



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16-035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

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FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Hosanna, Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord!"

Mark 11:1-10

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

Hymns: 331 ~ 334, stz.1-3 ~ 335 ~ 334, stz.4-6

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

- ✘ Bethann Gerken, *Organist* ✘ 1st Service: Cody Damman & Landon Willeman, *Acolytes* ✘
- ✘ 2nd Service: Cally Bialorucki & Maggie Weller, *Acolytes* ✘
- ✘ Scott & Kim VanValkenburg, *Greeters* ✘
- ✘ Jim & Linda Meyer, *Visitation* ✘
- ✘ Denny Bockelman, Jeff Buchhop, Dave Myles, *Ushers* ✘
- ✘ Lois Rosebrock, Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow, *Altar Guild* ✘

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR are placed this Sunday in memory of our mother, *Irene Bickel*, who went to be with her Lord and Savior 15 years ago, Nov. 27th, 1999. We will never forget her undying faith and her courageous, peaceful spirit! We look forward to a joyful reunion in heaven!
From the entire Bickel Family

MIDWEEK CONFIRMATION CLASS TIME CHANGE –Throughout the month of December, the Wednesday evening confirmation class will meet from 5:45 - 6:45 PM to accommodate the evening worship services.

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	8:15 AM 9:30 AM 10:30AM	Early Communion or Worship Service Adult Bible Class; Sunday School; "Time To Spare" Late Communion or Worship Service
Mon.	7:00 PM	Council Meeting & School Board Meeting
Tue.	9:00 AM 7:00 PM	Exercise Class Stewardship Board Meetings
Wed.	10:20AM 5:45 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Late Start-Up (<i>Teacher In-Service 9:30 AM</i>) Junior High Confirmation Class(5:45 – 6:45 PM) Adult Hand Bell Practice 1st Midweek Advent Service Offering: <i>Church Vocation Students and LYF (split)</i> Acolytes: <i>Alex Stevens</i> Greeters: <i>Tom & Sandy VonDeylen</i> Ushers: <i>Carey Damman, Craig Drewes, Scott VanValkenburg</i> Altar Guild: <i>Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short</i> Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	6:30 AM 9:00 AM 5:00 PM 7:00 PM	Men's Bible Breakfast at Hill's Restaurant Exercise class in gym B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 6:15 PM Gr. 7&8 Girls vs. St.John-Def. (A) Bible Study w/ <i>Vicar Shoaff</i>
Sun.	8:15 AM 9:30 AM 10:30AM	Early Communion Service Christmas Program Practice for Grades 5-8 (<i>until 10:15 AM</i>); Sunday School (<i>All others</i>); "Time To Spare" Late Communion Service
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Donald Luhring, St. John Lutheran, Defiance</i>

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

- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Stan Moll, Marian Fitzenreiter, Donald Landry, and Edwin Rosebrock*
- ❖ *Pauline Dishop and Marie Damman*, residing at The Lutheran Home, Napoleon
- ❖ *Magdalena Volkman*, residing at Heartland Nursing Home, Wauseon
- ❖ *Anna Brodman and Marian Buchhop* residing at Country View Haven
- ❖ *Helen Norden*, residing at Greenbriar Assisted Living, Birmingham, AL
- ❖ Servicemen and women, *Justin Atkinson, Kyle Elling, Jason Rohrs, Emily Niermann, and Connor Gerken*
- ❖ *Casen Lawrence*, as he has had on-going seizures resulting in hospitalization
- ❖ *Yvonne Volkman and Marvin Gruenhagen* dealing with health issues
- ❖ *Joel Stier*, diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma and currently undergoing chemotherapy

ADVENT DEVOTION BOOKLETS are available on the narthex table. They have been provided to us by L.A.M.P., Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots. Pick up a copy today!

Advent Midweek Worship

For the next three weeks, you are encouraged to join us on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. for our midweek Advent Services. These services are a crucial part of preparing your heart for the celebration of Christ's birth. This year our theme is, "**Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending**" from LSB #336. In preparation for each service, everyone is encouraged to consider a few questions and Bible verses – and then to come on Wednesday evening to learn more about the subject. The weekly themes are as follows:



- **Wed. Dec 3** **Our Two-Minute Drill** (1 Thess. 1:1–10)
- Wed. Dec. 10 Praying Like Paul (1 Thess. 3:10–13)
 - Wed. Dec. 17 You've Got a Ticket to Ride! (1 Thess. 4:13–18)
 - Sun. Dec. 21 Faithful Watching and Waiting (1 Thess. 5:1–11)
 - Wed. Dec. 24 Christmas Eve: Christmas Rejoice Evermore (1 Thess. 5:16)

Questions to help you prepare for this Wednesday evening (12/3)

Read **1 Thessalonians 1:1-10** and grapple with these questions:

1. In verse 3, what three things does Paul point to as evidence that the Thessalonian Christians had indeed been chosen by God?
2. In what ways had these Christians become imitators of the Lord?
3. When a Christian becomes an imitator of Christ, what else does he or she become according to verse 7? Could this be said of you?

ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT: *Advent By Candlelight* is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 11th from 6:00 – 8:00 pm. *Advent By Candlelight* is a candlelit potluck dinner and advent program for women designed to help us prepare our hearts for the celebration of Christ's birth. *Arlene Wallace* and *Vicar Shoaff* will be enhancing our program with music.

At this time we'd like to identify hostesses to each decorate and host one dinner table at this event. The hostess sign-up sheet and hostess information packets are located on the Christmas table in the narthex. You may contact *Bonnie Niermann* (598-8181) if you have any questions.

All women of the congregation are invited to this special evening. Watch your mail for a personal invitation or simply RSVP on the sheet in the narthex today!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICES:

TODAY (Nov. 30th) NO PRACTICE

Sunday, Dec. 7 Grades 5-8 only (9:30-10:15 AM) All others in regular SS

Sunday, Dec. 14 Grades K-8 (9:30-10:15 AM) Preschool in regular SS

Friday, Dec. 19 Full practice – Gr. PS-8 (8:30 AM or TBD). We would like all students, including those attending public school, to attend this practice, if at all possible.

Sunday, Dec. 21 Grades PS – 8 (9:30-11:30 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*)



SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIAL has arrived for the Winter quarter. Teachers can pick up their material in the church office today or anytime during the next few weeks. Thank you!

EAGLE NEWS NOVEMBER: The Eagle News publication is now available online via FastDirect Communication. Just go to <http://www.fastdir.com/stjohnfreedom/>, click on “Links” at the top of the page, then click on “Eagle News - November” in the “Everybody” column. There are some printed copies available on the narthex table for those parishioners without computer access.

YOUTH DIRECTOR POSITION AVAILABLE - We are presently seeking candidates for our Youth Director. This is a part-time paid position, to begin on December 1st. The Youth Director, with guidance and assistance from the Vicar and Pastor, promotes and leads the LYF youth ministry in our congregation. If you would like to apply for this position, please speak with *Vicar Shoaff* or *Pastor*.

GREETER, USHER, AND ALTAR GUILD SIGN-UP – 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 greeter, usher, or altar guild team? The demand on your time in either area of service is minimal, but the blessing of rendering service to the body of Christ in its worship is tremendous. We are preparing the 2015 greeter, usher, and altar guild schedules so this is the time to sign-up at the table in the narthex. **The sign-up deadline is TODAY .** *You do not need to sign up again if you are currently serving as a greeter, usher or are on an altar guild team.*

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 11/23/14	\$8,586.00	\$283.00	\$540.00

ATTENDANCE: 11/23/14 – 8:15 Service: 122; 10:30 Service: 171

COMMUNED in November: 413 members; 6 guests

BULLETIN STUFFER VOLUNTEERS: Want to get involved? Why not try volunteering to help with stuffing the bulletins for 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.

ATHLETIC BOOSTER MEMBERSHIP: Membership is still being taken for the Athletic Booster Club. **Sign up deadline is Mon., Dec. 8th.** Prices are \$20.00 for a couple and \$10.00 for an individual. Make checks payable to St. John Boosters and send to school with your child. Forms are available in the “School Info” rack outside the school office. Join today!

2015 OFFERING BOXES: Offering envelope boxes will be available in early December. The financial commitments you make as well as how you contribute are between you and God. The church provides offering envelopes to our members in order to promote faithful and joyful giving as well as to serve as a means to record member contributions throughout the year for charitable tax purposes. Due to the costs of these envelope boxes, members who elect to not use their envelopes over the course of two years (*for whatever reason*) will no longer be issued a box of envelopes. If at any time such a member would like to resume using envelopes, please contact *Joyce Wiechers* or *Kathy Behnfeldt*, Finance Trustee, and a box will be issued to you.

ITEMS “FOR SALE” FROM PTL: There will be a table set up in the hallway today with “That’s My Pan” for sale. **Orders are due no later than Wed., Dec. 3rd to be in by Christmas!** PTL appreciates your support. Call *Zoe Foor* at 419-906-1773 with questions about “That’s My Pan” or to place orders.

