



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

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September 12, 2021

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Fall 2021 at Muhlenberg begins TODAY (9/12). See pages 4-10 for details.

Dear Muhlenberg Family,
Where do we go from here? was the last question asked in our sermon series, *I've Been Meaning to Ask...* As we begin a new program year at Muhlenberg and the question lingers, *Where do we go from here?* I'm ready to answer that question with, *I'm glad you asked!*

As the new program year begins, you will see that some things will remain the same while new and exciting changes are also taking place. One thing that remains the same is that Muhlenberg is a lay-led congregation and each member is needed to help us meet our ministry goals. Two weeks ago we saw the excitement and commitment of members for our ministry teams at our first *Equipping the Saints Day*. If you didn't make it to that event, I encourage you to join in on Ministries night, tomorrow (9/13), 7:00 pm (see page 11 for details). All ministry teams welcome new members.

Christian Formation classes for all ages are also beginning, and we welcome your ideas for new classes to be established that might run on a short term or long term basis. See information

throughout this issue of *The Chimes* about class offerings.

Fellowship is going to be emphasized as we begin to gather back together but also as we renew efforts to reach out to those who may not be able to physically join us. Today we will enjoy fellowship between the 8:30 and 11:00 services. We will safely greet each other and enjoy refreshments. Those who are not able to join us physically will be connected through our new digital ministry. See more about our new Wellstream service opportunities (page 10).

Where do we go from here? I'm glad you asked. We will go where God leads us. As the Muhlenberg family, we will be the hands and feet of Christ, and we will go where we are called to serve our neighbor while caring for each other.

Where do we go from here? Let's come together and find out!

Your sister in Christ,

Karen Thomsen

Congregation Council President

NAME BADGES: It's been a while since we've seen each other, and masks make us harder to recognize. Please wear a name badge **today**. Supplies are at the Welcome Desk.



TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

WORSHIP LIVE-STREAMED AT 11 AM

Digital ministry is now 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 hybrid service of Holy Communion. This means cameras will be on during worship at 11:00, and we want to be sure our community knows what to expect. Cameras will be primarily focused on our worship leaders and offer some wide-angle views of the sanctuary. *We will not intentionally focus on congregation members in the pews*, but you may briefly appear in view depending on your seat. If you have questions or concerns about the possibility of appearing on camera, please contact Pastor Alex or Communication Minister Christian Perritt (perritt@muhlenberglutheran.org) for possible solutions. You're welcome at any time during worship in the sanctuary to connect on Facebook or YouTube to comment a word of welcome or peace to those worshipping online!

INSTALLATION OF ASHLEY SAUNDERS



Today we install Children's Minister Ashley Saunders at both services. Join us in welcoming Ashley to this role and keep her in prayer. We encourage you to reach out to her about ways you can get involved and support our Children's Ministry. She can be reached at 434-3496 or saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org.

*Finance News is now
located on the back cover*

REMEMBERING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11/2001

As our nation marks the 20th anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, we pause in worship today (9/12) for a litany of prayer and remembrance. We remember our neighbors who were lost and the lives that were forever changed all around the world over these last 20 years. We will pause for a moment of silent reflection as the bell is tolled three times in memory of those who died in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania.



DAY OF SERVICE TODAY (9/12)!

God's Work, Our Hands



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.

TODAY (9/12) is the last chance to place donations in the wooden bin in the Gathering Area. 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 School is a part of Lutheran Family Services of Virginia, now called *enCircle*. They so appreciate our continued care and support.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY IS BACK!

As we go into a new year of Sunday School some things will look the same, and some things are changing.

Sunday School is at 9:45 in the MAC for Pre-K through 5th grade.

This year we will be following the liturgical calendar connecting Sunday School to the message in the service. We will be taking a deeper dive into the scripture through storytelling, movement, and art.

We will have Covid protocols in place.

There will be temperature checks as the kids arrive, and all kids will need to be masked. We plan to do as much as we can outside but even outside, kids will be masked.

We need volunteers!

