



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

December 1, 2024

VOL. 90

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Rev. Gary Bender, TIM Pastor  
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

Cell: 989-770-0005; Church: 419-598-8961  
School: 419-598-8702  
Church Website: [www.sjl.org](http://www.sjl.org)

### First Sunday in Advent

Sermon & Text: "The Righteous Branch" *Jeremiah 33:14-16*  
Order of Service: Divine Service Setting Three - LSB pg. 184  
Hymns: 332 (v. 1, 2, 6, 8) ~ 357 (v. 1, 4, 6, 7) ~ 617 ~ 547 ~ 350

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### WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

*Advent is a season of repentance and preparation for the Coming of Christ. We warmly welcome all who have come to worship our God with us today! Each day we live is a priceless gift from God, loaded with possibilities to learn something new and gain fresh insights into His great truths. If you are a visitor, please fill out the Rite of Fellowship card from the pew 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**

- ✠ Elaine Buenger, *Organist* ✠ Maxton Howard, Westen Cowell *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Deb Wachtman, Nancy Short, Kathy Gruenhagen *Altar Guild* ✠

**CHURCH SECRETARY DAYS** – Please note that going forward, Leah Saylor will be in the church office on Wednesdays and Thursdays. She can be reached by e-mail at: [churchsecretary@sjl.org](mailto:churchsecretary@sjl.org). Bulletin submissions will now need to be turned in to the office by end-of-day *Tuesday* of each week in order to be included in the Sunday bulletin. Thank you for your patience as we make this transition.

**MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES BEGIN THIS WEEK!** Advent begins today, which means we will be gathering for midweek Advent services **starting this Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**. These service will be held at 7:00 p.m. Our midweek Advent theme this year is *"Preparing for CHRISTmas."* Join us each Wednesday for these special evening worship services as we prepare our hearts and minds for a fitting celebration of Christ's birth!

## In God's House This Week

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM	<b>Communion Service</b>
	10:20 AM	Adult Bible Study; "The Lamp"
	10:20 AM	<b>Children's Christmas Service Practice</b>
Mon.	4:30 PM	School Board Meeting
	5:30 PM	Christmas Decorating
	5:00 PM	Basketball: 5 p.m. Gr 4-6 Girls.; 6 p.m. Gr 4-6 Boys - Home vs. St. Pat's (Bryan)
Tues.	8:35 AM	<b>School Chapel</b>
Wed.	5:45 PM	Midweek Confirmation Class
	7:00 PM	<b>Advent Midweek Service- offering to benefit Orphan Grain Train, Hurricane Helene</b> Acolyte: <i>Alana Naveau</i> Ushers: <i>Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling</i> Altar Guild: <i>Deb Wachtman, Nancy Short, Kathy Gruenhagen</i>
Thurs.	6:30 AM	Men's Bible Breakfast
	4:30 PM	Basketball: 4:30 p.m. Gr. 4-6 Girls; 5:30 p.m. Gr 4-6 Boys – Away at St. Paul
Fri.		Wedding Rehearsal – Dachenhaus/Boysel
Sat.		Wedding Ceremony- Bryant Dachenhaus and Brittany Boysel
Sun.	9:00 AM	<b>Worship Service with Communion Following</b>
	10:20 AM	Adult Bible Study; "The Lamp"
	10:20 AM	Children's Christmas Service Practice

**PASTORAL EMERGENCIES** – In the event you require emergency pastoral care, please call **Pastor Gary at 989-770-0005**. **NOTE ABOUT HOSPITALIZATION:** If you are planning to spend time in a hospital (more than just out-patient) for surgery or other issues, please notify the Church Office or Pastor Gary so he can arrange to visit you while you are there. He will need to know the dates involved and which hospital you will be staying at (preferably in writing). Thank you for your help and cooperation in this matter.

