

Good soil

Good soil can change lives. This is both a metaphor for our hearts and a reality for global food security. Jesus' audience was an agrarian society, very familiar with sowing seeds and raising crops. Many were likely subsistence farmers, people who lived mainly off what they could grow from the ground.

While we often think about the quality of precipitation for farming - and it is crucial - the quality of soil is also key to an abundant or meager harvest. When Jesus described the hardened soil of the footpath, the rocky soil, the soil choked with thorns or invasive plants, and the good soil, his listeners could likely picture each one.

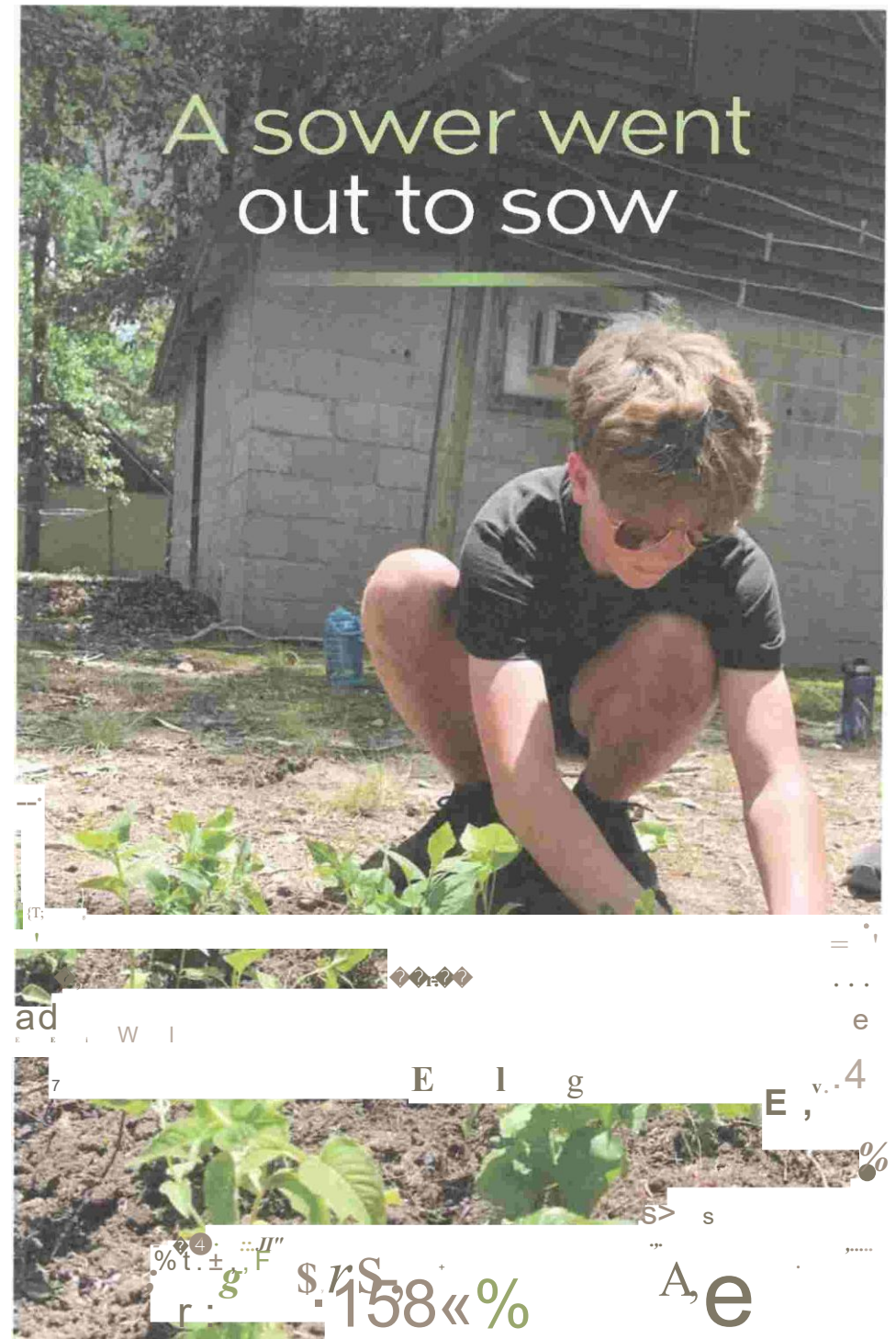
Many of our global siblings in Christ belong to churches full of subsistence farmers, people struggling to make ends meet, and dealing with irregular rains, poor soil quality, and erosion. A poor harvest can mean the family runs out of food before the next harvest comes. An abundant harvest allows families to sell the surplus and pay for children's school fees or medical care.

