



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16-035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom
Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 22, 2013

VOL. 78

NO. 51

Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor
Miss Mary K. Rettig, Principal

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
School: 419-598-8702 Home: 419-966-6160
Church Website: www.sjl.org

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Communion with God" *Romans 1:1-7*

Order of Service: *See printed folder*

Hymns: **358 ♦ 361**

Children's Choir: *Grades K-4 sing "Away in a Manger"*

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

- ✘ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✘ Conner Bialorucki & Brady Gerken, *Acolytes* ✘
- ✘ Don & Karan Niebergall, *Greeters* ✘
- ✘ Eldor & Rozella Gruenhagen, *Visitation* ✘
- ✘ Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling, *Ushers* ✘
- ✘ Diane VonDeylen, LouAnn Rosebrock, Jeannette Bostelman, *Altar Guild* ✘

POINSETTIA PLANTS – The poinsettias are adorning the sanctuary this morning and will be used for the various Christmas Services. If you ordered a poinsettia plant, it can be taken home after the Christmas Day Festival Service. There will be plastic sleeves to protect them in the side Conference room. Thank you to those who purchased poinsettias to decorate the church during Christmas.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY is cancelled today to permit Pastor to be with the children for their final rehearsal this morning. Bible study will resume next Sunday, Dec. 29!

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:15AM 7:00 PM	Worship Service Christmas Program Practice for Preschool – Gr. 8 (<i>until 11:15 AM</i>); LYF & School Board sacking Christmas bags Children's Christmas Program (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Mon.	5:30 PM	<i>Bread From Heaven</i> Food Pantry distribution
Tue.	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Adult Choir: "Christmas-tide" - A Christmas Medley Acolytes: <i>Lydia Schroeder & Lexi Wood</i> Greeters: <i>The Niermann Family</i> Ushers: <i>Al Damman, Andy Damman, Tim Hodson</i> Altar Guild: <i>Diane VonDeylen, LouAnn Rosebrock, Jeannette Bostelman</i>
Wed.	9:30 AM	Christmas Day Festival Service w/Communion Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolytes: <i>Brady Gerken & Aaron Bostelman</i> Greeters: <i>Bob & Diane Norden</i> Ushers: <i>Al Damman, Andy Damman, Tim Hodson</i> Altar Guild: <i>Diane VonDeylen, LouAnn Rosebrock, Jeannette Bostelman</i>
Thurs.		CANCELLED – Exercise Class
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:15AM	Worship Service Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "Time To Spare"
Mon.- Sat.	7:20 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Willie Stottlemyer, St. Stephen Lutheran, Defiance</i>

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

- Our Homebound Shut-Ins: *Stan Moll, Marian Fitzenreiter, and Donald & Sue Landry* dealing with various health issues
- Pauline Dishop, Marie Damman, and Joann Miller*, residing at The Lutheran Home
- Magdalena Volkman*, residing at Heartland Nursing Home, Wauseon
- Lucy Rosebrock*, residing at GlennPark of Defiance
- Marian Buchhop and Annalou Brodman* residing at Country View Haven
- Helen Norden*, residing at Greenbriar Assisted Living, Birmingham, AL
- Servicemen and women*, Justin Atkinson, Kyle Elling, Jason Rohrs, and Emily Niermann
- Arnold Bischoff*, recovering at home now from his recent bout of pneumonia
- Don Dickmann*, recovering from pneumonia at Golden Living Center – Northcrest, Napoleon

THANK YOU: The family of *Norma Dietrich* would like to thank you for your sincere kindness, support, and many prayers given to us during our loss.

THANKS to the Ladies Aid for their contribution toward having the church carpets shampooed for the Christmas season. Your generosity and thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated!

SCHEDULE OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES

- Tonight 7:00 p.m. Children's Christmas Program, "It's All About Mercy"**
Bring a non-perishable food item for our food pantry to present to the Savior as an offering pleasing to Him.
- Tues. Dec. 24 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles**
- Wed. Dec. 25 9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Festival Service**
With Holy Communion, the meal that puts the 'Mass' in Christmas



HONOR THE CHRIST CHILD WITH A GIFT TONIGHT – This

evening we encourage everyone to bring one or a few non-perishable food items to the children's Christmas program. The theme of the program is all about mercy – God's mercy to us in sending Christ, and our mercy toward others by sharing with them from our bounty. A table has been set up in the narthex to receive those items when

you arrive this evening. Representative items will be brought to the manger during the program along with our regular offerings, and all of the items will be stocked into our Food Pantry to be a blessing to those who need it. *"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."* (Matt. 25:40)

DRESS CODE FOR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: 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.**

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICE:

TODAY

Sunday, Dec. 22 Grades PS – 8 (10:15-11:15 AM)

7:00 PM Christmas Program – 8th Grade ushers should arrive at 6:00 PM.

