



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

Published Weekly by Muhlenberg Lutheran Church

281 East Market Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801 † Phone: 540-434-3496

E-mail address: info@muhlenberglutheran.org † Website: www.muhlenberglutheran.org

Senior Pastor Lauren Eanes: eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org Associate Pastor Alex Zuber: zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org



August 23, 2020

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WHAT'S THE BUZZ

INTRODUCING THE NARRATIVE LECTIONARY

Eugene Peterson notes that when we read scripture, we “see our stories in God’s.” Beginning September 13, Muhlenberg will participate in God’s story as we follow the Narrative Lectionary in our weekly sermons and engage in study and reflection on these texts.

The Narrative Lectionary is designed to follow the sweep of the biblical story, from Creation through the early Christian church. The weekly texts have been selected to highlight the breadth and variety of voices within Scripture, while arranged in a narrative sequence to help us see Scripture as a story that has coherence and a dynamic movement. By the time we conclude in May we will have touched on the great stories of scripture and gone more deeply into their themes and context. You will also be able to make connections from God’s story and the stories of the saints of the faith, to your story!

Congregations of many denominations from all over the world have used the Narrative Lectionary since its development in 2010 at Luther Seminary. Muhlenberg joins a number

of local congregations (Park View Mennonite, Trinity Presbyterian, First Church of the Brethren, Community Mennonite, and Shalom Mennonite) who will also be using the Narrative Lectionary this year. You can learn more about the Narrative Lectionary at narrativelectionary.org.

MEET OUR NEW COMMUNICATION MINISTER

We are pleased to announce Christian Perritt will serve as our new Communication Minister. The addition of this position is just one of several transitions happening at Muhlenberg. *See pages 3-4 for details.*

GATHERING TOGETHER TASK FORCE UPDATE

Thanks to all who filled out the recent survey indicating preferences for in person vs. virtual ministry this fall. We received over 95 surveys and are greatly appreciative of the feedback. The Task Force is evaluating options and will be releasing a plan for the fall next week.

VBS REFLECTIONS

Wondering what VBS participants did this year? *See page 7 for details.*

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Join your Muhlenberg friends and family for education and fellowship via [ZOOM](#) each **Sunday from 9:00 – 11:00** using this link:

[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84731416878](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84731416878)

- **Sunday School** ~ All are welcome to join.
 - **9:00:** Faith Lens
 - **10:15:** Kids Story Time
- **Pastoral Care** ~ If you would like a private word with one of the Pastors, we will provide a private breakout room for you and the pastor “on call.”
- **Small Group Fellowship** ~ Want to catch up with a small group of friends? We have private breakout rooms for that!

If you don't have a reliable internet connection, call in on Sundays at 1-301-715-8592 and enter the Meeting ID: 84731416878.

Livestreamed worship at 11:00 am on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) continues.

WELLSTREAM PHONE

Are you missing out on worship because you don't have an internet connection? We want all members to have the opportunity to “participate” in worship and hear The Word. **Wellstream Phone is a service that works from your home or cell phone — no internet required. Simply call the number below and select an option. Information will be available by 11 am each Sunday.** Contact Linda Depoy (434-3496) with any questions.

Wellstream Phone Number:
1-434-205-8777

FINANCIAL NEWS

RECENT DIGITAL ATTENDANCE

While we aren't meeting in person, we are able to track our online viewership:

8/9: 96 Total Live Views
421 Total Views
115.3 Hours of Content Viewed

8/16: 94 Total Live Views

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through July 2020			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$358,288	\$468,438	\$394,194
Total Receipts*	\$432,960	\$528,048	\$448,659
Expenses	\$451,756	\$572,118	\$486,101
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	(\$18,796)	(\$40,070)	(\$37,442)

* Includes \$12,331.53 – federal PPP proceeds

Giving in support of our Spending Plan \$ 7,371.00*
Giving to Other Designated Funds \$ 19,733.00*
Total Giving for the Week \$ 27,104.00*

* Includes offerings 8/9 - 8/16

To give online, scan here →



Muhlenberg is not suspending 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.

TRANSITIONS AT MUHLENBERG

We have some “Welcomes” and “Thank Yous” to extend in our Muhlenberg community, as we announce transitions in our staff and volunteer leadership.



First, a welcome to our newly hired Communication Minister, **Christian Perritt**! Christian brings a wealth of experience from his 26 years as Creative Director at the Gravity Group. He is excited to use his gifts to help Muhlenberg tell God’s story and our story. Christian, his wife Melissa, and their kids Billy and Henry have been Muhlenberg members for 10 years. Christian will begin on September 8.

A huge thank you goes out to **Janet Simmons**, who has served as our Financial Secretary for 27 years and is now stepping down. This is a volunteer position that requires a great deal of commitment and competence, and Janet certainly brought both. She served faithfully and adapted as financial management moved from paper to computer, and developed efficient systems for managing funds. We are grateful for her dedication over several decades at Muhlenberg!



Welcome to **Tim Wessel**, who steps into the Financial Secretary role. Tim has served as Financial Secretary, and in other financial roles, in multiple congregations prior to his retirement from the U.S. Air Force and move to Harrisonburg. He has a passion for financial management and stewardship in the church, and we’re thrilled he’s bringing that enthusiasm to Muhlenberg. Tim and his wife Katy are relatively new members of Muhlenberg, so he looks forward to getting to know everyone better.

~continued on next page~

TRANSITIONS AT MUHLENBERG (CONTINUED)



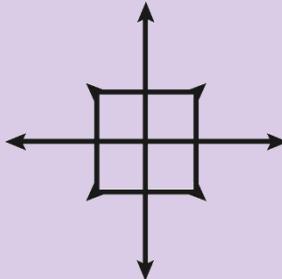
A big thanks next to **Clay Arthur**, whose position as High School Leader at Muhlenberg has ended. Clay stepped into this position shortly before the pastoral transition, and has shepherded the high school youth through the past few years. We've greatly appreciated his relational gifts as he's worked with the youth of Muhlenberg!

Finally, thank you to our nursery staff, **Crystal Weaver** (pictured) and **Heaven Emrich**, who nurture our littlest ones so well each Sunday morning. Their positions have been furloughed until we are worshipping in person again and can reopen the nursery.



We've certainly seen our fair share of changes in the way church works over the past few months! Transitions can be hard, but they also bring new opportunities for our community. And through all the changes, we remember that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)

We are excited to see where the Holy Spirit takes us as we continue to strive to be a Wellspring of God's Grace in Harrisonburg.



THIS WEEK

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

NO MEETING AUGUST 26 OR SEPTEMBER 2

Our next session will begin **Wednesday, September 9, 10:30 am**. Participants will study the Narrative Lectionary text for the upcoming Sunday, including a deep dive into the text, information about the context, and connections between God's story and our stories. We'll also have a lot of fun and get to know each other better! *Details coming next week.*

WEDNESDAY NOON SERVICE

We will have a brief prayer service on [Facebook](#). Tune in live or watch later.

MUHLENBERG NEWS

CREATION CARE TIP



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

If you are planning a Labor Day getaway, please observe all social distancing and mask-wearing requirements. Plan an eco-friendly Labor Day getaway. The beach is one of the most popular places to spend Labor Day weekend. Try to minimize your impact while you are soaking up the sun. Every year 14 billion pounds of trash are dumped in the ocean, and plastics account for up to 90 percent of all floating marine debris. Take a trash bag with you to contain food packaging and empty sunscreen bottles. Be sure not to leave any garbage behind; it could poison or choke marine life. While you are at the beach, pick up any trash you see.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BLESSING OF THE DEVICES

Often the start of a new school year brings a "Blessing of the Backpacks," but this year we'll be doing a "Blessing of the Devices!" Since so many students of all ages will be engaged in virtual/digital learning this fall, our **September 6** worship service will include a special blessing for them and their devices (Chromebooks, iPads, laptops...whatever device they're using to connect with their teachers and classmates!) We invite all students to have their devices with them as we worship that morning.

PASTORS' BOOK CLUB

September's Pastors' Book Club selection is *Raising a Rare Girl* by Heather Lanier. This memoir about raising a child with a rare syndrome raises questions about what it means to be human, the deepest challenges of parenting, and society's attitudes toward disabilities.

The book is available at online retailers like Amazon and bookshop.org. Since it just came out, it is a little pricier than books we've done in the past. If you'd like to borrow a copy from the church to read, please contact Pastor Lauren and we'll do our best to get you one.

Join the conversation via [Zoom](#)
Wednesday, September 23, 6:30 pm:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81394502762>.

Note: Just because we call this a book "club" doesn't mean there are any "membership" requirements! A different group gathers each month based on who is interested in the book. So feel free to jump right in, even if you've never attended before!

