

St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

January 19, 2025

VOL. 91

NO. 3

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

The Second Sunday After Epiphany

Sermon & Text: "In the Hand of God" *Isaiah 62:1-5*

Order of Service: Divine Service Setting Three ~ LSB pg. 184

Hymns: 398 ~ 824 ~ 570 ~ 636 ~ 394

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Welcome to St. John Church! "I sought the Lord and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Ps. 34:4). Let us seek the Lord together this day. Let us offer up our fears and doubts, that we may go forth strengthened and empowered for another week. If you are visiting us today, know that we are honored by your presence. 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 doors as you leave.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✘ Elaine Buenger *Organist* ✘ Anna Sausser, Anika Rosebrock *Acolytes* ✘
- ✘ Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Rich Elling *Ushers* ✘
- ✘ Diane Von Deylen, Lou Ann Rosebrock *Altar Guild* ✘

LYF MEETING - The Jr. High and High School LYF groups will be meeting TODAY, January 19th, 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.

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.

LARGE PRINT & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BULLETINS are always available on the table in the narthex. The Children's Bulletins are coordinated with the Bible texts for each Sunday and provide activities that tie in with the weekly themes.

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM	Communion Service
	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
Mon.		No School- MLK Day
Tues.	8:35 AM	School Chapel
	7:00 PM	Transition Task Force Meeting
Wed.	6:15 PM	Jr. High Confirmation Class
	7:00 PM	Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	5:30 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Girls – @ Trinity Lutheran
	6:30 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Boys – @ Trinity Lutheran
Sun.	9:00 AM	Worship Service
	10:20 AM	Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
	2:30 PM	GriefShare Support Group – Topic: "Self-Care"

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, Cody Hoffman, and Kyle*
- ❖ *Lowell Petzoldt and Cheryl Yaw*, for health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *William Niebergall* undergoing heart surgery
- ❖ *Marietta Damman* recuperating from hip surgery

FINANCIAL FACTS:	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 1/12/2025	\$6,640.00	\$282.00	\$368.00

ATTENDANCE: 178

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

THE 2025 USHER (blue) SCHEDULE is available today and can be picked up on the narthex table. Thanks again to all who are willing to be of service to the Lord at St. John.

PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *The Divine Glory is Manifested in the Signs of Christ.*

When Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana, it was “the first of His signs” by which He “manifested His glory” (John 2:11). It pointed to His coming “hour,” when He was lifted up on the cross for the forgiveness of sins and the life of the world (John 2:4; 12:23–32). The glory of the cross is incomprehensible apart from the Word and Spirit of God, but disciples of Jesus recognize that glory in the signs of His Gospel, and so they believe in Him. Jesus does not wait for His disciples to discover Him on their own, but He seeks out the forsaken and the desolate and unites them to Himself. He adorns them with His own beautiful righteousness and delights in them “as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride” (Is. 62:4–5). Purified by the washing of water with His Word in Holy Baptism, His disciples confess that “Jesus is Lord,” and they return thanks to Him “in the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:3) as they drink the good wine that He pours out for them, which is the new testament in His blood. *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 11:15).*

2024 CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT – It’s time to start getting your reports ready for the 2024 Church Annual. The secretaries of the different organizations are asked to write up a summary of the year’s activities, and treasurers should submit their financial report for their organization. If you need your offering contribution information prior to the distribution of the Annual Report, please call Financial Trustee, *Jerry Langenhop*, at 419-966-3473. **Please turn your reports in to Leah Saylor (e-mail churchsecretary@sjl.org or drop it in her office mailbox) by Wed., Feb. 12.**

DIRECTORY UPDATES – There are addresses and phone numbers in the Annual Report directory that need updated. If you (and/or your adult children) have address changes; or **if you have eliminated your land line telephone and only have cell phone numbers**, please call the church office at 419-598-8961 or email churchsecretary@sjl.org with updated information. Thank you!

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 2nd.** 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. 9th, the subs will be available for pick up after the church service.



Orders are due February 2nd. 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! Every second Sunday of the month after the service, we aim to have a time of fellowship with coffee, juice and snacks called **Java Joy**. We are still looking for hosts for many months of 2025. Find the sign-up sheet and hosting guidelines at the narthex table. Don’t let finances stop you – you are welcome to reimburse your expenses from the kitty if you wish.

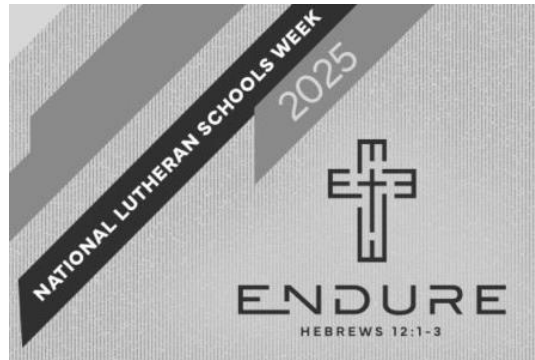
GRIEFSHARE is underway. Are you grieving the loss of a loved one? It's never too late to join— **every Sunday afternoon, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m. in the Youth & Family Center, from January 5 - March 30, 2025.** Facilitators are Rev. Gary Bender, with a number of years of experience with this class, and Nancy 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. 19 - “Loneliness & Sadness”; Jan. 26 - “Self-Care”; Feb. 2 - “Fearful & Overwhelmed”

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK –

As a congregation that supports a Lutheran School, we will be joining sister schools and congregations across the nation to celebrate *National Lutheran Schools Week*, January 26-January 31. In celebration of National Lutheran Schools Week, St. John will be holding various activities at school that include live broadcasts on the local radio station, WNDH 103.1, dress-up days, an online mission trip to Kenya, and a few other fun activities.



Then on Sunday, February 2, it's *National Lutheran Schools Sunday*. The school children of St. John are preparing some ways to celebrate with you, the church congregation. Wonderful plans are being made for that day, so stay tuned for more information.

An interesting fact about Lutheran Schools...We foster education! Schools in The LCMS serve children in early childhood programs through grade 12 in over 1,800 schools nationwide and internationally. Thank you for supporting our Lutheran school here at St. John.

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.

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

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.

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. Bulletin submissions will now need to be turned in by end-of-day *Tuesday* in order to be included in Sunday’s bulletin.

ST. JOHN WEBSITE- SJL.ORG – Did you know you can listen to *Pastor Gary’s* sermons on the internet? And access the current and archived bulletins? Just click on “St. John YouTube Channel” or “Worship Service Resources” on the Home Page.

WORSHIP ANEW is a weekly, 30-minute Lutheran broadcast worship service. Each service includes music, scripture readings, prayers, and a pastor delivering a message that is designed to feel one-on-one to the viewer. Broadcasts can be viewed every Sunday on: *Toledo’s WTVG (CW) Channel 13 at 9:30 a.m.* or online at worshipanew.org.

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.

IF YOU’RE EVER IN A PINCH and could use a little help, the ***Good Neighbor Fund*** is there to assist you too! Please don’t be bashful about asking – everything is strictly confidential. Just give the church office a call, and we’ll see what we can do!

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...

He who holds the stars in space holds His people in His hands.

*You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. Isaiah 62:3*

Sanctity of Life Sunday – January 19, 2025



Love life.
Love your neighbor's life.
LIFE SUNDAY

“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (JOHN 10:10).

From the time of conception to the time of natural death — and every time in between — life is a gift.

LCMS Life Ministry is devoted to upholding the sanctity of human life, both in our church body and in the culture at large. We work domestically and internationally on pro-life projects that serve men, women, children, families and those unable to speak for themselves.



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