



ELCA

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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September 10, 2023

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

FALL WORSHIP 2023: *WHO AM I?*

It's once again time to *fall in* to the true rhythm of life at Muhlenberg. At the heart of our life together is worship. Beginning this week we'll *fall in* to a sermon series based on the Narrative Lectionary focused on the overall theme of **identity**. Who am I? Who are we? What happens when we have an identity crisis? And most importantly: Who is God in the midst of these struggles? When we feel like we're falling, or failing, or frenzied, God's Word will call us back to who we are and whose we are.

For the next four weeks, we'll hear stories of creation, faithfulness to Sarah and Abraham, Jacob's great struggle with God, and Moses' encounter with God in the burning bush. Each story offers a mirror for us to reflect on our self-identity, and in the midst of all the movements of our lives ask faithfully — *Who Am I?*

For deeper reading and engagement with the biblical narrative this year, follow along with the [Narrative DAILY Lectionary online](#) to fill in the gaps of our Sunday stories!

After much positive feedback, we're continuing our practice begun this summer of reusing worship booklets. Please leave your booklet at the back of the Sanctuary for reuse in the coming weeks.

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

FINAL PHOTO SHOOTS FOR OUR COMMUNITY DIRECTORY!

TODAY (9/10) & NEXT Sunday, Sept. 17

We're holding two final photo shoots for the updated directory **TODAY (9/10) and again NEXT Sunday, September 17.**



You do not need to sign up; please just come and have your photo taken for the directory if you're among the few who have not already done so. We will be set up in the Gathering Area from 8:00 am - approx. 12:30 pm.

Thank you for your time and cooperation! If you have any questions, please email Communication Minister Christian Perritt (perritt@muhlenberglutheran.org) or Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org) or reach either of them at the church office (540-434-3496).



Since it's "Fall In" Weekend here at Muhlenberg, we ask you to wear a nametag today to help others learn your name. Supplies are in the Gathering Area.

TODAY'S WORSHIP INFORMATION

OFFERING

With Joy We Meet (J.W. Meyers)

POSTLUDE

*Fugue on the Magnificat Third Tone, No. 9
(J. Pachelbel)*

PREACHING MINISTER ~ Pastor Alex Zuber

PRESIDING MINISTER ~ Pastor Lauren Eanes

CRUCIFERS

8:30 ~ Gus Kagey

11:00 ~ Sue Koch

LAY ASSISTING MINISTERS

8:30 ~ Kim Fawley

11:00 ~ Philip Quoqui

LECTORS

8:30 ~ Pam Briehl

11:00 ~ Brad Moyers

SOUND TECHS

8:30 ~ Bill Wightman

11:00 ~ Mark Byerly

USHERS

8:30 ~ Karen Thomsen, Oris Griffin

11:00 ~ Sue Totty, Pam Bergey

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

8:30 ~ Mark & Pam Briehl, Gus Kagey

11:00 ~ Sue Koch, Brad Moyers, Greta Willis

MUSICIANS

Wade Meyers, Music Minister

Linlin Uta, Music Ministry Accompanist

Rachel Peters, Cantor (8:30)

Karen Barnes, Cantor (11:00)

Celebration Singers (8:30)

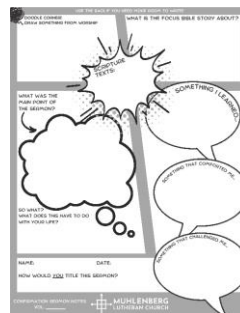
Sanctuary Choir (11:00)

SERMON AND WORSHIP NOTES

One element of the Confirmation process that is lifted up each year for our students is a responsibility to be immersed and engaged with worship weekly. This call to gather around word and sacraments is essential for all the baptized, and so we are delighted to equip not only our confirmands, but also all of our community with tools for engaging in deeper reflection on this time of weekly worship. On a table in the Gathering Area you will now find three different templates of Sermon and Worship Notes that all members are welcome to use. There are three styles:

Comic Style: *Bam! Pow!*

Thwip! Like a comic book, this is a page for jotting down quick thoughts, reflections, and even doodles as they help you reflect on what you heard during the sermon today! Short prompts are there to ask questions



that let you think about what happened in the stories and the sermon. Comic books use few words to share big ideas, so use this space well! *“With great power there must also come great responsibility”*

Journal Style: For those who like to write out thorough notes and use the written word to reflect, the journal style worship notes offer space for thoughtful reflection. Bring your previous knowledge and new revelations to this space, and consider how you will carry the heart of the gospel into your daily life. For those worshipping digitally or in another place while traveling you can complete this style of worship and sermon notes as a [Google Form](#)!

~ continued on page 7 ~



“Fall In” Weekend

Today! (9/10)

Worship at 8:30 & 11:00 am

In our Sunday morning worship, we'll fall in to a sermon series based on the Narrative Lectionary focused on the overall theme of identity. Who am I? Who are we? What happens when we have an identity crisis? And most importantly: Who is God in the midst of these struggles? When we feel like we're falling, or failing, or frenzied, God's Word will call us back to who we are and whose we are.

As we explore this theme together, you're invited to fall in to a rhythm of worship and learning on Sunday mornings, with new classes offered for all ages. Fall in to a new small group through our four-week “Why Groups” in October. Fall in to an activity that allows you to share your gifts, whether that's helping on a property work day, singing in the choir, volunteering at a service project, or joining any of the other opportunities happening this fall.

Faith Formation for All Ages, 9:45 – 10:45 am

See pages 4 & 5 for details about Faith Formation classes for all ages.

Roller Skating Fun at Funky's, 3:00 – 5:00 pm

Join us for a private roller skating party at Funky's! We'll have the rink all to ourselves 3:00 - 5:00 pm! Skate rentals are covered, and snacks and drinks will be provided. This is open to all families with kids from Pre-K to High School.



Faith Formation on Sundays

Fall In to Faith Formation on Sunday Mornings at 9:45 am!

Our main education time happens Sunday mornings from 9:45 - 10:45 am for all ages. Adult classes are offered with hybrid options for participants to join in-person or via [ZOOM](#). Zoom participants can log in with the “Sunday Mornings at Muhlenberg” link (available in our Friday email, on our homepage, and at muhlenberglutheran.org/Fall2023)

Pre-K to 5th Grade - Muhlenberg Activities Center (MAC) and Outside (*weather permitting*) - Led by Children’s Minister Ashley Saunders, kids will have an opportunity to grow together through the “Living the Word” curriculum, which follows the Narrative Lectionary. They will learn biblical stories, do activities to put the stories into action, and build strong relationships. Older students will help share the stories with younger students to cultivate a collaborative community.

Middle School Sunday School - Augsburg Room - 6th through 8th graders are encouraged to join each week for an in-depth Bible study together on the focus text of the Narrative Lectionary. This class is open to all middle schoolers, and will serve as the foundation of our Confirmation curriculum. Classes will afford our students the opportunity to learn more about important biblical figures, central stories in scripture, and learn with peers about applying the lessons to our daily life.

***NEW CLASS!* High School Sunday School - Campus Room** - 9th through 12th graders are encouraged to join together each week for fellowship, conversation, and learning among friends. You’ve been confirmed—now what? You have doubts—is that allowed? What does it mean to live out your faith publicly in the world? This class will be one that leaves “Room for Questions” as our youth find space, time, and community in which they can grow and learn together. We hope this class will be youth-led, guided by the questions on their hearts and rooted in a study of scripture together. We trust that together we’ll build a safe space for searching!

