



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16-035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 14, 2014

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NO. 50

Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor
Mr. Reed Shoaff, Vicar
Miss Mary K. Rettig, Principal

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Church Website: www.sjl.org

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Who Are You" *John 1:6-8, 19-28*

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

Hymns: **346 ~ Te Deum ~ 916**

Children's Bell Choir: (*Early*) *Grades 7&8 ring "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*

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. 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.*



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- † Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✕ 1st Service: Cody Damman & Caleb Bockelman, *Acolytes* ✕
- ✕ 2nd Service: Katelyn Drewes, *Acolytes* ✕
- ✕ Lois Arps & Evelyn Rohrs, *Greeters* ✕
- ✕ Lawrence & Hildegard Behrmann, *Visitation* ✕
- ✕ Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling, *Ushers* ✕
- ✕ Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short, *Altar Guild* ✕

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR are placed in loving memory of the 5th anniversary of the passing of Phyllis Damman on Tuesday, Dec. 16th. These flowers are placed by John Damman and Family, who still deeply miss Phyllis each and every day. Please pray for them during this time of remembrance.

WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

To accommodate the final rehearsal for the children's program, we will gather in the fellowship hall for both worship services next Sunday morning, December 21st. These will be communion services. This will permit the sanctuary to be set up for the Christmas program and for rehearsal to take place in the most efficient way.

In God's House This Week

Online church calendar: www.DynaCal.com/sjl

Date	Time	Activities
Today	8:15 AM 9:30 AM 10:30AM 1:00 PM 5:00 PM	Early Worship Service w/Communion following Voters' Meeting; <i>Java Joy</i> ; "Time To Spare"; Christmas Program Practice for Grades PS thru Gr. 8 (<i>until 10:15 AM</i>) Late Worship Service B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 2:15 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys; 3:30 PM Gr. 7&8 Girls; 4:45 PM Gr. 7&8 Boys vs. St. Paul-Napoleon (A) Congregational Caroling
Mon.	5:30 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 6:45 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys vs. St. Pats-Bryan (H)
Tue.	8:35 AM 9:00 AM 5:30 PM 7:00 PM	Napoleon Public Library (Gr. K-8) Exercise Class B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Boys; 6:45 PM Gr. 7&8 Boys vs. BG Christian (H) Building Committee Meeting
Wed.	5:45 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Junior High Confirmation Class(5:45 – 6:45 PM) Adult Hand Bell Practice 3rd Midweek Advent Service Offering: <i>Filling Home of Mercy - Napoleon</i> Adult Choir: "Advent Bell Carol" Acolytes: <i>Bailey Johnson & Colin Johnson</i> Greeters: <i>Alan & Kathy Damman</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.	9:00 AM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM	Exercise class in gym B-ball: Gr. 7&8 Boys vs. FCCS (A) Bible Study w/Vicar Shoaff
Fri.	12:30PM	Christmas Program practice (<i>Preschool thru Gr. 8, including public students</i>)
Sat.	10:00AM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 11:15 AM Gr. 4-6 Boys; 12:30 PM Gr. 7&8 Girls; 1:45 PM Gr. 7&8 Boys vs. Trinity – Toledo (A)
Sun.	8:15 AM 9:30 AM 9:30 AM 10:30AM 7:00 PM	Early Communion Service Christmas Program Practice for Preschool – Gr. 8 (<i>until 11:30 AM</i>); LYF & School Board sacking Christmas treat bags Adult Bible Class; "Time To Spare" Late Communion Service Children's Christmas Program (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Charles Kramer</i> , St. Paul Lutheran, Napoleon

HOLY COMMUNION will be offered this morning following the Early Worship service. Those who wish to attend should fill out a card from the pew rack in front of you and give it to the usher as you leave your pew this morning. Return immediately to the front pews in the sanctuary.

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

- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Stan Moll, Marian Fitzenreiter, Donald Landry, and Norma Damman*
- ❖ *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
- ❖ *Edwin Rosebrock*, residing at The Orchards of Northcrest, Napoleon
- ❖ *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
- ❖ *Don Badenhop*, recuperating from pneumonia

Java Joy TODAY since it's the second Sunday of the month. Be sure to stop out in the front hallway this morning for some refreshments and fellowship. Our hosts today are ***Don & Karan Niebergall and Brad & Amy Rosebrook***, and we thank them for this service of love to us all!

