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 Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal School: 419-598-8702
Church Website: www.sjl.org

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Sermon & Text: "Not Just Shepherds and Wise Men" *Luke 2:22-40*
Order of Service: *See printed Service Folder*
Hymns: (Medley: **390, 389) ~ 367 ~ 929 ~ 519 ~ 352**

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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* ✠ Cayden Ruffer, Zeek Kramer, *Acolytes* ✠
✠ Dean Badenhop, Dennis Showman, Richard Elling, Dave Von Deylen, *Ushers* ✠
✠ Diane Von Deylen, Lou Ann Rosebrock, *Altar Guild* ✠

SO THANKFUL: A special thank you from the Petzoldt Family to the St. John Family for all your thoughts and prayers. The monetary gift is especially appreciated to help support our transportation and essential needs. *The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. James 5:16b.NIV*. *The Petzoldt Family*

SAFE ARRIVAL: Todd & Chris Hesterman would like to announce the birth of their grandson, *Wyatt Nicholas McCarthy*, born to Nick and Jenelle (*Hesterman*)McCarthy on Tuesday, December 26th at Toledo Hospital. Jenelle and Wyatt are doing very well. Grandparents, Todd & Chris and Tim & Karen McCarthy are giving praise and thanks to God for this blessing, along with big sister, Maclyn who will be the "best" helper once Wyatt comes home. Congrats to the McCarthys!

"THE LAMP" – Will not be meeting today. We will resume again next Sunday.

In God's House This Week		Online church calendar: https://74058984.view-events.com
Date	***Time***	***Activities***
Today	**9:00 AM** 10:20AM	**Worship Service** Adult Bible Study; Sunday School
Wed.	6:15 PM	Midweek Confirmation Class (*until 7:30 PM*)
Thurs.	8:20 AM	School resumes
Sat.	10:00AM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 11:00AM Gr. 4-6 Boys vs. Solomon–Woodville (H)
Sun.	**9:00 AM** 10:20AM	**Communion Service & Installation of Church Officers** Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"

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,* recuperating and healing at home from a broken hip
- *Lowell & Renee Petzoldt,* both of whom are dealing with serious health issues and cancer. Renee remains in critical condition at the Toledo Hospital
- *Arlene Gerken,* who has moved to the In-patient Hospice Center in Defiance
- *Jake & Rachel (*Niermann*) Andrzejewski,* on the birth of their son, Jayden Leo, on Dec. 19th
- *Kyle & Rachel Niermann,* on the birth of their son, Henry Walter, on Dec. 23rd

SUNDAY ADULT BIBLE CLASS resumes this morning with the third installment of the Lutheran Hour Ministries Bible study, ***"Joseph – Carpenter Made of Steel."*** We hope you can join us as we learn more about this often overlooked character in the Christmas story. He is a man of great faith who inspires us in our own faith. The coffee is on!

HELP FOR THE PETZOLDTS – Thank you, everyone, for the kindness you have extended to our friends in Christ, *Lowell & Renee Petzoldt*. It is such a blessing for them to know that we are supporting and upholding them in their present trials. Above all else, please keep Renee, Lowell, Blake, Courtney and Robin in prayer. Thank you again!

PORTALS OF PRAYER booklets for January, February, and March are on the desk in the back of the church. Pick up a copy today!

MEN'S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY – Men's breakfast Bible study resumes this Thursday, January 4th at 6:30 a.m.. The subject of this study will be a surprise for this time, but what's never a surprise is that breakfast is great, the fellowship is wonderful, and God's Word is life and salvation! The combination of the three is the best way to begin the day, so please join us!

POINSETTIA PLANTS – If you ordered a poinsettia, it can be taken home after today's service to be enjoyed during the winter season. There are plastic sleeves to protect them in the Conference room.

