



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

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Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor
Rev. Charles Kramer, Principal

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Church Website: www.sjl.org

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Greater Things" *John 1:6-8, 19-28*
Order of Service: Divine Service, Setting Five (LSB page 213)
Hymns: **346** ~ (Communion: **515, 563, 333**) ~ **921**
Adult Bell Choir: "O, Holy Night"

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Advent is a season of repentance and preparation for the Coming of Christ. We warmly welcome all who have come to worship our God with us today! Each day we live is a priceless gift from God, loaded with possibilities to learn something new, to gain fresh insights into His great truths. If you are a visitor, please fill out the Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and pass it to the center aisle during the offering this morning.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✠ Clay Behnfeldt & Kaleb Woods, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Bonnie Niermann & Cheryl Yaw, *Greeters* ✠
- ✠ Delbert & Marian Damman, *Visitation* ✠
- ✠ Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Richard Elling, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Kathy Behnfeldt, Pat Maassel, Anita Badenhop, Deb Durham, *Altar Guild* ✠

THE FLOWERS BESIDE THE ALTAR are placed today in celebration and recognition of the 35th Wedding Anniversary of *Neil & Anita Badenhop*, on Mon., Dec. 18th. Congratulations to the Badenhops, and we wish them many more happy, healthy years of marriage!

WE MOURN the sudden passing of *Jim Meyer*, 76, on Monday, Dec. 11th at his home. The funeral service for Jim was held here at St. John yesterday, Dec. 16th at 11:00 AM. Burial on the Meyer property followed the luncheon at the church. While Jim is at peace now, we pray for peace and comfort for Linda, Dana & Fred McGee and family, Julie & Ron Zenz and family, Genni & Tom Nation and family, and Joel Meyer and family.

In God's House This Week

Online church calendar: www.DynaCal.com/sjl

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 10:20AM 7:00 PM	Communion Service Voters' Meeting; "The Lamp"; Children's Christmas Program practice – Full run through (<i>Gr. PS – 8 until 11:15 AM</i>) School Board & Sr. High LYF sacking Christmas candy bags Children's Christmas Program (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Tue.	8:35 AM 9:00 AM 5:00 PM	Chapel led by Pastor Kramer Exercise Class B-ball: Gr.7&8 Girls @ Ayersville; Gr.7&8 Boys vs Hicksville(@ St. Paul)
Wed.	5:45 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Junior Confirmation Class (<i>until 6:45 PM</i>) Adult Bell Choir practice Advent Service 3 ; Offering: <i>Disaster Relief</i> Acolytes: <i>Karleigh Sonnenberg & Karter Behnfeldt</i> Greeters: <i>Bob & Diane Norden</i> Ushers: <i>Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling</i> Altar Guild: <i>Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short</i> Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	9:00 AM	NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break (<i>classes resume on Wed., Jan. 3, 2018</i>) Exercise class
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM 7:00 PM	Worship Service Adult Bible Class; Sunday School; "The Lamp" Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles ; Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolytes: <i>Clay Behnfeldt & Logan Honemann</i> Greeters: <i>Tom & Sandy VonDeylen</i> Ushers: <i>Denny Bockelman, Dave Myles, Tim Badenhop</i> Altar Guild: <i>Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short</i>
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Willie Stottlemyer, St. Stephen Lutheran – Defiance</i>

MATTERS FOR PRAYER – Please keep these people in your prayers:

- ❖ Shut-Ins: *Norma Damman, Renetta Homan*
- ❖ *Delora Winkelman, Marian Buchhop, and Anna Brodman*, at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Lucia Delventhal*, at Fulton Manor, Wauseon
- ❖ *Evelyn Rohrs, Delores Badenhop, and Melba Elling*, in Assisted Living at The Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran's Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Armed Services: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Schroeder, Connor Gerken, Seth Handy*
- ❖ *Shirley Sonnenberg, Ezekiel Damman, Pat Kramer, Todd Wachtman, Marietta Damman, and Dorothy Gerken*, dealing with health issues at this time
- ❖ *Lawrence Langenhop*, temporarily at Genacross Lutheran Home after a recent fall at home
- ❖ *Dorothy Gerken*, remains hospitalized at Henry County Hospital for a deep foot sore
- ❖ *Gary Thompson, Lindsey (Elling) Thompson's father-in-law*, having tests and surgery for probable brain cancer
- ❖ *Mary Seibert, Sarah (Brad) Rosebrock's mother*, hospitalized at St. V's battling her cancer

ADULT BIBLE CLASS is cancelled today due to the Voters' Meeting in the fellowship hall immediately after this morning's service.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE – This evening!

The children have been rehearsing and are ready to present the Christmas Gospel to you this evening at 7:00 p.m.