As we move ahead and more people return to church, we need volunteers in Christian Formation. Do you love Jesus? Have you thought about the joy of sharing Jesus with children and helping them grow in their faith? This is the season for you! For more information, email Ashley Saunders at saunders@muhlenberhlutheran.org.

What to expect in the Nursery

The nursery will be available at the 8:30 and 11:00 services. It is available for ages birth-3. The service will be streamed into the nursery and have a space for feeding parents. The children will have temperature checks before entering the nursery, and all attendants will be masked at all times. We will be providing opportunities for age appropriate holy play connecting that Sunday's scripture to the play opportunities provided each week.

See more Christian Formation information on page 8.

YOUTH MINISTRY IS BACK!

Calling all Middle and High School youth! We will meet **TODAY (9/12)** during the Christian Formation hour, 9:45-10:45. We will gather on the grass behind the Ott Street House for games, snacks, and a service project. Please bring a mask and a friend!

NEW NAME FOR ADULT CLASS

40-Day Journey has changed its name! Our class is now called *Devotional Classics*. Although we changed the name of our Sunday School Class, the essence of our class remains - growing our relationships with others and our personal relationship with Christ. We will study the book *Devotional Classics*. Each week we will read excerpts from the most influential Christian theological minds in history, from C.S. Lewis to Thomas Merton, from Henri Nouwen to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, from Martin Luther to Soren Kierkegaard. Wow! We will discuss, reflect, learn and grow spiritually together. Please feel free to join us, whether for a day, a month or a year. We welcome you and your unique perspectives and insights. Join us in the Nielsen Room or via Zoom:

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

Jennie and Mark Warner

FAITH LENS ADULT CLASS

Participants read the Narrative Lectionary text for the day and discuss how we can live out and apply its message to our lives. Led by Jean Helmick, this class meets in Wayland Hall or via Zoom using the link above.



Fall 2021 at Muhlenberg begins TODAY (9/12)!

While we certainly face challenges in the midst of these ever-changing times, we also have a great deal for which we can be thankful. I remain grateful for the opportunity to serve amongst this community that strives in so many ways to be a *Wellspring of God's Grace* through living out our values of being *Open + Authentic + Relational + Serving*. I hope that this Fall brochure will illuminate ways that you and your family can claim your gifts and connect with our various means of *equipping all people to live out Christ's love*.

I am excited for a fall season of community and connection, as we work to welcome new faces as well as reconnect with familiar ones. That joy, energy, and positivity found in connection was certainly felt by those who attended *Equipping the Saints Day*, and I look forward to more people feeling that sense through the fall. In this brochure, you'll find opportunities for worship (both in-person and digital), Christian Formation, music, fellowship, and service that will be happening this fall. Each of these is an opportunity to participate as fully as you and your family are able in worshipping our life-giving God and sharing God's abundant gifts with our community.

In this season, if you are feeling disconnected, please reach out to me. Let's talk about the ways that we can be there for one another and truly be community. I am grateful for Pastor Daniel Hess bringing his gifts and passion to Muhlenberg this fall through his Pastoral Support role. Please continue to keep Pastor Lauren in your prayers as she recovers on her extended medical leave. We look forward to welcoming her back as she's ready, and I'm excited for her to see the ways the Holy Spirit is moving through this community when she returns.

I'm looking forward to seeing you, hearing from you, and following God's call together. I pray that wherever you're worshipping from this fall—from the sanctuary, the parking lot, or the couch—you may feel the joyful presence of our generous and compassionate God, and respond with your own joy, generosity, and compassion for all we meet.

In Christ,

Pastor Alex Zuber, Associate Pastor

Gathering Together Task Force Update

First, we would like to express our gratitude for the over 150 responses gathered in our Fall survey of the congregation. Thank you for taking the time to share your insights and perspectives as we strive to ensure the health and safety of our congregation in this challenging time. The results of this survey showed a congregation that has a wide variety of views and comfort levels regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and our best path forward. However, this survey also showed a congregation deeply committed to caring for one another. We are pleased to know that 97% of those who responded are **fully vaccinated**, and we hope you'll continue to encourage your friends and neighbors to get vaccinated ASAP.

