



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U • NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

*Worship • Stewardship • Mission*

March 19, 2023

VOL. 88

NO. 12

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

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### FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Sermon & Text: "Good, Right, and True" *Ephesians 5:8-10*

Order of Service: *See printed Service Folder*

Hymns: 814 ~ 411 ~ (Communion: 547, 563) ~ 433

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### WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

*Welcome in the name of the Lord. We pray that through this time of stillness and song, prayer and proclamation, you may experience the Spirit of God at work in your life. May God richly bless your worship today! 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 blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and drop it into the baskets at the doors as you leave today.*

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

- ✠ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✠ Brice Baumert, Zeb Kramer, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Denny Von Deylen, Jerry Short, Dan Wiechers, Dave Badenhop, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Pat Maassel, Kathy Behnfeldt, Anita Badenhop, *Altar Guild* ✠

**A PEACEFUL REST:** *Hildegard "Kate" Ludeman, 97, passed away peacefully on Friday, March 10, 2023 at Defiance Area Inpatient Hospice. Kate's funeral was held at St. John on Wed., March 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM followed by her committal service at St. John Lutheran Cemetery. Kate's quiet, humble personality will be missed by everyone that knew her. We pray for comfort for her brother, Ron Dietrich, sister, Loretta Koppenhofer, and her 20 nieces and nephews who will miss her greatly.*

**EASTER BREAKFAST SIGN UP** – Church Council and the LYF are hosting this year's Easter Breakfast to be served between the two services on Easter morning (8:00-9:15 AM). The menu is: *Scrambled eggs, ham or sausage links, fresh fruit, doughnuts, cinnamon rolls, cookies, coffee and juice.* A lot of help with donations is needed. You may sign up on the chart in the narthex to donate items. Donated items need to be at the church prior to 8:00 AM on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Anyone wanting to help with preparation and serving are welcome to do so.

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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Today	<b>9:00 AM</b> 10:20AM 4:00 PM	<b>Communion Service</b> Sunday School; <i>"The Lamp"</i> ; Adult Bible Class LYF – Jr High @ 4:00pm; High School @ 5:00pm
Tues.	<b>8:35 AM</b> 7:00 PM	<b>School Chapel</b> led by Camp Lutherhaven Women of Freedom Meeting
Wed.	5:30 PM 5:45 PM <b>7:00 PM</b>	Lenten Supper Jr. High Confirmation Class ( <i>until 6:45 PM</i> ) <b>Lenten Service</b> ; Offering: <i>Lutheran Hour Broadcast</i> Acolyte: Garrison Kruse Ushers: Denny Von Deylen, Jerry Short, Dan Wiechers, Dave Badenhop Altar Guild: Pat Maassel, Kathy Behnfeldt, Anita Badenhop
Thurs.	6:30 AM	Men's Lenten Bible Study Breakfast
Fri.	6:00 PM	Family Movie Night at St. John ( <i>see bulletin note</i> )
Sun.	<b>9:00 AM</b> 10:20AM 1:30 PM	<b>Worship Service</b> Sunday School; <i>"The Lamp"</i> ; Adult Bible Class 4-H Meetings – 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
- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Leona Durham* and *Elaine Mahnke*,
- ❖ Military: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Carmon, Jared Dishop, Jordan Lange*
- ❖ *Alan Gruenhagen, Sue Hurst* and *Dave Crandall*, health concerns related to cancer

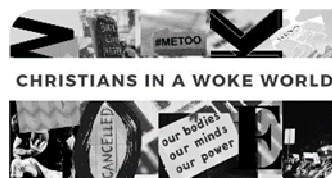
**TODAY LYF MEETINGS:** The Jr High and High School LYF members will be having their meeting today with the Jr High meeting at 4:00 PM followed by the High School at 5:00 PM.

**WOMEN OF FREEDOM MEETING:** The next Women of Freedom meeting will be held on Tues., March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 PM. As always, these meetings are open to any women in the congregation. Hope to see some of you there!

**ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL & BIBLE STUDY**

We have been discussing a phenomenon in our Western civilization called ‘Cultural Marxism,’ a.k.a ‘Woke-ism.’ These days we hear a lot of accusations of ‘racism’ being flung around, but there is confusion as to just what that means. Once upon a time you were considered racist because of your opinions about other people or because of the way you discriminated against them. These days, however, you are considered racist simply because you are part of a system that ‘woke-ism’ considers racist. What does Scripture have to say about race and racism? 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**



**PORTALS OF PRAYER BOOKLETS** for the next quarter, *April, May, June*, are on the desk in the narthex. There are also large print booklets available for anybody to pick up.

**LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICES** are being held each Wednesday evening during the Lenten season at 7:00 p.m.. *Each service starts with a hymn sing.* The remaining midweek schedule is as follows:

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Theme</u></b>	<b><u>Offering</u></b>
<b>Mar. 22</b>	<b>“King Uzziah – Know Thyself”</b>	<b><i>Lutheran Hour Broadcast</i></b>
Mar, 29	“King Josiah – Our Last Hope”	<i>Sufficient Grace Ministries</i>

To prepare for our fifth midweek Lent service, read **2 Chronicles, chapter 26**, about Judah’s ‘good’ **King Uzziah**. Of all of Judah’s “good” kings, Uzziah was one of the best. Yet even he fell short. Full of pride and forgetting his place, he presumed to himself the priestly task of burning incense before the Lord in His sanctuary. For his impudence Uzziah paid dearly, as the chronicler records, *“But when he was strong, he grew proud, to his destruction.”* (2 Chr 26:16).



Another king, another let-down. Thankfully, we have a better King by far, who knew His place as God’s obedient Son, born to be our Servant-King, to give His life for the sins of His people. Join us this Wednesday evening for the continuing saga of the...

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

**LENTEN SUPPERS:** Each Wednesday evening, the LYF or Church Council will be hosting a Lenten Supper in the fellowship hall. Your free-will donations will benefit the LYF and also help finance the sanctuary lighting project. Suppers start at 5:30. *This week’s menu includes Creamed Chicken sandwich, Vegetable, Chips, Dessert, and Drink.*

**DESSERTS FOR SUPPERS:** Anyone willing and able to donate desserts for the Lenten Suppers is asked to do so. We could use about 4 desserts each week and a sign-up sheet is on the narthex table. Please join us for some delicious food each Wednesday before going to the Lenten Services. Thanks for taking the time to help out.

**A QUESTION ABOUT LARGE-PRINT HYMNALS** – The publishing arm of our church body, *Concordia Publishing House*, has recently made available a large-print version of our LSB hymnal. It is exactly the same as the hymnal in the pews, but a little heavier and easier to read. They sell for \$49.99 per copy. We are probably not talking about having these in the pews, but most likely having copies available in the narthex for those who wish to use them.



The Church Council discussed the possibility of purchasing some copies, but first wanted to gauge interest. If you would appreciate having some of these available, or if you think you might like to purchase a personal copy, please speak with Pastor Niermann or congregational president Dan Wachtman.



**CHILDREN’S EASTER ‘BAG-SKETS’** – The Stewardship Board is planning something special for Easter morning for the children of the congregation and any friends they may like to invite. Much as we hand out treat bags at Christmas, we will have ***Easter Bag-skets*** to give to the children on Easter morning! Join us Easter morning for worship, breakfast, and a little something special for the young ones!

<b><u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u></b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 3/12/23	\$8,145.00	\$340.00	\$155.00

ATTENDANCE – Sunday: 130

LENTEN SERVICE (3/8/23): Youth Gathering / Conferences - \$646.00      Attendance: 58

**Bible Study**



**MEN’S LENT BIBLE BREAKFAST – THURSDAYS DURING LENT**

**Men’s Bible Breakfast will be meeting at 6:30 a.m. each Thursday morning during the season of Lent.** We are engaging in a study titled, “The Bible on Trial” which asks whether or not the Bible is reliable. The verdict we reach is crucial for us personally, since the Bible is the foundation of our Christian hope, the assurance of our eternal salvation, and the light by which we live. It is also crucial for us to be

able to answer others when they express doubts about the Bible, and whether they can trust it. **Please join us for a breakfast of good food and a good word from God!** The best part of waking up is a delicious breakfast, great fellowship, and the Word of God!

**CHURCH JANITOR POSITION:** At the March Council meeting, it was announced that Dan & Kim Damman would like to step down from cleaning the church. We would like to first offer this position to anyone within the congregation (or *school*) that may be interested in taking over this job. This is a paid position. If after several weeks there is no response, we will search for someone outside the church/school. Please contact the church office at 419-598-8961 to leave your name and number.

**LIBRARY COMPUTERS & SMARTBOARDS:** With the increased use of Chromebooks by students in the school classrooms, the need for the computers in the Library has greatly decreased. In an effort to de-clutter the Library, we are offering these used computers and a few Smart Boards to anyone interested in them. We would ask for a small donation in exchange. What’s available...PC’s, towers, monitors, keyboards, etc. We have set a deadline of Mon., April 3<sup>rd</sup> to conclude this offer.

