



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

January 12, 2025

VOL. 91

NO. 2

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)

### The Baptism of Our Lord

Sermon & Text: "You Are Mine" *Isaiah 43:1-7*

Order of Service: Matins ~ LSB pg. 219

Hymns: 405 ~ 735 ~ 936 ~ 594 (v. 1, 2, 5)

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### A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Welcome to our worship service here at St. John. If we can be of service to you in any way, please speak to our Pastor. If you are looking for a church to call home, please consider joining this church where we seek to help each other grow in faith, in love, and in service. Simply fill out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and drop it in the baskets at the door as you leave.

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

- ✘ Sharon Damman *Organist* ✘ Piper Speiser, Erin Damman *Acolytes* ✘
- ✘ Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling *Ushers* ✘
- ✘ Diane Von Deylen, Lou Ann Rosebrock *Altar Guild* ✘

**REMEMBERING ELAINE** – We remember and grieve the passing of *Elaine Mahnke* on Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> at Genacross Lutheran Services. Elaine's funeral was held here on Wed., Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM. Please keep Richard, Deb and Dave, Denise and Larry, David and Sue Ann, Margery, and Elaine's many grandchildren and great-grandchildren in your daily prayers. Elaine's confirmation verse gives hope at this difficult time: "*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*" Psalm 27:1

**RETIREMENT CELEBRATION TODAY** – Join us as we host a retirement celebration for our church/school secretary, Joyce Wiechers. We will gather in the fellowship hall after worship for a time to share memories and congratulations with Joyce. Then, following the time of fellowship, a meal and cake will be served. Thank you, Joyce, for your 18 years of service to St. John!



## In God's House This Week

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM	<b>Worship Service with Communion Following</b>
	10:15 AM	Retirement Party for Church/School Secretary, Joyce Wiechers CANCELLED: Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
	2:30 PM	GriefShare Support Group— Topic: "Your Grief Journey"
Mon.	5:00 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Girls.; 6:00 p.m. Gr 4-6 Boys – Away at BG Christian
Tues.	8:35 AM	<b>School Chapel</b>
	7:00 PM	Church Council Meeting
Wed.	6:15 PM	Jr. High Confirmation Class
	7:00 PM	Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	6:30 AM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast
	5:30 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Girls.; 6:30 p.m. Gr 4-6 Boys – home vs. St. Paul
Sun.	9:00 AM	<b>Communion Service</b>
	10:20 AM	Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
	2:30 PM	GriefShare Support Group— Topic: "Loneliness & Sadness"
	4:00 PM	Junior High LYF Meeting
	5:00 PM	High School LYF Meeting

**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 and Willie Joost* at Northcrest Nursing & Rehab
- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Irene Joost and Leona Durham*
- ❖ 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* recuperating from hip surgery

<b>FINANCIAL FACTS:</b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 1/5/2025	\$6,086.00	\$205.00	\$110.00

**ATTENDANCE: 165**

**2025 OFFERING BOXES** – There are still a few who have not picked up their 2025 offering envelopes. Be sure to pick yours up today!

**WOMEN OF FREEDOM** – There are still some 2025 Women of Freedom program booklets at the narthex table. Please pick up your copy today.

**ADULT BIBLE CLASS, SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND “THE LAMP”** will not meet today and will resume next Sunday.

**PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR** – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *The Triune God Opens Heaven to You in Holy Baptism*.

