



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

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Vicar Jonathan Pietrowski  
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

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School Office: 419-598-8702  
Church Website: [www.sjl.org](http://www.sjl.org)

### THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

#### **Order of Service: Matins (LSB pg. 219)**

- Opening Hymn: **610 Lord Jesus, Think on Me**
- Opening Versicles (LSB pg. 219)
- Venite (LSB pg. 220)
- Holy Scripture Readings *Psalm Chanted Responsively*
- Responsory (LSB pg. 221)
- Office Hymn: **719 I Leave All Things to God's Direction**
- Sermon: "The Difficulty of Forgiveness" Vicar Jon Pietrowski
- Te Deum **941 We Praise You and Acknowledge You**
- Offering
- Prayer with Kyrie (LSB pg. 227) *Lord's Prayer Sung*
- Benedicamus and Benediction (LSB pg. 228)
- Closing Hymn: **816 From All That Dwell Below the Skies**

#### **WELCOME VISITORS!**

*Now is the hour of worship. Christ has called us to follow Him and gives us all we need for life and salvation in Him. If you are visiting with us, please fill out the blue card from the pew rack and drop it in the baskets at the doors as you leave.*



#### **SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING**

✠ Sharon Damman *Organist* ✠ Casen Niese, Stryker Oyer *Acolytes* ✠  
✠ Derek Damman, Greg Kehnast, Mitchell Kruse, Todd Kruse *Ushers* ✠  
✠ Karan Niebergall, Karen Lulfs, Kaylee Buchhop, Ronda Wentworth *Altar Guild* ✠

**SUNDAY SCHOOL KICKOFF** – After the worship service this morning, **September 13<sup>th</sup>**, we will kick off our new Sunday School year with an **all-ages gathering!** We will meet together as one group in the south hallway, in front of the gym, for opening and fellowship and to go over our plan for the coming Sunday School year. In the weeks to follow, we will begin together as an all-ages group before splitting into age-appropriate classes for Pre-K through adults. Vicar Jon will teach the adult class.

"Java Joy" is being phased out and replaced with a weekly time of fellowship with coffee and donuts at the start of the Sunday School hour. We look forward to growing together in God's Word and enjoying fellowship as a church family! *Stay tuned for volunteer opportunities as the Sunday School year gets underway.*

| Date   | Time                                                 | Activities                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TODAY  | 9:00 AM<br>10:15 AM<br>6:00 PM                       | <b>Worship Service</b><br>Sunday School Kickoff (all ages)<br>Confirmation Class (6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> grades)                                                                        |
| Tues.  | 8:30 AM<br>7:00 PM                                   | <b>School Chapel</b><br>Women of Freedom Meeting                                                                                                                                                  |
| Wed.   |                                                      | School Picture Day (3 y/o Preschool and K-7)                                                                                                                                                      |
| Thurs. | 6:30 AM<br>4:30/6:30 PM                              | School Picture Day (4 y/o Preschool and Make-ups)<br>Men's Bible Breakfast<br>Baptisms of <i>Wyatt Leatherman</i> and <i>Emeri Dachenhaus</i>                                                     |
| Sat.   |                                                      | LWML Fall Retreat at St. John Stryker<br>Hawks Pizza Community Day Fundraiser                                                                                                                     |
| Sun.   | 9:00 AM<br>10:15 AM<br>1:30 PM<br>4:00 PM<br>5:30 PM | <b>Communion Service</b><br>All-Ages Sunday School<br>Vicar leading Chapel Service at GenaCross<br>LYF Kickoff (Grades 6-8 at 4:00 PM, Grades 9-12 at 5:00 PM)<br>Confirmation Class (6-8 grades) |

**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
- ❖ *Zoe Pietrowski* as she recovers from a concussion
- ❖ *Brent Damman* (brother to *Carey*) suffering from back pain
- ❖ 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      |
| Rec'd 08/30/2026 | \$6,366.18  | \$721.18         | \$731.18      |
| Attendance: 144  |             |                  |               |
| Rec'd 09/06/2026 | \$8,654.95  | \$310.00         | \$210.00      |
| Attendance: 145  |             |                  |               |

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS** – Vicar *Jon* will have open office hours at St. John each week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. He can be contacted at [pastor@sjl.org](mailto:pastor@sjl.org), through the church office line, or by his cell at 419-309-2420. Secretary *Leah Saylor* is in the church office on Wednesdays and Thursdays from around 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. **Bulletin submissions are due by 9 a.m. on Wednesdays** to [churchsecretary@sjl.org](mailto:churchsecretary@sjl.org) or 419-598-8961.

**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##**



**NEW MEMBER RECEPTION** – During the service next Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, we will receive 6 new members who completed the new member classes this summer with Vicar Jon. We are grateful for the time and attention they dedicated to these classes, and we are excited to formally welcome them as members of St. John!

**BAPTISMS THIS WEEK** – This Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, Rev. Aaron Bueltmann from St. John Stryker will be coming to St. John Freedom to administer the Sacrament of Holy Baptism to two individuals. *Wyatt Leatherman* will be baptized at 4:30 p.m., and *Emeri Louise Dachenhaus* (infant daughter of Bryant and Brittany) will be baptized at 6:30 p.m. Members of the congregation are welcome to attend to witness and celebrate with these individuals and their families! May God bless them as they receive the Holy Spirit through the renewing waters of Holy Baptism.