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

- ❖ *Melba Elling, Norma Damman, and Rozella Gruenhagen* 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, Jordan Lange, and Cody Hoffman*
- ❖ *Lowell Petzoldt and Cheryl Yaw*, for health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *Marietta Damman and Willie Joost*, dealing with health related concerns

### **FINANCIAL FACTS:**

	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$9,792.78	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 11/24/24	<i>to be published in next week's bulletin</i>		

**LAST SUNDAY ATTENDANCE: TBD**

**PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR** – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *The Lord Jesus Comes in Humility to Redeem Us*. The season of Advent focuses on the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this first Sunday establishes this theme for the rest of the season. The Son of God came long ago to be our Savior, “a righteous Branch” descended from David (Jer. 33:15). As He then came into Jerusalem, riding on a lowly donkey to sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world (Luke 19:28–40), so does He come to His Church today in the humility of Word and Sacrament to deliver the fruits of His Passion: the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. He absolves us and establishes our hearts “blameless in holiness before our God and Father” (1 Thess. 3:13). The same Lord Jesus, who came to Jerusalem then and who comes to us now in peace, will come again with power and great glory on the Last Day. Then there will be “distress of nations in perplexity,” with “people fainting with fear.” Yet, as we anticipate that great and terrible day, He bids us to rest securely in Him: “Raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:25, 26, 28). ***“He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 11:15).***

**ADULT BIBLE CLASS** - This morning we will take “A Longer Look at the Lessons.” These week-by-week studies take a more in-depth look at the Scripture readings that are read in worship that morning. Each Sunday is a study unto itself, so that if you have to miss one Sunday, you can easily pick up again the following Sunday.

**CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS SERVICE** – The Children’s Christmas service will be held on Sun., Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM. This is a combined church/school event, with practices being held on Sundays after church during the Sunday School hour beginning **today** and continuing each of the following Sundays Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**2025 OFFERING BOXES** – Offering envelope boxes are available to pick up in the back of the church. The financial commitments you make as well as how you contribute are between you and God. The church provides offering envelopes to our members in order to promote faithful and joyful giving as well as to serve as a means to record member contributions throughout the year for charitable tax purposes. Due to the costs of these envelope boxes, members who elect to not use their envelopes over the course of two years (*for whatever reason*) will no longer be issued a box of envelopes. If at any time a member would like to resume using envelopes, please contact Jerry Langenhop, Finance Trustee (419-966-3473).

**BULLETIN STUFFER VOLUNTEERS** – Want to get involved? Why not try volunteering to help with stuffing the bulletins for worship services. It’s not too difficult and can be done either at church or in the comfort of your own home. The bulletins are pre-folded. We are looking for about 11-12 couples/families to sign up for this task for 2025. Those interested can sign up for the month that works best for them on the sheet at the narthex table. **NOTE:** *If you have stuffed bulletins in the past year, thank you for your service. We ask that you please sign up again and choose your month. You can also call Lori Langenhop at 419-966-3472 or email her at [lahop@bright.net](mailto:lahop@bright.net).*

**CHRISTMAS DECORATING** – We plan to begin decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas around 5:30 PM on **Mon., Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Decorating usually can take one and a half hours. Everyone is welcome to come and join the fun!

**GRIEFSHARE** – Grieving the loss of someone close to you? Start the new year with new hope. Find comfort and support at GriefShare. Sundays, January 5<sup>th</sup> - March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m. in the Youth & Family Center. Weekly meetings include a video, discussion, and a helpful book with more ways to navigate your personal grief journey. Topics include ways to cope with loneliness, anxiety, sadness, anger and regret, changes to relationships, recognizing what's normal or not, and what to do if you feel stuck or hopeless.

If you know someone who might benefit from the class, share this information and consider coming with them for the first week or two. It can be difficult to come to a grief group the first time when you already feel so afraid and alone. For more details and to register for the next class visit

[www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org). (Or call Nancy Nemoyer at 717-421-5741.) Brochures with more information are on the back table.



**MY DEVOTION BOOKLETS** for the next quarter, *December*, *January*, and *February*, are available on the desk in the narthex. These are nice kid-friendly family devotions. Pick up a copy today!

**ADVENT DEVOTION BOOKLETS** are available on the narthex table. They are titled *Come, Let us Adore Him* and are provided to us through Lutheran Hour Ministries. You may also access the Advent devotionals online by visiting [lhm.org/advent](http://lhm.org/advent).

**CHRISTMAS CARDS & CUTLERY** – Check out the table in the hallway! The Women of Freedom have put out boxes of Christmas Cards for sale. If you are interested in purchasing any Rada cutlery items such as: Paring Knives, Stubby Butcher Knives, Pie Servers, Vegetable Peelers, Slicer Knives, Granny Forks, Carving Forks, Pizza Cutters, Tomato Slicer, and Small Spatula, please contact *Linda Meyer* or *Deb Wachtman* to purchase these.

