



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 8, 2019

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

ADVENT

While Advent is a season of waiting, this year in worship we'll explore the theme *"What Can't Wait?"* Is idle waiting what God wants of us? What demands our attention? What requires our work and preparation? What is it that God can't wait for?

This Advent, we invite you to join us in imagining, prioritizing, and preparing. As we wait, what can't? A devotional guide to the season and family Advent calendar are available in the Gathering Area.



WELCOME GUESTS

We are blessed to welcome our guests today. We have a gift waiting for you at the Welcome Desk in the Gathering Area (main church entrance) and ask that you



complete a blue guest card and/or sign our guest register. If you prefer, you may scan this QR code or securely register online at muhlenberglutheran.org.

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

ESME MARGARET CREASY

Baptized, A New Child of God

Welcome Esme, daughter of Justin & Catherine Creasy, into the Body of Christ and the Muhlenberg family at the 11:00 service! Margaret Manney and Damien Christopher Manney are sponsors. Welcome to the Lord's family!



THE ADVENT WREATH

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen images of Advent found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. We encourage members to prepare an Advent wreath at home and include a time of prayer or devotion after its lighting, perhaps at mealtime.

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG (CONT'D)

CALLING CHRISTMAS CAROLERS

It's not too late to join our carolers – we'll have lunch after the 11:00 service, then leave for about an hour of singing and sharing some holiday cheer with our brothers and sisters who can't make it to church. All ages are welcome. We're looking for smiling faces and warm hearts. Professional singing skills not required. See you later today!

SENIOR CITIZEN SANTA BAGS

Sponsored by JAMers

TODAY JAMers (elementary youth group) will fill Senior Citizen Santa Bags for the Salvation Army.

ANGEL TREE

We are sponsoring an *Angel Tree*. Your unwrapped gifts need to be **returned to the tree TODAY**. Thank you for sharing with those in need!



CAMPUS MINISTRY PRAYER

Students, Faculty, & Staff of JMU, EMU Bridgewater, and BRCC begin Finals Week tomorrow. Pray that our students gather all the things they have learned in classes this semester and reflect them in the exams, projects and papers.

We pray they will find calm and focus as they prepare, and confidence as they take exams. May the faculty and teaching assistants who grade their work be fair and find patience.

FINANCIAL NEWS

LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCE

8:00 Worship	55	Wed. Noon	14
9:30 Worship	101		
11:00 Worship	<u>170</u>		
Total	326		

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through October 2019			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$566,725	\$658,825	\$561,093
Total Receipts	\$650,160	\$749,608	\$643,389
Expenses	\$689,353	\$822,604	\$698,235
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	(\$39,193)	(\$72,996)	(\$54,846)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 17,350.50
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ <u>13,389.13</u>
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 31,394.63

See *Connection Center notebook* for details.

To give online, scan here →



HELP WANTED: TREASURER

Following the retirement of Terry Looney as our faithful treasurer at the end of this year, we will be in need of a new treasurer. Duties include preparation of monthly financials, bank reconciliation and journal entries; online payments of federal and state payroll taxes; preparation of federal and state quarterly payroll reports and annual W-2's and Form 1099; preparation and presentation of the annual spending plan; and serving as a voting member of the executive board, finance committee, and congregation council. Duties are shared with an assistant treasurer. Ideally, the treasurer will be someone with education and experience in accounting. The time commitment is approximately 10-15 hours a month. Contact Gary Calleo, Congregation President, if you're interested in learning more.

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

SOPHIE MOELLER CIRCLE

The Sophie Moeller Circle will have its Christmas social at 1:30 pm, **Tuesday, December 10**. Please bring a dessert and a white elephant gift.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Join Pastor Lauren for an in-depth study of the book of Job. We meet in the Nielsen Room on **Wednesdays at 10:30 am**. All are welcome!