Our mandate remains the same that it's been from the beginning of the pandemic: providing guidelines that promote the health and safety of all members of the congregation. Our worship this fall will include a number of measures designed to help us live up to that standard of safety: masks, distancing, choir-only singing, some outdoor worship, and other methods that we hope are only temporary. Some of these steps may feel like an inconvenience, but we know they won't last forever. As the Apostle Paul says, *"So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith."* (Galatians 6:9-10) Even with these steps, some members will remain online, enjoying our upgraded Wellstream worship services streamed live from the Sanctuary. We affirm their decision, as we must all do what we can to find that healthy balance between staying safe and staying connected.

Lastly, as we make plans and move boldly into this new season, it is worth noting that all of this is subject to change as we keep an eye on local conditions. We will be watching local COVID-19 numbers and heeding the advice of public health officials as we move into this fall, but we trust the science behind these vaccines that so many of our congregation have taken, and the efficacy of masks with physical distancing. We hope that, with all of these safety measures in place, the opportunity will be afforded for our community to worship in whatever way is best for you and your family. Please contact any member of the Gathering Together Task Force if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for all you are doing to allow us to safely *equip all people to live out Christ's love*.

The Gathering Together Task Force:

Erin Burke, Cynthia Page, Kevin Stees, Crystl Whitmire, Greta Willis, Pastor Alex Zuber



SUNDAY

MORNINGS

8:30am - Worship in the Sanctuary with Holy Communion

9:45am - Christian Formation Hour

11:00am - Worship in the Sanctuary with Holy Communion

(Live Streamed on Facebook & YouTube)

Sunday Morning Worship

Worship times will be 8:30 am and 11:00 am in the Sanctuary. These worship times recommended by Congregation Council were found to be favorable by the congregation, with some noting a need to change their Sunday morning pattern. *Physical distancing will be in place in the sanctuary with every other row in use.* These services will be full liturgies with Holy Communion and music. **Music will be sung by the choir only.** At this time, we will not resume congregational singing of hymns and liturgy. A majority of respondents to our fall survey were in favor of allowing the choir to lead music without the congregation's participation as the act of singing moves more air than speaking, which makes singing more dangerous. Our choir members will be masked as well, and all musicians will provide proof of vaccination before rehearsing.

Worship will be live-streamed at 11:00 am. Many wish to remain online for their health and safety, and we affirm this choice. Digital ministry isn't going anywhere and our Wellstream service at 11:00 am will allow those at home to worship alongside our gathered community for a service of Holy Communion. (see page 9 for info on our Wellstream upgrade!) When worshipping at home, you are welcome to receive Holy Communion. We invite you to have bread and wine/grape juice ready before the service. However, as we believe within the Lutheran tradition that "Holy Communion takes place in the assembly," and specifically that "the gathered people of God celebrate the sacrament," we ask that you only partake of the sacrament if you are worshipping with us LIVE at 11:00 am. While the services will be available on playback through our Facebook Page and YouTube Channel, we ask that you only commune with the gathered assembly at 11:00 am and not later during the week.



Sunday Morning Worship (continued)

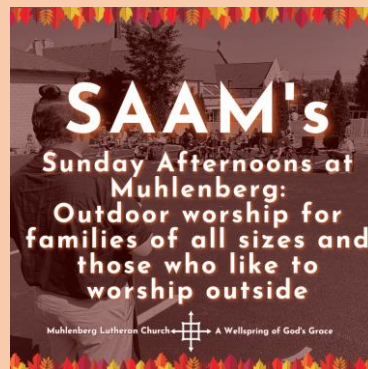


Well-fitted masks will be required for all in-person worshippers, regardless of vaccination status. While the CDC lifted the mask mandate for fully vaccinated individuals, many health officials are revising that position in light of the high transmissibility of the Delta variant. Masks are a way we protect those around us, and we will continue this practice of care. This practice will be especially important as we wish to create a worship space that is as safe as it can be for those under 12 who cannot be vaccinated yet.