- ***WOULD YOU CONSIDER HOSTING JAVA JOY?*** *Hosting does not have to be expensive – you are welcome to reimburse some or all of your expenses, if you wish, from the 'kitty' – so please don't let that hold you back. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for all the second Sundays of the year. Please sign up, and pick up the sheet of guidelines from the table. Thank you!*



VOTERS' ASSEMBLY TODAY AT 9:30 AM: On the agenda: 1) Adoption of the 2015 Budget; 2) Election of officers for 2015; 3) Recommend candidate for called Principal/Teacher position; 4) Endowment status

LIST OF 2015 CHURCH OFFICE NOMINATIONS: (to date)

ELECTED: **Vice Pres.** – *Bob Norden, Dean Badenhop*
Treasurer – *Krista Gerken, Deb Durham*; **Financial Trustee** – *vacant*
Elder – *Dale Damman, Larry Mahnke (3 year); Rich Elling (1 year)*
Stewardship Board – *Sarah VerMeulen, Kristyn Honeman*
Board of Education – *Scott VanValkenburg, Karen Gerken*
Alt. Delegate Syn – *Darrel Behrmann, Rich Elling*

APPOINTED: **Secretary** – *Rhonda Bockelman*; **Church Deacon** – *Jeff Buchhop*
Trustee – *Scott Damman, Ted Ripke*; **Cemetery Sexton** – *Ben Kruse*
Cemetery Board – *Michael Cohrs, Pete Henry, Josh Behnfeldt*
Asst. Sunday School Supt. – *Sarah Rosebrock*

NOTE: The installation of our newly elected and appointed officers for the year 2015 will be conducted in the regular Sunday service on January 4th.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICES:

TODAY (Dec. 14) Grades PS -8 (9:30-10:15 AM)

Friday, Dec. 19 Full practice – Gr. PS-8 (12:30 PM). We would like students attending public school to attend this practice, if at all possible.

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

Dec. 21 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*)



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.**

Advent Midweek Worship

Please join us on Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. for our midweek Advent Service. 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: Rejoice Evermore (1 Thess. 5:16)

Questions to help you prepare for this Wednesday evening (12/17)

Read **1 Thessalonians 4:13–18** and wrestle with these questions:

1. Three times in these verses Paul says that people who die in the Lord are asleep. What does this mean?
2. It is important to note that the rapture described in 1 Thess. 4:17 happens at the same time as Christ's second coming. Other Christians, evangelicals especially, believe the rapture will come before a seven-year tribulation which is followed by Christ's 1,000-year reign on earth. Discuss these different understandings of the rapture.
3. How are Paul's words encouraging to you?

LYF CAROLING & CHRISTMAS PARTY: The LYF will be having their Christmas party today from 7:30 – 10:00 PM at *Carey & Sharon Damman's* house. Please bring an (*optional*) \$10 gift to exchange, and a munchie or dessert item to share. You can drop these off at the Damman's at 4:45 PM prior to going to the church to go caroling with the church group at 5 PM. Hope to see a lot of you later today so we can all spread some Christmas joy this year!

2015 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2015 offering envelopes are available today. Please pick yours up, and may God prosper the work of our 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 *Kathy Behnfeldt* (419-598-8682).

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Please note that there is no offering envelope for the Children’s Christmas Program next Sunday 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 the Fellowship Hall Debt Reduction.



LYF & SCHOOL BOARD will be sacking candy on Sunday, Dec. 21ST at 9:30 AM in the gym.

Christmas at St. John

It’s time to celebrate the best good tidings this world has ever heard!

- **Dec. 21, 7:00 p.m.** **Children’s Christmas Program**
 “Something Fishy at Christmas”
- **Dec. 24, 7:00 p.m.** **Christmas Eve of Carols & Candles**
 “Rejoice Evermore – the Savior is Born!”
- **Dec. 25, 9:30 a.m.** **Christmas Day Festival Service**
 Bring a bell to ring out the good news!



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*.

MITE-Y SOCKS: It’s time to turn in the *Mite-y Socks* you’ve been collecting throughout 2014. There is a basket on the table in the narthex. Some of you may have already turned in your sock at the Ladies Advent By Candlelight Christmas Party on Thursday, Dec. 11th. Look for the 2015 *Mite-y Socks* to be available in January!

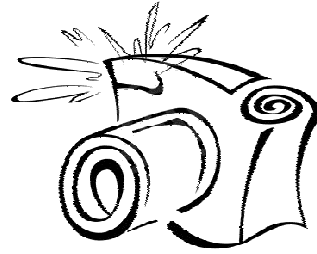
<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 12/07/14	\$7,870.00	\$288.00	\$1,058.00

ATTENDANCE: 12/07/14 – 8:15 Service: 173; 10:30 Service: 104

2nd ADVENT SERVICE: \$705.00 to “*Rosie*” the *Comfort Dog*; Attendance: 112

145th ANNIVERSARY PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

Say cheese, and get on board for a new congregational pictorial directory. Photography dates are **January 21-24** (Wednesday thru Saturday). Every household that participates will receive a free 8x10 as well as a copy of the directory. To schedule your photography appointment, please stop out in the fellowship hall today and sign up for a time that works for you. Things to note:



- **Online Scheduling** – If you prefer to sign up online, you may do so Monday through Friday for the next few weeks (but not weekends). An instruction sheet is available at the table in the narthex. There is also a link on our website, www.sjl.org.
- **Photography Hosts** – We also need volunteers to host on the photography dates to receive and register people. There are three shifts per day: 2-4:00 p.m. / 4-6:00 p.m. / 6-8:30 p.m. Please sign up to host at the table in the narthex.