**SCRIP FOR CHRISTMAS** – Do Christmas shopping the easy way this year— pick up a form at the narthex table and shop in the comfort of your home. Additional SCRIP order forms are available in the “School Info” rack outside the school office. Thank you and happy shopping! Any questions about SCRIP can be directed to SCRIP Coordinator Kristyn Honemann at 419-966-0207 or email at [honemann@embarqmail.com](mailto:honemann@embarqmail.com).

### **SCHOOL POSITION OPENING**

- **Music Teacher**: If you know of anyone interested in taking on the role as music teacher, please let Miss Germann know. Position is open as of November 1<sup>st</sup>. This is a one day a week position responsible for teaching children in grades K-5 music according to the state standards. If you know of anyone for this position, please contact Miss Germann at [tgermann@sjl.org](mailto:tgermann@sjl.org).

**BASKETBALL SCHEDULES** – The 2024-2025 St. John Eagle basketball schedules are printed and available on the narthex table for anyone interested. GO EAGLES!

**ALTAR FLOWERS** – For anyone wishing to place flowers on the altar for Sunday worship, please contact *Nancy Glaser* at 419-906-0963. **NOTE: The price for flowers through the Women of Freedom is now \$30.00.** Please make checks payable to Women of Freedom. Remember that it is your responsibility to call Nancy either way; if you would like the Women of Freedom to order flowers or if you are going to take care of ordering them yourself. This will alleviate any confusion.

**“HERE WE COME A-CAROLING”** – Mark your calendars! **On December 15<sup>th</sup>, we will go a-caroling** the old fashioned way and make our way around to our shut-ins at home and in nursing care facilities to bless them with companionship and the carols of Christmas. Join us at 4:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. We’ll warm up our voices and then get on the way!



Please mark your calendar and join us for the fun. Touching the lives of our shut-ins in this simple way means the world to them! **Come a-caroling with us, and be a blessing!**

**WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA** – The Ridgeville Sons of the American Legion are asking you to join them in their mission to place “wreaths across America” in 2024. National Wreaths Across American Day is Sat., Dec. 14, 2024. Sponsored wreaths are placed on grave markers at state and national veterans’ cemeteries, as well as at local, community cemeteries each December. Wreath Sponsorship forms and more information is available on the narthex table. Wreaths may also be sponsored online at [www.wreathscrossamerica.org/OH0229P](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/OH0229P) or via the QR code on the sponsorship form. **Order deadline is Sun., Dec. 1.**

### **AREA EVENTS**

- ◆ **BLOODMOBILE** at the Ridgeville Legion Hall, Mon., **Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> from 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM.**
- ◆ **CHRISTMAS VILLAGE CRAFT SHOW** will be held at the Ridgeville Legion Hall, Sun., **Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM.** Come and browse the shops!
- ◆ **THE TOLEDO SYMPHONY** will perform a Christmas Concert at St. Paul Lutheran Church – Napoleon Township, on **Wed., Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.** Tickets are on sale thru their church office at 419-758-3522. See flyer!

**VENMO IS HERE!** Exciting News...St. John now accepts donations via Venmo! If you need internet access, you may use our guest wifi **SJL Open** and use password **sjleagles##**. Then scan the QR code beside this announcement to go directly to our donation page.



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*Thought for the Week...*

**Fruitfulness for Christ requires faithfulness to Christ.**



## Orphan Grain Train

**Special Collection for delivery to North Carolina in December -  
please prayerfully consider how you can help!**

**Items requested:**

- PRAYERS
- New, unwrapped toys for all ages
- Nonperishable food items – canned or boxed [for this collection only - we cannot store food products in our warehouse – making an exception at this time due to quick turnaround time for delivery]
- Can openers
- New kitchen items (plates, pans, flatware, cups, pots, pans)
- Paper plates / napkins / plasticware
- Hygiene items
- Towels / wash cloths
- Mailboxes / posts
- Monetary – will be used for shipping expense, purchase items that are newly identified as needed.

**Items should be delivered on the following dates / locations:**

- Sat. December 7, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Orphan Grain Train Warehouse – 500 Independence Dr. Napoleon OH 43545
- Sun. December 8 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Zion Lutheran Church – 20-141 County Road X Ridgeville Corners OH 43555