



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 11, 2022

VOL. 87

NO. 50

Rev. Stephen J. Niermann, Pastor
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
School: 419-598-8702 Cell: 419-270-8863
Church Website: www.sjl.org

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Love is a Rose" *Isaiah 35:1-2*

Order of Service: Morning Prayer *LSB pg. 235*

Hymns: **537** ~ "In Advent Hope" ~ **359** ~ **941** ~ **347**

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 drop it in the baskets at the doors as you leave today.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✠ Brice Baumert, Nolan Bickel, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Dean Badenhop, Richard Elling, Dennis Showman, Dave Von Deylen, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Lou Ann Rosebrock, Diane Von Deylen, *Altar Guild* ✠

VOTERS' MEETING NEXT WEEK – Please mark your calendar for the regular December voters' meeting on Sunday, December 18 in the fellowship hall after worship. On the agenda: 1) Elections and Appointments of congregational offices; 2) adoption of a budget for 2023.

NO COMMUNION THIS MORNING AFTER WORSHIP – Because of all the busyness of getting set up after worship for the children's rehearsal, Holy Communion will not be available as it normally is on the 2nd Sunday of the month. We will resume 2nd Sunday Communion on January 8th after worship.

LYF DECEMBER GET-TOGETHER TODAY – The Junior High and High School *Lutheran Youth Fellowship* groups will be gathering **this afternoon at 4:00 and 5:00 PM respectively**. We will gather at the *Youth & Family Center*, and encourage you to invite anyone to come along with you to enjoy our fellowship.

In God's House This Week

Online church calendar: www.DynaCal.com/sjl

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 10:20AM 4:00 PM 5:00 PM 5:00 PM	Worship Service (No communion following) Adult Bible Class; "The Lamp" Children's Christmas Service practice – (Gr. PS – 8 until 11:30 AM) Jr High LYF Meeting High School LYF Meeting Advent Fellowship Dinner
Mon.	5:00 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Boys ONLY @ St. John – Defiance
Tue.	8:35 AM 7:00 PM	School Chapel Church Council Meeting
Wed.	5:45 PM 7:00 PM	Junior Confirmation Class (until 6:45 PM) Advent Service 3 ; Offering: <i>Cherry Street Mission</i> Ushers: <i>Neil Badenhop, Doug Dietrich, Joe Badenhop, Nick Sonnenberg</i> Altar Guild: <i>Lou Ann Rosebrock, Diane Von Deylen</i>
Thurs.	6:30 AM 5:30 PM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 6:30 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys vs Trinity – Toledo (H)
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM 10:20AM 7:00 PM	Communion Service Voters' Meeting; Children's Christmas Program practice -- Full run through (Gr. PS – 8 until 11:30 AM) School Board & High School LYF sacking Christmas candy bags Children's Christmas Service (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Mon.-Sat	7:30 AM	Morning Meditations, WONW 1280 AM

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

- ❖ *Melba Elling, Lorna Von Deylen, Norma Damman*, at Genacross – Napoleon
- ❖ *Lawrence Behrmann*, at Northcrest Nursing & Rehab
- ❖ Military: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Niermann, Jared Dishop, Jordan Lange*
- ❖ *Sue Hurst and Dave Crandall*, health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *The family of Marvin Gruenhagen* – Marvin died in Christ this past Wednesday; his funeral is set for Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. Pray for Arlene and her family in their time of grief.

STILL, STILL, STILL CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

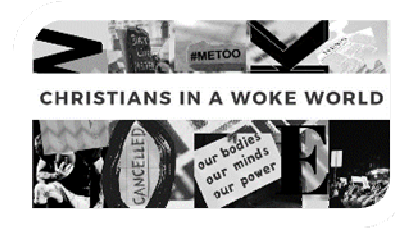
The children's Christmas service this year is **NEXT SUNDAY**, December 18, at 7:00 PM. The children will rehearse this morning and again next Sunday during an extended Sunday School hour from 10:20 to 11:30 AM. We ask that everyone please stay clear of the narthex during these rehearsals, so that the din of conversation does not distract. May God bless the children as they rehearse and prepare to tell us the story of our Savior's coming!

DRESS CODE for the Children's Christmas Service is as follows: 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 and tie (optional). No jeans, please!

SET-UP HELP TODAY AFTER CHURCH: If there is anyone available right after church today to come down to the fellowship hall for about 15-20 minutes, we could use your help in setting up tables and chairs for the Advent Fellowship Dinner being held tonight. Thank you in advance!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL & BIBLE STUDY

We have been discussing a phenomenon in our Western civilization called “Cultural Marxism.” Like its classic version, Cultural Marxism divides people into groups and pits them against each other as “oppressors” and “oppressed.” The language is a little different, however. Instead of “oppressor” and “oppressed” we hear of “privilege,” and “victimhood.” Instead of a seeking “revolution” we hear a lot about “equity” and “social justice” as the noble goal of this movement. Language, and its manipulation, is very important to this agenda, and Christians need to understand this vocabulary and how to respond to it with love and the truth of God’s Word. Join us for our Sunday study... **Christians in a Woke World - A Call to Courage, Confession and LOVE**



We are analyzing this new Marxism from a Biblical perspective, and seeking courage to confess the truth to this ‘Woke’ world that our true identity is in Christ. We are not defined by any humanly devised identity group, but by the cross at which ALL of us were redeemed to be the children of God.

