



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

August 23, 2026

VOL. 92

Vicar Jonathan Pietrowski
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

NO. 34

Church Office: 419-598-8961
School Office: 419-598-8702
Church Website: www.sjl.org

THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Order of Service: Prayer and Preaching *LSB pg. 260*

- Opening Hymn: **783 Take My Life and Let It Be**
- Opening Versicles *LSB pg. 260*
- Old Testament Cantic *LSB pg. 261*
- Holy Scripture Readings (*Psalm chanted responsively*)
- Common Responsory
- Catechism *LSB pg. 264* and Responsive Readings of Commandments 7 & 8 *LSB pg. 321*
- Hymn of the Day: **644 The Church's One Foundation**
- Sermon: "Wisdom is the Goal" Vicar Jon Pietrowski
- Blessing of the Backpacks (*school children come forward*)
- Offering
- Prayers of the Church
- New Testament Cantic *LSB pg. 266*
- Benedicamus and Benediction
- Closing Hymn: **588 Jesus Loves Me**

WELCOME VISITORS!

*Now is the hour of worship.
God speaks to us, and we
listen and respond with our
hymns, prayers, and
praises. Together we bless
the Lord who saves us and
keeps us in His faithful
flock. He is the God of
Grace and the God of
Glory. If you are visiting
with us, please fill out the
blue Rite of Fellowship
card from the pew rack,
and drop it in the baskets
at the doors as you leave.*



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Elaine Buenger *Organist* ✠ Westen Cowell, Lanny Cowell *Acolytes* ✠
✠ Dave Badenhop, Denny Von Deylen, Jerry Short, Dan Wiechers *Ushers* ✠
✠ Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow *Altar Guild* ✠

BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSINGS AND BRUNCH! – This morning during the worship service, we will observe the "Blessing of the Backpacks" for all students returning to school, any school. Have your student bring his/her backpack for a special blessing and time of prayer for the school year. Following the service, School Board is hosting a "Back to School Brunch" in the fellowship hall. Church and school families are invited to join! Meet staff members, tour classrooms, drop off supplies, and enjoy a delicious brunch as we kick off a new school year!

WELCOME
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
BACK
TO SCHOOL!

Sermon Text: Proverbs 1:1-9 English Standard Version

¹ The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

² To know wisdom and instruction,
to understand words of insight,

³ to receive instruction in wise dealing,
in righteousness, justice, and equity;

⁴ to give prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the youth—

⁵ Let the wise hear and increase in learning,
and the one who understands obtain

guidance,

⁶ to understand a proverb and a saying,
the words of the wise and their riddles.

⁷ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of
knowledge;

fools despise wisdom and instruction.

⁸ Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
and forsake not your mother's teaching,

⁹ for they are a graceful garland for your head
and pendants for your neck.

In God's House This Week

Online church calendar: <https://74058984.view-events.com>

Date	Time	Activities
TODAY	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:15 AM	Worship Service with Blessing of the Backpacks Confirmation Parent Meeting and Student Acolyte Training School Board Sponsored Pancake Breakfast; School Supply Drop-off
Mon.	5:30 PM	<i>Bread from Heaven</i> Food Pantry Distribution
Wed.	8:30 AM	First Day of School K-7 th School Opening Chapel
Thurs.	7:00 PM	Thursday Worship Service
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:15 AM	Worship Service New Member Class (open to all!); Student Acolyte Training

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

- ❖ *Melba Elling* and *Norma Damman* at Genacross, Napoleon
- ❖ *Rozella Gruenhagen* and *Bob Nemoyer* at Vancrest, Holgate
- ❖ *Lois Arps* at Genacross – Assisted Living, Napoleon
- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Irene Joost*, *Leona Durham*, and *Marlene Showman*
- ❖ *Stan Gerken* for health concerns
- ❖ *Nancy Nemoyer* following her heart procedure
- ❖ *Zoe Pietrowski* as she recovers from a concussion
- ❖ Military: *Justin Atkinson*, *Jason Rohrs*, *Jordan Lange*, *Joshua*, and *Kyle*

FINANCIAL FACTS:

	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
<u>Rec'd 08/16/2026</u>	\$8,949.95	\$240.00	\$305.00

Attendance: 151

Gifts received in memory of *Weldon Meienburg*: \$50 to the St. John Home Fund

VENMO IS HERE! Exciting News... St. John now accepts donations via Venmo!

Scan the QR code or search @sjlfreedom to visit our donation page. If you need internet access, use our guest Wi-Fi **SJL Open** with the password **sjleagles##**



CONFIRMATION PREPARATION – Vicar Jon plans to begin confirmation classes on September 13th at 6 p.m. **If you have a student entering 6th, 7th, or 8th grade this fall, please add your contact information to the blue form on the Narthex table.** Beginning this year, confirmation instruction will include 6th graders in addition to the 7th and 8th graders.