Confirmation - 1st Sundays, 6:00 – 8:00 pm - 6th through 8th graders are invited to participate in the journey of growth and discernment as they prepare to Affirm their Baptisms. At the conclusion of their 8th grade year, students will have the opportunity to share their faith statements and take on the covenant of baptism for themselves. In preparation for this moment, students will join together weekly for Sunday School, prepare individual reflections on Sunday worship, and serve the community together. Our Confirmation Curriculum is on a three-year rotation of topics including “the Small Catechism,” “Lutheran History/Theology,” and - the focus of this year - “The Bible.” While Biblical study is a part of the entire confirmation process, this year we’ll take a closer look at the stories of scripture on Sunday mornings, and then have monthly classes to learn broad themes and the history of the Bible with an eye toward Lutheran theology. This monthly class will happen the 1st Sunday each month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm with dinner provided. Confirmation students and their parents/guardians are expected to attend. **The monthly class is also open to anyone in the congregation who would like to learn alongside our confirmands**, and continue the lifelong journey of affirming their baptisms! If you are interested in being a part of the Confirmation class and/or helping to provide monthly meals, contact Pastor Alex.

Faith Formation on Sundays (cont'd)

Faith Lens Adult Class - Kairos Room - Join in lively conversation focused on the Bible text used in worship that day. Explore the background and context of biblical stories, and consider how they apply to our lives today. *Convener: Jean Helmick*

40-Day Journey Adult Class - Nielsen Room - Join a journey that deepens your spiritual life using excerpts from the work of author Madeleine L'Engle. Participants read a brief excerpt, respond to engaging questions, and join together in prayer. Order a copy of the book on our Fall 2023 webpage, or just drop in and check out the class! *Conveners: Mark and Jennie Warner*

***NEW CLASS!* Civic Life and Faith - September 10-October 15 – Pastor Lauren's Office** - The old adage says to never discuss “religion, politics, or sex,” but this class will invite you into conversation about two of the three! Disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the ages have had to figure out how to serve God within a political society, and we are no exception. This six-week class will follow the ELCA's study curriculum for a closer look at the intersections of our Civic and Faith lives. See the Newsletter for more information. *Convener: Karen Thomsen*

Lutheran Campus Ministry

Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) at Muhlenberg serves students attending James Madison University, Bridgewater College, Eastern Mennonite University, and Blue Ridge Community College. All are welcome to join us, even if you do not have a Lutheran background, as we strive to build a community where all people are seen, heard, and valued. LCM also strives to connect students with faculty and staff who are Muhlenberg members to form friendships and support that transcend the campus and classroom.



To start the semester, we plan to be “*The Club That Does Nothing*.” You heard that right, *nothing*! Your schedule as a college student is already over saturated, so take this time to just *be present, not busy*.

Sabbath is a commandment of our God, so doing nothing is sometimes faithful! We'll feed you, we'll talk, we'll pray, but other than that, there are no plans. Just join for a time of laid-back community that cares for each other. Join us each Wednesdays at 6:00 pm in the Campus Ministry Room to joyfully and faithfully do... nothing.

LCM members have access 24/7 to the Campus Room at Muhlenberg to gather, study, eat, and be our community center. For more information, follow us on Instagram and Facebook @LCMatMLC, or contact Pastor Alex Zuber (540-309-2414 or zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org).

Music

Choirs are open to all, even if you haven't participated in the past. If interested, contact Music Minister Wade Meyers for more information (meyers@muhlenberglutheran.org or 540-434-3496).

Adult Choirs (10th Grade and up)

Celebration Singers ~ Tuesdays, 6:30 – 7:30 pm

This ensemble revels in a mix of unison singing and harmonies, and diverse genres. Your love for singing is the only ticket in! Sings at most 8:30 am Sunday services.

Sanctuary Choir ~ Wednesdays, 6:30 – 7:30 pm

A tapestry of melodies, from the Renaissance era to the latest in choral music, awaits you. Prior choral experience is helpful but not mandatory. Sings at 11:00 Sunday services.

