

Good Soil Lutheran Ministries

Growing Together in Christ to Love and Serve



First Sunday of Christmas

December 31st, 2023

9:30 am



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Rocky River, OH 44116
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YouTube: [Good Soil Lutheran Ministries](https://www.youtube.com/GoodSoilLutheranMinistries)

Welcome

We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.

For Parents with Children

Good Soil loves kids and the "holy noise" they bring! Your children are warmly welcome in worship. Sing, pray, and respond; your children will learn by worshiping with you. There's also a "prayground" area in the back of the sanctuary and a nursery/cry room behind that on the back left side. We pray that worshiping together as a family is a meaningful experience!

For Those Needing Hearing Assistance

Please ask an usher about our hearing assistance devices to enhance your worship experience.

Holy Communion

Christ is truly present with us in worship and through this meal. All are welcome to participate in Holy Communion here at Good Soil. Children may commune with elements or receive a blessing depending on parent/guardian preference. Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available upon request.

Bulletin Key

Bold Font – Spoken by the Congregation
Regular Font – Spoken by the Pastor or Worship Assistant
† – Please stand as you are able, in body or spirit.

1st Sunday of Christmas

The psalmist calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity, to praise God. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. We have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Prelude

Welcome

In the Confession and Forgiveness, we are drawn by God's mercy to prepare to assemble around the Word and Sacrament. It may be seen as a return to the gift of Baptism through repentance.

† Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the Word made flesh,
our life and our salvation.

Amen.

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of life,
you promise good news of great joy for all people,
and call us to be messengers of your peace.

**We confess that too often we hoard our joy,
our resources, and our security.**

We nurture conflict and build barriers.

**We neglect the needs of our neighbors
and ignore the groaning of creation.**

Have mercy on us.

Where we are self-centered, open our hearts.

Where we are reluctant, give us courage.

Where we are cynical, restore our trust.

**Renew us with your grace
and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.**

Amen.

Hear the good news:

We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed.

Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

Amen.

† Gathering Hymn: What Child Is This- ELW 296

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
 on Mary's lap is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
 while shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the king,
 whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 haste, haste to bring him laud,
 the babe, the son of Mary!

2 Why lies he in such mean estate
 where ox and ass are feeding?
 Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
 the silent Word is pleading.
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
 the cross be borne for me, for you;
 hail, hail the Word made flesh,
 the babe, the son of Mary!

3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
 come, peasant, king, to own him.
 The King of kings salvation brings;
 let loving hearts enthrone him.
 Raise, raise the song on high,
 the virgin sings her lullaby;
 joy, joy, for Christ is born,
 the babe, the son of Mary!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

The assembly is greeted with words used by Paul in 2 Corinth. to greet churches. The assembly also greets the presiding minister in return. It is a moment of mutuality that signifies trust, love, mutual service, and a shared hope in God.

† 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.

Kyrie Eleison means "Lord have mercy." Chanting is an ancient practice of the church. This Kyrie was arranged by The Rev. Sarah Taylor, ELCA. Used with permission.

† Kyrie

Ky - ri - e (e)le - i - son. Chri - ste
(e)lei - i - son. Lord have mer - cy on us.
Christ have mer - cy on us. Lord have mer - cy on
us. Christ have mer - cy on us.

The Prayer of the Day highlights themes from the scripture readings we are about to hear.

† Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

The Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10—62:3

To put this reading into context:

To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that God's salvation will fully come to pass. Jerusalem will become a shining light to the nations and righteousness and praise will spring up as surely as the earth puts forth vegetation.

Hear now the reading.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: 148:1-6, 13-14



¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD | from the heavens;
praise God | in the heights.

²Praise the LORD, | all you angels;
sing praise, all you | hosts of heaven.

³Praise the LORD, | sun and moon;
sing praise, all you | shining stars.

⁴Praise the LORD, heav- | en of heavens,
and you waters a- | bove the heavens.

⁵Let them praise the name | of the LORD,
who commanded, and they | were created,

⁶who made them stand fast forev- | er and ever,
giving them a law that shall not | pass away.

