

# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

January 14, 2024

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NO. 2

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](http://www.sjl.org)

### SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Guest Preacher: Rev. Ted Rellstab

Sermon & Text: "A Listening Heart" 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19

Order of Service: Printed Order – Service of Prayer & Preaching

Hymns: 901 ~ (589, between readings) ~ 'Here I Am, Lord' ~ 827 ~ 784

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### WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

*Welcome to St. John Church. We thank God for this time together! We pray that the grace of God will heal your hurts; that the strength of God will give you courage to face the work before you; that the power of God will prepare your way; and that the peace of God will keep you secure and steady in Christ Jesus. If you are a visitor, please introduce yourself to our pastor and fill out the Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack and drop it into the baskets as you leave the sanctuary today.*

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

- ✠ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✠ Zeek Kramer, Cayden Ruffer *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Dean Badenhop, Dennis Showman, Richard Elling, Dave Von Deylen, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow, Karen Germann, *Altar Guild* ✠

**WELCOME AGAIN, REV. TED RELLSTAB!** This morning we welcome back to St. John **Rev. Ted Rellstab**, long-time, now retired, pastor of St. John Lutheran in Holgate. Rev. Rellstab is filling in as Pastor & Bonnie Niermann attend the baptism of one of their new grandsons this morning. As always, we thank Rev. Rellstab for being here to share God's Word with us and to lead us in worship. It is a blessing to have him, and Deb, his wife, in our midst today!

- **BIBLE STUDY THIS MORNING** – After worship this morning Rev. Rellstab will also be conducting a single-session Bible study in the fellowship hall. Please come on down for the fellowship and for growth together in God's Word.

**2024 ALTAR GUILD (pink) SCHEDULE:** The 2024 Altar Guild schedule is available today and can be picked up on the narthex table. Thanks again to all who are willing to be of service to the Lord through St. John. You are a blessing!

## In God's House This Week

Online church calendar: <https://74058984.view-events.com>

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM	<b>Worship Service w/Communion following</b> <i>Java Joy</i> ; Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
Mon.	6:00 PM	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – MLK Jr. Day observed B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 7:00 PM Gr. 4-6 Boys @ Trinity - Toledo
Tues.	8:35 AM	<b>School Chapel</b>
Wed.	6:15 PM	Midweek Confirmation Class ( <i>until 7:30 PM</i> )
Thurs.	6:30 AM 5:30 PM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Boys ONLY vs. St. Pats – Bryan (H)
Sat.	10:00AM	B-ball: Gr. 4-6 Girls; 11:00 AM Gr. 4-6 Boys @ St. Mary's – Edgerton
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM 4:00 PM	<b>Communion Service</b> Adult Bible Study; Sunday School Jr. High LYF; 5:00 PM High School LYF

### **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 is dealing with cancer (*see bulletin note*)
- ❖ *Arlene Gerken*, who is receiving care at the In-patient Hospice Center in Defiance

**JAVA JOY TODAY** – It's the second Sunday of January, and you know what that means. It's JAVA JOY day! We thank our hosts today, ***Mike & Amy Dietrich***, for providing us this time for fellowship and refreshment. Please stop out in the front hallway after worship and enjoy it!

*Java Joy hosts are still needed for the remainder of the year, on second Sundays. If you would like to host, please sign up in the narthex. A sheet with guidelines is available as well. Hosting Java Joy does not need to cost you anything. You can reimburse yourself from the Java Joy kitty if you wish.*



**LYF NEWS:** The next LYF meeting is coming up on Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> at the Youth and Family Center. \*Jr. High (Grades 6-8) will meet at 4 PM and \*High School (Grades 9-12) will meet at 5 PM.

**National Youth Gathering:** 1) **Participants** - The LCMS Youth Gathering is July 19-23, 2025 in New Orleans. The Gathering is for youth participants between the ages of 14 – 19 at the time of the Gathering. Stay tuned for more details. 2) **Volunteers** - Those who are 19-25 years old may choose to serve as a Young Adult Volunteer (YAV). Feel free to contact Youth Directors, Todd or Tina Wachtman with any questions.

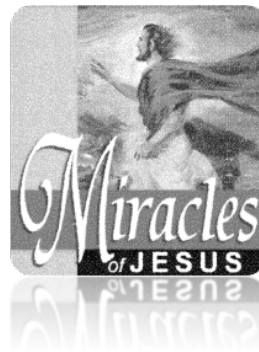
**A SPECIAL THANK YOU** to the St John Family for what you did to help us during Renee's funeral. Many compliments from my family as well as visitors on how well you welcomed everyone. *The Petzoldt Family & Robin Wagner*

**Update on Lowell's condition:** On January 9<sup>th</sup> I went to an appointment at the James Center in Columbus, OH. The cancer specialist said I was diagnosed with lung cancer that has spread to my kidneys, L3 in my back, and a mass on my side that is a gene mutation called ALK. I will be returning to the James Center within two weeks to get my treatment plan. The plan as of now, is to give me a daily pill that will shrink all my forms of cancer and a slight chance of removing it completely. I will also be receiving radiation at the Karmanos Cancer Institute at the Toledo Clinic Cancer Center in Maumee, OH for the cancer in my back on L3. The radiation hopefully will shrink that cancer and relieve my pain. A special thank you to the people that have volunteered to take me to my appointments, helped me with home accommodations, and overall prayers. *Lowell Petzoldt*

**NEW SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY BEGINS NEXT SUNDAY --- Miracles of Jesus**

**“It’s a miracle!”** These words mean many things to different people. Some use them to describe any surprising or unexpected event. Some limit these words to events that seem humanly impossible. Many don’t know what miracles really are or question whether they exist. Miracles are an important part of Jesus’ ministry, but what are they exactly? And what’s their purpose?

