



The CHIMES

MUHLENBERG: A WELLSPRING OF GOD'S GRACE

Muhlenberg Lutheran Church strives to be a Wellspring of God's Grace in Jesus Christ.

Open † Authentic † Relational † Serving

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August 22, 2021

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

CONGREGATION COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

- Discussed Chapter 9 of Muhlenberg's Constitution as part of our monthly Constitution Study
- Received updates on the search for a Children's Minister and Finance Manager
- Formally adopted our Strategic Plan and discussed priorities for this program year
- Reviewed a draft of the Facility Usage agreement for Second Home
- Discussed details of the August 29 *Equipping the Saints Day* event - see page 3
- Reviewed feedback from the 130+ members who responded to the Gathering Together/ Council Survey
- Voted to request Pastoral support from the Synod during Pastor Lauren's medical leave
- Many of these highlights will be addressed in more detail in *The Chimes* so stay tuned! **Exciting things are happening at Muhlenberg as we strive to be a Wellspring of God's Grace while equipping all people to live out Christ's love.**

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

NEW WORSHIP SERIES

Today we continue our worship series, "I've been meaning to ask... Today's question: **Where does it hurt?**" The questions in this series aren't surface level; they invite us to tell our stories, share our pain, care for one another, and dream about a new way forward together.

Through vulnerability and authenticity, may our courageous conversations lead us to glimpse hope, joy, and beauty and to become the community God created us to be.

A study guide/daily devotional is available in print from the Connection Box, and online by clicking [HERE](#).



SECOND HOME NEWS

SECOND HOME RENEWED!

In 2007, Second Home was created in partnership with Muhlenberg Lutheran Church to serve our neighbors with high quality, academically focused care for school-age children that is affordable for even the lowest income families. As the program grew to fill the ever increasing need in the city, Muhlenberg and Second Home leadership recognized that an independent non-profit status could potentially expand much needed funding opportunities for the program. After a long process, we are delighted to announce that as of August 16 (just in time for the new school year) Second Home Learning Center has acquired its own 501(c)(3) non-profit status. **We remain a social outreach ministry of Muhlenberg (much like People Helping People and Habitat for Humanity), and seek to work in partnership with the congregation.**

The need for affordable child care is bigger than ever and is essential for economic recovery. As the only before-school child care opening at 6:00 am for those working in the food and service industry, health care, and other areas requiring early shifts, Second Home's program has become a lifeline for more children than ever before. Our after-school Literacy, STEM, and Performing Arts activities encourage children to explore and learn. Your support is essential in continuing the mission and caring for these families and their children. In-kind and monetary donations are extremely helpful. Please address any donation to "Second Home Learning Center." Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to learn more about our daily activities, or stop by our table on *Equipping the Saints Day*

Krisztina Szekely, Executive Director

FINANCIAL NEWS

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

8/8	8:30 Communion (in person-31 + Zoom-9).....	40
	10:00 Outside/Communion.....	47
	11:00 Total Live Views.....	41
	Total Views this Week	221
	Hours Viewed this Week	57.2
8/15	8:30 Communion (in person-19 + Zoom-10)....	29
	10:00 Outside/Communion.....	39
	11:00 Total Live Views.....	45

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through July 2021			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$324,075	\$470,326	\$333,574
Total Receipts	\$387,348	\$525,881	\$432,960
Expenses	\$457,127	\$565,080	\$451,756
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	(\$69,779)	(\$39,199)	(\$18,796)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 12,949.74
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 16,355.96
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 29,305.70

To give online, scan here →



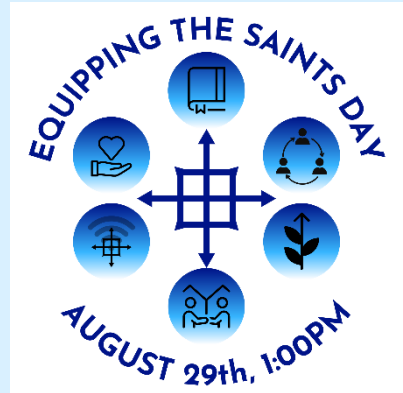
Muhlenberg has not suspended its ministry through this unprecedented time, and we ask you not to suspend your financial contributions either. We are committed to maintaining our ministries, even if they are in a different form for now. We also want to be able to continue to support the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. You can make a one-time or recurring donation through the [donation page](#) on our website, or mail your check to the church: 281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS DAY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 29

