



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 12, 2021

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

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
School: 419-598-8702 Cell: 567-277-1339
Church Website: www.sjl.org

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon Title & Text: "Are You the One?" *Luke 7:18-28*

Service: *Matins (LSB pg. 219)*

Hymns: **343 ~ 354 ~ 941** (*Te Deum*) ~ 347

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 blue Rite of Fellowship card in front of you and drop it in the baskets as you leave.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✠ Paul Sausser, Cooper Speiser, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling, Dennis Showman, Dave Von Deylen, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Nancy Short, Kathy Gruenhagen, Deb Wachtman, *Altar Guild* ✠

ADULT BIBLE STUDY THIS MORNING - A Longer Look at the Lessons

Presently we are detouring from our study of the "Provoking Proverbs" to take a longer, deeper look at the Scripture lessons for the season of Advent. **Each session is a study unto itself, so don't feel like you shouldn't come if you weren't there for previous sessions.** Bible Study is a wonderful time of growth in God's Word and of Christian fellowship. **Oh, and we have coffee too!**

SPECIAL MUSIC THIS MORNING – We extend our thanks and appreciation this morning to Anita Badenhop, Megan Bostelman, Sharon Damman and Peter Gerken for blessing all of us with their song, "Christmas Grace." *Please remember that if you would like to provide special music for worship, either vocal or instrumental, you can speak with Pastor Niermann, Renee Petzoldt, or Sharon Damman, and we'll get things set up with you.*

SACKING CANDY: The School Board and Sr. High LYF members will be filling the Christmas candy sacks in the gym on Sun., Dec. 19th following Christmas Practice and the Voters' Meeting.

In God's House This WeekOnline church calendar: www.DynaCal.com/sjl

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00AM 10:20AM	Worship Service (no Communion afterward) Children's Christmas practice (until 11:30 AM); Adult Bible Class
Tues.	8:35AM 7:00 PM	School Chapel Church Council Meeting
Wed.	5:45 PM 7:00 PM	Junior Confirmation Class (until 6:45 PM) Advent Worship Service Offering: <i>National Youth Gathering (2022)</i> Acolytes: <i>Addison Naveau, Peyton Naveau</i> Ushers: <i>Doug Dietrich, Joe Badenhop, Neil Badenhop</i> Altar Guild: <i>Deb Wachtman, Kathy Gruenhagen, Nancy Short</i>
Sat.	10:00AM 6:00 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Boys @ St. John – Defiance LYF Christmas Party (see bulletin note)
Sun.	9:00AM 10:20AM 10:30AM 11:30AM 7:00 PM	Communion Service Voters' Meeting Full rehearsal for Children's Christmas practice (until 11:30 AM) School Board and Sr Hi LYF sacking candy in the gym (see note) Children's Christmas Service
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Kurt Mews</i> , St. John Lutheran – Defiance

FOR THOSE LISTENING FROM THE PARKING LOT**Pick up your bulletin and service by driving through the carport before worship****You can give your offering to the deacon at the same time****Tune your FM radio to 87.7****MATTERS FOR PRAYER** – Please keep these people in your prayers:

- ❖ *Melba Elling, Lorna Von Deylen, Norma Damman, Evelyn Rohrs*, at Genacross – Napoleon
- ❖ *Ruth Mahnke*, at Assisted Living – Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Hildegard Behrmann*, at Northcrest Nursing & Rehab
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran's Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Military: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Schroeder, Jared Dishop, Jordan Lange*
- ❖ *Esther Layton, Florence Jones, Sue Hurst, Eileen Fitzenreiter*, and *Don Lawrence*, for health concerns relating to cancer
- ❖ *Pat Kramer*, who continues to recover from a recent medical emergency

NO COMMUNION THIS MORNING AFTER WORSHIP – Because of all the busyness of getting set up after worship for the children's rehearsal, Holy Communion will not be available as it normally is on the 2nd Sunday of the month. We will resume 2nd Sunday Communion on January 9 after worship.

MIDWEEK CONFIRMATION CLASS SCHEDULE – During the month of December, the midweek confirmation class is meeting from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m., dismissing in time for everyone to get to the midweek Advent service at 7:00 p.m. We will resume our regular schedule in the new year on Wednesday, January 5th.

VOTERS' MEETING – Next Sunday, December 19, while the children are rehearsing after worship for their special service, the voters will gather in the fellowship hall for the final meeting of 2021. On the agenda as of this printing is: 1) *Election of Officers*; 2) *Approval of 2022 Budget*; 3) *Decision on the purchase of the Harold Behrmann property*.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE 2021

There are three more full rehearsals scheduled:

- **Today --- 10:15-11:30 a.m.**
- **This Friday (12/17) --- 9:00-11:00 a.m.**
For public school students too, if they can make it!
- **Next Sunday (12/19) --- 10:15-11:30 a.m.**

The Children's Christmas Service is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 19, at 7:00 p.m. After suspending last year's service because of Covid, it will be wonderful to hear from the children once again the wondrous news of our Savior's birth. Please join the children for this special Christmas service.