All other children should arrive at 6:30 PM (*Meet in the Fellowship Hall*)

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Please note that there is no offering envelope for the Children's Christmas Program tonight at 7:00 PM. If you wish for your offering at that service 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 assume it should go for the designated purpose, which is Church Vocation Students.



PORTALS OF PRAYER booklets for January, February, and March are on the desk in the back of the church. Pick up a copy today!

2014 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2014 offering envelopes are available today. Please pick yours up, and may God prosper the work of our hands and the giving of His people!

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	<u>Home Fund</u>	<u>Synod & Missions</u>	<u>Building Fund</u>
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 12/15/13	\$8,036.00	\$219.50	\$945.50

ATTENDANCE: 12/15/13 – 270

3RD ADVENT SERVICE: *Summer Mission Trip* - \$546.00; Attendance – 91

MEMORIALS for Norman Fitzenreiter: St. John Endowment – *Capital Projects* \$1,050.00;
St. John Endowment – *School* \$1,050.00; St. John Fellowship Hall Renovation \$20.00

ANNUAL SCHOOL CLEANING INFORMATION: Due to the fellowship hall renovations this past summer, the annual school cleaning was postponed in August. The school board would like to perform this annual cleaning over the upcoming Christmas Break. This involves **Gr. K-8 school families** and the dates and times are set for Thurs., Jan. 2 and Fri., Jan. 3, both nights at 6:00 PM. And on Sat., Jan. 4 (if needed) with starting time to be determined. All parents are asked to help so we can get this cleaning done in as short a time as possible. Please bring a bucket and rags. Thank you all for helping out with this task!

INSTALLATION OF CHURCH OFFICERS – We give thanks to God for everyone who submitted their names for nomination to our various church offices. Your servant hearts and willing spirits provide an example for us all! **Those who were elected or appointed to offices for the coming year will be installed into those offices on the first Sunday of the New Year, January 5th.**

Officers to be installed are: **ELECTED:** **President** – *Craig Drewes*; **Vice President** – *Dennis Bockelman*; **Treasurer** – *Krista Gerken*; **Financial Trustee** – *Sara Myles*; **Elder** – *Delbert Damman, Jim Hogrefe*; **Stewardship Board** – *Tim Johnston, Rob Scheffert*; **Board of Education** (installed to take office in July 2014) – *Jamie Rosebrock, Sunday Griffith*; **Alternate Delegate Synod** – *Mark Elling*. **APPOINTED:** **Secretary** – *Rhonda Bockelman*; **Church Deacon** – *Carey Damman*; **Trustees** – *Randy Damman, Elmer Maassel*; **Sunday School Supt.** – *Brenda Kruse*; **Cemetery Board** – *Bobby Cowell, Roger Lulfs, Blake Miller*; **Cemetery Sexton** – *Ben Kruse*.

FUN(d) RAISING CONTINUES:

- ✓ Fun Pasta orders can still be placed thru the end of the year. Just go to **www.funpastafundraising.com/shop/st-john-lutheran-church** to place your order. If you prefer free shipping, contact Karen Norden at 419-267-3477 and she can combine several orders to get the free shipping for you.
- ✓ Yankee Candle orders also can be placed thru the end of the year. For ordering, go to **www.yankeecandlefundraising.com** and enter group #990058626. The website should say “Right Hand of Fellowship Gift Matching Campaign”.

ST. JOHN CHURCH LIBRARY: New books have just been added to the Church Library here at St. John. ✦ For youth and children there are new books about Christmas, Bible Stories, and Easter. Some titles include "The Christmas Story According to Luke" and "The Blind Man by the Road". ✦ Other books found in the new books section cover topics such as church denominations in America, marriage, divorce, addictions, the service of women in the church, studies on Bible Books, and Christian care at the end of life. ✦ Also added is a book series called "How to Respond", which answers questions about the new age movement, lodges, cults, Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Judaism, and Satanism.