Communion will still be offered in its current prepackaged form. Over the summer, we have been using a prepackaged container with both bread and wine during our indoor and outdoor services. While this practice of using prepackaged elements and receiving the eucharist in our seats may feel unfamiliar, it is safer at the moment than the processional process. Additionally, without the processional of the assembly, this will reduce the worship time, which will be beneficial to our community's safety.

SAAM's: Sunday Afternoons at Muhlenberg

Afternoon outdoor services will be offered twice a month. Even with all the practices outlined above, some families, especially those with children under 12, may not feel comfortable worshipping indoors yet. We also recognize that, throughout the summer, some folks have realized they really like worshipping outdoors and would enjoy continuing that this fall. With that in mind, **we will offer outdoor services at 1:30 pm** twice a month in a format similar to our Summer 10:00 am service. Some of these services will have a special focus, like a Blessing of the Animals, but these will be services with Holy Communion and the added safety of gathering outdoors. In order to best steward the time and resources of our congregation, it is not possible to offer this service weekly on Sunday mornings, but we hope this service will be a meaningful addition to your family's worship plans.



SAAM Worship Schedule, 1:30 pm:

September 19

October 3, *Blessing of the Animals*

October 17

November 7

November 21

Christian Formation

In line with our Strategic Plan, a dedicated Christian Formation hour has been established so that our call to growth and learning is no longer competing with worship. From **9:45-10:45 am**, join us for classes open to all ages. Adult classes will be offered with hybrid options for participants to join both in-person and via Zoom. In-person participants will have plenty of room to space out with physical distancing. Zoom participants can log in with the *Sunday Mornings at Muhlenberg* link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84731416878>

Pre-K to 5th Grade: *MAC Main Room and Outside (weather permitting)*

Led by Children's Minister Ashley Saunders, kids will have an opportunity to grow together through *Holy Play*: learning biblical stories, doing activities to put the stories into action, and building strong relationships. Older students will have the opportunity to help share the stories with younger students to cultivate a collaborative community.

Devotional Classics (formerly 40-Day Journey) Adult Class: *Nielsen Room*

An interactive class for adults of all ages, where participants read and discuss Christian literature. Facilitators: Mark and Jennie Warner

Faith Lens Adult Class: *Wayland Hall*

Participants read the Narrative Lectionary text for the day and discuss how we can live out and apply its message to our lives. Facilitator: Jean Helmick

BEYOND SUNDAY MORNING

6th - 8th Grade Youth Group and Bible Study (Confirmation)

Led by Karen Thomsen and Pastor Alex, our confirmands will grow together in their understanding of scripture, the Lutheran tradition, and what it means to live out our faith. A schedule will be created in consultation with students and their families. Watch *The Chimes* for more information.

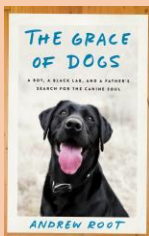
High School Youth Group and Bible Study

We are organizing leaders and reaching out to high school students to set a schedule and listen to needs for gathering to learn, grow, and care for each other. We'll share more information about this in *The Chimes* soon!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study: 10:30 - 11:30 am

Based on the Narrative Lectionary, this class gathers each week to look ahead to Sunday's lessons and dive deeper into God's word. Led by Pastor Daniel Hess, this group will meet via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/200491556>

Christian Formation (continued)



Pastors' Book Club: Wednesdays, 6:30 pm

Gather monthly to discuss a book with the Pastors. This will tentatively be offered only by Zoom, but this will be assessed closer to the first date.

October 6 *The Grace of Dogs* by Andrew Root
October 27 TBD
November 17 TBD

Music

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

Adult Choirs

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

All choir members must be fully vaccinated.

Sanctuary Choir ~ Wednesdays, 7:15 – 8:15 pm starting September 8

All choir members must be fully vaccinated.

Children's Choirs

Cherub Choir ~ Tuesdays, 5:30 – 6:00 pm

For ages 4 – grade 3; led by Cherub Choir Director Rachel Peters (repeters@gmail.com or 570-975-5457). Pending Covid pandemic restrictions/ guidelines, rehearsals will begin in October and will be either in person or through Zoom.

