

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
**7:00PM TRADITIONAL SERVICE**

**BEHOLD!**



**MUHLENBERG**  
**LUTHERAN CHURCH**

# THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD: CHRISTMAS EVE

DECEMBER 24, 2023 ~ 7:00 PM

## WELCOME

We welcome you in the name of Christ. If you're new to Muhlenberg, we're glad you're here! Please complete one of the blue cards in the pew rack and place it in the offering basket, or scan this QR code with your smartphone to complete the visitor card digitally.



You are invited to join in all parts of worship. Everything you need is printed in this worship booklet. Portions of our worship in **bold print** are to be spoken/sung by the whole congregation. We stand for portions of our worship service, but please feel free to remain seated if you prefer.

All who desire to receive Holy Communion are welcome at the table. If you do not wish to receive, you are invited to come forward for a blessing. For instructions on receiving the bread and wine, see the Communion section later in this booklet.

Worship will be livestreamed at 7:00 pm. The cameras will be primarily focused on our worship leaders and offer some wide angle views of the sanctuary. If you have questions or concerns about appearing on camera, contact Communication Minister Christian Perritt ([perritt@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:perritt@muhlenberglutheran.org)) or one of the pastors.

We invite you to return for worship in the coming weeks. Our regular Sunday services are at 8:30 am and 11:00 am with Holy Communion at both services.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

While we do not require masks in the building, wearing a mask for any reason is always welcomed. We continue to follow the current CDC guidance, and we request that anyone who experiences symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, stay home, self-isolate and get tested. Please wear a well-fitted mask if you have a known exposure to COVID in the past 10 days. Thank you for doing all you can to help care for one another by reducing the spread of germs in our community!

## CANDLES

Please pick up a candle, available in the Gathering Area, for use during the closing portion of our worship. Battery-operated candles for children are available from ushers. Please leave candles in the basket at the entrance as you depart.

## CHILDREN

We love having children in worship and welcome their active participation. Activity packets for kids are available in the Gathering Area. In addition, our fully equipped nursery located at the north end of the Gathering Area (main church entrance) will be open and fully staffed for this service.

## OTHER NOTES

- **Amplification devices** for the hearing impaired are available from ushers or at the Welcome Desk.
- **Large print bulletins** are available from the ushers.
- A **restroom** is located at the north end of the Gathering Area (additional restrooms downstairs).

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### MUHLENBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH: A WELLSPRING OF GOD'S GRACE

Open ✝ Authentic ✝ Relational ✝ Serving

Pastor Lauren Eanes

Pastor Alex Zuber

281 E. Market Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

(540) 434-3496  
[www.muhlenberglutheran.org](http://www.muhlenberglutheran.org)

If you're  
interested in  
why we do what  
we do, follow  
the notes in this  
column.

# WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION

## GATHERING

We come from our homes, our labor, our struggles, and our joys – which we share in fellowship as a Christian community. We are gathered together as God's people to worship.

## PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

## WELCOME

**PRELUDE ~ E'en So Lord Quickly Come** (P. Manz)

Christmas Choir

(We stand)

## CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth  
and then formed humankind in God's own image;  
long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of  
the covenant;  
twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah;  
thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam  
danced in freedom;  
eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges;  
one thousand years from the anointing of David as king,  
in fulfillment of the times and years and months and days discerned by  
the prophets;  
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;  
the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome;  
the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;  
while the whole world enjoyed a span of peace,  
Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,  
desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming,  
being conceived by the Holy Spirit and nine months of growth in the womb of  
his mother—  
now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

This  
contemporary  
version of an  
ancient  
proclamation  
places the birth  
of Christ into  
human history.  
The last phrase  
reminds us that  
the nativity of  
Jesus is not only  
then but now,  
today, in our  
own time.

We sing as the  
Spirit gathers us  
for worship.  
This hymn sets  
the tone for the  
day.

