



FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 CO. RD. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom
Worship • Stewardship • Mission

April 28 2024

VOL. 89

NO. 17

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

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sermon & Text: "Abide in the Vine" Acts 8:26-40

Order of Service: Printed Order of Service

Hymns: [Baptism: 605, 601] ~ 540 ~ 953 ~ 691

**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 and dropping it in the baskets by the doors as you leave today.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✦ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✦ Brayden Damman, Zeek Kramer, *Acolytes* ✦
- ✦ Elmer Maassel, Bob Norden, Denny Behnfeltd, Ted Ripke, *Ushers* ✦
- ✦ LouAnn Rosebrock, Diane Von Deylen, *Altar Guild* ✦

FLOWERS TODAY:

- ❖ Altar flowers are placed today in celebration of the baptism of *Calvin Michael Buchhop*. Nathan, Kaylee, and Mack, along with fellow Christians, welcome Calvin into the family of God thru his baptism.
- ❖ Piano flowers are placed in loving memory of our daughter, sister, and aunt, *Stephanie Kossow*, who went to be with the Lord 16 years ago on May 1st. As the years pass, we still miss her each day, but know she is singing her heart out in heaven along with her three grandparents. Signed, *Doug, Mary, Tyler, Olivia, Kohen, Karsyn, and Logan*

SPECIAL VOTERS' MEETING TODAY: There will be a Special Voters' Meeting held after today's worship service in the fellowship hall. The business at hand is to present a recommendation for a TIM (Transitional Interim Minister) candidate to fulfill the pastoral duties at St. John following Pastor Niermann's retirement. More details will be conveyed at the meeting.

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 Voters' Meeting; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
Tues.	8:35 AM 6:00 PM	School Chapel <i>GriefShare</i> Ministry Support Group (<i>until 7:30 PM</i>)
Wed.	6:15 PM 7:00 PM	Midweek Confirmation Class (<i>until 7:30 PM</i>) Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	6:30 AM 7:45 AM 7:00 PM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast Muffins with Mom (<i>see bulletin note</i>) Thursday Evening Worship (with communion)
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20AM 1:30 PM	Communion Service Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp" Gerald Busy Fingers & Cloverbuds 4-H Meetings

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

- ❖ *Melba Elling, Norma Damman, and Elaine Hesterman (rehabbing)*, 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
- ❖ *Bev Elling*, recovering at home now following recent hip surgery

BAPTISMS TODAY – This morning we rejoice with a couple of families who are celebrating the baptisms of their little ones.

- **Calvin Michael Buchhop**, the infant son of *Nathan & Kaylee Buchhop*, will be baptized during the service this morning. Calvin was born on February 28 at the Parkview Regional Medical Center in Fort Wayne, IN. Witnessing his baptism are family friends, Joe & Haley Cordes. Calvin's grandparents are Robert & Ronda Wentworth and Mike & Dawn Buchhop, and the late Cindy Buchhop.
- **Liam Elliot Miller**, infant son of *Blake & Brittni Miller*, will be baptized in a family ceremony after today's service. Liam was born on April 4 at the Fulton County Health Center in Wauseon. Witnessing his baptism will be Megan Snodgrass (Brittni's sister), and Katy & Jesse Hesketh (Blake's sister and brother-in-law). Grandparents are Steve & Linda Miller, Bill Snodgrass, and Monnie Holman.



The Psalmist said, "*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord*" (*Psalm 127:3*). We rejoice with these families as they welcome and receive these gifts of God into their families, and bring them to this sacred washing to be adopted into God's own family!

MEN'S BREAKFAST AND BIBLE STUDY! The men's Breakfast Bible Study will meet this Thursday morning, May 2, at 6:30 a.m. We hope you can make it as we enjoy a wonderful breakfast menu, and grow together in fellowship, in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord!

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY is cancelled this morning to allow for the gathering of the voters in the fellowship hall for a special voters' meeting. Our study of the Lord's miracles will resume next Sunday when we consider an event that we don't often think of as a miracle – the incarnation (or 'embodiment') of the Son of God in human flesh. As we say in the Nicene Creed, He "*was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man.*" It's the miracle that kicked into high gear God's plan of salvation for us. We hope you will join us!

MOTHER'S DAY JAVA JOY – Two weeks from today, the Stewardship Board is planning to host a Mother's Day *Java Joy* after the worship service. We'll have some special coffees and treats for all of our moms and for all of us who love our moms and are grateful to God for the blessing of godly mothers.