I work with the Church of the Brethren Global Food Initiative (GFI) which supports projects promoting soil health around the world. In places like Burundi, Haiti, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda, GFI has funded church-led trainings that equip small-scale farmers with techniques that both conserve water and improve soils without costly chemicals. Small changes can greatly increase yields, such as no-till techniques, cover crops for soil protection, crop rotations, and soil amendments through compost and animal manure. With the support of generous donors, GFI funds these trainings which improve soils and increase yields, enabling families to sow seeds and thrive. "A sower went out to sow."

*Jenn Hosler
Washington, DC*

"And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow'" (Matthew 13:3, NRSVue). **Today's Bible readings from the lectionary:** Isaiah 55:10-13; Psalm 65(1-8), 9-13; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23.

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INVOCATION

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

OFFERTORY INVITATION

God's Word has been sown among us. We are the soils, receiving seeds of truth. The harvest depends on our accepting the Word, letting it take root and getting rid of the weeds. What we offer to God is a small return on God's investment in us. Let us give with joy.

As we pass the offering plate here in the sanctuary, we also pass a virtual offering plate to those worshipping with us on YouTube Live. We invite you to give by mailing your offering to the church or dropping it off at the church during the week, or by going to the [Hagerstowncob website](http://Hagerstowncob.com).

OFFERTORY “In the Holy Presence” (Smith)

***DOXOLOGY #119** *"Praise God From Whom"*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

To know you and to have fellowship with you is the greatest experience in all the world, heavenly Father. Like the angels who cried, "Holy, holy, holy," we acknowledge your holiness; and, like Isaiah, who caught a glimpse of your glory, we cry, "I am a man of unclean lips." We thank you for loving us in spite of our sins and for the privilege of calling you "Father." May we ever be obedient to you and thus bring honor and glory to your holy name. Accept these gifts of tithes and offerings as an expression of our desire to follow you. In Jesus' name. Amen

SPECIAL MUSIC “In the Presence of Jehovah/Surely the
Presence of the Lord Is In This Place” (Arr. Hayes)

July 12, 2026

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN GOD?

PRELUDE “Holy God, We Praise Thy Name” (Chesterton)

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Robin Davies, Worship Leader

Leader: Your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

People: Give us life, O God, according to your word.

Leader: Accept our offerings of praise and teach us your or ordinances.

People: Your decrees are our heritage forever;

Leader: they are the joy of our hearts.

People: We incline our hearts to perform your statutes forever!

***HYMN #120** *"Holy, Holy, Holy"*
[Verse 1]

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee. Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty! God in three persons, blessed trinity!

[Verse 2]

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee, casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea; cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee, which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

[Verse 3]

*Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee, though the eye made blind by sin
thy glory may not see, only thou art holy; there is none beside thee, perfect in pow'r,
in love, and purity.*

[Verse 4]

*Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty! All Thy works shall praise thy name, in earth,
and sky, and sea. Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty! God in three persons,
blessed trinity!*

SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

*Please remember our worship is also on YouTube and our website.
Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public.
An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*HYMN #395

"Here I Am, Lord"

[Refrain]

*Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

[Verse 1]

*I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?*

[Refrain]

*Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

[Verse 2]

*I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them. They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?*

[Refrain]

*Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

[Verse 3]

*I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide, till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?*

[Refrain]

*Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 6:1-13

OT 635

¹In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ²Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³And one called to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."

