

Christmas in July



 **MUHLENBERG**
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**"Let us go (on a summer vacation) to
Bethlehem and see this thing that has
taken place!"**

Christmas in July Worship Series ~ JULY 21 & 28, 2024

WELCOME

We welcome you in the name of Christ. **We love welcoming guests/visitors** and encourage you to complete one of the blue cards in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate, or **scan this QR Code** with your smart phone to complete the visitor card digitally. We have a gift for you at our Welcome Desk – please stop by after worship. You are invited to join in all parts of worship. Everything you need is printed in this worship booklet. All who desire to receive Holy Communion are welcome at the table. If you do not wish to receive, you are still welcome to come forward for a blessing! For instructions on how to receive the bread and wine, see the Communion section later in this booklet. Portions of worship in **bold print** are to be spoken by the whole congregation. We stand for portions of our worship service. **Please feel free to remain seated, if you prefer.**



HEALTH AND SAFETY

While we do not require masks in the building, wearing a mask for any reason is always welcomed. We encourage mask-wearing by those who have had an exposure to illness, or have recently recovered from illness. We ask anyone who has symptoms of a respiratory virus (including fever, chills, fatigue, cough, runny nose, headache) or other symptoms of illness (such as sore throat, vomiting) to please stay home and join us online for worship. Thank you for doing all you can to help care for one another by reducing the spread of germs in our community!

OUR WORSHIP

Our worship is rooted in the ancient pattern of the church – gathering, word, meal, sending. The shape of this liturgy and much of the actual words/prayers come directly from scripture. Though we make seasonal shifts, the constancy of our worship reflects God’s constant love and promises through forgiveness, scripture, and the sacraments of baptism and communion. Following this liturgical pattern, as well as the Narrative Lectionary (a four-year cycle of scripture readings in biblical order), we are connected through our worship with Christians around the world and throughout time.

Worship will be live-streamed this morning. Digital ministry is an essential part of our community with the Wellstream service at 11:00 am allowing those at home to worship alongside our gathered community for a service of Holy Communion. The cameras will be primarily focused on our worship leaders and offer some wide-angle views of the sanctuary. If you have questions or concerns about appearing on camera, contact Communication Minister Christian Perritt (perritt@muhlenberglutheran.org).

OTHER NOTES

- **Amplification devices** for the hearing impaired are available from ushers or at the Welcome Desk.
- A **restroom** is located at the north end of the Gathering Area (additional restrooms downstairs).
- Our fully equipped and staffed **nursery** is located at the north end of the Gathering Area (main entrance).

MUHLENBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH: A WELLSPRING OF GOD’S GRACE

Open ✝ Authentic ✝ Relational ✝ Serving

Pastor Lauren Eanes

Pastor Alex Zuber

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Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION

GATHERING

We come from our homes, our labor, our struggles, and our joys – which we share in fellowship as a Christian community. We are gathered together as God's people to worship. In this first part of our worship, we share together honestly – our sins in confession, our joy in forgiveness.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

(We stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection.

God-with-us,

**we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter,
claiming there is no room when we have plenty.**

**We have made power and wealth our idols,
while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger.**

**We have overlooked the shepherds,
expecting good news in prettier packaging.**

Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace.

Turn us from our ways to your ways.

Grant us the grace to begin again.

**Free us from all that keeps us bound, and forgive our sin,
through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us.**

Amen.

Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
† forgiven in Christ, and freed to respond in joy.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

The congregation turns to face the cross as the procession approaches the altar, reminding us that Christ leads us into the presence and love of God.

Hymns are located in the red "Evangelical Lutheran Worship" (ELW) hymnal in the pews.

July 21 Once in Royal David's City

ELW 269

July 28 Unexpected and Mysterious


ELW 258

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE ~ *Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child* repeat twice

ELW 297



Je - sus, Je - sus, oh, what a won - der - ful child.



Je - sus, Je - sus, so ho - ly, meek, and



mild; new life, new hope the child will bring.



Lis - ten to the an - gels sing: "Glo - ry, glo - ry,



glo - ry," let the heav - ens ring!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

(We sit)

CHILDREN'S TIME

Children age 10 and under are invited to come forward at this time.
They're welcome to bring their grown-ups with them if it makes them feel more comfortable.

WORD

The first half of our liturgy focuses on the Word of God through the reading of scripture and preaching. The pattern of reading, singing, reading, singing is an ancient one, which comes from Christianity's roots in Jewish synagogue worship.

READINGS

July 21 Isaiah 9:2-7

Pew Bible page 706

July 28 Hebrews 1:1-12

Pew Bible N.T. page 234

The reading concludes: The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

(We stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to ... **Glory to you, O Lord.**

July 21 Luke 2:1-20

Pew Bible N.T. page 57

July 28 John 1:1-14

Pew Bible N.T. page 94

After the reading: The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(We sit)

SERMON

Pastor Alex Zuber

Silence for reflection follows.