## GATHERING HYMN

ELW 283

*The congregation turns and faces the cross as the procession approaches the altar,  
reminding us that Christ leads us into the presence and love of God.*

### O, Come, All Ye Faithful



- 1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
- 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
- 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
- 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

#### *Refrain*



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## HYMN OF PRAISE

ELW 289



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

(We sit)

*This prayer  
collects the  
themes from  
today's scripture  
readings.*

Liturgy, from the Greek, means “the work of the people.” Our worship is designed so we all take part. We are far more than just spectators.

The scripture readings follow a cycle, called a lectionary. We are connected with other Christians all over the world, in many denominations, reading the same texts.

## WORD

*The first half of our liturgy focuses on the Word of God through the reading of scripture and preaching. The pattern of reading, singing, reading, singing is an ancient one, which comes from Christianity's roots in Jewish synagogue worship.*

### FIRST READING ~ Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

*The reading concludes: The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.***

The Psalms were the original hymns in Holy Scripture, used by God's people for personal and corporate devotion. They continue to be prayed, sung and read by God's people all over the world as a rich and honest expression of faith.

## PSALM 96 *All sing Refrain after it is introduced by choir, then, where indicated.*

Refrain

Give the Lord glo-ry, glo-ry and hon-or.\_\_\_\_\_

Give the Lord glo-ry, glo-ry and hon-or.\_\_\_\_\_

To Verses

Final ending

hon - or.\_\_\_\_\_

1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth.  
Tell among the nations his glory.  
And his wonders among all the people.  
*Refrain*
2. For the Lord is great and highly to be praised, to be feared above all gods.  
For the gods of the nations are naught.  
It was the Lord who made the heavens.  
*Refrain*
3. Ascribe to the Lord, you families of peoples,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and power, ascribe to the Lord,  
the glory of his name.  
Bring an offering and enter his courts.  
*Refrain*
4. Worship the Lord in holy splendor.  
O tremble before him, all the earth.  
Say to the nations, "the Lord is King."  
He will judge the peoples in fairness.  
*Refrain*

We give special honor to the reading of the gospel by standing as the Word of God comes into our midst. The Bible is accompanied by candles as a symbol of Christ, the Light of the World.

## GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL we sing verses 1 & 2

ELW 275

*Please stand as the Bible is brought forth into the congregation.*



- 1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
- 2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
- 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam a - far;
- 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais-ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon-der shines the in - fant light.  
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, the new-born king.

## CHRISTMAS GOSPEL ~ Luke 2:1-20

Robert Alley, Biblical Storyteller

*We invite you to lay your bulletin aside and listen to the Biblical Storyteller.*

The Holy Gospel according to ... **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*After the reading:*

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL we sing verses 3 & 4 (see above)

(We sit)

## SERMON

Pastor Lauren Eanes

*Silence for reflection follows.*



# Love Has Come



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem    skies.    See,    all    heav-en    has    come to    pro - claim    it;  
sleep in the    hay.    See    the    glow in the    eyes of    his    moth - er;  
last - ing and free.    Love    is    Je - sus    with - in    and    a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the  
Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you,	a	Sav - ior!	Love!	Love!	Glo - ry	to	God	on	high.
name	she	whis - pers;	Love!	Love!	Je - sus,	Im - man - u - el.			
gift	of	Christ - mas.	Love!	Love!	Praise	to	you,	God	on high!

*The creeds  
(statements of  
faith) date back  
to the 4<sup>th</sup>  
century and  
contain the  
basics of what  
Christians  
around the  
world hold to be  
true.*

## **NICENE CREED**

Let us confess our faith:

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation**

**he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*The use of the  
non-capitalized  
word "catholic"  
here means  
simply  
worldwide or  
universal.*

We pray as a community. The assisting minister leads this time to gather the prayers of all, and at their invitation you may add others aloud or silently in your heart.

Much more than a pleasant greeting – we do this to proclaim God’s promise of peace to one another.

