



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

*Worship • Stewardship • Mission*

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Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

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### FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Sermon & Text: "Being Salt and Light" *Matthew 5:13-16*

Order of Service: Divine Service, Setting Three *LSB pg. 184*

Hymns: 587 ~ 646 ~ (Communion: 637, 427, 411) ~ 698

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### WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

The Psalmist wrote: "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the House of the Lord.'" We are happy to have you with us, whether someone invited you or you came by yourself. We are glad to share this House of the Lord with you. Please help us get to know who you are by introducing yourself to our pastor and by filling out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you. Simply drop it into the baskets at the doors as you leave today.

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

- ✠ Renee Petzoldt, *Organist* ✠ Peyton Naveau, Addison Naveau, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Dave Myles, Dennis Bockelman, Tim Badenhop, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Kaylee Buchhop, Karan Niebergall, Ronda Wentworth, Karen Lulfs, *Altar Guild* ✠

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY – Like every season of the church year, Epiphany is about the cross. God manifested His saving work in "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (*Epistle, 1 Cor 2:2*). Today's readings highlight the difference between those who are only "natural" (who cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God) and those who are "spiritual" (who are enlightened by the Spirit to understand the wisdom of the Lord and of His cross). Only the power of God can convert and keep us in the faith.

Free of condemnation, the children of God joyfully do good and become "gracious, merciful, and righteous" in their deeds (*from the day's Psalm, 112:4*). The light of the cross then begins to reflect off them into the surrounding darkness, and they become "the light of the world" whose good deeds "give glory to the Father who is in heaven." (*Matt 5:14*) Having been preserved by Christ from sin and the grave, God's children are also "the salt of the earth," (*Matt 5:13*), having a preservative effect in the world as God's agents of salvation. What a difference the Spirit makes in our lives through the preaching of the cross! Therefore, "ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name."

**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> 10:20AM	<b>Communion Service</b> Sunday School; "The Lamp"; Adult Bible Class
Mon.	5:30 PM 7:00 PM	School Board Meeting PTL Meeting
Tues.	<b>8:35 AM</b> 6:00 PM	<b>School Chapel</b> B-ball: Gr. 4-6 girls; 7:00 PM Gr. 4-6 boys vs Solomon – Woodville (H)
Wed.	6:15 PM	Jr. High Confirmation Class (6:15 – 7:30 PM)
Sun.	<b>9:00 AM</b> 10:20AM 10:30AM 1:30 PM	<b>Worship Service</b> w/Communion following Sunday School; "The Lamp" Voters' Meeting 4-H Meeting – Gerald Busy Fingers & Cloverbuds

**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
- ❖ *Denny Damman and Brian Bickel*, for recent medical procedures

**COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION CHANGES** – Starting This Morning

After two Sundays using the new approach to Communion Distribution, we have generally heard positive comments. One thing has come to our attention, however, is that it can be difficult or daunting for some to stand during Communion without anything around them to steady themselves. Therefore we will tweak our new distribution method by removing the taped line and having communicants stand directly in front of the front pew panel so that the panel can be used to steady oneself if desired. We will try this out, and would appreciate your comments and evaluations.

**ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL & BIBLE STUDY**

We have been discussing a phenomenon in our Western civilization called 'Cultural Marxism,' a.k.a 'Woke-ism.' Did you know that something on the order of 25% of university professors self-identify as Marxist? It is nearly impossible to send a young person to college without them coming under the influence of a Marxist professor. The rise and pervasiveness of *Marxism* in our culture and educational system is startling. As always, the way of Marxism, classical or cultural, is to divide people into groups and classes, and to foment a revolution by the oppressed classes against the oppressor classes and to overthrow their oppressive systems. Such talk can be frightening, but we know the One who holds the future, and is working everything for good to those who love Him. Come on down to the fellowship hall – **the coffee is on** – and join us this morning for our Sunday study...



**Christians in a Woke World - A Call to Courage, Confession and LOVE**

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:** For clarification purposes, the February Church Council meeting will be held on **Tues., Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM.** It was listed incorrectly on the “Activities Calendar” in last Sunday’s bulletin.

**VOTERS’ MEETING** – The first Voters’ meeting of 2023 will be held on Sun., Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> after the worship service. Items on the agenda to date are: 1) Annual school report; 2) Audit Committee report; 3) Endowment Fund distribution; 4) Status of 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade.

**Gearing Up for JAVA JOY** – It’s been a while since we shared **Java Joy** together. It was Covid that put the kibosh on our coffee clutch each second Sunday. The council, however, decided it’s time to bring **Java Joy** back to St. John. **Would you, or a group of you, or perhaps your church organization, please consider hosting?** If we had six regular host groups, for example, each would host just twice per year. And the more the merrier!