Tweens and Teens ~ Sundays, 12:15-12:45 pm

For grades 6 – 8; led by Music Minister Elizabeth Williams. Pending Covid restrictions/ guidelines, rehearsals will begin in October with the possibility of meeting in person.

Handbell Choir

Gloria Dei Ringers ~ Tuesdays, 7:00-8:30 pm beginning September 7

Rehearsals will be in person and in the sanctuary. All members must be fully vaccinated to participate. Led by Handbell Director Kath Wissinger.



Wellstream Digital Worship

Thanks to the 2021 disbursements of the Mission Endowment Fund, “Phase 2” of our Wellstream initiative is here! Our live-streaming system has been installed, and will enable us to stream full worship services, live from the Sanctuary, **starting TODAY (9/12)**. This is a significant development in equipping Muhlenberg to reach our faith communities where they are - online or in person - so that we are bringing God’s story to as many as possible. In 2020, we learned that online services were not just good “alternatives” to in-person worship - 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 that are mounted inconspicuously throughout the sanctuary; along with a switcher, dedicated laptop, and all necessary equipment to 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 an 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 and YouTube. And, each live-stream will be automatically recorded. Our next steps include recruiting and training a team of operators, so that this process is sustainable. We look forward to this exciting new chapter in the life of our congregation!

Connect Online

Website ~ www.muhlenberglutheran.org Facebook ~ www.facebook.com/MuhlenbergLutheran

YouTube ~ <https://www.youtube.com/MuhlenbergLutheranChurch>

Via Email *visit our website for a complete list*

Pastor Lauren Eanes ~ eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org

Pastor Alex Zuber ~ zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org

Elizabeth Williams~ williams@muhlenberglutheran.org

Christian Perritt ~perritt@muhlenberglutheran.org

Ashley Saunders~ saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org

Linda Depoy ~ depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org

Crystl Whitmire ~ whitmire@muhlenberglutheran.org

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

MINISTRIES NIGHT

Monday (9/13), 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Join us via [ZOOM](#) tomorrow evening – all are welcome! You may also join us by phone:

Meeting ID: 833 4118 0538

One tap mobile +13126266799,,83341180538#

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

Join us **each Wednesday at 10:30 am** for Bible study. Based on the Narrative Lectionary, this class gathers each week to look ahead to Sunday's primary lesson and dive deeper into the full narrative of scripture. If you are unable to attend one week, video recordings of this Bible Study are available by request. Led by Pastor Daniel Hess, this group will meet via Zoom:

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

COMFORT MAKERS

Calling All Former/New Comfort Makers



If you can tie a knot, want to help keep your neighbors warm, and have an hour or 3 to spare for others, come join us **Thursdays** in

Wayland Hall (downstairs in the church). We work from about 8:00 – 12 noon, but we welcome you for any time during those hours. If you haven't tried it, come by and see what we're all about. All are welcome! For more information, contact Linda Morrison (glenm778@comcast.net or 540-383-5085).

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BACK TO PASTORS' BOOK CLUB

Pastors' Book Club (PBC) will return this fall with an opportunity to curl up on the couch with your favorite pup and read [The Grace of Dogs](#) by Andrew Root! With his family gathered in the vet's office to grieve losing their beloved black lab, systematic theologian and seminary professor Andrew Root witnessed a moment that was simply "sacramental" between his son and his dog. This led to asking "why did my son's sacramental act feel so...right?" *The Grace of Dogs* is the result of this impassioned search!

Join us for conversation **Wednesday, October 6, 6:30 pm**. Contact Pastor Alex (zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org) if you need help ordering this book, or order the book [online](#). This conversation will tentatively be offered only by Zoom, but a hybrid in-person/digital gathering will be assessed closer



to the date. (pictured: Pr. Alex & his dog Arya)

The next PBC dates will be October 27 and November 17 with the books to be determined.

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*Devotional booklets for
October-December are
available at the Connection Center
and the Connection Box*

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MUHLENBERG NEWS

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NEEDED



As fall begins, we are in need of worship servants: lectors, ushers, acolytes, greeters, communion assistants/stewards, etc.

