



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 18, 2016

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NO. 51

Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor
Mr. M. Brent Keller, Vicar
Rev. Charles Kramer, Principal

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
Cell: 940-390-3065
School: 419-598-8702 Cell: 567-277-1339
Church Website: www.sjl.org

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Utterly Ordinary" *Matthew 1:18-25*

Order of Service: *Divine Service, Setting One (LSB pg. 151)*

Hymns: **361** ~ (Communion: **617, 353, 347**) ~ **919**

Adult Bell Choir: "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" and "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

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

- ✠ Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✠ Clay Behnfeldt & Clara Damman, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Dan & Deb Wachtman, *Greeters* ✠
- ✠ Delbert & Marian Damman, *Visitation* ✠
- ✠ Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short, *Altar Guild* ✠

FLOWERS BY THE ALTAR are placed in remembrance of the first anniversary of the passing of *Roger Mahnke* on Thurs., Dec. 15th. Please keep Ruth and her family in your prayers at this difficult time of year for them. May God be with them over the holidays and into the New Year!

SACKING CANDY: The School Board and Sr. High LYF members will be assembling the Christmas sacks today during the Sunday School hour.

SWEETS-N-TREATS THANK YOU – The Stewardship Board would like to thank everyone who brought goodies for the **Sweets-n-Treats** last Sunday, and for all who supported it with their donations. Over \$300 was raised toward a mission trip this coming summer.

In God's House This Week

Online church calendar: www.DynaCal.com/sjl

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 10:20AM 7:00 PM	Communion Service Adult Bible Class; Children's Christmas Program practice -- Full run through (<i>Gr. PS – 8 until 11:15 AM</i>) School Board & Sr. High LYF sacking Christmas candy bags Children's Christmas Program (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Mon.	4:30 PM	B-ball: Gr. 7&8 boys vs. Liberty Center
Tue.	8:35 AM 9:00 AM 3:00 PM 5:00 PM	Chapel led by Vicar Keller Exercise Class Christmas Break begins B-Ball: Gr. 7&8 Girls vs. Ayersville (played at St. Paul – Napoleon)
Wed.	5:45 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM	NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break (<i>classes resume on Tues., Jan. 3, 2017</i>) Junior Confirmation Class (<i>until 6:45 PM</i>) Adult Bell Choir practice Advent Service 4; Offering: <i>Local Lutheran Hour Broadcasts</i> Acolytes: <i>Taylor Dietrich & Gavin Gerken</i> Ushers: <i>Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling</i> Altar Guild: <i>Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short</i>
Sat.	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles; Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolytes: <i>Clay Behnfeldt & Zak Schroeder</i> Greeters: <i>Dan & Joyce Wiechers</i> Ushers: <i>Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling</i> Altar Guild: <i>Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short</i>
Sun.	9:00 AM	Christmas Day Festival Service w/Communion; Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolytes: <i>Maggie Weller & Hope Buchhop</i> Greeters: <i>Lois Arps & Evelyn Rohrs</i> Ushers: <i>Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling</i> Altar Guild: <i>Marietta Damman, Deb Wachtman, Sharon Badenhop, Nancy Short</i>
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Willie Stottlemyer, St. Stephen Lutheran – Defiance</i>

POINSETTIA PLANTS – The poinsettias are adorning the sanctuary this morning and will be used for the various Christmas Services. Please see the pink insert in today's bulletin for a listing of those who purchased these poinsettias. 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.

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

MITE-Y-SOCKS: Anyone that filled a Mite-Y Sock for Missions this year, may turn them in now. A large LWML Mite box is placed on the table in the narthex into which you may place your Mite-y-Sock for this year. If you wish to keep your sock to refill in 2017, simply empty it into the box.

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

- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Norma Damman, Lucia Delventhal, Renetta Homan, Stan Moll, and Delores Badenhop*
- ❖ *Marie Damman and Delora Winkelman*, at The Lutheran Home, Napoleon
- ❖ *Anna Brodman and Marian Buchhop* residing at Country View Haven
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran's Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Servicemen, *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Kyle Elling, Emily Schroeder, Connor Gerken, and Seth Handy*
- ❖ *Casen Lawrence*, for control of increased seizure activity he has been experiencing
- ❖ *Florence Fitzenreiter*, recovering at home from a recent hospitalization
- ❖ *Shirley Sonnenberg*, for a recent medical procedure
- ❖ *Vernon Kruse*, for radiation treatments he is currently receiving
- ❖ *Evelyn Rohrs*, recuperating at Northcrest Nursing Home following a recent fall

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICES:

TODAY Grades PS – 8 (10:20-11:30 AM or until we are done)

TONIGHT at 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 tonight. If you wish for your offering at this 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.



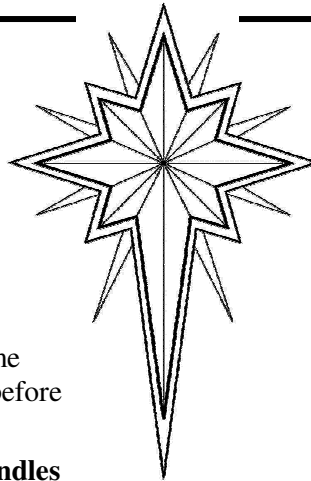
ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES -- Services will be held each Wednesday in Advent at 7:00 p.m. The schedule for Advent messages is:

- Nov. 30 How Shall I Greet You?, *Matthew 21:1–11*
- Dec. 7 Advent's Fiery Preacher, *Matthew 3:1–12*
- Dec. 14 Not Another Advent!, *Matthew 11:2–15*
- Dec. 21 **We Still Need Him, Our Immanuel, *Matthew 1:18–25***

- **The offering this Wednesday evening** will be used to support the local broadcast of *The Local Lutheran Hour Broadcasts*, bringing Christ to the nations, and the nations to Christ!

WOMEN OF FREEDOM – The Program Booklets for 2017 are in a box on the table in the back of the church. They are in alphabetical order. Be sure to pick yours up today. Also be sure to check to see what month you are on for serving. If that time does not work out for you, you can switch with someone.

Christmas at St. John



Oh, come, all ye faithful! The time has come once again to celebrate God's greatest gift to humanity, the one and only gift that gives forever!

- Sun. Dec. 18 7:00 pm - Children's Christmas Service**
"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"
(with a visit from Dr. Martin Luther)
- Wed. Dec. 21 7:00 pm - Midweek Advent Service 4**
- Sat. Dec. 24 6:45 pm - Christmas Eve Preservice Music** – Come a little early to enjoy an extended time of music before our Christmas Candlelight Service.
- 7:00 pm - Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles**
"A Christmas Gift Card – It's all yours!"
- Sun. Dec. 25 9:00 pm - Christmas Festival Service, Holy Communion**

LIST OF 2017 CHURCH OFFICERS ELECTED/APPOINTED:

ELECTED: Vice Pres. – Dan Wiechers

Treasurer – Cathy Gerken; Financial Trustee – Cheryl Dietrich

Elder – Alan Gruenhagen, Larry Gerken; Stewardship Board – Kathy Badenhop, Diane Johnson

Board of Education – Zoe Foor, Christa Bickel; Alt. Delegate Syn – Todd Hesterman

APPOINTED: Secretary – Barb Bockelman; Church Deacon – Denny VonDeylen

Trustee – Dave Rohrs, Terry Norden; Cemetery Sexton – Ben Kruse

Cemetery Board – Todd Kruse (Brenda), Neil Badenhop, Randy Rosebrock

Asst. Sunday School Supt. – vacant

NOTE: The installation of our newly elected and appointed officers for the year 2017 will be conducted in the regular Sunday service on January 1st.

ASSISTANT SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPT. – With the recent elections and appointments, we are still searching for a volunteer for Assistant SS Superintendent. We will need someone beginning in January 2017. Thank you to whoever chooses to help out with this appointed position.

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 12/11/16	\$7,298.00	\$144.00	\$147.00

ATTENDANCE: Sunday (12/11/16) Service: 234

ADVENT SERVICE #2 (12-07-16): \$568.00 – Ministry Vocation Students; Attendance: 84

ADVENT SERVICE #3 (12-14-16): \$449.00 – Lutheran Braille Workers; Attendance: 82

2017 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2017 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 *Sara Myles* (419-966-1335) until Jan. 1st. After Jan. 1st, please contact *Al Damman* (419-598-8425).

FELLOWSHIP HALL LIGHTS: If you use the fellowship hall or are in the fellowship hall and walk out, please leave the light switches set in the “ON” position. Both ends of the fellowship hall light switches are motion activated, so when you walk in they will automatically come on, and when you walk out they will automatically turn off after 8 minutes. This will take some getting used to, but please do not set the switches to the “off” position. Thank you!

FELLOWSHIP HALL SET-UP CREW NEEDS YOU! The Church Council is looking for a few good people to serve on a crew that can be available as needed to set up the fellowship hall for church related events such as funeral luncheons, potlucks, special events, etc (not private events). Set up would typically take place on evenings, although there may be exceptions. If you can help, please sign up in the narthex and include your cell number (if you have one) so that we can use texting for easy communication. We would also like to identify a crew chief to take the reins and to be the primary contact person. Thank you for your help and for all you do!

**Fellowship Hall
Set-up
Crew**



FREEDOM FLOCK HELP: The Freedom Flock After School Program is looking for a few people to fill in with our after school program when there is an emergency, illness, etc. with the full time aide. You would be “on call” if we need a quick substitute. It would be for three hours or less (*depending how soon all the children are picked up*) from 3 – 6 PM. If you are interested, please contact the school office at 419-598-8702.

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 2016. Here are the individual year-to-date deposits for 2016: St. John Church - \$16,791.00; St. John School - \$2,609.00; St. John Preschool - \$91.00. A well-deserved “thank you” to Thrivent for providing these funds throughout the year.

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.

CALENDARS & MORE CALENDARS FOR 2017 – We now have 2017 calendars from Thrivent Financial and Snyder-Wesche-Hoening Funeral Home in Napoleon available for anyone to take. These calendars will be available on the narthex table and desk on a first come, first serve basis.

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 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.

SUNDAY NIGHT VOLLEYBALL & FELLOWSHIP: Every Sunday night until the end of March 2017, there will be open volleyball in the gym for anyone wishing to come and get a little exercise and enjoy some fellowship with one another. The time will be 6:00 – 8:00 PM and you can come anytime and any week that fits your schedule. Some weeks the time will fluctuate due to previously scheduled events, so if you contact Amy Dietrich at 419-966-7345 she will put you into a group text and let you know of the time each Sunday. This is nothing organized, just "pick up" teams based on whoever shows up. Hope to see you in the gym!

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

MINI EAGLE INTEREST: I would like to get Mini Eagles going again this season. The mini eagle program is designed to teach children in Grades K-2 the basics of basketball and begin to learn the fundamentals of the game. Any child in these grades can participate; however, I need a couple things to make this a success. The most important is a volunteer or two to coach the kids. I would like to see one or two of the parents coach the kids and hold a practice once per week. If we get a team together we may play other schools if they have similar programs. Otherwise we will hold practices and scrimmage during halftime at home games. Please consider helping with this program. Contact me if you have any questions. Thank you and Go Eagles! *AD Brad Rosebrook (419-966-3099)*

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

The greatest gift comes, not in a sleigh, but in a manger.

"You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:12)