



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16-035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 13, 2015

VOL. 80

NO. 50

Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor
Mr. Aaron Yaeger, Vicar
Miss Mary K. Rettig, Interim Principal

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
Cell: 989-607-4566
School: 419-598-8702 Cell: 419-966-6160
Church Website: www.sjl.org

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

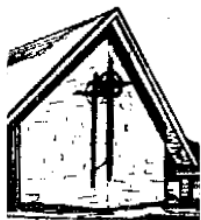
Sermon & Text: "Gaudete" *Zeph. 3:14-20*

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

Hymns: 515 ~ 341 ~ 349

Gr. 5&6 Chime Choir: "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* ✘ Tyne Rosebrock & Hope Buchhop, *Acolytes* ✘
- ✘ Dave & Sara Myles, *Greeters* ✘
- ✘ Lawrence & Hildegard Behrmann, *Visitation* ✘
- ✘ Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Richard Elling, *Ushers* ✘
- ✘ Lois Rosebrock, Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow, *Altar Guild* ✘

HOLY COMMUNION will be offered this morning following the 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.

VOTERS' ASSEMBLY TODAY AFTER THE SERVICE: On the agenda: 1) Recommend candidate for called Principal/Teacher position; 2) Adoption of the 2016 Budget; 3) Election of officers for 2016; 4) Endowment status; 5) Give consideration to a new policy for long-term inactive members.

CHURCH DIRECTORIES: The church directories have arrived. They will be available for pick up on Sun., Dec. 20th, for those who had their picture taken or submitted a picture for this directory. Anyone wishing to have a directory, but did not have their picture taken or submit a picture, may purchase one for \$3.00. These copies will also be available on the 20th. Thank you for your patience!

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 1:00 PM 5:15 PM	Worship Service with Communion following Voters' Meeting; "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 Congregational Caroling (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Mon.	5:30 PM	B-ball: Gr. 7&8 Girls; 6:30 PM Gr. 7&8 Boys @ St. John - Defiance
Tue.	9:00 AM 10:00AM 5:00 PM	Exercise Class Tuesday Bible Study B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 6:00 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys vs. St. Pats – Bryan
Wed.	5:45 PM 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Junior Confirmation Class (<i>until 6:45 PM</i>) Advent Service 3 Gr. 5&6 Chime Choir: "O come, O come, Emmanuel" Offering: <i>LCMS fund Christ Care for Persecuted & Displaced</i> Acolytes: <i>Caleb Bockelman & Brooks Behnfeldt</i> Greeters: <i>Don & Karan Niebergall</i> Ushers: <i>Carey Damman, Craig Drewes, Scott VanValkenburg</i> Altar Guild: <i>Karan Niebergall, Kaylee & Ronda Wentworth, Karen Lulfs</i> Adult Choir practice
Thurs.	9:00 AM	Exercise Class
Fri.	12:30PM 3:00 PM	Christmas Program practice (<i>Preschool thru Gr. 8, including public students</i>) Christmas Break begins (<i>Classes resume on Mon., Jan. 4th @ 8:20 AM</i>)
Sat.	10:00AM 5:30 PM	B-ball: All four teams play @ Trinity – Toledo Jr./Sr. Hi LYF Christmas Party
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM 10:20AM 7:00 PM	Communion Service Adult Bible Class; "Time To Spare"; Children's Christmas Program practice (<i>Gr. PS – 8 until 11:30 AM</i>) Sweets & Treats Bake Shop; LYF & School Board sacking candy Children's Christmas Program (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Logan Scheiwe, St. Paul Lutheran – Napoleon</i>

ADULT FAITH ENRICHMENT**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.**

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!

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
- ❖ *Simon Robeson*, still in critical condition after the car accident that took the life of his fiancée

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

- 🌲 **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 meets 5:45 to 6:45 p.m.
- 🌲 **Christmas Caroling** will take place today at 5:15 p.m.
- 🌲 **Jr. & Sr. Hi LYF Christmas Party** will be held on Sat., Dec. 19th.
- 🌲 **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.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING TODAY – 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 today 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: Selling Today!!! The sticky buns fundraiser is back for December! This month we will be selling on two Sundays, today and next Sunday, December 20th. 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!

