



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 23, 2018

VOL. 83

NO. 51

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Rev. Charles Kramer, Principal

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FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Blessed is the Fruit of Mary's Womb" *Luke 1:39-56*

Order of Service: Prayer and Preaching (LSB pg. 260)

Hymns: 357 ~ 933 ~ 384 ~ 431; 1,2,5 ~ 373

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* ✦ Addyson Speiser & Landen Kruse, *Acolytes* ✦
- ✦ Dave & Sara Myles, *Greeters* ✦
- ✦ Dave Von Deylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Richard Elling, *Ushers* ✦
- ✦ Diane Von Deylen, LouAnn Rosebrock, *Altar Guild* ✦

POINSETTIA PLANTS – The poinsettias are adorning the sanctuary this morning and will be used for the various Christmas Services. Please see the insert in today's bulletin for a listing of those who purchased these poinsettias. If you ordered a poinsettia plant, it can be taken home after the Christmas Day Festival Service on Tuesday. There will be plastic sleeves to protect them in the side Conference room. Thank you to those who purchased poinsettias this Christmas Season.

SUNDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY – Have you ever wondered what power is at work within you that causes you do the things you hate and know you should not do? You're not alone. Paul had this same struggle, as does every Christian. But we are not left alone to fight this battle. **Please join us this morning in the fellowship hall for this study of God's Word – it's never too late!** "How blest are those who hear the Word of God and put it into practice." (Luke 11:28)



In God's House This Week		<i>Online church calendar: www.DynaCal.com/sjl</i>
Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 10:30AM	Worship Service Adult Bible Class; Sunday School; "The Lamp" School Board & LYF sacking candy for Christmas Program
Mon.	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles; Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolytes: <i>Karleigh Sonnenberg & Logan Honemann</i> Greeters: <i>Don & Karan Niebergall</i> Ushers: <i>Denny Behnfeldt, Elmer Maassel, Bob Norden, Ted Ripke</i> Altar Guild: <i>Diane Von Deylen, LouAnn Rosebrock</i>
Tue.	7:00 PM	Christmas Day Festival Service w/Communion; Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolyte: <i>Maggie Weller</i> Greeters: <i>Bonnie Niermann & Cheryl Yaw</i> Ushers: <i>Dave Von Deylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Richard Elling</i> Altar Guild: <i>Diane Von Deylen, LouAnn Rosebrock</i>
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Worship Service Adult Bible Class; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Jeff Corder, St. John Lutheran – Stryker</i>

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

- ❖ Shut-Ins: *Norma Damman, Renetta Homan, and Willie Gerken*
- ❖ *Lucia Delventhal*, at Fulton Manor, Wauseon
- ❖ *Delora Winkelman, Marian Buchhop, and Dorothy Gerken*, at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Evelyn Rohrs and Melba Elling*, in Assisted Living at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran's Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Armed Services: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Schroeder, Connor Gerken, Seth Handy*
- ❖ *Macie Wyse*, going thru some difficult therapy as she continues her battle with cancer
- ❖ *Cheryl Yaw's sister-in-law, Cindy Walbolt*, who has had a recurrence of her cancer
- ❖ *Lucia Delventhal*, hospitalized at Toledo Hospital on Tuesday due to a stroke

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

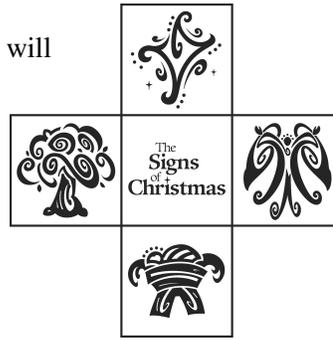
MIDWEEK CONFIRMATION CLASS is not scheduled for this week. We will resume class on the first Wednesday of January (1/2) at the normal time, 6:15 p.m.

2019 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2019 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 *Kathy Gruenhagen* (419-335-9173) until Jan. 1st. After Jan. 1st, please contact *Cheryl Dietrich* (419-592-9792).

