

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



4th Sunday of Advent  
December 22nd, 2024  
9:30 am



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

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Facebook/Instagram: goodsoillutheranministries  
YouTube: Good Soil Lutheran Ministries

## 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 "pryground" 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

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.

## 4th Sunday of Advent

In our scriptures today, we hear a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise. We are reminded that Christ's advent is a world-changing event. God has come into our midst and the world is about to turn. On this 4th Sunday of Advent, we hear the story of the Nativity of our Lord proclaimed by the youngest voices among us bringing Good News of great joy for all people.

### Gathering

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

#### **Prelude and Welcome**

*Call to Worship  
based on Luke  
1:47, 49-53;  
Luke 2:14; and  
Matthew 5:6*

#### **† Call to Worship**

Let our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord

**Let our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.**

For the Lord, the Almighty, has done great things

**For us and for all people.**

God scatters the proud and raises up those who humble themselves.

**God fills the hungry with good things and satisfies those who thirst for righteousness.**

Glory be to God in the highest

**And on Earth peace and goodwill to all. Amen.**

#### **† Gathering Hymn: Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding! (ELW 246) v. 1, 2, 4, 5**

1 Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding!

"Christ is near," we hear it say.

"Cast away the works of darkness,  
all you children of the day!"

2 Wakened by the solemn warning,  
from earth's bondage let us rise;  
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling,  
shines upon the morning skies.

4 So, when next he comes in glory  
and the world is wrapped in fear,  
he will shield us with his mercy  
and with words of love draw near.

5 Honor, glory, might, and blessing  
to the Father and the Son  
with the everlasting Spirit  
while unending ages run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878

*The assembly and  
presiding minister  
greet one  
another.  
(scripture  
reference:  
2 Corinthians)*

## † 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



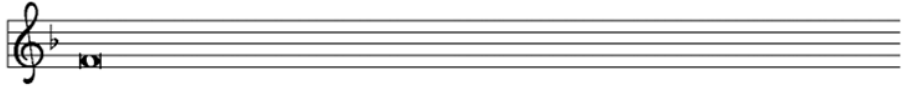
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



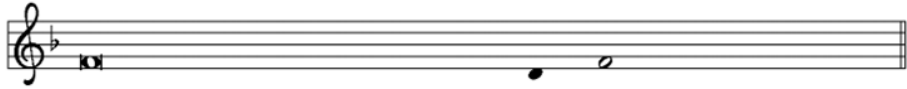
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



**Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



**Lord, have mer - cy.**



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

*The Prayer of the Day highlights themes in the scripture we will hear.*

### † Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### The Word

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

#### **First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a**

To put this reading into context:

*The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.*

Hear now the reading.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore 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.

<sup>4</sup> And 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,

<sup>5a</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

**Word of God. Word of Life. Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55



46b My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,  
 47 my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,  
 48 for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.  
**From this day all generations will | call me blessed:**  
 49 you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me  
 and holy | is your name.  
 50 You have mercy on | those who love you,  
 from generation to | generation.  
 51 You have shown strength | with your arm  
 and scattered the proud in | their conceit,  
 52 casting down the mighty | from their thrones  
 and lifting | up the lowly.  
 53 You have filled the hungry | with good things  
 and sent the rich | away empty.  
 54 You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel,  
 to remember the prom- | ise of mercy,  
 55 the promise made | to our forebears,  
 to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever.

*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

1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
 from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
 dear de - sire of ev-'ry na-tion, joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart.

*Before and after the*

† Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39-45

To put this reading into context:

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

*Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.*

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

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

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

**† Advent Wreath Hymn: Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah,  
ELW 240**

- 1 Light one candle to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel,  
God fulfills the promise.
- 2 Light two candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,  
gently lead them homeward.
- 3 Light three candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway  
for the King of glory.
- 4 Light four candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.

He is coming, tell the glad tidings.  
Let your lights be shining!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954 Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## Good Soil Children's Christmas Pageant

### O Come, All Ye Faithful

- 1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Beth-le-hem;  
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 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; *Refrain*

### O Little Town of Bethlehem

- 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.
- 2 For Christ is born of Mary, And gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wandering love.  
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.