(We stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

July 21 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

ELW 270

July 28 *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

ELW 295

verses 1, 3 & 5 ~ all sing; verse 2 ~ treble voices; verse 4 ~ bass voices

NICENE CREED

Let us confess our faith:

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS

After each petition:

. . . Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The Lay Assisting Minister concludes the prayers:

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Have a prayer concern to share? Forms are available in the back cover of each hymnal.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

*The congregation may greet one another with a gesture of peace, using these or similar words:
“Peace be with you.”*

(We sit)

MEAL

In the second half of our liturgy, we gather around the table, following Jesus' invitation. Here in this meal we encounter the risen Lord who gives himself for the forgiveness of sins and strengthening the Body of Christ.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered at this time to support the mission of the church and care for those in need. Our offerings are a humble and grateful response to the gifts that God has first given us. You can place a gift in the offering plate as the ushers come around, or give online by scanning the QR Code and visiting our online giving portal.

(We stand)

MAKE YOUR OFFERING DIGITALLY
BY SCANNING HERE



MUHLENBERG
LUTHERAN CHURCH

OFFERING SONG ~ *In the Bleak Midwinter* we sing verse 3

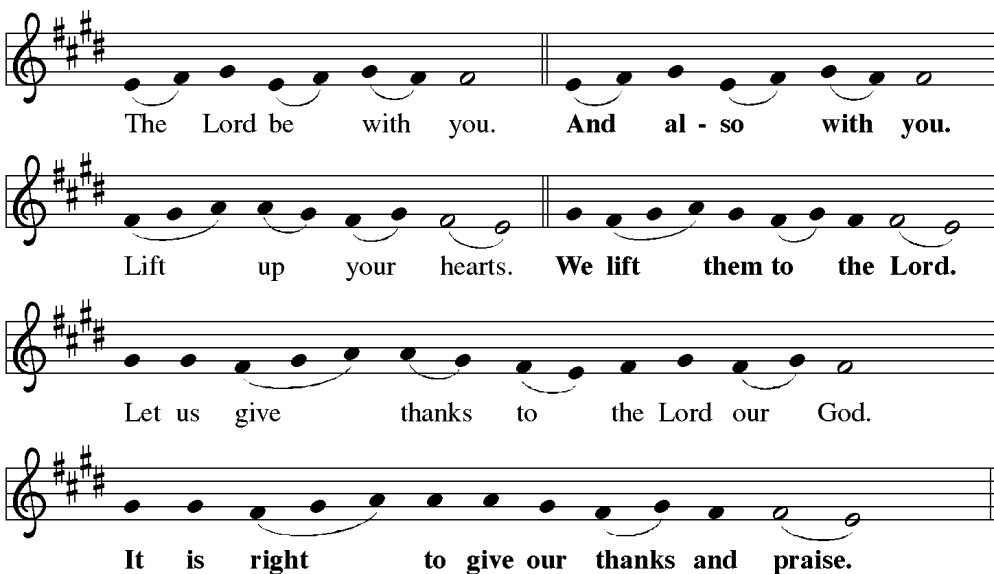
ELW 294

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man
I would do my part; yet what I can I give him—
give my heart.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of heaven and earth, **from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING




The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.


Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.


It is indeed right . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Lord God - of power and might: Heav'n and earth - are



6 full of your glo - ry, Ho - san - na in - the high - est. Blessed is the one - who



10 comes in the name, who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in - the



14 high - est, Ho - san - na in - the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God,
Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.
In the fullness of time,
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.
In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Remembering, therefore,
his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection,
we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.
By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.
Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us.
Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

(We sit)

COMMUNION

All are welcome at the Lord's Table! After the invitation to communion, the ushers will direct each row to come forward. If, for any reason, you prefer not to receive communion, you are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing. If you are unable to come forward, signal an usher or raise your hand, and an assisting minister will bring the elements to you.

As you come forward, pick up a small cup from the table at the front and then receive the bread (wafer) from the minister. Gluten-free wafers are located on the table. If you require gluten-free, please take one and present it to the pastor for blessing.

Next, proceed to one of the two communion assistants. The first chalice has wine, and the second chalice has grape juice.

As the ministers give the bread and cup to you, they say these words:

"The body of Christ, given for you . . . The blood of Christ, shed for you."

You may say: "Amen."

After consuming the wine/juice, please put your cup on the tray along the side wall so it can be composted, and return to your seat via the side aisle.

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming we sing verse 4

ELW 272

O Savior, child of Mary,
who felt our human woe;
O Savior, king of glory,
who dost our weakness know:
bring us at length, we pray,
to the bright courts of heaven
and into endless day.

