



# 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  
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181  
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Church Website: www.sjl.org

### CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS

Sermon & Text: "What WILL Be" Luke 2:21

Order of Service: See printed Service Folder

Hymns: 897 ~ 898 ~ [Communion: 375, 900] ~ 733

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### A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Welcome to our worship service here at St. John. If we can be of service to you in any way, please speak to our Pastor. If you are looking for a church to call home, please consider joining this church where we seek to help each other grow in faith, in love and in service. Simply fill out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and drop it in the baskets at the door as you leave.

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

- ✠ Sharon Damman, Organist ✠ Garrison Kruse, Nolan Bickel, Acolytes ✠
- ✠ Dave VonDeylen, Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling, Ushers ✠
- ✠ Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow, Karen Germann, Altar Guild ✠

### ABOUT TODAY --- THE CIRCUMCISION AND NAMING OF JESUS

The eighth day of Christmas was first celebrated as the *Festival of the Circumcision and Naming of Our Lord* in the sixth century in Gaul and Spain. By the eleventh century, the festival was also being observed in Rome and from there spread throughout Christendom. The festival, with the shortest Gospel of the year (only one verse!), presents the circumcision of Christ on the eighth day after His birth. Thus it was deemed appropriate to celebrate His circumcision on the eighth day of Christmas.



Of course the eighth day of Christmas also happens to fall on the first day of the New Year. This was not always the case, since the beginning of a year has been reckoned differently from time to time and from place to place. When the calendar was standardized in 1582 by Pope Gregory VIII (hence our 'Gregorian calendar') the *Festival of the Circumcision and Naming of Jesus* came to coincide with New Year's Day, and the two themes became intertwined. Today in worship, word, and song, we will hear a fusion of these two emphases. God bless our worship, as we consider what it means for our years that Christ was circumcised in the flesh for us!

**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	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Communion Service w/Installation of Church Officers</b>
Wed.	8:20 AM 6:15 PM	School resumes Jr. High Confirmation Class (6:15 – 7:30 PM)
	6:30 AM 6:00 PM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 7:00 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys @ St.Pats – Bryan
Sat.	10:00AM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 11:00 AM Gr. 4-6 Boys @ St.Mary's - Edgerton
Sun.	<b>9:00 AM</b> 10:20AM	<b>Worship Service with Communion following</b> Sunday School; "The Lamp"; Adult Bible Class

**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

**A HEARTFELT AND SINCERE THANKS** to everyone for the prayerful support and kind expressions of sympathy after Marvin Gruenhagen passed from this life to his eternal home in heaven. A special thank you to Pastor Niermann, the Women of Freedom, Peter Gerken, and Renee Petzoldt for their part in the funeral service. Your prayers, kind words and cards were a blessing to our family.

Alan Gruenhagen would also like to thank everyone for their help, prayers, and cards during his recent hospitalization. It was greatly appreciated. *Signed, The family of Marvin Gruenhagen*

**POINSETTIA PLANTS** – Don't forget to take your poinsettia plant home after the worship service today. There are plastic sleeves to protect them in the side Conference room.

**SUNDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY** will not meet today. We will resume the Sunday study, "Christians in a Woke World," on Sunday, January 8.

**SANCTUARY CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS** will be taken down on Monday, January 9 at 6:00 PM. Once again we thank everyone, and the School Board especially, for their work in making God's house so beautiful for the celebration of Christ's birth. We invite anyone and everyone to help the School Board members in taking the decorations down and putting them away, as we enter the next season of the church year, Epiphany, beginning next Friday, January 6.

## Bible Study



**MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST THIS THURSDAY** – *The best part of waking up is a delicious breakfast, great fellowship, and the Word of God!* The men's breakfast Bible study will meet at 6:30 AM this Thursday (January 5) for a study titled, '**Life Together.**' Using 1 Peter's instructions on Christ-centered conduct and service, this video based study stresses the need to live like Jesus for others, and yet resist the world around us. Reflection questions prompt us to add our own thoughts and words to the discussion. *Please join us for a breakfast of good food and a good word from God!*

**INSTALLTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS** – This morning we give thanks to God for all the people who lend their time and talents to the Lord’s service as officers in our congregation. We offer gratitude to those who are leaving their respective offices for a job well done, and to those who are being installed today for the New Year 2023. May God bless our service to Him in His kingdom, whether in a formal office or in our own various ways and vocations.

Those who are being installed this morning are:

**President** – *Dan Wachtman*; **Vice President** – *vacant*; **Treasurer** – *Cathy Gerken*;  
**Financial Trustee** – *Jim Hogrefe*; **Elders** – *Dennis Bockelman, Larry Gerken*; **Stewardship Board** – *Jenelle McCarthy, Rhonda Bockelman*;  
**Board of Education** (installed to take office in July 2023) – *Ben Pescara, vacant*;  
**Alt. Delegate Syn** – *Todd Hesterman*; **Secretary** – *Nicole Stier*; **Church Deacon** – *Greg Kehnast*; **Trustees** – *Scott Van Valkenburg, Eric Weller*; **Sunday School Supt.** – *Jenna Kehnast*; **Asst. Sunday School Supt.** – *Stephanie Damman*; **Cemetery Board** – *Todd Kruse (Kathy), Nick Sonnenberg, Doug Kossow*; **Cemetery Sexton** – *Ben Kruse*.

