



The CHIMES

MUHLENBERG: A WELLSPRING OF GOD'S GRACE

Muhlenberg Lutheran Church strives to be a Wellspring of God's Grace in Jesus Christ.

Open ✚ Authentic ✚ Relational ✚ Serving

Published Weekly by Muhlenberg Lutheran Church

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

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

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

December 6, 2020

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

WHAT'S THE BUZZ

GENEROSITY MATTERS

Today is Commitment Sunday for 2021. We submit our Estimates of Giving Cards as an act of faith and in response to God's generosity to us.—This can be done one of three ways:

1. Mail your card to Muhlenberg Lutheran Church, 281 E Market St, Harrisonburg VA 22801, Attn: Tim Wessel.
2. Bring the card to Advent-ure Sunday (**today at 4 pm**) or next Sunday's parking lot service (December 13, 4 pm).
3. Click here to fill it out electronically at <https://forms.gle/V6tnk3W46MwqfHN6>.

If you need a card mailed to you, please contact the church office. If you have questions, contact Tim Wessel at twessel@aol.com or 803-521-9984.

Please submit your card by December 15.

Thank you for joining with us as we celebrate God's abundance in our lives and the ministry we are called to do together through Muhlenberg Lutheran Church!

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

ADVENT-URE SUNDAY

Advent-ure Sunday has been part of Muhlenberg's Advent season for more than 20 years! Christian Formation invites everyone to join us, **TODAY, at 4:00 pm in the parking lot.** We will hear from St. Nicholas and have family craft activity bags to take home. Greenery will be available for you to clip and use in your Advent wreath!



6TH – 8TH GRADE YOUTH GROUP AND BIBLE STUDY

We continue our journey! All 6th - 8th graders are invited to attend this outdoor, socially distant events at Hillandale Park, pavilion 1:
Today 1:00-3:00 pm



TODAY AT MUHLENBERG (CONT'D)

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Join your Muhlenberg friends and family for education and fellowship via [ZOOM](#) each Sunday from 8:30 – 11:00 using this link:

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

8:30 – 9:00 Communion Service via Zoom
9:00 – 11:00 “Coffee Hour” Fellowship
9:30 – 10:00 K - 3rd Grade Class
9:30 – 10:00 4th - 5th Grade Class
9:30 – 10:30 Adult Faith Lens Class
9:30 – 10:30 Adult 40-Day Journey Class
10:15– 10:30 Pre-K Story Time
11:00 Worship on [Facebook](#),
[YouTube](#), Wellstream Phone

- **Pastoral Care** ~ If you would like a private word with the pastor on call, we will provide a breakout room for you.
- **Small Group Fellowship** ~ Want to catch up with a small group of friends? We have private breakout rooms for that!

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

WELLSTREAM PHONE

We want all members to have the opportunity to “participate” in worship and hear The Word. **Wellstream Phone is a service that works from your home or cell phone — no internet required. Simply call the number below and select an option. Information will be available by 11 am each Sunday.** Contact Linda Depoy (434-3496) with any questions.

Wellstream Phone Number:

1-434-205-8777

FINANCIAL NEWS

RECENT ATTENDANCE

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

11/22	8:30 Communion	21
	11:00 Total Live Views	96
	Total Views this Week	340
	Hours Viewed this Week	123.8
11/29	8:30 Communion	21
	11:00 Total Live Views	112

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through October 2020			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$504,446	\$673,509	\$566,725
Total Receipts*	\$642,631	\$765,722	\$650,160
Expenses	\$660,132	\$813,258	\$689,353
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	(\$17,501)	(\$17,501)	(\$39,193)

* Includes \$12,331.53 – federal PPP proceeds

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 24,050.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 13,285.85
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 37,335.85

November Thrivent Choice Dollars: \$47



To give online, scan here →

Muhlenberg is not suspending its ministry through this unprecedented time, and we ask you not to suspend your financial contributions either. We are committed to maintaining our ministries, even if they are in a different form for now. We also want to be able to continue to support the needs of the most vulnerable in our community.