(Please note the date change from 8/22)

Join us **Sunday, August 29 at 1:00 pm in the MAC** for our first *Equipping the Saints Day* at Muhlenberg! As we shared in the spring, Congregation Council has been working under the guidance of a new mission statement. For years we have recognized our vision for ministry as *Muhlenberg Lutheran Church strives to be a Wellspring of God's Grace in Jesus Christ*. While a vision statement points us toward the hope of our future, a mission statement roots us in who we are and our purpose in this community. A mission statement gives us a roadmap for how we achieve this vision, and our mission is simple: *To equip all people to live out Christ's love.*



How will you be equipped through our life together? *Equipping the Saints Day* is an opportunity to gather with your Muhlenberg family and learn about the various areas of ministry offered throughout the fall. From worship to music, from care teams to Sunday School, from Local & Global Mission to Administration/Communication, there are countless opportunities for you to identify your gifts and live out our mission.

From 1:00 – 3:00 pm our campus will be open for a time of food, fellowship, and a ministry fair. You'll have the opportunity to learn more about many of Muhlenberg's ministry teams and connect with others who share similar interests. You will also be able to tour the sanctuary and see our new *Wellstream* system in action and discover the behind-the-scenes process for how we will continue to offer vibrant digital ministry each week. Mask wearing will be required in the sanctuary, and strongly encouraged in the MAC when not eating. There will be space and tents outside for fellowship if you prefer that option.

We're excited for a fun day of connecting our members, learning about what's happening this fall at Muhlenberg, and leaning into our shared Mission, Vision, and Values! We hope to see you there.

MUHLENBERG NEWS

FINANCE MANAGER NEEDED

We are hiring a paid part-time Finance Manager to replace Elizabeth Fletchall who recently resigned her position. We need a staff member who can truly manage our financial affairs, while also working with our Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Parish Administrator and volunteers. If you or someone you know may be interested in exploring this opportunity, you can find the job description and application instructions by clicking [HERE](#). We hope to fill this position as soon as possible, so please lift up our search in prayer.

CREATION CARE TIP



Creation Care offers a simple tip that will help you protect God's earth. Contact Ramona Sanders for more information: (rsanders97@verizon.net or 433-1165).

Recent studies show that living close to trees improves our mental health. Being close to nature positively impacts our cognitive and psychological health, as well as reduces stress. Trees prevent nearly \$7 billion in health costs annually simply by filtering air pollution and preventing more adverse effects. In terms of impacts on human health, trees in urban areas are substantially more important than rural trees due to their proximity to people. The greatest monetary values are derived in areas with the greatest population density. Air pollution is a major health concern and results in more deaths than you may think. According to the World Health Organization, air pollution can be contributed to more than seven million deaths every year. Protect the future by planting trees now.

LOCAL & GLOBAL MISSION

DAY OF SERVICE

September 26, 2021

God's Work, Our Hand

It's the time of year for the ELCA's Day of Service, where we can reach out in meaningful ways to help our neighbors in need. Again this year, we will help Minnick School by collecting packages of new underwear and/or new or gently used sweat-pants or shorts (elastic or drawstring waist).



Sizes: small – large; children's sizes 4 - 18. These are among the top clothing items that are greatly needed.

Over the next several Sundays, place donations in the wooden bin, inside for the 8:30 service and outside for the 10:00 service. If you would rather donate money, we can purchase items for you. Please indicate *Underwear Drive* on the memo line of your check/envelope.

As you may know, Minnick is a part of Lutheran Family Services, now called enCircle. They so appreciate our continued care and support.

THANK YOU

The Local and Global Mission team would like to thank everyone who donated feminine hygiene products. The items were delivered August 6 to Thomas Harrison and Skyline Middle schools and to Second Home. Your generosity was greatly appreciated.

WELLSTREAM DIGITAL INSTALLATION

We are excited to announce that “Phase 2” of our Wellstream initiative is well underway! We recently completed the installation of our live-streaming system which will enable us to stream full worship services, live from the Sanctuary. This is a significant development in equipping Muhlenberg to better reach our online faith community that we grew over the past year.