⁴The pivots^[a] on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵And I said, "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

⁶Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷The seraph^[b] touched my mouth with it and said, "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." ⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" ⁹And he said, "Go and say to this people: 'Keep listening, but do not comprehend; keep looking, but do not understand.'

¹⁰Make the mind of this people dull,

and stop their ears,

and shut their eyes,

so that they may not look with their eyes

and listen with their ears

and comprehend with their minds

and turn and be healed."

¹¹Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said, "Until cities lie waste

without inhabitant,

and houses without people,

and the land is utterly desolate;

¹²until the Lord sends everyone far away,

and vast is the emptiness in the midst of the land.

¹³Even if a tenth part remain in it,

it will be burned again,
like a terebinth or an oak
whose stump remains standing
when it is felled.”¹⁴

MESSAGE “The Great Encounter”
Pastor Eddie Edmonds

***HYMN #528** *“I Stand Amazed In The Presence”*
 [Verse 1]
 I stand amazed in the presence
 Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how he could love me,
 A sinner, condemned, unclean.
 [Refrain]
How marvelous! How wonderful!
 And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful
 Is my Savior’s love for me.
 [Verse 2]
 For me it was in the garden
He prayed, “Not my will, but thine.”
He had no tears for his own griefs,
But sweat drops of blood for mine.
 [Refrain]
How marvelous! How wonderful!
 And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful
 Is my Savior’s love for me.
 [Verse 3]
He took my sins and my sorrows,
 He made them his very own;
He bore the burden to Calv’ry,
 And suffered, and died alone.
How marvelous! How wonderful!
 And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful
 Is my Savior’s love for me.

 [Refrain]
How marvelous! How wonderful!
 And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful
 Is my Savior’s love for me.
 [Verse 4]
When with the ransomed in glory
 His face I at last shall see,
 ’twill be my joy through the
Ages to sing of his love for me.
 [Refrain]
How marvelous! How wonderful!
 And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful
 Is my Savior’s love for me.

***BENEDICTION**

After the Benediction, you may be seated.
Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.

POSTLUDE “God Is Our Hope and Strength” (Blake)

 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship
 Thank you for joining us in worship today.
 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Hagerstown
Church of the Brethren
15 S. Mulberry Street,
Hagerstown, Maryland
21740
301-733-3565

Office: Tuesday—Friday
Flexible hours
(appointments welcome/
call ahead)

Morning Praise Worship
at 8:30 AM
Sunday School at 9:30 AM
Worship and YouTube Live at
10:45 AM

www.hagerstowncob.org

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[www.youtube.com/
@hagerstowncob](http://www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)

Eddie Edmonds
Interim Pastor

Allyson McPeak
Administrative Assistant

Burton Young
Director of
Music Ministries

James “Jamie” Prather
Interior Esthetics
Technician

*We welcome you to our church and
Rejoice in your participation with us in
worship. It is our prayer that you will
experience the presence of God's Spirit and
that it will equip you for service and ministry
in the week ahead. Our Pastor, Deacons, and
Cluster Leaders are available after worship
and during the week to listen and assist you in
your Christian pilgrimage.*

THE ANNOUNCER **July 12, 2026**

If you placed someone on the prayer list and they are now celebrating a recovery and would like their name taken off the list, please contact the church office.

If you or a loved one has surgery scheduled, is hospitalized, or would like a visit from the pastor, please notify the church.

“Take A Moment” - July 12, 2026 - We used to think that the people in the Bible were giants of the faith, God of Lives, but then we discover how much they are like us, and we them. Like Isaac and Rebekah, we choose favorites, causing pain to those who most need our love and attention. Like Esau, we quickly let go of the promises given to us, so we can gratify our desires instantly. Like Jacob, we struggle with your claim on our lives, always in conflict with your hopes for us. Forgive us, Loving God. Because we are so much like the people in the Bible, we are heirs of your promises, recipients of your grace, and sharers of your mercy. Your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, sows the seeds of discipleship in our hearts. May we not choke them off, but let them grow each and every day of our lives.

