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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 18, 2022

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

RED CARPET PREMIERE Children's Christmas Pageant "God Wants a Re-Do"



Ever wonder what happens behind the scenes of the Christmas story? Premiering this Sunday following the 11:00 am service is our Christmas Pageant, "God Wants a Re-Do"

by Niki Harvell. We'll go behind the scenes of the Christmas story to see the real reasons God sent Jesus to the world in this way. Gabriel takes on new life as an overly imaginative and rambunctious angel with crazy ideas for how the story should go, but ultimately serves as God's messenger of the good (and unfortunately for Gabriel, the simple) news.

We'll meet in the **Gathering Area at 12:15 pm** for snacks and fellowship, **then at 1:00 pm** the participants in the Christmas Pageant will walk a red carpet into the Sanctuary to watch "God Wants a Re-Do" on the big screen. This is a fun afternoon celebrating the immense talent of the youth of Muhlenberg. You can also catch the **digital premiere** live at home on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) at **4:00 pm**. Share the link with family and friends!

CONGREGATION COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Merry Christmas, Muhlenberg! Your Council had their final meeting for the year on December 12. We had a fun Christmas potluck and did good work for Muhlenberg. We said goodbye to our outgoing Council members: Sandra Blade, Jenny Gibson, Bill Compton ... and ME! It was a bittersweet meeting for me, being my last. I've had a wonderful experience serving as your President. The time has been truly meaningful.

Other things we did at our meeting ...

- Got an update from our Treasurer that we have a VERY good chance of ending 2022 in the black!!! Praise be to God for that!
- Heard an update on our Community Christmas Dinner. There are still things you can do to help, so see page 5 for details.
- We voted to allow our church staff to have an additional five paid sick days retroactive for 2022 and for 2023.

We voted in a new Executive Committee for the 2023 Council. Congratulations to the following: Meg Wightman, President; Kevin Stees, Vice President; Rachel Peters, Secretary; Sarah Sunde, Treasurer. Please give these folks a pat on the back and a CONGRATS when you see them in worship.

~continued on page 2~

CONGREGATION COUNCIL (CONT'D)

As you're finishing up your Christmas shopping, please don't forget to put Muhlenberg on your list. 2022 donations must be received in the office **no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, December 30**. Thanks to everyone for their generosity.

Greta K. Willis, 2022 Congregation Council President

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

CAMERON MATTHEW SLOWINSKI Baptized, A New Child of God



Welcome Cameron Matthew Slowinski, son of Eric & Annie Slowinski and grandson of Mike & Mary Jane Slowinski, into the Body of Christ and the Muhlenberg family at the 11:00 am service! Cameron's sponsors are Nathan and Allie Wine. Welcome to the Lord's family, Cameron!

CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING

During the Christian Formation hour at 9:45 am, our Confirmation class and High School students will decorate the Christmas tree in the Gathering Area together.

CARE MINISTRY

The Care Committee has prepared "Goodie Bags" for delivery to anyone - especially those recovering from illness, surgery or in need of an uplifting gesture! Send name(s) to Crystl Whitmire (crystlwhitmire@comcast.net) or Linda Morrison (lindamm778@gmail.com) as soon as possible or request a goodie bag from the Care Committee. Bags are available in the Gathering Area between services **TODAY (12/18)**.



THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY Wednesdays, 10:30 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 Lauren, this group meets via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/200491556>

Note: Bible Study **will not meet December 28**.

ADVENT CHORAL EVENSONG Wednesday, December 21, 7:30 pm

Join us for the final Advent Choral Evensong of the season. This service will be available in person as well as live-streamed on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

The use of candles with minimal lighting will enhance the service experience and trustfully foster a feeling of peacefulness and nearness with God during this Advent season, as we prepare for the coming of the Lord.



CHRISTMAS EVE & CHRISTMAS DAY

We have many opportunities to worship on Christmas Eve, and will hold a 10 am service on Christmas Day. See page 5 for details. We look forward to celebrating with you!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

LONGEST NIGHT: COMMUNITY WORSHIP Tuesday, December 20, 7:30 pm At Trinity Presbyterian Church

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20
AT 7:00 PM

LONGEST NIGHT
COMMUNITY WORSHIP
Hosted at Trinity Presbyterian Church

Harrisonburg Ecumenical Partners

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 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. This year, the service will be hosted at **Trinity Presbyterian Church (725 S. High St.)** with leaders from all participating congregations.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER December 25 at 3:00 pm in the MAC

Muhlenberg will host the annual **Harrisonburg Community Christmas dinner in the MAC.** Doors will open at **3:00 pm with the meal served at 3:30 pm.** Make plans to share God's love with your neighbors. There are a variety of ways you can volunteer, both before and on Christmas Day. Can you help decorate or cook? Visit the website below to sign up:



<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040c48aca92da7f58-harrisonburg1>

EPIPHANY CHILI COOK OFF Sunday, January 8, 4:30-6:30 pm



Mark your calendars for the second annual Epiphany Chili Cook Off in Wayland Hall and the Nielsen Room. Plan ahead and enter your favorite chili recipe - regular, white or vegetarian for the Muhlenberg Great Chili Cook Off! Proceeds from voting will benefit People Helping People. **We will also need corn bread, salad and dessert as well as volunteers to help.** Contact Barbara Roadcap (540-830-1896 or bbroadcap@gmail.com) if you can help.