Our offerings are collected and dedicated to our Lord’s service. They support the ministries of Christ’s church in this congregation, the Virginia Synod, ELCA, and our global mission partners.

## PRAYERS

After each petition:

. . . Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The Lay Assisting Minister concludes the prayers:

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

*Have a prayer concern to share? Forms are available in the back cover of each hymnal.*

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

The congregation may greet one another with a gesture of peace using these or similar words:  
**“Peace be with you.”**

(We sit)

## MEAL

*In the second half of our liturgy, we gather around the table, following Jesus’ invitation. Here in this meal we encounter the risen Lord who gives himself for the forgiveness of sins and strengthening the Body of Christ.*

## OFFERING ~ There Is a Song in the Air (H. Sorensen)

Christmas Choir

An offering is gathered at this time to support the mission of the church and care for those in need. Our offerings are a humble and grateful response to the gifts that God has first given us. You can place a gift in the offering plate as the ushers come around, or give online by scanning the QR Code and visiting our online giving portal.

MAKE YOUR OFFERING DIGITALLY  
BY SCANNING HERE



MUHLENBERG  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

*This song  
becomes our  
prayer as our  
gifts are  
collected and  
dedicated to our  
Lord's service.*

(We stand)

## OFFERING HYMN

ELW 296



So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



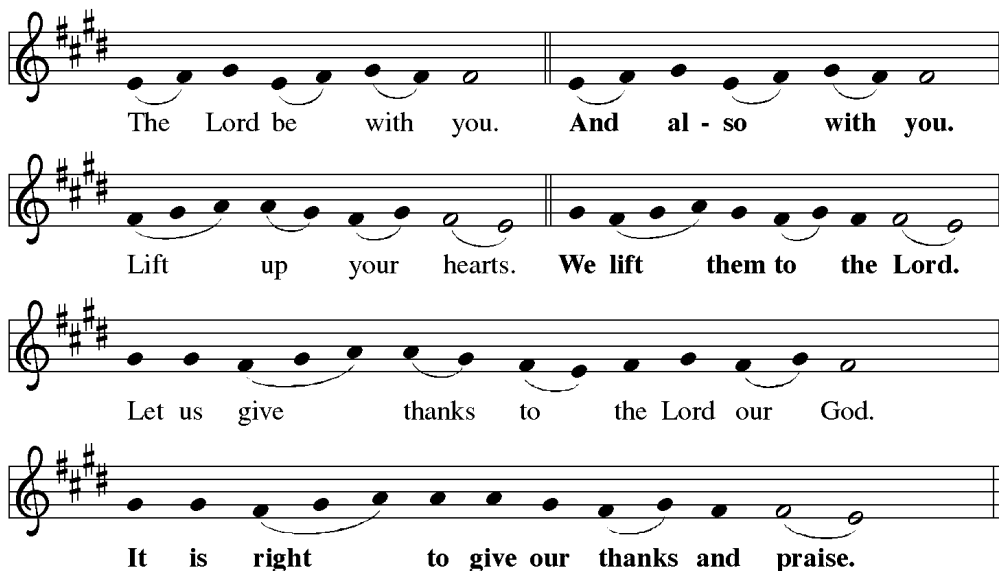
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

## OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of abundance, **receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving is an ancient part of the worship that proclaims our thanks for the gifts of God in the meal.

