



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

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

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

November 26, 2023

REIGN OF CHRIST

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS

At our November 19th Congregational Meeting the voting members of the congregation:

1. Elected the 4 nominated Congregation Council members, Cathy Copeland (2nd 3-year term), Jacob Dunlap, Sarah Orem, and Kristee Trumbo. They will join Karen Thomsen, Russell Presnell, Rachel Peters, Gus Kagey, Brad Moyers, Meg Wightman, Pastor Lauren Eanes and Pastor Alex Zuber, as well as non-voting member Sarah Sunde, Treasurer, beginning in January.
2. Elected the nominated Trustee, Diane Walton (2nd 5-year term).
3. Voted to approve the 2024 Ministry Spending Plan proposed by the Congregation Council.
4. Voted to approve the Constitutional Amendments proposed by the Congregation Council. (note: a second vote to ratify the amended Constitution will be held at our next congregational meeting on January 28).

Interested in becoming more involved in the life of this body? Speak with anyone on council, and we'll help you plug in.

Peace be with you all,

Meg Wightman

Congregation Council President

mlccouncilpres@gmail.com

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

REIGN OF CHRIST

Hoping to celebrate the lordship of Christ in a world of increasingly secular and non-Christian empires, Pope Pius XI inaugurated a Sunday dedicated to Christ as King in 1925. Originally Roman Catholics celebrated the Reign of Christ (also called Christ the King) on the last Sunday in October, to precede the feast of All Saints, but also to counter the Protestant celebration of the Reformation. When the Roman Catholics proposed the three-year lectionary after the Second Vatican Council, Reign of Christ was moved to the final Sunday of the liturgical year. Today's Narrative Lectionary lesson shows us the limits of human kingship in light of the Reign of Christ. The story of King Josiah is a cautionary tale about what happens when a people stray too far from God's commandments for too long.

TODAY'S WORSHIP INFO

OFFERING

Andante Simplicie

(by Joel Collier, for Tuba and Piano)

PREACHING MINISTER ~ Pastor Alex Zuber

PRESIDING MINISTER ~ Pastor Lauren Eanes

CRUCIFERS

8:30 ~ Jim Doyle

11:00 ~ Cheryl Hoak

TORCH BEARERS

8:30 ~ Bill Whitmire, Kathy Thompson

11:00 ~ Sue Koch, Linda Alley

LECTORS

8:30 ~ Pam Briehl

11:00 ~ Brett Tjaden

LAY ASSISTING MINISTERS

8:30 ~ Kim Fawley

11:00 ~ Lori Reich

SOUND TECHS

8:30 ~ Bill Wightman

11:00 ~ Bazil Gibson

USHERS

8:30 ~ Roger & Gus Kagey

11:00 ~ Jeff Williams, John Mulder

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

8:30 ~ Pam Briehl, Jim Doyle, Bill Whitmire,
Kathy Thompson

11:00 ~ Brett Tjaden, Cheryl Hoak, Sue Koch,
Robert Alley

MUSICIANS

Linlin Uta, Interim Music Minister

Judith Ofcarcik, Organist

Kevin Stees, Tubist

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG (CONT'D)

BAPTIZED, NEW CHILDREN OF GOD

We welcome children of **Jeremy and Lauren Fuller** into the Body of Christ and the Muhlenberg family during the 11:00 am service: **Tucker Orin Fuller, Rowan Thomas Fuller, and Oliver Russell Fuller.**

Welcome to the Lord's family, Tucker, Rowan and Oliver!

FAITH FORMATION CLASSES

Pre-K – 5th Grade meet in the Muhlenberg Activities Center [MAC] (behind the church)

These classes meet downstairs in the church:

Grades 6 - 8 ~ *Augsburg Room*

HS and Adult Classes will not meet today (11/26).

There will be no classes next Sunday (12/3).

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT PRACTICE

There will be **NO** practice for our Christmas Pageant Today (11/26). We will pick up again next **Sunday, December 3 at 8:30 am** (note change in time for Advent-ure Sunday).

Please email Children's Minister Ashley Saunders at saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org with any questions you may have.

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

COMFORT MAKERS ON HIATUS

Comfort makers are on hiatus until **January 4**. For more information, contact Linda Morrison (lindamm778@gmail.com or 540-383-5085).

LINDA DEPOY ON VACATION

Parish Administrator Linda Depoy is on vacation through December 1. Administrative Assistant Liz Engleking will cover priorities in Linda's absence, so please be patient as Liz is part time and may not be able to respond as quickly. Reminder: the church office is staffed 10:00 am – 3:00 pm.

PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING CIRCLE Saturday, December 2, 10:00 – 11:30am

Join us in the Gathering Area to create a prayer shawl through knitting or crocheting. No experience necessary; we'll teach you basic stitches! This prayerful ministry and spiritual practice reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace, as well as in celebration and joy. For more information or if you desire a prayer shawl to give to someone, contact Jackie Wells (540-434-6283 or jswells62@verizon.net).

ADVENT-URE SUNDAY

Sunday, December 3, 9:30 – 11:30 am

Join us for a brunch potluck and Advent-themed art for all ages. There will also be Advent wreath making and an opportunity to learn about and make Chrismons.

If you have greenery we can use for wreath making, please plan to drop it off at the church Friday, December 1 or Sunday, December 3 before 9:30 am. For planning purposes, email Ashley Saunders if you can donate greenery (saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org).

FAITH FORMATION AND MUSIC MINISTRY

Information on our Faith Formation classes and Music opportunities can be found on our website www.muhlenberglutheran.org

FOOD COLLECTION REMINDER

NEXT Sunday, December 3

We will collect non-perishable food items for Patchwork Pantry in the Gathering Area. No glass jars please. The Pantry is also in need of paper products (paper towels, wraps, food storage bags, toilet tissue, etc.), cleansers (dish, laundry, all-purpose), diapers, and all types of personal hygiene products. Monetary donations are also appreciated. Make checks payable to Muhlenberg, noting "Patchwork Pantry" on the memo line.



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NEEDED

We are in need of worship servants (lectors, ushers, communion assistants, sound techs, etc.) for December (Christmas Eve!). **Sign up** on the notebook in the Gathering Area or online at: **Worship + Sermons > Serve in Worship.**

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:

Luther's Theology of the Cross highlights that God's true nature and salvation are revealed through the unexpected and seemingly weak moments, like Christ's crucifixion, as opposed to worldly success. It contrasts with the "Theology of Glory" that seeks God in human achievements. In a world that often values success and power, how does Luther's Theology of the Cross challenge our perspective on where we find God's presence and meaning in our lives?

BEHOLD!

Advent & Christmas at Muhlenberg 2023



Behold! Advent and Christmas are Here!

It's so easy to overlook Advent. The weeks leading up to Christmas Day can plunge us into a state of dazed busyness in which the stunning story of Christ's birth is obscured by the rush of the season or even traditions that begin to feel monotonous. In the midst of this time, we offer a simple Advent invitation: ***Behold!***

This Advent and Christmas, we're inviting our community to a season of prayerful attentiveness. Through worship, devotions, reflection, and fellowship, we hope this will be a time where each of us can be attentive to our feelings of expectancy, our call for preparation, the heart of our faith, and the promise in which we live. Utilizing the devotional resource ***Behold!*** by Pamela C. Hawkins, we'll journey together, cultivating attentiveness in the season of Advent. 2000 years ago, 175 years ago, and this very day... ***Behold!*** God is doing a new thing! Let us gather our hearts intentionally and attentively around the promise of this season.

Advent Devotional Books

As we enter Advent with an attitude of curious expectancy and trustful anticipation, our Advent devotional book, *Behold! Cultivating Attentiveness in the Season of Advent*, will guide us through the season. This book provides an invitation to read, reflect, and pray in a variety of ways. Books will be available in the Gathering Area beginning November 26. A suggested donation of \$10 per book will help offset the cost. Pick one up for yourself or for your family to use together!

BEHOLD! Advent & Christmas at Muhlenberg 2023

Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesdays in Advent at 7:00 pm (December 6, 13, 20) - Gather together for a time of contemplation, music and reflection. The music of Marty Haugen's beloved Holden Evening Prayer will surround a time of Scripture and reflection on our weekly themes of expectancy, preparation, and faith. This service will also be live-streamed, so if you can't make it in person, be sure to tune in for this beautiful worship.

ADVENT-ure Sunday

December 3, 9:30-11:30 am- Join us for a breakfast potluck along with crafts for children of all ages and adults. There will also be supplies to make your Advent wreath and a table to make a Chrismon for the season.

If you have any questions, please email Children's Minister Ashley Saunders at saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org.

Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 10, 9:45 am-10:30 am - All ages gather together to adorn our church with Advent and Christmas decorations, including the Chrismon tree and our congregational nativity sets. Hear the story of Santa Lucia and learn more about the symbolism of familiar Christmas decorations like wreaths, poinsettias, and holly and ivy while helping to get our space ready for Christmas!