Worship is where we gather around the true *Wellspring of God’s Grace* — the Word and Sacraments of Jesus Christ. Worship, and the community we find there, is still at the heart of who we are. Part of creating a culture of welcome, hospitality, and care involves making that core aspect of worship available to a variety of communities — local or at a distance, online or in person — so that we are reaching as many as we can with God’s story.

In 2020, we learned that online services were not just good “alternatives” to in-person worship but they helped create a whole new way to engage with and grow our faith community. With our new live-streaming system, we’ll be able to operate as a truly hybrid church, returning to full worship in the Sanctuary, while providing those online with a rich and full worship experience.



The new streaming system includes three high-resolution remote-control digital cameras mounted inconspicuously throughout the sanctuary, along with a switcher, dedicated laptop, and all necessary equipment to broadcast an online live-stream video. All of this will be run from the balcony of the church (next to the current soundboard).

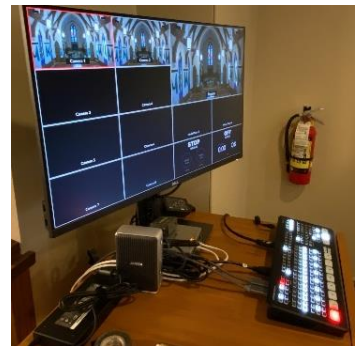
Our Communications Team spent countless hours researching the best solution that would meet our needs while keeping costs as low as possible and honoring the beautiful aesthetics of Muhlenberg. The result is a low-profile, unobtrusive system that will allow us to replace our pre-recorded services with a live-stream of the 11:00 service each Sunday.

This system also gives us the ability to simultaneously stream to a number of different platforms including Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo, etc. The live-stream will also be automatically recorded, so that each worship service can be part of Muhlenberg’s YouTube archive to be viewed anytime.

Our next steps include system testing and training of a team of operators, so that our live-stream process is as sustainable as possible. We hope to premiere our first live-streamed services in September, and we’ll keep you posted on our progress.

This focus on becoming a truly hybrid church is not about simply keeping up with the latest trends. Digital communities are here to stay, and we’ve learned that we can reach people online, as well as in person, in truly deep and meaningful ways. We look forward to experiencing this new and exciting chapter together!

Tours of our new system will be available on [Equipping the Saints Day \(8/29\)](#), or stop by the Administration/Communication table to learn more.



ABUNDANCE TASK FORCE

WHY I GIVE ~ *Conversations about giving and abundance*

As part of our Abundance Task Force's efforts to share the story of why members give to the ministries of Muhlenberg, Congregation Council President Karen Thomsen sat down for some conversations with about giving. These wonderful, brief chats addressed the question "Why I Give" - with members explaining why and how they give their time, talents, and treasure to help live out Muhlenberg's mission. Below, please find an abbreviated recap of Karen's conversation with long-time member, Jean Helmick.



Karen: First, I must ask - what brought you to Muhlenberg?

Jean: To be honest, getting married! My husband and his family had been long-time members of Muhlenberg. We met in California and got married there, then moved back here to Muhlenberg - and that was 59 years ago.

Karen: Wow! So, "what keeps you here" might be a more appropriate question!

Jean: First, the Lutheran theology, which puts the congregation and community at the forefront - that's very important to me. And also the family connection.

Karen: What does it mean to you to give to Muhlenberg?

Jean: At first, it was just something we needed to do. But over the years, I've seen what giving means to this church. We've done a good job of growing and reaching out to the community, doing those things that I think are important. I never cut what I give, because I can see the results. I've actually been the recipient of those results - the church supported me for 5 years traveling to Rwanda to check on the school being built there; they supported me and my children as they grew, as well as when my husband died...so I've been on the receiving end of that support.

Karen: It's important to have that church community there! Jean, could you describe the other ways you give to Muhlenberg?

Jean: I did all the prosaic things - sang in the choir for 40 years, taught Sunday School, been on church Council and committees, been involved with projects - I consider that as part of my contribution. I can't give a lot of money, but there are other ways I can give. And I see other congregants give of their time and talents - and that also keeps me here. If we work together and combine our financial and non-financial assets - it builds a strong church that makes a big impact in the community.

Karen: And you still teach an adult Sunday School class, correct?

