



# 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](mailto:info@muhlenberglutheran.org) † Website: [www.muhlenberglutheran.org](http://www.muhlenberglutheran.org)

Senior Pastor Lauren Eanes: [eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org) Associate Pastor Alex Zuber: [zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org)

**December 20, 2020**

## **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

### **WHAT'S THE BUZZ**

#### **UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL SERVICES**

The Gathering Together Task Force has put into place new guidelines for weddings, funerals and baptisms. As the local COVID numbers continue to rise, we will abide by the Governor's limit of no more than ten people at a gathering, indoors or outdoors. (Parking lot events allow for larger gatherings because people can remain in their vehicles.) You can read the complete Muhlenberg Gathering Together guidance at [muhlenberglutheran.org/covid19](http://muhlenberglutheran.org/covid19).

### **TODAY AT MUHLENBERG**

#### **CHARLOTTE KNAPPENBERGER**

##### **Baptized, A New Child of God**

Welcome Charlotte Elizabeth, daughter of Kyle & Jacqui Knappenberger into the Body of Christ and the Muhlenberg family! Charlotte was baptized last Sunday (12/13), and the video will be part of today's worship service. We continue to surround Elizabeth with our promises and God's promises through our responses in worship. Welcome to the Lord's family, Elizabeth!

### **TODAY AT MUHLENBERG**

#### **CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM CHRISTMAS LETTERS**

Nearly 30 young people will participate in our online program, *Christmas Letters*, premiering **TODAY, 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 until January 2, so if you miss the premiere you can watch it another time. 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 **TODAY, 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. For more information, visit [muhlenberglutheran.org/longestnight](http://muhlenberglutheran.org/longestnight).

## 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 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Class  
**9:30 – 10:00** 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> 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:

12/6	8:30 Communion	21
	11:00 Total Live Views	112
	Total Views this Week	347
	Hours Viewed this Week	140.5
12/13	8:30 Communion	20
	11:00 Total Live Views	105
	4:00 Parking Lot Service	40

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Through November 2020			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$561,483	\$778,337	\$624,790
Total Receipts*	\$719,884	\$877,902	\$715,607
Expenses	\$727,723	\$891,130	\$748,891
<b>Excess Income/ (Expenses)</b>	<b>(\$7,839)</b>	<b>(\$13,228)</b>	<b>(\$33,283)</b>

\* Includes \$12,331.53 – federal PPP proceeds

*Information not available this week.*

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.

*See p. 5 for news about a CARES Act special tax deduction.*

## **CHRISTMAS NEWS**

### **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, Christian Formation, or fellowship that day.



## THIS WEEK

### ADVENT DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Our emailed digital devotionals have been appreciated by many members. To sign up to receive the last few, click [HERE](#). They are also posted daily in the Muhlenberg Daily Devotions Facebook group.

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*Wednesday AM Bible Study and Holden Evening Prayer will **not be held** December 23 or 30. Both return January 6.*

### 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

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.

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### ALTERNATIVE ADVENT...



Each day during devotions, put something in the box you picked up at Advent-ure Sunday (or any 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 between **3:00-6:00 pm**.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### VIRGINIA INTERFAITH CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

#### Day for All People

**January 18-21**

Join people of faith and goodwill from across Virginia to make your voice heard on economic, racial, social, and environmental justice issues. Learn the issues from dynamic speakers and workshops, meet with legislators and engage with advocates in your region. Register at [tinyurl.com/dfap2021](http://tinyurl.com/dfap2021).



### ONLINE WINTER CELEBRATION

**January 22-24, 2021**

**Registration Now Open**

Winter Celebration is Virginia Synod's annual weekend faith-formation retreat for youth in 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades and adult leaders. This year we will gather online for large group experiences with lots of singing, skits and fun, and small group experiences with lots of new friends, games, conversation, and faith sharing! **Deadline to register is January 5, 2021.** To register after this date, please contact Rev. Dave Delaney ([delaney@vasynod.org](mailto:delaney@vasynod.org) or 540-529-6893).

For more information and to register online, visit

[www.vasynod.org/event/winter-celebration](http://www.vasynod.org/event/winter-celebration).

## MUHLENBERG NEWS

### TREASURER NEEDED

Our Treasurer, Bill Vance, will be moving to North Carolina this spring. We are grateful for all Bill has done to manage our finances this year! We are now looking for a new Treasurer, and it would be ideal to identify this person before Bill moves, so he can help train them. 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 Committee, 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 Congregation Council President Gary Calleo ([vnccall@yahoo.com](mailto:vnccall@yahoo.com) or 540-421-5463) if you're interested in learning more.

