



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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December 15, 2019

THIRD 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

SECOND HOME FOOD COLLECTION

TODAY we collect *graham crackers* to serve as snacks for Second Home students. 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 your ongoing support!



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AND HYMN SING

TODAY at 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.



TODAY AT MUHLENBERG (CONT'D)

REMEMBER & HONOR LOVED ONES

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 TODAY!

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

GO-GO GROUP BREAKFAST (55+)

THIS Tuesday, December 17, 8:30 am at Thomas House in Dayton. *Contact Dan Werner at 433-3912 for more information.*

PASTORS' BOOK CLUB

Pastors' Book Club continues with *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor. **THIS Wednesday, December 18, 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.”

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.

FINANCIAL NEWS

LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCE

8:00 Worship	75	Wed. Noon	9
9:30 Worship	106		
11:00 Worship	<u>149</u>		
Total	330		

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through November 2019			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$624,790	\$739,229	\$629,570
Total Receipts	\$715,607	\$837,221	\$717,730
Expenses	\$748,894	\$901,285	\$766,109
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	(\$33,287)	(\$64,064)	(\$48,379)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 11,254.21
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 8,648.97
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 19,903.18

See Connection Center notebook for details.

November Thrivent Choice Dollars: \$15

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, Council President, if you're interested in learning more.

THIS WEEK (CONT'D)

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 **THIS 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. We have drivers available. If you need a ride to this service, please contact Pastor Lauren.

ALICE WIGHTMAN RECITAL

Alice Wightman will present a piano recital **next Sunday, December 22, 3:00 pm** in the Sanctuary. She is the daughter of Bill and Meg Wightman and a student of Elizabeth Williams.



Her recital will include works of varying styles, including both classical and sacred. She is also a beginning organ student and will perform a few works on that instrument as well. Please come and support your fellow Muhlenberg member and aspiring musician!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CHRISTMAS AT MUHLENBERG

Once again this year we will gather around the manger of our Lord and worship the Christ who was born to save. All three of our services this Christmas will be resplendent with carols, special music, the Christmas story from Luke, and Holy Communion as we celebrate the presence of Christ in our midst.

On **Christmas Eve**, the **4:30 pm** service will include a special children's message and homily from Pastor Lauren. At the **6:30 and 9:00 pm** services, Kathy Thompson will tell the gospel story and Pastor Lauren will preach. All three services will begin with the centuries old Proclamation of Christmas, pronounced by Pastor Alex, and conclude with candle lighting and the singing of Silent Night.

On **Christmas Day**, we will host the **Community Christmas dinner**. The evening will include prayers and carols, as well as a good meal and joyful fellowship. All are welcome, especially those who may not have another place to gather on Christmas Day. **The meal will be served at 5:30** (doors open at 5:00).

On **December 29**, the First Sunday after Christmas, our celebration will continue with a service of **lessons and carols** with Holy Communion and a baptism.

The Twelve Days of Christmas will conclude liturgically **Sunday, January 5**, as we celebrate the festival of **Epiphany** in morning worship. Epiphany commemorates the revelation of God incarnate in Jesus Christ, especially through the arrival of the Magi. We'll gather again at **4:00 pm** for an all-ages **Epiphany event and chili cook-off**.

May you know God's blessing throughout this holy season! *See p. 4 for more information.*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR (CONT'D)

11TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER!

December 25, 5-8 pm in the MAC

Muhlenberg Lutheran Church, 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 Muhlenberg.

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

IT'S TIME TO SIGN UP!! 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:



SCAN ME

Planning meeting **TODAY at 12:30** in the Gathering Area. Thanks for your help with this amazing community event! *For more information, contact Cannie & Paul Campbell (540-578-4155 or email harrisonburgCCD@gmail.com).*

EPIPHANY EVENT & CHILI COOK-OFF

Fire up your crock-pots! Join us for an Epiphany event and chili cook-off **Sunday, January 5, 4:00 – 6:00**



pm in the MAC. 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

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 **Saturday, February 1, 9:00 am - 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. Register at vasynod.org/epic.