MARY/MARTHA CHRISTMAS PARTY

Please note date change — Karen Dotson will host the annual Mary/Martha Christmas party **Thursday, December 12, 6:30 pm** (we will carpool from church at 6:00). Karen will provide main food items; you may bring a dish to share if you wish. There will be a Christmas sock exchange this year, and we will collect feminine products for First Step. *For more information or to RSVP for seating purposes, contact Karen (karendotson12@gmail.com or 540-333-2753).*

SECOND HOME FOOD COLLECTION



NEXT Sunday we collect **graham crackers** for snacks. Place donations in the designated bin in the Gathering Area. If you wish to help and prefer to make a cash donation, designate “Second Home food” on the memo line of your check and envelope. Thank you for this support!

CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AND HYMN SING

Sunday, December 15, 4:00 pm,

children in Christian Formation classes (ages 2–5th grade) will present a Christmas program. Afterward, **Minister of Music Emeritus Don Smith** will provide music for an old-fashioned hymn sing. Our children are excited and hope you will attend.



Have a favorite Advent/Christmas song you want to hear? Write your selection(s) on the paper provided today, and place it in the basket on the table in the Gathering Area.

*Parents, if you have a child who can play an instrument and is interested in participating in the Children’s Christmas Program, please contact Diane Bayer. **Note:** Dec 1, 8 & 15, students PreK - 5th grade will be in the MAC at 9:30 to practice for the Christmas Program.*



Christmas Worship Schedule

**12/24 – Christmas Eve Services
4:30, 6:30 & 9:00 pm**

**12/25 – Christmas Day
5:30 pm Community Meal
(no service)**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

11TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER!

December 25, 5-8 pm in the MAC

IT'S TIME TO SIGN UP!! Muhlenberg Lutheran Church (MLC), in collaboration with volunteers from across Harrisonburg, will host the Community Christmas Day Dinner. This downtown tradition has served hundreds of our friends and neighbors over the past 10 years and we are proud to now be spearheading the effort at MLC.

Mark your calendar to celebrate with families, those alone for Christmas, those who can't make their own holiday meal, older folks, younger folks, less fortunate and others who want to enjoy good food and fellowship for Christmas.

If you are interested in learning more about the event, volunteering before or during the dinner, donating to the dinner/activities, or just attending as a community member, please choose one of the following options:

1. Visit <https://harrisonburgcommunitychristmasdinner.weebly.com/>.
2. Visit the Connection Center in the Gathering Area to sign up in the Activities Notebook.
3. Scan the QR code below:

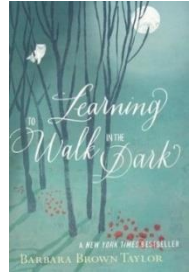


Next planning meeting will be **December 15 at 12:30** in the MLC Gathering area. Thanks for your help with this amazing community event! Any questions, call or text Cannie & Paul Campbell at 540-578-

4155 or email harrisonburgCCD@gmail.com!

PASTOR'S BOOK CLUB

Pastor's Book Club continues in December with *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor. **Wednesday, December 18** at 6:30 pm in the Gathering Area, we will meet to discuss this moving exploration of all that God has to teach us "in the dark."



You may purchase the book on your own, or order one by contacting one of the pastors.

Like to read ahead? The selection for our January 15 Book Club meeting is *Everything Happens for a Reason and Other Lies I've Loved* by Kate Bowler.

LONGEST NIGHT WORSHIP SERVICE

The Christmas season is often marked by expressions of joy, excitement and happiness. However, this time of joy and expectation can often overshadow the pain and



hurt many experience during this season, when the world's merriment puts our grief and sorrow in stark relief. If this Christmas season is a difficult one for you or others you love, you are invited to attend a special **Service for the Longest Night** at Trinity Presbyterian Church **Thursday, December 19 at 7:00 pm**. This is a community service with participation by people of Methodist, Presbyterian, UCC, and Lutheran traditions. Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex will be giving the sermon, and special music will be offered by members of Muhlenberg. If you need a ride to this service, please contact Pastor Lauren. We have drivers available for transportation.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR (CONT'D)

EPIPHANY EVENT & CHILI COOK-OFF

Fire up your crock-pots! Join us for an Epiphany event and chili cook-off **Sunday, January 5 from 4-6 pm.** Bring chili, salad, or bread to share. Plan to vote for your favorite chili. We'll share in Epiphany traditions like the Chalking of the Door and Burning of the Greens (bring a branch from your Christmas tree or a wreath to place in the fire), as well as fellowship together on a cold winter night. We need help with set-up and clean-up, so please contact Pastor Lauren if you're able to assist.

