St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP 16035 CO. RD. U ◆ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

April 7, 2024

VOL. 89 NO. 14

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

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sermon & Text: "Easter Makes a Difference" *Acts 4:32–35*
Order of Service: See printed Service Folder, Divine Service, Setting One
Hymns: 484 ~ 468 ~ (Communion: 469, 487) ~ 477

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WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life." Our Savior invites us to His table, a table of love that has been prepared for us. Jesus, our Savior, lived, died and lives again for each one of us. Let us worship our God today and praise Him for His love. If you are a visitor today, please fill out a blue pew card from the rack in front of you and drop it in the baskets at the doors as you leave today.

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SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

✠ Bethann Gerken, *Pianist* ✠ Nolan Bickel, Maxton Howard, *Acolytes* ✠
✠ Elmer Maassel, Bob Norden, Denny Behnfeldt, Ted Ripke, *Ushers* ✠
✠ LouAnn Rosebrock, Diane Von Deylen, *Altar Guild* ✠

EASTER THANKS – We give thanks to God for everyone who worked so diligently and faithfully to make Easter at St. John such a joyful celebration of Christ's resurrection. Thank you to *Sharon Damman, Elaine Buenger* and *Bethann Gerken* for the wonderful music, to *Brynnleigh Kehnast* for playing the piano during the Offertory in the Easter Sunrise service, and to *Jon Buenger* and the adult choir for their beautiful choral selections. Thanks also to the church deacons, altar guild members, ushers, acolytes, and *Dan Wachtman* and *Nathan Nemoyer* for the technical help in the balcony. To *Joyce Wiechers*, for all the extra printing and coordination; to everyone who supplied flowers and breakfast items; to Dan and the breakfast crew who pulled together a wonderful breakfast and decorated the fellowship hall; to the Stewardship Board for coordinating the children's Easter Bag-skets; and to anyone else who had a hand in helping us to celebrate, we say from the depths of our hearts --- THANK YOU! Well done, good and faithful servants!

In God's House This Week		Online church calendar: https://74058984.view-events.com
Date	***Time***	***Activities***
Today	**9:00 AM** 10:20AM 1:30 PM	**Communion Service** Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp" 4-H Meetings – Gerald Busy Fingers & Cloverbuds
Tues.	**8:35 AM** 6:00 PM 7:00 PM	**School Chapel** *GriefShare* Ministry Support Group (*until 7:30 PM*) Church Council Meeting
Wed.	6:15 PM	Midweek Confirmation Class (*until 7:30 PM*)
Sat.	9:00 AM	LWML Napoleon Zone Spring Rally (*see bulletin note*)
Sun.	**9:00 AM** 10:20AM	**Worship Service** w/Communion following Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"

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
- *Bev Elling,* recovering at the rehab center at the Lakes of Monclova facility
- *Elaine Hesterman,* moved to Genacross – Napoleon for rehab following a stroke
- *Arlene Gruenhagen,* recovering from recent shoulder surgery
- *Blake & Brittni Miller,* on the birth of their son, *Liam Elliot*, on April 4th at FCHC

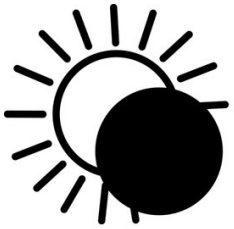
OUR THANKS: Thank you so much for the cards and memorials given in our Mom's name. She would be so happy to be remembered by so many. Thank you, Pastor, for your visits at home and away. It meant so much to all of us. We appreciate Sharon for playing the songs Mom chose and Pete for helping us fulfill a promise we made that he would sing. Thanks to the food committee for the luncheon after the service, feeding souls and bodies as you always have. Our St. John family is very special! *The Family of Arlene Gerken*

BAPTISM NEXT SUNDAY – We look forward next Sunday to the baptism of ***Wyatt Nicholas McCarthy***, infant son of Nick & Jenelle (Hesterman) McCarthy. Let's all share together in the joy of this family as little Wyatt is born anew of water and the Word into the family of God!

2023 ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE TODAY! These are available today (after the service) on the narthex table and the desk. There are 50 copies and more will be printed as needed each Sunday. Thank you to those of you who contributed information for the completion of this report. It is greatly appreciated every year!

AMAZING ARTWORK: The students of St. John School have been busy in art class this school year. They have created some amazing drawings and 3D images. Please take a few extra minutes to stroll down the back hallway to enjoy some of the fun projects they have completed.

SOLAR ECLIPSE AND THE GLORY OF GOD



Tomorrow, Monday, April 8, we will experience a solar eclipse the likes of which has not been seen in northwest Ohio for over 200 years. As people of faith, we are being given a window into the majesty and magnificence of God's creation and of our own fragile role in it.

Psalm 19:1 says, *"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."* In light of this, we learn that science is no threat to faith. Science is nothing more than the careful observation and study of God's creation. Paying careful attention to what God has made, and admiring what He has created, is in fact a form of devotion. As an artist is pleased when you enjoy her artwork, God is pleased when we stand in awe of His handiwork.

