

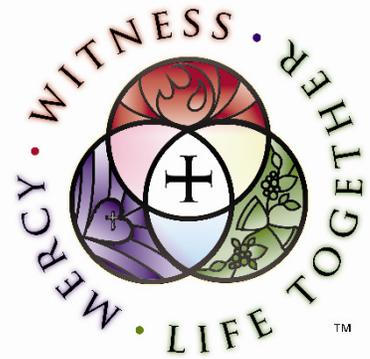
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

16035 County Road U

Napoleon, Ohio 43545

Church: (419) 598-8961

School: (419) 598-8702



News & Notes

May 24, 2020

During these unusual days of pandemic, we will not be preparing the regular church bulletin, but will instead make this *'News & Notes'* page available weekly on the website. In addition, paper copies of this page will be available on Tuesdays outside the church office for anyone coming in to drop off an offering.



LITURGICAL SETTING FOR SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Each Lord's Day is a witness to the resurrection of Jesus. Christians live with the reality of our Lord's victory over sin, death, and the devil. That reality causes us to "be glad," "exult before God," and "be jubilant with joy" (Psalm). But we also live in the reality that until Jesus returns for the judgment, we are "in the world" (Gospel, Jn 17:11), bearing witness to the cross of Jesus and his resurrection so that others may also receive the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. And because we bear Christ's name, we share in his sufferings (Epistle, 1 Pet 4:13). We are attacked and harassed by the devil, who seeks to devour us (5:8).

Therefore, we gather as the body of Christ in worship to hear our Savior's word of forgiveness and strength, just as his apostles did. Word and Sacrament are the means by which we can resist the devil, standing firm in our faith (5:9). The juxtaposition of the themes is thus striking—joy and suffering. Peter gives us the synthesis: Blessed with the name of our triune God, we can rejoice in our sufferings, glorifying God as Christians (4:16).



For a Memorial Day devotion, see back page...



CONFIRMATION SUNDAY - June 7th, 10:00 a.m. service

The Rite of Confirmation for our junior catechumens will take place this year on Sunday, June 7th in the 10:00 a.m. service. In the meantime, these young people will be preparing with Pastor Niermann by writing Statements of Faith, studying the Small Catechism on "The Sacrament of the Altar" and by answering questions from all sections of the Small

Catechism. Please pray for them as they make their final preparations for Confirmation and their first Communion.



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

- ❖ Shut-Ins: *Norma Damman, Renetta Homan, and Lester Rabe*
- ❖ *Melba Elling, and Lorna Von Deylen*, at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Evelyn Rohrs and Arlene Gerken*, at Assisted Living – Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Donald Badenhop*, now residing at Vancrest Assisted Living – Holgate
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran’s Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Armed Services: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Schroeder, Connor Gerken, Seth Handy, Nathan Nemoyer, Jared Dishop*
- ❖ *Harold Behrmann*, admitted this past week to the ICU at the Toledo Hospital, with health complications.
- ❖ *Cathy Gerken*, hospitalized suddenly in Angola, IN for a surgery; now recovering.
- ❖ *Doug & Mary Kossow*, rejoicing in the birth of their grandson, ***Kohen Jay Kossow***, son of Tyler & Olivia Kossow. Kohen was born on Wednesday, May 20 at Fulton County Health Center. Thanks be to God!

MRS. HALEY O'NEIL ACCEPTS CALL TO TEACH - **Great news!** Haley (*Gruenhagen*) O'Neil has accepted our call to teach in the 3rd and 4th grade, replacing long-time teacher and servant of souls, Mr. Lowell Petzoldt. Details about her arrival, installation and welcome will be forthcoming. Please watch for updates, and let's give thanks to God for supplying our need.

HELP WITH MOWING – We are looking for volunteer help for mowing the south field of the church property (the old softball fields). Volunteers may of course use the church mower, or can bring their own mower if preferred. This job typically needs to be done once a week early in the season, and then as needed through the summer. If you could help with this, please contact the church office at 419-598-8961.

