



FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom
Worship • Stewardship • Mission

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NO. 12

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

SUNDAY OF THE PASSION (Palm Sunday)

Sermon Title & Text: "A Glorious Death" John 12:20-43

Order of Service: See printed Service Folder

Hymns: 443 ~ 901 ~ 685 ~ 441 ~ 837

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

On this day, long ago, our Lord entered Jerusalem to glad shouts of "Hosanna!" On the threshold of Holy Week, we invite you to share with us this foretaste of His final triumph. Welcome to our celebration! If you have no church home of your own, we invite you to join the St. John family. Simply fill out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack and drop it in the baskets at the doors as you leave.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✠ Anna Sausser, Anika Rosebrock, *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Denny Von Deylen, Jerry Short, David Badenhop, Dan Wiechers, *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Elaine Buenger, Teresa Weller, Deb Von Deylen, *Altar Guild* ✠

ALTAR FLOWERS today are in celebration of the 67th Wedding Anniversary of *Dick & Elaine Mahnke*. The Mahnke's actual anniversary was this past Fri., March 23rd. We congratulate them on this occasion and wish them nothing but God's blessing in the year ahead. Congrats to Dick & Elaine!

MOURNING THE LOSS: On Monday, March 18, 2024, *Arlene Gerken*, 90, passed away at the In-Patient Hospice Center, Defiance, OH. Arlene's funeral was held at St. John on Thurs., March 21st at 11:00 AM with burial following in St. John Lutheran Cemetery. We will miss Arlene's gentle smile, but are comforted knowing she is spending her first Easter in heaven. Please keep *Sandy (Tom) Von Deylen, Stan (Cathy) Gerken, Sara (Dave) Myles, and Scott (Lori) Gerken* in your prayers at this time of grief for they and their families.

MEN'S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY will not be meeting during Holy Week. Our next breakfast get-together is set for Thursday, April 4 at 6:30 a.m. We hope you can join us then!

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20AM 4:00 PM	Palm Sunday Procession and Worship Service Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp" 4-H Meetings – Gerald Busy Fingers & Cloverbuds
Mon.	3:00 PM 5:30 PM	Stoller "Yummy" Fundraiser delivered (<i>pick up between 3&4 pm</i>) <i>Bread From Heaven</i> Food Pantry distribution
Tues.	8:35 AM 7:00 PM	School Chapel Board of Elders
Wed.	7:00 PM	NO SCHOOL – Easter Break begins (Classes resume on Tues., April 2 nd) Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday Communion Service ; Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolyte: Nolan Bickel, Brayden Damman Ushers: Elmer Maassel, Denny Behnfeldt, Bob Norden, Ted Ripke Altar Guild: Elaine Buenger, Teresa Weller, Deb Von Deylen
Fri.	7:00 PM	Good Friday Tenebrae Service ; Offering: <i>Home Fund</i> Acolyte: Anna Sausser Ushers: Denny Von Deylen, Jerry Short, David Badenhop, Dan Wiechers Altar Guild: Elaine Buenger, Teresa Weller, Deb Von Deylen
Sun.	7:00 AM 8:00AM 9:30 AM	Easter Sunrise Service Easter Fellowship Breakfast Easter Festival Service

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

- ❖ *Melba Elling* and *Norma Damman*, at Genacross
- ❖ *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*, *Lowell Petzoldt*, *Sue Hurst*, *Dave Crandall*, dealing with health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *Aimee Naveau*, recovering from injuries sustained in a serious car accident
- ❖ *Bob Norden*, who is recovering from recent hip replacement surgery
- ❖ *Bev Elling*, recovering at the rehab center at the Lakes of Monclova facility
- ❖ *Elaine Hesterman*, hospitalized this week on Wednesday in Toledo Hospital



PALM SUNDAY CHILDREN'S PROCESSION THIS MORNING – Parents, the children are gathering this morning in the fellowship hall to prepare for a Palm Sunday processional at the beginning of our worship this morning. There will also be a special message for them at the front of the sanctuary. When they arrive, send them down to the fellowship hall to join us!