Sign up in the notebook at the Connection Center for September by **NEXT Sunday, September 19**. Signing up really helps the schedulers avoid time calling/emailing. One-on-one training can be arranged – just indicate the training needed on the sign-up sheet or *contact Kathy Thompson* (578-4830 or thompskb@jmu.edu). If you prefer to sign up online, follow the path below from our website:

Worship + Sermons > Serve in Worship

Prefer to work behind the scenes? We have many opportunities – talk with Kathy to learn how you can serve.

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).

“Creation justice” may be a new term for some, but it is a concept deeply grounded in Christian theology and practice. It captures both the depth of our interconnectedness with everything and the necessity to partner with God in the healing and restoration of all -- God's Shalom. Using the term “creation” (instead of “eco,” “nature” or “environment”) demonstrates that we are intimately part of the created order, and constantly working alongside our Creator to redeem and sustain it. When we say Creation, we mean *all* Creation - justice for God's people and God's planet. Seeing the world as Creation is a radical act that counters modern notions of nature as either a resource to be exploited or as something entirely separate from humanity.



LOCAL & GLOBAL MISSION

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

The headlines are filled with the devastation from Hurricane Ida, which made landfall near New Orleans August 30, exactly 16 years after Hurricane Katrina. As a strong Category 4 storm, Hurricane Ida's 150 mph winds, torrential rain and strong storm surge caused widespread flooding and wind damage in southeastern Louisiana and coastal Mississippi.

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, LDR stays to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

100% of your gifts given to LDR go directly to aid in disaster relief. Visit the Connection Center for more information. Here are ways you can give:

- **Online:** www.elca.org.
- **Phone:** 800-638-3522 (Monday-Friday, 8:00-5:00 Central Time).
- **Mail:** make checks payable to Lutheran Disaster Response, designate **Hurricane Ida** and send to ELCA, PO Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.
- **Offering plate:** make check payable to Muhlenberg and designate *Lutheran Disaster Response* on your check and envelope.
- **Via Thrivent:** Thrivent Financial members can direct their Choice Dollars to Disaster Relief and/or make a personal donation that will be matched by Thrivent. Visit thrivent.com Disaster Response for details.

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.

Krisztina Szekely, Executive Director

ABUNDANCE TASK FORCE

WHY I GIVE ~ *Conversations about giving and abundance*

As part of our Abundance Task Force's efforts to share the story why members give to the ministries of Muhlenberg, Congregation Council President Karen Thomsen sat down for some conversations with Muhlenberg members about giving their time, talents, and treasure to help live out Muhlenberg's mission. Here's an abbreviated recap of Karen's conversation with long-time members and volunteers, Malcolm and Judy Wilfong.



Karen: You have a long history with Muhlenberg - what brought you here?

Malcolm: Mom and dad brought me - I became a member in 1957. When Judy and I got married, it was a natural transition for her to join...

Judy: ...the truth is - he said, if we're going to get married, I had to join the Lutheran church! Coming from a Mennonite / Brethren background, it was very different. I remember learning about grace, and how it's for everyone - I hadn't been taught that. I learned to love the liturgy, the music - I'm definitely Lutheran now. We were married here, all 3 kids were baptized here, and we renewed our vows here.

Karen: Quite a bit of history! So, why do you give to Muhlenberg?

Malcolm: Starting off, we weren't able to tithe as much as we wanted, working public service jobs with 3 children. But now, we can give what we want, and we do it because we can see the good things that happen - the growth of the membership, the church building and activity center, and the outreach of the church. My parents were good models for giving, but wrote out their checks every Saturday. We didn't want to do that, so are big proponents of Simply Giving.

Judy: Simply Giving is like when taxes are taken out of your paycheck - you really don't miss that money, because you never had it. With Simply Giving, the money goes to the church first - so you feel good your obligations are met while never missing that money.

Karen: I really like Simply Giving, too! What are other ways you give to Muhlenberg?