EPIC CONFERENCE AT MLC

EPIC (Effective Practices for Innovative Congregations) is a one-day leadership development conference designed to strengthen congregational leaders for their ministry in the congregation and in the world. Muhlenberg is hosting this Virginia Synod event on Saturday, February 1, 2020 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Workshops will include topics such as Congregational Vitality, Ministry with Older Adults, Creating a Good Digital First Impression, and Resources for Difficult Discussions. The cost is \$15 per person, with lunch included. To register visit: vasynod.org/epic

CREATION CARE TIP

To preserve the environment and leave a better planet for your children, avoid using disposable goods (lighters, plastics, etc.). We can embrace the ideals of reducing, reusing, and recycling materials to make the world a better place.



ENDOWMENT GRANT

The Muhlenberg Endowment Committee is seeking proposals for grants requesting amounts up to \$7,500 for **projects aligned with Muhlenberg's mission** to be a Wellspring of God's Grace: Open + Authentic + Relational + Serving. The \$7,500 is made possible by the interest from the church Mission Endowment Fund, and we are hoping to award one or more grants to projects of the Muhlenberg congregation.

The purpose of these grants is to provide members support and resources to carry out plans, programs, ideas, and dreams as we are moved by the Spirit to help live out our mission. While we often support and fundraise for existing programs and initiatives, we really want to encourage church members to dream and think big, innovate, and take risks about ways that we can be a Wellspring of God's Grace. While the grants are only available to members of the congregation, we encourage you to identify ways to extend that Wellspring and Grace to our community beyond the Church.

Please visit the Connection Center for the necessary form to have your mission project considered for receiving Endowment monies. Details are included on the form. If you have any questions, please contact Council members Bill Compton, Tim Peifer, or Greta Willis.

MUHLENBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH: A WELLSPRING OF GOD'S GRACE

- + *Open*
- + *Authentic*
- + *Relational*
- + *Serving*

REMEMBER & HONOR

LOVED ONES

Want to remember or honor a loved one with a poinsettia? **Cost per plant is \$15.** To reserve your poinsettia, do the following:



1. **Sign up** at the Connection Center in the notebook under the “Flowers” tab.
2. **Pay** for poinsettias (write “Poinsettias” on the memo line of your check). Place your check in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. **Payments reserve poinsettias.**

Poinsettias may be picked up after the 9:00 pm service on Christmas Eve.

Sign up deadline is TODAY (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 **Patchwork Pantry** (a mission of Community Mennonite Church) and a global opportunity in **ELCA Disaster Response** (an ELCA mission).

1. **Sign up** in the notebook at the Connection Center (**blue forms in the front of the book**).
2. **Make your contribution.** Ensure correct credit/designation by indicating “**Patchwork Pantry Christmas Gift**” or “**Disaster Response Christmas Gift**” on the memo line of your check. Place your check in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. 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 15.**

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. We hope one of these opportunities 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@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496) with any questions about these projects.

GOOD GIFTS ADVENT TREE And Advent Devotional Calendars

There is a small tree in the Caring Corner with ELCA Good Gifts ornaments. The ornaments will have different opportunities to give to World Hunger. Remove an ornament and make a donation to **ELCA World Hunger by visiting ELCA.org/goodgifts**. You can make a general gift by writing a check to **Muhlenberg and designating World Hunger in the memo line!** You can also pick up an ELCA World Hunger Advent Devotional Calendar from the Gathering Area.



ALTERNATIVE ADVENT

During Advent we are offering an opportunity to do something a bit different as part of your Advent devotions. Take home a cardboard box available in the Gathering Area. Each day during devotions, put something in the box (a can of soup or vegetables, a bar of soap, a toothbrush or toothpaste, etc.).

The boxes should be **returned Sunday, December 22 or Christmas Eve**. We will bless the boxes and share them with those in need.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY FAMILY DEVOTIONALS

Devotional calendars are available from the table in the Gathering Area. Make time each day for devotions as we all prepare and wait for God's most precious gift to be given – His own son Jesus Christ our Lord. Place your offerings in the offering plate by Christmas Eve, designating Habitat for Humanity on your check/envelope.



