



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 19, 2021

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

WHAT WE LEARNED LAST SUNDAY

We knew going into this fall season we'd be trying new things, learning a lot, and making adjustments as we go. Here are some of the major takeaways and adjustments from our first week of fall worship:

Our First Fully Live-streamed/In-Person Service was a Success! We are so grateful for the hard work that went into bringing all of the pieces together for successful digital worship, and we are always working to improve. This week, our Communications Team made adjustments to our audio process in an attempt to bring about even clearer sound online without sacrificing our audio in-person. Also, we've diagnosed and corrected an error that occurred last week in our web service that resulted in YouTube missing the first few minutes of worship. Additionally, we've created "Live Events" on both platforms so that you can find and share the services easier.

Keeping Our Eyes on the Cross: We noted last week there would be some differences in the traditional rubrics for sitting and standing during worship, and this week we're making some changes. While the choir sings the gathering and sending hymns, *we will stand*

and face the cross for the processional and recessional. This important liturgical act reminds us that we orient our lives around the transformative love of Christ found in the cross, and calls us to seek Christ crucified in our world today so that we may respond to need with compassion and grace.

Hybrid Adult Sunday School: Something we recognized as a new and important challenge was maintaining digital connections with our Christian Formation community both in-person and online. We are offering a Zoom option for our Adult Sunday School classes, but we want to make sure the space we use is conducive to faithful conversation. In order to avoid conflict with choir practice, Sunday School classes will move to the following locations: *Devotional Classics* in Nielsen Room; *Faith Lens* in the Kairos Room.

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!

JOIN US TODAY AT 1:30 PM FOR SAAM

Even with all the safety practices in effect for Sunday morning worship, some families (especially those with children under 12) may not feel comfortable worshipping indoors yet. Additionally, some folks realized throughout the summer they really like worshipping outdoors and would enjoy continuing that this fall. So if this applies to you, join us for **Sunday Afternoons at Muhlenberg (SAAM)**! This fall, we will offer an outdoor service at **1:30 pm** in the Ott Street parking lot (behind the MAC) on the first and third Sundays. The format will be similar to our summer 10:00 am spoken word worship with communion and special music.

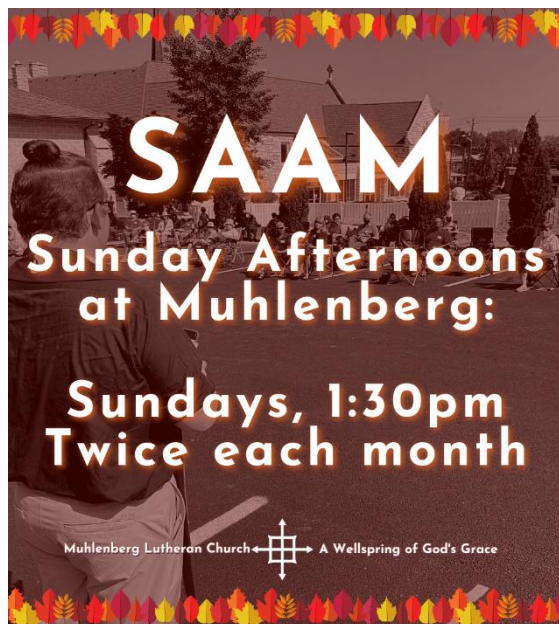
Bring your own chairs, please! If you do not have portable chairs, folding chairs will be available in the Gathering Area.

We will also use the grassy area behind the Ott Street House for seating. You may choose to bring a blanket and sit on the ground.

This service will be completely outside with a portable sound system amplifying the service.

When you arrive, please check in at the Welcome Tent where you will receive your bulletin and communion elements, then proceed to the seating area. Place your chairs or blankets wherever you'd like in the seating areas, being mindful of physical distancing. You're welcome to bring food, drinks, and canopies/umbrellas for shade!

THIS SERVICE IS WEATHER PERMITTING. If weather does not allow us to gather, an email will be sent Sunday by noon, and a notice will be put on our website.



CHRISTIAN FORMATION

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 meet during the Christian Formation hour, **9:45 - 10:45**. We will gather behind the Ott Street House for games, Bible study, 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 the **Kairos Room** or via Zoom using the link above.



Fall 2021 at Muhlenberg!

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 10 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 for playback through our Facebook Page and YouTube Channel, we ask that you commune with the gathered assembly only when participating live at the 11:00 am service, and not later during the week.



Sunday Morning Worship (continued)

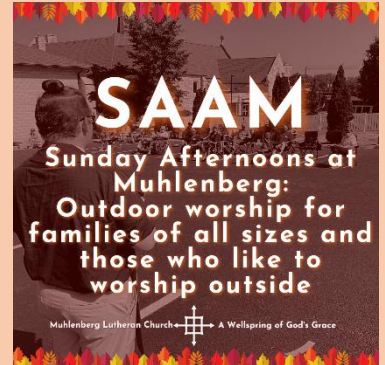


Well-fitted masks will be required for all in-person worshippers, regardless of vaccination status. While the CDC lifted the mask mandate for fully vaccinated individuals, many health officials are revising that position in light of the high transmissibility of the Delta variant. Masks are a way we protect 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: 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: *Kairos Room*

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.