The Baptism of our Lord is an “Epiphany” of the one true God in the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. In divine mercy, He takes His place with sinners and takes their sin upon Himself. “When all the people were baptized,” Jesus submitted Himself to a Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Luke 3:21). He had no sins of His own, but He took the sins of the world upon Himself and so was baptized into His own death. Therefore, “when you pass through the waters,” He is with you (Is. 43:2). He created you for His glory, and He has redeemed you with His blood, that you may be His own and live with Him in His kingdom (Is. 43:1, 7). As you are baptized with a Baptism like His, so also are you united with Him in His death and resurrection that you “might walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4). For all who are baptized into Christ Jesus receive His anointing of the Holy Spirit and are named by His Father as beloved and well-pleasing sons and daughters. *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 11:15).*

**THANK YOU** to those who graced our preservice music Christmas Eve with their musical talents—Taylor, Lakyn, Braelyn, and Brynnleigh Kehnast, Jovi and Summer Sonnenberg, Maisie Damman, Tyson Damman, Luke and Alex Gruenhagen. Their voices, piano, and guitar added to the glory of the evening. - Thank you, *Sharon Damman*

**LYF MEETING** - The Jr. High and High School LYF group will be having their next meeting on Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at the Youth & Family Center. The Jr. High (Grades 6-8) will meet at 4:00 PM followed by the High School (Grades 9-12) at 5:00 PM.

**LYF SPONSOR BOARD** – The LCMS National Youth Gathering is this summer, and the participants are looking for sponsors. There will be a Sponsor Board (envelope fundraiser) in the back of the church during the month of January. Sponsors can choose an envelope that suits them and contribute the corresponding amount. **Please return envelopes to Todd or Tina Wachtman by February 2<sup>nd</sup>.** Your support is greatly appreciated!

**LYF SUPER BOWL SUB SALE** – It’s that time of year again for the LYF Super Bowl Sub Sale (pre-order only; order forms located in the back of the church). On Sunday, Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>, the subs will be available for pick up after the church service. Orders are due February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Payment is due when you pick up your subs. Checks can be made payable to St. John LYF. Super Bowl sub sales help raise money for the youth group’s expenses. Thank you for supporting our LYF group!

**BE A JAVA JOY HOST!** Would you like to host JAVA JOY on the second Sunday of one of the months of 2025? Find the sign-up sheet and hosting guidelines at the narthex table. Hosting does not need to cost you anything – you may reimburse yourself from the Java Joy kitty.

**CHURCH SECRETARY DAYS** – 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 by end-of-day *Tuesday* in order to be included in the following Sunday’s bulletin.

**GRIEFSHARE** is underway. Are you grieving the loss of a loved one? It's never too late to join— **every Sunday afternoon, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m. in the Youth & Family Center, from January 5 - March 30, 2025.** Facilitators are Rev. Gary Bender, with a number of years of experience with this class, and Nancy Nemoyer, member of our congregation and a Deaconess and educator. Whether your loss is recent or more distant, the discussion, video presentations, and participant guide have proven valuable in the grieving process. For more information or to register, go to <https://www.griefshare.org/groups/248795> or call Nancy at 717-421-5741. Brochures with more information are also on the back table.



The GriefShare topics for the next few weeks are: Jan. 12 - *“Your Grief Journey”*; Jan. 19 - *“Loneliness & Sadness”*; Jan. 26 - *“Self-Care”*; Feb. 2 - *“Fearful & Overwhelmed”*

**PORTALS OF PRAYER** booklets for January, February, and March are on the desk in the back of the church. Pick up a copy today!

**TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE** – St. John School is helping the organization Together We Can Make a Difference, located in Napoleon. They are in need of egg cartons. We are asking for donations of empty egg cartons that hold a dozen eggs. Please make sure the egg carton is clean and not damaged. Children will also be working on a service project to help this organization in their classrooms later this month, truly showing that TOGETHER we can make a difference.

**OPEN HOUSE** – Mark your calendars for Feb. 23; there will be a new format for our School Open House. Invite a friend, and come check out our school! More details to follow.

**SCHOOL POSITION OPENING:**

- **Music Teacher** - This is an open position as of November 1st. 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).

**THE FLOWER CALENDAR** for 2025 is posted in the narthex. 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.** It is your responsibility to contact *Nancy Glaser*. Also, please contact the church office with the information for the bulletin.

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



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*Thought for the Week...*

**God made us for His glory, so we should live for His glory!**