



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

February 2, 2025

VOL. 91

NO. 5

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 Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

Sermon & Text: “Proclaiming the Word of God” *Jeremiah 1:4-19*

Order of Service: Divine Service Setting Four ~ LSB pg. 203

Hymns: 935 ~ 729 ~ “Let us Break Bread Together” (*projected*) ~ 578 ~ 784 v. 1, 2, 6

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

The Psalmist wrote: “I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the House of the Lord.’” We are happy to have you with us. Whether someone invited you or you came by yourself, we are glad to share this House of the Lord with you.

Please help us get to know who you are by introducing yourself to our pastor and by filling out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you. Simply drop it into the baskets at the doors as you leave today.



SERVING IN GOD’S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Sharon Damman *Organist* ✠ Brayden Damman, Kenlee Coressel *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Denny Bockelman, Dave Myles, Tim Badenhop *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Karan Niebergall, Karen Lulfs, Kaylee Buchhop, Ronda Wentworth *Altar Guild* ✠

STUDENTS SINGING – St. John Lutheran School students in grades K-5 will be singing in church this morning. The students also invite you to join them for refreshments in the fellowship hall after worship as they are excited to share with you about National Lutheran Schools Week!

CONGREGATIONAL WORKSHOP – The Transition Task Force is sponsoring three workshops to begin exploring St. John’s past, present, and future as we look forward to new ministry with a new pastor. These workshops will deal with exploring St. John’s past and will last about 1.5 hours. The dates are: **TODAY**, Feb. 2 (1PM); Wednesday, Feb. 5 (1PM); Monday, Feb. 10 (7PM). Please plan to attend **ONE** of the Workshops. Please fill out the “Exploring the Past of St. John Church & School” Questionnaire ahead of time and bring it with you to the Workshop. (Complete one questionnaire per adult. One was included in last week’s bulletin, and additional copies are on the narthex table).

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM	Communion Service
	10:20 AM	Refreshments with St. John School Students to celebrate NLSW
	10:20 AM	Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
	1:00 PM	"Exploring St. John's Past" Workshop
	1:30 PM	Gerald Busy Fingers 4H Meeting
	2:30 PM	GriefShare Support Group – Topic: " <i>Fearful and Overwhelmed</i> "
Mon.	5:00 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Girls – Home vs. Solomon
	6:00 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Boys – Home vs. Solomon
Tues.	8:35 AM	School Chapel
	5:15 PM	School Board Meeting
	7:00 PM	Transition Task Force Meeting
Wed.	1:00 PM	"Exploring St. John's Past" Workshop
	6:15 PM	Jr. High Confirmation Class
	7:00 PM	Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	6:30 AM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast
	5:00 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Girls – Home vs. Monclova Christian
	6:00 PM	Basketball: Gr 4-6 Boys – Home vs. Monclova Christian
Sun.	9:00 AM	Worship Service with Communion Following
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"
	2:30 PM	GriefShare Support Group – Topic: " <i>Anger</i> "

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 and Willie Joost* and *Leona Durham*
- ❖ Military: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Emily Carmon, Jordan Lange, Cody Hoffman, Joshua, and Kyle*
- ❖ *Lowell Petzoldt* and *Cheryl Yaw*, for health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *William Niebergall* undergoing heart surgery
- ❖ *Marietta Damman* recuperating from hip surgery

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS:</u>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 1/26/2025	\$7,649.00	\$280.00	\$295.00

ATTENDANCE: 131

PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR – In today’s Scripture readings on the back of the bulletin we hear that *God Gives the Gift of a Child to Destroy Death*.

The Lord opened the barren womb of Hannah and gave her the gift of the son for whom she prayed, and in grateful response she presented and gave the child, Samuel, to the Lord’s service. “As long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD” (1 Sam. 1:28). So, too, did Mary and Joseph present the Child promised from the fall, born of a virgin’s womb. The true offering wasn’t the turtledoves or young pigeons. It was the Child they carried. This Child has come to “destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery” (Heb. 2:14b–15). Set free by His advent in our flesh and the promise of what He would do “in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17b), Simeon and Anna rejoiced. We also rejoice, for we, too, can face death unafraid and “depart in peace” (Luke 2:29) when our time comes. *“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.

MEN’S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY – **Join us bright and early this Thursday morning** at 6:30 a.m. for **Men’s Bible Breakfast**. It’s a great way to start your day! Good food, good friends, and a good Word from God!