¹³Let them praise the name | of the LORD,
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over | earth and
heaven.

¹⁴The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for
all | faithful servants,
the children of Israel, a people who are near
the LORD. | Hallelujah!

*We welcome the
gospel by singing
the Gospel
Acclamation.
We rise, if able, in
anticipation of
Christ being
revealed to us
through the Living
Word of the
Gospel.*

† Gospel Acclamation: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus-ELW 254 v2



2 Born thy peo-ple to de-liv-er, born a child, and yet a king;



born to reign in us for-ev-er, now thy gra-cious king-dom bring.



By thine own e-ter-nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a-lone;



by thine all-suf-fi-cient mer-it raise us to thy glo-rious throne.

*Before and after
the reading of
the Gospel, we
give thanks and
praise to Jesus
Christ, who is
revealed to us*

† Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

To put this gospel reading into context:

Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.

*through the
Gospel reading.*

The holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The

child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Children grade 1 and younger are invited to step out with one of our Sunday School teachers to join the "learn and grow in faith" class during the sermon. They will return during the Passing of the Peace. Sunday School classes for all children (nursery school – grade 6) meet after worship.

Sermon: The Rev. John Butchko

Silence for Reflection.

† Hymn of the Day: The First Noel - ELW 300, v. 1, 2, 4

1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

4 This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay. *Refrain*

Text: English traditional

*As the church,
we pray for
those in our
community and
around the
world. The
prayers are also
responsive,
emphasizing our
own
participation.*

*Each petition
addresses a
different topic,
often in the same
pattern:*

*+ The Church
+ Creation
+ Nations and
leaders
+ Those in need
+ This faith
community
+ The great
cloud of
witnesses/those
now resting with
God*

† Prayers of Intercession

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

You inspire faith in our hearts and call us to rejoice with our whole selves at the salvation you bring. Make our churches places of belonging for all people in the fullness of their being. Raise up the gifts and the witness of people who are neuro-divergent, living with disability, or bearing invisible illness. Receive our prayer, O God.


Your mercy is great.

Your praise is sung throughout creation in all times and seasons. As the new year turns, ground us in your changeless and sustaining love. Keep us attentive to the rhythms of the cosmos and inspire us to live in harmony with all the earth. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Give hope and stamina to leaders who work tirelessly for the sake of the most vulnerable. We pray especially for organizations working on behalf of children to provide basic needs, to protect from abuse and neglect, to address trauma, and to rescue from trafficking. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Sustain all people who have been waiting for salvation and wholeness, especially Helen, Jane, Carl, Pam, Tanya, Betty, family and friends of Rose, Joe, Willie, Char, Rich, Jeanette, Archer, Steve, family and friends of Alfred, Jo-Anna, Kyle, and baby Julian, Dick, family and friends of Joan, Khams and his people and family in Manipur, India, ... and all those we name aloud or in our hearts. Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care. Empower us as helpers and advocates. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let this community of faith be a joyful and welcome place for all ages and generations. Teach us to honor the wisdom of children, the inquisitiveness of youth, the thoughtfulness of adults, and the knowledge of elders. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

	<p>We give thanks for all the beloved who lived with expectation and departed this life in peace. Sustain us in joy until we join them around your throne. Merciful God, receive our prayer.</p> <p>Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace. Amen.</p>
<p><i>A practice of the ancient church, where we recognize Christ's peace in one another and share it together.</i></p>	<p>† Passing of the Peace</p> <p>The Peace of Christ be with you always And also with you.</p> <p><i>The people greet one another saying, "Peace" or "Peace be with you" sharing the peace of Christ with one another in a no-touch or low-touch way, such as a wave, peace sign, or elbow bump.</i></p>
<p><i>God entrusts us with everything we have. Our offering is one way we give thanks to God and support the ministry of the church.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Meal</u> <i>God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.</i></p> <p>Offering</p> <p>God's ministry through Good Soil makes a difference, and your offering makes that possible. Help Good Soil continue making an impact by giving today at www.goodsoillutheran.org/support or by using the QR code to the right.</p>  <p><i>Aim your phone camera at the QR code, but don't take a picture. A link will appear to click on that will take you to Good Soil's support page.</i></p>
<p><i>The offering is brought forward to the altar to signify our gratitude for God's blessings.</i></p>	<p>† Offering Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High- ELW 289 (v. 1)</p> <p>1 Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains, and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.</p> <p>Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.</p> <p><small>Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, <i>The Crown of Jesus Music</i>, 1864</small></p>

† Offering Prayer

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.

