The Virginia Lutheran

We Are Church Together

October 2026

Camp G.L.O.W.

Shared by Ashley Saunders, Muhlenberg Lutheran Church Children's Minister



Every summer during the first week of August, an assemblage of church communities comes together to put on Camp G.L.O.W. (God's Love Our World) on the campus of Muhlenberg Lutheran Church in Harrisonburg, VA. Camp G.L.O.W. was created by Ashley Saunders, the children's minister at Muhlenberg Lutheran Church, and Georgia Metz, pastor at Shalom Mennonite, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic out of a desire to revitalize and refocus traditional vacation bible school programs. Over the years, Camp G.L.O.W. has grown into the shared work of four different church communities, adding Emmanuel Episcopal and Community Mennonite to work together for the children and youth of their congregations and the greater community. This year we had 120 campers ages 2-14 who spent a week learning about the *Sermon on the Mount* through songs, art, Bible time, community service projects, and games. A free meal is given every evening, and we feed over 200 people every night through teams of volunteers from each church. Camp G.L.O.W. is truly a labor of love.





From the beginning, Ashley and Georgia established three core goals of the Camp G.L.O.W. program:

- To see a children's program that was based on the Gospels, where Jesus is front and center as the core of the Christian faith.
- To give every camper access to the word of God.
- To allow children to see themselves as an important part of the community of faith and the communities in which they live.



Camp G.L.O.W. is a time when church belongs to children. They see themselves as members of their own congregation and an important part of that community. They get one-on-one time with their pastors and the adults all around them who are deeply invested in their faith. Every camper who does not have a Bible at home receives an age appropriate Bible that is just theirs. Our goal is for every camper to know that God loves them, and Jesus shows us how to live as God calls us to do.



The dream for the greater church is to see people of many walks of life come together to worship God and to live as a community as Jesus teaches. Camp G.L.O.W. is a place where that dream is a reality. Campers of many ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, families, and denominations come together to live their faith together. It is a beautiful taste of Heaven on Earth.