And there will be no better time to stand in awe of God than in the face of this cosmic event, the solar eclipse. Let us observe it carefully. Let us rejoice in the magnificent order God has established in His universe. Let us ponder how big as God is and how small we are, and rejoice that He is nevertheless mindful of us and has given His only Son to call us *"out of the darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9)*. While protecting our eyes, let us be reminded of what a miracle it is that we exist at all.

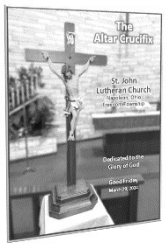
Tomorrow, we will witness the glory of God proclaimed in the skies. If clouds should obscure our view, let us be reminded of the second coming of Jesus upon the clouds in great glory (Mark 13:26), when sin's long eclipse of heaven's light will at last be over, and there shall be no more darkness. Either way, let us give thanks that we are alive to see this day! For those interested in viewing the eclipse, there are several solar eclipse glasses available on the narthex table. Please keep your eyes protected and be safe!

CHANGES IN WORSHIP SLIDES – In view of Pastor Niermann's pending retirement, it is necessary that the task of preparing worship slides be handed off to another individual. Currently, Pastor Niermann is working on this transition with a member of the church who has kindly volunteered to take this on. However, the transition will require some changes. You will notice that we are scaling back worship slides to the basics – a theme slide to set the tone for worship, hymn slides, and the Steward*MINUTE* slide for the offering. This means that we will need to make more extensive use of our hymnals to follow the liturgies, and the back side of the bulletin to read along with the Scriptures. To help in this process, a slide at the beginning of worship will relate helpful information on getting your hymnal ready with ribbon markers so that you can navigate the service more easily.

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.

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.

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC is *Regrets.* The phrase "If only....." can haunt the one who has experienced the death of a loved one, and feels guilt or regret. We want to go back and redo parts of the relationship. God's response is both honest and restorative.



NEW ALTAR CRUCIFIX – This past Good Friday our new altar crucifix, which you see before you this morning, was blessed and dedicated for service in God's house as a permanent fixture in the Lord's sanctuary. To learn more about this crucifix in particular, and about the history and use of the crucifix in general, Pastor Niermann has prepared a booklet that you can pick up from the narthex table this morning. If you get a moment, please come near to the altar to get an up-close look at this beautiful work of art, and the care and detail that went into it.

FINANCIAL FACTS:	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	$9,792.78	$500.00	$961.54
Rec'd 03/31/24	$8,836.00	$35.00	$270.00

ATTENDANCE: 3/31/24 – Sunrise Service: 174; Late Service: 245

MAUNDY THURSDAY SVC. (3/28/24): Home Fund - $1,229.00; Attendance: 104

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE (3/29/24): Home Fund - $1,548.00; Attendance: 178

SCHOOL SECRETARIAL POSITION: We are now accepting résumé from anyone interested in applying for the position of School Secretary. This is a fulltime position, working year-round. Requirements are a high school diploma, an accounting background, a good familiarity with Word, Excel, and Google Drive, 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. Resumes should be emailed to tgermann@sjl.org, or dropped off at the school office. Deadline for submissions is May 15, 2024.

PART-TIME CHURCH SECRETARY POSITION – **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.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – STAFF RECRUITMENT

A director for our 2024 VBS has come forward, so now we begin recruiting our VBS staff. Tentatively we are look at the dates of June 10-14 (Monday – Friday, 9:00-11:30 am) for our VBS. Enclosed in today's bulletin is a VBS staff recruitment form. We are seeking adult volunteers to coordinate each of the five site rotations (Bible Story, Bible challenge, crafts, games, snacks), as well as additional helping staff. Please consider ministering to the children as a volunteer with our VBS. It is a wonderful way to bring the children to Jesus, as He bids us to do, *"Let the children come unto me." (Matthew 19:14)*

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!

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.

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.

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 around the stamp. The stamp may not be damaged and the perforations around the stamp must be perfect. You need not trim the stamp. 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. Collecting stamps is an easy way to participate in a mission project sponsored by the Lutheran Women's Missionary League.

AREA EVENTS:

- Today at 6:30 PM there will be a presentation at **St. Paul Lutheran Church – Napoleon Township** (16976 County Road Q1, Napoleon) about the 48N48 Project flight taken by Barry Behnfeldt. Refreshments to follow. Free will offering taken with all proceeds going toward the Veterans Airlift Command, which provides free, private air transportation to our nation's combat injured veterans for medical and other services.
- **St. Martin's Concert Series** is proud to present *Found Sounds* today at 3pm**.** This versatile group of musicians from NE Ohio specializes in various percussion music from around the world. This performance will feature the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago, the steelpan. See flyer! For more information visit: https://the-welcome-place.org/about/worship-and-music/st-martins-2023-2024-concert-series/
- Sunday, April 14th at 4:00 PM **The Kantorei of Concordia Theological Seminary** will perform Bach Cantata 67, "Hold in Remembrance Jesus Christ." See flyer!

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Food For Thought…

Christ's resurrection changes the midnight of bereavement into the sunrise of reunion!

"We…will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord." (Thess. 4:18)

COLORING PAGE

(Doubting Thomas)

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