THURSDAY EVENING SERVICES BEGIN THIS THURSDAY, MAY 2

As in years past, our schedule of Thursday evening services begins on the first Thursday of May. These evening services are at 7:00 p.m. During May, until school is out, we will worship in the sanctuary. Our Thursday services are a preview of the coming Sunday service, with Communion on the Thursdays prior to Communion Sundays – meaning Thursday, May 2 will be a Communion service.

Special notes:

- 1) *Thursday, May 9 will be a circuit Ascension Day Service – see announcement in this bulletin.*
- 2) *Thursday, May 30, the Sunday prior to Pastor Niermann's retirement day, there will be no Thursday evening service.*
- 3) *Beyond May, during the pastoral interim, the status of these services is uncertain. Please stay tuned for further announcements.*



GRIEF SHARE is a class offered at St. John for those grieving the loss of a loved one, meets 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, Wauseon. You are invited to pray each week for the comfort of participants and the wisdom of the leaders.

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC is *Questions for God: Why God? What's next? Life after Death?*

What about Heaven? What am I supposed to learn from this? Are You still there for me?

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 04/21/24	\$17,244.33	\$130.00	\$365.00

ATTENDANCE: 192

LOOKING AHEAD *Pastor's Retirement – Sunday, June 2*

Plans are underway to commemorate Pastor Niermann's retirement from full-time ministry and from the pastoral office at St. John Lutheran. On Sun., June 2nd, his final Sunday, Pastor will preach his farewell sermon and administer the sacrament for us one last time. Worship that morning will be at 10:00 a.m. A retirement dinner will follow at the Ridgeville Legion Hall at 12:00 noon.

PTL PIZZA SALE: This is a VERY quick announcement about a pizza sale hosted by the PTL. Following the service today, and ONLY today, please stop in the front hallway and see Margo Behnfeldt to place your order for pizzas that will be made at Brick-N-Brew Pub in Napoleon this coming Sat., May 4th. If you haven't seen the advertisement on Facebook or called Margo (419-966-3469) to place your order, stop and see Margo after the service today. Thank you for always supporting St. John PTL.

INTERIM PASTOR HOUSING – The pastoral call committee has had contact with a number of *Transitional Interim Ministry (TIM)* pastors who could potentially serve St. John as our interim pastor, and next Sunday will have a specific recommendation for the voters today. TIM pastors are specially trained to guide congregations through an interim period until such time as a new settled pastor is called and installed. Please keep this matter in your prayers.

One of the more pressing matters is to identify housing for this pastor and possibly also his wife. If you know of a place that might be suitable – an apartment, a rental house, or even a mother-in-law suite – please contact the church office, or Elder Mike Maassel, call committee chairman.

CELEBRATE THE ASCENSION --- Join your fellow Christians from congregations of our circuit to mark and celebrate the *Ascension of Our Lord* on Ascension Day, Thursday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m. at St. John Lutheran, Freedom Township. Participating congregations are St. John, Stryker; St. Luke, Wauseon; Emmaus, Wauseon; St. Paul; Liberty Center, St. James, Burlington, and St. John, Freedom Twp. Pastor Aaron Bueltmann of St. John, Stryker will be our preacher. The Sacrament of the Altar will be celebrated. After the service a time for refreshments and fellowship will be provided so that you may linger a while and enjoy our fellowship. *We haven't held this combined Ascension Day service since COVID, so we hope you will come and worship with us as we revive this circuit tradition.*



- **Additional note - We are seeking an organization or group of people to organize a JAVA JOY after this service so that our brothers and sisters from around the circuit can have a few moments to linger in fellowship.** Please speak with Pastor Niermann if you would be interested in organizing this for us. Expenses will be reimbursed.

FULL-TIME SCHOOL SECRETARIAL POSITION: We are now accepting résumés from anyone interested in applying for the full-time 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.

LIONS RECYCLE FOR SIGHT – If you have used **prescription or nonprescription** glasses or sunglasses lying around at home, you can donate them now! Children's glasses are especially needed. There is a box under the table in the narthex for the collection of these used glasses.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

NEW DATES –and– STAFF RECRUITMENT

Previously we announced tentative VBS dates, but plans have changed and we have bumped up VBS to the **earlier dates of June 3-7 (Monday – Friday, 9:00-11:30 am)**.