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

This evening the children and youth of our Sunday School and school will be leading the congregation in worship of the Christ Child under the theme, "**The Signs of Christmas.**" They have been working hard to memorize their lines, to set up the sanctuary, and to rehearse – all to bring you the good news of great joy of the Savior who is born. **Be sure to join at 7:00 this evening for this very special worship service, when "out of the mouth of babes" we will hear the praises of God for the gift of His only Son!**

Final rehearsal is this morning during the Sunday School hour.



DRESS CODE for the Christmas Program tonight is as follows: 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.

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Please note that there is no offering envelope in your boxes for the Children's Christmas Program 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.

Christmas at St. John

The time has come once again when the church around the world celebrates the greatest good news of all, the birth of our Savior two millennia ago. **Join the celebration!**

**Once He came in blessing,
All our ills redressing,
Came in likeness lowly,
Son of God most holy;
Bore the cross to save us,
Hope and freedom gave us**



- TODAY 7:00 p.m.
- Monday, December 24 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 25 9:30 a.m.
- Sunday, December 30 9:00 a.m.

Children's Christmas Service
"The Signs of Christmas"
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
"Fear Not!" Medley of Carols
Christmas Day Festival Service, Communion
"Infinite Gifts in Finite Wrappings"
Sunday after Christmas
With lots of our favorite carols

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 12/16/18	\$9,020.00	\$395.00	\$345.00

ATTENDANCE: 276

3RD ADVENT SERVICE: \$868.00 – *Church Vocation Students*; Attendance: 91

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 MEETING: The Quarterlies are available and can be picked up on the narthex table. The next Women of Freedom meeting will be on Tues., Jan. 15th at 7:00 PM. All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend.

LYF FUNDRAISERS:

- **STICKY BUNS** - The Sr. High LYF are offering sticky buns periodically again this year after church. The proceeds will be going toward the youth's trip to the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in July 2019. **The next sticky bun fundraiser is today.**
- **SKITTLES GUESSING JAR** - The youth are also conducting their Skittles Guessing Jar fundraiser. Guesses are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Take as many guesses as you want! The winner will receive the full jar of Skittles. This fundraiser will run through January. All funds raised will be put towards the youth's trip to the National Youth Gathering in July.

150th Anniversary Kick-off

Two weeks from today, on **Sunday, Jan. 6th**, we will kick off our **150th Anniversary Year Celebration** with a special worship service and a potluck meal and program to follow. Be sure to mark your calendar for this special day in our congregation's history, as we celebrate the year together under our anniversary theme, **"Jesus Christ: Yesterday, Today, Forever."**



Please note that each of our four special anniversary services (1/6, 3/17, 6/2, 9/15) will begin at 10:00 a.m. with the congregational meal and program to follow at 11:30 a.m. (no Sunday School those days). We hope this will make it as easy as possible for everyone to participate fully in the events of the day.

NOTES FOR KICK-OFF SUNDAY, January 6

- **Worship at 10:00 a.m. / Congregational Meal at 11:30 a.m.**
- **For the meal, meat, beverages and table wear are provided – bring a dish to share.**
- **The program will include a quiz about our early history, with winners to receive prizes.** To study up for this quiz, read the document at www.sjl.org/SJLShistory.pdf (link is up at sjl.org)

INSTALLATION OF 2019 OFFICERS NEXT SUNDAY (DEC. 30TH) – With gratitude to God for all those who have served in the past in the various offices of our congregation, and for those who stood for election for this coming year, we will install the 2019 congregational officers next Sunday during the morning service. Officers to be installed are:

President – Brad Rosebrook; **Vice President** – Richard Elling; **Treasurer** – Cathy Gerken; **Financial Trustee** – Jerry Langenhop; **Elders** – Denny Behnfeldt, Todd Hesterman; **Stewardship Board** – Deb Wachtman, Judy Okuly; **Alt. Delegate Synod** – Peter Gerken; **Board of Education** (installed to take office in July 2019) – Amy Kramer, Joel Stier; **Secretary** – Deb Durham; **Church Deacon** – Matt Schroeder; **Trustees** – Juergen Goertz, Dean Badenhop; **Sunday School Supt.** – Kelly Sonnenberg; **Asst. Sunday School Supt.** – Stephanie Damman; **Cemetery Board** – Ron Germann, Andrew Naveau, Dave Johnson **Cemetery Sexton** – Ben Kruse.