The theme for worship is, "A Sola Christmas." The service is built around the five great "solos" of the Reformation: Scripture Alone, Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Christ Alone, and To God's

Glory Alone, and ties them in with the good news of great joy of our Savior's birth! JOIN US, please!



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM INFO:

TODAY Practice for Grades PS – 8 (10:20-NOON)

TONIGHT at 7:00 PM Christmas Program – 8th Grade ushers should arrive at 6:00 PM.

All other children should arrive at 6:30 PM (*Meet in the Fellowship Hall/Cafeteria*)

DRESS CODE FOR THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE: Girls should wear either a dress or dress pants and a blouse or sweater. Boys should wear dress pants or khakis (*no cargo pants*) and a sweater or dress shirt (*any color*) and tie (*optional*). No jeans or athletic shoes.

MITTEN TREE – LAST DAY

Today is the final day to make donations of mittens, gloves, hats and scarves, or even new or lightly used coats, for needy people of all ages in our area. Tomorrow the items will be gathered up and sent to *The Salvation Army* for distribution to the needy in our area, in time for Christmas. *Let us heed the words of our Lord, "I was naked and you clothed me." (Matt. 25:36)*



SACKING CANDY: The School Board and Sr. High LYF members will be assembling the Christmas sacks today during the Sunday School hour.

VOTERS' MEETING in the Fellowship Hall immediately after today's service. On the agenda will be: 1) *Election of Officers*; 2) *Distribution of "Soaring with the Eagles" funds*; 3) *Approval of 2018 Budget*; 4) *Second reading and potential vote on Constitution change to Article IV Communicant Membership wording*; 5) *Second reading and potential vote on Constitution change to Article VIII Synodical Membership wording*; 6) *Discussion and potential vote on new policy concerning Religious Employment Criteria*; 7) *Discussion and potential vote on proposed revision to the Facilities Use Policy*; 8) *Potential consideration of a buyer's offer to purchase the old school*; **ADDITIONAL ITEMS:** 9) *A Housing Allowance change*; 10) *Nomination of a Circuit Visitor*

OLD SCHOOL PURCHASE OFFER: There has been interest recently from someone to purchase the old school. They have been shown the interior of the building, and have made an offer of \$28,000 to buy it. This will be a Voters' Meeting discussion item today.

LIST OF 2018 CHURCH OFFICE NOMINATIONS: *(as of the printing of this bulletin)*

ELECTED: Vice Pres. – *Brad Rosebrook*

Treasurer – *Cathy Gerken*; Financial Trustee – *Mary Kossow*

Elder – *Brian Bickel, Larry Sausser*

Stewardship Board – *Kurtis Kramer, Dave VonDeylen*

Board of Education – *Bob Riefers, Tara Sausser*

APPOINTED: Secretary – *Sandy VonDeylen*; Church Deacon – *Doug Dietrich*

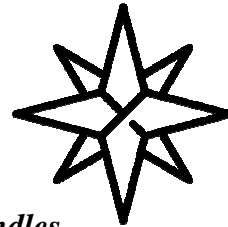
Trustee – *vacant, Dennis Showman*; Cemetery Sexton – *Ben Kruse*

Cemetery Board – *Tyler Kossow, Jordan Myles, Roger Lulfs*

Asst. Sunday School Supt. – *Kelly Sonnenberg*

NOTE: The installation of newly elected and appointed officers for 2018 will be conducted in the regular Sunday service on January 7th.

Christmas at St. John



Today 7:00 p.m. Children's Christmas Service
"A Sola Christmas"

Dec. 24 Next Sunday, Christmas Eve
9:00 a.m. Regular Morning Worship Service
7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles

Dec. 25 Christmas Day
9:30 a.m. Christmas Festival Service with Holy Communion

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR TONIGHT'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Please note that there is no offering envelope in your boxes for the Children's Christmas Program for tonight. If you wish for your offering to be recorded, use any spare Sunday envelope in your set. Regardless of which envelope you use, unless you specify something in writing on the envelope, we will apply your contribution to the Home Fund as designated.

PORTALS OF PRAYER booklets for January, February, and March are on the desk in the back of the church. Pick up your copy today!

WOMEN OF FREEDOM – The Program Booklets for 2018 are in a box on the narthex table. They are in alphabetical order. Be sure to pick yours up today. Also be sure to check to see what month you are on for serving. If that time does not work out for you, you can switch with someone.

MITE-Y-SOCKS: Anyone that filled a Mite-Y Sock for Missions this year may turn them in now. A large LWML Mite box is placed on the table in the narthex into which you may place your Mite-Y Sock for this year. If you wish to keep your sock to refill in 2018, simply empty it into the box.