You can make a one-time or recurring donation through the [donation page](#) on our website, or mail your check to the church: 281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

THIS WEEK

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays at 10:30 am, participants study the Narrative Lectionary text for the upcoming Sunday. All are welcome to join via [ZOOM](#) using the following link:

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

HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER

Wednesdays at 7:00 pm

Led from the sanctuary by Music Ministry Accompanist Linlin Uta and a rotating slate of singers, including the pastors, this service is livestreamed on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

The service will be recorded and available to view any time.

REMINDERS

CARE COMMITTEE SUGGESTION

As you are thinking about your gifts and greetings, please consider sending additional greeting cards or messages. Some suggestions might include:

- military personnel away from home
- nursing care facility staff or residents
- healthcare workers /first responders
- a member of the congregation living alone or in a care facility
- a member of the congregation who has lost a loved one this year

In addition, please send a card to someone within our church family to show you are thinking of them. If you have children who would include a small drawing or homemade card, wonderful!

You may never know how much a small gesture such as this could mean to someone this holiday season.

Thank you from the Muhlenberg Care Ministry Team

PASTORS' BOOK CLUB

We gather Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 6:30 pm via Zoom for a discussion of “The Very Good Gospel: How Everything Wrong Can be Made Right” by Lisa Sharon Harper. God once declared everything in the world “very good.” Can you imagine it? Shalom is what God declared. Shalom is what the Kingdom of God looks like. What can we do to bring shalom to our nations, our communities, and our souls? Through a careful exploration of biblical text, particularly the first three chapters of Genesis, Lisa Sharon Harper shows us what “very good” can look like today, even after the Fall. Because despite our anxious minds, despite division and threats of violence, God’s vision remains: Wholeness for a hurting world. Peace for a fearful soul. Shalom. Please join us <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82701657853?pwd=NWFkXZVhnVGdEY1Z5dzRCSjNVQzIzQT09>

Remember: “Membership is not required.” A different group of people gather each month based on interest, so feel free to attend, even if you haven’t before!

CREATION CARE TIP

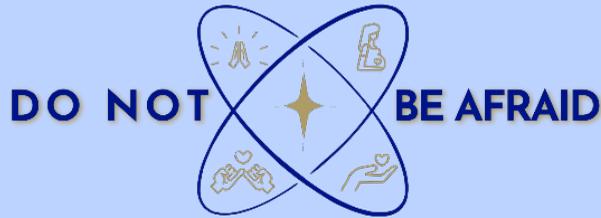
Creation Care offers a simple tip that will help you protect God’s earth. Contact Ramona Sanders for more information: 433-1165 or rsanders97@verizon.net.



Create a homemade garland for the Christmas tree. An old-fashioned string of popcorn and cranberries will look great on your tree. Once the holidays are over, you can hang the garland in an evergreen tree in your yard and let the birds feast on your creation.

ADVENT NEWS

Advent 2020



DO NOT BE AFRAID

This Advent and Christmas, you're invited to listen in to the angels' message in the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke: "Do not be afraid!" God gave this instruction to God's people throughout their history, and it's a message God continues to give to us today. Through the stories of Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Mary, we'll explore together what it looks like to have hope, know peace, live in joy, and trust love.

ADVENT DAILY DEVOTIONAL BEGINS NOVEMBER 25

This has been a challenging year, with many stressors and unexpected twists along the way. Biblically, prophets are often called upon to speak God's Word in troubled times like these, and so we turn to their wisdom now! In worship on Sundays at Muhlenberg we will reflect on the angelic call "Do Not Be Afraid," while throughout the weeks we will explore the faithfulness of the prophets and what wisdom and challenge they shared with God's people.

You are invited to participate in this devotional season by recording a short video reflection that will be shared as a daily devotional. How do we have hope, know peace, live in joy, and trust love? Contact Pastor Alex for more information or click [HERE](#) to sign up for a reflection.

To sign up to RECEIVE the daily devotions via email, click [HERE](#). They will also be posted daily in the Muhlenberg Daily Devotions Facebook group.

ADVENT-URE SUNDAY ~ TODAY AT 4:00 PM

Advent-ure Sunday has been part of Muhlenberg's Advent season for more than 20 years! Christian Formation invites everyone to join us, **Sunday, December 6, 4:00 pm in the parking lot**. We will hear from St. Nicholas and have family craft activity bags to take home. Greenery will be available for you to clip and use in your Advent wreath.

