



FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom
Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 3, 2023

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Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

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

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sermon & Text: "Oh, Wait a Minute" *Isaiah 64:1-9*
Order of Service: Divine Service, Setting One *LSB page 151*
Hymns: 331 ~ 334 ~ (Communion: 910, 333, 341) ~ 348

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

- ✠ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✠ Nolan Bickel & Maxton Howard, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Dean Badenhop, Dennis Showman, Richard Elling, Dave Von Deylen, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Diane Von Deylen, LouAnn Rosebrock, *Altar Guild* ✠

VOTERS' MEETING NEXT SUNDAY, DEC. 10 – Please be aware that the voters will meet next Sunday following worship in the fellowship hall to discuss important matters pertaining to the business of God's House, including: 1) discussion and adoption of the 2024 budget; 2) election of officers; 3) discussion about engaging the consultation and coaching services of the *Five/Two Network*,

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR VOTERS – In today's bulletin, please find a folded insert with information about a proposal from the elders and church council to engage the consulting and coaching services of the *FiveTwo Network*. This matter will be discussed at our voters' meeting next Sunday, December 10. It will save us a great deal of meeting time if everyone has read this. *Don't read it during the sermon, however!* ☺

ADVENT DEVOTION BOOKLETS are available today on the narthex table. They are titled *What Child is This* and are provided to us through Lutheran Hour Ministries. Pick up a copy today!

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 5:00 PM	Communion Service Children's Christmas Practice following the service; Adult Bible Study; "The Lamp" Caroling (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Tues.	8:35 AM 10:00AM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM	School Chapel <i>GriefShare</i> Support Group B-ball – Gr. 4-6 Girls; 7:00 PM vs. St. Mary's – Edgerton (H) Church Council Meeting (<i>note date change</i>)
Wed.	5:45 PM 7:00 PM	National Mitten Tree Day (<i>see bulletin note</i>) Midweek Confirmation Class (<i>until 6:45 PM</i>) Advent Service 1 Offering: <i>Good Shepherd Church for the Deaf, Toledo</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. St. Paul – Napoleon (H)
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM 10:20AM 5:00 PM	Worship Service Voters' Meeting Children's Christmas Practice following the service; "The Lamp" Jr High and High School LYF Christmas Get-together

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

- ❖ *Melba Elling and Norma Damman*, at Genacross – Napoleon
- ❖ *Lawrence Behrmann*, at Northcrest Nursing & Rehab
- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Irene Joost, Leona Durham, and Elaine Mahnke*
- ❖ Military: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Carmon, Jared Dishop, Jordan Lange*
- ❖ *Alan Gruenhagen, Sue Hurst, Dave Crandall, Eddie Harris, Delia Blake*, health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *Marian Damman*, who broke a hip from a fall and is recovering at Fulton Manor – Wauseon

SANCTUARY DECORATING THANK-YOU – A great big thanks to the School Board members and other volunteers who took time this past week to help decorate the sanctuary for this holy season. Your service to our congregation is so much appreciated, and it is a pleasure to step into the sanctuary decked out for Advent and Christmas. God bless you for lending a helping hand!



CHIPOTLE NIGHT! WOW!!!! Thank you to everyone that took the time to order online or pack up and drive to Chipotle in Defiance to support this school fundraiser. We've heard from Chipotle via email with the results of the fundraiser. **St. John School will be receiving a check from Chipotle for \$246.77 in the near future.** This is great for our first-time attempt with Chipotle. Thank you all for joining in!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE PLANS – Parts have been assigned, and full Sunday rehearsals have begun each Sunday during the Sunday School hour.

- **Parents, thank you for making the extra effort to have your children at these rehearsals.** It helps them to build confidence as they prepare to stand before the congregation on December 17 to share the good news of Christ's birth for us!
- **Please try to avoid congregating in the narthex** as the children are rehearsing – the lower noise level is a tremendous help for their rehearsals.



SCRIP FOR CHRISTMAS: Christmas shopping the easy way this year, and forms are included in today's bulletin to allow you to shop in the comfort of your home. Additional SCRIP order forms are available in the "School Info" rack outside the school office. Thank you and happy shopping!

NATIONAL MITTEN TREE DAY: St. John students would like you to help us this Wed., Dec. 6th for National Mitten Tree Day. We are asking students, staff, and congregation members to donate new or gently used (washed) mittens and gloves to help fill our Christmas Tree, to then donate these items to kids in need. Our mitten and glove donations will be given to the non-profit organization called Together We Can Make A Difference in Napoleon. You can send your donations to the school on Dec. 6th or you can bring them with you to the Advent Service that same night.