### Hark! The Herald Angels Sing


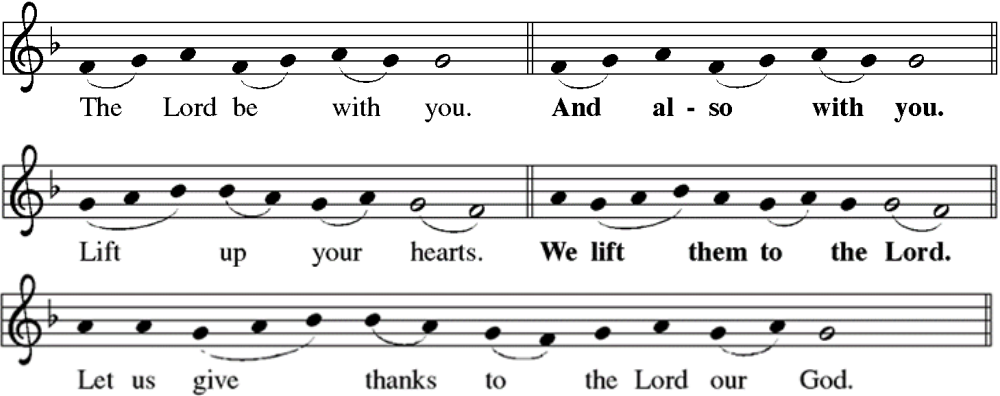
Hark, the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King.  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies,  
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem."  
Hark, the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

*A practice of  
the ancient  
church, we  
recognize  
Christ's peace*

## † Passing of the Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**



<p><i>in each other and share it together.</i></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;"><b><u>The Meal</u></b> <i>God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.</i></p> <p><b>Offering</b></p> <p>God’s ministry through Good Soil makes a difference, &amp; your offering makes that possible. Help Good Soil keep making an impact by giving today using the QR code or at <a href="https://pushpay.com/g/goodsoillutheran">https://pushpay.com/g/goodsoillutheran</a></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><b>† Offering Hymn: O Come O Come Emmanuel- ELW 257 v. 1</b></p> <p>1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.</p> <p><i>Refrain:</i> Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.</p>
	<p><b>† Offering Prayer</b></p> <p>Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. <b>Amen.</b></p>
	<p><b>† Great Thanksgiving</b></p>  <p>The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.</p>

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

† Preface

† Sanctus

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

† Eucharistic Prayer and 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

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to 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 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.*

### **Communion Hymn: Unexpected and Mysterious (ELW 258)**

- 1 Unexpected and mysterious  
is the gentle word of grace.  
Everloving and sustaining  
is the peace of God's embrace.  
If we falter in our courage  
and we doubt what we have known,  
God is faithful to console us  
as a mother tends her own.
- 2 In a momentary meeting  
of eternity and time,  
Mary learned that she would carry  
both the mortal and divine.  
Then she learned of God's compassion,  
of Elizabeth's great joy,  
and she ran to greet the woman  
who would recognize her boy.
- 3 We are called to ponder myst'ry  
and await the coming Christ,  
to embody God's compassion  
for each fragile human life.  
God is with us in our longing  
to bring healing to the earth,  
while we watch with joy and wonder  
for the promised Savior's birth.

Text: Jeannette M. Lindholm, b. 1961 Text © 2002 Jeannette M. Lindholm, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

### **Communion Hymn: Canticle of Turning (ELW 723)**

- 1 My soul cries out with a joyful shout

that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,  
and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest.  
Could the world be about to turn?

*Refrain:* My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.

2     Though I am small, my God, my all,  
you work great things in me,  
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame,  
and to those who would for you yearn,  
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,  
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

3     From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,  
not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears  
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more,  
for the food they can never earn;  
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,  
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

4     Though the nations rage from age to age,  
we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us  
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard  
is the promise which holds us bound,  
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,  
who is turning the world around. *Refrain*

† **Post-Communion Table Blessing**

Now 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 of endings and beginnings,  
God in the darkness and the light,  
God, our hope for the journey,

† bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

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

† **Sending Hymn: Soon and Very Soon (ELW 439)**

1        Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King x3

*Refrain:* Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King!

2        No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King x3 *Refrain*

3        No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King x3 *Refrain*

4        Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King x3 *Refrain*

Text: Andrae Crouch, b. 1945 Text and music © 1976 Bud Johnson Songs/Crouch Music, admin. EMT  
Christian Music Publishing

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

† **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

## Today's Worship Servants:

Ushers: Bill & Darlene Wahl	Livestream: Trey Harrison
Reader: Bill Fink	Acolyte: TJ Lanter
Counters: David Paine & Ellen Young	Altar Care: Sharon Hollowell
Online Usher: Kim Wylie	Communion Bread: Darlene Wahl
Cantor: David Paine	



## Announcements from Good Soil for Sunday, Dec 22, 2024

**Especially in our prayers:** Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Barbins of the NEO Synod, Helen Andrews, Fred Ayers, Mildred Baehr, Gail Boggs, Carl Bruns, Pam Bruns, Mary Lou Busby, Bruce Crosby, Frank Dunaway, Sara Gresh, Donna Handy, Madeline Kelly, Kate Labuda, Ann Layman, Susan Omerod, Sally Pate, Ruth Patrick, Rich Petrusky, Mindy S., Kristina Seeley, Jeanette Weidlich, Khams Zotal & his people in Manipur, the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Haiti, India, Syria, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**The flowers adorning the altar today are given to the Glory of God by Amy Elliott**



**Help make 2025 ministry dreams a reality! Submit your Intent Card for 2025-** Join the 44 households who've submitted intents for our Generosity Emphasis, "Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise"! Scan the QR code to access the digital intent form.