ARCHIVES DISPLAY: The Archives Display has been finished and is showcasing the 2023-2024 St. John School students, teachers, and staff; field trips; St. John high school sports students; and pictures of the Ladies Aid Mother-Daughter Banquets of the past and more. Stop by and enjoy the variety of pictures. Thank you to the Archives Committee for this nice feature!

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY – HEALING OF THE TEN LEPERS

Walking through the mall one day, you look in a window and see something that your friend would like. It would be an absolutely perfect gift. You buy the gift, carefully wrap it, and drop it off at her house. You wait to hear from her, but nothing is said. You get no response. You know your friend got the gift, but she never acknowledges it. Kind of hurts, doesn't it? Did Jesus feel something like that when nine of the ten lepers He healed did not offer so much as a word of gratitude? We hope you can join us this morning for our study, *Miracles of Jesus*, as we consider the *Resurrection of Lazarus*. Come on down - the coffee is on!



Come Worship With Us!

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER AT ST. JOHN

Holy Week is full of drama! It starts with a rather humble parade on Palm Sunday. No prior publicity. No tickets for admission. Just palm branches waving and a spontaneous crowd. God shows up in lowly pomp, riding in subdued majesty to His coronation by crucifixion.

On Thursday, Jesus gathers with His disciples for a final meal. No fine china, real silver or linen napkins. Seemingly just bread and wine from the hand of God's only Son. But is there more?

Then a rigged trial and convenient condemnation. The innocent One is branded the worst of criminals. The Holy One is abandoned. Disciples flee. Hope retreats. Humiliation and suffering lead to death on a cross.

As we worship together this Holy Week, come and bear witness to the full range of human experience and the abundant grace of a loving God, from a parade with shouts of praise to a meal framed by promise and betrayal, to abandonment, to a gruesome death and empty hearts, and, finally, to an empty grave. From death to life. All because God shows up. Don't miss a moment!

HOLY WEEK

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| • Today | Palm Sunday – “Glorious Death” | Children’s procession of palms |
| • Mar. 28 | Maundy Thursday – “It’s About Jesus” | Holy Communion |
| • Mar. 29 | Good Friday – “Real Life after Good Friday” | Tenebrae; Adult Choir
<i>Dedication of Crucifix</i> |

EASTER – Next Sunday, March 31

- 7:00am Easter Sunrise Service – “One is the Biggest Number”
- 8:00am Fellowship Breakfast – *Easter bags for the children*
- 9:30am Easter Festival Service, Holy Communion – “A Jarring New Reality”

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.

BREAKFAST HELP – Thank you to everyone who signed up to bring food donations for the Easter Breakfast. This year’s Easter Breakfast will be served between the two services on Easter morning (8:00-9:15 AM). The menu is: *Scrambled eggs, sausage, tater tots, grapes, doughnuts, cinnamon rolls, cookies, coffee and juice.* Church Council and the LYF are being asked to come and help with preparing and serving this year’s Easter Breakfast. Anyone else wanting to help with prep and serving are welcome help also.

NOTE: Some of the food items such as **EGGS, TATER TOTS, or MILK will need to be at the church by 8:00am Sat., March 30th** so they can be prepped for Sunday’s breakfast. If you signed up for baked goods, cookies, fruit or juice, please have it to the kitchen either on Saturday or by 8:00am Easter morning.

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!



LWML SPRING RALLY - The Napoleon Zone Spring Rally will be held at St. John Lutheran, Stryker, Ohio, on Saturday, April 13th with registration at 8:30am followed by the program at 9am. The speaker will be Judy Kaufmann, who will share news about her mission trip to Malawi in Africa. The ingathering will be new socks and underwear for men, women and children to be donated to Orphan Grain Train. See flyer for more information!

NEW BOOKS! The St. John Church Library is located in the hallway west of the sanctuary. Many new books have been recently added to its shelves including: "Objections Overruled III, Answering Arguments Against Christianity", "Reading Isaiah With Luther", "The Work Of His Hands, A View of God's Creation From Space", and "Luther, The Graphic Novel". Just take any book you wish at any time and return it in the basket provided when finished.