### 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](mailto:rsanders97@verizon.net).*

Give the gift of time: call, send cards, invite a "face time" or Zoom with homebound church members, family members and friends. Simplify gift giving. For example, draw names and set a limit to spend. Re-gifting is acceptable, just be thoughtful about original giver. Perhaps give a bottle of festive wine (bottles are recyclable). If you can only do one thing this Advent Season, walk outdoors and enjoy Creation and its changing seasons.

## CARES ACT NEWS

### SPECIAL \$300 DEDUCTION FOR DONATIONS IN 2020

Ordinarily, you can only deduct charitable contributions on your tax return if you itemize your deductions, but under the CARES Act, individuals can deduct \$300 in cash donations to a qualifying organization. This special deduction is an "above-the-line" deduction, which means that it reduces your taxable income even before you apply the standard or itemized deduction. Consider a special gift to Muhlenberg, which allows our ministry to happen and comes with a bonus tax deduction for you!

## CARE COMMITTEE NEWS

### 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.

# 2020 Poinsettia Offerings and Alternative Giving



*Poinsettias decorating the church are given **to the Glory of God** and in memory or in honor of those we wish to remember during this special season. (Poinsettias may be picked up Christmas Eve, 3 – 6 pm.)*

## DONOR

Alex Zuber  
Chuck & Jill May  
Chuck & Jill May  
The Copeland Family  
Stephanie Hudy  
Brenda, Lisa and Amanda Branner  
Don Darr and Bette Rhodes  
Frank & Betty Lambert

## IN MEMORY OF ...

Father Thaddeus Zuber  
Our Parents  
Our Grandparents  
Zack Fletchall  
Adolph & Anna Platz (parents)  
Lee Branner  
H. K. and Sue Darr  
Our Parents



# ALTERNATIVE GIVING

*Special offerings to Habitat for Humanity and ELCA Disaster Response are given to the Glory of God and in memory or in honor of those we wish to remember.*

## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

### DONOR

Jon & Jenny Gibson  
Jon & Lori Oliver  
Diane & Bob Wolfe  
Susan & David Lawrence  
Wylie & Diane Walton  
Wendy Arbogast  
Phyllis Sonner

### IN MEMORY OF ...

Fred & Mary Ella Gibson  
Our Loving Parents  
Roger Wolfe  
Mary Doris Joecks  
Molly Elizabeth  
Retha Pitsenbarger and Nancy Clark  
Loved Ones



### DONOR

Kathy Thompson  
B. J. Daniel  
Stephanie & Mark Hudy  
Linda Depoy

### IN HONOR OF ...

Muhlenberg Pastors and Staff  
Zachary, Mary, Mark and Zoe Daniel  
Our Children  
Muhlenberg Office Assistants

## ELCA DISASTER RESPONSE



### DONOR

Jon & Lori Oliver  
Wendy Arbogast

### IN MEMORY OF ...

Our Loving Parents  
Gina Arbogast and Grandparents

### DONOR

Kathy Thompson

### IN HONOR OF ...

Muhlenberg Pastors and Staff

## 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 [depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org)). Submissions will be printed with consideration for space and appropriateness at the discretion of the pastors and editor.

✚ Children in JAMers (our elementary youth group) thank everyone who helped with the Salvation Army Santa Bags — from those who contributed items to those who sorted and filled the bags. Children, youth and adults worked together to use “Our hands to do God’s Work” and 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.



*The pastors and staff of  
Muhlenberg Lutheran Church  
wish you a blessed Christmas  
and happy, healthy New Year!*

## WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

**December 21- 28**

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

- Mon. 2:00 pm** Weekly Staff Meeting  
**6:30 pm** Congregation Council Mtg.
- Thu. Christmas Eve**  
**3:00 – 6:00 pm** Pick Up/Drop Off Items  
**3:00-3:30 pm** Carols and Story  
**4:30 pm** Christmas Eve Service  
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)  
**5:30-6:30 pm** Luminaries  
**7:00 pm** Christmas Eve Service of Word  
and Sacrament via [ZOOM](#)  
**9:00 pm** Christmas Eve Service  
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
- Fri. Christmas Day**  
**Church Office Closed**  
**10:00 am** Christmas Morning Concert  
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
- Sun. First Sunday of Christmas**  
**11:00 am** Lessons & Carols  
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
- Mon. Church Office Closed**

### SPECIAL DEADLINE

Due to the holidays and lead time needed for mailing *The Chimes* to those without internet access, the deadline to submit article information for the December 27 issue is **8 am Tuesday, December 22**. Submit information to Parish Administrator Linda Depoy: [depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org/434-3496](mailto:depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org/434-3496)