



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16-035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 06, 2015

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NO. 49

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School: 419-598-8702 Cell: 419-966-6160

Church Website: www.sjl.org

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Excellence: Doing What Matters Most" *Philippians 1:2-11*

Order of Service: *Divine Service, Setting Three (LSB pg. 184)*

Hymns: 838 ~ (Communion: 344, 628, 350) ~ 333

Adult Choir: "Will We Know Him?" and "A Tiny Child will Come"

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* ✠ Tyne Rosebrock & Emily Bostelman, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Steve & Linda Miller, *Greeters* ✠
- ✠ Harold Behrmann & Richard Elling, *Visitation* ✠
- ✠ Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Richard Elling, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Lois Rosebrock, Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow, *Altar Guild* ✠

THE FLOWERS BY THE ALTAR are placed today to the Glory of God by *Rob & Valerie Scheffert* in honor of *Lydia Babcock's* 14th birthday, which was on December 5th. Happy Birthday, Lydia!

THE DECEMBER VOTERS' MEETING is scheduled for next Sunday, Dec. 13 during the Sunday School hour. After worship, please pick up a document we will consider at the voters' meeting regarding a new policy for long-term inactive members.

LYF & SCHOOL BOARD will be sacking candy on Sunday, Dec. 20th at 10:20 AM in the gym.

In God's House This Week

Online church calendar: www.DynaCal.com/sjl

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 2:00 PM	Communion Service Adult Bible Class; "Time To Spare"; Adult Instruction Class Children's Christmas Program practice (<i>Gr. PS – 8 until 11:15 AM</i>) Ridgeville Community Choir Concert
Mon.	5:30 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 6:30 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys vs. St. John - Defiance
Tue.	8:35 AM 9:00 AM 10:00AM 7:00 PM	Chapel led by Pastor Niermann and Vicar Yaeger; Offering: <i>Bethesda</i> Exercise Class Tuesday Bible Study Church Council Meeting
Wed.	5:45 PM 6:30 PM 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Junior Confirmation Class (<i>until 6:45 PM</i>) Adult Bell Choir practice Advent Service 2 Adult Bell Choir: "Savior of the Nations Come" Offering: <i>St. John Vocational Students</i> Acolytes: <i>Caleb Bockelman & Madison Bostelman</i> Greeters: <i>Clara Meyer & Phyllis Silveus</i> Ushers: <i>Dave Badenhop, Denny VonDeylen, Jerry Short, Dan Wiechers</i> Altar Guild: <i>Lois Rosebrock, Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow</i> Adult Choir practice
Thurs.	9:30 AM 6:00 PM	Secret Santa Workshop for Grades PS – 8 "Advent By Candlelight" Ladies Dinner Program
Sat.	10:30AM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls & Boys vs. Solomon - Woodville
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM 1:00 PM	Worship Service with Communion following Voters' Meeting; <i>Java Joy</i> ; "Time To Spare"; Children's Christmas Program practice (<i>Gr. PS – 8 until 11:15 AM</i>) B-ball: All four teams play @ St. Paul – Napoleon
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Keith Witte</i> , St. Paul Lutheran, Liberty Center

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

- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Stan Moll, Marian Fitzenreiter, Norma Damman, and Don Dickmann*
- ❖ *Pauline Dishop, Marie Damman, and Delora Winkelman*, at The Lutheran Home, Napoleon
- ❖ *Magdalena Volkman*, residing at Heartland Nursing Home, Wauseon
- ❖ *Anna Brodman and Marian Buchhop* residing at Country View Haven
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Orchards of Northcrest - Napoleon
- ❖ *Helen Norden*, residing at Greenbriar Assisted Living in Birmingham, AL
- ❖ Servicemen and women *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Schroeder, and Connor Gerken*
- ❖ *Delores Badenhop*, recuperating at The Lutheran Home following her surgery
- ❖ *Kyle Elling*, now deployed overseas, that God would guard him and his comrades against all harm and danger

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS NOTES – This is a summary list. More details about many of these events can be found elsewhere in today’s bulletin.