DRESS CODE for the Children's Christmas Service 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, please.

STUDENT BELL CHOIR: The student bell choir will be playing for the Children's Christmas Service this year. The final scheduled practice after church will be on Sun., **Dec. 19**.

VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS CAROLING – **This Evening at 6:00 p.m.**

In consideration of the present Covid situation, we are going to attempt our first-ever '**Virtual Christmas Caroling**' night. Using modern technology, we will stream and record our caroling from the sanctuary, so that anyone who cares to listen may do so online, and hear the songs and carols of this holy season. We pray especially that our fellow members who are shut-in will be able to listen and be blessed.



ALL ARE WELCOME! Come to the church at 6:00 p.m. this evening, and we'll organize ourselves to sing, stream and record 6 or 7 carols. After the live-stream, the video will also be available on our 'sjl services' YouTube channel.

LYF CHRISTMAS PARTY – The LYF will be having a Christmas Party on Sat., Dec. 18th from 6-8 PM at the Youth Center. Come and have some fun with Christmas theme games, food, and music to get you in the holiday spirit!

2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2022 offering envelopes are available today. Please pick yours up, and may God prosper the work of your hands and the giving of His people! If you did not receive a box of envelopes but would like one, please contact *Jerry Langenhop* (419-598-8151) until Jan. 1st. After Jan. 1st, please contact *Jim Hogrefe* (419-267-3806).

COVID MEASURES – Recently we’ve been soliciting people’s input about taking small steps toward normalcy, especially with respect to worship. We thank everyone who offered us their thoughts and opinions. The overwhelming majority of people we heard from are of the opinion that we are not out of the woods yet with respect to Covid, and that we should continue for the time being giving our offerings and receiving Holy Communion as we have been doing it now for some time. Thanks again to everyone who shared your thoughts!



ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES – The theme this year for our midweek Advent services is, “**Ageless Advent Questions.**” The questions Advent poses for us and all humanity are suggested by in texts of Advent by John the Baptist, Mary, and the shepherds. They are ageless questions that we all need to ponder.

The midweek Advent schedule is as follows:

Date	Theme	Offering
Dec. 1	“Are You the One?” <i>Matthew 11:2-11</i>	Lutheran Bible Translators
Dec. 8	“How Will This Be?” <i>Luke 1:5-38</i>	Worship Anew
Dec. 15	“For Me?” <i>Luke 2:8-16</i>	National Youth Gathering

**Please join us this Wednesday for our last Advent evening service this year.
Worship begins at 7:00 p.m.**

FINANCIAL FACTS:	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 12/05/21	\$11,610.00	\$160.00	\$352.00

ATTENDANCE: Thursday – N/A; Sunday – 180

1st ADVENT SERVICE: \$636.00 – Lutheran Bible Translators; Attendance: 70

BULLETIN STUFFER VOLUNTEERS: Want to get involved? Why not try volunteering to help with stuffing the bulletins for the 2022 worship services. It’s not too difficult and can be done either at church or in the comfort of your own home. The bulletins are pre-folded. If anyone is willing to donate a little time toward stuffing bulletins, we are looking for about 11-12 couples/families to sign up for this task. If you feel you would like to give this a try, there is a signup sheet on the narthex table. You can even pick the month(s) that work best for you. We can accommodate your busy schedules. *NOTE: If you have stuffed bulletins in the past year, thank you for your service. We ask that you please sign up again and choose your month. You can also call Lori Langenhop at 419-598-8151 or email her at lahop@bright.net.*

USHER, AND ALTAR GUILD SIGN-UP – **The sign-up deadline is TODAY!** We are preparing the 2022 Usher, and Altar Guild schedules so this is the time to sign-up at the table in the narthex. If you are interested in serving God’s people here at St. John in a way that is much needed and appreciated, would you consider joining a team? *If you are currently serving as an usher or are on an altar guild team, you will remain on that team for 2022, unless you notify the office otherwise.*

LIST OF 2022 CHURCH OFFICE NOMINATIONS: (as of the printing of this bulletin)