To sign up for our VBS, please use the form that is available on the narthex table, and deposit completed form in the marked box. 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)

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 know someone interested, please call the church office at 419-598-8961.

LUTHERAN WITNESS RENEWAL – It’s time to renew your subscription to the Lutheran Witness for this year. To subscribe or renew your subscription, **simply place \$20.75 in an envelope**, along with your name and address, and place it in the Sunday collection plate or bring it to the church office. **Deadline for subscriptions is May 26th.**

INTERESTED IN A CHURCH PROFESSION? WE’D LIKE TO HELP! Over the years a number of young people from St. John have pursued educational goals to prepare them for full-time service as teachers and pastors. If you are interested in a church profession (*as a pastor, deaconess, teacher, lay minister, or a Director of Christian Education, Christian Outreach, Parish Music, or Family Life Ministry*), our congregation would like to support you by offering a tuition gift. An application for this gift is available online --- type **www.sjl.org/student_gift_app.pdf** into your browser (*there is no link*) and fill out the application. Deadline for fall enrollment is June 1st.

WOMEN OF FREEDOM SCHOLARSHIPS: Here is another opportunity to encourage and help young people prepare for service to the church as pastors, teachers, lay workers, deaconesses, etc. \$500 per year Women of Freedom Scholarships are available to any young person attending one of our synodical schools. Simply contact any Women of Freedom member for more details about this.

PIERSTORF COLLEGE FUND: The Pierstorf College Fund is a one-of-a-kind pan Lutheran financial aid program that provides interest-free loans to all Lutherans pursuing a higher education who live in the State of Ohio. These loans are specific to students who are or will be enrolled full time in a four-year undergraduate program at any accredited college or university. For information, visit www.Pierstorf.org to complete the online 2024-2025 application. Application deadline is June 30, 2024. Questions can be emailed to Pierstorf@messiahfp.org.

MUFFINS WITH MOMS: On Thursday, May 2 at 7:45 AM, we are celebrating moms. We invite all students to bring their mom or special guest to celebrate. Thanks moms for all you do!

CAR SEAT CHECK: On May 7 and May 8 the Henry County Health Department will be offering car seat checks to anyone interested. Their goal is to make sure that all kiddos are riding safely. On Tuesday, May 7 they will be in the parking lot before the 3PM dismissal to check car seats for anyone interested. On Wednesday, May 8, they will be available prior to preschool pickup from 10:30-11:30. What a great resource to have that car seat/booster seat double checked.

PRESCHOOL GRADUATION: This year our 4-yr preschool graduation will be held on Wed., May 22nd at 6:00 PM in the sanctuary. Everyone is invited to this big day for the 4-year olds. There will be a program followed by light refreshments in the fellowship hall.

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.

ST. JOHN SCRIP: SCRIP order forms are available at the tract rack in the narthex. Please turn those orders in to the office on Wednesdays, with payment to *St. John School PTL Scrip*. Payment must accompany orders. The gift cards will be sent home the following week on Tuesday. **Any questions about SCRIP can be directed to SCRIP Coordinator Kristyn Honemann at 419-966-0207 or email at honemann@embarqmail.com.**

WHY NOT CONSIDER ST. JOHN? Saint John Lutheran School offers preschool to 8th grade Lutheran education. Students are taught the Word of God through weekly chapel, daily religion classes, and a Christ-centered learning environment. Students also have the opportunity to participate in a variety of athletics. Bus transportation is available to students in local school districts. If you have any questions about enrollment or would like a tour of the school please call the office for an appointment.

CHICKEN BBQ TODAY – St. Paul Lutheran – Liberty Center is hosting a Drive-thru Chicken BBQ at their church located at 8074 County Road T, Liberty Center today from 11:00 am – 1:30 pm (or until gone). The menu is: ½ Chicken, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Roll, and Cookie. The cost is \$12.

SILENT MOVIE NIGHT – St. Martin’s Lutheran Church, Archbold, Ohio, presents Silent Movie Night featuring Cleveland organist, David Blazer on Sun., May 5th at 4:30 PM. Mr. Blazer will accompany the 1931 Charlie Chaplin Film, “City Lights”. Join us for *Silent Movie Night*, complete with popcorn! For more information visit: <https://the-welcome-place.org/about/worship-and-music/st-martins-2023-2024-concert-series/>

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Food For Thought...

Easter is the only time when it’s perfectly safe to put all your eggs in one basket.

*“My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him.
He only is my rock and my salvation.” (Psalm 62:5-6)*