CHURCH'S ARTIFICIAL TREE: Due to purchasing the two new Christmas trees in the front of the church this year, Church Council has decided to offer the previous artificial tree to anyone interested. If you are interested in taking this tree, please contact one of the Trustees to make arrangements to pick it up from the old school. The Trustees are David Rohrs, Terry Norden, Rodney Rosebrock, and Dave Rosebrock.

YOUTH CENTER: For those of you who would like to donate your labor for the new Youth Center project, there is a green sheet on the table in the narthex to sign up and list your phone number. We will be starting on some of the work very soon. We have some interior brick from the chimney that needs to be removed, also framing walls, help installing windows, blowing insulation in the attic (*at a later date*), etc. This labor will help to offset the financial burden of the project. In the past we have enjoyed the company of members getting together to build and improve the Lord's house. Thank you in advance for your support. Questions...Call Denny Damman at 419-966-2687. *The Building Committee*

CHOICE DOLLARS RECAP: Thanks to everyone who continues to designate their Choice Dollars through Thrivent Financial. Because of your initiative the church and school have benefited in 2018. Here are the individual year-to-date deposits for 2018: St. John Church - \$7,795.00; St. John School - \$2,182.00; St. John Preschool \$-0-. A well-deserved thank you to Thrivent for providing these funds.

MYSTERY READER: Is there a Mystery Reader among us???? Please send Kindergarten Teacher, Mrs. Niermann an email at bniermann@sjl.org if you would like to be a "mystery reader". We have already had a few mystery readers which proved very exciting for the kindergarteners. There are also forms available on the narthex table to sign up. Complete the form and drop in the box provided or bring your form to the school office.

PROJECT CONNECT – There are many free booklets in the rack in the narthex. Be sure to check for some good reading. Some titles are: "Why Do Bad Things Happen To Me," "Has God Abandoned Me," "Dealing with Depression," "Coping with Cancer," "Who Is Jesus," "Just Stress?," "Overcoming A Painful Childhood," "Where's God in All of This?," "Why Should I go to Church?" and many more. These booklets are furnished through the Lutheran Hour Ministries.

OHIO ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN: The Ohio Division OGT is located in the north end of the Culligan Water Conditioning building on Independence Drive in Napoleon. Someone is usually there to receive items on the first Tuesday of the month from 9:00-11:00 AM. If you need to drop off items at another time, please contact *Nancy Helmke* (419-758-3539), *Diann Meyer-Grieser* (419-267-3485), or *Vicki Grieser* (419-445-2986) and they will be happy to meet you and open the facility to receive your donations! PLEASE do not drop off items at the warehouse when it is closed. Thank you!

FOLLOW OUR CHURCH ON FACEBOOK – Our new Facebook page will become a source of information about our 150th Anniversary year, as well as a place where members and school alumni will be encouraged to share memories of the past. The first of many historical pictures has been posted there for you to enjoy and discuss. Please be sure to ‘like’ and ‘share’ these posts so that we can reach the broadest possible audience. Let’s build a good Facebook following, especially as we approach the 150th Anniversary celebration.



If you aren’t following our church yet on Facebook, just search for “St. John Lutheran, Napoleon” and you’ll see us in this list with a profile picture of the outside front of the sanctuary. Be sure to share the page with your friends, and (Our school also has a Facebook page; find and follow it!)

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!

IF YOU’RE EVER IN A PINCH and could use a little help, the *Good Neighbor Fund* is there to assist you too! Please don’t be bashful about asking – everything is strictly confidential. Just give Pastor Niermann a call, and we’ll see what we can do!

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

What does God want for Christmas? Look in the mirror!

Jesus said, “Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will never send away.” (John 6:37)