ISSUES, ETC. – Your comprehensive source for news information & truth... is a radio talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio in Collinsville, IL and hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken. This week's topics include: *Media Coverage of Religion, Pop American Christianity, Christ in the Old Testament, The Birth of Jesus Foretold, The Lutheran Confessions, Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch and more.* You can listen to what you want when you want at www.issuesetc.org and on the Lutheran Public Radio mobile app.

2018 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2018 offering envelopes are available today. Please pick yours up, and may God prosper the work of our hands and the giving of His people! If you did not receive a box of envelopes but would like one, please contact *Al Damman* (419-598-8425) until Jan. 1st. After Jan. 1st, please contact *Kathy Gruenhagen* (419-335-9173).

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA – Looking for a last minute Christmas gift? The Women of Freedom have beautiful Rada Cutlery available (*knives, servers, pizza cutters, and vegetable peelers*) The items are on display in the hallway. There are also PTL cookbooks available.

GIVING BACK AT ST. JOHN! This morning you will find forms on the narthex table with lists of the many ways you can serve here at your church.

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- Some of these are the elective and appointed offices of the congregation. These are the most pressing for us at this time of year.
- Others are volunteer positions for the many things that need to be accomplished for our church to continue in ministry.
- There is also a section for your own ideas. If there's a way you'd like to serve that's not listed, please write in the idea.

Deposit your completed form in the box in the narthex labeled, "Serving Christ in Freedom." These forms will be distributed to the appropriate people so that contact can be made and you can begin serving. It is our prayer that everyone will find at least one way they can serve, or perhaps more. God has given gifts to each and every one of us to be used in His service. What a privilege!

ADVENT MIDWEEK WORSHIP – This year our Advent midweek theme is...

"We Three Kings"

We are focusing on Israel's first three kings. We've considered Saul and David; **this Wednesday evening we take a look at the life and reign of Israel's third king, Solomon.** He is best known for his wisdom and wealth, and for building the first temple in Jerusalem as a permanent house of God, replacing the tabernacle (*Israel's mobile tent church*) that had been God's house since Mt. Sinai. Contrasting Solomon with Jesus, we develop a much deeper appreciation for the King who came to us from heaven! Take time this year to count down to Christmas in a way that will truly prepare your heart for a joyous celebration of Christ's birth! Midweek Advent services are on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.



<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 12/10/17	\$6,923.00	\$176.00	\$589.00

ATTENDANCE: 215

2ND ADVENT SERVICE (12/13/17): *Lutheran Hour Radio* - \$323.00 Attendance: 63

CHOICE DOLLARS RECAP: Thanks to everyone who continue to designate their Choice Dollars deposits through Thrivent Financial. Because of your initiative the church and school have benefited in 2017. Here are the individual year-to-date deposits for 2017: St. John Church - \$13,519.00; St. John School - \$2,292.00; St. John Preschool \$-0-. A well-deserved “thank you” to Thrivent for providing these funds throughout the year!

ST. JOHN WEBSITE: Did you know you can listen to *Pastor Niermann's* sermons on the internet? Just click on the “Media” tab on our website, www.sjl.org.

LARGE PRINT & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BULLETINS are available on the table in the narthex. The Children's Bulletins are coordinated with the Bible texts for each Sunday, and provide activities that tie in with the weekly themes. Pick one up today for your child.

THE LUTHERAN HOUR – The Lutheran Hour Ministries can be heard on a few radio stations in our area. They cover many topics relevant to today's issues. Broadcasts can be heard Sundays on: Archbold's WMTR 96.1 at 7:30 AM; **Napoleon's WNDH 103.1 at 9:00 AM.**

“WORSHIP FOR SHUT-INS”: “Worship for Shut-Ins” has joined the WLMB-TV40 line up. If you have a relative or friend who is homebound, hospitalized, or recovering from a recent surgery, you may suggest this 30-minute LCMS worship service to them. So tune in to WLMB-TV40 on Sundays at 6:30 AM and get your Sunday started off right!

CALENDARS & MORE CALENDARS – We received 2018 calendars from Snyder-Wesche-Hoening Funeral Home and Rodenberger Funeral Home, both in Napoleon. These calendars will be available on the narthex table and desk on a first come, first serve basis.

PTL COOKBOOKS: Don't forget a cookbook for someone on your Christmas list! This cookbook would make a great gift for that “hard to buy” family member. At a cost of only \$10, check out the display in the side hallway and pick up and pay for your copy today.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

**The innkeeper had no room for Jesus on the day of His birth.
Will you have room for Him this Christmas?**

“O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.” (LSB 379)