



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

*Worship • Stewardship • Mission*

February 14, 2021

VOL. 86 NO. 7  
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Rev. Charles Kramer, Principal School: 419-598-8702 Cell: 567-277-1339  
Church Website: [www.sjl.org](http://www.sjl.org)

### LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY (Transfiguration)

Order of Service: See printed Service Folder

Hymns: 414 ~ 706 ~ 413 ~ 415 ~ 417

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### WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

*We invite you to celebrate God's love as we pray to a Heavenly Father who cares for us, and as we hear His powerful Word to us. If you do not have a local church home, we extend a warm invitation to you to become a part of our church family. Please fill out the Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and drop it in the basket in the narthex as you leave.*

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

- ✠ Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✠
- ✠ Tim Badenhop, Dave Myles, Denny Bockelman, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Karen Lulfs, Kaylee Buchhop, Ronda Wentworth, Karan Niebergall, *Altar Guild* ✠

**VOTERS' MEETING** is next **Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup>** after the worship service in the sanctuary (so that Sunday School can gather in the fellowship hall). On the agenda will be: 1) Report on the St. John Endowment fund and requested uses; 2) Annual School Report; 3) Audit Committee Report; 4) Naming the Youth Center; 5) Stained Glass Project and add'l funding needed.

**NO THURSDAY SERVICE THIS WEEK** – Because Wednesday this week is Ash Wednesday, ***there will be no worship service on Thursday of this week.*** For the remaining weeks of Lent, we will however conduct our midweek Lenten services on Thursday evenings instead of Wednesdays.

**THANK YOU** to *Larry Mahnke* and *Dean Maassel* for their efforts this winter in keeping the church and school parking lot cleared of snow. They donate their time and equipment to get this job done after each snowfall. This year's snowfall is picking up quite a bit, but even with that, they are here bright and early clearing the lot. Great job guys! Thank you for your service!

<b>In God's House This Week</b>		<i>Online church calendar: <a href="https://74058984.view-events.com">https://74058984.view-events.com</a></i>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Today	<b>9:00AM</b>	<b>Worship Service</b> w/Communion following
Mon.		<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – President's Day
Tue.	5:00 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Boys vs Patrick Henry 6 <sup>th</sup> Graders
Wed.	<b>8:35 AM</b> 5:45 PM <b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>School Chapel – Ash Wednesday Service</b> Midweek Confirmation Class <b>Ash Wednesday Service</b>
Thurs.	6:30 AM	Men's Lenten Bible Study Breakfast ( <i>see bulletin note</i> )
Fri.	6:30 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Boys @ Tinora
Sun.	<b>9:00 AM</b> 10:20AM 10:30AM	<b>Communion Service</b> Sunday School begins for Preschool thru High School age students 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: *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*, at Vancrest Nursing Care Facility, Holgate
- ❖ *Donald Landry*, residing at the Ohio Veteran's Home, Sandusky
- ❖ Armed Services: *Justin Atkinson*, *Jason Rohrs*, *Emily Schroeder*, and *Jared Dishop*
- ❖ *Sue Hurst*, *Rev. Logan Scheiwe*, *Sharon Badenhop*, *Phyllis Silveus*, and *Eileen Fitzenreiter*, for cancer issues
- ❖ *Crew Gerken*, born prematurely and in the NICU at Riverside Hospital, Columbus
- ❖ *Clara Meyer* and *Rev. Robert Nemoier*, are now home and recuperating
- ❖ *Norma Damman*, recuperating at Genacross Lutheran Home after a recent fall
- ❖ *Florence Jones' daughter, Patty Badenhop*, diagnosed with cancer recently

**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.

**THANKS FOR YOUR THOUGHTFULNESS:** Peter Gerken would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, and well-wishes during his recent cancer surgery. He is doing well and feeling stronger each day. Please continue your prayers as he continues on the road to recovery.

