



ELCA

# 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 31, 2023**

## A POETIC SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

### FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

#### WHAT'S THE BUZZ?



**MUHLENBERG  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**HAPPY 175TH ANNIVERSARY,  
MUHLENBERG!**

2024 marks our 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary! We're planning to spend the year looking back and celebrating our congregation's history and ministry to the community. But the anniversary year also gives us a chance to look forward to the future with renewed vision, hope, confidence, and commitment. We're excited to celebrate with nostalgia and fun, as well as serious reflection and opportunities for spiritual growth.

*See page 2 for a calendar of events.*

#### CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed Monday (1/1) in observance of New Year's Day.

#### THE RINGING OF THE BELL

Throughout our anniversary year, we return to the tradition of ringing the church bell at the start of our worship services. The sound of a church bell is a summons into a holy place, to gather in reverence to worship our Lord.



Our bell has a history almost as old as our congregation. The bell was cast by the foundry of Jones and Hitchcock in Troy, NY between 1852 - 1857 and originally installed in a church in Pennsylvania. In the late 1880s, the bell was brought to Muhlenberg and stored until it was placed on the new brick church built at N. Main and Wolfe streets. When the current building was built in the early 1950s, the bell was placed in a boiler room where it sat (except for a few years when Jim and Dolores Hoak stored it in their barn for safekeeping) until the building of the Gathering Area in 2009. In its now prominent position outside the Sanctuary, we can hear and appreciate its call to worship once more.



# 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 began 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 the 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.

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

## JANUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

We'll start our yearlong celebration 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.

- Jan 7 1790s *Hymn and Prayer Book: for the use of such Lutheran churches as use the English language*
- Jan 14 1850s *Liturgy of the General Synod*
- Jan 21 1920s *Common Service Book*
- Jan 28 1960s *Service Book and Hymnal*
- Feb 4 1980s *Lutheran Book of Worship*
- Feb 11 2020s *All Creation Sings*

Our anniversary year begins **next Sunday, January 7, with** a journey back in time—all the way to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century! Lutherans were settling in the Shenandoah Valley, and our namesake Peter Muhlenberg had taken leave from the congregation he served in Woodstock to command the Eighth Regiment of Virginia in the Revolutionary War.

Special guest Rev. Jonathan Boynton will be our guide to introduce us to the lives of early church leaders in the Valley, including Rev. Peter Muhlenberg and his friend, Rev. Christian Streit who served as the chaplain for Muhlenberg's regiment and went on to be the first settled pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Winchester. You don't want to miss Rev. Boynton's presentation in the Nielsen Room at 9:45 am next week!

Worship next Sunday will be in the style of the time period, using resources from the first Lutheran hymnal and prayer book, dated 1795, that was printed in English. In the coming weeks, we'll continue our journey through history with worship in the style of various periods as listed above. We look forward to

experiencing these pieces of history as we learn more about our congregation's past.

## SIGNATURE QUILT CELEBRATES 175 YEARS

Quilting has been part of the history of the Shenandoah Valley for centuries. In fact, Harrisonburg is home to the Virginia Quilt



Museum, and our own Comfort Makers have made thousands of comforts for those in need for decades. That's one of the reasons we have chosen to kick off our 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Muhlenberg Lutheran Church by creating an heirloom "signature" quilt to commemorate this celebration. Signature quilts were first seen in America in the mid-1800's about the same time Muhlenberg's congregation was formed. A family or group of friends would sign or embroider their names on small pieces of fabric which would be sewn together into a patchwork quilt.

Our first congregation of worshippers signed their names to a document forming our congregation. To mark this momentous occasion, we decided to ask members, staff and regular attendees to sign a small square of fabric which will be sewn into a much larger quilt. **We hope each member will sign a square with their first and last name and the date they joined the church.** (Lists with member join dates will be available.) Young children are welcome to sign a square if they are able or they may sign a piece of paper and we will trace their name onto the fabric. Homebound members can do the same if they are unable to sign directly on the fabric.

We view this quilt as “a moment in time” worth preserving in our church. The quilt will reflect the life and active participants of the church in 2023 – 2024 and will include all those who gather here, both young and old. Imagine 25 years from now when our then grown children can see themselves in this quilt as well as many of saints of Muhlenberg who have gone before them.

One of our newest members, Kelly Zuber, will coordinate the signing and put the quilt together. **TODAY** and continuing through January, you can visit the quilt signing table in the Gathering Area after the 8:30 am service and before and after the 11:00 am service. Kelly will sew the squares together and add embellishments such as our church logo, the Luther Rose, and ELCA emblems to the quilt next spring and summer. We hope you will sign your name just as our founders did to charter Muhlenberg 175 years ago.

## TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

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

## YEAR-END GIVING Deadline Today!

You have three options to fulfill a 2023 donation amount or make a special end-of-year donation. If done **no later than 12:00 noon TODAY (12/31)**, exercising one of these options will ensure your contributions will be counted toward 2023 giving:

- Give online through secure Vanco site at <https://secure.myvanco.com/YKC0/home>
- Bring a check or cash into the church office
- Place your gift in the offering plate on Sunday

Donations arriving in our office after the deadline will be counted toward 2024 giving. For this reason, dropping your donation into the offering plate today may be the easiest solution! **Thank you in advance for your generosity to Muhlenberg Lutheran Church.**

## 2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

For those of you who requested offering envelopes, they are ready for pick up **TODAY (12/31)** in the Gathering Area. After January 1, you can pick them up 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!

## THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

### THE WELLSPRING PODCAST Monday, January 1, 2024

Tomorrow (1/1), 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 bring understanding in how to care for the trauma of others and the world around them without embodying trauma for themselves. In a post-COVID world, we've witnessed profound trauma as a 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.

Find the link to each episode on Mondays on our [Facebook](#) page, or visit [muhlenberglutheran.org/wellspringpodcast](http://muhlenberglutheran.org/wellspringpodcast) to learn how to subscribe! Reach out to Pastor Alex with any questions or if you're interested in organizing a discussion group!

### **WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY** **Wednesdays, 10:30 am**

This study gathers each week to look ahead to Sunday's lessons and dive deeper into God's word. Led by Pastor Lauren, meeting via Zoom:

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

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

### **COMFORT MAKERS** **Thursdays, 8:00 am - noon**

If you can tie a knot and want to help keep your neighbors warm, come join us **Thursdays in Wayland Hall**. We work 8:00 am-12:00 pm but welcome you any time during those hours. For more information, contact Linda Morrison ([lindamm778@gmail.com](mailto:lindamm778@gmail.com) or 540-383-5085).

### **PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING CIRCLE** **Saturday, January 6, 10:00 – 11:30 am** **Making Hats for Open Doors**

During January and February, Muhlenberg's Prayer Shawl Knitting Group will be knitting/crocheting hats for Open Doors along with prayer shawls. We invite Muhlenberg knitters, knitting at home, to join us in this project. Hats and prayer shawls may be brought to the church when finished, or call Jackie Wells (540-434-6283) if you wish to have them picked up at your home.

## **EPIPHANY CHILI COOK OFF**

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

Join us for the third annual Epiphany Chili Cook Off in Wayland Hall and the Nielsen Room. 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.

### **FOOD COLLECTION REMINDER** **Next Sunday, January 7**

We will collect non-perishable food items for Patchwork Pantry (1/7) in the Gathering Area. No glass jars please. The Pantry is also in need of paper products (paper towels, wraps, food storage bags, toilet tissue, etc.), cleansers (dish, laundry, all-purpose), diapers, and all types of personal hygiene products. Monetary donations are also appreciated. Make checks payable to Muhlenberg, noting "Patchwork Pantry" on the memo line.



