



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 6, 2020

VOL. 85

NO. 49

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

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "The Mystery of God in the Manger"

Order of Service: See printed Service Folder

Hymns: 624 ~ 621 [Communion: 347, 352] ~ 359

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 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

✠ Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✠

✠ Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling, Dave Von Deylen, Dennis Showman, *Ushers* ✠

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

ADULT SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY has been canceled until further notice. We will reevaluate in January to see if it's feasible for us to begin meeting again.

VOTERS' MEETING is today after the Worship Service. On the agenda is: 1) *Election of Officers*; 3) *Approval of 2021 Budget*.

THANKSGIVING THANK YOU – Thank you to everyone who brought food items to our Thanksgiving Eve service to help supply our ***Bread From Heaven Food Pantry***. Your kind generosity will be a blessing to many families. And while we're at it, thank you to everyone who supports our congregation's ministries of mercy throughout the year by your gifts to the ***Good Neighbor Fund***. By means of this fund we are able to help people in various needs, as well as stock our food pantry for monthly distributions.

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Communion Service Voters' Meeting (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Tues.	8:35 AM 7:00 PM	School Chapel Church Council Meeting
Wed.	6:15 PM	Junior High Confirmation Class (<i>until 7:30 PM</i>)
Thurs.	7:00 PM	Advent 2 and Thursday Evening Worship Service Offering: <i>Church Vocation Students</i> Ushers: <i>Doug Dietrich, Joe Badenhop, Neil Badenhop, Tom Von Deylen</i> Altar Guild: <i>Pat Maassel, Anita Badenhop, Kathy Behnfeldt, Deb Durham</i>
Sun.	9:00 AM 1:00 PM	Worship Service w/Communion following B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 2:00 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys; 3:00 PM Gr. 7&8 Girls; 4:00 PM Gr. 7&8 boys vs St. Paul – Napoleon
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****Drive-thru Communion after worship under carport****MATTERS FOR PRAYER** – Please keep these people in your prayers:

- ❖ Shut-Ins: *Norma Damman, Renetta Homan, and Annetta Rosebrock*
- ❖ *Melba Elling and Lorna Von Deylen*, at Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Evelyn Rohrs and Ruth Mahnke*, at Assisted Living – Genacross Lutheran Home
- ❖ *Harold Behrmann*, at Fulton Manor, Wauseon
- ❖ *Donald Badenhop and Elmer Badenhop*, at Vancrest Nursing Care Facility, Holgate
- ❖ *Arlene Wallace*, recuperating at Fairlawn Haven – Archbold
- ❖ *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
- ❖ *Marian Dickmann*, recuperating at her son and daughter-in-law's, Steve & Dawn Dickmann
- ❖ *Crew and Elliot Gerken*, born prematurely and in the NICU at Riverside Hospital, Columbus
- ❖ *Lester Rabe*, hospitalized at Fulton County Health Center this past week
- ❖ *Sharon Badenhop*, hospitalized this past week for testing

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.

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 – This week's offering: CHURCH VOCATION STUDENTS

During the season of Advent, we will receive a door offering at each service in lieu of the special offerings we would normally 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 that tradition to become another casualty of Covid-19. These special offerings may be deposited into the special box located in the narthex, wrapped in poinsettia paper and with a sign. (*Regular offerings will be received in the offering plates at the narthex table.*)

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE 2020 – UPDATE!!!

THE PLAN --- This year, due to Covid, we are planning a very special and different kind of children's Christmas service. The children will not lead our worship in person, but through videos of their spoken parts.

- **Speaking parts have been assigned and distributed.**
- **Parents, please help your children practice their parts at home** so they are ready to record when that time comes.
- **We will video record all the children's spoken parts.** (*Please note that we plan to use the children's videos in the sanctuary and then to post it on our YouTube channel.*)
 - ~ **Public School Students** 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. 20th at 9:00 AM.** 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. **It's a different kind of service in a very different kind of year, but it promises to be a wonderful retelling of the birth of our Lord and Savior.**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE – HELP WITH SANCTUARY TECHNOLOGY

- **Have you got a ‘knack’ for technology? Have you ever considered that ‘knack’ to be a gift of God that can be used in service to Him and His people?** We could use some help in worship with the sound board and with video recordings and uploading.
- And while we’re at it, **we could also use some volunteers to help as “slide clickers” to advance worship slides during services.** This task does not require any technical skills, just the ability to press a button on a remote control.

Please think and pray about it, and get the word out, and we’ll begin signing up people soon, and will then provide training. These are wonderful ways to serve!

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, Mike Maassel*

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 – *Denny Von Deylen*

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.

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 11/29/20	\$19,135.00	\$120.00	\$405.00

ATTENDANCE: Thursday – N/A; Sunday – 71

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE: \$963.00 – Henry Co Christmas Cheer; Attendance: 75

2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES – With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2021 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 *Mary Kossow* (419-599-0011) until Jan. 1st. After Jan. 1st, please contact *Jerry Langenhop* (419-598-8151).

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.

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.

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.

ADVENT DEVOTIONS FROM L.H.M. – Lutheran Hour Ministries has made available their 2020 Advent Devotions, on the theme, "God with Us." To access these devotions, go to www.lhm.org/advent. A handful of print copies are also available on the narthex table today. Light an Advent Wreath at home and make these devotions part of your daily household routine!

COUNCIL MINUTES – 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/unapproved copy of the minutes is available for viewing in the church office, usually within a week after the meeting.

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!

LIONS RECYCLE FOR SIGHT – *How You Can Help?* If you have used **prescription or nonprescription** glasses or sunglasses in your drawers, desks, or closets, you can donate them now! Children's glasses are especially needed. Both plastic and metal frames are accepted. There is a box on the table in the narthex for the collection of these used glasses.

SCRIP: After a few years and now with Covid-19, the SCRIP order form has been revised. Updated forms (green) are available on the narthex table. So start your Christmas shopping! 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.

RIDGEVILLE LEGION BLOOD DRIVE will be held tomorrow, Dec. 7th from noon – 6:00 PM at the Legion Hall. Call 800-733-2767 to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are also welcome!

✘ ✘ ✘

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

Everything in this world is tainted; 'taint yours and 'taint mine --- 'tis the Lord's!

“The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” (Psa 24:1)