The library is self-serve and is located in the hallway just west of the Sanctuary. Feel free to take out books at any time and return them in the tray provided. If you would like help finding a book on a particular topic call *Darrel Behrmann* at 419-598-8252.

EAGLE NEWS: Due to time restraints with the holidays quickly approaching, we are posting the *December Eagle News* on FastDirect School Information System. You can access FastDirect by going to www.sjl.org and clicking on St. John School Website on the left; then click on FastDirect School Information System also on the left side; and then click on "Links" again on the left side of the page. Look for "Eagle News – DECEMBER 2013" and enjoy! There will also be a few hard copies available on the narthex table today.

SECRET SANTA THANK YOU: A really "BIG THANK YOU" to all who helped with Secret Santa. We had such good helpers which made it a big success! So thanks go out to the 7th and 8th grade class for setting up and taking down the tables, to all the Secret Santa buyers, helpers, and wrappers. We had many children shopping throughout the day. In addition we had teachers purchase gifts. Just as a reminder this is not a fundraiser! We just hope to break even after the expense of bags, ribbons, stamp pads, etc. The purpose of this event is to give the children a chance to give an inexpensive gift to their loved ones. The children have certainly learned how to receive gifts this time of year but we hope they can learn the act of giving too!

HELP NEEDED: The sports program is in need of volunteers to work the clock and/or scoreboard for the home basketball games. If there are several volunteers, we can work around your busy schedules and make it work for all of us. Please contact *Jason Foor* at 419-906-5074 or by email at jyfoor@gmail.com.

EXTENSION FUND – As God gave us the gift of His only Son, so too do we give gifts to others during the Christmas season. As nice as our gifts to each other are, seldom do they impact anyone beyond those that receive them. However, by investing in Church Extension, you can make a significant impact on the local Lutheran community. Individual investments are pooled to provide low-cost loans to Ohio District congregations and missions for building, expansion and renovation projects. To learn more about investment opportunities call 1-800-901-2297 for current rates of interest and application forms.

CHOICE DOLLARS RECAP: Thanks to everyone who have signed up for the automatic Choice Dollars deposits through Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Because of your initiative the church, school, and preschool have benefited in 2013. Here are the individual year-to-date deposits for 2013: St. John Church - \$15,075.00; St. John School - \$1,191.00; St. John Preschool - \$0. A well deserved “thank you” to Thrivent for providing these funds throughout the year.

PRAYER CALENDAR NOTE: Please be aware that if you would like your wedding anniversaries printed on the prayer calendars, you will have to post them each year. Just list them on the blank calendars posted on the bulletin board in the narthex throughout the year. Thank you!

COLLECTING STAMPS: The LWML is still collecting stamps “For Missions,” so snip those Christmas stamps off the envelopes. Here is what you do: Cut the stamps from the envelopes allowing ¼ inch margin or more around the stamp. The stamp may not be damaged and the perforations around the stamp must be perfect. You need not trim the stamp; we have someone who trims and sorts the stamps. Do not remove stamps from envelopes, albums, and older postcards. An “old” postcard is usually from 1930 or before. The most valuable stamps are commemorative, foreign, and stamp denominations larger than 46 cents. It only makes sense that you purchase and use commemorative stamps for your personal mailing. When purchasing stamps, ask the post office staff for commemorative stamps. Colorful and large stamps are desirable. Collecting stamps is an easy way to participate in a mission project sponsored by the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. A box is on the table in the narthex.

LIONS RECYCLE FOR SIGHT – How You Can Help? If you have used **prescription or nonprescription** glasses or sunglasses in your drawers, desks, or closets, you can donate them now! Children's glasses are especially needed. Both plastic and metal frames are accepted. There is a box on the table in the narthex for the collection of these used glasses.

THE LUTHERAN HOUR – The Lutheran Hour Ministries can be heard on several radio stations in our area. They cover many interesting topics relevant to today’s issues. Broadcasts can be heard Sundays on: Holland’s WPOS 102.3 at 7:00 AM; Archbold’s WMTR 96.1 at 7:30 AM; Defiance’s WONW (AM)1280 at 10:30 AM; Napoleon’s WNDH 103.1 at 12:00 PM.

“WORSHIP FOR SHUT-INS”: “Worship for Shut-Ins” has joined the WLMB-TV40 line up again. 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 (*note time change*) and get your Sunday started off right!

✂ ✂ ✂

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

“Maybe Christmas, the Grinch thought, doesn’t come from a store.” ~Dr. Seuss

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” (John 3:16)