For more information, contact Diane Bayer (bayer@muhlenberglutheran.org).



CHRISTMAS NEWS

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM ~ *CHRISTMAS LETTERS*

Nearly 30 young people will participate in our online program, *Christmas Letters*, premiering **Sunday, December 20, 4:00 pm** on Muhlenberg's [Facebook](#) page and [YouTube](#) channel. Tune in to see their presentation in word and song! This event will be available online for two weeks following the premiere, so if you miss the broadcast you can watch it any time during those two weeks. Share it with friends and family so they can join in the Christmas cheer!

LONGEST NIGHT COMMUNITY WORSHIP

The longest night of the year is December 21, and it has become a meaningful time to recognize that the Christmas season is often not all brightness and fun. In particular this year, we have much to grieve and many losses to acknowledge. Muhlenberg is hosting this year's ecumenical Longest Night worship service **Sunday, December 20, 7:00 pm**, on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). This service of word and song will provide an opportunity to be honest about our pain and be reminded of Christ's light that shines into dark places.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

3:00-6:00 pm please stop by the church to drop off alternative giving boxes and/or Christmas offerings. Pick up poinsettias (if you ordered one) and candles for singing Silent Night at home.

3:00-3:30 pm Carols and Story ~ Gather in Muhlenberg's parking lot for Christmas carols and a family-friendly reading of the Christmas story! We'll stay in our cars and listen through our radio transmitter. (Also, you can sing as loud and off-key as you'd like when you're in your own car!) Come and welcome the newborn King with our faith community.

4:30 pm Christmas Eve Service of the Word will premiere on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). This service will be similar to our current 11:00 Sunday service and feature rich musical selections, the proclamation of the birth of Christ, and a candlelit singing of "Silent Night." Watch it concurrently with the congregation and send greetings to one another through the chat, or tune in anytime that evening to worship with your family.

5:30-6:30 pm Luminaries ~ Candle-lit luminaries will line the street around our church building, shining Christ's light out to passersby. Stop by the church to light a candle and listen to musical selections through our radio transmitter. (*Weather permitting*)

7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service of Word and Sacrament will take place via [ZOOM](#). Similar to our current 8:30 Sunday service, this service will feature simple liturgy and music, proclamation, the sharing of communion, and a candlelit singing of "Silent Night." Please have bread and wine ready in your home before the service begins.

9:00 pm Christmas Eve Service of the Word will premiere on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). This service is identical to the 4:30 service and provides the opportunity to worship concurrently with other members of the congregation.

CHRISTMAS MORNING MUSIC

Tune into a **Concert for Christmas Day**, presented by Music Minister Elizabeth Williams. This concert premieres on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) **December 25, 10:00 am** and will be available to view anytime the rest of the day.

DECEMBER 27 LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday, December 27 will feature a service of lessons and carols at **11:00 am** on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). There will be NO 8:30 am service or Christian Formation that day.

REMEMBER & HONOR LOVED ONES

Want to remember or honor a loved one with a poinsettia? **Cost per plant is \$17.** To reserve your poinsettia, do the following:

1. **Sign up** online using the link below or call Louise Layman at 540-442-1524:
<https://forms.gle/rLA7kyZfcMnbeQLBA>
 2. **Pay** for poinsettias (write "Poinsettias" on the memo line). Mail your check to the church office (281 East Market Street, Harrisonburg 22801). **Payments reserve poinsettias.**
- Poinsettias may be picked up Christmas Eve Day from outside the Gathering Area, 3:00-6:00 pm.
Sign up deadline is NEXT Sunday, December 13 (no additional flowers will be ordered after that date).



ALTERNATIVE GIVING OPPORTUNITY

If you wish to remember a loved one in a different way during this Holy Season, we offer a local opportunity in **Habitat for Humanity** (a nonprofit organization that helps families build and improve places to call home) and a global opportunity in **ELCA Disaster Response** (*an ELCA mission*).

1. **Sign up** using the link below or call Emily Wicht at 540-421-1994:
<https://forms.gle/7nLwASmuxfZkLA1o9>
2. **Make your contribution.** Ensure correct credit/designation by indicating "**Habitat for Humanity Christmas Gift**" or "**Disaster Response Christmas Gift**" on the memo line. Mail your check as described in #2 above.