**ANNUAL CHURCH CLEANING** – The list of the people for this year’s annual church cleaning are printed and available on the narthex table. If you feel you are not physically able to help with the cleaning for whatever reason, let your co-chair know and we’ll make a note of that. Thank you!

**CHOICE DOLLARS:** Keep up the good work! Your designations are making a difference here at St. John. You have until March 31, 2023 to designate your 2022 Choice Dollars. Some of you may still have Choice Dollars to designate, so either give Mary Kossow (at the Ridgeville Thrivent Office) a call to check on your Choice Dollars. The phone number is 419-267-0113. Thank You!

**FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT:** Coming soon on March 24, beginning at 6:00 PM (with snacks) followed by the movie at 6:30, we will be having a Family Movie Night. **All church and school families are invited to attend.** The Athletic Boosters are generously providing all snacks and drinks. The movie will be *Raya and the Last Dragon*. We look forward to seeing you there.



**PLANS FOR AN ALTAR CRUCIFIX** – Plans are underway to acquire a crucifix for the altar, to stand between the two altar candles. Briefly, a crucifix is a cross upon which the corpus, the body of Christ, is affixed --- a powerful visual representation of the core message of our faith – “*Christ, and Him crucified.*” (1 Cor. 2:2) Pastor has prepared a paper with a fuller explanation, available now in the narthex.

The plan is to have the cross portion of the crucifix built locally, and to order the corpus from carvers in Europe who specialize in this kind of artwork. A donor has offered to provide this for the congregation, but would also like to give everyone the opportunity, if desired, to be part of this special project. During lent, a resin crucifix that pastor normally has in his study is on the altar so that you can get a feel for its visual impact. Also a receptacle has been placed in the narthex to receive any gifts toward this project.

**ST. JOHN SCHOLARSHIP:** With the decision made to reinstate 7th and 8th grade here at St. John, I have had alumni of the school reach out to me. They are offering a scholarship of \$500 for any current sixth grade students that re-enroll at St. John for their 7th grade year. **They are also offering one “new student” scholarship in the amount of \$500 for next school year.** We are very grateful to have supportive alumni here at St. John, whose mission is focused on growing His kingdom. If you know of anyone who is interested in St. John, have them call the school at 419-598-8702 or email me, Tracy Germann at [tgermann@sjl.org](mailto:tgermann@sjl.org).

**PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT** – The St. John Lutheran Preschool is now accepting enrollment applications for 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.

**KINDERGARTEN CLINIC & ELIGIBILITY** for students entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2023! The K-clinic will be held on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 – 11:30 AM. **St. John Lutheran School’s eligibility date for entering Kindergarten is that a child must be five years old on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> to enroll in Kindergarten.** Items needed for our St. John clinic are: An original and/or certified copy of their birth certificate; a physical dated after August 2022 (*if available*); immunization records; Social Security number; child custody documents if applicable; and the baptism date or dedication date. *NOTE: If your child is enrolled in our Preschool program, we already have the items listed above and you will not need to bring them the day of the clinic.*

**EXTRA YEARBOOKS:** We are offering some excess yearbooks to anyone who would like to have a copy (or two), free of charge. These are from the following school years: 2018-2019 (4 copies), 2019-2020 (4 copies), and 2020-2021 (21 copies). These extra copies will be available by the Archives display. Enjoy!

**POSITION OPENINGS:** St. John Lutheran School is seeking names for filling the position of **Kindergarten Teacher** and **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher for the 2023-2024 school year**. Requirements for the positions 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).

**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.

**LARGE PRINT & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BULLETINS** are available today on the table in the narthex. The Children's Bulletins are coordinated with the Bible texts for each Sunday, and provide activities that tie in with the weekly themes. Pick one up today for your child.

**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.

**COLLECTING STAMPS:** The LWML is collecting stamps "For Missions." A box is on the table in the narthex. 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. 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, foreign, and stamp denominations larger than 46 cents. When purchasing stamps, ask the post office staff for commemorative stamps. Colorful and large stamps are desirable. Collecting stamps is an easy way to participate in a mission project sponsored by the Lutheran Women's Missionary League.

**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).**

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

**"Those who walk with God, always reach their destination." — Henry Ford**

*"Walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you." (Jer 7:23)*