We will have a brief confirmation parent meeting this morning after the service at the front of the sanctuary.

ACOLYTE TRAINING – Following the services on August 23rd and 30th, we will be having brief “acolyte training” sessions. **All incoming 6th and 7th graders in Confirmation are asked to attend one of these sessions.** It would be much appreciated if some of the 8th graders would stick around as well each morning to help train their new classmates. Thank you! *Vicar Jon and Miss Rettig*

NEW MEMBER CLASSES – Note: There will be no new member class this morning, so everyone may join in the Back to School festivities! We’ll resume next week.

“MY DEVOTIONS” booklets are available on the desk in the Narthex. Please help yourself to a copy for each of your children! Created for elementary-age children, *My Devotions* help build lasting devotional habits through Scripture readings, prayers, activities, and age-appropriate reflections.

THANK YOU to *Pete Gerken* for volunteering to help get the hallway floor waxed and prepared for the coming school year. Your time and skill is very appreciated!

GENACROSS CHAPEL – Vicar Jon will be leading chapel services at GenaCross in Napoleon every third Sunday at 1:30. If you would be interested in joining him as a song leader and/or a piano player, please let him know. The next service will be September 20th.

LWML FALL RETREAT – The LWML Fall Retreat will be held on September 19th at St. John, Stryker. Registration forms are on the Narthex table. We are responsible for providing some of the (breakfast) refreshment items. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. The ingathering will be art supplies to create art kits for the Migrant Center. Requested items are: *Colored Pencils, 12 and 24 count; Broad tip markers, 10 count; Slim markers, 10 count; Colored Flair Pens, 10 or 12 count; Spiral Notebooks, college and wide ruled; 12-inch rulers; Ink pens, blue or black ink; Pencil Sharpeners; Coloring books for elementary age children*

SHARE THE BOUNTY – Has your garden produced a bounty of beans? A crush of cucumbers? An excess of eggplants? If you’ve got more than you can use, consider sharing the bounty with your friends at church. There is a table outside under the carport where you can drop off any garden produce you can’t use, and you can also pick up what you can use. It’s a wonderful way to share the blessing!

CHURCH OFFICE VACATION NOTICE – The Church Secretary will be out of office this week and will return any e-mails or phone calls on September 2nd. Vicar Jon will have his regular open office hours (Tues. and Thurs. 9:30-11:30 a.m.) and can be contacted at pastor@sjl.org, through the church office line, or by his cell at 419-309-2420. The School Secretary can be contacted at emusshel@sjl.org or the school office line as usual.

LYF KICKOFF – Join us as we kick off a new year of Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) on Sunday, September 20th at the Youth and Family Center! Junior High (Grades 6–8) will meet at 4:00 PM, and High School (Grades 9–12) will meet at 5:00 PM. We especially look forward to welcoming our new 6th graders! Bring a friend and come join us for a great year of LYF!

LYF ICE CREAM SOCIAL – The LYF will be hosting its annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, September 27th, with serving from 10:30 AM–Noon in the Fellowship Hall. On the menu: chicken sandwiches, hot dogs, baked beans, chips, beverages, and, of course, ice cream! Freewill offering. Carryout will also be available. Proceeds help support our LYF meetings, activities, and future youth gatherings. Come enjoy lunch and ice cream while supporting the youth of our congregation!



From the **Classroom** to the **Congregation**

Notes & Updates from St. John Lutheran School



Our School Theme this year is “**Rooted in Christ**,” based on Colossians 2:6-7 — *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*



IMPORTANT DATES –

- **First Day of School K-7th** - Wed., August 26th
- **School Parent Information Night** - Mon., August 31st at 6 p.m.
- **Preschool Preview Days** – September 2nd and 3rd
- **No School on Labor Day** – Mon., September 7th
- **First Days of Preschool** – September 8th (4 y/o) and September 9th (3 y/o)

OPENING SCHOOL CHAPEL will be held at 8:30 a.m. this Wednesday, August 26th. Parents and members of the congregation are invited to join this service and are also regularly invited to school chapel on Tuesdays at 8:30 throughout the school year.

STAFF UPDATES – We are happy to announce that *Mrs. Crystal Pleasant* and *Mrs. Brandi Myers* will be joining our staff this school year. Mrs. Pleasant will be serving as our full-time 3rd grade teacher, and Mrs. Myers will be serving part-time as our Title 1 educator.

Mrs. Bonnie Niermann has retired from St. John School after many years of faithful service. We pray blessings for her in this new season. Mrs. Niermann wore many hats from her joyful care with students to her creative event planning. She was truly a gift to our school and will be missed in our halls!

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Thought for the Week...

Rooted in Christ. Growing together. Abounding in thanksgiving.

Have a blessed 2026–2027 school year!