ST. JOHN SCRIP: The *SCRIP* campaign is in full swing. Order forms and program information are posted on FastDirect under ‘Links,’ titled *SCRIP Order Forms* and *SCRIP Program Information*. There are also hard copies on the narthex table and in the “School Info” rack outside the office. Please turn your orders in on Wednesdays, with payment to *St. John School PTL Scrip Program*. The gift cards will be sent home the following week on Tuesday. Payment must accompany orders. **Any questions about SCRIP can be directed to the following SCRIP Coordinators: Karen Gerken at 567-454-0087 or email at kgerken564@gmail.com; or Kristyn Honemann at 419-592-0643 or email at honemann@embarqmail.com.**

CHRISTMAS SWEETS & TREATS! The Stewardship Board is organizing a Christmas fundraiser for the Right Hand of Fellowship Gift Matching campaign. The Christmas Sweets & Treats Shop will be open on Sunday, Dec. 21st after each of the Early and Late Services that day.

Here is how it will work. You can make a freewill donation and receive a small or large gift box, after which you will go to tables, set up in the hallway and pick out any of the baked goods to fill your box with Christmas goodies. All money raised will be given (and matched) toward the Right Hand of Fellowship campaign – Fellowship Hall debt reduction.

Stop by on Dec. 21st and let us brighten your Christmas season with a handpicked box of sweets and treats! Any questions about this fundraiser should be directed to *Karen Norden* (419-267-3477) or *Kim VanValkenburg* (419-519-0437). More information will be forthcoming requesting donations of your favorite holiday cookies, candies, bars, etc. for this fundraising event. Stay tuned!

CHRISTMAS SWEETS & TREATS DONATIONS – Get your mixers going and heat your ovens up!!! Start making plans to whip up your favorite Christmas cookies, candies, or other holiday recipes to donate to the Sweets and Treats Shop on Sunday, Dec. 21st. We would ask that you bring your items in Ziploc bags, cellophane, or disposable tins with a minimum of 2 dozen pieces per package. Someone will be at the church on Sat., Dec. 20th from 6:00 – 8:00 PM if you would like to drop your items off early. Otherwise, please have them to the church by 8:30 AM on Sunday, Dec. 21st.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP FUNDRAISER: The Stewardship Board is offering “for sale” the Ultimate Cloth® as a fundraiser. These are a MiraFiber® technology cloth that cleans with water only. More effective than harsh cleaning chemicals and soaps. Contact Karen Norden (419-267-3477) for more information and pricing. This will be an on-going fundraiser for the Right Hand of Fellowship gift matching campaign.

HENRY COUNTY CHRISTMAS CHEER –Dec. 9th is the deadline! A barrel has been placed in the narthex and a box in the fellowship hall for the collection of canned and dry goods and paper products. No Microwave items!

SPORTS NOTE: Basketball schedules/calendars are being posted on FastDirect. Please continue to check Jason Foor’s Calendar in Fast Direct frequently as this is where he will post any changes to the schedules.

Boar’s Head Festival AT CONCORDIA, ANN ARBOR

This coming weekend Concordia University in Ann Arbor will present its 37th annual *Boar’s Head Festival*. This colorful and joyous celebration of Christ’s birth is set in medieval times when the wild boar was considered a symbol of evil. The presentation of the boar’s head at the beginning commemorates Christ’s victory over sin and evil. It’s a one-of-a-kind experience that will truly focus your heart and mind on the Christ of Christmas!

Performances are on Dec. 5 and 6 (Friday and Saturday) at 7:30 p.m., and again on Dec. 7 (Sunday) at 4:00 p.m. For tickets, call the **Concordia University Box Office: 734-995-7537**. Tickets: \$8-\$15.



BLOODMOBILE AT RIDGEVILLE LEGION: Tomorrow, Dec. 1st there will be a blood drive at the Ridgeville Legion Hall from 12:00 – 6:00 PM. Please consider a blood donation during this Christmas season. Walk-ins always welcome! Call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE to schedule an appointment.

THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE CRAFT SHOW will be held at the Ridgeville Legion Hall, County Rd. 19, Napoleon, on Sunday, Dec. 7 from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Lunch will be served by the Legion Auxiliary. Come and browse through the shops at the craft village!

TOLEDO SYMPHONY CONCERT: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Napoleon Township, will be hosting the Toledo Symphony for a Christmas Concert on Wed., Dec. 17th at 7:30 PM in their sanctuary. Ticket information can be found on the flyer posted on the bulletin board in the narthex.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

Advent: the time to listen for footsteps.

“Righteousness will go before Him and make His footsteps a way.” (Psalm 85:13)