## GREAT THANKSGIVING



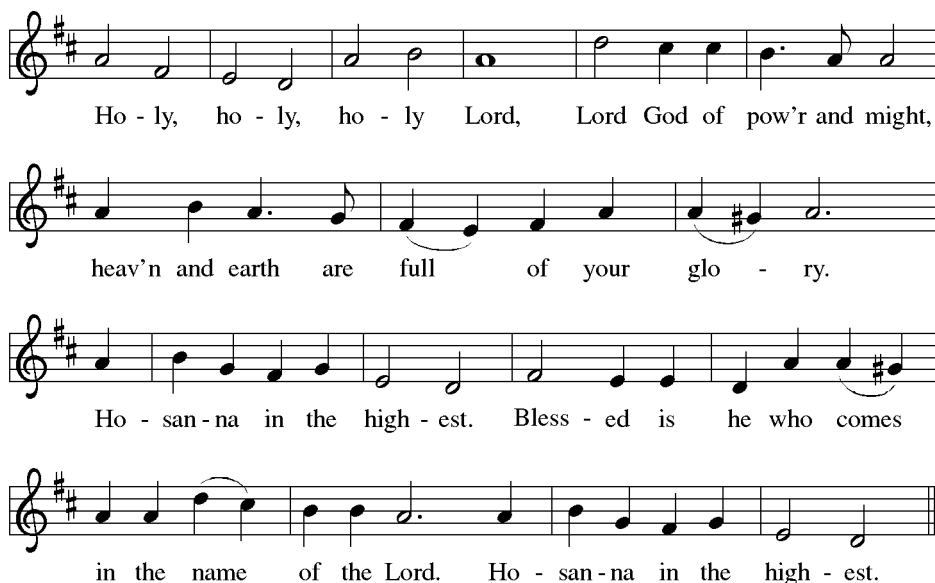
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,

heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The "Holy, Holy, Holy" echoes the heavenly chorus in Isaiah 6:3 and the crowds of Mark 11:9 as Jesus enters Jerusalem. This reminds us that we are in the presence of a God identified both by holiness and humility. Some will make the sign of the cross at the announcement of God's presence: "Blessed is He..."

*Eucharist is the  
Greek word for  
thanks.*

*These are the  
words and  
actions, the  
commands and  
promises of Jesus  
at the last  
supper with his  
disciples as  
recorded in  
scripture:  
1Cor. 11:23-26  
Matt. 26:26-29  
Luke 22:15-20*

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

Holy God,

Creator of all and Source of life,  
at the birth of time  
your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,  
you sent your Word, born of Mary,  
to shine in our darkness  
and to make us your daughters and sons.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,  
his birth and life among us,  
his death and resurrection,  
we await his coming again  
when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,  
that, held and nourished by you,  
we may live as your children,  
shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,  
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
in your holy Church,  
both now and forever. **Amen.**

*Jesus taught his disciples this prayer. In this prayer, all our needs and concerns are addressed. See ELW page 1163 for Martin Luther's explanation of this prayer in the Small Catechism.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray with confidence the words our Savior gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those**

**who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial**

**and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,**

**and the glory are yours**

**now and forever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In Christ's manger, at Christ's table, come, see what God makes known for you.

*(We sit)*

## COMMUNION

*The "last supper" was a meal that Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion. He invited them to share this meal in the future to remember him and he promised to be present in a mysterious, but very real sense.*

*All are welcome at the Lord's Table! After the invitation to communion, the ushers will direct each row to come forward. If, for any reason, you prefer not to receive communion, you are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing. If you are unable to come forward, signal an usher or raise your hand, and an assisting minister will bring the elements to you.*

*As you come forward, pick up a small cup from the table at the front and then receive the bread from the minister. Gluten-free wafers are located on the table. If you require gluten-free, please take one and present it to the pastor for blessing.*

*Next, proceed to one of the two communion assistants. The first chalice has wine, and the second chalice has grape juice.*

*As the ministers give the bread and cup to you, they say these words:*

*"The body of Christ, given for you . . . The blood of Christ, shed for you."*

*You may say: "Amen."*

*After consuming the wine/juice, please put your cup on the tray along the side wall, and return to your seat via the side aisle. **If you don't wish to remove your mask up front**, you may choose to bring the elements back to your pew to eat/drink there.*

All who desire  
to participate  
are welcome to  
receive Holy  
Communion.  
Feel free to  
remain seated if  
you prefer, or  
come forward  
for a blessing.

**MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION**

*Lamb of God*

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

*Oratorio de Noël Benedictus* (Camille Saint-Saëns)

Vocal Duet

*On Christmas Night*

ELW 274

~see next page~



# On Christmas Night



1 On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing to hear the news the  
 2 Then why should we on earth be sad, since our re-deem-er  
 3 When sin de-parts be-fore his face, then life and health come  
 4 All out of dark-ness we have light, which made the an-gels



an-gels bring. On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing to  
 made us glad? Then why should we on earth be sad, since  
 in its place. When sin de-parts be-fore his face, then  
 sing this night. All out of dark-ness we have light, which



hear the news the an-gels bring: news of great joy, news of great  
 our re-deem-er made us glad, when from our sin he set us  
 life and health come in its place. An-gels re-joice with us and  
 made the an-gels sing this night: "Glo-ry to God in high-est



mirth, news of our mer-ci-ful king's birth.  
 free, all for to gain our lib-er-ty?  
 sing, all for to see the new-born king.  
 heav'n; peace on earth, and good-will. A-men."

(We stand)

### **BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*Symbolically, we receive and share the light and love of Christ – banishing the darkness.*

### **THE SERVICE OF LIGHT**

*The pastors will begin to light the candles of worshipers at the end of each row. Please pass the light to your neighbor – the unlit candle should be the one tilted toward the lit candle, to make lighting easier and avoid dripping wax. Please be aware of those around you when lighting the candles and then please extinguish your candles after the blessing.*

### **CANDLE LIGHTING HYMN ~ Silent Night, Holy Night**

ELW 281

*~see next page~*

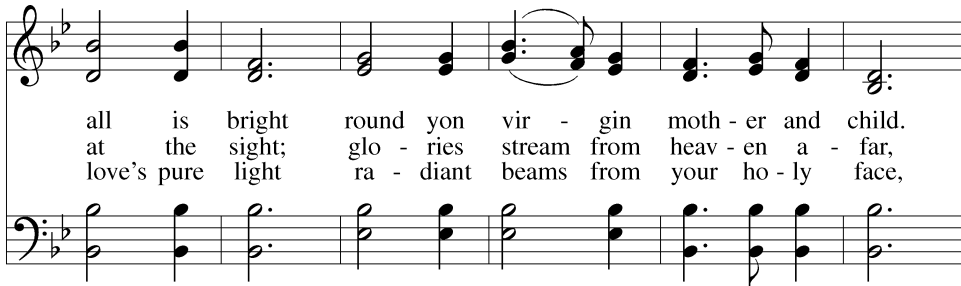


*Silent Night,  
Holy Night*


# Silent Night, Holy Night



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

## SENDING

*Our worship does not end, but continues in the world. In our daily lives we are called to be ministers of God's love and mercy as we live and serve by the power of the risen Christ.*

### PRAYER

Lord Jesus, Son of God, Love's Pure Light, by your holy birth you have brought us dignity, hope, and salvation. May the beams radiating from your face shine in our hearts and lives. May the good news of your birth pierce the silence of this and every night. And may you lead us from this place into the darkness of the world, there to share your glorious presence and love. **Amen.**

*In this blessing  
we are reminded  
we bear God's  
name as we  
depart to live out  
our baptism,  
serving our  
neighbor and  
spreading the  
gospel.*

### BLESSING

God bless you and keep you, ✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever. **Amen.**

*(Extinguish candles)*

*We gather once  
more in song as  
our worship  
concludes, and  
we prepare to  
take this good  
news into the  
world.*

**SENDING HYMN ~ Joy to the World** *see next page*

ELW 267

### DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!  
**Peace to God's people on earth!**  
Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*Feel free to stay  
and listen to  
music.*

### POSTLUDE

## Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing  
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