**MEN'S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY** – Men's Bible Breakfast is back for the season! Join us each first and third Thursday morning at 6:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall for Men's Bible Breakfast. It's a great way to start your day! Good food, good friends, and a good Word from God!



**THE WOMEN OF FREEDOM** will meet this Tuesday at 7 p.m. All ladies welcome!

**LWML FALL RETREAT** – The LWML Fall Retreat will be held on Sat., September 19<sup>th</sup> 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*

**THE LWML FALL QUARTERLY IS IN!** – Stop by the tract rack at the narthex table to pick up a copy of the LWML Quarterly for Fall 2026. These magazines have nice articles and Bible studies and are available to all ladies.

**PRAYER PALS PREP** – Our congregation-member-to-school-student “Prayer Pals” program will return for the school year soon! For those unfamiliar, each of our St. John PreK–7th grade students is assigned a St. John congregation member “Prayer Pal” who prays for him/her throughout the year, and vice versa. There are typically a few in-person events where congregation members come to the school for prayer and fellowship with their student prayer pal.

In preparation for our first event (to be announced soon!), the first order of business is to update the partners list. There are students who have left and a whole new group of preschoolers and other new students who will need a congregational partner. **There is an orange sheet on the Narthex table for anyone who does not currently have a prayer partner and would like to join the program.** If you already have a student prayer pal but want to be taken off the list for whatever reason, please contact Leah at 419-598-8961. She will be in touch with everyone in the coming weeks to either confirm that your prayer pal is the same as last year or to update you on who you've been assigned to.

**CONFIRMATION CLASSES** begin today, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at the Youth and Family Center. *If you have a student entering 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade and you have not signed up or attended the parent meeting, please contact Vicar Jon to make sure your student gets added to the list!*

**LYF KICKOFF** – Join us as we kick off a new year of Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) next Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 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! *Note: there will be a meal at 5 p.m. for the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders, and Confirmation class will begin at 5:30 this day so that the students may attend both LYF and Confirmation class.*

**LYF ICE CREAM SOCIAL** – The LYF will be hosting its annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 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!

**“MY DEVOTIONS”** booklets for the fall season 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.

**THURSDAY EVENING** worship services have concluded for the season.

**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!

**LARGE PRINT & CHILDREN’S ACTIVITY BULLETINS** are always available on the table in the narthex. Feel free to grab them to use in church or to take home after the service.

#### **AREA EVENTS**

- ✦ The **CPC Women’s Health Resource** is hosting its annual Walkathon and 5K Run on Sat., September 19<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m.-noon in Bryan. See flyer on the bulletin board for more information.
- ✦ **St. Martin’s Concert Series** continues on September 27<sup>th</sup>. See the flyer on the bulletin board!
- ✦ **National “Wreaths Across America” Day will be on December 19<sup>th</sup>.** There are sponsorship forms on the Narthex table for anyone looking ahead who’d like to sponsor a wreath to be placed on a veteran’s grave marker.

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*Thought for the Week...*

**Joy shared is multiplied. Grief shared is divided.**



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

## *Notes & Updates from St. John Lutheran School*



### **A NOTE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL:**

What a fast and exciting start to the school year it has been! It has been wonderful to see so many happy, smiling faces each day, hear the laughter in the classrooms and on the playground, and see all the great learning already taking place.

Our students are greatly enjoying the prairie. What an amazing learning opportunity to have right here at St. John. The prairie garden gives students hands-on opportunities to learn about plant and animal life, habitats, life cycles, the scientific process, and so much more. Before school started, our teachers participated in professional development to learn new ways to incorporate the prairie into their classroom lessons. Thanks to the grant that made the prairie possible, we also received science tools for students to use in the garden, including magnifying glasses, soil thermometers, and a bird feeder. We are also excited to welcome the Toledo Zoo back to St. John on October 1 for some special learning opportunities with our students!

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.* This year, we will focus on becoming more deeply rooted in Christ. Just as strong roots help a tree grow tall and strong, our roots in Jesus help us grow in faith and in our relationship with Him. Throughout the year, we will have opportunities to grow stronger roots of faith through singing, worshiping, praying, and listening to God’s Word—at home, at school, and in church. We are looking forward to a wonderful year filled with growth, fun, joy, faith, and learning!

*Miss Tracy Germann*

**ATHLETIC BOOSTER MEMBERSHIP** – Memberships are now being taken for the ‘26-‘27 Athletic Booster Club. Prices are \$20.00 for a couple and \$10.00 for an individual. Make checks payable to *St. John Boosters* and turn them into the school office. Forms are available on the Narthex table or outside the office. Join today to help out the children’s athletic program.

**SCHOOL CHAPEL** – Parents and church members are always welcome to attend our regular school chapel services on Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m. throughout the school year.

**HAWK’S COMMUNITY DAYS** – Mark your calendars! Hawk’s Pizza and Drive-Thru has invited us again to be part of their Community Day fundraiser. On Saturday, **Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>**, Hawk’s will donate 10% of their sales to St. John Lutheran School.

**SCHOOL PICTURES** – School pictures will be taken by John Kuser on September 16<sup>th</sup> for the 3-year-old preschool class and K-7 and then September 17<sup>th</sup>, for the 4-year-old Pre-K class.

**AS A REMINDER**, please help us respect our teachers’ spaces and materials. Children and visitors should be accompanied by an adult member when using the gym, classrooms, or other spaces. Please do not remove or use classroom or gym supplies without permission from the appropriate teacher. We appreciate everyone’s help in caring for these spaces and the resources entrusted to our school.