**If you cannot sing like angels, If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can serve the Savior’s kingdom, And mow from spring to fall.** 

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 05/17/20	\$4,505.00	\$290.00	\$290.00

YOUTH CENTER DONATION UPDATE – Donations to the Youth Center have continued to come in over the past 4-5 months. Here is where donations stand to date: 82 bricks have been purchased with donations of \$12,940.00. Total donations (*including the brick donations*) stands at \$106,519.84.

OFFERINGS DURING THIS TIME – There is much for which to be thankful, even during this pandemic. In particular, we give thanks to God for everyone who has faithfully supported the ministry through this time with their continuing offerings. We are truly blessed!

There are three ways we suggest giving your gifts during this time especially...

- Use our new ‘**Give Now**’ online giving page – a link is on our website
- Mail your offerings to the church
- Drop off your offerings on Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to noon, outside the church office

More detailed information is available on the “Sustaining Ministry” document online.



GETTING BACK TO WORSHIP – At the last meeting of the Church Council and Elders it was decided that we would target the first week of June to resume public worship services as follows:

- **Thursday, June 4th at 7:00 p.m.**
- **Sunday, June 7th at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.**



By having three identical services each week, we hope to keep our numbers down at any one service, to better conform to government guidelines for group gatherings. In the letter to the congregation, you can read about many protocols we are putting in place to help mitigate the spread of viruses.

In addition, we will continue to make service recordings available on Sunday mornings by 9:00 a.m. We will record the Thursday evening service for that purpose.

Also, we are purchasing an FM transmitter so that we can broadcast services to the parking lot. This will permit people at higher risk, as well as those who are initially uncomfortable with public gatherings, to come to the church and listen to the service on their car the radios. If we need to restrict the number of people gathered for worship, the overflow crowd could listen this way as well.



RESUMING COMMUNION - First week of June

Our souls are parched, but the Sacramental fast is soon ending! At its meeting last Tuesday, the church council revised their original decision about resuming Holy Communion.

We now plan to resume Communion the first week of June in all three services - Thursday, June 4th at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, June 7th at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m. **The Rite of Confirmation will take place in the 10:00 a.m. service.** These plans will permit the 2020 Confirmation

Class to receive their first Communion together during the same service in which they are confirmed, as we have traditionally done.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT UPDATE

The St. John “Maskateers” are still hard at work, turning out face masks for both the community and for our congregation. It appears that face masks will be part of the “new normal” of our lives for a while to come, so these masks will be a blessing to many.

When we resume worship, you will see these masks available in the narthex, in children’s and adult sizes and in lots of patterns. They are yours for the taking, but once you claim one, it is yours. Wash it and use it over and over, and let’s help prevent the spread of this virus.



WEARING MASKS WHEN WE RETURN TO WORSHIP

We are reading in the news of cases where people, are resisting, sometimes violently, wearing face masks in public. If you are of a mind that face masks are unnecessary for your own protection, that’s okay, **BUT we ask everyone to remember that love’s first duty is not to ourselves but to our neighbor, to “help and support them in every physical need.”** (Explanation, 5th Commandment) This is one of those times that calls for us to heed the Scripture, *“In humility count others more significant than yourselves.”* (Phil 2:3) Consideration of others is the main thing!



ONLINE SERVICES FROM ST. JOHN

- Online services will be made available on **Sundays by 9:00 a.m.**
- Be sure to access the service PDF files so that you can follow along with each service
- Links for all worship resources will be made available on **sjl.org** and on our Facebook page.