## **PARTICIPANTS IN WORSHIP**

**PREACHING MINISTER** ~ Pastor Lauren Eanes

**PRESIDING MINISTER** ~ Pastor Alex Zuber

**COMMUNION ASSISTANTS** ~ Robert Alley, Jim Doyle, Meg Wightman, Bill Whitmire

**CRUCIFER** ~ Meg Wightman

**TORCH BEARERS** ~ Jim Doyle, Bill Whitmire

**LAY ASSISTING MINISTER** ~ Kristee Trumbo

**LECTOR** ~ Robert Alley, Biblical Storyteller

**USHERS** ~ Nathan Leopard, Caroline Leopard, Brett Tjaden

**SOUND TECHS** ~ Bill Wightman

**MUSICIANS** ~ Linlin Uta, Interim Music Minister

Judith Ofcarcik, Organist

Edward Gant, Cello

Erin Yo, Violin

Maria Sarri, Soprano

Nikos Myrogiannis-Koukos, Baritone

Christmas Choir ~ members of Celebration Singers and Sanctuary Choir

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license # A-701538, CCLI license # 20104877, and Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License: SAS014720.

***After worship, Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex invite you to greet them and each other in the Gathering Area. Please be mindful of others' wishes for physical distancing.***

## Christmas Gifts

This is the time of year where much of our attention is drawn towards gifts. When children are little, they focus most on the gifts they're going to get. A wonderful thing happens, though, when children reach a certain age. There comes a time when our children most look forward to that moment when a brother or sister or parent opens their present--the gift they chose to give, that they paid for. Even when they have little money, they are determined to give the best present they can. What gives them the greatest joy is not what they get, but seeing the pleasure their gift brings to another.

When we experience that, we experience the pleasure God gets from giving. And of course, God gave the most generous gift of all when he sent Jesus to us!

**In response to God's gifts to us, I invite you to consider a special Christmas gift to Christ's church.**

- If you're a regular giver, **thank you!** Your ongoing support has helped Muhlenberg make a real difference in the lives of people we serve. Your Christmas gift will help us end the year strong as we continue in ministry together.
- If you've not given regularly this year, **it's not too late to make a difference!** Prayerfully reflect on what gift you'd like to give in thanksgiving to God this Christmas. Consider a gift proportional to your income this past year.

Christmas gifts can be placed in the offering plate, mailed to the church at 281 East Market Street, Harrisonburg 22801, given online at [muhlenberglutheran.org/give](https://muhlenberglutheran.org/give), or by scanning this QR code. The deadline to receive 2023 offerings is **noon December 31, 2023.**



I'm reminded of the words of the hymn: "All good gifts around us are sent from heav'n above. We thank you, God, we thank you, God, for all your love." Indeed, we give thanks and praise for God's love in our midst this Christmas. May God bless you and your loved ones as we celebrate the gift of the Christ child this season.

In Christ,

*Pastor Lauren Eanes*

Pastor Lauren Eanes



*Thanks be unto God  
for his unspeakable gift.*

2 Corinthians 9:15, KJV

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Community Christmas Dinner Tomorrow at 4:00 pm in the MAC

Muhlenberg will host the annual **Harrisonburg Community Christmas dinner in the MAC**. Doors will open at **4:00 pm with the meal served at 4:30 pm**. Come share God's love with your neighbors and enjoy a great meal together!



### Epiphany Chili Cook Off

**Sunday, January 7, 4:30-6:30 pm**



Mark your calendars for the third 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! We will vote for the best chili with change and bills, and proceeds from voting will benefit Open Doors. **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](mailto: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.