Children's Choirs

Cherub Choir ~ Sundays, November 12 – December 17, 12:15 – 12:45 pm

Catering to the spirited voices from ages 4 – grade 2. Guided by Rachel Peters, these cherubs will serenade the congregation on the second Sunday of Advent and the 4:00 pm Christmas Eve service. Practice sessions will unfold in the music room.

Youth Choir ~ Sundays, November 12 – December 17, 12:15 - 12:45 pm

For grades 3 – 9; under the guidance of Music Minister Wade Meyers, this choir is prepping for an enchanting performance on the second Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve. Join the melodies in the Sanctuary.

Handbell Choir

Gloria Dei Ringers ~ every Tuesday, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Under the expert hand of Handbell Director Kath Wissinger, the Sanctuary will resonate with the timeless tones of handbells about once per month.



For full details about all our fall events, activities, small groups, and classes, visit...

muhlenberglutheran.org/fall2023

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG (CONT'D)

SERMON AND WORSHIP NOTES (CONT'D)

Artistic Style: If a picture's worth a thousand words, you'll pack a whole lot of words into this reflection form! Freely draw your reflections on worship in the space provided. Consider the sermon, the Bible story, the music, or any other part of worship that resonated with you. Then share your art with someone after worship, and discuss why you chose to express your reflections today in this way! Art can be a powerful tool for offering reflection deeper than words can encompass, and now you'll have space to share that art as well.

We hope these note pages will be a useful tool for everyone reflecting on worship and what it means to you to be gathered around God's word. Confirmands can turn their notes in to the Confirmation mailbox in the Administrative Hallway or hand it to Pastor Alex on the way out of worship. If others in our community would like to share notes with the pastors, they'll be happy to keep a copy and return the original! Your thoughtful response to God's word is deeply appreciated.

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

MINISTRIES NIGHT

Monday (9/11), 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Join us tomorrow evening as we strengthen our ministries, plan new initiatives, and serve one another and the wider community! All are welcome in person, via [ZOOM](#) or by phone:

Meeting ID: 833 4118 0538

One tap mobile +13126266799,,83341180538#

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

Join Pastor Lauren **each Wednesday at 10:30 am** for Bible study via [ZOOM](#). This class dives deep into the upcoming Sunday's scripture text. Experience the sweep of God's salvation story over the course of the year by attending each week, or drop in occasionally as your schedule allows. No previous experience in Bible study necessary, just a desire to explore!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/200491556>

Or by phone ...DIAL IN – **301-715-8592** and enter Meeting ID / Passcode: **200491556#**

COMFORT MAKERS

THIS Thursday, September 14, 8:00 am

If you can tie a knot and want to help keep your neighbors warm, come join us **Thursdays in Wayland Hall**. We work 8:00 am-12:00 pm but welcome you any time during those hours. For more information, contact Linda Morrison (lindamm778@gmail.com or 540-383-5085).

CHURCH PICNIC

FALL INTO FOOD AND FUN!

NEXT Sunday, Sept. 17, 4:00 pm

Join us for Muhlenberg's annual church picnic **NEXT Sunday, September 17 at 4:00 pm!** Come to Purcell



Park, Shelter 2 (by the wooden play structure) for food, fellowship and fun. Hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks will be provided; we'll eat at 5:00. Bring a dish to share and a chair or blanket for seating, as well as any outdoor games you'd like to play. To spread the culinary wealth, we suggest if your last name begins with...

- **A-F**, please bring a salad;
- **G-N**, please bring a side dish;
- **O-Z**, please bring a dessert.

If you have a signature dish, feel free to bring it instead!

MUHLENBERG NEWS

THE SYNOD TREE

Last week, we were joined by Sister Phyllis Cox, an ELCA Deacon who is serving the Virginia Synod as the chair of the Tapestry Team and serves as the Faith Community Outreach Coordinator with Virginia Interfaith Power and Light. As part of Sister Phyllis's work related to Climate Justice and Faith, she led Muhlenberg in a Tree-Planting Litany to mark the conclusion of our Caring for Creation Series. We now join Pleasant View, Trinity Ecumenical Parish, Luther Memorial, Wheatland, Good Shepherd-Front Royal, and more congregations to come as communities who have planted trees through this effort.