Attendance. Please sign the attendance rosters found at the end of your pew, or possibly in the hymnal rack, and pass it down the row so everyone can sign.

Our thanks to Robin Davies for being our worship leader today.

The flowers on the altar this morning are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of my husband Peter Marshall, given by Barbara Beachley Marshall.

Junior Church will be held today for children ages Kindergarten through the sixth grade. **We will gather in the Children's Church Room (Room #203).** (Parents may, of course, opt to keep their child in worship with them especially if the child is uncertain about going.) Parents/grandparents should pick up their children afterward at the stair/elevator area outside the sanctuary in the west entrance. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Tina Mills. **Junior Church is held the second and fourth Sunday of each month.**

The Parish Nurse Blood Pressure Screenings will be held today. The screenings take place in the Fellowship Hall before the 8:30 AM Morning Praise Worship Service and in the Mullendore room before the 10:45 AM worship.

Newsletter Deadline—All articles should be submitted to the Administrative Assistant **on or before July 15th.** You can submit articles by email or leaving a note in Allyson's mailbox. Thank you!

If anyone has little bottles of shampoo, conditioner, soap, or lotion that are from hotels or ones that you have that are unopened, would you consider putting them in the box at the west entrance, marked hygiene to be handed out at the community breakfast. If you have questions, please call Jenny Ferguson 301-964-1779. *-Thank you, Spiritual Nurture Team*

A young couple attending our early church service is in need of a dryer and pots and pans. If you have a used dryer, one that is in good shape, and/or slightly used pots and pans that you are wanting to part with, please call Suzie Wolfe.

If you bring any dishes or containers and leave them in the church kitchen, please make sure that your name is on the item. Thank you

Friends in Faith will be having a carry in lunch this Wednesday, July 15, 2026 at 12PM in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign up on the sign-up sheet in the west entrance and please add what dish you will be bringing. Any questions, contact Nancy Gingrich, Robin Davies, Ann Platou, Suzie Wolfe, and Mary Means.

Deadline for bulletins and newsletters. Announcements for the weekly bulletin need to be given to the administrative assistant before noon on Wednesday. Announcements for the monthly newsletters need to be given to the administrative assistant before the 15th of each month. Let's help her out by meeting deadlines, and also by not asking for special exceptions. Announcements should continue to be emailed to secretaryhcob@gmail.com. **UPDATE:** The Admin. Assistant will be using a new application to publish the bulletins & newsletters starting October 2026, due to the current application expiring. Please be patient with her during this time and if you see any mistakes or anything that needs changed, please contact her. Thank you!

Cash for Causes/Martin's Gift Card Program. Purchase Martin's gift cards to take to the store to pay for your groceries or gas, and 5% of the face value of the gift card is a donation to the church and goes toward your yearly charitable contribution. To purchase a card, please contact Donnie Maas (240-866-1077). We can make arrangements to leave cards in your church mailbox or mail them to you.

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Warm, sunny weather is here! We want to take this opportunity to remind you that in the warm weather many of the neighborhood children ride bikes, trikes, skateboards, and scooters, on our parking lot. They're often low to the ground and moving fast so please be on the lookout for them when you visit the church. When on foot, please also be on the lookout for cars speeding through the parking lot to "beat the light" at the corner.

Our services are streamed through YouTube! If you have not done so already, subscribe to HCOB's YouTube Channel and share it with others. You can do so by going to: www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob

Church mailboxes. Everyone is welcome to use the mailboxes. If you would like to be added or taken off the list, please contact Mary Means. If you have a mailbox, we ask that you be willing to monitor it. Any mail that is left in the mailboxes after a three-month period will be disposed of. The mailboxes are located in the hallway of the church office.

Fellowship Time — We're in need of volunteers to provide goodies for Fellowship Time, held the first Sunday of each month from 10:20 am—10:40 am. Goodies may be your favorite recipe or a delicious store bought treat. Suggestions include cookies, muffins, or doughnuts (3-4 dozen of whatever you choose) and may be dropped off in the Mullendore Room (the room behind the wing of the sanctuary) that morning. Beverages and paper products are provided. Please sign up on the sheet located in the west entrance, or contact Kristal Bricker or Amy Hardy. Thank you for helping to make Fellowship Time possible!