Malcolm: We've both sung in the choir, been involved with church leadership, Judy's taught Sunday School, I've been involved in Property Committee and build projects - those are fun.

Judy: I've enjoyed teaching children and adults in Sunday School for many years. I also led women's retreats for about 10 years, and do Biblical Storytelling. And we do a lot of service in our community as well.

Karen: You two are the perfect examples of being the hands and feet of Christ - you feel His love and put it into action in the church and community. We need to be a lay member led church, and you're great examples!

Judy: Thank you. I think when the pandemic closed the doors, it became almost comfortable to stop participating - so we need to put a fire under people again!

Karen: Yes, I agree. And thank you so much for talking today!

MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND

For details, contact Chair Doris Stone
(dmstone99@gmail.com or 540-289-5520).

EARNINGS/MORE INFORMATION

We give thanks to God that earnings from our Mission Endowment Fund provided funds for expanding our Wellstream Digital ministry. With these funds, we have been able to purchase a new streaming system including digital cameras, mixer, laptop, and all the necessary equipment to broadcast an online live-stream video of our 11:00 am service. In addition, earnings from our Fund paid for consultation fees, installation costs, and future audio upgrades. *See page 10 for details.*

All gifts to the Mission Endowment Fund are preserved in perpetuity. The fund is held in an investment account, and only the earnings are used to expand the ministry of the church both locally and globally.

Please pick up a *Muhlenberg Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund* brochure at the Connection Center in the Gathering Area for more information, including ways you can make an endowment gift.

Members of the Endowment Committee are Doris Stone, Chair; Lesa Calleo, Secretary; Tassie Pippert; Wylie Walton; and Pete Weaver.

*For the Lord is good, his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.
Psalm 100:5*



ALTAR FLOWERS

RESERVING ALTAR FLOWERS

Beginning today (9/12), 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 the notebook at the Connection Center or click [HERE](#) to sign up electronically.

REMINDER

PRAYER CARDS



You can find prayer request cards in the back inside cover of the worship book in your pew or at the Welcome Desk in the Gathering Area.

On the form, you will see that one option is to share the prayer request with the “prayer chain.” Our prayer chain is an email group that receives and covenants to pray for these requests, as well as holding them confidential. To receive these emails (average of 3 per week), email Linda Depoy (depoy@muhlenberg.lutheran.org) with your request.

FINANCIAL NEWS

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

8/29	8:30 Communion (in person-24 + Zoom-9)	33
	10:00 Outside/Communion	61
	11:00 Total Live Views	50
	Total Views this Week	250
	Hours Viewed this Week	64.2
9/5	8:30 Communion (in person-23 + Zoom-8)	31
	10:00 Outside/Communion	n/a
	11:00 Total Live Views	48

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/	(\$69,779)	(\$39,199)	(\$18,796)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 11,353.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ <u>9,798.00</u>
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 21,151.00



To give online, scan here →

Muhlenberg has not suspended its ministry through this unprecedented time. In fact, in some ways our outreach and ministry have been strengthened and enhanced. Regardless of the worship opportunities you choose, we ask you to continue your financial contributions. We also want to continue to support the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. You can make a one-time or recurring donation through our [website](#), place your offering in the basket on Sunday morning, or mail your check to the church: 281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg 22801.

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

September 13 - 19

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

- Mon. 2:00 pm** Staff Meeting
- 5:30 pm** Executive Committee
- 7:00 pm** Ministries Night via [ZOOM](#)
-
- Tues. 6:30 pm** Celebration Singers
- 7:00 pm** Gloria Dei Ringers
-
- Wed 10:30 am** Wed. Morning Bible Study via [ZOOM](#)
- 7:15 pm** Sanctuary Choir
-
- Thur 8:00 am** Comfort Makers
-
- Sun. Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**
- 8:30 am** Holy Communion in person
- 9:45 am** Christian Formation
- 11:00 am** Holy Communion in person and Livestreamed via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)

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@muhlenberg.lutheran.org/434-3496

Like us at facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran.

We give thanks to *The Wishing Well* for gifting today's beautiful arrangement in the Gathering Area.