**Here’s what you need to know:**

- **The Java Joy coordinator is Char Weber.** Please contact her at 419-906-0208 with questions.
- **Java Joy** will be held after worship on the second Sunday of each month, starting Feb. 12.
- A sign-up sheet for the rest of the year is in the narthex.
- Hosting Guidelines are available right next to the sign-up sheet to answer your questions about what is involved when you host.
- Hosting **Java Joy** does not need to cost you anything – money from the Java Joy kitty is available for you to cover expenses. The donation box will be on the table each time to replenish the kitty.

**LENTEN SUPPERS ARE BACK!!!** With the Lenten season quickly approaching, we will be hosting Lenten Suppers each Wednesday prior to the worship service. Suppers will begin at 5:30 PM and serving will stop around 6:30 PM to allow for cleanup and for the hosts to attend worship. These will be freewill meals and will be hosted by LYF and/or Church Council. Anyone else wishing to host a meal should contact the church office. Thank you!

**SCHOOL BOARD POSITION:** St. John Lutheran Church is seeking an individual who would be interested in filling the final spot on the School Board. This individual would begin their duties on School Board as of July 1, 2023. If you would be interested in serving on the Board, please contact Pastor Niermann, Randy Rosebrock, or Cheryl Sausser.

<b><u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u></b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 1/29/23	\$5,417.00	\$515.00	\$317.00

ATTENDANCE – Sunday: 145

**ARCHIVES DISPLAY:** The Archives Display has been changed and is now highlighting the 2022-2023 school pictures of the students and staff of St. John Lutheran School. Please stop down and check them out at your leisure.

**SAVE THE DATE! LYF SUPER BOWL SUB SALE** – Get ready!!! It's that time of year again! The LYF Super Bowl Sub Sale is quickly approaching and it's time to get ready for the big game. On Sun., Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>, the LYF will be selling Super Bowl subs to help raise money for their youth group. There are 3 different sub choices this year. They are: 6" Cold Cut, 6" Ham and cheese, and 6" Veggie sub. The price is \$4, and checks can be made payable to St. John LYF. Payment can be made at time of pick up. Pre-order only with a deadline of Fri., Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for supporting our LYF youth!



**MISSION SUNDAY – Two weeks from today**

**Sunday, February 19 is Transfiguration Sunday** and will also be a Mission Sunday as we receive our special guest preacher, **Rev. Robert Rahn**, from *The Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF)*. You may recall that Rev. Rahn was last here at St. John at the end of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year to receive our year-long anniversary thank offering in support of *LHF* for their work in translating, publishing and distributing Bible-based, Christ-centered, Reformation-driven books around the world. It will be our pleasure to welcome him back. Mark it on your calendar!

**LADIES. . . Come on along.** . . . Time to lend your hands to help at the Grain Train on our 'Service Day'. **Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>**. All are invited to join the group at **11:30 am** for a **Dutch Treat** lunch at **Sweet Dreams-Ice Cream** (formerly *Johnson's Ice Cream Shoppe*) after which we will proceed to the **Grain Train** – or you can just meet us at the Grain Train (located on the east side of the Culligan building) at 1:00 p.m. We will wrap up by 2:30 p.m. We guarantee no hard labor . . . only good fellowship! Sign-up sheet is on the table in the Narthex.



**LENTEN MIDWEEK TEASER** – Lent begins in 17 days on February 22, Ash Wednesday. Pastor Niermann is planning a midweek Lent series about the *mostly* good kings of Judah. ***We'll start each midweek Lenten Service with a hymn sing. Be ready!***

***So, what do you know about King Jehoshaphat?*** There's a theory that the phrase, "*Jumpin' Jehoshaphat*" is based off the Scripture passage in which God tells Jehoshaphat and his people to stand still. "*The battle is not yours but God's ... take your position, stand firm, and see the victory of the Lord on your behalf*" (2 Chron 20:15,17).

Jehoshaphat, being (*mostly*) faithful to God, obeyed, and the victory for Judah was won. So to say, "*Jumpin' Jehoshaphat*" is to say something like, "I'm as surprised as if faithful King Jehoshaphat had started jumping!"

But even Jehoshaphat did not always stand firm in the Lord. He jumped into an alliance with Ahab, the wicked and idolatrous monarch of the northern kingdom of Israel that would ultimately compromise Judah's future and its relationship with the Lord. Clearly, we need a better king. Thankfully, we got one in our uncompromisingly faithful King Jesus! Our Lenten midweek series this year is titled:

***"CHRONICLES OF THE (mostly) GOOD KINGS OF JUDAH." They fell short. King Jesus does not!***

**PTL MEETING:** The next PTL meeting is scheduled for Mon., Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. The success of the PTL depends on parental involvement. We are still in need of PTL officers.

