



# The CHIMES



**MUHLENBERG  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*Equipping All People to Live Out Christ's Love*

*Published Weekly by Muhlenberg Lutheran Church*

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)

## CHRISTMAS EVE 2023

### *Welcome!*

Welcome, one and all! Whether this is your first time visiting this place, or it's the tried and true tradition of your family to gather here in this sacred season, we are so glad to be together at Muhlenberg Lutheran Church! While this is certainly a special time of year—with beautiful liturgies, beloved hymns, and time-honored traditions—we will also continue to gather each week, equipping all people to live out the love of the Savior who is born this day. There is a place for everyone at Muhlenberg! We hope as you find welcome and joy in these walls, you'll continue to join us in sharing Christ's love. If you are a visitor and would like to learn more about Muhlenberg, we encourage you to fill out a **Visitor Card** (using a blue card in the pew or the QR code in the front of the worship booklet) so that we can follow up with you and continue to extend the spirit of welcome.

To the members of this Muhlenberg family, we encourage you to reach out to one another, introduce yourself to someone you don't recognize, and welcome all who are here this Christmas. The angels sing joyfully of Christ's love today, a gift for each one of us, and a gift that transforms strangers into community in profound ways.

As we worship together this Christmas, we pray you realize that you belong here—to a story etched into the wrinkles of time, to generations that have come before and will come after, to a love that won't let you go. On behalf of all the Muhlenberg family: Welcome and Merry Christmas!

In Christ, *Pastor Alex and Pastor Lauren*

A photograph of the interior of Muhlenberg Lutheran Church during Christmas. The pews are filled with people, and there are Christmas decorations, including a sign that says "EXCELSIS DEC." and another that says "MERRY CHRISTMAS".

**Merry Christmas  
and Welcome to Muhlenberg!**



# 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.*

## 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.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### OPEN DOORS

January 7 – 11



Muhlenberg is providing meals for Open Doors which is being hosted by First Presbyterian Church on Court Square. Open Doors provides shelter for our community members in need of a safe place to stay. You can access the spreadsheet that includes the food needs and servers required to feed 50 people per night by clicking [HERE](#). Please consider helping our neighbors in need with a hot meal. For more information, please contact Sue Totty ([svtotty@gmail.com](mailto:svtotty@gmail.com) or 540-478-3073).

### THE WELLSPRING PODCAST

January 1, 2024

New Year, new podcast! Mark your calendar for **January 1, 2024**, when the first episode of **the Wellspring Podcast** will be released. The first series of this new podcast will be a book and Bible study led by Pastor Alex and weekly guest hosts so that you can take this study with you on the go! Each episode will break down a chapter of the book [Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others](#) by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky and offer an accompanying Bible study.



This incredible book was designed to be read by those who work in helping professions to understand how to care for the trauma of others and the world around them without embodying trauma for themselves. However, in a post-COVID world, we've witnessed profound

trauma as an entire society, and everyone we meet is carrying some kind of pain. If we hope to be caring people in the world today, we need to understand Trauma Stewardship. Episodes will release weekly on Mondays beginning January 1, so grab your copy of the book, and reach out to Pastor Alex if you're interested in organizing a discussion group!

## MUHLENBERG NEWS

### CREATION CARE TIP

When holiday gift giving is complete, be sure to recycle and reuse what you can. Shipping boxes easily recycle because cardboard is clean, easy to reprocess, and every ton of it that's reclaimed saves 17 trees. Save shiny Christmas bows and ribbons for reuse next year. They do not recycle because they are a composite of plastic and paper, and ribbons are notorious for snagging recycling machinery.



### CONFIRMATION CORNER

*Confirmation isn't just for middle schoolers! All the baptized who have been confirmed are called to grow in faith and affirm God's promises in their life. You can support the hard work of our middle school students by reflecting on these Confirmation Corner thoughts each week. Here's a confirmation prompt for this week:*

In Luther's Small Catechism, under the explanation of the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed, which deals with Jesus Christ, it states: "I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord." As we celebrate Christmas, how does the belief in Jesus Christ as both true God and true man, born of the Virgin Mary, deepen your understanding of the significance of His birth for your faith and salvation?

## FAITH FORMATION

### CLASS SCHEDULE

#### Sunday Mornings at 9:45 am

Our normal schedule is as follows:

**Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade** meet in the Muhlenberg Activities Center [MAC] (behind the church)  
Led by Children’s Minister Ashley Saunders, kids will have an opportunity to grow together through the “Living the Word” curriculum, which follows the Narrative Lectionary. They will learn biblical stories, do activities to put the stories into action, and build strong relationships. Older students will help share the stories with younger students to cultivate a collaborative community.

These classes meet downstairs in the church:

#### **Grades 6 - 8 ~ Augsburg Room**

6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> graders are encouraged to join each week for an in-depth Bible study together on the focus text of the Narrative Lectionary. This class is open to all middle schoolers, and will serve as the foundation of our Confirmation curriculum. Classes will afford our students the opportunity to learn more about important biblical figures, central stories in scripture, and learn with peers about applying the lessons to our daily life.

#### **High School ~ Campus Room**

9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders join together each week for fellowship, conversation, and learning among friends. You’ve been confirmed—now what? You have doubts—is that allowed? What does it mean to live out your faith publicly in the world? This class will be one that leaves “Room for Questions” as our youth find space, time, and community in which they can grow and learn together. We hope this class will be youth-led, guided by the questions on their hearts and rooted in a study of scripture

together. We trust that together we’ll build a safe space for searching!

#### **Civic Life and Faith ~ Kairos Room**

The old adage says to never discuss “religion, politics, or sex,” but this class will invite you into conversation about two of the three! Disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the ages have had to figure out how to serve God within a political society, and we are no exception. This class will resume mid-January, following the ELCA’s study curriculum for a closer look at the intersections of our civic and faith lives.

#### **40-Day Journey Adult Class ~ Nielsen Room**

Join a journey that deepens your spiritual life using excerpts from the work of author Madeleine L’Engle. Participants read a brief excerpt, respond to engaging questions, and join together in prayer.

#### **Faith Lens Adult Class ~ On hiatus**

Join in lively conversation focused on the Bible text used in worship that day. Explore the background and context of biblical stories, and consider how they apply to our lives today.

**To attend virtually, use this Zoom Link:**

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

### WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

#### Wednesdays, 10:30 am

There will be no Wednesday morning Bible study this week. **Join us next week, January 3** via [ZOOM](#), as we dive deep into the upcoming Sunday’s scripture text.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/200491556>

Or by phone ...DIAL IN – **301-715-8592** and enter Meeting ID / Passcode: **200491556#**



## MUSIC MINISTRY

### CHOIR REHEARSALS

Our choirs are open to all, even if you haven't participated in the past. If interested, contact Interim Music Minister Linlin Uta ([uta@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:uta@muhlenberglutheran.org) or 540-434-3496).

#### Adult Choirs (10<sup>th</sup> Grade and up)

##### Celebration Singers

**Tuesdays, 6:00 – 7:00 pm**

This ensemble revels in a mix of unison singing and harmonies, and diverse genres. Your love for singing is the only ticket in! Sings at most 8:30 Sunday services.

##### Sanctuary Choir

**Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:15 pm**

A tapestry of melodies, from the Renaissance era to the latest in choral music, awaits you. Prior choral experience is helpful but not mandatory. Sings at 11:00 Sunday services.

#### Children's Choirs

##### Cherub Choir

**Sundays in Lent 12:15 – 12:45 pm**

Catering to the spirited voices from ages 4 – grade 2. Guided by Rachel Peters, these cherubs will serenade the congregation during the Easter season. Practice sessions will unfold in the music room.

##### Youth Ensemble

**Sundays in Lent 12:15 - 12:45 pm**

The ensemble is led by Linlin Uta and meets in the Sanctuary. They will present musical offerings in worship during the Easter season.

#### Handbell Choir ~ Gloria Dei Ringers

**Tuesdays, 7:00 - 8:30 pm**

Under the expert hand of Handbell Director Kath Wissinger, the Sanctuary will resonate with the timeless tones of handbells about once per month.

## FROM OUR FINANCE MANAGER

For more information about these articles, contact Finance Manager Jane Eanes ([eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org) or 540-434-3496).

### YEAR-END GIVING

If you plan to fulfill a 2023 donation amount or make a special end-of-year donation, please ensure your cash or checks arrive in our office **no later than 12:00 noon Sunday, Dec. 31**. Mailed donations need to be delivered to our office on or before Friday, December 29 (assuming you prefer your gift to be counted for 2023). Checks or cash donations arriving in our office after December 31 will be counted toward 2024 giving. For this reason, dropping your donation into the offering plate on December 31 may be the easiest and most predictable solution!

To ensure online donation transactions are completed by December 29, make sure the transaction is dated **no later than Dec. 22**.

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

### 2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Earlier this fall, we asked the congregation to let us know if you would like to order a booklet of 2024 offering envelopes. For those of you who replied and asked for these, offering envelopes will be ready for pick up TODAY (12/24). You will find your offering booklet in the Gathering Area. They are arranged in alphabetical order to make it easier to find your envelopes. They will remain out for pick up through December 31. 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*

## TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

### RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent in-person and online viewership:

12/10	8:30 Holy Communion .....	68
	11:00 Holy Communion .....	95
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	40
	Total Views this Week .....	228
	Hours Viewed this Week .....	574
12/17	8:30 Holy Communion .....	67
	11:00 Holy Communion .....	98
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	39

### NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

In November, Gifts & Offerings and total income are higher than the previous year. We are trending in the right direction. However, expenses are higher than past years, due to increased costs to maintain and manage Muhlenberg's campus and ministries. As the year draws to a close, consider how you might make a year-end gift to support the ministry of God's work in this community

*Sarah A. Sunde, Treasurer*

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Through November 2023

	2023 YTD Actual	2023 YTD Budgeted	2022 YTD Actual
Gifts & Offerings	\$505,128	\$ 581,167	\$467,809
Total Income	\$680,066	\$755,128	\$600,037
Total Expenses	\$747,838	\$757,340	\$588,703
Excess Income/(Deficit)	\$(67,722)	\$(2,212)	\$11,334

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 15,704.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 1,020.00
<b>Total Giving</b>	<b>\$ 16,724.00</b>

**December Thrivent Choice Dollars - \$349**

To give online, scan here →



## WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

**December 24 – 31, 2023**

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

Mon	4:00 pm	Community Christmas Dinner
Mon and Tues		Church Office closed in observance of Christmas
Sun		First Sunday of Christmas
	8:30 am	Holy Communion in person
	9:45 am	Faith Formation
	11:00 am	Holy Communion in person & Livestreamed via <a href="#">Facebook</a> and <a href="#">YouTube</a>

**The church office will be closed December 25 & 26.**

### CELEBRATION CORNER

What a show! Bravo to our young performers and their supportive families for their role in making our Christmas play a roaring success! Thank you to Children's Minister Ashley Saunders and our amazing volunteers for their dedication. Go [online](#) to watch the show, *A Very Mixed Up Christmas!*

*Singing O Holy Night*



*Congratulations to the cast!*

# 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**