We will have dinner, followed by a short service and Epiphany traditions like Chalking the Door and Burning of the Greens, **so bring a branch from your Christmas tree or wreath** to place in the fire.

Visit the Connection Center for a copy of our newsletter or visit our website, www.muhenberglutheran/adventchristmas for full details about all the exciting things happening at Muhlenberg this Advent/Christmas season.

Due to the Christmas holiday, the deadline for The Chimes next week is Tuesday, 12/20 at 8:00 am. The church office will be closed December 23 & 26.

FROM OUR FINANCE MANAGER

YEAR-END GIVING

The season of Advent has already begun, and this happy time of celebrating Christmas means that the end of the year will soon be upon us, too! Perhaps many of you are setting aside a special Christmas or end-of-year donation for Muhlenberg, and those gifts will be very much appreciated!

You should have recently received a preliminary year-end contribution statement, allowing you to see how much you have given so far in 2022, and also calculate what you would like to give before the end of the year.

If you have plans to fulfill a 2022 donation amount to our congregation, please mark your calendars to make sure your cash or checks arrive in our office **no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, December 30**. Mailing your donation to the church can be fine, as long as you send them early enough to ensure that they will arrive by or before December 30 (assuming you prefer your gift to be counted for 2022). Any checks or cash donations arriving in our office after this deadline will be counted toward 2023 giving.

Online giving will allow an exception, since we can count any gifts being deposited into the church account by or before December 31 as counting for 2022. However, since online donations take several business days to complete the process, please make sure the transaction is dated no later than December 27 to insure arrival by December 31.

Thank you in advance for your generosity to Muhlenberg Lutheran Church.

2023 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Earlier this fall, we asked the congregation to let us know if you would like to order a booklet of 2023 offering envelopes. For those of you who replied and asked for these, offering envelopes are ready for pick up. You will find your offering booklet in the Gathering Area on a table just ahead of the main entrance, against the stairwell railing. They are arranged in alphabetical order to make it easier to find your envelopes. They will remain out for pick up over the next two Sundays of 2022. After January 1, you can pick up your offering booklet from the church office or call me to make other arrangements. If you didn't order a booklet but would like one, please let me know. Thank you!

Jane Eanes, Finance Manager

REMINDER

CHURCH PHONE UPDATE

We are much closer to having a permanent solution to our phone system outage, **but our temporary solution is working well. Please**

DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL our main number (540-434-3496) anytime. If we are unavailable or you call after hours, you can leave a voicemail message and Liz or Linda will be glad to pass your message along to the appropriate person.

You may also send a general email to us at info@muhlenberglutheran.org, or contact the pastors at their respective email address:

Pastor Lauren - eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org

Pastor Alex - zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org.



CHRISTMAS SEASON

Christmas Eve Worship

Fireside Christmas ~ 2:00 pm

We'll gather around the warmth of the fire pits as we share an abbreviated Christmas Eve liturgy.

Christmas Eve Services ~ 4:30, 6:30 & 9:00 pm

These services will feature a full traditional liturgy, singing of beloved hymns, the proclamation of the birth of Christ, Holy Communion, and a candlelit singing of Silent Night. The 4:30 pm service will be particularly appropriate for young children, and the nursery will be staffed at that service as well. The 6:30 pm service will be live-streamed on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) so you can worship digitally wherever you are.

Christmas Day Worship ~ 10:00 am

This service of Holy Communion will include readings and carols proclaiming the birth of our Savior. You are invited to bring a small plate of Christmas cookies or sweet bread to share during our fellowship time following the service.

New Year's Day Worship ~ 10:00 am

Celebrate the start of a new year! Come to thank God for new beginnings and hope for the year to come.

Community Christmas Dinner ~ NEXT Sunday, December 25, 3:00 pm



The Harrisonburg Community Christmas Dinner is back! Make plans now to share God's love with your neighbors right here in our community. Muhlenberg will host the annual **Community Christmas dinner in the MAC**. Doors will open to our guests at **3:00 pm with the meal served at 3:30 pm**. Everyone is needed to make this event a success! There are a variety of ways you can volunteer, both before and on Christmas Day. Can you help decorate

or cook? Perhaps donate a dessert or a \$10 gift card? Or maybe you could volunteer to be a table host? Please consider saying "yes" when asked to help with this event.