† Great Thanksgiving

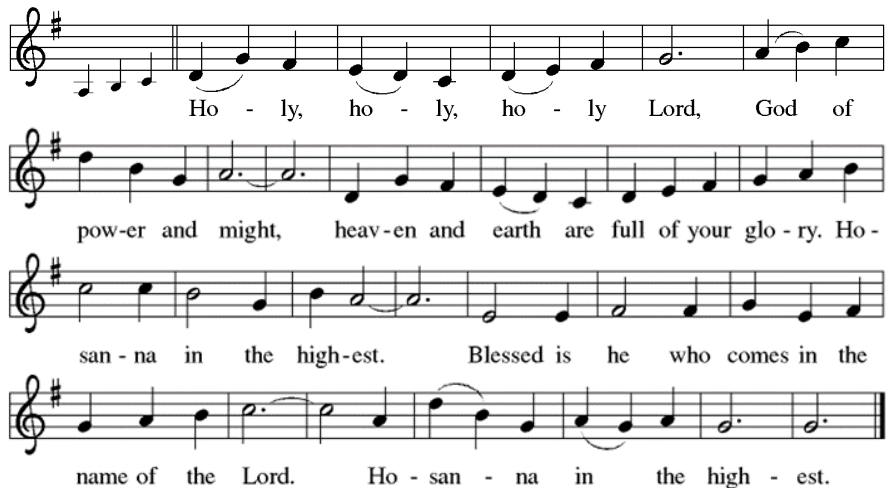
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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.

† Preface

† Sanctus



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

† Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer is Jesus' response to his disciples when they asked him to teach them how to pray.

† Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus first taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

Amen.

† Invitation to the Table

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.
Come, take your place at the table.

Communion

Christ is with us in this meal. All who are hungry for the presence of Jesus are welcome to commune here at Good Soil. Children are welcome to come to the Lord's table for communion or for a blessing, depending on parent/guardian's preference.

When you receive the elements, you are invited to respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God."

Please wait for the usher to release your row before proceeding up front. You are invited to stand or kneel at the altar rail. Gluten-free bread is available upon request. The wine (red) is in the outer rings of the tray, the grape juice (white) is in the center.

Communion cups can be returned at the end tables on your way back to your seat.

Communion Hymns

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence- ELW 490

1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;

ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descending
comes full homage to demand.

- 2 King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.
- 3 Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way;
as the Light of light, descending
from the realms of endless day,
comes, the pow'rs of hell to vanquish,
as the darkness clears away.
- 4 At his feet the six-winged seraph,
cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829-1885, alt.

Lo, How E'er a Rose is Blooming- ELW 272

- 1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
as seers of old have sung,
it came, a flow'r so bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half-spent was the night.
- 2 Isaiah had foretold it,
the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,

the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half-spent was the night.

3 This flow'r, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air,
dispels with glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
from sin and death he saves us
and lightens ev'ry load.

4 O Savior, child of Mary,
who felt our human woe;
O Savior, king of glory,
who dost our weakness know:
bring us at length, we pray,
to the bright courts of heaven
and into endless day.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946 English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

† Post-Communion Table Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and
keep you in his grace.

Amen.

The Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

† 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.

Through the sending hymn we are sent out into the world to follow Jesus.