- 🌲 **THIS AFTERNOON - The Ridgeville Community Choir** Concert at 2:00 p.m.
- 🌲 **Children’s Christmas Service rehearsals** are taking place on the Sundays of December during the Sunday School hour. We ask that everyone please clear the sanctuary after worship and try to keep the sound level to a minimum.
- 🌲 **The Children’s Christmas Service** will be held on Sunday, December 20th at 7:00 p.m.
- 🌲 **Midweek Confirmation Class** this week and next meets 5:45 to 6:45 p.m.
- 🌲 **“Advent By Candlelight”** is this Thursday evening. Beside the fantastic food everyone always brings to this event, we have a wonderful barbershop quartet lined up to entertain and to lead in singing favorite carols. Sign up today and join us for this elegant evening as we further prepare to celebrate the Savior’s birth.
- 🌲 **Christmas Caroling** will take place on Sunday, Dec. 13th at 5:15 p.m.
- 🌲 **Christmas Sweets & Treats** is set for Sunday, Dec. 20th. 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 toward the RHF campaign.
- 🌲 **Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles** - Dec. 24th at 7:00 p.m.
- 🌲 **Christmas Day Festival Service** – Dec. 25th, 9:30 a.m.

ADULT FAITH ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Cross; We Suffer with Jesus (*Sundays after worship*)

Our daily crosses—a battle against sin, a disease, a lack of success at work, or a shrinking congregation—make it difficult to believe in a gracious God. We wish God would reveal Himself clearly and deliver us. But God chooses to remain hidden. How can this be good news for us? Come and find out as we continue our study: **Cross, We Suffer with Jesus.**

A Man Named Martin (*Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m.*)

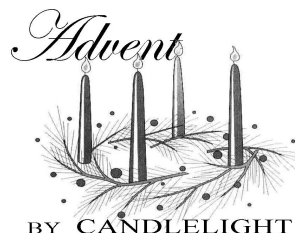
Pastor is leading this video study from *Lutheran Hour Ministries* titled “**A Man Named Martin – Part 5, The Man.**” The influence and impact of Luther’s life is the stuff of serious study. As a forlorn sinner feeling lost before a stern and exacting Judge, Luther desponded of all hope for eternity. But as one who came to cling to the Spirit-delivered truths of justification by faith and the liberty believers experience by God’s grace, he rebounded to become a triumphant ambassador for the Gospel. Join us for this fresh and explorative look at an individual who, down through the centuries, has increased in importance and vitality to the Christian church.

ADVENT DEVOTION booklets are available on the narthex table. They have been provided to us by Lutheran Hour Ministry and Lutheran Assoc. of Missionaries & Pilots. Pick up a copy today!

CHRISTMAS CAROLING – The LYF, Adult Choir, and anyone else who wants to spread the good tidings of Christmas by singing carols to the shut-ins and to the nursing homes, should plan to meet here at church on Sun., Dec. 13th at 5:15 PM. If we have enough singers, we will split up and one group will sing to the shut-ins at home and the rest will sing at the nursing homes. Also, bring a light snack if you can and we’ll share it together after we return from caroling.

SR. LYF STICKY BUNS FUNDRAISER: The sticky buns fundraiser is back for December, but first we would like to thank all of you for your strong support of the sticky bun sales in November. This month we will be selling on two Sundays, December 13th and December 20th, due to Christmas. This fundraiser is to help our Sr. High LYF raise money for their trip to the National Youth Gathering this July. Inside your bulletin there is a pre-order sheet that we are asking you to fill out in advance so that we can assure that we have enough for each Sunday. Once your pre-order sheet is filled out, you may drop it into the box in the narthex that will be labeled "Sticky Bun Pre-Orders." If you forget to fill out a pre-order sheet, that's okay! We will have extras available on those Sundays as well. Thank you for supporting St. John's LYF!

ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT – There is still time to sign up to attend this year's Advent Dinner and Program for all women of the congregation. You won't want to miss the delicious food, fellowship with friends, and entertainment! This wonderful evening is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 10th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.



🕯️ You may RSVP in one of the following ways:

- Sign up on the sheet in the narthex
- Call *Pat Mahnke* at 419-598-8382

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES

Stir it up! It's a common Advent theme, expressed especially in the collects of Advent that begin with the words, "Stir up, O Lord..." We ask that God would stir up in our hearts all that is necessary for a blessed life here and in eternity.