Visit <https://harrisonburgcommunitychristmasdinner.weebly.com/> to find out more or to volunteer, sign-up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040c48aca92da7f58-harrisonburg1>. For more information, contact Karen Thomsen (kethomsen25@gmail.com or 540- 421-4431).

MUHLENBERG NEWS

CREATION CARE TIP



Wrap presents in gift bags. Once you tear the wrapping paper off a holiday gift it ends up in the recycle bin, but gift bags can be reused. Use the comics section of the newspaper, outdated maps, or paper grocery bags to wrap gifts. Look for gift bags made with recycled content or use plain paper bags and decorate them yourself with recycled holiday cards.

OPEN DOORS THANK YOU

The Local and Global Mission Committee wishes to thank everyone who helped feed homeless guests at Open Doors. Each night the shelter was filled with the maximum of 40 guests who appreciated warm dinners served by our volunteers.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION NEWS

SUNDAY CLASS LOCATIONS, 9:45

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

Grades 6 - 8 ~ Augsburg Room

Devotional Classics Adult Class ~
Nielsen Room

Faith Lens High School & Adult Class ~
Kairos Room

To attend virtually, use this Zoom Link:

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

YOUTH NEWS



FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING

Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

VIRGINIA SYNOD YOUTH EVENT Winter Celebration, January 27-29

The Synod's annual faith-sharing retreat for 9th - 12th graders, as well as their adult advisors, will take place at Eagle Eyrie Conference Center in Lynchburg.

Winter Celebration includes Large Group gatherings with lots of singing, energy, comedy, worship, and a presentation on our event theme. After each Large Group gathering, participants gather in Small Groups. These are made up of a handful of youth and a couple of adult leaders. In small groups, participants get to know other Lutheran youth from Virginia and discuss life and faith and other topics that arise throughout the weekend. There is also free time on Saturday afternoon when participants can continue to grow relationships, enjoy the coffee and ice cream shop, and participate in or watch the talent show. The evenings are for relaxing in your Cottage and talking about the day. You can find more information [HERE](#) and register for the event [HERE](#). **Early Bird Discount ends December 19.**

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: (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org /540-434-3496)
Like us at [facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran)

DIGITAL MINISTRY

It was a joyful Sunday last week as the Tweens and Cherub Choirs performed during the 11:00 am worship service. Check out the video on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#). Aren't all of our Choirs wonderful!



DIGITAL DEVOTIONS

Did you know that our Advent Devotions are available digitally as well as in print? You can find snippets of the daily devotions posted on our Facebook group [Muhlenberg Digital Devotionals](#) or each day on our Instagram Stories [@MuhlenbergLC](#).

We hope you'll engage with, enjoy, and share these thoughtful reflections throughout the Advent season.

TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

12/4	8:30 Holy Communion	67
	11:00 Holy Communion	78
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	38
	Total Views this Week	196
	Hours Viewed this Week	59.6
12/11	8:30 Holy Communion	56
	11:00 Holy Communion	104
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	35

NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

Thank you for your generosity in November as we saw an increase in gifts and offerings and are hopeful that will continue in December and the new year. As the end of the fiscal year approaches, I believe Muhlenberg is in a position to finish the year with a balanced budget if expenses remain stable and gifts and offerings increase this month. Please prayerfully consider Muhlenberg for additional year end contributions.

Sarah A. Sunde, Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through November 2022

	2022 YTD Actual	2022 YTD Budget	2021 YTD Actual
Gifts & Offerings	\$470,929	\$581,167	\$529,634
Total Income	\$585,087	\$704,711	\$614,904
Total Expenses	\$579,562	\$799,558	\$716,028
Excess Income/(Deficit)	\$5,525	\$(94,847)	\$(101,124)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 10,601.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 1,344.23
Total Giving	\$ 11,945.23

To give online, scan here →



WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

December 19 - 26, 2022

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

Mon	1:00 pm	Weekly Staff Meeting
Tues	6:30 pm	Celebration Singers
	7:00 pm	Gloria Dei Ringers
Wed	10:30 am	Bible Study via Zoom
	7:30 pm	Advent Choral Evensong
Fri		Church Office Closed
Sat		Christmas Eve
	2:00 pm	Fireside Service
	4:30 pm	Holy Communion in person
	6:30 pm	Holy Communion in person and Livestreamed via Facebook and YouTube
	9:00 pm	Holy Communion in person
Sun		Christmas Day
	10:00 am	Holy Communion in person and Livestreamed via Facebook and YouTube
Mon		Church Office Closed



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

Oris Griffin

Doris Grimm

Larry and Sheila Haaland

Bruce and Wanda Hamilton

Trent, Dani, Ainsley and Paige Hargens

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)