# Lent Midweek 2021

“Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster” (Joel 2:13). God’s invitation and promise finds its fullness in Jesus Christ, who personified and accomplishes all that God declares. Follow different events during the Passion, specifically focusing on the people that followed Christ, to see how God calls His people to return to Him this Lenten season.



## WEEKLY THEME

- **Ash Wednesday: Call to Return**
- Lent 2: Return to Prayer
- Lent 3: Return from Betrayal
- Lent 4: Return from False Witness
- Lent 5: Return from Denial
- Lent 6: Return from the Kingdom of God
- Maundy Thursday: Return to the Table
- Good Friday: Return to the Church
- Easter Sunrise: Return and See

## OFFERING DESIGNATIONS

**St. John Church Vocation Students**  
Good Shepherd Lutheran for the Deaf  
Filling Home of Mercy, Napoleon  
National Youth Gathering  
Lutheran Hour Broadcast  
Worship Anew TV program  
Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty  
Home Fund  
Home Fund

**Ash Wednesday is Feb. 17 ♦ Worship at 7:00 p.m.**

*Due to Covid, there will be no imposition of ashes this year*

**Thereafter, our Lenten Midweek services  
will be on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m.**



**MEN'S LENTEN BIBLE BREAKFAST** – Each Thursday during Lent the men are invited to join us for a breakfast Bible study at 6:30 a.m. We gather in the fellowship hall for one hour, which should give you give time to get on your way with whatever your day may hold. It's a great way to commemorate Lent, to enjoy fellowship, to grow in God's Word, and to enjoy a really good breakfast! **Please join us!**

**WOMEN'S LENTEN BIBLE STUDY:** “Be Thou my Guide” is the topic for the Women's Lenten Bible Study this year. We will be meeting on Thursday mornings at 10:00 AM in the Conference Room. The first Lenten Bible Study will begin on Thurs., February 25<sup>th</sup>. Women interested can call or email Lois Rosebrock at 419-598-8248 or [rosebro1137@gmail.com](mailto:rosebro1137@gmail.com). Masks will be required when entering and leaving the building.

**2020 END OF YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS** – The 2020 individual offering totals (green sheets) are available on the narthex table. These will also be printed in the Church Annual Report. We hope this helps those members in need of this information for tax purposes. If you have any questions on your yearly contribution information, please call past Financial Trustee, *Mary Kossow* at 419-599-0011.

# Countdown to Sunday School

Because of Covid-19 it's been a long time since the children and adults of St. John have gathered on a regular basis for Sunday morning Christian education. **However, plans are in place to resume both Sunday School and Adult Bible Study in February.**



- **NEXT SUNDAY IS SUNDAY SCHOOL!** We will kick off Sunday School on **Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup>** in the fellowship hall with a **JUNIOR JAVA JOY for the returning students**. There will be snacks and drinks, all commercially packaged for safety. As in the schools, students will wear masks and maintain social distancing. We will begin the session with a combined opening during which we will begin practicing a song or hymn for worship later on. We will then split into two groups, grades K-3 and 4-6 for our first lesson on the Creation.
- **NEXT SUNDAY 'THE LAMP' YOUTH BIBLE CLASS RESUMES!** The youth will gather again for a Sunday study. We will be blessed to gather in our new youth facility across the road. Join us, and invite a friend!
- **TWO WEEKS TO ADULT BIBLE CLASS!** Because of the Voters' Meeting next Sunday, this class will resume the following **Sunday on February 28<sup>th</sup>**. We will meet in the sanctuary for the time being. Our new study is titled, **"PROVOKING PROVERBS."** If you learned a proverb from your parents, such as, "A stitch in time saves nine," and still remember it, you understand the power of a proverb to stick in the mind and to impact our lives. The Bible **PROVERBS** are the same – pithy, memorable and often fun little sayings of wisdom that we can apply to our walk with Christ. We'll find all kinds of Proverbs to help us keep God's commands and to take "every thought captive" to Christ, (2 Cor. 10:5) like this proverb: "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." (4:23)