ADVENT FELLOWSHIP DINNER – TODAY

Dinner plans for TODAY are all set. Just bring a side dish, salad or dessert, and join us in the fellowship hall at 5:00 PM for an **Advent Fellowship Dinner**. The main meat will be provided. We will enjoy one another’s fellowship and company, sing some of the carols of Christmas, and share a devotional moment reflecting upon the lesson of the candy cane and God’s gift of His beloved Son, our Savior. **Please join us, and if you are so inclined, we’d love to receive any dinner guests you may invite!**



ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES are being held each Wednesday during Advent at 7:00 p.m. The worship series is based on Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians, focusing us on the hope we have as we await the second coming of the Christ child. The schedule for Advent messages is:

- Nov. 30 “Our Two-Minute Drill” *1 Thess 1:1-10*
- Dec 7 “Praying Like Paul,” *1 Thess 3:10-13*
- **Dec. 14 “You’ve Got a Ticket to Ride!” *1 Thess 4:13-18***
- Dec. 21 “Faithful Watching and Waiting,” *1 Thess 5:1-11*

POINSETTIAS –With the change in the poinsettia supplier this year and the quick turnaround to get our orders sent in, we cushioned the order by adding 6 extra pots. So if you were not able to get your order in last Sunday and would still like to buy one “in memory of” or “in honor of” someone, please call or email Joyce in the church office by December 15th. **The cost is \$9.00 per plant.**

SACKING CANDY: The School Board and High School LYF members will be assembling the Christmas sacks on Sun., Dec. 18th during the Sunday School hour.

UNANSWERED BIBLE QUESTIONS... Issues, Etc., a radio-talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio, will have Pastors Bryan Wolfmueller and Brian Kachelmeier respond to your unanswered Bible questions. You can submit your question via email: talkback@issuesetc.org; Facebook: facebook.com/issuesetc; or the Issues, Etc. Comment Line: (618) 223-8382. You can listen to the interview at your convenience at issuesetc.org, the LPR mobile app and your favorite podcast provider.

NOMINATIONS URGENTLY NEEDED! As you can see below, we are still looking for nominees for **Vice President, Secretary, Elder, and Board of Education**. Would you like to volunteer and serve? Please consider putting forth your service toward being a steward/servant at St. John. Pray about it and please contact one of the Stewardship Board members (*Char Weber, Cheryl Sausser, Kelly Sonnenberg, Pastor, or Randy Rosebrock*) if you are willing to serve. Thank you!

LIST OF 2023 CHURCH OFFICE NOMINATIONS: *(as of the printing of this bulletin)*

ELECTED: Vice Pres. – *Vacant*

Treasurer – *Cathy Gerken*; Financial Trustee – *Jim Hogrefe, Jerry Langenhop*

Elder – *Larry Gerken, Vacant*

Stewardship Board – *Jenelle McCarthy, Rhonda Bockelman*

Board of Education – *Ben Pescara, Vacant*

Alt. Delegate Syn – *Vacant*

APPOINTED: Secretary – *Vacant* Church Deacon – *Greg Kehnast*

Trustee – *Scott Van Valkenburg, Eric Weller*; Cemetery Sexton – *Ben Kruse*

Cemetery Board – *Todd Kruse(Brenda), Nick Sonnenberg, Doug Kossow*

Asst. Sunday School Supt. – *Stephanie Damman*

NOTE: The installation of our newly elected and appointed officers for the year 2023 will be conducted in the regular Sunday service on January 1st.

ADVENT DEVOTION BOOKLETS are available today on the narthex table. They are titled *A Son is Given* and are provided to us through Lutheran Hour Ministries. There is also a second devotion booklet from Concordia Publishing House that is designated for the Advent season.

WOMEN OF FREEDOM – The 2023 Women of Freedom program booklets are available at the narthex table. Please pick up your copy today. If for some reason the meeting you're scheduled to serve does not work for you, please switch with someone. If you spot any errors, such as incorrect phone numbers or emails, please contact the church office.

USHER, AND ALTAR GUILD SIGN-UP – **The sign-up deadline is TODAY.** We are preparing the 2023 usher and altar guild schedules so please sign-up at the table in the narthex. *You do not need to sign up again if you are currently serving as a greeter, usher or are on an altar guild team.*

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 2022. Here are the individual year-to-date deposits for 2022: St. John Church - \$12,830.00; St. John School - \$3,070.00; St. John Preschool - \$95.00. A well-deserved "thank you" to Thrivent for providing these funds throughout the year.

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 12/04/22	\$6,490.00	\$457.00	\$193.00

ATTENDANCE: 160

1st ADVENT SERVICE: Good Shepherd Church for the Deaf - \$917.00 Attendance: 42

MEMORIALS for *Esther Layton*: St. John Endowment Fund – School Acct. - \$88.00
 St. John Lutheran Church Memorial Fund - \$25.00; St. John Lutheran Church - \$650.00

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Please note that there is no offering envelope in your boxes for the Children’s Christmas Service next Sunday at 7:00 PM. If you wish for your offering at that 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.



2023 OFFERING BOXES AVAILABLE: With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2023 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 *Jerry Langenhop* (419-966-3473).

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!

MY DEVOTIONS BOOKLETS are available on the desk in the narthex for December, January, and February. Pick up your copy today!

THE TOLEDO SYMPHONY will perform a Christmas Concert at St. Paul Lutheran Church – Napoleon Township, on **Wed., Dec. 14th at 7:30 PM.** Tickets on sale thru their church office at 419-758-3522. See flyer!

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DISTRIBUTION: If you placed an order for a wreath, please go to the Ridgeville American Legion on Sat., Dec. 17th at 11:00 AM to pick up your wreath.

✘ ✘ ✘

Food For Thought...

GOSPEL – God’s Only Son Provides Eternal Life

“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.” John 10:28