NEW YEAR'S DAY & CIRCUMCISION AND NAMING OF JESUS

And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. (Luke 2:21)

While the culture marks the beginning of a new year on January 1st each year, the church marches to the beat of a different drummer and begins a new year on the First Sunday of Advent. The significance of January 1st to us as Christians is that it is the eighth day after our celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas, the day we commemorate the circumcision and naming of Jesus. This was done for our Lord according to the Law of God in Leviticus 12:3, *"And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."*

There is much that can be said that our Lord was circumcised, but perhaps most comforting to us is how from the very first days of His life He is already fulfilling the Law of God for us, in our place. Galatians 4:4-5 says, *"God sent His Son, born of a woman,* ***born under the law****, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive our adoption as son."* Born under the Law! Jesus is our Savior, not just because He died for us, but because He lived for us the life of obedience that we could not. And already on the eighth day we see His life of perfect obedience being lived for us, that we might become the children of God through Him. Thanks be to God for our perfect Savior!

THE FLOWER CALENDAR for 2024 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 $30.00.** 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.

FINANCIAL FACTS:	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	$9,792.78	$500.00	$961.54
Rec'd 12/24/23	$27,386.00	$55.00	$150.00

ATTENDANCE: Sunday – 147

ADVENT SERVICE #3 (12-20-23): $735.00 – SJLC Student Vocation Fund; Attendance: 55

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE: $7,155.00 – Home Fund; Attendance: 237

CHRISTMAS DAY FESTIVAL SERVICE: $2,314.00 – Home Fund; Attendance: 109

GRIEF*SHARE* has wrapped up its 13 week course, but there's more to come. Another round of ***GriefShare*** sessions will begin on Tuesday, Feb. 20, and runs through May 21. These will be evening sessions from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Youth & Family Center. The last round of sessions was a great blessing, and we hope to extend the blessing to even more. For more information and to register, please check us out at our ***GriefShare*** website at: **www.griefshare.org/groups/177431**

CONFIRMATION CLASS SCHEDULE – Confirmation Class resumes this Wednesday evening, January 3 at the normal time, 6:15 to 7:30 p.m

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES – There are still a few who have not picked up their 2024 offering envelopes. Be sure to pick yours up today!

INSTALLATION OF 2024 CHURCH OFFICERS – We give thanks to God for everyone who submitted their names for nomination to our various church offices. Your servant hearts and willing spirits provide an example for us all! Those who were elected or appointed to offices for the coming year will be installed into those offices next Sunday, January 7th. ***Please note that if you are currently serving a multi-year term of office, you have already been installed and do not need to present yourself for installation again.***

Officers to be installed are: **President** – *Kirk Sausser;* **Vice President** – *Dean Badenhop*; **Treasurer** – *Cathy Gerken;* **Financial Trustee** – *Ryan Bostelman;* **Elders** – *N/A, N/A;* **Stewardship Board** – *Lisa Bockelman, Karen Lulfs;* **Board of Education** (installed to take office in July 2024) – *Linda Miller, Amy Rosebrook,* **Alt. Delegate Syn –** *vacant;* **Secretary** – *Nicole Stier;* **Church Deacon** – *Dave Johnson* (to commence in July 2024)*;* **Trustees** – *Dennis Showman, Kurtis Kramer;* **Sunday School Supt**. – *Stephanie Damman;* **Asst. Sunday School Supt.** – *vacant;* **Cemetery Board** – *Michael Cohrs, Gavin Gerken, Jake Myles;* **Cemetery Sexton** – *Ben Kruse.*

BE A JAVA JOY HOST IN 2024! Make 2024 your year for giving, by being a JAVA JOY host on the second Sunday of one of the months of 2024. Sign up now at the narthex table! Please remember that hosting does not need to cost you anything – you may reimburse yourself from the Java Joy kitty. Hosting guidelines are available next to the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Thank you for providing this wonderful service for the fellowship and enjoyment of your church family and starting 2024 off "just" right!

'BREAD FROM HEAVEN' – A note to St. John members needing food assistance – If you could use food assistance from our food pantry, please speak with *Pastor Niermann*. We are required by the *Northwestern Ohio Food Bank* to keep a record with your name, but pastor will keep your record separate and absolutely confidential.

Food contributions can be made at any time by dropping them in the box by the Food Pantry door. Monetary gifts can be given to the *Good Neighbor Fund* (note it on your offering envelope). Any and all contributions are always greatly appreciated. Thank you so much!

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Food For Thought…

New Year, Same Jesus

"Through if all, I've learned to trust in Jesus, I've learned to trust in God."

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord. (Jeremiah 29:11)