GIFT IDEA FOR THE CHILDREN IN YOUR LIFE – Just in time for Christmas, *Lutheran Visuals* is making a DVD available titled “Three Christmas Classics.” This DVD contains three Christmas shows that will drive home the true message of Christmas and of God’s gift to us. The three features are:

- **Christmas Is...** (22 minutes, animated)
- **The City That Forgot About Christmas** (22 minutes, animated)
- **The Stableboy's Christmas** (27 minutes, drama)

Cost is \$9.95 plus shipping. To order, call *Lutheran Visuals* at 1-800-527-3211, or order online at www.lutheranvisuals.com.

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 2014. Here are the individual year-to-date deposits for 2014: St. John Church - \$17,669.00; St. John School - \$2,330.00; St. John Preschool - \$697.00. A well-deserved “thank you” to Thrivent for providing these funds throughout the year.

TIME TO UPDATE OUR DIRECTORY: There are many addresses and phone numbers in the Annual Report directory that need updated. If you (*and/or your adult children*) have address changes; or if you have eliminated your land line telephone and only have cell phone numbers, **please call or email** the church office at 419-598-8961 or email jwiechers@sjl.org with updated information. It will be very helpful to have current addresses on file when we do our mailings. Thank you!

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.**

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.

HELP NEEDED: The sports program is always looking for volunteers to work the clock and/or scoreboard for the home basketball games. If you are interested in being a volunteer, 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.

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).

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.

ULTIMATE CLOTH SALE: The Stewardship Board will have the Ultimate Cloth® available on Sun. Dec. 21st in conjunction with the Sweets & Treats Shop fundraiser. If you've been meaning to purchase these cloths, you can take care of that on the 21st. Contact Karen Norden (419-267-3477) for more information and pricing. As always, this will be an on-going fundraiser for the Right Hand of Fellowship gift matching campaign.

THE GIFT OF GENEROSITY: This holiday season, we thank everyone who has supported St. John Lutheran Church this past year with their time, talent and financial contributions and look forward to support from all of our members in the year ahead. If you need a convenient way to make regular offerings or if you plan to make an additional gift before the end of the year, we encourage you to look into our electronic giving options. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around the holidays, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions.

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, check out the display in the side hallway and pick up and pay for your copy today.

CHRISTMAS CARDS: Check out the table in the hallway by the cry room! The Ladies Aid have put out their boxed Christmas Cards for sale. The dish cloths are also available and be sure to check out the display board to see if you are interested in purchasing any cutlery items such as: Paring Knives, Stubby Butcher Knives, Pie Servers, Vegetable Peelers, Slicer Knives, Granny Forks, Carving Forks, Pizza Cutters, Tomato Slicer, and Small Spatula. Contact officers *Nancy Hogrefe, Mabel Bischoff, Lois Rosebrock, or Pat Maassel* if you would like to see or purchase any of these items.

CHURCH LIBRARY – The church library, located in the hall next to the sanctuary, is growing to contain a lot of excellent books that will edify your faith. The books in this library have been screened to assure that they are true to the Word of God and can be trusted to be theologically sound. Please check out the selection. To borrow a book, just take it with you, then return it to the basket when you've finished reading.

'BREAD FROM HEAVEN' – A note to St. John members needing food assistance – If you could use food assistance from our food pantry, please speak with *Pastor Niermann*. We are required by the *Northwestern Ohio Food Bank* to keep a record with your name, but pastor will keep your record separate and absolutely confidential.

Contributions can be made at any time. Monetary gifts can be given to the *Good Neighbor Fund* (note it on your offering envelope). Food donations for our pantry can be dropped off in the box by the Archives display cases. **Food items especially needed at this time are: spaghetti sauce, cereal, mac n' cheese, saltines & any crackers, and hamburger helper.** Any and all contributions are always greatly appreciated. Thank you so much! As we learned in the meaning of the Fifth Commandment, "*We should fear and love God that we...help and support our neighbor in every physical need.*" (*Small Catechism*)

CHURCH HISTORY BOOKS – If at any time during the year (*and why not at Christmas time*) you need a gift for a current or former member of St. John, why not consider one of our Church History Books. This book is full of interesting facts about St. John's and is available in the church office at a cost of \$12.00.

HENRY COUNTY CHORALE CHRISTMAS CONCERT: St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1075 Glenwood Ave., Napoleon, will be hosting a Christmas Concert on Sun., Dec. 14th at 2:00 PM in their sanctuary. See the flyer posted on the bulletin board in the narthex.

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...

Church Sign: "All we want for Christmas is your presence!"

"O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant." (LSB 379)