

Good Soil Lutheran Ministries
Growing Together in Christ to Love and Serve



Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve
December 24th, 2025
9:30 am



20300 Hilliard Blvd
Rocky River, OH 44116
(440) 331-1773 | GoodSoilLutheran.org

Pastor of Presence during Pastor M's Parental Leave
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YouTube: Good Soil Lutheran Ministries

Welcome

Reflecting the abundant welcome of the Kingdom of God as revealed by Jesus, GSLM welcomes all who seek God's love and grace. We affirm and celebrate the diversity of humanity in all its races, cultures, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, social and economic circumstances, abilities, and disabilities. Together, we commit ourselves to racial equity and to justice for all, because in God's kingdom, we are all beloved children of God.

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 worshipping 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 worshipping together as a family is a meaningful experience!

For Those Needing Hearing Assistance

Ask an usher about 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.



RECONCILING IN CHRIST

Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Gathering

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

Prelude and Welcome

† Call to Worship (based on Isaiah 9 and John 1)

The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light.

The light shines in the darkness, & the darkness does not overcome it.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.

He is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace.

For the Word became flesh and lives among us.

We have seen his glory. O come, let us adore him!

† Gathering Hymn: O Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283) v. 1-3

1 O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the king of angels:

Refrain: O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

2 The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

3 Sing, choirs of angels,

sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
in the highest: *Refrain*

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

The Prayer of the Day highlights themes in today's scripture.

† Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Advent Wreath Hymn: O Come O Come Emmanuel (ELW 257)v1,4-5

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain*

5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. *Refrain*

Text: *Psalteriolum Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. Composite Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

Reading: Micah 5: 2-5a

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,

from ancient days.

³Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth,

⁵and he shall be the one of peace.

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem (ELW 279) v. 1 & 3

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

3 How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

Gospel Reading: Luke 2: 1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the
world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was
taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own
towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth
in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he
was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be

registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

Hymn: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (ELW 282) v. 1-2

1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:8-14

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High (ELW 289) v. 1-3

1 Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain*

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain*

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864

Gospel Reading: Luke 2: 15-20

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Hymn: Away in a Manger (ELW 277) v. 1-3

1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

2 The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,

but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Christmas Eve Homily – The Rev. Jim Kulma

Silence for reflection

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

*Prayer list names
have been reset
at the start of the
new church year.*

† Prayers of the Church

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

Gathering God, you bring your people from every corner of the earth together before the manger that you have made a throne. Unite the church in love as we rejoice in the news of your coming. Receive our prayer, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Creating God, you brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Join our voices with the roaring seas, the exulting fields, and the trees of the forest singing for joy on this holy night. Receive our prayer, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Transforming God, the world trembles amid violence and war. Empower our hands, feet, and hearts with your Spirit to shatter the rod of the oppressor and turn swords into plowshares. Receive our prayer, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Shepherding God, you lead us to your love in the face of our neighbor. Send us into the world to find your Word made flesh in one another, especially those who are sick or struggling. We pray especially for Dale, Diane, Mike, Steve, the Busby family, Joe, Jon, Audrey, Frank, Kay, Brendan, Kay, Ed & Verna, Sarah, Donna, Herb, Toni, Kate, Jason, Charley & Cindy, Bill, Joyce, Susan, Sally, Ruth, Kristina, Jeanette, the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, & Gaza, ...and those we name aloud or in our hearts. Receive our prayer, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

<p><i>If you would like to add anyone back on the worship prayer list, please contact the church office at 440-331-1773.</i></p>	<p>Nurturing God, you dwell with us in humble places. Sustain housing and clothing ministries in this community, that all find shelter and warmth. We pray especially for youth seeking safety and care. Receive our prayer, O God. Your mercy is great.</p> <p>Abiding God, you remain at the side of all the departed. Grant all who mourn hope in the resurrection and peace in Christ Jesus. Receive our prayer, O God. Your mercy is great.</p> <p>With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.</p>
<p><i>A practice of the ancient church, we share in Christ's peace & recognize it in each other.</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></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><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 keep making an impact by giving today using the QR code or at pushpay.com/g/goodsoillutheran</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>† Offering Prayer</p> <p>God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. Amen.</p>