**2023 ALTAR GUILD (pink) SCHEDULE:** The 2023 Altar Guild schedule is available today and can be picked up on the narthex table. The Usher schedule is in the making and will be available soon. Thanks again to all who are willing to be of service to the Lord through St. John. You are a blessing!

**STUDY GOD’S WORD IN 2023**... The **Word of the Lord Endures Forever** is a daily, 15-minute, verse-by-verse Bible study produced by Lutheran Public Radio and hosted by LCMS Pastor Will Weedon. Pastor Weedon is currently leading a study on the Book of Luke. You can listen at [thewordendures.org](http://thewordendures.org) or your favorite podcast provider.

**THE FLOWER CALENDAR** for 2023 is posted in the narthex. If you wish to sign up for a certain Sunday to place flowers on the altar or the piano, sign your name on that Sunday and then about two weeks before that date, call *Nancy Glaser* at 419-906-0963 to let her know if you are getting your own flowers or if you want the Women of Freedom to take care of them. **The price for the flowers through the Women of Freedom is \$25.00.** Please remember that it is your responsibility to contact *Nancy Glaser*. Also, please contact the church office with the information for the bulletin before the week you are placing the flowers in church. This will insure that you are not forgotten or overlooked.

<b><u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u></b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 12/25/22	\$24,245.00	\$535.00	\$885.00

**ATTENDANCE:** Sunday Service (12/25/22): 133

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:** \$9,961.11 – Home Fund; Attendance: 189

**ADVENT SERVICE #4 (12-21-22):** \$745.00 – SJLC Church Vocation Students; Attendance: 34

**2023 OFFERING ENVELOPES** – There are still a few who have not picked up their 2023 offering envelopes. Be sure to pick yours up today!

WEDNESDAY CONFIRMATION CLASS will resume instruction on Wed., Jan. 4, at the regular time of 6:15 – 7:30 PM.

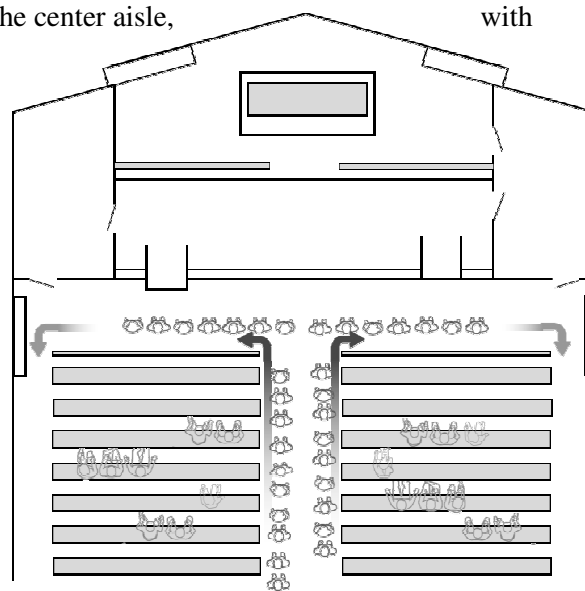
### COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION CHANGES - STARTING TODAY

The elders and church council, in discussions with the pastor, have decided to try a new approach for Communion Distribution starting next Sunday. The goals of the new procedure are:

- to restore the practice of giving us a little time to be still before the Lord's altar as we receive the Sacrament (versus a continuously moving line);
- to avoid using the steps so that most everyone can participate; and,
- to restore the common cup for those who wish to use it.

To these ends, the distribution of Holy Communion will proceed as follows:

- Worshipers on both sides will form two lines in the center aisle, 10 people or so in the line at all times.
- The first seven (or so) people in the lines will split left and right to form a single line (a 'table' of 14 people) on the carpeted area in front of the first chancel step. For a while there will be a line taped to the floor to help.
- This 'table' of communicants will receive the host (bread) from the Pastor, followed by assistants with the tray of individual cups, then the common cup.
- The 'table' will be dismissed, and split left and right to the outside aisles to deposit individual cups and to return to the pews.
- The communicants already in the lines will immediately fill in behind the previous 'table.' At the same time, more people can step into the lines in the aisle.



Ushers will be available to help us out for the first few times, but eventually we'd like to use this procedure without having ushers involved. This procedure is a hybrid of our previous and present distribution methods that we hope will be a blessing to us all. ***What does not change, of course, is that we receive in this Holy Supper the very body and blood of our Savior, given and shed for our forgiveness and for the assurance of our salvation!*** Let us know what you think!

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#### **Food For Thought...**

**And just like that, Santa is gone till next year.  
But Jesus is still here, giving gifts that never end!**

*"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."  
(2 Corinthians 13:14)*