NEW PROCEDURES FOR HOLY COMMUNION

When we resume Holy Communion during the first week of June, there will be new procedures and protocols in place as follows:



- **For the Altar Guild** - Members of the Altar Guild will be following very specific protocols for the safe preparation of the Communion vessels and elements, including hand washing, masks, sanitizing, etc.
- **For Pastor and Assistant** - Both the pastor and the Communion assistant will thoroughly wash their hands immediately prior to the distribution, and will wear masks.
- **For Communicants inside the Sanctuary** - We will form a single line in the middle aisle starting with worshipers on the pulpit side, maintaining appropriate distancing in the aisle. We will come forward to the front of the aisle to receive the host (the bread) from the pastor, then turn toward "your side" of the sanctuary to receive an individual cup of wine. The empty cup can then be deposited in the basket, and you may return to your pew by the side aisle. For more specific protocols, please refer to the recent congregational letter.
- **For Communicants in their cars listening to the FM broadcast** - At the end of the service, worshipers in the sanctuary will be dismissed and immediately head outside. Once they have cleared the building, a station for Communion will be set up under the carport, and an announcement will be made that those in their cars can begin driving through to receive Communion. The flow will be from south to north, from the parking lot toward the old school building.

2019 CHURCH'S ANNUAL REPORT: The 2019 Annual Report is now available. Thank you for your patience. Copies can be picked up from the table outside the office or on the desk in the narthex. There will be more printed and available next Tuesday. Thanks to everyone for your information submitted to be included in this report.

OLD SCHOOL WORK DAY, SATURDAY, MAY 30 --- We need your help!

We are nearing completion of the Old School renovation, but a few things remain to be done. A few significant donations have been made for the completion of this project which we hope will inspire us to do what we can to donate our sweat equity and save costs. **WE COULD USE YOUR HELP! A work day has been scheduled for Saturday, May 30th**, for putting in a footer tile for improved drainage. The excavation is being contracted, but we need help with:

- 1) Hauling dirt away a few miles using our trucks or trailers;
- 2) Scraping dirt from the foundation walls after excavation;
- 3) Laying the footer tile;
- 4) Spreading out a base layer of stone; and
- 5) Power washing the foundation walls using our own power sprayers and hoses.

The old saying goes, "Many hands make light work." No, this proverb is NOT in the Bible, but it's true nonetheless! **Please plan on joining us Saturday, May 30.**



MEMORIAL DAY DEVOTION "We Forget"

(Jesus said) "... Do this in remembrance of Me."
1 Corinthians 11:24b

"If other eyes grow dull, other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remain to us."

These words establishing Memorial Day are taken from General Order Number 11. That order was written in 1868 by General John Logan who was then serving as commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic. Even as he encouraged people to remember those in the Civil War who had given their lives to preserve the Union, Logan recognized one of humanity's great flaws: we forget those to whom we owe much.

Forgetfulness certainly has been the great flaw when it comes to the celebration of Memorial Day. Not so many years ago pastors were asked to say a few words about military sacrifice to the great Memorial Day crowds that gathered at the community or congregational cemeteries. This Memorial Day the only invitation many pastors will get is to a family barbecue.

People have forgotten those who gave their lives to preserve their physical freedom.

Things aren't much different in the spiritual realm.

Twenty centuries ago Jesus Christ -- God's Son and our Redeemer -- gave His life to save us. On Calvary's cross He died so we might no longer be condemned. Jesus allowed Himself to be sacrificed so all who believe on Him might live forgiven and free. All He asked in return was for His people to believe in Him and remember all He has done to save them.

Jesus wants us to remember; but most people forget.

So, this Memorial Day, I'm trotting out General Logan's orders and asking all of you to do as Logan promised: "If other eyes grow dull, other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall (remember the Savior and) keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remain to us."

THE PRAYER:

Dear Lord, keep us from forgetting. Instead, let us remember the Savior's unique sacrifice, which saves the souls of all who believe on Him. And, if it please You, may I also remember those men and women who served, suffered and died so I might enjoy earthly freedom. This I pray in my Savior's Name. Amen.



MEMORIAL DAY



REMEMBER AND HONOR