**OLD THEOLOGY, NEW TECHNOLOGY**... Issues, Etc. is a radio-talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio in Collinsville, IL and hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken. This week's topics include: Mental Illness in the Lutheran Congregation, The "He Gets Us" Ad Campaign, True Tolerance, Church Discipline and more. You can listen on-demand at [issuesetc.org](http://issuesetc.org), the LPR mobile app and your favorite podcast provider.

**2022 CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT** – It's time to start getting your reports ready for the 2022 Church Annual. The secretaries of the different organizations are asked to write up a summary of the year's activities and treasurers should submit their financial report for their organization. If you need your offering contribution information prior to the distribution of the Annual Report, please call Financial Trustee, *Jerry Langenhop*, at 419-966-3473. **Please turn your reports in to Joyce Wiechers ASAP.**

**TIME TO UPDATE OUR DIRECTORY:** There are many addresses and phone numbers in the Annual Report directory that need updated. If you (and/or your adult children) have address changes; or if you have eliminated your land line telephone and only have cell phone numbers, **please call or email** the church office at 419-598-8961 or email [jwiechers@sjl.org](mailto:jwiechers@sjl.org) with updated information. It will be very helpful to have current addresses on file. Thank you!

**2022 END OF YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS** – The 2022 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 Financial Trustee, *Jerry Langenhop* at 419-966-3473.

**EAGLE NEWS:** The January Eagle News publication will be passed out today. Extra copies are available on the narthex table and also online via FastDirect Communication. Go to <http://www.fastdir.com/stjohnfreedom/>, click on "Links" at the top of the page, then click on "Eagle News - January" in the "Everybody" column.

**ST. JOHN OPEN HOUSE REGISTRATION** – An **Open House** is planned for grade levels PS-8 at St. John School on Wed., Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 – 7:30 PM. This Open House is for families who would like to come and look at our school and discuss the possibility of sending their child(ren) to St. John for their education and to grow their faith. If anyone in the school and/or congregation might know of prospective students for Grades PS-8, be sure to pass this information on to them.

**PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT** – St. John Lutheran Preschool is now accepting enrollment applications for the 2023-24 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 and/or turn in their registration form. Registration is now opened up to the public, so be sure to register soon. Current preschool students must complete new registration forms if they will be returning next school year. **NOTE:** The child must be 3 or 4 years old by September 30 of the year applying for preschool. The child must be completely toilet trained. There is a non-refundable \$30 registration fee that must accompany your registration paperwork.

**POSITION OPENING:** St. John Lutheran School is seeking names for filling the position of Kindergarten Teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Requirements for the position are: Must have a Bachelor's degree in education, obtain a background check, supply three references, and adhere to the St. John Lutheran Church & School religious beliefs. If you know of anyone interested, please call the school office or reach out to Miss Germann at [tgermann@sjl.org](mailto:tgermann@sjl.org).

**FREEDOM FLOCK HELP:** The Freedom Flock After School Program is looking for a person(s) to be an aide with our after school program a few days each week. It would be for three hours or less from 3 – 6 PM, (*depending how soon all the children are picked up*). This person must be 18 years old and be willing to be FBI/BCI background checked. If you are interested, please contact the school office at 419-598-8702. This is a great chance for any high school seniors to complete their community service hours for the year.

**LOST AND FOUND:** There are several jackets and coats that have accumulated over the past months in the side coat room off the narthex. Please check to see if anything belongs to you. These items will be donated to the Orphan Grain Train if they are not claimed by Sun., Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>.

**ST. JOHN SCRIP CONTINUES:** You may begin ordering SCRIP. 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](mailto:honemann@embarqmail.com).**

**ST. JOHN WEBSITE:** Did you know you can listen to *Pastor Niermann's* sermons on the internet? Just click on "St. John YouTube Channel" or "Worship Service Resources" on the Home Page. There is also a "For Kids" tab which allows you to listen to previous Children's Sermons at St. John.

**HEARING ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE:** If hearing in worship has been a problem for you, pick up one of the receiver units for our hearing assistance system. An usher will assist you and you'll hear much more clearly. (*Also, please let us know how the system is working for you.*)

For those who use the hearing assistance system regularly and for the sake of hygiene, we ask that you claim one of the ear buds as your own and keep it with you in your purse, pocket, etc. Bring it with you when you come to church, and simply plug it into one of the receivers. At the end of the service, unplug the ear bud to take with you until the next time.

**CHICKEN PIE DINNER** – The Ridgeville American Legion Post #454 will host their annual Chicken Pie Dinner on Sun., Feb. 19 with serving from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

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

**To avoid sin's tragedy, learn Satan's strategy.**

*"But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ." (1 Cor 11:3)*