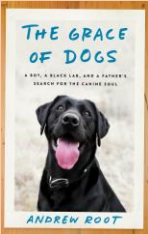
High School Youth Group and Bible Study

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, [Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God](#),
by Kaitlin B. Curtice

November 17, [Baptized in Tear Gas](#), by Elle Dowd

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

All choir members must be fully vaccinated.

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

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 (rgpeters@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. 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

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).

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

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION FAMILY MEETING

Students in grades 6 - 8 and their families are invited to join us **Sunday, October 3, 12:00 noon** for a conversation about Confirmation this year. We'll discuss plans regarding our gatherings for learning and service this fall, and we'll participate in a service project together. Contact Pastor Alex or Karen Thomsen with any questions:

Pastor Alex - zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org

Karen - kethomsen25@gmail.com

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

At our next SAAM, **October 3, 1:30 pm**, we will have a Blessing of the Animals Service! This service is traditionally held on a day near the church's commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi.



Pets and service animals are welcome, leashed or properly restrained for the safety of your pet and others. We will gather for worship behind the MAC for a service of Holy Communion and blessing of each pet. Don't have a pet? You're still welcome to join us! Have a pet but they cannot attend? Bring a picture and join us anyway! Have a special stuffed animal that has become "real" through love and devotion? Bring them, too. Invite a friend – all are welcome!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR (CONT'D)

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!

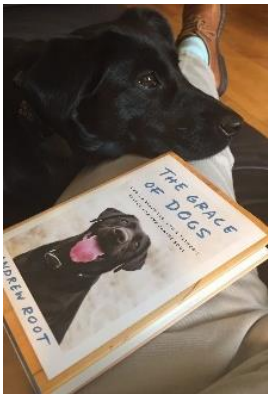
Join us for conversation **Wednesday, October 6, 6:30 pm**. Contact Pastor Alex (zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org) if you need help ordering this book, or order the book [online](#). This conversation will tentatively be offered only by Zoom, but a hybrid in-person/digital gathering will be assessed closer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

(pictured: below is Pastor. Alex & his dog Arya)

Here's information about the next PBC dates:

October 27, [Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God](#), by Kaitlin B. Curtice

November 17, [Baptized in Tear Gas](#), by Elle Dowd



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 — **deadline today (9/19)**. 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).

A psalm is an ancient poem-prayer. During a moment of profound threat, such as Hurricane Ida landing in Louisiana, Psalm 85 speaks to this immediate situation and likewise to the long-term global tragedy of which Ida is yet another piece of unwelcome evidence. Our land, God's earth is in desperate need of God's restorative work. God's word of shalom is not "peace" in any simple sense, but rather a comprehensive condition of wellbeing — one that binds together people, land, and God in a covenanted unity. Many psalms appeal to our visual imagination, but none offers a more vivid picture than Psalm 85. Covenant-loyalty, truth, righteousness, and *shalom* are here embodied attributes – divine *and* human, heavenly and earthly – all actively engaged in the work of restorative living.

RESERVING ALTAR FLOWERS

We are once again offering 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. **Note: Sign-ups close for the upcoming week on Sundays.**

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.

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.

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 depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org). Submissions will be printed with consideration for space and appropriateness at the discretion of the pastors and editor.

✚ We ask for prayers for the family of Gus Alvez Kagey whose father, Walter Alvez, died at the age of 87 in his home in Uruguay after a seven-year battle with prostate cancer. We pray for peace and comfort for Gus and Roger Kagey, and all of the Alvez family who grieve his loss from home and afar.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

People Helping People has an outdoor waiting space for clients on the covered porch of the Ott Street house. If you have patio or porch furniture you no longer need or want, please contact Director Leanne Shepherd (540-433-7286 or peoplehelpingpeopledirector@gmail.com).



REMINDERS

CONTACT INFORMATION

With our ever-changing lifestyles, it's sometimes difficult to be sure everyone has your correct contact information. Have you recently ...



- **moved?**
- **cancelled your home phone?**
- **changed your cell phone number?**
- **changed your home/work email address?**

If so, please be sure we have your updated information by contacting Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496).

PARKING COURTESY

From young families juggling little ones to older members to others 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 that others may have a safe spot for them. Thank you for your consideration.

FINANCIAL NEWS

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

9/5	8:30 Communion (in person-23 + Zoom-8).....	31
	10:00 Outside/Communion	42
	11:00 Total Live Views	48
	Total Views this Week	224
	Hours Viewed this Week	58.2
9/12	8:30 Holy Communion.....	66
	11:00 Holy Communion	61
	11:00 Wellstream Worshipers.....	56

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	\$ 12,541.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 835.00
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 13,376.00

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 20 - 27

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

- Mon. 2:00 pm** Staff Meeting
- 6:30 pm** Congregation Council Mtg.
- Tues. 6:30 pm** Celebration Singers
- 7:00 pm** Gloria Dei Ringers
- Wed 10:30 am** Wed. Morning Bible Study
via [ZOOM](#)
- 6:30 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](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran).