



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

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Waiting for God in the Manger"

Order of Service: See printed Service Folder

Hymns: 355 ~ 350 ~ 348

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 blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and drop it in the basket at the table in the narthex as you leave today.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

✂ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✂

✂ Doug Dietrich, Neil Badenhop, Tom Von Deylen, Joe Badenhop, *Ushers* ✂

✂ Pat Maassel, Anita Badenhop, Kathy Behnfeldt, Deb Durham, *Altar Guild* ✂

MEN'S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY – Join us bright and early this Thursday morning at 6:30 AM in the north fellowship hall for devotion and prayer, and for discussion of some of the upcoming Scripture readings for our Advent worship services. Please join us as we fill up on our fellowship in Christ, the study of His Word, and some very good breakfast food!

Bible Study



COVID-19 MEASURES – The two most important things we can do to prevent the spread of viruses are 1) social distancing, and 2) wearing a mask when entering and exiting the building, and when singing or speaking. Masks can be removed during longer periods of listening, such as Scripture readings, sermon, prayers, etc.

In God's House This WeekOnline church calendar: <https://74058984.view-events.com>

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Worship Service Adult Bible Study
Mon.	8:20 AM	Classes resume
Tues.	8:35 AM 5:00 PM 5:30 PM 7:00 PM	School Chapel B-ball: Gr. 7&8 Girls; 6:00 PM Gr. 7&8 boys vs. BG Christian School Board Meeting Stewardship Board Meeting
Wed.	6:15 PM	Junior High Confirmation Class (<i>until 7:30 PM</i>)
Thurs.	6:30 AM 7:00 PM	Men's Bible Breakfast in fellowship hall Advent 1 Worship Service Offering: <i>Shepherd's Canyon Retreat Center</i> Ushers: <i>Dave Myles, Tim Badenhop, Denny Bockelman</i> Altar Guild: <i>Pat Maassel, Anita Badenhop, Kathy Behnfeldt, Deb Durham</i>
Sat.	10:00AM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 11:00 AM Gr. 4-6 Boys; 12:00 PM Gr. 7&8 Girls; 1:00 PM Gr. 7&8 boys @ Trinity – Toledo
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Communion Service Voters' Meeting (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Mon.- Sat.	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM

FOR THOSE LISTENING FROM THE PARKING LOT**Pick up your bulletin and service by driving through the carport before worship****You can give your offering to the deacon at the same time****Tune your FM radio to 87.7****MATTERS FOR PRAYER** – Please keep these people in your prayers:

- ❖ Shut-Ins: *Norma Damman, Renetta Homan, and Lester Rabe*
- ❖ *Melba Elling, Lorna Von Deylen, and Ruth Mahnke*, at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Evelyn Rohrs*, at Assisted Living – Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Harold Behrmann*, at Fulton Manor, Wauseon
- ❖ *Donald Badenhop*, at Vancrest Nursing Care Facility, Holgate
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran's Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Armed Services: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Schroeder, Connor Gerken, Seth Handy, Jared Dishop*
- ❖ *Sue Hurst, Rev. Logan Scheiwe, Bev Nelson, and Peter Gerken*, for health issues related to cancer
- ❖ *Annetta Rosebrock*, recuperating at home now after a brief stay at Northcrest Nursing & Rehab
- ❖ *Marian Dickmann*, at Henry County Hospital recuperating after hip surgery
- ❖ *Crew and Elliot Gerken*, born prematurely and in the NICU at Riverside Hospital, Columbus
- ❖ *Pastor Larry Yaw and Family*, all testing positive for Covid recently. May God protect them thru these trying times.
- ❖ *Arlene Wallace*, recuperating and rehabbing at Fairlawn Nursing & Rehab - Archbold

BIBLE STUDY TODAY POLITICS IS DRIVING ME CRAZY!

Whew, what a week it has been! Did your candidate win? Or lose? How are you feeling about the outcome of the elections? And how do we, as Christians and as the church, deal with whatever new political realities we may be facing as a consequence of the elections?



How should a Christian view politics? How do we respond to the present political climate? How can a Christian find hope even when he or she is overwhelmed with the thought, **“Politics is driving me crazy!”**? This Bible study offers a note of hope as it reminds us that God has absolute rule over all things. Join us TODAY after worship for a cup of ‘Joe,’ and God’s Word!

VOTERS’ MEETING will be Sunday, December 6 after the Worship Service, and will be held in the Fellowship Hall. On the agenda as of today is: 1) *Election of Officers*; 3) *Approval of 2021 Budget*.

