

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



Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve
December 24th, 2023
6:30 pm



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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.

Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. 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

Welcome

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

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

C: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

P: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

C: In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

P: The true light, which enlightens everyone, has come into the world.

C: The Word became flesh and lived among us. Come, let us worship him!

† Gathering Hymn: Oh, Come All Ye Faithful - ELW 283
v. 1, 2, 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

The presiding minister greets the assembly with the words used by Paul in 2nd Corinthians to greet churches. The assembly also greets the presiding minister in return. It is a moment of mutuality that signifies trust, love, 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.

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

† 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.

Children's Sermon

Lighting of the Advent Wreath & Christ Candle

Christ Candle Hymn: Go Tell It On the Mountain- ELW 290 (x2)

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born! *Repeat*

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925

The Gospel of Luke is the only gospel to feature the beloved infancy narrative of Jesus.

The Word

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

Gospel Part 1: Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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. ⁵Joseph went to Bethlehem to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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 for them in the inn.

Hymn: Away in the Manger ELW 277 v 1

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

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Gospel Part 2: Luke 2:8-14

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid;

for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”
¹³And suddenly there the shepherds saw that with the angel there was 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 God favors!”

Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ELW 270 v 1

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn king;
 peace on earth, and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconciled."
 Joyful, all you nations, rise;
 join the triumph of the skies;
 with angelic hosts proclaim,
 "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
 Hark! The herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

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

† Gospel Part 3: Luke 2:15-20

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

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 the shepherds saw Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But 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, as it had been told them.

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

Christmas Eve Homily – The Rev. Marissa Harrison

Silence for reflection

Thinking theologically is a spiritual practice. You're invited to reflect on the following question:

How has God's presence been with you this Advent and Christmas season? Who has helped you feel a sense of God's love made real? How will you pass that light on to others?

**† Hymn of the Day: O Little Town of Bethlehem- ELW 279
(v. 1, 3, 4)**

- 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.
- 4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels

the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

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 the Church

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

A brief silence.

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as we sing of our dear Savior's birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**


Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those who are burdened this season, and grant them wholeness. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Prince of Peace, bring an end to war-torn areas, especially Ukraine, Russia, and the place of Christ's birth—Israel and Palestine. Share the comfort of your presence with all who are alone, suffering, or separated from loved ones. We especially pray for 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. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Everlasting One, we remember with thanksgiving all who have died and who now rest in your peaceful light. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace and love.

Amen.

<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></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 continue making an impact by giving today at www.goodsoillutheran.org/support or by using the QR code to the right.</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><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. 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>
	<p>† Offering Prayer</p> <p>God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of angels, and gather us at your table of celebration.</p>

	<p>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.</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:</p> <p>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 Communion</p> <p>Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.</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. Children are welcome to come to the Lord's table for communion or for a blessing, depending on parent/guardian's preference.</i></p>

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 in a **single-file line**. We will be observing standing processional communion this evening.*

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 Special Music: Melodies on Guitar, Jim Kulma

† Post-Communion Table Blessing

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

*First verse will be sung in German by a small ensemble.
Congregation is invited to join in with the first verse in English.*

*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

*With the blessing
of God, we go out
to live as Christ's
body in the
world.*

Sending

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

† Blessing

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the courage of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and
forever.

Amen.

Please extinguish your candle.

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

† Sending Hymn: Joy to the World- ELW 267 vs 1, 2, & 4

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,

	<p>repeat, repeat the sounding joy.</p> <p>4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.</p> <p>Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748</p>
<p><i>The dismissal sends us out into the world as Christ's Body—fed, nourished, and ready to serve. Worship has ended, and our service begins!</i></p>	<p>† Dismissal</p> <p>Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim the good news. Thanks be to God.</p>
	<p>Postlude</p>

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Merry Christmas!

Tonight's Worship Servants:

Livestream: Joe Lanter	Reader: Barbara Munch
Ushers: Chris & Larry Jacobson and Bill Fink	Counter: Barbara Munch & Bill Fink
Online Usher: Ellen Young	Acolyte: Evan Lanter
Cantor: Hymn Ensemble	



Announcements from Good Soil Saturday Dec 24, 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 Schlupe, Jeanette Weidlich, family and friends of Joan Zeager, and Khams Zotal and his family and people of Manipur, India.

For those celebrating their birthday: Brynn Carlson (12/24), Mark Johnson (12/25), Else Rolland (12/26), Madeline Sburlea (12/28), & Nick Young (12/28).

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.

Dave & Abbie Blocksom

Paula & David Connor

Bill Fink

The Inman Family

Jim & Toni Kulma

Larry and Chris Jacobson

The Lanter Family

Jim Mattson

John A. Shumaker

Bill and Darlene Wahl

Jan Whiley

The Williamson Family

The Wylie Family

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.



Advent Giving Tree- We blessed our items for the Advent Giving Tree in worship this morning. If you have additional gifts of comfort and joy for those served by Trials for Hope, please place them in the Trials for Hope bin by the parking lot doors. *SUGGESTED GIFTS: Warm Socks, USB Charging Blocks, Multi-charging Power Cords, 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.

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 24	Candlelight Christmas Eve In-Person and Livestream Worship	6:30 pm
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