



FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom
Worship • Stewardship • Mission

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NO. 1

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

Church: 419-598-8961 Home: 419-598-8181
School: 419-598-8702
Church Website: www.sjl.org

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Sermon & Text: "As Real As It Gets" Romans 6:1-11
Order of Service: See printed Service Folder – Divine Service, Setting Five
Hymns: 394 ~ 605 ~ 404 ~ (Communion: 405, 594) ~ 538

**A WARM
WELCOME
TO OUR
VISITORS**

The Lord calls all of us to a new way of living under His wonderful grace in our Savior. If you are our guest this morning, it is a pleasure to have you worshipping with us. Please help us get to know who you are by introducing yourself to our pastor and by filling out the Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you. Simply drop it into the baskets as you leave the sanctuary today. Thank you!



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✘ Sharon Damman, Organist ✘ Erin Damman, Evelyn Szabo Acolytes ✘
- ✘ Dean Badenhop, Dennis Showman, Richard Elling, Dave Von Deylen, Ushers ✘
- ✘ Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow, Karen Germann, Altar Guild ✘

PLAYING MUSIC IN HEAVEN! We remember and grieve the passing of Renee Petzoldt on Wednesday, January 3rd at the In-Patient Hospice Center, Defiance. Renee's funeral was held here on Sat., Jan. 6th at 11:00 AM. Renee's musical talent will be greatly missed here at St. John, but we also know she will continue to play music in heaven. Please keep Lowell, Blake & Kristin, Courtney & Wes (fiancé), and grandchildren, Quinn and Scarlett in your daily prayers at this very difficult time for all of them.

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

For one final session we will give consideration to a very crucial, though oft forgotten, character in the Christmas story – Joseph, carpenter, husband, guardian of the Son of God. Joseph was 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!

In God's House This Week		Online church calendar: https://74058984.view-events.com
Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Communion Service & Installation of Church Officers Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
Mon.	5:00 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 6:00 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys vs. BG Christian (H)
Tues.	8:35 AM	School Chapel
Wed.	6:15 PM 7:00 PM	Midweek Confirmation Class (<i>until 7:30 PM</i>) Adult Choir practice (<i>see bulletin note</i>)
Thurs.	5:00 PM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 6:00 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys @ St. Paul - Napoleon
Fri.		End of 2 nd Quarter Grading Period
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM	Worship Service 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 Petzoldt*, who will embark on a course of radiation treatments possibly this week
- ❖ *Arlene Gerken*, who is receiving care at the In-patient Hospice Center in Defiance

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to *Bethann Gerken* for helping out with the Christmas services at the last minute! And also a big thank you to *Brynnleigh* and *Lakyn Kehnast* for blessing us with their preservice piano pieces on Christmas Eve. Thank you for using your talents for God's glory!!!

Signed, *Sharon Damman*

CONFIRMATION CLASS SHCEDULE – Midweek confirmation classes are back to their regular schedule, meeting on Wednesday evenings from 6:15 to 7:30 p.m. at the *Youth & Family Center*.

ADULT CHOIR PRACTICE: The Adult Choir is reorganizing again and practice will begin this Wed., Jan. 10th at 7:00 PM in the church balcony. Even if you didn't sign up and still have that urge to join, please do so. The director is *Jon Buenger*. We look forward to having some new people join us and use their talents in praise to God!

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

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

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 12/31/23	\$12,376.39	\$125.00	\$375.00

ATTENDANCE: Sunday – 137

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*.

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.

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!



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

‘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!

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.

WORSHIP ANEW: Lutheran Ministries Media, Inc. produces a weekly, 30-minute Lutheran broadcast worship service called *Worship Anew* (*formerly Worship For Shut-Ins*). Each service includes music, scripture readings, prayers, and a pastor delivering a message that is designed to feel one-on-one to the viewer. For over 50+ years, the ministry’s dedicated staff and supporters have touched the lives of countless viewers around the world. They look forward to the continuation and expansion of this ministry in the years to come. Lutheran Ministries Media would like to thank you for your prayers and support of God’s work through *Worship Anew*. Broadcasts can be viewed every Sunday on: *Toledo’s WTVG (CW) Channel 13.2 at 10:30 AM*.

IF YOU’RE EVER IN A PINCH and could use a little help, the *Good Neighbor Fund* is there to assist you too! Please don’t be bashful about asking – everything is strictly confidential. Just give Pastor Niermann a call, and we’ll see what we can do!

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.

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Food For Thought...

Sign at a Baptist Church – “We Love Hurting People” (*Should’ve thought that one through*)

“Be kind to one another.” (Eph 4:29)