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 10, 12:15 pm - When was the last time you and yours went caroling? We are looking for an enthusiastic group - young to not so young - to help spread Advent/Christmas cheer to our brothers and sisters who can't join us in worship. Impressive singing ability is not required, just a willingness to make noise with spirit! All are welcome! We need YOU and your family - the more the merrier. Meet at 12:15pm for a light meal in Wayland Hall before caroling!

BEHOLD!

Advent & Christmas at Muhlenberg 2023

Happy Anniversary, Muhlenberg Lutheran Church!

Sunday, December 17 - On December 17, 1848, several months before the City of Harrisonburg (population: 700) was incorporated and Isaac Hardesty was elected the town's first mayor, a group of intrepid Lutherans gathered to form the first Lutheran congregation in Harrisonburg. Signing their names to a charter document, Muhlenberg Lutheran Church was formed. Although not "officially" a congregation until accepted into the Virginia Synod in May 1849, Muhlenberg recognizes December 17, 2023 as the start of our 175th Anniversary Year! Join us in worship on Sunday, December 17 as we kick off a year of celebration.

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 17, 9:45am-10:45am - The Christmas Pageant is back in person on Sunday, December 17 at 9:45am in the MAC. Join us for A Very Mixed Up Christmas by Gwynne Watkins. What if kids showed up to perform a traditional Christmas Pageant...in their Halloween costumes?! That's what happens in this contemporary spin on a traditional nativity play. It's up to their youth director to improvise her way through the story of Jesus' birth in a hilarious and heartfelt way that connects biblical figures with modern day superheroes, villains, and more. In the end, everyone learns that perhaps being a little bit "mixed-up" is something we can all rejoice in.

Join us after the play for light refreshments and a chance to meet the performers!

Longest Night Worship

Thursday, December 21, 7:00 pm, Park View Mennonite Church - The longest night of the year is December 21, and it has become a meaningful time to recognize the darkness of grief and loss in our lives that long for the light of Christ. The Harrisonburg Community Longest Night service brings together eight congregations (Presbyterian, Mennonite, Methodist, UCC, and Lutheran) for a service of Word, song, prayer, and Holy Communion. The worship provides an opportunity to be honest about our pain and be reminded of Christ's light that shines into dark places. Join Pastor Lauren and leaders from all participating congregations at 7:00pm on Thursday, December 21 at Park View Mennonite Church (1600 College Avenue).

BEHOLD! Advent & Christmas at Muhlenberg 2023

Youth Christmas Party

Friday, December 22, 6:00-8:00 pm - Middle and High School youth are invited to dinner and a Christmas party at Pastor Lauren's house from 6:00-8:00pm Friday, December 22. Wear your favorite tacky Christmas sweater and join us for Christmas games, decorating cookies, and a White Elephant gift exchange. (No spending money on gifts! Your gift must be something you create or already have at home!) RSVP to Pastor Alex by December 18 if you plan to attend or have any questions - zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org.

Local and Global Advent Giving Opportunities

This year, the Local and Global Mission Ministry team is offering two opportunities for giving during Advent. The first is an opportunity to give to ELCA's Lutheran Disaster Response Fund. As all of us know, many people around the world have suffered from numerous disasters this year. As followers of Jesus we are compelled to help our brothers and sisters in need. Thankfully the Lutheran Disaster Response Fund is a trusted source of support to our neighbors in crisis. To give online go to elca.org/disaster or put your check in the offering plate with ELCA Disaster Response in the memo line. The Local & Global Mission Ministry team is using the last of our budgeted funds to double your donations up to \$1,000 total!

The second opportunity for Advent giving is the donation of \$10.00 gift cards to Walmart, Sheetz, Roses, or 7-Eleven. These gift cards will be given out to our Community Christmas Dinner guests. Your gift cards may be given to Linda Depoy in the church office or placed in the mail slot of the main office door in the Admin Hallway!

Poinsettias

Help us enjoy the festive colors of poinsettias throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons! Poinsettias will adorn our sanctuary during Advent, and then you take the plant home following the last service on Christmas Eve. You can choose to remember or honor a loved one through your poinsettia purchase. We will have both white and red poinsettias available this year, so please be sure to specify if you have a preference. To purchase one, please sign up by December 10 at the Connection Center or use the link on our Advent webpage - muhlenberglutheran.org/AdventChristmas. The cost per plant is \$22. Place your check in the offering plate or mail it to the church office and note "Poinsettias" on the memo line.