**Coffee Hour Fellowship-** We need volunteer hosts to set-up, brew, & clean-up the coffee/tea service &/or bring snacks/baked goods. The Coffee Hour volunteer sign-up is on the bulletin board by the lounge. Contact JoAnne Wancata (cell: 440-655-3674) with questions.



**Summer 2026 Pastoral Renewal/Congregational Renewal:** We are in the early stages of crafting a renewal experience (sabbatical) in summer 2026 for Pastor Marissa and the congregation. The experience is designed to be a time of intentional renewal for *both* the pastor and congregation. The Renewal Planning Team needs your input! Please fill out this 5-question survey using the QR code to the left. More information about this opportunity will be shared at the 12/8/24 congregation meeting.

**Introducing PushPay-** Good Soil has transitioned to a new contribution & accounting software called PushPay, replacing Vanco. If you had an account through Vanco, you've received an email to set up an account on PushPay & migrate your recurring offering if you have one. Scan the QR code to the right or in the *Offering* section of the bulletin to visit our new PushPay giving page!



**Advent Devotionals-** If you're looking for an Advent devotional (Advent began 12/1), check out options from Kate Bowler using this URL: <https://katebowler.com/advent/> or the QR code to the left.

**Holiday Schedule-** Advent is here! Below is a schedule of this season's events!

12/22 - Children's Christmas Pageant, Good Soil, 9:30am

12/24 - Candlelight Christmas Eve, Good Soil, 6:30pm

**Socks "Plus" Giving Tree for Trials for Hope through 1/5!** Please join in decorating our Advent Giving Tree with gifts of comfort and joy for those served by Trials for Hope.

Sunday 12/8 thru Sunday 12/29 in the upstairs coffee kitchen across from the Lounge. SUGGESTED GIFTS: Warm Socks - USB Charging Blocks - Multi-charging Power Cords - Hats-Gloves-Individual Packets of Starkist Tuna Creations and/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.*

**MOW Volunteer Coordinator Opening-** West Shore Meals On Wheels is looking for an enthusiastic person to support volunteer coordination efforts. The Coordinator is responsible for various related tasks that assist with the effective and efficient operation of the Rocky River-Lakewood Kitchen. This position interacts with Unit and Executive Board Members, recipients, volunteers, donors, staff and vendors. The Coordinator is also responsible for managing data, scheduling volunteers, assisting with fundraisers, and attending all Unit Board meetings. MOW's current Coordinator will provide training. This paid position averages 16-24 hours per week. For more information please email [executiveboard@westshoremow.org](mailto:executiveboard@westshoremow.org).

**MOW looking for Drivers-** West Shore Rocky River-Lakewood Meals on Wheels is in search of drivers to deliver meals to our recipients, especially Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Please contact 440-333-6298 or [rrlwcoordinator@westshoremow.org](mailto:rrlwcoordinator@westshoremow.org) for further info.



**Meet Good Soil's new members!** Scan the QR code to the left to learn more about Good Soil's new members!

**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 list 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 to reschedule. Each vase costs \$20. You may also bring your own flowers instead of buying them through Good Soil, but please do still sign up.



**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>



**SUNDAY SCHOOL-** Weekly Sunday faith formation for kids includes Learn & Grow and Experience & Grow opportunities during Sunday services. Additionally, kids will participate in special activities during planned monthly congregational events after worship. (Event updates will be announced, ongoing.) Contact JoAnne Wancata (cell: 440-655-3674) with questions OR to join the weekly rotation of Learn & Grow teachers/helpers.

Learn & Grow time during the worship service: Coloring, crafts, Bible stories, sharing, light snack, etc., in the classrooms on the first floor during the sermon & reflection time for adults in the sanctuary. For children in Preschool/Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Experience & Grow time participating in the worship service: Participating in the worship experience, including sermon & reflection time. Access to special materials on the "Experience & Grow" stand in the Playground. For Grade 5 through Confirmation.



**Ministry Funding Plan-** Scan the QR code to the left to view the approved Ministry Funding Plan for 2025!

**Calendar of Events**

Date	Event	Time
Sun, Dec 22	<b>In-Person &amp; Livestream Worship</b> <i>Children's Christmas Pageant during worship</i>	9:30 am
Tue, Dec 24	<b>In-Person &amp; Livestream Worship: Christmas Eve</b>	6:30 pm
Sun, Dec 29	<b>In-Person &amp; Livestream Worship</b>	9:30 am
Sun, Jan 5	<b>In-Person &amp; Livestream Worship: Epiphany of our Lord</b>	9:30 am
Thurs, Jan 9	Confirmation Class @ Bethesda on the Bay	6:00 pm
Sun, Jan 12	<b>In-Person &amp; Livestream Worship: Baptism of our Lord</b>	9:30 am