*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. (If you signed up and your name is not on the list, please contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy.)*

**DONOR**

Chuck & Jill May  
Chuck & Jill May  
Linda & Robert Alley

Harold & Diane Scheidt  
Diane & Robert Wolfe  
Katy & Tim Wessel  
Marilynn Jarrells  
Lori & Jon Oliver

Tim & Kelly Zuber  
Tim & Kelly Zuber  
Brenda Branner, Lisa & Amanda  
Lauren & Nathan Eanes  
Amy Burke  
Robert & Judith Neumann

**IN MEMORY OF . . .**

Louise Perry  
Libby Clatterbuck  
Parents: Robert Lefever and  
Earl & Helen Alley  
Jason Scheidt, our son  
Roger Wolfme  
Marilyn Goff  
Juanita Propst  
Our Parents, Russel E Hammond Jr.  
and Aunt Betty Wilson  
Stan & Irene Wittenauer  
Ed & Marlene Zuber  
Lee Branner  
Our Grandparents  
Parents and Grandparents  
Our Parents



**DONOR**

Linda & Robert Alley  
Patty & Fred Sensabaugh

BJ Daniel

Kathy Thompson  
Kathy Thompson  
Linda Depoy

**IN HONOR OF . . .**

Mother, Esther Lefever  
Our Grandchildren: Charlotte, Anais,  
Sabine, Lillian, and Andrew  
Marie and Mary Daniel, my family, my  
Grandchildren: Mark and Zoe  
Our Pastors  
Muhlenberg's Amazing Staff  
Our Volunteer Office Assistants



# MUHLENBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Happy Anniversary Muhlenberg Lutheran Church!

You're invited to celebrate Muhlenberg's 175 years of ministry throughout 2024!

### 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Calendar of Events

**December 17, 2023: Anniversary Kick Off!** We begin our anniversary year with the launch of the Signature Quilt project. Sign a square for the quilt in remembrance of our ancestors in the faith who signed the charter forming Muhlenberg Lutheran Church.

**January 7-February 11, 2024: Historic Worship Services** We'll start our year immersing ourselves in liturgy and music from throughout the history of the Lutheran Church in the Shenandoah Valley. Each week, we'll worship with Lutheran resources from a different era, from the 1790s through today!

**January 7, 2024: Introduction to Peter Muhlenberg** We welcome Pastor Jonathan Boynton to Muhlenberg for an engaging presentation on our namesake, Peter Muhlenberg, at 9:45am in the Nielsen Room.

**Spring 2024: Historic Artifacts Displayed in Gathering Area** See items and photographs from our past on display, and read stories of Muhlenberg throughout the years.

**May 19, 2024: Happy Birthday Muhlenberg!** On this Pentecost Sunday, we'll celebrate the birthday of the church with a party. We'll also welcome Virginia Synod Bishop Phyllis Milton to celebrate this milestone with us in worship.

**June-July 2024: Muhlenberg's Pastors and Sons/Daughters of the Congregation** Former pastors of the congregation, as well as those who have entered the ministry from Muhlenberg will be visiting throughout the summer.

**Fall 2024: Tours of the Church** Learn more about our history, buildings, and art with tours scheduled throughout the fall.

**September 15, 2024: Homecoming** Save the date for our Anniversary Homecoming Event! Gather with friends old and new for a celebratory banquet, remembrances from the past, and a look forward to the future. Every family will receive a special keepsake from this event.

*Several additional presentations and speakers are still being scheduled. More details about all of these events will be shared through The Chimes.*

# CONNECT WITH US

Use these QR Codes to Stay Connected with Muhlenberg and learn more about life in this community



Learn more about becoming a Muhlenberg member! *Our next New/Prospective Member class is January 21, at 9:45am*

Sign up to receive emails and stay up to date on all Muhlenberg activities!



Connect with our Digital Ministry:



**MUHLENBERG**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Jim Dyk

The Congregation Council and staff  
of Muhlenberg Lutheran Church  
wish you a Merry Christmas!

Luella

Kevin  
Steer

Karen  
Thomson

Linda Depoy  
Liz Eught

FPS

Surendra

Meg Wightman

Christy  
Penn. FL

Bruce D. Hamulas

Rachel  
Peters

Ashley ☺



P. J. J.

Pastor  
Laurie Carver

Kath Wisinger

Paul  
Jeffrey

Laurie

Tracy