MUHLENBERG NEWS

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NEEDED

We are always in need of worship servants: lectors, ushers, acolytes, greeters, communion assistants/stewards, sound techs, etc.

Sign up in the notebook at the Connection Center for **January services**. Signing up 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.

LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

LCM will gather in the Campus Ministry room **today** for a Pizza Party Semester Finale to plan for the coming year.

JCREW

Contact Clay Arthur
(434-3496 or clay@muhlenberglutheran.org)
for more information.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

NEXT Sunday, December 15 - Massanutten Waterpark Trip. Meet in the Campus Room at **12:30 pm**. We plan to be back at the church by around 6:00 pm. The cost is \$38 per person plus whatever food you decide to buy. Siblings/families are welcome to come along!

ALPHA TEENS

Mark your calendar for upcoming events!
All youth in grades 6-8 are invited.

Dec. 22: Afternoon time to be determined for Christmas party with a service event and fun holiday activities.

Jan. 25-26: Church Lock-In Dinner and service event, games, movies, *some* sleep, and church in the morning. Call/text/email Rebecca Pettit (304-939-0528 or pettitre4@gmail.com) for more information.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION NEWS

Contact Christian Formation Minister Diane Bayer
(434-3496 or bayer@muhlenberglutheran.org)
for more information.

Pick up a green Christian Formation brochure from the Connection Center for details about our opportunities.

SHARING GOD'S WORD

Christian Formation classes begin Sundays at 9:30 in designated locations. Children should be picked up immediately following the 9:30 liturgy.

JOYS, THANKS & CONCERNS

✦ **Fearless Generosity:** A big thanks to the 70+ families who have submitted Commitment Cards for 2020. Extra cards are located at the Connection Center for those who still wish to submit a card. Please place completed cards in the offering plate, or in the mailbox of Janet Simmons, Financial Secretary, in the office hallway.

✦ The Board and Volunteers of Patchwork Pantry wish to thank everyone in the congregation for their monetary gifts and donations of food to the pantry during 2019. It is due to individual, church, and business contributions like yours that the pantry is able to meet the immense need of those coming to us on Wednesday evenings.
Jackie Wells, Board Member

✦ We lift in prayer and sympathy Garland and Jeannie Long as they mourn the loss of their granddaughter, Molly Elizabeth. Molly was also the goddaughter of Wylie and Diane Walton.

PASS THE PEACE, NOT THE GERMS

As we enter into cold and flu season, we invite you to consider ways to help everyone stay healthy. We encourage the practices your mother told you to do: cover your cough, stay home if you're sick, wash your hands. During the passing of the peace or greeting the pastors after the service, feel free to refrain from shaking hands. We want to share the love of God, but not our germs!

DAILY DEVOTIONS

PRAYING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

For individual and family use. Scripture citations taken from ELW's 3-Year Daily Lectionary, p. 1143 - 1153, (Year A).

Mon. 1 Thess. 4:1-12 Thu. 2 Peter 3:1-10
Tue. Romans 15:14-21 Fri. 2 Peter 3:11-18
Wed. Matthew 12:33-37 Sat. Luke 3:1-18
Sunday: Matthew 11:2-11

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

December 9-15, 2019

Mon. 2:00 pm Weekly Staff Meeting

Tue. 1:30 pm Sophie Moeller Circle
4:45 pm SonShine Singers
5:30 pm Cherub Choir
6:30 pm Celebration Singers
7:00 pm Gloria Dei Ringers

Wed. 10:30 am Wed. AM Bible Study
12 noon Holy Communion
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

Thurs. 6:30 pm Mary Martha Circle

Sun. Third Sunday of Advent
8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 am Holy Communion
9:30 am Christian Formation
4:00 pm Youth Christmas Program
and Hymn Sing

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 Linda Depoy (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org/434-3496).*

Additionally, requests to utilize space in the Gathering Area on Sunday or post information at the Connection Center should be made to Linda as soon as planned, but no later than Thursdays at 8 am.

Check bulletin boards for community information.
Like us at [facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran).