



STRENGTH FOR TODAY AND BRIGHT HOPE FOR TOMORROW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is the campaign called *Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow*?

“Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow” is a line from the hymn *Great is Thy Faithfulness* (#733 in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*). This hymn reminds us that God’s faithfulness is what provides all and sustains all. All we have needed, God’s hand has provided. Our grateful, generous response to God’s gifts allows the Muhlenberg community to further live out the strength and hope that God gives both today and in the future.

What is the goal of the campaign?

The goal is to raise \$60,000 over one year, from June 2022-May 2023. These funds will strengthen our operating budget to afford a permanent nursery coordinator (5 hours/week), small group coordinator (10 hours/week), and youth minister (25 hours/week). 10% of the amount given will be shared with the Virginia Synod as Mission Support.

How were these priorities decided?

Our Congregation Council has prayerfully considered ways we can strengthen our ministry, welcome new people to faith, and build a community connected to one another in new ways. To help us accomplish this, they’ve focused on priorities from the Strategic Plan, with a special focus on welcome, youth ministry, and small group ministry. You can read more about the Strategic Plan at <https://www.muhlenberglutheran.org/strategicplan>.

Why are we hiring more staff?

Our mission at Muhlenberg is to “equip all people to live out Christ’s love.” In order to equip all people, we need key leaders who can support, equip, and empower each of us to use our gifts for God’s work.

Why do we need a paid nursery attendant? Can’t we just get volunteers?

As families visit for the first time and/or return to church, they need a safe place for their very young children to be during worship. We’ve seen a large increase in babies born in our congregation the past few years, so the need is already there. We also want to reach out to young families who are seeking connection and faith in a post-pandemic world. A regular, paid nursery worker is vital to providing this safe space and increasing our welcome to families with young children. Children and their adults will benefit from having a familiar face and trusting relationship with the person caring for them. Volunteers would still be needed/utilized each Sunday to be the second adult in the nursery each week in keeping with the guidelines of our *Safeguarding God’s People* policy.

Why do we need a youth minister?

Parents of teens are often struggling to figure out how to pass their faith along to their children. A strong, vibrant youth ministry attracts families to a congregation and gives them the tools they need to help their entire family grow in faith. In addition, we already have a fantastic group of middle schoolers moving up to high school next year. Now is the time to build on the strength we already have with these young people, and grow on the foundation that our Children’s Ministry is already providing for kids moving from elementary to middle school. This person would organize and empower youth ministry to thrive, and reach out to youth in our wider community.

Why do we need a small group coordinator?

When new people visit a large congregation, they need a way to get connected on a personal level. Small groups can provide this opportunity. We’ve got the people who can provide content for small group gatherings (both pastors and lay leaders) but we need someone who can take care of scheduling, coordinating, and encouraging these groups to happen. A dedicated individual spending 5-10 hours a week on these tasks will empower the people of Muhlenberg to find ways to lead and be involved in small groups. A special focus, especially at the beginning of this person’s tenure, will be on growing groups and connections for older adults (for example, reviving the *Go-Go Group*, for members 55+).

How will the funds be spent?

A rough estimate is:

\$36,000 Youth Ministry

\$12,000 Small Group Ministry

\$6,000 Nursery

\$6,000 Mission Support to VA Synod

How will we pay for these positions after the campaign is over?

These positions will be incorporated into our annual Ministry Spending Plan. This campaign will help us jump start these ministries, but we anticipate that gifts to our general operating fund will be able to sustain these positions going forward.

What’s the Challenge Gift?

A generous donor has offered an additional \$10,000 towards this appeal. When 40 commitments toward this campaign are received, we’ll receive \$5,000; when an additional 40 commitments are received (for a total of 80) we’ll unlock an additional \$5,000. A commitment of any amount will help us reach our goal!

How do I decide how much to give?

One way is through determining the percentage of income that you are currently giving to the church, and deciding how much you’d like to see that percentage grow through this campaign. For example, if you’re currently giving 4% of your total income, you may decide to give an additional 1% towards this campaign, for a total of 5%.

Another option is to use the chart below to see the number of gifts needed at certain levels in order for us to reach our goal. Consider where you might fit into this chart.

Number of Gifts	Value of Gift	Running Total
1	\$10,000	\$10,000
1	\$5,000	\$15,000
2	\$3,000	\$21,000
5	\$1,200	\$27,000
12	\$900	\$37,800
22	\$600	\$51,000
23	\$300	\$57,900
14	\$150	\$60,000

If you're currently not a regular contributor to the congregation, consider this your invitation to give it a try for a year! Try giving \$5 or \$10 a week and seeing how it impacts your faith journey.

How do I make a commitment?

You can fill out an Intent Card and bring it to worship on June 5. Or, you can mail your card back to the church. You can also fill out the Intent Card online at <https://forms.gle/kr7fugp6qWVuWU4E7>.

How do I give toward this campaign?

Once your Intent Card is received in the church office, you will receive detailed information on how to give via cash, check, or online. Finance Manager Jane Eanes will also be present 9:30 – 12:30 on Sunday, June 5 and Sunday, June 12 to answer questions and help folks who would like to get set up with online giving. You can also contact Jane at 540-434-3496.

What do others have to say?

Lily Harmison grew up in the Youth Ministry program at Muhlenberg and spoke recently in worship about the impact of the program on her life and the importance of supporting Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow.

"I would not be who I am today without the Youth Ministry program I grew up in at Muhlenberg. This amazing program led me to be a faithful servant; encouraged me to be a fierce advocate and compassionate friend; and provided me with an intentional faith community where I felt welcomed, heard, and cared for. Being involved in this community connected me to some of my best friends in the whole world, and provided me with leadership opportunities I never would have known. Your generosity through the "Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow" Campaign will allow the youth coming up behind me to engage in the same intentional faith community that has benefited my life in more ways than I can imagine. I encourage you to support the youth of Muhlenberg so they can be equipped to serve themselves, their peers, and the next generation to come."



Rachel Peters serves on Congregation Council and attends Muhlenberg with her family (including her son, Henry, pictured here!). Rachel recently spoke about the importance of small groups and the Nursery at Muhlenberg, and about supporting Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow.



"When my husband and I joined Muhlenberg 6 years ago, we found a church home mostly thanks to a small group called "Life on Tap." The group would meet and talk together, and grow in our faith and in our community. Those people became "our tribe" here at Muhlenberg and in our lives. Since then, our needs have changed - but the need for small group community has not. Wouldn't it be amazing if we had a point person here at the church to help organize, schedule, and promote small groups, so that more people could benefit from that community? It would also be nice if someone could take my child Henry for some time during worship, so that my husband and I could focus on what is being said. I believe the sound of a small child in church is beautiful, but sometimes it's a little loud and daunting for the adults. To have a Nursery

Coordinator that we could trust and rely on consistently would be wonderful. These needs require financial support. They require us to give so that everyone can receive these benefits. Thank you for considering!"