The Synod Tree now stands proudly outside our gathering area as a reminder of our call to steward God's gifts in creation, and of our unity with our siblings in Christ all across the Virginia Synod. The tree planted is a Cherokee Princess Dogwood, not only the state tree of Virginia, but a species of dogwood indigenous to this area. May we tend to this tree with love, watch it grow along with our community, and remember our unity with all the saints of God.



NURSERY COORDINATOR POSITION SEARCH

We continue our search for our next Nursery Coordinator. With many new families in our community, it is a wonderful opportunity to care for our members and welcome all who enter our doors by having someone on hand each week to care for our youngest members. Our new Nursery Coordinator will support the congregation's mission by providing a faithful, safe, nurturing, clean and loving environment.

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](#). Please lift up our search in your prayers.

CREATION CARE

Many consumers have already been buying organic apples and oranges, hormone free milk, and free-range chickens. We have many other choices too. The more we shift our budget to organic and sustainably raised foods, the more choices we'll continue to have and the cheaper those choices will become.



PARKING COURTESY

From young families juggling little ones to older members and all those in between, there are many folks whose lives could be made a little easier or safer by parking closer to the church entrances. While we have a few designated handicapped parking spots, at times on Sunday morning those can be full. Let's be hospitable to each other and visitors who might simply be helped by a closer space. If you usually park closer, maybe take a spot a little further back so others who need it may have a safer spot. Thank you for your consideration.

MUHLENBERG NEWS (CONT'D)

NEW DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM



Knock, knock! Who's there? You are, and you're trying to get into the church! You may have noticed there's a new doorbell system on one of the Gathering Area doors. It's the first step in a new entry system to make our building more secure and easier for people coming to church during the week!

During the week: When you arrive at the church, come to the Gathering Area doors and press the doorbell (instructions are posted on the door). When the call is answered, please identify yourself, and the door will be unlocked remotely so you can enter. Please note that ***the office is staffed Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.*** If you arrive outside of those hours, there's still a good chance someone will be here, but please call before you come to be sure. Please do not use the red doors at the back of the building — for security reasons, these doors are now reserved for Day Care use only.

On Sundays: Our practice is to unlock only the Gathering Area doors for entry on Sunday mornings, allowing for greater security. **All doors can be used to exit the building.**

If you regularly enter the church (for example, if you are part of the Altar Guild and need access the building during off hours to set up) and/or if you currently have a key, we will be assigning PIN numbers to unlock the door via the keypad on the entry system. We plan to rekey all exterior doors at a later phase in the entry system project, so keep an eye on *The Chimes* for more information about how to get a PIN number and turn in your key. Thank you for your *undoorstanding* as we learn this new system!

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE NEWS

Have you always thought that gifts to endowment funds needed to be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars? The Muhlenberg Lutheran Church Endowment Committee would like you to remember that any gift compiled with others can grow funds that far exceed the individual donations. Muhlenberg's two endowment funds (The Mission Endowment Fund and the Seminary Scholarship Fund) have nearly doubled in size through sound, professional investments. A small amount doubled is no longer small. Please consider giving to this mission outreach resource during your lifetime through your regular designated offerings or designated memorials. Estate planning and insurance beneficiary assignments are ways to support this mission after you're gone. For more information, contact Endowment Committee Chair Doris Stone (dmstone99@gmail.com or 540-289-5520).



CONFIRMATION CORNER

Confirmation isn't just for middle schoolers! All the baptized who have been confirmed are called to grow in faith and affirm God's promises in their life. You can support the hard work of our middle school students by reflecting on these Confirmation Corner thoughts each week. Here's a confirmation prompt for this week:

Take a moment to reflect on Luther's explanation of the Lord's Prayer from The Small Catechism (ELW page 1163). How can this prayer guide your conversations with God, deepening your relationship through prayer?