2016 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2016 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 *Kathy Behnfeldt* (419-598-8682) until Jan. 1st. After Jan. 1st, please contact *Sara Myles* (419-966-1335).

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

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 – *Lori Bickel*; 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.

SERVING THEIR COUNTRY: With Christmas just around the corner, and Christmas cards being sent to family and friends, why not take a few extra minutes to remember our St. John servicemen and women with a card too. Here are the current addresses we have for them:

JUSTIN ATKINSON
17 Sugar Cane Drive
Savannah, GA 31419

JASON ROHRS
11601 Gun Powder Drive
Fort Washington, MD 20744

CONNOR GERKEN
3656 Kershaw Avenue
Toledo, OH 43613

EMILY SCHROEDER
9401 Wilson Blvd., Lot 38
Columbia, SC 29203

KYLE ELLING
1556 Ripple Court
Gulf Breeze, FL 32563

ATHLETIC BOOSTER MEMBERSHIP: Sign up deadline is today. Membership is now being taken for the Athletic Booster Club. 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. Join today!

LYF CHRISTMAS PARTY: The Jr. & Sr. Hi LYF will be having their Christmas party on Sat., Dec. 19th from 5:30 – 7:00 PM here in the fellowship hall. This is for youth from 6th – 12th grade. Please bring a food item for the food pantry and a munchie or dessert item to share. Pizza will be provided. Please RSVP by Dec. 18th to Miss Bartok's email: sbartok@sjl.org. Hope to see a lot of you on the 19th so we can enjoy some Christmas fellowship with each other!

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

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICES:



TODAY, 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.**

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Please note that there is no offering envelope in your boxes 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 to the Home Fund as designated.



<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 12/06/15	\$8,651.00	\$217.00	\$523.00

ATTENDANCE: 12/06/15 Service: 232;

ADVENT SERVICE #2 (12-09-15): \$592.00 – St. John Vocation Students; Attendance: 85

CHOICE DOLLARS RECAP: Thanks to everyone who continue to designate their Choice Dollars deposits through Thrivent Financial. Because of your initiative the church, school, and preschool have benefited in 2015. Here are the individual year-to-date deposits for 2015: St. John Church - \$11,103.00; St. John School - \$2,067.00; St. John Preschool - \$697.00. A well-deserved “thank you” to Thrivent for providing these funds throughout the year.

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.

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 understanding 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)



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!

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, saltines & any crackers, and soups.** 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.

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.

GREETER, USHER, AND ALTAR GUILD SIGN-UP – **The sign-up deadline is today.** 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. *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.

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.

ULTIMATE CLOTH SALE: **The Stewardship Board will have the Ultimate Cloth® available on Sun. Dec. 20th 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 20th. 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.

CHRISTMAS CARDS: Check out the table in the hallway by the cry room! The Women of Freedom 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, Marian Damman, Mabel Bischoff, Lois Rosebrock, or Karan Niebergall* if you would like to see or purchase any of these items.

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.



OHIO ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN: The Ohio Division OGT is located in the north end of the Culligan Water Conditioning building on Independence Drive in Napoleon. Someone is usually there to receive items on the first Tuesday of the month from 9:00-11:00 AM. If you need to drop off items at another time, please contact *Nancy Helmke (419-758-3539), Diann Meyer-Grieser (419-267-3485), Vicki Grieser (419-445-2986), or Harold Behrmann (419-598-8311)* and they will be happy to meet you and open the facility to receive your donations!

TURN YOUR OLD USED CELL PHONE INTO A GIFT FOR THE POOR AND FOR YOUR CHURCH! Informed sources tell us that the average American household has 5 to 6 old unused cell phones lying around. Now you can put those phones to good use AND keep them out of the landfills. Bring them to church and deposit them in the large white box in the narthex. They will be forwarded to a company that sorts them and prepares them to be given to poor families for emergency use, and sends us a check. Old cell phones range in value from \$1 up to \$50.



AREA EVENTS

- ◆ **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 is the day that holds all time together!

“When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman.” (Gal. 4:4)