God in the Manger - Advent 2020

This year’s advent theme, for both the Thursday and Sunday services, is: **“God in the Manger.”** It is the greatest mystery of our faith that the infinite God would come down and occupy the finite space of a baby’s body, laid in a manger. The wonder of it!

Please note that because of changes due to the Covid pandemic, we will not have the traditional Wednesday evening Advent services this year. Instead, we will continue with the Sunday and Thursday schedule. Here is our schedule for the year...

Date:	Theme:	Offering:
Nov 29 & Dec 3	“Waiting for God in the Manger”	Shepherd’s Canyon Retreat
Dec 6 & 10	“The Mystery of God in the Manger”	Church Vocation Students
Dec 13 & 17	“The Redemption of God in the Manger”	National Youth Gathering



ADVENT DOOR OFFERINGS – During the season of Advent, we will receive a door offering at each service in lieu of the special offerings we would usually receive at the special Wednesday Advent services. **It has long been our custom at St. John to use the special offerings of Advent and Lent to support various missions and benevolences**, and we didn’t want to drop that tradition this year because of Covid-19. These special offerings, along with your “Rite of Fellowship” card, may be deposited into the baskets at each sanctuary door. (*Regular offerings will be received as always in the offering plates on the table in the narthex.*)

NEXT STAINED GLASS WINDOW TO BE INSTALLED - If everything stays on schedule, the next stained glass window is slated to be installed later this week. This beautiful window is based on John 11 and the raising of Lazarus from the dead. We are thankful to God that Sue Hurst, in the midst of her cancer battle, is able to persevere and to express her faith and ours in this beautiful medium of glass, lead and paint.

CHRISTMAS CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2020 – UPDATE!!!

THE PLAN --- This year, due to Covid, we are planning a very special and very different kind of children's Christmas service.

- **Speaking parts will be assigned this week.**
 - ~ Families of public school students should have been contacted by phone to confirm their children's participation. Call us Monday if you haven't been contacted yet.
 - ~ SJLS students will be asked this week to confirm their participation in this service
- **Scripts will be distributed.**
 - ~ Public school students will receive their script pages via email
 - ~ SJLS students will receive their script pages in school
- **We will video record all the children's spoken parts.**
 - ~ Public School Student will record on Saturday morning, Dec. 12 at 10:00 a.m.
 - ~ SJLS students will record during a school day

THE SERVICE --- The Children's Christmas Service will be on **Sunday morning, Dec. 20**. During this service the congregation's children will tell us the wondrous Christmas story via their video snippets. The congregation will round out the service with the singing of the hymns and carols of Christmas.

WOMEN OF FREEDOM & COVID: It has been decided by the officers of the Women of Freedom to suspend the monthly meetings of the group until such time as Covid-19 becomes less of a health issue for our members. An announcement will be made at church and in the bulletin at such time as meetings will again be started up. Please contact *Karan Niebergall* or *Nancy Hogrefe* with any questions or concerns. Thank you!

LIST OF 2021 CHURCH OFFICE NOMINATIONS: (as of the printing of this bulletin)

ELECTED: Vice Pres. – *Jerry Short*; Treasurer – *Cathy Gerken**

Financial Trustee – *Pat Mahnke*; Elder – *Dave Von Deylen*, **vacant**

Stewardship Board – *Char Weber*, *Kelly (Dietrich) Sonnenberg*

Board of Education – *Eric Riefers*, *Kara (Sausser) Cowell*, *Blake Miller*

Alt. Delegate Synod – *Peter Gerken**

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

Trustee – *Brad Rosebrock (Sarah)*, *David Badenhop*; Cemetery Sexton – *Ben Kruse**

Cemetery Board – *Lucas Damman*, *Joe Hesterman*, **vacant**

Asst. Sunday School Supt. – *Tracy Weber*

NOTE: The * indicates current office holder. As you can see, there are still ballot spots that need filled, so please consider serving and contact *Pastor Niermann* or the church office. Installation of newly elected or appointed officers for 2021 will be conducted in the Jan. 3rd Sunday Service.

CHRISTMAS CARDS: Check out the table in the hallway by the cry room! The Women of Freedom have put out boxes of Christmas Cards for sale. The dish cloths are also available. Contact *Mabel Bischoff*, *Lois Rosebrock*, or *Karan Niebergall*.

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA – Looking for a Christmas gift idea? The Women of Freedom have beautiful Rada Cutlery available (*knives, servers, pizza cutters, vegetable peelers, etc*). These items are not on display for safety reasons. Contact any of the following: *Mabel Bischoff, Nancy Hogrefe, or Karan Niebergall* if you would like to see or purchase any of these items.

USHER, AND ALTAR GUILD SIGN-UP – We are preparing the 2021 usher, and altar guild schedules so this is the time to sign-up at the table in the narthex. 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 team? A few people have dropped out over the past year and so we ask you to consider signing up for one of these teams. The sign-up deadline is Sunday, Dec. 13th. *You do not need to sign up again if you are currently serving as an usher or are on an altar guild team.*

Due to Covid, we will be suspending the Greeter sign-up for 2021. Thank you all for your service as a greeter in the past.

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 11/22/20	\$13,956.00	\$230.00	\$375.00

ATTENDANCE: Thursday – 26; Sunday – 76

2021 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 *Mary Kossow*, Finance Trustee.

REDEDICATION OF THE “NEW” OLD SCHOOL DELAYED: The Church Council voted to delay the rededication of our new ministry facility in the old school building to allow more time for the congregation to have input on the naming of the building. Our plans are to continue receiving suggested names through December. The Council will narrow the list and then present the options at the January Voters' Meeting for a vote.

So please turn in your suggestions for the naming of this wonderful new facility!

THREE WAYS TO GIVE AN OFFERING

- Deposit your offering in the narthex when you come to worship, or if you're listening to the FM broadcast, give your offering to the usher or deacon when they hand you your bulletin.
- Use the 'Give Now' online giving page – a link (the blue button) is on our website.
- Mail your offering to the church.

DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS: The School Board would like to ask for volunteers to help decorate the sanctuary this year. They will be putting up decorations on Tues., Dec. 1st at 5:30 PM, prior to their School Board meeting. Please consider giving an hour or two of your time to help.

OPTIONS FOR HOLY COMMUNION DURING COVID - During this time of pandemic, we are making Holy Communion available in the following ways:

- **Thursday evening Communion services** prior to first and third Sundays
- **First and Third Sundays each month** – in the Sanctuary, and drive-thru after the service
- **Second Sundays** – after the service in the sanctuary



Please note – Drive-thru Communion is on the first and third Sundays for those who have participated in the Divine Service from the parking lot.

COUNCIL MINUTES – This is just a reminder that council meeting minutes are not published until they are approved a month later. If you would like to read about the most recent council meeting, an unofficial and unapproved copy of the minutes is available for viewing in the church office, usually within a week after the meeting.

UPDATED SCRIP ORDER FORM: After a few years and now with Covid-19, the SCRIP order form had to be revised. Updated forms (green) are available on the narthex table. So start your Christmas shopping early! Scrip orders are received on Wednesdays, ordered on Fridays and delivered on the following Tuesday. Please feel free to share with family and friends. Payment must accompany orders. **Any questions about SCRIP can be directed to the SCRIP Coordinator Kristyn Honemann at 419-966-0207 or email at honemann@embarqmail.com.**

SPORTS SCHEDULE NOTE: With *Brad Rosebrook* as our Athletic Director, please go to the “Calendar” icon in Fast Direct frequently as this is where he will post the sports schedules and any changes to the sports schedules. Keep in mind that in order to view the games for the basketball season, you can go to either FastDirect directly (*thru the school*) or you can enter the church’s website (*www.sjl.org*), click on “School” at the top of page, click on “FastDirect School Info. System” on the left side of page, click on “BulletinBoard/Calendar” on the left side of page, and then scroll down to Brad Rosebrook, Athletic Director and click on **his** “Calendar”.

IT’S CHRISTMAS CHEER TIME AGAIN! – Henry County Christmas Cheer is beginning its annual campaign for **monetary donations ONLY** for the purchase of food for low income and needy persons in Henry County. Due to the Covid pandemic, the Christmas Cheer program will be different this year. We will NOT be collecting any items from schools, churches or individuals. **Only monetary donations will be accepted.** These donations will be used for the purchase of **only** food products this year. The campaign runs from now through December 10th. Make checks payable to: *Henry County Christmas Cheer*, and send it to Henry County Christmas Cheer, c/o LeRoy Helberg, Q610 County Road 19, Napoleon, OH 43545. Thank you for your donation in 2020.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

Jesus is the missing peace.

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” (Colossians 3:15)