Jean: I always shied away from that, scared I would be burned at the stake because of a theological issue [**Karen and Jean laugh*], but I was assured that wouldn't happen! But yes, I teach an adult formation class, and that has been a wonderful experience. The class focuses on what it means to be Christian beyond the church - taking our message out into the community.

Karen: Jean, thank you so much for sharing your story!

Jean: You're very welcome.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

FAITH LENS COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Several members of the Muhlenberg Faith Lens class joined with Our Community Place (OCP) August 11 to help start their pavers project. We gathered materials together such as concrete, foil trays, bits of glass, broken tiles, pebbles, shells, etc. What a treat to work alongside both staff and several members of their community of homeless. We experimented with the size of the tray and drew pictures of possible patterns using glass, tiles, stones, and shells. A couple from Maryland provided music, and we all had lunch together as the day ended.

In two weeks, we plan to go back to see how our pavers turned out. We will continue to work with these great people to make enough pavers for the path to OCP's public water access for the homeless. Dates will be provided in *The Chimes* as they become available and any who would like to help are welcome. For more information, please call Jean Helmick at 540-830-1930.



Please note: The Faith Lens adult class **will not meet Sundays August 22 - September 5.** Class will resume September 12. Time and place will be announced later.

ALTAR FLOWERS

RESERVING ALTAR FLOWERS

Beginning September 12, we will once again offer the opportunity to reserve your special dates to remember or honor a loved one by providing funding for altar flowers! We offer the opportunity for two families to sign up each week and **request payment (\$25/vase) at the time of sign up.** We will send reminders as needed and appreciate your cooperation.

Please sign up in person at the Connection Center. Watch *The Chimes* for an opportunity to sign up electronically.

Also, stop by the worship table on *Equipping the Saints Day (8/29)*. You will have the opportunity to meet Altar Flower Coordinator Louise Layman, learn more about why and how altar flowers are provided each week, and sign up to sponsor flowers this fall.



JOYS, THANKS & CONCERNS

This is the space for sharing joys, thanks, and concerns of our congregation, our synod, and the wider church. Please lift these up as a part of your daily prayers. To share joy, thanks, or concern (e.g. birth, illness, injury, or death of an immediate family member; thank-you and congratulatory notes, etc.), contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (434-3496 or depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org). Submissions will be printed with consideration for space and appropriateness at the discretion of the pastors and editor.

✦ Thank you to everyone who completed our recent survey to provide information for Congregation Council and the Gathering Together Task Force. We will share results with the congregation very soon.

✦ I want to thank everyone for the prayers, calls, cards, food and fellowship at the passing of my dear wife Betty. The kind thoughts and prayers are a blessing for our family and myself.

Richard Ryman.

SUMMER SERVICE INFORMATION

8:30 Hybrid Service: In-person and online opportunities to participate. **Advanced registration is no longer required.** A well-fitted facemask is required at all times in the building. To connect online, go to

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84731416878>.

10:00 Outdoor Service: Bring your own chairs, shade and/or coolers! Please check in at the Welcome Tent. There will be special music but no congregational singing at this service. Masks optional.

11:00 Worship on Facebook and YouTube.

Full Service of the Word with sermon, prayers, etc. Sing hymns and enjoy special music.

www.facebook.com/MuhlenbergLutheran

www.youtube.com/c/muhlenberglutheranchurch.

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

August 23-29

If viewing electronically, you can click the links below to access meetings and services.

Mon. 2:00 pm Weekly Staff Meeting

Sun. Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday am ZOOM link

8:30 am Hybrid Communion Service

9:00 am ZOOM “Coffee Hour” begins

10:00 am Outdoor Worship

11:00 am Faith Lens Class via ZOOM

11:00 am Service Livestreamed

via Facebook and YouTube

1:00 pm *Equipping the Saints Day*

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Join your Muhlenberg friends and family for education and fellowship via **ZOOM** each **Sunday from 8:30 – 9:30** using this link **[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84731416878](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84731416878)** or call 1-301-715-8592 and enter the Meeting ID: 84731416878.

No internet access? Call Wellstream Phone:
1-434-205-8777

The weekly deadline for routine articles for *The Chimes* is **Thursday at 8 am**. Requests for a series, inserts or full-column articles should be made two weeks in advance. *Submit information to Parish Administrator Linda Depoy:*

(depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org/434-3496)

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