July 21 *Away in a Manger*

ELW 277

July 28 *O Little of Bethlehem*

ELW 279

(We stand)

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy. Amen.

SENDING

Our worship does not end, but continues in the world. In our daily lives we are called to be ministers of God's love and mercy as we live and serve by the power of the risen Christ.

SENDING HYMN

The congregation turns & faces the cross reminding us that we follow Christ into the world & our daily lives.

| | | |
|---------|-------------------------|---------|
| July 21 | <i>Joy to the World</i> | ELW 267 |
| July 28 | <i>Love Has Come</i> | ELW 292 |

BLESSING

Grace from God's own heart, peace from the ☩ Child in the manger, and strength from the Spirit of life be blessings for you today and forever. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!
Peace to God's people on earth!
Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

After worship, Pastor Alex invites you to greet him and each other in the Gathering Area. Please be mindful of others' wishes for physical distancing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Permission to print/podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license # A-701538, CCLI license # 20104877, Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License: SAS014720, and St James Press, license #15220.

REMINDERS AS YOU EXIT THE SANCTUARY

- **Please leave this worship booklet in the basket at the sanctuary entrance for use in future services (or recycling).**
- **We encourage you to take *The Chimes* home with you.**

ABOUT OUR WORSHIP...

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS: + All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins, but no one should feel compelled. Both our confession of sin and God's promise of mercy are rooted in our baptism. We come before God recalling our brokenness, but even more God's great grace.

GATHERING HYMN: We sing as the Spirit gathers us for worship and this hymn sets the tone for the day.

KYRIE: The Kyrie is an ancient piece of service liturgy that may date back to the second century. Kyrie Eleison is Greek for "Lord have mercy" and is in reference to both New and Old Testament scriptures which use the same words and pattern.

PRAYER OF THE DAY: The Prayer of the Day collects the themes from today's scripture readings.

READINGS AND PSALM: Liturgy, from the Greek, means "the work of the people." Our worship is designed so we all take part. We are far more than just spectators. The scripture readings follow a three-year cycle, called a lectionary. We are connected with other Christians all over the world, in many denominations, reading the same texts. The Psalms were the original Hymns in Holy Scripture, used by God's people for personal and corporate devotion. They continue to be prayed, sung and read by God's people all over the world as a rich and honest expression of faith. We stand during the gospel because we believe our Lord is present with us in the reading.

HYMN OF THE DAY: This hymn complements the day's scripture readings and sermon.

NICENE & APOSTLES' CREEDS: The creeds (statements of faith) date back to the 4th century and contain the basics of what Christians around the world hold to be true. The use of the non-capitalized word "catholic" means simply worldwide or universal.

PRAYERS: We pray as a community. The assisting minister leads this time to gather the prayers of all, and at his/ her invitation you may add others aloud or silently in your heart.

PEACE: Much more than a pleasant greeting — we do this to proclaim God's promise of peace to one another.

OFFERING: Our offerings are collected and dedicated to our Lord's service. They support the ministries of Christ's church in this congregation, the Virginia Synod, ELCA, and our global mission partners.

OFFERING SONG: This song becomes our prayer as our gifts are collected and dedicated to our Lord's service.

GREAT THANKSGIVING & HOLY, HOLY, HOLY: The Great Thanksgiving is an ancient part of the worship that proclaims our thanks for the gifts of God in the meal. The "Holy, Holy, Holy" echoes the heavenly chorus in Isaiah 6:3 and the crowds of Mark 11:9 as Jesus enters Jerusalem. This reminds us that we are in the presence of a God identified both by holiness and humility. Some will make the sign of the cross at the announcement of God's presence: "Blessed is He..."

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER: Eucharist is the Greek word for thanks. These are the words and actions, the commands and promises of Jesus at the last supper with his disciples as recorded in scripture: 1Cor. 11:23-26, Matt. 26:26-29, Luke 22:15-20.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Jesus taught his disciples this prayer. In this prayer, all our needs and concerns are addressed. See ELW page 1163 for Martin Luther's explanation of this prayer in the small catechism.

COMMUNION: The "last supper" was a meal that Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion. He invited them to share this meal in the future to remember him and he promised to be present in a mysterious, but very real sense. All who desire to participate are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Feel free to remain seated if you prefer.

RECESSIONAL HYMN: We gather once more in song as our worship concludes, and we prepare to take this good news into the world.

BLESSING: In this blessing we are reminded we bear God's name as we depart to live out our baptism, serving our neighbor and spreading the gospel. It reaffirms our mission and reminds us that if we are to be a Wellspring of Grace, we need to be renewed first through Water, Word, and Meal—the means of grace God has given to us.