	<p>† Great Thanksgiving</p> <p>The Lord be with you. And also with you.</p> <p>Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.</p> <p>Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.</p>
	<p>† Words of Institution</p>
<p><i>The Lord's Prayer is Jesus' response to his disciples when they asked him to teach them how to pray.</i></p>	<p>† Lord's Prayer</p> <p>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.</p>
	<p>† Invitation to the Table</p> <p>God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!</p>
	<p>Communion</p> <p><i>Christ is with us in this meal. All who are hungry for the presence of Jesus are welcome to commune here at Good Soil.</i></p> <p><i>Children are welcome to come to the Lord's table for communion or for a blessing, depending on parent/guardian's preference.</i></p> <p><i>When you receive the elements, you are invited to respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God."</i></p> <p><i>Please wait for the usher to release your row before proceeding up front. You are invited to stand or kneel at the altar rail.</i></p> <p><i>Gluten-free bread is available on 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.</i></p>
	<p>Special Communion Music: Melodies on Viola and Violin by mother-son musicians, Deb Yandala and Matt Bishop</p>

† Post-Communion Table Blessing

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

Amen.

† Candlelight Hymn: Silent Night- ELW 281

Please tip the unlit candle to receive the flame.

- 1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
- 3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885

The Sending

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

† Blessing

The triune God,
glorious Mystery,
holy Incarnate One,
abiding Comforter,
‡ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.
Amen.

The dismissal sends us out as Christ's Body: nourished, fed, & ready to serve. Worship has ended, and our service begins!

† Dismissal

Glory to God in the highest!
And peace to God's people on earth!
 Go in peace. Let the light of Christ shine in your hearts.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Scripture: New Revised Standard Version Bible©1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. Worship texts: sundaysandseasons.com Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies License #SAS020986 Music reprinted under One License #A-719034/CCLI license #3013830. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Today's Worship Servants:

Ushers: Bill Wahl, Stan Zeager, & Chris & Larry Jacobson	Livestream: Sean Lanter
Reader: David Dick	Acolyte: George Young
Counters: _____ & Stan Zeager	Cantor: William Eversole
Online Usher: Ellen Young	Altar Care: Darlene Wahl
Communion Bread: Michael Mitterholzer	Musicians: Deb Yandala, Matt Bishop, & Erik Bogen



Announcements from Good Soil for Wed, December 24, 2025

Especially in our prayers: Dale Alexander, Diane Bennett, Mike Bishop, Steve Bugosh, the Busby family, Joe Cassatta, Jon Deye, Audrey Dorin, Frank Dunaway, Kay Eaton, Brendan Erchul, Kay Eaton, Ed & Verna Fink, Sarah Gresh, Donna Handy, Herb Harrison, Toni Kulma, Kate Labuda, Jason Mattson, Charley & Cindy McCabe, Bill Meyer, Joyce Miller, Susan Omerod, Sally Pate, Ruth Patrick, Kristina Seeley, Jeannette Weidlich, the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, & Gaza.

The flowers adorning the altar today are given to the glory of God by members of the Good Soil faith community to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Brenda Alexander | Jeanne Livingood |
| Diane Bennett | Jim Mattson |
| Prs. Paula & David Connor | Martha Panek |
| Louise DeBell | Nancie Smith |
| Barbara Demko-Werner | The Wahl Family |
| Jane Dugan | Mike & JoAnne Wancata |
| Bill Fink | Jan Whiley |
| Sharon Hollowell | The Wylie Family |
| Larry & Chris Jacobson | Deb Yandala |
| Brett & Kelsey Johnson | |

Thank you for your generosity! Thank you so much for your generosity to Good Soil in this year's intent campaign. We have received 32 intent cards so far! If you would like to fill out the digital intent form, please scan the QR code to the right!



Maternity Leave FAQ- 10/19 was Pr. M's last Sunday before maternity leave. Scan the QR code to the left to see the answers to some frequently asked questions. Pr. Jim Kulma will be the Pastor of Presence while she's gone. His email is jkulma@cox.net and his cell phone number is 216-221-7333.