**A Lenten FAST from something that distracts you from God is a great spiritual exercise, but a Lenten FEAST on the Word of God is another great way to commemorate Lent.** Your life of faith will definitely be enriched in Sunday School and Bible study. **JOIN US, PLEASE!**

**2020 CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT** – It's time to start getting ready for the 2020 Annual Report. The various organization secretaries are asked to write up a summary of the year's activities and the treasurers of the different organizations are asked to submit their yearly financial report. **Please turn your reports in to Joyce Wiechers by Sun., Feb. 28.**

Also, if you've moved, eliminated your landline phone, or have a new phone number, contact the church office or make a note of it on a *Rite of Fellowship Card* and drop it in one of the baskets in the narthex to help us keep our records as up-to-date as possible.

**LWML NOTE:** The LWML Zone President is asking for donations of washable markers (10 count) and coloring books to be taken to the National Convention from the Ohio LWML District. One of the service events at the Convention is to pack school kits. The coloring books are for younger children. Anyone wishing to donate items may place them in the designated collection container that will be placed in the narthex. Thank you.

**PRAYER & ACTIVITY CALENDARS – FEBRUARY:** Due to the harsh weather over the past few Sundays, we are making the February Prayer and Activity calendars available on the narthex table this morning. Please stop by and pick them up for yourself or other members you think would like them. Thanks!

<b><u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u></b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 02/07/21	\$10,195.00	\$665.00	\$445.00
ATTENDANCE:	Thursday – cancelled/weather;	Sunday – 107	

### **THREE WAYS TO GIVE YOUR REGULAR 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.



**VBS PLANNING TO BEGIN** – Yes, it's time to start thinking about *Vacation Bible School* for this year. VBS has been tentatively scheduled for June 7-11. The first order of business is to identify and **VBS DIRECTOR** to help lead the way in this ministry to our children. If you would be interested in serving the little ones in this way, please speak with Pastor Niermann.

**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!

### **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!

**ST. JOHN SCRIP CONTINUES:** You may begin ordering SCRIP. Order forms are available on the narthex table and also in the "School Info" rack outside the office. 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.**

## **BE AN AMBASSADOR FOR LUTHERAN HOUR**

**MINISTRY (LHM)** – LHM would like to have an ambassador in each congregation. The task is simple and rewarding for both the ambassador and the congregation. It involves...

- ...reading a monthly email about new product and program information, and sharing the information with the congregation;
- ...participation in an annual virtual training event from wherever you are;
- ...possibly leading congregational activities such as book clubs, “Gospel Adventure Groups,” Bible studies, etc.



When you sign up to become an Ambassador, you will receive a welcome package with some unique gifts to help keep you connected to LHM. Please speak with Pastor Niermann if you are interested.

**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



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

**HOLY COMMUNION** will be offered this morning following the Worship service. Those who wish to attend should fill out a Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in church and drop it in the baskets in the narthex. Return immediately to the front pews in the sanctuary following the service.

**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.

**PTL COOKBOOKS** – The “Recipes and Remembrances” cookbooks from PTL are still available for purchase. They have a very nice collection of great recipes in them and would make a neat gift for that “hard to buy” family member or friend. This is a PTL fundraiser and the cookbooks are available in the school office. The cost is \$10.00. If writing a check, please make it payable to: *St. John PTL*. We hope you enjoy it! Thank you for supporting the PTL!

**“RECOLLECTION OF GERALD” HISTORY BOOKS** – If at any time during the year you need a gift for a current or former member of St. John, why not consider this history book about the development of Gerald? This book is full of interesting facts about Gerald, Freedom Township, and St. John Church. Copies available in the office for \$10.

**STAMP COLLECTING:** The LWML is collecting “Stamps For Missions.” Here is what you do: Cut the stamps from the envelopes allowing ¼ inch margin or more around the stamp. The stamp may not be damaged and the perforations around the stamp must be perfect. Regular stamps are no longer accepted. You need not trim the stamp; we have someone who trims and sorts the stamps. Do not remove stamps from envelopes, albums, and older postcards. An “old” postcard is usually from 1930 or before. The most valuable stamps are commemorative and foreign. Collecting stamps is an easy way to participate in a mission project sponsored by the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. A yellow box is on the table in the narthex.