ELECTED: Vice Pres. – *vacant*; Treasurer – *Cathy Gerken**

Financial Trustee – *Jerry Langenhop**; Elder – *vacant, vacant*

Stewardship Board – *Cheryl Sausser, Randy Rosebrock*

Board of Education – *Abbie Badenhop, Yajaira Kruse*

Alt. Delegate Synod – *Peter Gerken**

APPOINTED: Secretary – *vacant*; Church Deacon – *Dale Damman*

Trustee – *Roger Lulfs, Dan Wiechers*; Cemetery Sexton – *Ben Kruse**

Cemetery Board – *Lowell Petzoldt, Glenn Badenhop, Todd Kruse (Brenda)*

Asst. Sunday School Supt. – *Jenna Kehnast*

NOTE: *The * indicates current office holder. As you can see, there are still ballot spots that need filled, so please consider serving and contact Pastor Niermann or the church office. Installation of newly elected or appointed officers for 2022 will be conducted in the Jan. 2nd Sunday Service.*

THREE WAYS TO GIVE YOUR REGULAR OFFERING

- Deposit your offering in the narthex when you come to worship, or if you're listening to the FM broadcast, give your offering to the usher or deacon when they hand you your bulletin.
- Use the 'Give Now' online giving page – a link (the blue button) is on our website.
- Mail your offering to the church.

OPTIONS FOR HOLY COMMUNION DURING COVID - During this time of pandemic, we are making Holy Communion available in the following ways:

- **Thursday evening Communion services** prior to first and third Sundays
- **First and Third Sundays each month** – in the Sanctuary, and drive-thru after the service
- **Second Sundays** – after the service in the sanctuary

Drive-thru Communion is on the first and third Sundays for those who have participated in the Divine Service from the parking lot.

ASKING FOR DONATIONS: With the addition of our STEM classes this year, we are asking if anyone would have any of the following items lying around the house (or tucked away in a cupboard) that you would consider donating to the STEM Lab: 1) Salad Spinner; 2) Large size square see-thru plastic containers; 3) Tempera Paints; 4) Balloons; 5) Rubber Bands; 6) Popsicle sticks or tongue depressors. And for our Music Department, any used drumsticks for the Music classes. Thank you!

GOT SOME TIME? Why not be an adult volunteer at St. John School. You could listen to children read, talk about your time in the military, work with flash cards, or tell children about a hobby or craft you enjoy doing. The possibilities are endless and your time with them will be priceless!

If you would be interested in volunteering in the school, please call the school office at 419-598-8702 and give us your name and a contact number. The school will contact you. Thank you in advance for thinking about volunteering at our school.

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, stop in at the church office and pick up and pay for your copy today.

SPORTS SCHEDULE NOTE: With *Joe Badenhop* as our Athletic Director, please go to the “Calendar” icon in Fast Direct frequently as this is where he will post the sports schedules and any changes to the sports schedules. Keep in mind that in order to view the games for the basketball season, you can go to either FastDirect directly (*thru the school*) or you can enter the church’s website (*www.sjl.org*), click on “School” at the top of page, click on “FastDirect School Info. System” on the left side of page, click on “BulletinBoard/Calendar” on the left side of page, and then scroll down to Joe Badenhop, Athletic Director and click on **his** “Calendar”.

ATHLETIC BOOSTER MEMBERSHIP: Membership is now being taken for the Athletic Booster Club. **We will wind up our membership drive on Wed., Dec. 29th.** Be sure to turn your form and payment in by then. Prices are \$20.00 for a couple and \$10.00 for an individual. Make checks payable to St. John Boosters.

PROJECT CONNECT – There are many free booklets in the rack in the narthex. Be sure to check for some informative reading such as: “*Has God Abandoned Me,*” “*Dealing with Depression,*” “*Coping with Cancer,*” “*Who Is Jesus,*” “*Why Did Jesus Die?*” “*Overcoming A Painful Childhood,*” “*Where’s God in All of This?*” “*Why Should I go to Church?*” and many more. Booklets furnished through Lutheran Hour Ministries.

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.

HELP US KEEP UPDATED RECORDS – With the advent of cell phones, keeping current contact information is an issue for every organization these days, including the church. When people move or get a new phone number, they often don’t think to update that information with us, often leaving us with no way to contact them for ministry related matters. So please, if you move or get a new phone number, contact the church office or make a note of it on the *Rite of Fellowship Card* and help us keep our records as up-to-date as possible.

AREA EVENTS:

- **A Christmas Concert** by The Toledo Symphony String Orchestra – **Wed., Dec. 15th** at 7:30 PM at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Napoleon Twp. See “red” flyer for all the ticket information and details.
- **Distribution of Wreaths Across America** on Sat., Dec. 18th at 11:00 AM at the Ridgeville American Legion Hall. If you placed an order for a wreath, please pick yours up on the 18th.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

It was Mary who wrapped the first and greatest Christmas gift.

“She gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths...”

Luke 2:7