Socks "Plus" Giving Tree for Trials for Hope! Please join in decorating our Advent Giving Tree with gifts of comfort and joy for those served by Trials for Hope, 12/7-1/4. The tree is set up in the Lounge this year. **SUGGESTED GIFTS:** Warm Socks, USB Charging Blocks, Multi-charging Power Cords, Hats, Gloves, Individual Packets of Starkist Tuna Creations &/or Spam Single Classics. *Ongoing items requested by Trials for Hope (e.g., Diapers size 6, canned meats, personal hygiene products, etc. can be placed in the box beneath the tree.)*

Congregational Renewal Activities- The Renewal Committee reflected on the congregation's interest in meaningful activities centered on rest based on the sign-up sheets in the hallway. Four areas emerged as priorities for Good Soil at this time:

1. Creative Rest: Hands-on *crafting* activities to inspire joy and creativity (i.e. knitting)
2. Spiritual Rest: A *Book Club* will be held to encourage deep reflection & rich discussion.
3. Physical Rest: *Hikes in Nature* with the Holy Hikes Northeast Ohio planned events (4th Saturday of every month, see Holy Hikes-Northeast Ohio Facebook Page for details).
4. Social Rest: There was interest in a *potluck*, but we need someone to plan the event. If you'd like to volunteer to organize a time of relaxation & connection over good food, music, & conversation in the coming months, contact admin@goodsoillutheran.org.

Knitting Lessons- As part of our congregational renewal activities, Anne Paine is offering knitting lessons. The group meets on Thursdays at 7 pm. If you'd like to learn or have questions, contact Anne at anne.c.paine@gmail.com, or text her at 440-670-4917.

MOW looking for Drivers- West Shore Rocky River-Lakewood Meals on Wheels works in Good Soil's kitchen M-F! They need more drivers to bring meals to recipients, especially Mon, Wed, & Fri. Contact 440-333-6298 or rrlwcoordinator@westshoremow.org for more info.



Bethesda Staff Partnership- Scan the QR code to read an update from Good Soil and Bethesda on the Bay Lutheran's call committee as they engage the call process seeking a shared Minister for Christian Formation. Please pray for our joint call committee as they journey together. Read additional info below:

Call Committee Work- The joint call committee members are Chris Webner (co-leader), Lynne Zeidler, Scott Pohlkamp, & Lisa Hanson from Bethesda, and JoAnne Wancata (co-leader), Evan Paine, Emma Sleva, & Amelia Forshey from Good Soil. Feel free to reach out to any of them. The committee has begun their work, utilizing an ELCA guide. One of the committee’s primary goals is to regularly communicate with and involve congregants throughout the search. The committee will be offering updates throughout the search. Please answer the reflection questions (using the above QR code or handouts on the welcome table) and submit those responses to JoAnne Wancata jwancata@sbcglobal.net, if you haven’t already.

Flower Sign-Up- Interested in adorning Christ's altar with flowers for worship? Sign up on the flower list on the hallway bulletin board or online using this QR code. Please note: The physical bulletin board list has priority. Best efforts are made to ensure the digital calendar matches the physical one. If you sign up online for a date that is taken on the physical list, we will reach out to reschedule. Each vase costs \$30. You may bring your own flowers instead of buying through Good Soil, but please still sign up. Questions about flowers? Contact Cara Rovella at cclc@goodsoillutheran.org.



Newsletter- Want to keep up with news at Good Soil or share the e-news with friends? Sign up or share our newsletter using the QR code or URL to the right: <https://tinyurl.com/bddjk7yp> Questions about the E-news? Contact Cara Rovella at cclc@goodsoillutheran.org.

Calendar of Events		
Date	Event	Time
Wed, Dec 24	In-Person & Livestream Worship- Candlelight Christmas Eve	6:30 pm
Thurs, Dec 25	<i>Christmas Day, Church Office Closed</i>	
Fri, Dec 26	<i>Day after Christmas, Church Office Closed</i>	
Sun, Dec 28	In-Person & Livestream Worship- Lessons & Carols, Coffee Fellowship	9:30 am
Wed, Dec 31	<i>New Year's Eve, Church Office Closed</i>	
Thurs, Jan 1	<i>New Year's Day, Church Office Closed</i>	
Sat, Jan 3	Ladies' Breakfast @ Gene's Place to Dine	9:00 am
Sun, Jan 4	In-Person & Livestream Worship	9:30 am