CELEBRATION CORNER

To help share information from our social media with those who don't have access or may have missed it, we are including recent posts in The Chimes. Posts may come from Muhlenberg's [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) pages.

THANKS FOR COMING TO THE GREAT COMMUNITY PLAY DATE!

Special Thanks to Vicki Heitsch, Karen Thomsen, and Ashley Saunders for their work putting together The Great Community Play Date Saturday (8/26). This event brought together Muhlenbergers and our three school partners: Second Home, Harrisonburg/Rockingham Day Care, and Minnick School kids for games, fellowship, food and more! With your generosity, we are gifting these three organizations with much-needed play equipment and supplies.



TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent in-person and online viewership:

8/27	8:30 Holy Communion	72
	11:00 Holy Communion	103
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	28
	Total Views this Week	135
	Hours Viewed this Week	43.1
9/3	8:30 Holy Communion	68
	11:00 Holy Communion	101
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	32

NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

In June, gifts & offerings were consistent with last year and expenses trended slightly higher. As we enter into the second half of the fiscal year, I anticipate the deficit will widen unless there is an increase in gifts and offerings. With summer vacations, you may not be physically present, but remember to continue giving to Muhlenberg.

Sarah A. Sunde, Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through July 2023

	2023 YTD Actual	2023 YTD Budgeted	2022 YTD Actual
Gifts & Offerings	\$302,682	\$369,833	\$301,117
Total Income	\$430,553	\$448,453	\$377,964
Total Expenses	\$447,976	\$510,678	\$317,724
Excess Income/(Deficit)	\$(17,423)	\$(62,225)	\$60,240

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 17,680.06
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 1,160.00
Total Giving	\$ 18,840.06

To give online, scan here ➔



WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

September 11 - 17, 2023

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

Mon	1:00 pm	Weekly Staff Meeting
	6:00 pm	Executive Committee Mtg.
	7:00 pm	Ministries Night
Tues	6:30 pm	Celebration Singers Rehearsal
	7:00 pm	Gloria Dei Ringers
Wed	10:30 am	Bible Study via ZOOM
	6:30 pm	Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
Sun		Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
	8:30 am	Holy Communion in person
	9:45 am	Faith Formation in person
		& via ZOOM
	11:00 am	Holy Communion in person & Livestreamed via Facebook and YouTube
	4:00 pm	Church Picnic



Each week, we lift up five households from our congregation in prayer. Our prayer families for this week are the following:

*Jess, Bobby, Elizabeth, William, Daniel
and Asher Weimerskirch
Bill and Crystl Whitmire
Juanita Whitmire*

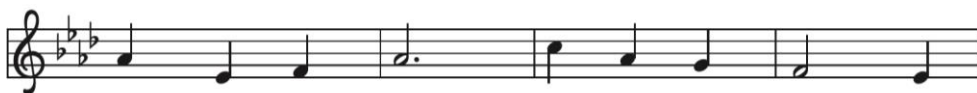
*Bill, Meg, Liam and Alice Wightman
Malcolm and Judy Wilfong*

Please note: if you notice an unintentional omission in our list or prefer your name not be listed, please contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (540-434-3496 or depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org).

The **weekly deadline** for routine articles for *The Chimes* is **Thursday at 8:00 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 /540-434-3496) Like us at [facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran).

SENDING HYMN

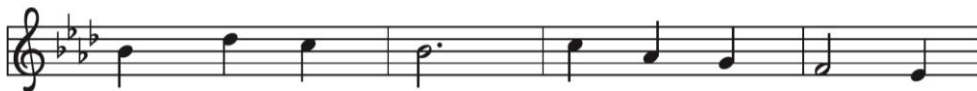
September 10 *God's Work, Our Hands*



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.
run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.
claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.
gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

*Return to The Blessing on page 13
of the worship booklet.*