BEHOLD! Advent & Christmas at Muhlenberg 2023

Christmas Eve Worship - Sunday, December 24

10:00 am - ONLINE ENCOURAGED - A Fireside Advent - Christmas Eve is a Sunday this year, which means that we'll be celebrating the fourth Sunday of Advent in the morning, before turning to Christmas Eve worship in the afternoon and evening! You can join us in person in the Nielsen Room, or we encourage you to grab a warm beverage, cozy up on the couch, and join online worship at 10:00 am for a 20-30 minute time of prayer and reflection to lead us from Advent to Christmas. This "Fireside Service" will be a time for us to pause whatever we're doing, wherever we are, and prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ child.

Beginning at 3:20 pm - IN PERSON - Christmas Photos - Come early to get your photo taken by the Christmas tree! Kids will also have the opportunity to pack a special Christmas gift bag filled with quiet activities that can be done during worship and at home. Enjoy pre-service music by youth and adults from the congregation, and visit with friends old and new before worship begins at 4:00 pm.

4:00 pm - IN PERSON - Family Service - Join us for an energetic worship for all ages. This service includes easy-to-sing hymns, a meaningful reflection, the sharing of Holy Communion, special music from our children and youth choirs, and a candlelit "Silent Night," with battery operated candles for our younger kiddos! The nursery will be staffed.

7:00 pm - IN PERSON & ONLINE - Traditional Service - Gather for a rich liturgical service led by choir and organ. This service includes favorite Christmas carols, a full sermon, Holy Communion, beautiful anthems, and a candlelit "Silent Night." The nursery will be staffed, and the entire service will also be livestreamed.

10:00 pm - IN PERSON - Late Service - Welcome Christ in the darkness through this quiet, intimate, reflective, and joy-filled service. This service includes music led by the handbell choir and solo musicians, congregational song, a full sermon, Holy Communion, and a candlelit "Silent Night." It's a "Midnight Mass" a few hours early!

Community Christmas Dinner

Monday, December 25, 4:30pm, Muhlenberg Activities Center - Muhlenberg Lutheran Church will be hosting our second annual Community Christmas Dinner on Christmas Day. Christmas should be a time for joy and celebration but far too many in our community face loneliness and hunger on this most special day. Hosting this Community Christmas Dinner gives us the opportunity to know our neighbor. This year, we open our doors for guests at 4:00 pm with dinner served at 4:30 pm. Dinner will be followed by games and the singing of Christmas Carols. The event will end at 6:00 pm as we say good night and bid our guests a very Merry Christmas. A sign-up Genius will be available after Thanksgiving with ways you can be a part of this event either before Christmas Day and/or on Christmas Day.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MUHLENBERG MINISTRIES NIGHT Temporary Date Change

Please remember that for **December**, Ministries Night committees will meet the first Monday of the month, **December 4, 7:00 pm.**

See you there!

Kevin Stees, Congregation Council Vice President

COMFORTS ON DISPLAY

Starting Sunday, December 3, the cozy comforts will be on display. Imagine the joy one of these warm comforts will bring to someone who needs warm winter bedding.

Over the past 20 years, Muhlenberg has made more than 2,500 comforts to give to local, national & international disaster relief projects.

Comforts will be blessed at services next Sunday and may be purchased: large ~ \$55; youth ~ \$40; baby ~ \$35. Proceeds pay for batting and other supplies. If interested, pin your name and phone number on the comfort you choose, and someone from the Comfort makers group will be in touch with you. For more information, contact Linda Morrison (lindamm778@gmail.com or 540-383-5085).

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: (depay@muhlenberglutheran.org /540-434-3496)

MUHLENBERG NEWS

CHURCH ENTRY SYSTEM

PIN Number Request Forms Available

Have a key to the church and need continued access to the building? Wondering about that keypad that has been installed on one of the Gathering Area doors? Here's the full story ...

The keypad entry system on one of the east side Gathering Area doors has multiple purposes and phases of installation:



- Phase 1 ~ Install the keypad on an outside door of the Gathering Area and desk stations in two offices to safely and efficiently allow visitors to enter the building during the workday. This phase has been completed and works very well to protect the children, staff and others in the building, and brings Muhlenberg in line with safety measures that have been adopted by local churches for several years.
- Phase 2 ~ Issue PIN numbers to our staff and members who routinely need access to the church building to live out their ministry. This also eliminates the cost of issuing keys.
- Phase 3 ~ Rekey all outside doors of the church building to maximize security.

Currently we are in Phase 2 of our installation. We will accept applications so those who need routine access to the church building can request their preferred 4-digit number. Our security company suggests you ask for numbers easy to remember: the last four digits of your SSN, your mother's/father's birth month/day, the last four digits of your phone number when

~ see next page ~

MUHLENBERG NEWS (CONT'D)

you were growing up, etc. The application also asks for a second choice in case your first choice is already taken.