Join God's people each Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. as we do the only preparations for Christmas that truly count, and get our hearts ready to celebrate the birth of our Savior. Weekly themes are:



DATE	THEME	OFFERING
Dec. 2	Stir Up the Power of Hope, <i>Rom 15:12-13</i>	2016 LYF Youth Gathering
Dec. 9	Stir Up the Power of Preparation, <i>Matt 3:1-12</i>	Ministry Vocation Students
Dec. 16	Stir Up the Power of Love, <i>1 John 4:15-21</i>	LCMS fund for Persecuted

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 11/22/15	\$4,894.00	\$347.00	\$370.00
Rec'd 11/29/15	\$7,346.00	\$81.00	\$416.00

ATTENDANCE: 11/22/15 Service: 238; **ATTENDANCE:** 11/29/15 Service: 255

COMMUNED in November: 440 members; 9 guests

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE: \$1,857.00 to Good Neighbor Fund; Attendance: 131

FREEDOM'S FLOCK NOTICE: On Thurs., Dec. 10th Freedom's Flock will be held in Miss Rettig's classroom due to the set up for the "Advent By Candlelight" program in the fellowship hall that evening. There will be a sign on the outside double doors by Miss Rettig's classroom indicating to pick up your child there. The normal pick up doors will not be accessible that day. Thank you!

A CELEBRITY AMONG US: If you haven't already received your copy of the December issue of Thrivent Magazine, when you do, please take time to read the "Living Well" section (pg. 24) which is featuring Centenarian Thrivent members. One of those featured centenarians is our very own, *Magdalena Volkman*, 102, and her interview can be read along with five other 100+ year old Thrivent members from across the United States. We also have laminated copies of the interview (*with her picture*) by the narthex table and bulletin board, and in the hallway across from the 7&8 classroom.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICES:

TODAY, Dec. 6 Grades PS-8 (10:20-11:15 AM)

Sunday, Dec. 13 Grades PS-8 (10:20-11:15 AM)

Friday, Dec. 18 Full practice – Gr. PS-8 (12:30 PM). We would like all students, including those attending public school, to attend this practice, if at all possible.

Sunday, Dec. 20 Grades PS – 8 (10:20-11:30 AM)

Sunday, Dec. 20 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.**

LIST OF 2016 CHURCH OFFICE NOMINATIONS: (*as of the printing of this bulletin*)

ELECTED: Vice Pres. – *Dean Badenhop, Tom VonDeylen*

Treasurer – *Cathy Gerken*; Financial Trustee – *Denny VonDeylen*

Elder – *Dan Wachtman, Dave Damman, Jerry Short*

Stewardship Board – *Cheryl Sausser, Nate Bickel*

Board of Education – *Derek Damman, Jenelle Hesterman*

Alt. Delegate Syn – *no nomination required this year*

APPOINTED: Secretary – *vacant*; Church Deacon – *vacant*

Trustee – *Scott Speiser, Dennis Showman*; Cemetery Sexton – *Ben Kruse*

Cemetery Board – *Logan Kossow, Clay Badenhop, vacant*

Asst. Sunday School Supt. – *vacant*

NOTE: The installation of our newly elected and appointed officers for the year 2016 will be conducted in the regular Sunday service on January 3rd.

SERVANT SUNDAY – STARTING A NEW TRADITION

The Stewardship Board has come up with the idea of a *Servant Sunday* on the first Sunday of each new year as a way for us to better express our thanks to all those who serve voluntarily in the various offices of our congregation and school. **The inaugural *Servant Sunday* will be on Sunday, January 3rd.** On that day in worship we will install the newly elected and appointed officers, and offer prayers of thanks for the service of those who are vacating their offices. Then at **11:30 a.m.** after the Sunday School hour, we will gather for a **congregational potluck dinner**, followed by a brief and less formal time to say our thanks to all who serve us. Mark your calendar for this day!

NOTES FROM THE WOMEN OF FREEDOM MEETING: We had election of officers and the following will be leading us next year beginning January 2016: President - *Karan Niebergall*; Vice President - *Nancy Glaser*; Secretary - *Karen Sonnenberg*; Treasurer - *Mabel Bischoff*; Christian Growth - *Sharon Damman*; Budget - *Lois Arps, Kathy Behnfeldt, Irma Rohrs*. Vicar Yaeger was our speaker and he told us about his life as he was growing up. At the end of the meeting we packed boxes for the shut-ins. A box will be on the table in the back of the church starting the first Sunday in December for the collection of the Mite-y-Socks.

A NEW YEAR, A NEW WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY

Starting in January, Pastor and Vicar will offer a new Bible study titled, “**Triune God.**” We are offering a choice of two different times: **Monday evenings, 7-8:15pm**, or **Tuesday mornings, 10-11:15am**. The first sessions will be on January 4th and 5th. There will be three sessions each month.

Have you ever wondered what the Bible actually says about the Trinity? Do Christians worship three ‘Gods,’ as *Jehovah’s Witnesses* sometimes accuse? Why do we have the creeds? Can’t I just believe the Bible? Is there a good way to symbolize the Trinity? Is the Trinity revealed in the Old Testament? How does our understanding of the Trinity help us understand our own salvation? Join us for our study of our Triune God.