## THIS WEEK (CONT'D)

### 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).

## MUHLENBERG NEWS

### MUHLENBERG CUB SCOUT PACK

Muhlenberg is considering chartering a Cub Scout pack in our community and needs volunteers to be a part of that effort, especially someone to be a dedicated Chartered Organization Representative (COR). This position is the link between the pack and the church. They are a part of the unit's key-3 leadership team that includes the COR, the pack committee chair and the Cubmaster. The COR works with the unit to help them succeed and ensure the pack has adult volunteers that uphold the values of both organizations.

The position also serves as the voice of Muhlenberg within the local council. Chartered organizations make up the body of Virginia Headwaters Council, and the COR is the voting representative.

If you have any questions about the role or are interested in taking it on (or any other leadership role

in the pack), please reach out to Sarah Sunde ([sunnysunde@gmail.com](mailto:sunnysunde@gmail.com)) or Matt Phillippi ([matt.phillippi@virginiaheadwaters.org](mailto:matt.phillippi@virginiaheadwaters.org)).

### CREATION CARE TIP

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.



### 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:*

Philippians 3:13-14 says, "Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." As we approach the dawn of a new year, reflect on these words from the Apostle Paul. Just as he encouraged the Philippians to forget what is behind and focus on the journey ahead, let us also leave behind the burdens and regrets of the past year. With hope and determination, let us press on toward the goals and purposes that God has set before us in the coming year. May our faith in Christ Jesus inspire us to step boldly into the future, trusting in His guidance and grace.

## CELEBRATION CORNER

Thank you to everyone who participated in any way to make the Community Christmas Dinner a huge success! Over 40 Muhlenberg members made donations or volunteered their time and talents before, during, and after the dinner. Many other volunteers heard about it or were relatives visiting members who were helping. We are also grateful for a Thrivent Action Grant that paid for most of the dinner items as well as some gift items for our guests.

It was hard to get an exact count, but our best estimates were that 70-75 community members were fed a delicious meal of ham, mashed potatoes, corn pudding, green beans, applesauce and a roll. After the meal, games were enjoyed and gift bags were distributed. Guests thanked us for inviting them for a meal and fellowship on Christmas Day. Thank you, Muhlenberg, for sharing Christ's love with our neighbors.



# TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

## RECENT ATTENDANCE

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

12/17	8:30 Holy Communion .....	67
	11:00 Holy Communion .....	98
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	39
	Total Views this Week .....	255
	Hours Viewed this Week .....	50.4
12/24	10:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	41
	4:00 Holy Communion .....	165
	7:00 Holy Communion .....	190
	7:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	47
	10:00 Holy Communion .....	55

## 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
<b>Excess Income/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$(67,722)</b>	<b>\$(2,212)</b>	<b>\$11,334</b>

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 10,409.50
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 11,317.50
<b>Total Giving</b>	<b>\$ 21,727.00</b>

**Dec. Thrivent Choice Dollars – \$349**

To give online, scan here →



# WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

January 1 - 7, 2023

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

Mon	Church Office Closed ~ New Year's Day Observed
Tues	6:00 pm Celebration Singers 7:00 pm Gloria Dei Ringers
Wed	10:30 am Bible Study via <a href="#">Zoom</a> 6:00 pm Sanctuary Choir
Thu	8:00 am Comfort Makers
Sat	10:00 am Prayer Shawl Knitting Circle
Sun	<b>Ephiphany Sunday</b> Food Pantry/Lay Communion/Name Badge Sunday 8:30 am Holy Communion in person 9:45 am Christian Formation in person & via <a href="#">Zoom</a> 11:00 am Holy Communion in person and Livestreamed via <a href="#">Facebook</a> and <a href="#">YouTube</a> 4:30 pm Epiphany Party & Chili Cookoff



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

*John Derrick & Jeanette Williams*

*Tom Dove & Karen Thomsen*

*Jim Doyle*

*Brandon, Beth, Everette and Elise Driver*

*Mary Ann Duda*

*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@muehlenberglutheran.org](mailto:depoym@muehlenberglutheran.org))*

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: ([depoym@muehlenberglutheran.org](mailto:depoym@muehlenberglutheran.org) /540-434-3496)