



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

*Worship • Stewardship • Mission*

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Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor  
Rev. Charles Kramer, Principal

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181  
School: 419-598-8702 Cell: 567-277-1339  
Church Website: [www.sjl.org](http://www.sjl.org)

### **FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Sermon & Text: "Greater Than..." 1 John 4:4

Order of Service: *See printed Service Folder*

Hymns: 474 ~ 949 ~ 540 ~ 955 ~ 919

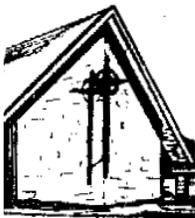
Children's Bell Choir: "It Is Well With My Soul"

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### **WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS**

*The Lord calls all of us to a new way of living under His wonderful grace in our Savior. If you are our guest this morning, it is a pleasure to have you worshipping with us. Please help us get to know who you are by introducing yourself to our pastor and by filling out the Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you. Simply pass it to the center aisle during the offering or register your name in the Guest Book in the Narthex.*

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### **SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING**

- ✠ Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✠ Taylor Dietrich & Kaelyn Gerken, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Bob & Diane Norden, *Greeters* ✠
- ✠ Linda Meyer, *Visitation* ✠
- ✠ Denny Behnfeldt, Elmer Maassel, Bob Norden, Ted Ripke, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow, *Altar Guild* ✠

### **FLOWERS TODAY:**

- ❖ The altar flowers are placed in loving memory of our daughter, sister, and best friend, *Stephanie Kossow*, who we lost 10 years ago on May 1<sup>st</sup>. As the years go by, we still miss her every day, but know she is singing her heart out in heaven. *Doug, Mary, Tyler, and Logan*
- ❖ The flowers on the piano are placed in loving memory of our son, brother, uncle, and best friend, *Ryan Rosebrock*, who went to be with the Lord on May 3, 2009. As the years go by, our hearts still yearn to see that sparkle in his eye and to hear his laughter. Prayers today for *Randy, Lou Ann, Michael, Michelle & Ben, Ryan and Lucy*

**In God's House This Week**Online church calendar: [www.DynaCal.com/sjl](http://www.DynaCal.com/sjl)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 2:30 PM	<b>Worship Service</b> Pancake & Sausage Breakfast; Sunday School; "The Lamp" <i>Love &amp; Logic Parenting Workshop (final class)</i>
Mon.	7:00 PM	VBS Staff Meeting
Tue.	8:35 AM 9:00 AM 7:00 PM	<b>Chapel led by Pastor Niermann</b> Exercise Class in gym School Board Meeting
Thurs.	9:00 AM 7:00 PM	Cancelled -- Men's Bible Breakfast Exercise Class Thursday Evening Worship
Fri.	12:30PM	Grandparents' Day for Grades K thru 8
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Worship Service Adult Bible Class; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM Speaker: <i>Rev. Eric Moquin</i> , St. John Lutheran – Sherwood

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

- ❖ Shut-Ins: *Norma Damman, Renetta Homan, and Willie Gerken*
- ❖ *Lucia Delventhal*, at Fulton Manor, Wauseon
- ❖ *Delora Winkelman, Marian Buchhop, Dorothy Gerken, and Delores Badenhop*, at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Evelyn Rohrs and Melba Elling*, in Assisted Living at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran's Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Armed Services: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Schroeder, Connor Gerken, Seth Handy*
- ❖ *Bev Elling, Seth Gerken, and Tim Swick*, recuperating at home from recent hospitalizations
- ❖ *Don Dickmann*, recuperating from double pneumonia at the Orchards at Northcrest
- ❖ *Marvin Gruenhagen*, at Henry County Hospital Swing Bed for rehab to gain strength
- ❖ *Macie Wyse*, (Great-niece to Denny & Diane Von Deylen), 2-yr old in Toledo Hospital diagnosed with leukemia this past week

**NEW ARRIVAL:** Congratulations to Micah Behnfeltdt and Haley Kina on the birth of a little girl, *Baylor Rae Behnfeltdt*, on Wed., April 25<sup>th</sup> at St. Charles Hospital, Toledo. Haley and Baylor are doing well and adjusting to their new routine. Blessings to Micah, Haley, and little Baylor!

**PANCAKE & SAUSAGE BREAKFAST TODAY** – The 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Graders are hosting a Pancake & Sausage Breakfast Fundraiser today with serving from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM. This fundraiser will help support their upcoming class trip to Washington D.C. It will be freewill! This is a Thrivent Action Team Event.

**NLSA UPDATE:** National Lutheran School Accreditation took place on Monday and Tuesday. The four person team examined school and parent relationships, academic achievement, facilities, school mission, and teachers teaching licenses.

In the exit interview on Tuesday afternoon, the accreditation team shared their findings with the school staff. They will recommend our approval to the Ohio District. Finally, the findings are forwarded to an accreditation team from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. That meeting will take place in July in St. Louis. In August, the results of the accreditation will be announced to our congregation.

<b><u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u></b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 04/22/18	\$7,530.39	\$270.00	\$352.00

**ATTENDANCE:** 203

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL STAFF MEETING IS TOMORROW!



VBS is scheduled for the mornings of June 10 to 14 (Sunday to Thursday). Our plan is as follows:

- **SUNDAY** – We'll kick off VBS with a special emphasis in the morning service, followed by the lesson and activities for Day One, and concluding with a hotdog lunch at 12:30 p.m.
- **MONDAY to THURSDAY** – VBS will begin at 9:00 a.m. with a worship opening, and conclude at 11:30 a.m.

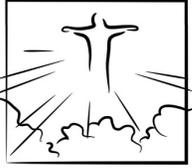
Our theme this year is, “**Splash Canyon: God’s Promise on Life’s Wild Ride.**” Each day the students and their small group guides will rotate to five sites where they will hear the Bible stories, memorize key Bible verses, make crafts, enjoy snacks, and participate in a fun activities. See the VBS table in the narthex for more information.

**VBS needs you!** Our first step is to recruit staff. Enclosed in today’s bulletin is a staff recruitment form on which you can sign up to help with various aspects of our VBS. Return forms to the VBS table in the narthex. **Our first staff meeting will be tomorrow, Monday, April 30 at 7:00 p.m.,** so please sign up to help and let’s get the journey started!

**LUTHERAN WITNESS RENEWAL** – It’s time to renew your subscription to the Lutheran Witness for the year. To subscribe or renew your subscription, **simply place \$16.00 in an envelope,** along with your name and address, and place it in the Sunday collection plate or bring it to the church office. **Deadline for subscriptions is May 15<sup>th</sup>.**

**FREE SWIVEL CHAIRS:** There are 10 black cloth swivel chairs from the School Library that are no longer needed. They are in the Ladies Aid quilting room and are marked with masking tape. If you have need of one, please stop in and take one home today.

**THURSDAY EVENING SERVICES** at St. John will begin **THIS THURSDAY** at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Please note that the next week we will not have a Thursday evening service at St. John, but will be participating in a joint Ascension Day service at Emmaus Lutheran in Wauseon (see announcement below). Once the school year is over, we will hold these evening services in the north end of the fellowship hall. Holy Communion will be available at our Thursday services on the Thursdays prior to our regular Communion Sundays. **ALSO TO BE NOTED:** With Thursday night services starting, bulletin announcements need to be turned in to the office by Wednesday of each week in order to be included in the Thursday and Sunday bulletin. Please make a note of this. Thank you!



### **FEAST OF THE ASCENSION, CIRCUIT JOINT SERVICE**

Forty days after our Lord's resurrection, He "*ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.*" (Eph. 4:10) Our Lord's ascension was not His "swan song," but the beginning of an entirely new and better way of being present with His Church.

**Ascension Day is Thursday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, the fortieth day after Easter.** On that day at 7:00 p.m. please join your circuit brothers and sisters for an Ascension Day Divine Service hosted at Emmaus Lutheran in Wauseon. **Pastor Geske at Emmaus is planning to begin the service with a balloon launch, symbolizing Christ's ascent to the heavens.** Participating congregations are Emmaus and St. Luke (Wauseon), St. Paul (Liberty Center), Zion (Ridgeville), St. John (Stryker), and St. John (Freedom Twp.). Join us for the celebration!

**WHY DO WE?** A member of the congregation has suggested a feature in our bulletin that asks and answers questions about why we do what we do in our worship and practice. This is an excellent idea that we hope will enrich everyone's worship and life of faith. A few of the questions suggested are: **Why do we turn to the cross during a processional? Why do we not sing certain hymns and songs? Why do we use Creeds? Why do we practice "closed Communion?" Why do we baptize infants?** If you have a question you'd like to see answered, please submit it using the form on the table in the narthex. Starting in May we will try to make this a regular feature of our bulletin.



**HEARING ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE:** If hearing in worship has been a problem for you, pick up one of the receiver units for our hearing assistance system. An usher will assist you and you'll hear much more clearly. (*Also, please let us know how the system is working for you.*)

For those who use the hearing assistance system regularly and for the sake of hygiene, we ask that you claim one of the ear buds as your own and keep it with you in your purse, pocket, etc. Bring it with you when you come to church, and simply plug it into one of the receivers. At the end of the service, unplug the ear bud to take with you until the next time.

**PRAYER CALENDAR NOTE:** Please be aware that if you would like your wedding anniversaries printed on the prayer calendars, you will have to post them each year. Just list them on the blank calendars posted on the bulletin board in the narthex throughout the year. Thank you!



**FORMER VICAR RECEIVES FIRST CALL** - Our former vicar, **Mr. Brent Keller**, has received his first Divine Call to become the pastor at Peace Lutheran Church in Alcester, South Dakota (located about 35 miles north of Sioux City, Iowa). We do not yet know when Brent will be ordained and installed, but will make that information available as we receive it. In the meantime, if you'd like to offer the Kellers your prayers and well wishes, you can send a note to them at their address: 10503 Lagoon Drive, Grabill, IN 46741 or you can find them on Facebook and message them there; search for Brent Keller or Hannelore Keller. They would love to hear from you!

**GOOD NEIGHBOR WORK GROUP** – For years we have had our “Good Neighbor Fund” by which we are able to financially assist people in times of need and to stock a food pantry for a monthly distribution. Your donations to the fund have been a blessing to many.

**But what about donating our time and abilities to help others?** The Stewardship Board, at its last meeting, decided this is an idea whose time has come. The idea is to provide practical help to people on an occasional basis when more than money is needed – perhaps when a neighbor is recovering from a fire or other disaster, or when a person comes to need a wheel chair ramp, or a fallen tree needs to be cleaned up, or an elderly couple's home needs to be painted. Offering help in these situations is a powerful witness of God's love, and is great stewardship of the time, talents and resources God has given to each of us for service. **We'll begin signing up people TODAY on the sign-up list in the narthex.**



**2017 CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT** are available on the desk and table in the narthex. Thanks to everyone for your information submitted to be included in this report.

**GRANDPARENT'S DAY:** A reminder that Grandparent's Day at St. John School for Grades K-8 will be held on **Friday, May 4** from 12:30 - 3:00 PM. *Lunch is not included.*

**ST. JOHN SCHOOL POSITION OPENINGS** – St. John Lutheran School is seeking a few people to fill the following positions that will be open after this school year.

- **Computer Instructor** – This individual is responsible for computer instruction one day per week for Grades K thru 8. Must have a teaching license and background check.
- **Jr High Science Teacher** for 4 hours per week. Must have a teaching license and a background check.
- **Music Instructor** – This individual is responsible for classroom music instruction one day per week for Grades K thru 8. Must have a background check.
- **Freedom Flock Aide (After School Care)** – This person is in charge of the aftercare program each day that school is in session from 3-6 p.m. It averages 10-12 hours per week. Must have a background check.

If you are interested in more information on these positions, please speak with Principal Kramer or the chairman of the School Board, Karen Gerken. Thank you!

**PRESCHOOL'S GRADUATION** will be **Tues., May 22<sup>nd</sup>** at 6:00 PM in the sanctuary. Everyone is invited to this big day for the preschoolers. There will be a program followed by light refreshments (in the fellowship hall).

**FIELD DAY OF FUN AND FELLOWSHIP!** On Friday, May 11 at 9:15 AM, we will be hosting a combined school field day with St. John – Defiance. Very similar to last year's Fun Day, St. John Defiance will organize most of the events for the day, but there are some things we will be asked to help with. A free lunch will be provided that day by St. John Freedom. We would like to have several St. John parents volunteer to help with this combined school field day on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

**SPRING PENNY CHALLENGE** – The PTL Spring Penny Drive has been transformed into the **SPRING PENNY CHALLENGE**. This will run from April 30<sup>th</sup> thru Fri., May 11<sup>th</sup>. That's only 2 weeks and its pennies only, but you can sabotage the other classrooms with silver coins. There are yellow flyers explaining the rules on the narthex table if you want to jump on board. The winning classroom collecting the most points will be treated to a pizza party AND an ice cream party. Save those pennies and give them to one of our students or turn your pennies in at the school office. We hope many of you can support the PTL with this fundraiser. Game On!

**WHY NOT CONSIDER ST. JOHN?** Saint John Lutheran School offers preschool to 8th grade Lutheran education. Students are taught the Word of God. In addition all the other subjects are taught. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of athletics. Bus transportation is available to students in all the local school districts. If you have any questions about enrollment or would like a tour of the school please call the church office for an appointment.

**ST. JOHN SCRIP CONTINUES:** Please turn those 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](mailto:honemann@embarqmail.com).**

**SAVE THE DATE:** Plans are in motion for the “Soar with the Eagles” school fundraiser to be held at the Ridgeville American Legion Hall on Fri., Nov. 9, 2018. There will be a meal, along with live and silent auctions. The format will be the same as last year's event. Stay tuned for more info.

**IF YOU'RE EVER IN A PINCH** and could use a little help, the *Good Neighbor Fund* is there to assist you too! Please don't be bashful about asking – everything is strictly confidential. Just give Pastor Niermann a call, and we'll see what we can do!

**WOMEN OF FREEDOM SCHOLARSHIPS:** Here is another opportunity to encourage and help young people prepare for service to the church as pastors, teachers, lay workers, deaconesses, and parish workers. \$500 per year Women of Freedom Scholarships are available to any young person attending one of our synodical schools. Simply contact any Women of Freedom member for more details about this.

## STAINED GLASS WINDOW UPDATE

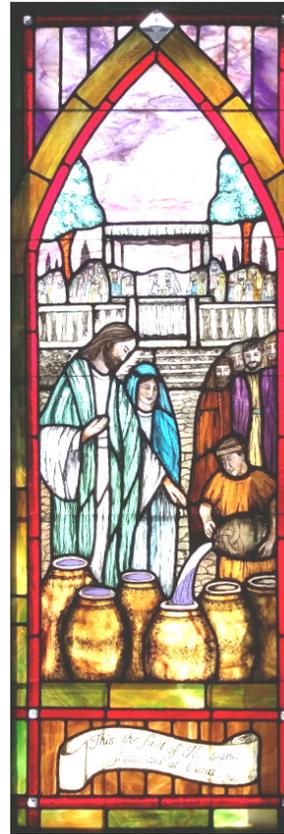
### WINDOW FOUR – “This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana.” (John 2:11)

St. John, in his Gospel account, emphasizes the true divinity of Christ - that Jesus is truly God. One of the ways he gets this message across is by telling us of Jesus’ miracles, or “signs,” as John likes to call them. Signs are not meant to draw attention to themselves, but to point us to greater truths. Each of the seven “signs” in John’s Gospel teach us something of vital importance about Jesus’ identity and mission.

The first “sign” that Jesus performed was at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. In this window we see the wedding guests celebrating in the background, unaware of the miracle that is happening nearby. The wine had run out, but Jesus provides abundantly by changing water into wine. At “ground zero” of this miracle, on the pot used for pouring, we see the symbol of the Holy Trinity, for this miracle can only be the work of God. St. John says that by this “sign,” Jesus “manifested His glory,” (2:11) depicted as a subtle glow around Jesus’ head. This manifestation of Jesus’ divine glory resulted in His disciples believing in Him. Thus the “sign” fulfills its purpose, pointing them and us to Jesus as “very God of very God,” and calling forth faith.

In Scripture, wine is often a symbol of God’s gift of joy. The abundance of wine that Jesus provided reveals Him to be the ultimate giver of joy. That joy is evident on the face of those witnessing this miracle, and it will soon spread to all who come to know the joy of their salvation through Christ, God’s incarnate Word!

**USE OF OLD GLASS** – This window is the first to use some of the glass recovered from the old sanctuary windows; the greens (Jesus’ robe and the trees), and the beiges (the background floor, steps and pillars, as well as the pot used for pouring).



**INTERESTED IN A CHURCH PROFESSION? WE’D LIKE TO HELP!** Recently a number of young people from St. John have pursued educational goals to prepare them for full-time service as teachers and pastors. If you are interested in a church profession (*such as a pastor, deaconess, teacher, lay minister, a Director of Christian Education, etc.*), our congregation would like to support you by offering a tuition gift. An application is available online at [www.sjl.org/student\\_gift\\_app.pdf](http://www.sjl.org/student_gift_app.pdf). There is no link. Deadline for fall enrollment is June 1<sup>st</sup>.

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#### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT...**

**Even with life’s eclipses, you always have the Son.**

*“The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” (Matt 4:16)*