This study is from the *LifeLight* series published by CPH. It is excellent material, and you will “know your stuff” when you’re done. This study invites you to read your Bible at home in preparation for each session. Each student guide costs about \$10 (*or less if we order 10 or more*), so we need people to sign up to participate. Also, as you are able, we would ask each participant to help cover the cost of these materials. Details of how you can do that will be discussed at the first session.

Sign up today in the narthex, and let us together “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.” (2 *Peter* 3:18)

2016 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 Sara Myles, Finance Trustee, and a box will be issued to you.

SCRIP CARDS ON HAND – For anyone interested, there will be gift cards on hand every Sunday after the worship service for sale. Some choices are Applebees, Chili’s, Red Robin, Buffalo Wild Wings, Subway, Starbucks, IHop, and Walmart, just to name a few. There will be others available too, so plan to stop and shop on Sundays! Any questions, contact SCRIP Coordinator *Kristyn Honemann* at 419-966-0207.

BULLETIN STUFFER VOLUNTEERS: There are still a few openings if you'd like to give this a try. A big "thank you" to all who have already signed up to help with stuffing the bulletins in 2016. You are the "behind the scenes" people of the church that keep things flowing smoothly on Sunday mornings. We appreciate your dedicated effort!

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 2016 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 Sunday, Dec. 13th.** *You do not need to sign up again if you are currently serving as a greeter, usher or are on an altar guild team.*

CHRISTMAS SWEETS & TREATS! Just like last year the Stewardship Board is organizing a Christmas fundraiser for the Right Hand of Fellowship capital campaign. Put it on your calendar for Sun., Dec. 20th following the worship service that day. The variety last year was amazing --- and delicious! Please put some thought into what you might be able to provide for this event.

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 toward the RHF campaign.

Stop by on Dec. 20th 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* (419-579-0437). 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. 20th. 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. 19th 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. 20.

Vacation Bible School 2016 – Believe it or not, it's time to think about VBS. This year the theme of the CPH curriculum is one that we know a thing or two about in these parts – "Barnyard Roundup – Jesus Gathers His People Together." At this time we would like to identify a VBS director (or maybe co-directors) to work with Pastor in making some of the initial plans. Please speak with *Pastor Niermann* if you are interested in serving the children in this way.



SPORTS NOTE: **Basketball schedules/calendars are being posted on FastDirect.** Please continue to check James Wagner'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 to make it work for you. Please contact *James Wagner* at 419-722-8847.

ATHLETIC BOOSTER MEMBERSHIP: Membership is now being taken for the Athletic Booster Club. **Sign up deadline is Mon., Dec. 14th.** 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 or contact any of the Booster officers: *Jody Meller, Lisa Bockelman, Krista Gerken, and Becky Michaelis.* Join today!

ST. JOHN SCRIP: *SCRIP* order forms and program information are posted on FastDirect under ‘Links,’ titled SCRIP Order Forms and SCRIP Program Information. There are also hard copies 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 SCRIP Coordinator Kristyn Honemann at 419-966-0207 or email at honemann@embarqmail.com.**

AREA EVENTS

- ◆ **RIDGEVILLE COMMUNITY CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT** – The Ridgeville Community Choir along with the Junior Choral Society will be presenting a Christmas concert today at 2:00 PM here at St. John.
- ◆ **CHRISTMAS VILLAGE CRAFT SHOW** will be held at the Ridgeville Legion Hall, today from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Lunch will be served. Come and browse the shops!
- ◆ **HENRY COUNTY CHRISTMAS CHEER – Tomorrow is the deadline!** A barrel has been placed in the narthex for the collection of canned goods and paper products.
- ◆ **COMMUNITY BAND CONCERT:** On Monday, Dec. 7 at 7:00 PM the Community Band will celebrate the 30th anniversary of our gift of live concert band music to the community. The concert will be held at the Emanuel Lutheran Church, Napoleon.
- ◆ **HENRY COUNTY CHORALE CHRISTMAS CONCERT** will be presenting a Christmas Concert Sun., Dec. 13 at 2:30 PM at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1075 Glenwood, Napoleon.
- ◆ **THE TOLEDO SYMPHONY** will perform a Christmas Concert at **St. Paul Lutheran Church – Napoleon Township, on Wed., Dec. 16th beginning at 7:30 PM.** Tickets on sale thru their church office at 419-758-3522. See flyer!

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

Christmas won't be Christmas without His presents – or presence!

“But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 6:23)