BAKE SALE! Join The Women of Freedom and St. John Lutheran School for a bake sale after church on Sunday, February 16th. All proceeds will go to help those affected by the California fires. Donations are welcome! We are also happy to announce that **Thrivent has offered to match \$1 for every \$2 we raise in the bake sale**, so your impact will be multiplied! ... *Lord, make me an instrument of Your Love, let me be a channel from above. Amen.*

VOTERS’ MEETING – Two weeks from today, on Sunday, February 16th, the voters’ assembly will meet in the fellowship hall after worship. A primary piece of business will be to receive the report of the endowment fund committee and vote on the disbursement of this year’s endowment earnings. In addition, the annual school report will be given, and the Audit Committee will report their findings.

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 TODAY, 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 **TODAY**, 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!

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!

GRIEFSHARE is for those grieving the loss of a loved one, either recently or some time ago; maybe suddenly, tragically, or the slow decline leading to death - all are painful. Whether the loss of a baby, mom or dad, a grandparent, your spouse, sibling or best friend, grief is love's response to loss. A caring group has been meeting together, and there is room for more participants. We meet Sunday afternoons, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m. in the Youth & Family Center, for 13 weeks, from January 5 - March 30, 2025. The three-prong approach of GriefShare has proven to provide support, insight, and comfort: using *videos* with expert presenters, a free *handbook* covering weekly themes, and the *shared wisdom* and compassion of fellow grievers and your leaders, Rev. Gary Bender and Nancy Nemoyer. 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 topics for the next few weeks are: Sun, Feb. 2 - Fearful & Overwhelmed; Sun, Feb. 9 - Anger; Sun, Feb. 16 – Regrets; Sun, Feb. 23 - Grief & Your Household

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, truly showing that TOGETHER we can make a difference.

ST. JOHN SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE – Mark your calendars for February 23rd. Open House will run from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is a new format for Open House this year. Come join us for breakfast and family fun activities taking place during Open House. Invite a friend or someone you know who may be interested in St. John School. We will be enrolling for the 2025-2026 school year.

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.

THE 2025 USHER (blue) AND ALTAR GUILD (pink) SCHEDULES are available and can be picked up on the narthex table. Thanks again to all who are willing to be of service at St. John!

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

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.

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.

USE OF THE FELLOWSHIP HALL OR YOUTH CENTER – If you would like to use the Fellowship Hall or Youth Center for any occasion on a certain date this year, **please contact the church office at 419-598-8961 or churchsecretary@sjl.org**. In addition to calling the office, you may want to check availability on the online church calendar at www.sjl.org.

CHURCH SECRETARY DAYS – Leah Saylor is in the church office on Wednesdays and Thursdays. She can be reached by phone at 419-598-8961 or 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 – Did you know you can listen to Pastor Gary's sermons and access current and past bulletins online? Just click on "St. John YouTube Channel" or "Worship Service Resources" on the home page of sjl.org.

AREA EVENT

- ◆ **A VALENTINE'S DINNER FUNDRAISER** to benefit the St. Peter (Florida) and St. Paul (Flatrock) Youth Group will be held on Sunday, February 16th, at 5:30 p.m. at St. Peter Lutheran Church. See flyer on the bulletin board or text 419-966-2637 for more details.

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 doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called!

LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES SUNDAY is recognized today, February 2nd. Daily Devotions, video Bible studies, and many other resources are free because of generous supporters. To access LHM's resources or support their work, visit the website below or scan the QR code:

 LHM.ORG/DISCOVERLHM

Connect with us!



The Lutheran Hour

- Listen on your local station
- SiriusXM Family Talk
(Sundays, 10 am ET, channel 131)
- Stream it online
- Ask Google or Alexa to "Play The Lutheran Hour"

Video Bible Studies

- Access for free online
- For personal study or your small group
- Topics include Bible stories, spiritual questions, life, career, and more

Topical Booklets

- Access for free online
- Grow in your spiritual walk
- Assist your finances and goal setting
- Find help for depression, cancer, addiction, and more

Daily Devotions

- Read them online or download the Connected by LHM app
- Receive them straight to your e-mail inbox
- Listen by asking Google or Alexa to "Play Daily Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries"

Gospel Adventures

- Multimedia, interactive journeys for children and youth
- **The Gospel Adventures™ Show** podcast and local radio broadcasts
- This year's destination ... *Kenya!*

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