Physically Distant Fellowship @ Hillandale Park

SPACED
OUT 2
AUGUST 30TH, 2020

Muhlenberg Lutheran Church  A Wellspring of God's Grace

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

The Fellowship Committee is holding *Spaced Out*, a gathering of Muhlenberg members. You are invited to attend! We plan to hold three “new normal” gatherings at various locations and times. Here are the details about the second gathering:

NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

Hillandale Park in Harrisonburg, Shelter #10, 11, or 12*

7:00 - 8:30 pm (No Restrooms)

- **There are still lots of spaces available! Please RSVP** to Fellowship Committee Chair Barbara Roadcap (bbroadcap@gmail.com or 540-830-1896) with the number attending from your family. First come, first reserved as we can only host 20 people from our congregation.
- **Bring your own chairs and beverage/snacks**
- **Wear masks or face coverings/shields**
- **Observe social distancing while at event and follow directional flow**

Please attend *Spaced Out* only if you feel safe, well and comfortable doing so, for the sake of yourself and others.

** Shelters 10, 11 & 12 are all in sight of each other. Pastor Lauren will reserve the best one available, or we will meet in a circle in that area under trees if no shelter is available.*

VBS REFLECTIONS

VIRTUAL VBS: *COMPASSION CAMP*

We had a great time this year for our Virtual Vacation Bible School. We started the week off with a Car Corral in the church parking lot. Parents and kids stayed in their cars while a bag of supplies for the week and delicious cookies were delivered to them. The cookies were made by one of our former youth who is now a baker, and each child received three cookies with the words, *Be Loved*, *Be Kind* and *Be You* on them.



We heard songs that focused on the theme such as *Come to the Table*, reminding the children we are all welcome at God's table. The song *I am Brave* helped the children learn they are brave enough to help others and to show kindness to everyone. The next song *God Loves Me so I can Love You* taught the children that God loves them just as they are, and as they love themselves they can share God's love with others. Each day we learned how to be compassionate and caring for our family, our community and ourselves.

As part of showing their compassion each day, the children put their *Compassion into Action* by collecting food for Patchwork Pantry, dog and cat food for the SPCA, and school supplies for Second Home. Each day they saw fun videos that shared the theme for the day, the Bible story, art, Compassion activities, some yoga, and a visit from camper *Clodhopper*, who helped us learn the lesson for the day.

The week ended with another fun Car Corral in the church parking lot. We sang songs from our cars, turned in all our *Compassion in Action* service project items, and even had a visit from camper *Clodhopper* who shared how he learned a lot about compassion during the week. Finally, we enjoyed Kline's ice cream with our family. Everyone expressed that while this was a different kind of VBS, they had a great time and were happy to see some of their church family at a safe distance!



CHRISTIAN FORMATION NEWS

Contact Christian Formation Minister Diane Bayer
(434-3496 or bayer@muhlenberglutheran.org)
for more information.

CHILDREN'S STORY TIME

Miss Diane and Miss Kathy invite Sunday school children to join Story Time **Sunday mornings at 10:15** via [Zoom](#). We will hear a Bible story and visit with our church friends. See p. 2 for sign in instructions.

JOYS, THANKS & CONCERNS

- ✚ With great sadness, we share the news of Lee Branner's death (August 18) after suffering with cancer. We keep in our prayers his wife Brenda, daughters Amanda Dowling and Lisa Stickley, and Lee's extended family.
- ✚ Thank you to everyone who participated in our first Virtual Vacation Bible School and to those who made it happen!

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

August 24-30, 2020

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

- Mon. 2:00 pm Weekly Staff Meeting
- Wed. 12 noon Service Livestreamed on [Facebook](#)
- Sun. [Sunday AM Zoom link](#)
 - 9:00 am Faith Lens Class
 - 10:15 am Kids Story Time
 - 10:30 am "Coffee Hour"
 - 11:00 am Service Livestreamed via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
 - 7:00 pm *Spaced Out 2*

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:*

(depay@muhlenberg.lutheran.org/434-3496)

Like us at [facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran).

PASTORAL CARE

Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex are working to stay connected with as many people as possible. Our pastors are returning to in-person pastoral care, when necessary, and with specific guidelines in place as identified by the Gathering Together Task Force.. Additionally, they are both available for phone conversations, email, and video meetings. Simply email or call the church office — they'll be happy to hear from you!

ENTERING THE CHURCH

Staff continues to work mainly from home. **All doors are locked at all times.** To keep everyone safe, **we ask that congregation members refrain from coming to the church building unless necessary. If you need to be in the building, use the Gathering Area doors to enter and exit (*NOT* the back red doors which Day Care uses).** We suggest you wear a mask as much as possible. If you have something to drop off, arrange with a staff person to receive it ahead of time. Thank you!