



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 22, 2019

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBER

Barbara "B.J." Daniel



B.J. was born and raised in western Pennsylvania. She found her second home in the Shenandoah Valley 30 + years ago and currently lives in the Cross Keys area. She retired after 25 years at JMU where she was an Academic Advisor and Career Counselor. Blessing her life are her son, daughter-in-law and 2-year-old grandson.

B.J. is interested in art, music and learning new things and is exploring what the valley artisans have to offer. She began attending Wednesday noon services during Lent of 2017. Through Muhlenberg's faith community, engaging study groups, individual dialog, and liturgical worship focused on the Word, she has experienced new growth and a powerful renewal.

B.J. will join the Muhlenberg family at the 9:30 service. Her sponsors are Bruce & Karen Matthias.

ALICE WIGHTMAN RECITAL

Alice Wightman will present a piano recital **TODAY, 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!

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

This week, we emailed a newsletter about Christmas and Epiphany opportunities. Hard copies are available at the Connection Center.

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:

muhlenberglutheran.org



THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

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 of 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. 3 for more information.*

FINANCIAL NEWS

LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCE

8:00 Worship	91	Wed. Noon	8
9:30 Worship	95		
11:00 Worship	<u>143</u>		
Total	329		

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	\$ 6,033.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ <u>6,057.50</u>
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 12,090.50

See Connection Center notebook for details.

November Thrivent Choice Dollars: \$15

To give online, scan here →



FINANCIAL TIP

DO YOU NEED TO TAKE A REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTION FROM YOUR IRA?

If you are 70 ½ years old and need to take a Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA, you have an opportunity to support Muhlenberg and save money on your taxes. Under the current tax law, a gift made directly from an IRA to a qualifying charitable organization counts toward your required IRA minimum distribution requirement. Making a gift directly from your IRA to Muhlenberg allows you to support ministries you love and to lower both your adjusted gross income and your taxable income, resulting in a lower overall tax liability. Talk to your tax advisor to find out if this strategy will work for you.

THIS WEEK (CONT'D)

11TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER!

December 25, 5-8 pm in the MAC

The 11th Annual Community Christmas Dinner is almost here! 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.

TODAY, 12:00 - 3:00 pm we will decorate the MAC and prepare much of the food for Wednesday's meal. If you would like to learn more, join us at noon or choose an option:

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:

For more information, contact *Cannie & Paul Campbell* (578-4155 or harrisonburgCCD@gmail.com).



SCAN ME

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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 Chalking of the Door and Burning of the Greens, so bring a branch from your Christmas tree or a wreath to place in the fire and we will enjoy fellowship 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 Leadership Conference

at Muhlenberg, Harrisonburg



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.

MUHLENBERG NEWS

NEW COUNCIL OFFICERS

The following officers were elected to serve in 2020. We are blessed to have them share their time and talents with us.

PresidentGary Calleo
Vice PresidentGreta Willis
Secretary.....Jenny Gibson

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!

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.

Learn to reuse products in different ways, e.g. plastic microwave dinner trays used as picnic dishes, coffee cans used to pack lunch. Though an object is used for one function or purpose, it can be repurposed for other functions. This practice saves money and reduces clutter.

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!

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.

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**. 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.

WHY CHILDREN NEED TO BE IN CHURCH ON CHRISTMAS EVE

A resource for parents and guardians can be found at the Connection Center. Please pick up a copy and see why coming to church as a family on Christmas Eve is important!

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.

NEED A LAST-MINUTE GIFT IDEA?

GOOD GIFTS ADVENT TREE

And Advent Devotional Calendars

There is a small tree in the Caring Corner with ELCA Good Gifts ornaments. The ornaments 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

It's Not Too Late!

During Advent we offer an opportunity to do something a bit different as part of your Advent devotions. It's not too late to participate! Members can take home a cardboard box and 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 by Christmas Eve**. We will bless the boxes and share them with those in need.

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.



DAY FOR ALL PEOPLE

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy will hold the 2020 Day for All People **Wednesday, January 22, 8:30 – 3:00 pm** in Richmond. Register online; don't miss the January 13 deadline!

We'll meet for a day of fellowship, education and advocacy. The morning will include a welcome address and policy briefings, after which we will meet with our senators and delegates. We will meet at the church to carpool. *Contact Diane Bayer (434-3496) with any questions.*

ENDOWMENT GRANT

Deadline: Tuesday, December 31, 2019

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*

ALPHA TEENS

Contact *Rebecca Pettit*
(304-939-0528 or [pettitre4@gmail.com](mailto:pettetre4@gmail.com))
for more information.

Join us for these December & January events!

TODAY: We will have a Christmas party in the Nielsen Room, **2:00-4:00 pm.**

- Service event: baking dessert and/or bread for the Community Christmas Dinner.
- Games and snacks.
- White elephant gift exchange. Bring a wrapped funny/odd gift. Limit \$10.

Jan. 25-26: Church Lock-In. *See next week's issue of The Chimes for details.*

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 following the 9:30 liturgy.

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.

JAMERS (GRADES 2-5)

Meet **Sunday, January 12, 4:00** in the MAC to celebrate Epiphany. Join the fun and fellowship as together you serve others.

SECOND HOME NEWS

*All of us at Second Home
wish you a Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!
Thank you for your support!*



JOYS, THANKS & CONCERNS

✚ Thank you for blessing us with your cards, calls and prayers as we grieve the loss of our beloved Molly Elizabeth. We are grateful for the support of our church family and your acts of kindness will always be remembered.

Garland & Jeannie Long (grandparents)
Wylie & Diane Walton (godparents)

✚ We offer sympathy to Norwood Beery and his family following the death of his sister, Dorothea Hopkins, on December 18. Dorothea had suffered from pancreatic cancer.

CORRECTION

The worship booklet for last Sunday, Dec. 15 should have included the following altar flower designation:

Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Juanita Wightman (Bill's mother) by Bill & Meg Wightman.



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 23-29, 2019

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

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

Wed. Christmas Day
Church Office Closed
5:30 am Community Christmas Dinner
(doors open at 5:00)

Thu. Church Office Closed

Sun. First Sunday of Christmas
8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 am Holy Communion

Tuesday, December 24, 8:00 am is the
deadline for the 12/29 issue of *The*

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).