NEWS ON THE ALTAR CRUCIFIX – Presently we are awaiting shipment of our beautiful new altar crucifix that will permanently adorn our sanctuary. Tracking info indicates that we should receive this shipment this week, so that we are ready to dedicate the crucifix at our Good Friday worship service. This crucifix was carved for us by a master Holzschneiderei (German for wood carver) from Oberammergau, Germany, named Robert Eder. The pictures we have seen look fabulous. Plan to join us at our Good Friday Tenebrae service for the unveiling and dedication. A booklet full of information about our crucifix and about the use of crucifixes in general will be available at this service as well.

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 03/17/24	\$7,859.19	\$120.00	\$165.00

ATTENDANCE: Sunday – 161

LENTEN SERVICE (3/13/24): *Lutheran Hour Broadcast* - \$760.00; Attendance: 55

YUMMY FUNDRAISER: A reminder that the “Yummy” Fundraiser items will be delivered on Mon., March 25th from 3-4PM. If you ordered items, please make arrangements to pick them up then. We hope you enjoy all the items you ordered!



GRIEF SHARE is a class offered here at St. John for those grieving the loss of a loved one. We meet on Tuesday evenings, 6 - 7:30 p.m., from now until May 21. It is led by the team of Nancy Nemoyer, a member of St. John and Rev. Robert Bartz, interim pastor of Emmaus Lutheran, Wauseon. Learn more or register to attend at www.griefshare.org/groups/177431. Pray for the comfort of the participants and the wisdom of the leaders.

SPECIAL THANKS to those who signed up to bake "comfort cookies" for the GriefShare classes. A cookie won't cure grief, but it can offer some needed comfort for the participants.

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.

CHOICE DOLLARS: Keep up the good work! Your designations are making a difference here at St. John. You have until March 31, 2024 to designate your 2023 Choice Dollars. Some of you may still have Choice Dollars to designate, so give Mary Kossow (*at the Ridgeville Thrivent Office*) a call to check on your Choice Dollars. If you have an online account with Thrivent, please log on and check to see if you have Choice Dollars to designate. The phone number is 419-267-0113. Thank You!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – IT'S TIME TO PLAN

It's time to begin thinking about plans for Vacation Bible School this summer, which we typically schedule for mid-June. First on the VBS to-do list is to identify a director to work with the pastor to coordinate plans this year. If you might be interested in serving the children in this way, please speak with Pastor Niermann ASAP, and we'll get the ball rolling. Thank you!



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

KINDERGARTEN CLINIC & ELIGIBILITY: For students entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2024, our Kindergarten clinic will be held on Thursday, April 4th with the time TBD. There WILL BE Kindergarten class as usual on the 4th. **St. John Lutheran School's eligibility date for entering Kindergarten is that a child must be five years old on or before September 30th 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 2023 (*if available*); immunization records; Social Security number; child custody documents if applicable; and the baptism date or dedication date. If applying for the EdChoice Expansion Scholarship, please bring a current utility bill to confirm your permanent residence. *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.*

PROJECT CONNECT – There are many free booklets in the rack in the narthex. Be sure to check for some informative reading. Some titles are: “*Alzheimer’s: Facing the Loss of a Lifetime*,” “*Talking with God*,” “*Forgiveness is a Choice*,” “*Talking Openly with Kids*,” “*Setting Priorities*,” “*Your Place in God’s Plan*,” “*Stressed but Connected*,” “*Beyond Divorce*,” “*For Better, For Worse*,” “*What Is Faith in Jesus?*” and many more. These booklets are furnished through the Lutheran Hour Ministries.

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.

USE OF THE FELLOWSHIP HALL OR YOUTH CENTER – If you would like to use the Fellowship Hall or Youth Center for any occasion on a certain date this year, **please contact the church/school office at 419-598-8961 or 419-598-8702.**

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.

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.*

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Food For Thought...

No pains, no palms; no thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown. –*William Penn*

“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)