We will publish the name of your loved one(s) in an insert during the Christmas season (as we do for poinsettia donations). **Sign up deadline is NEXT Sunday, December 13.**

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Christian Formation and Local & Global Mission ministry teams are offering many opportunities to make your Advent and Christmas a time of sharing with others. By providing these different opportunities, we hope you find one that touches your heart. Another way you and your family can take part is by praying for those who are in need in our world! Contact Diane Bayer (bayer@muhlenbergglutheran.org or 434-3496) with any questions about these projects.

ANGEL TREE



We are again sponsoring an *Angel Tree* for the Salvation Army. Because of COVID, the needs are especially great. To participate, choose an “angel” from “Angel Envelope” in the pick-up/drop-off box outside the Gathering Area. Complete instructions are included with each angel. Return today or Next Sunday, Dec. 13, 4 pm.

CHRISTMAS SOCKS

Fill a **pair** of dark socks with things like...

- water flavoring powder packets
- tissues
- toothpaste/toothbrushes
- crackers, granola
- hand warmers
- soap, shampoo, lip balm
- bus tickets
- gift cards to local food shops, etc.

Tie the pair of filled socks together and bring to church **Today or next Sunday during 4:00 pm parking lot** events. Filled socks may also be placed in the pick-up/drop-off box outside the Gathering Area before December 13. If your sock contains bus tickets, gift cards, or other valuable items, contact Diane Bayer for instructions.



SENIOR CITIZEN SANTA BAGS

Sponsored by JAMers

The JAMers offer this service opportunity every year for the whole congregation. The following items will be collected:

- shampoo
- toothbrushes/toothpaste
- combs/brushes
- body lotion
- soap
- hand sanitizer
- tissues
- hot chocolate
- popcorn
- snack crackers
- stamps, envelopes & greeting cards



Bins for collection of these items will be available at the 4:00 parking lot events **Today and December 13.**

ALTERNATIVE ADVENT...



An opportunity to do something a bit different as part of your Advent devotions. Pick up a box **Sunday, December 6 at 4:00** during our Advent-ure Sunday parking lot activity.

Each day during devotions, put something in the box (e.g. a canned good, a bar of soap, a toothbrush or toothpaste, etc.).

The boxes should be **returned Christmas Eve** and placed on the table outside the Muhlenberg Activities Center.

JOYS, THANKS & CONCERNS

GATHERING TOGETHER TASK FORCE UPDATE

At this time, COVID numbers in the region are still high and climbing!! The governor has issued an executive order restricting in-person gatherings. Harrisonburg City Schools have indicated they will continue to teach virtually over the next several months. And the “Be Vigilant for the Valley” effort (an initiative of local universities, school districts, retirement communities, religious groups, and city and county leadership) is strongly urging residents to avoid gathering indoors with people outside of their household.

Given all of this, the Task Force recommends we keep our current guidelines through March 2021, at which point they will reevaluate. As always, don't hesitate to contact a group member with questions or comments: Neil Alexander, Erin Burke, Cynthia Page, Kevin Stees, Crystl Whitmire, Greta Willis, Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex.

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 depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org).

Submissions will be printed with consideration for space and appropriateness at the discretion of the pastors and editor.

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

December 7- 13

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

- Mon. 2:00 pm** Weekly Staff Meeting
- Tue. 5:00 pm** Tweens and Teens
5:30 pm Children's Choir
6:30 pm Celebration Singers
- Wed. 10:30 am** Wed. Morning Bible Study
7:00 pm Holden Evening Prayer
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
- Sun. Third Sunday of Advent**
[Sunday am ZOOM link](#)
8:30 am Communion Service
9:00 am “Coffee Hour” begins
8:30 am Communion Service
9:00 am “Coffee Hour” begins
9:30 am K – 3rd Grade Class
9:30 am 4th - 5th Grade Class
9:30 am Faith Lens Class
9:30 am 40-Day Journey Class
11:00 am Service Livestreamed
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
4:00 pm Parking Lot Service
Return of Angel Tree gifts and Pledge

Cards

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).