**EAGLE NEWS:** The Eagle News is available on the narthex table today and is available online via FastDirect Communication. Just go to <http://www.fastdir.com/stjohnsfreedom/>, click on “Links” at the top of the page, then click on “Eagle News – February” in the “Everybody” column. Extra copies are also in the “School Info” rack outside the office.

**PRESCHOOL:**

- **ENROLLMENT FOR PRESCHOOL:** The St. John Lutheran Preschool is now accepting enrollment applications for 2021-22 school year. Anyone interested in enrolling your child in our preschool program should contact the school office at 419-598-8702 to request an enrollment packet. We have opened the registration up to the public as of Feb. 2, 2021. There is a non-refundable \$30 registration fee that must accompany your registration.
- **TUITION** – Here are the School Board approved rates for the 2021-2022 school year:  
3-yr old Preschool - \$80/month; 4/5-yr old Preschool - \$210/month.

**ALTAR FLOWERS:** For anyone wishing to place flowers on the altar or piano for a certain Sunday worship, please sign up on the “Flower Calendar” posted in the narthex. Then about two weeks before that date, please contact *Mabel Bischoff* at 419-598-8757. **NOTE:** **The price for flowers through the Women of Freedom is now \$21.00.** Please make checks payable to Women of Freedom. Remember that it is your responsibility to call Mabel either way; if you would like the Women of Freedom to order the flowers or if you are going to take care of ordering the flowers yourself. This will alleviate any confusion.

**LIONS RECYCLE FOR SIGHT** – 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. There is a box under the table in the narthex for the collection of these used glasses.

**BAKED STEAK DINNER:** The Ridgeville American Legion is hosting a **Drive-thru Baked Steak Dinner today with serving from 11:00 AM until sold out.** This will be at the Legion Hall on County Road 19. The cost is \$10. Hope to see you there!

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT...**

**Don't twist God's Word to fit your life; twist your life to fit God's word!**

*“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions.” (2 Tim 4:3)*



## *Valentine's Day Devotion*

***“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”***

***Micah 6:8***

This year, Americans are expected to spend \$18.2 billion on Valentine's Day. The five most common items purchased on this day are a box of chocolates, diamond earrings, a dozen roses, dinner for two, and a bottle of champagne. Approximately 180 million cards will be exchanged. An estimated 14% of women will send flowers to themselves! All of this will be done in honor of St. Valentine.

The history of Valentine's Day – and the story of St. Valentine – is murky. There were at least three different saints named Valentine, all of whom were martyred. One legend says that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers, and he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death. Other stories suggest that Valentine might have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons, where they were often beaten and punished. According to one legend, while Valentine was imprisoned he sent the first “valentine” greeting after he fell in love with a girl who visited him in jail. It is said, he wrote his love a letter before he died signed, “From Your Valentine,” an expression still used today.

We will probably never know the whole truth about St. Valentine. But one thing these various legends have in common is that Valentine loved others sacrificially. The stories differ, but the bottom line is the same: Valentine stood up for justice. He risked his life...eventually losing it ... demonstrating his love for others and for what was right.

Micah 6:8 tells us that there are three things the Lord desires from us: To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him. Unfortunately, this type of love is rare today. The world celebrates a love that is self-centered and dependent on feelings that come and go. Biblical love, in stark contrast, is exemplified by Jesus, who loved us sacrificially all the way to the cross. Godly love is patient, kind, honest, and sacrificial. It is rooted in God's love for us in Christ, and not in self. It seeks to serve rather than to be served.

This Valentine's Day, think about how you love others. Is God honored in the way you love?

*PRAYER: God, thank you for the love you have demonstrated through Your Son, Jesus. Help me to love others sacrificially and biblically, so that my life brings glory to Your Name. In Jesus' name, Amen.*