Save the Date—Our Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat will be held on Saturday, October 17th. More details to come.

Offering envelopes are located in the pew racks and at other convenient locations around the church. To assist our financial secretary, we ask that you use an envelope and please put your name and envelope number on the outside. Here's a tip - take a few envelopes home and stick one of those return address labels we all get on the outside. Then all you need to add is your number. Having your name and number on the outside of the envelope is a huge help to our offering counters. Thank you!

The Church Directory. Now is a great time to update your information in the church directory. If you have recently changed phone numbers or emails, please send any changes/updates/additions to the administrative assistant at: secretaryhcob@gmail.com or leave a note in her mailbox.

CALENDAR

Sunday, July 12

Junior Church

8:15 am	Parish Nurse Blood Pressure Screenings
8:30 am	Morning Praise Worship/Fellowship Hall
9:30 am	Sunday School, individual classrooms
10:15 am	Parish Nurse Blood Pressure Screenings
10:45 am	Worship, Sanctuary & YouTube (www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)

Monday, July 13

Church office closed

Wednesday, July 15

Admin. Assistant/Work from home

12:00 pm	Deadline for bulletin announcement submissions
12:00 pm	Friends in Faith/Fellowship Hall
12:00 pm	Newsletter deadline

Thursday, July 16

Pastor Eddie's in office day/Call ahead to schedule an appointment

Friday, July 17

8:00 am	Bulletin prep/Church office
1:00 pm	Islamic Center/Use of Parking Lot (1-3pm)

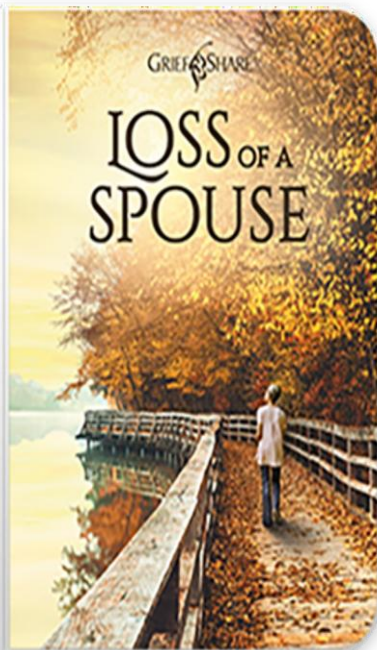
Sunday, July 19

8:30 am	Morning Praise Worship/Fellowship Hall
9:30 am	Sunday School, individual classrooms
10:45 am	Worship, Sanctuary & YouTube (www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)

Remember our weekday schedule is subject to rapid change.

You may mail your offering to
15 S. Mulberry Street,
Hagerstown MD 21740
OR
you can make a secure offering
donation on our website using
Breeze www.hagerstowncob.org

The church calendar is online at
www.hagerstowncob.org.
Click the calendar tab.



Grieving the death of a spouse? *Or do you know someone who is?*

The death of a spouse brings a unique kind of pain. People who are widowed haven't just lost a loved one—they've lost an entire lifestyle once enjoyed with that special person. As a result, this grief is fundamentally different from other losses.

We hope you will consider joining the HCOB GriefShare Team for a special 2-hr seminar addressing the challenges of this type of loss. You may wish to bring a family member or friend so they can better understand your loss and become a greater support for you.

Date: Wednesday, August 19

Time: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Place: Mullendore Room

Register at www.GriefShare.org

*Additionally, the fall session of GriefShare will be held September 23 - December 16 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Debbie Nycum and Twyla Rowe will be facilitating.

**Surviving the Holidays* is another special event to be hosted by the team on November 9 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**If you have questions about any GriefShare event, please contact Debbie, Twyla, or any other GriefShare Team Member: Robin Davies, Deb Long, Wilma Moore, Brenda Shane, Cinnamon & Brian Shay.