Applications are available at the Connection Center through Sunday, December 3. Place your completed application in the wooden lock box (also at the Connection Center), which will be emptied weekly. In the following weeks, applications will be reviewed/approved and PIN numbers will be assigned.

Two Sundays will be designated for you to pick up your approved PIN number and turn in your key (if you have one). Watch *The Chimes* for more information.

Have a key to the church you no longer need? You may return it to the locked box at the Connection Center through December 3 or the mail slot in the Church Office door at any time.

If you have questions, please contact me (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org) or Sexton Jeff Williams (sexton@muhlenberglutheran.org) or call us at the church office (540-434-3496).

Linda Depoy, Parish Administrator

MUSIC MINISTER SEARCH UPDATE

Our music minister search team is up and running! The job has been posted and applications are being received. If you know someone who'd be a great fit for this position, please have them check out muhlenberglutheran.org/jobs.

If you have questions about the search process, feel free to reach out to any member of the Search Committee: Greta Willis (chair), Dave Barnes, Judith Ofcarcik, Kevin Stees, Alice Wightman, and Pastor Lauren.

CREATION CARE TIP

You'll probably have lots of leftover turkey and mashed potatoes. Every year, Americans use enough plastic wrap to cover all of Texas. Instead of sending your guests home with leftovers piled on paper plates and covered in plastic wrap, ask them to bring their own containers.



LOCAL AND GLOBAL MISSION



COAT DRIVE

COAT DRIVE

Our friends at Church World Service (CWS) are holding a coat drive for the next several weeks. For many refugees, this will be the first winter they experience, and they are unprepared for the cold weather. Our support will greatly lessen the impact and stress for our newly arrived neighbors. CWS is hoping to end the drive and distribute the coats the first week of December. Please bring new or gently used coats to the church and place in the donation bin **by NEXT Sunday, December 3.** Any financial contributions would also be greatly appreciated. Here are the ways you can donate:

- Online at <https://cwsharrisonburg.org/donate>
- In person at 250 E Elizabeth St Suite 102

CONNECTION 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.

LOST AND FOUND!

What a wonderful weekend with our fantastic Virginia Synod friends at the one and only Eagle Eyrie! Our crew had a great time making new friends, singing fun songs, learning about Jesus together, and braving a wildfire just down the road! The theme was: Are you there, God? It's a question that is so easy to lift up during the highs and lows of life! Our Muhlenberg 7th and 8th graders back from Lost and Found know Jesus' answer, "Remember, I am with you ALWAYS, even to the end of the age." And ALWAYS means ALWAYS!



TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

RECENT ATTENDANCE

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

11/12	8:30 Holy Communion	78
	11:00 Holy Communion	93
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	36
	Total Views this Week	241
	Hours Viewed this Week	66.7
11/19	8:30 Holy Communion	60
	11:00 Holy Communion	75
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	27

NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

We see an increase in gifts and offerings compared to this time last year. I am hopeful this continues through the end of the year. Expenses are slightly down compared to where we expected them to be. I am hopeful gifts and offerings will continue the upward trend so that we can end the year balanced.

Sarah A. Sunde, Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through October 2023

	2023 YTD Actual	2023 YTD Budgeted	2022 YTD Actual
Gifts & Offerings	\$454,353	\$528,333	\$423,392
Total Income	\$620,115	\$686,480	\$542,676
Total Expenses	\$668,716	\$688,392	\$529,576
Excess Income/(Deficit)	\$(48,601)	\$(1,912)	\$13,100

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 16,933.83
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 300.69
Total Giving	\$ 17,234.52

To give online, scan here →



WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

November 27 – December 3, 2023

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

Tues	6:00 pm	Celebration Singers Rehearsal
	7:00 pm	Gloria Dei Ringers
Wed	10:30 am	Bible Study via ZOOM
	6:00 pm	LCM Dinner
	6:00 pm	Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
Sat	10:00 am	Prayer Shawl Knitting Circle
Sun		First Sunday of Advent
		Food Pantry/Lay Communion/Name Badge Sunday
	8:30 am	Holy Communion in person
	8:30 am	Christmas Pageant Practice
	9:30 am	Advent-ure Sunday
	11:00 am	Holy Communion in person & Livestreamed via Facebook and YouTube
	12:15 pm	Cherub Choir Rehearsal
	12:15 pm	Youth Ensemble Rehearsal



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

Carrol and Billie Bushong

Mark and Roberta Byerly

Gary and Lesa Calleo

Paul Campbell

Cannie Campbell

Isaiah and Grayson Campbell

Robert, Emily, Russell and Kemper Carneal

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 depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org)