We hope you can join us for this new Bible study, ***Miracles of Jesus***, starting next Sunday. Each session of this 12-session study takes a look at one of the miracles of our Lord, including *Water Turned to Wine*, *The Healing of the Paralyzed Man*, *Jesus Walking on Water*, *The Blind Man Receiving Sight*, as well as the *Incarnation* and *Resurrection of Jesus*. Each session is a self-contained study, so you cannot “fall behind” if you miss a day. ***Please join us starting next Sunday!***



**ADULT CHOIR PRACTICE:** The Adult Choir is reorganizing again and practice began this past week. Our next practice will be Wed., Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the balcony. Even if you couldn’t make the first practice, please join us on the 24<sup>th</sup>. And 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!

<b><u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u></b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec’d 12/31/23	\$7,578.00	\$232.00	\$253.00

**ATTENDANCE:** Sunday – 162

**COUNCIL MINUTES** – This is just a reminder that council meeting minutes are not published until they are approved a month later. If you would like to read about the most recent council meeting, an unofficial and unapproved copy of the minutes is available for viewing in the church office, usually within a week after the meeting.

## NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK – January 21 – 27, 2024

As a congregation that supports a Lutheran School, we will be joining sister schools and congregations across the nation to celebrate *National Lutheran Schools Week*, January 21-27. In celebration of National Lutheran Schools Week, St. John will be holding various activities at school that include live broadcasts on the local radio station, WNDH 103.1, dress-up days, and a few other fun activities still being worked out.

Lutheran Schools are driven by a commitment to the Gospel. They meet or exceed state and national academic standards, and have educators who model visionary, servant, and spiritual leadership. The LCMS has 1,800 preschools, elementary schools, and high schools with the public opportunity to proclaim and celebrate God's work among us in Lutheran schools. We thank God for the opportunity to share Jesus' amazing love with children and their families. NLSW gives us the chance to proclaim these blessings out in the community. Lutheran schools are an amazing incubator for faithful witnessing of God's love for us through Christ by teachers and students alike. Stay tuned for more information in the near future.

"Connected" is the theme for the 2024 National Lutheran Schools Week celebration. The associated scripture verse is John 15:1-5 which says:

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."*

**IN CONSIDERATION OF PASTOR'S JUNE RETIREMENT**, there are a few things that we will need to consider. This list is not exhaustive, but it's a beginning.

- **Desk for Pastor's Study** – The desk in our Pastor's study belongs to Pastor Niermann, so we need to find a desk to replace it. The council determined that it should be a wood executive size office desk of good craftsmanship, not of the self-assembly type. If you are aware of a desk that might be available, please speak with congregational president, Kirk Sausser, or V.P. Dean Badenhop.
- **Thursday evening services** may or may not be available this summer, depending on how things shape up for the interim and pastoral call process. We will keep you informed.
- **Vacation Bible School** – We definitely want to move forward with VBS '24, even though the date will be after Pastor's retirement. If you would like to direct our VBS this year, please speak with Pastor Niermann – it's not too soon to begin thinking about this.

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

**ST. JOHN OPEN HOUSE** – An **Open House** is planned for grade levels (PS-8) at St. John School for Wednesday evening, **February 7<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 to 7:00 PM (note time change)**, for families who would like to come and look at our school and discuss the possibility of sending their child/children here for their education and to grow their faith. If anyone in the school or congregation might know of prospective students for Grades PS-8, be sure to pass this information on to them.

**PART-TIME CHURCH SECRETARY POSITION** – With the announcement of Joyce’s retirement at the end of this year, the church council has decided to break out this position into two positions, a part-time church secretary and a full-time school secretary. **We are currently seeking applicants for a part-time church secretary.** This job would involve working two days per week (probably later in the week). Required are a high school diploma, an accounting background, a good familiarity with word processing, data base and computer use, and the ability to maintain a strict confidence. An Associate Degree in the secretarial field is a bonus. Applicants must be willing to submit a résumé, obtain a background check, supply three references, and must adhere to the religious beliefs of St. John Lutheran Church. If you are interested, or you know someone who may be interested, please call the church office at 419-598-8961.



St. John is again preparing for ***GriefShare***, a 13-week class for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, a spouse, baby or child, a parent, best friend, or sibling. Whether your loss is recent or more distant, the learning, insights, opportunity to talk and listen, video presentation and study guide have proven valuable in the grieving process. Meeting this spring, Feb. 20 - May 21, on

Tuesday evenings from 6-7:30 PM in the Youth & Family Center. Learn more and register at <https://www.griefshare.org/groups/177431>.

Additionally, volunteers are invited to assist in co-facilitating, hospitality, publicity, and in prayer that the Holy Spirit would continue to guide this program of hope and healing. Contact Nancy Nemoyer, for more complete information about these opportunities to serve and support this work.

**PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT** – St. John Lutheran Preschool is now accepting enrollment applications for the 2024-25 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. We will be opening the registration up to the public as of Feb. 2, 2024, 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. Refer a family to our preschool and your \$30 registration fee will be refunded.

**ST. JOHN SCRIP CONTINUES:** You may begin ordering SCRIP again. Please turn those orders in on Wednesdays, with payment to *St. John School PTL Scrip*. 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.**

**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.

**‘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.

**THE LUTHERAN HOUR** – Locally you can listen to the Lutheran Hour Ministries broadcast on WMTR 96.1 FM, Archbold at 7:30 AM or on WNDH 103.1 FM, Napoleon at approximately 9:00 AM every Sunday. They cover many interesting topics relevant to today’s issues.

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

**Keep your words sweet, or you may have to eat them.**

*“A fool’s lips walk into a fight, and his mouth invites a beating.” (Prov 18:6)*