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES BEGIN THIS WEEK – Advent begins today, which means we will be gathering for midweek Advent services **starting this Wednesday, December 6.** These service will be held at 7:00 p.m.



Our midweek Advent theme this year is ***"Resounding Psalms."*** "Resounding" means "reverberating," and the Psalms definitely reverberate with good news that God comes to **RESTORE** His people (Psalm 80), **REVIVE** them (Psalm 85), and **RETURN** them to the life He always intended for them. Join us each Wednesday for these special evening worship services, as we prepare our hearts and minds for a fitting celebration of the Christ's birth!

OFFERING BOXES AVAILABLE TODAY: With gratitude to God for the generous support of our members to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this place, the 2024 offering envelopes are available today in the narthex. If you give electronically, you will still need to pick up your offering box for the "special" services during the year, and newly confirmed members will have boxes labeled for them also. 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).

ADULT CHOIR: There has been interest shown in starting up the Adult Choir again. If you've been pondering becoming a choir member, now is your chance. Practices will not be weekly, and the choir will only be singing at some of the special services during the church year. There is a sign-up sheet on the narthex table. If you were previously in choir and intend to come back, please sign-up also. You can also call the office (419-598-8961) to sign up.

LYF DECEMBER GET-TOGETHER – The Junior High and High School *Lutheran Youth Fellowship* groups will be gathering together at the Youth Center **next Sunday, Dec. 10th at 5:00 PM.** There will be food, cookie decorating, and gifts. We encourage you to bring a friend too!

SACKING CANDY: The School Board and High School LYF members will be assembling the Christmas sacks on Sun., Dec. 17th during the Sunday School hour in the gym.

CONFIRMATION CLASS SHCHEDULE DURING ADVENT – Starting this week and for the remainder of December confirmation class will meet from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m., dismissing in time for the midweek Advent services at 7:00 p.m. Then in the new year, we will be back to our regular schedule.

LWML QUARTERLIES & ODE's: Pick up the Winter issue of the LWML Quarterly and ODE in the tract rack in the narthex. All women of the congregation are welcome to take one for your reading enjoyment during the winter months.

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 11/26/23	\$8,444.65	\$490.00	\$435.00

ATTENDANCE: Sunday – 181

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE: \$1,363.00 to *Henry County Christmas Cheer*; Attendance: 94

Opportunities for Growth in Faith this week...

SUNDAY ADULT BIBLE CLASS --- *Joseph – Carpenter of Steel*

As we approach the Christmas season, we will take some time in Sunday Bible study to consider God's servant, Joseph, step-father of our Lord. Joseph is a man appointed by God to do extraordinary things. Take a little time to study this "average Joe, and you will gain an immense amount of respect and admiration for his role in God's saving plan.

This four-part study from *Lutheran Hour Ministries* will include videos and discussion in which we hope you will engage with us, for a deeper appreciation of the Christmas story. Please join us in the fellowship hall after worship. The coffee is on!

THE LAMP (Youth Bible Study) is changing things up a bit this year. The Lamp will not be in session on the Sundays that the LYF meetings are being held. The devotion and topic will be done at the meeting. We want to welcome all youth and young adults to join us at the Youth Center across the road for Bible Study, snacks, games, discussions and fellowship!! Staying in God's Word is so important in this crucial time in life! Come join us!



GRIEF SHARE is a grief and loss support ministry to help those dealing with grief by giving them valuable, Christian-based guidance and tips leading to healing, comfort, and peace of mind. The group is led by our member, *Nancy Nemoer*, a commissioned Deaconess of the LCMS. It's never too late to join us.

“HERE WE COME A-CAROLING” – LATER TODAY we will go a-caroling the old fashioned way, and make our way around to our shut-ins at home and in nursing care facilities to bless them with companionship and the carols of Christmas. Join us at 5:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. We’ll warm up our voices and then get on the way!



Also, if you wish, bring a treat or snack item to share when we arrive back at the church. Please mark your calendar and join us for the fun. Touching the lives of our shut-ins in this simple way means the world to them! **Come a-caroling with us, and be a blessing!**

CHRISTMAS CARDS & CUTLERY: Check out the table in the hallway! The Women of Freedom have put out boxes of Christmas Cards for sale. If you are interested in purchasing any Rada cutlery items such as: Paring Knives, Stubby Butcher Knives, Pie Servers, Vegetable Peelers, Slicer Knives, Granny Forks, Carving Forks, Pizza Cutters, Tomato Slicer, and Small Spatula, please contact *Linda Meyer, Deb Wachtman, or Marian Dickmann* to purchase these. **The deadline to order the Rada Cutlery is Dec. 3rd.** This will allow the shipment to arrive before Christmas.