CHRISTMAS EVE HELP NEEDED

If you attend a Christmas Eve service and have just a few minutes to spare, the Altar Guild would greatly appreciate any help with communion clean up and set up, especially between the 4:30 and 6:30 services. Many hands can make light work!

MUHLENBERG NEWS

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 taught you: 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!

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 rsanders9@verizon.net.

Reusable wrapping: minimize the impact your gifts have on local landfills by packaging them in reusable or biodegradable materials. Use a gift bag or basket. Wrapping gifts in blankets or table linens creates practical and reusable packaging options.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NEEDED

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

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

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. **Deadline: December 31, 2019.**

MUHLENBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH: A WELLSPRING OF GOD'S GRACE

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

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 donate 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.



CHRISTMAS CARD CHALLENGE: BE RELATIONAL

The Care Committee challenges and encourages each person or family to send a personal Christmas card to another person or family in the congregation:

- someone in your neighborhood Shepherd group, perhaps someone you do not know or do not know well
- a newer member
- one of the sick, bereaved, or homebound members (see Care & Prayer List at the Connection Center)

We suggest you include a personal note or prayer for their family. Pray for that person or family as you put it in the mail.

Cards are available at the Welcome Desk in the Gathering Area.



JCREW

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

WATERPARK TODAY!

TODAY - 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

Contact Rebecca Pettit
(304-939-0528 or pettitre4@gmail.com)
for more information.

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

Dec. 22: We will have a Christmas party in the Nielsen Room, **2:00-4:00 pm**. Join us for a service activity, snacks, and games. Bring a funny or odd gift for a white elephant gift exchange (\$10 limit).

Jan. 25-26: Church Lock-In. We will gather at 6:00 pm for dinner, a service activity, games, movies, *some* sleep, and attend 8:00 am worship Sunday morning.

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.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Children's Church is held every Sunday in the Nielsen Room (downstairs) for ages 3 – 3rd grade.

- **1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays – 11:00**
- **2nd & 4th Sundays – 9:30**

It begins after the Children's Time with the pastors. Leaders take children downstairs for Children's Church. They return to their families in the sanctuary during Sharing of the Peace!



NO SUNDAY CHRISTIAN FORMATION DECEMBER 29

All children are invited to remain in the sanctuary and join their family for a special service of Lessons and Carols.



JOYS, THANKS & CONCERNS

✠ The children in JAMers (Elementary Youth Group) want to thank everyone who helped with the Salvation Army Santa Bags, from those who brought in items to those who sorted and filled the bags. Using “Our hands to do God’s Work,” children, youth and adults together filled 40+ bags that will bring joy to seniors in our community! We also thank all who brought gifts for the Salvation Army Tree, your spirit of giving and generosity will help to make this Christmas brighter for children in our area.

✠ We thank you for remembering us and for your gifts and carols. God bless you all!
Dick & Jo Umberger

RESERVING ALTAR FLOWERS



The 2020 chart is available in the sign-up book at the Connection Center. Reserve your special dates to remember or honor a loved one! 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. Thank you in advance for contributing to the worship experience.

TOO MANY CALENDARS?

Have you been bombarded with 2020 calendars from charities or other vendors? If so, we could use a few in the church office. Please place them in Linda Depoy’s mailbox and she will distribute to other staff who need them. We will thank you all year long!

DAILY DEVOTIONS

PRAYING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

For individual and family use. Scripture citations taken from ELW’s 3-Year Daily Lectionary, p. 1121 1132 (Year A).

Mon. Acts 5:12-16 **Thu. Galatians 3:23-29**
Tue. Jude 17-25 **Fri. Galatians 4:1-7**
Wed. Matt. 8:14-17, 28-34 **Sat. John 1:31-36**
Sunday: Matthew 1:18-25

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

December 16-22, 2019

Mon. 2:00 pm Weekly Staff Meeting
6:30 pm Congregation Council Mtg.

Tue. 8:30 am Go-Go Group Breakfast
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
6:30 pm Pastors’ Book Club
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

Thu. 7:00 pm Longest Night Service
(at Trinity Presbyterian)

Sun. Fourth Sunday of Advent
8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 am Holy Communion
9:30 am Christian Formation
3:00 pm Wightman Recital

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).