† Sending Hymn: Let All Together Praise Our God- ELW 287
(v 1, 2, 4, & 5)

- 1 Let all together praise our God
before the highest throne;
today God opens heav'n again
and sends the only Son,
and sends the only Son.
- 2 From God's right hand the Son descends,
is born an infant small,
and lies in poverty, his bed
a manger in a stall,
a manger in a stall.
- 4 Your mother feeds you tenderly,
sings you a lullaby,
while angels, hailing David's heir,
your glory magnify,
your glory magnify.
- 5 A wonderful exchange you make:
you take our flesh and blood,
and in return give us to share
the shining realm of God,
the shining realm of God.

Text: Nikolaus Herman, 1480-1561; tr. hymnal version Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

The dismissal sends us out as Christ's Body—fed, nourished, and ready to serve. Worship has ended, and our service begins! The dismissal is based on Good Soil's Purpose Statement.

† Dismissal

Christ the Savior is born!
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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You are warmly invited to gather in the upstairs lounge area for coffee fellowship following worship!

Today's Worship Servants:

Livestream: Joe Lanter	Reader: Paula Connor
Ushers: Bill & Darlene Wahl	Counters: Michael Wancata & Bill Fink
Online Usher: Karen Sperli	Acolyte: TJ Lanter
Cantor: William Eversole	



Announcements from Good Soil for Sunday, Dec 31st, 2023

For those in need of healing, comfort, or strength: Helen Andrews, Jane Beese, Carl Bruns, Pam Bruns, Tanya Calcote, Joe Gray, Betty Holcomb, family and friends of Rose Laputa, Willie Lee, Char Mattson, Archer Oster, Steve Patrick, Rich Petrusky, family and friends of Alfred Kanagaraj, Jo-Anna, Kyle, and baby Julian Regan, Dick Schluep, Jeanette Weidlich, family and friends of Joan Zeager, and Khams Zotal and his family and people of Manipur, India.

For those celebrating their birthday: Erik Bogen (12/31), Eric Carlson (1/3), and Henry Smith (1/4).

For those celebrating the anniversary of their baptism: Abby Alusheff (1/1).

Flower Sign-Up- Interested in signing up to adorn Christ's altar with flowers for worship? You can sign up with the flower list on the bulletin board in the hallway or online using this QR code. Please note: The physical flower sign-up sheet on the bulletin board has first priority. Best efforts will be made to ensure the digital calendar reflects the physical one, but if you happen to digitally sign-up for a date that is already taken on the physical sheet, you will be contacted about rescheduling.



Coffee Fellowship Volunteers Needed! - Please consider volunteering to host and/or provide healthy snacks or baked goods. Volunteers can sign-up using the Ministry Scheduler Pro platform, the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board outside of the Lounge, or by contacting the church office. Coffee volunteers aren't expected to provide snacks or baked goods but can if they would like. Anyone can donate ready to serve healthy snacks or baked goods. Please use the sign-up sheet in the hallway or the QR code to the left.



Newsletter- Want to keep up with the latest Good Soil news or share the e-news with a friend? Sign up for or share our newsletter *Seeds* with this URL: <https://tinyurl.com/bddjk7yp> or the QR code to the right.



Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
Sun, Dec 31	In-Person and Livestream Worship	9:30 am
Thurs, Jan 4	Confirmation Class @ Bethesda on the Bay Lutheran	5:45 pm
Sat, Jan 6	Ladies' Breakfast @ Gene's Place to Dine	9:00 am
Sun, Jan 7	In-Person and Livestream Worship: Baptism of Our Lord Sunday	9:30 am
Sun, Jan 14	In-Person and Livestream Worship MLK Jr. Commemoration Service @ Good Soil With fellowship to follow downstairs	9:30 am 3:00 pm
Mon, Jan 15	Regional MLK Jr. Confirmation Service Project @ Lee Miles Hunger Center, 16718 Miles Ave, Cleveland	TBD
Sun, Jan 21	In-Person and Livestream Worship Adult Forum: New Member Orientation	9:30 am 10:30 am
Sun, Jan 28	In-Person and Livestream Worship Welcome of New Members during worship	9:30 am
Sun, Feb 4	In-Person and Livestream Worship	9:30 am