USHER AND ALTAR GUILD SIGN-UP – If you are interested in serving God’s people here at St. John in a way that is much needed and appreciated, would you consider joining an usher or altar guild team? The demand on your time in either area is minimal, but the blessing of rendering service to the LORD is tremendous. We are preparing the 2024 usher and altar guild schedules so this is the time to sign-up at the table in the narthex. **The sign-up deadline is Sunday, Dec. 17th.**

AN EASY OPPORTUNITY TO BENEFIT ST. JOHN SCHOOL: What if you could give more without it costing more? What if that giving helped St. John School? Learn how you can do both by contributing to the Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization (LSGO), recognized as a charitable organization by the IRS.

- The LSGO’s purpose is to raise scholarship dollars for students to attend Lutheran schools throughout Ohio, with priority given to students from low-income households.
- Contributors to the LSGO of Ohio qualify for a non-refundable tax credit for their donations; the tax credit will be able to be applied to their Ohio state income tax liability, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$750. Couples filing jointly may donate a total of \$1,500, where each person separately donates \$750.
- When you specify St. John School on your form, your entire donation will be used to benefit our students in Preschool thru Grade 8.

For more information about LSGO, please go to <https://www.lsgoohio.org/>. There are a few individuals in the side hallway today to help you understand LSGO better or to assist you with making your donation.

AREA EVENTS

- ◆ **CHRISTMAS VILLAGE CRAFT SHOW** will be held at the Ridgeville Legion Hall, Sun., Dec. 3rd from 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Lunch will be served. Come and browse the shops!
- ◆ **RIDGEVILLE LEGION BLOOD DRIVE** will be held at the Ridgeville Legion Hall, Mon., Dec. 4th from Noon – 6:00 PM. Walk-ins welcome!
- ◆ **WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA CEREMONY** will be held at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Napoleon Twp., 16976 Co Rd Q1 on Sat., Dec. 16th at noon. See flyer on the narthex table.

**KEEP THIS PAGE HANDY SO YOU DON'T MISS OUT
ON CHURCH EVENTS IN DECEMBER!**

(This will be updated as things are added)

DECEMBER HAPPENINGS – Please mark your calendars for some important events and happenings coming up at St. John this month.

- **Sunday Dec. 3, 10, 17 ♦ 10:15 a.m. CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE REHEARSALS**
Rehearsals may last a little longer than the normal Sunday School hour, perhaps till 11:30 a.m.
- **TODAY Dec. 3 ♦ 5:00 p.m. TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAROLING**
We'll hop in our cars and visit our shut-ins, both at home and in nursing care facilities, with the carols of Christmas. Bring a snack that you can share when we gather back at the church!
- **Wednesday Dec. 6, 13, 20 ♦ 7:00 p.m. MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES**
Our midweek Advent theme this year is "Resounding Psalms." Join us for the first three Wednesdays in December for these special evening services, as we prepare our hearts for birth of our Savior.
- **Sunday Dec. 10 ♦ 10:15 a.m. VOTERS' MEETING**
After worship, while the children are rehearsing, the voters will gather in the fellowship hall to discuss: 1) 2024 budget; 2) Nomination/Election of 2024 officers; and 3) The matter of seeking outside consultation for the purpose of creating a vision for ministry here at St. John.
- **Sunday Dec. 10 ♦ 2 – 5 p.m. LADIES CHRISTMAS PARTY**
Please plan to attend if you are able. The theme is "Party with a Purpose." There will be snacks and treats provided. See the flyer in today's bulletin. Additional flyers available at the narthex table. This is open to any women in the congregation. Bring a friend! We hope to see you there!
- **Sunday Dec. 10 ♦ 5 p.m. LYF CHRISTMAS GATHERING**
Jr High and High School LYF will gather at the Youth Center sat 5 PM for food, cookie decorating, and gifts. Bring a friend!
- **Sunday Dec. 17 ♦ 5:00 p.m. CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE**
The children will be ready to present you with a very special gift and blessing, as they lead us in the worship of our new-born Savior!
- **Sunday Dec. 24 ♦ CHRISTMAS EVE**
Regular Sunday Morning Service at 9:00 a.m.
Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candlelight (NO Communion) – 7:00 p.m.
- **Monday Dec. 25 ♦ CHRISTMAS DAY**
Christmas Day Divine Service and Holy Communion, the "Christ Mass" – 9:30 a.m.

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Food For Thought...

The First Advent Candle – PROPHECY

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and you will call him Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)