



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

February 16, 2025

VOL. 91

NO. 7

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 Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

Sermon & Text: "Cursed or Blessed" *Jeremiah 17:5-8*

Order of Service: Divine Service Setting One ~ LSB pg. 151

Hymns: 904 ~ Choir: "Jesus, Take All of Me" ~ 705 ~ Communion: 606, 686, 633 ~ 643

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

We invite you to celebrate God's love as we pray to a Heavenly Father who cares for us and as we hear His powerful Word to us. If you do not have a local church home, we extend a warm invitation to you to become a part of our church family. Please fill out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and drop it into the baskets at the doors as you leave today.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Elaine Buenger *Organist* ✠ Anna Sausser, Anika Rosebrock *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Denny Bockelman, Dave Myles, Tim Badenhop *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Karan Niebergall, Karen Lulfs, Kaylee Buchhop, Ronda Wentworth *Altar Guild* ✠

VOTERS' MEETING – After worship today, the voters' assembly will meet in the fellowship hall. 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.

BAKE SALE! Join The Women of Freedom and St. John Lutheran School for a bake sale after church this morning. All proceeds will go to help those affected by the California fires. 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.*

In God's House This Week

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

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM	Communion Service
	10:15 AM	Bake Sale to Benefit California Fire Relief
	10:20 AM	Voters' Meeting
	10:20 AM	Sunday School; "The Lamp"
	2:30 PM	GriefShare Support Group – Topic: "Regrets"
Mon.	10:00 AM	NO SCHOOL – Presidents' Day LWML Service Project
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.	6:30 AM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast
Sat.		NWOLL Basketball Tournament @ St. Paul
Sun.	9:00 AM	Worship Service
	10:30 AM	Pancake Breakfast Sponsored by PTL
	11:00 AM	School Open House
	2:30 PM	GriefShare Support Group – Topic: "Grief & Your Household"

PASTOR OUT OF TOWN – Rev. Gary Bender will be out of town from February 21st to 28th. Rev. Gary Bernath will be our guest pastor on Sun., Feb 23rd. *If you have any pastoral needs while Pastor Gary is out, please contact Pastor Kramer at 567-277-1339.*

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 2/9/2025	\$6,004.00	\$302.00	\$233.00

ATTENDANCE:144

2024 END-OF-YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS – The 2024 individual offering totals (green sheets) are available on the narthex table. These will also be printed in the Church Annual Report. We hope this helps those members in need of this information for tax purposes. If you have any questions on your yearly contribution information, please call Financial Trustee, Jerry Langenhop, at 419-966-3473.

PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *Christians Live by Faith in Christ and Rejoice in the Promise of His Resurrection.*

“Cursed is the man who trusts in man,” for all the strength of his flesh is like the grass that fades away (Jer. 17:5). The one who turns away from the Lord may have food and money and laugh for now, but he “shall mourn and weep” in the judgment (Luke 6:24–25). But “the man who trusts in the LORD” is blessed with all that he needs, “like a tree planted by water.” When heat comes, he survives (Jer. 17:7–8). For the Lord has come in the flesh to heal the people of all their diseases, to cleanse their spirits with forgiveness, and to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God to the poor (Luke 6:18–20). As all of this is by way of His cross, it is solely by faith in the promise of His resurrection that Christians “rejoice” and “leap for joy” (Luke 6:21–23). “If Christ has not been raised,” our faith is in vain and we are most to be pitied (1 Cor. 15:14–19). But, in fact, just as “Christ died for our sins,” so has He also “been raised from the dead” (1 Cor. 15:3, 20). *“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 if you have to miss one Sunday, you can easily pick up again the following Sunday.

SERVICE DAY! Tomorrow, February 17th, at 10 a.m., the Women of Freedom will be preparing material for baby care kits. Any and all are invited to share fellowship and enjoy a pizza and ice cream lunch while helping in this mission project. No sewing skill required! Bring a set of shears and a measuring tape (if you have them). Call Linda Riefers 419-267-3366 if you have any questions.

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!



2024 CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT – Please be sure to get your reports turned in to Leah Saylor. The secretaries of the different church organizations are asked to write up a summary of the year’s activities, and treasurers should submit their financial report for their organization.

DIRECTORY UPDATES – There are addresses and phone numbers in the Annual Report directory that need updated. Call the church office or email churchsecretary@sjl.org with updates.



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.

THANK YOU to *Larry Mahnke* and *Dean Maassel* for their efforts this winter in keeping the church and school parking lot cleared of snow. They donate their time and equipment to get this job done after each snowfall. It is greatly appreciated especially on these chilly days! God is good! Thank you for being willing servants here at St. John.

FACEBOOK VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY – Are you interested in serving at St. John, but want flexible times and remote work? Do you enjoy working with social media? We are looking for a member to help take over the management of our church Facebook page. This volunteer will create posts and share information about our worship services, events, etc. This can be done from the comfort of your own home as long as you have internet and a smartphone or computer! Anyone with questions or interest can email Leah at churchsecretary@sjl.org.

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 13.2 at 9:30 a.m.* or online at worshipanew.org.



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.

AREA EVENTS

- ◆ **THE CHICKEN PIE DINNER** at the Ridgeville American Legion Post #454 is today, **Feb. 16th** serving dine-in and carryout from **11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**
- ◆ **A VALENTINE'S DINNER FUNDRAISER** to benefit the St. Peter (Florida) and St. Paul (Flatrock) Youth Group will be held today, **Feb. 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.
- ◆ **THE CHARTON POLKA BAND** will be performing at St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Archbold on **Sunday, Feb. 23rd, at 3 p.m.**

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...

The one who trusts the Lord is like a tree planted near running water.

Check out what's going on at St. John School!

ENROLLING NOW – St. John Lutheran School is enrolling students in preschool-grade 8 for the 2025-2026 school year. Come to our Open House on February 23rd to take a tour, meet our staff and hear more about our curriculum. Interested families can contact Tracy Germann for more information at 419-598-8702 or tgermann@sjl.org

SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE – Open House is coming soon on Sunday, February 23rd. Come check out the new format this year for current and new interested families. Visit the classrooms and see what they have been working on, check out your child's classroom for next year, and enjoy family activities. Open House will run from 11-1. Register to win free enrollment fee for the 2025-2026 school year. See you there!!!

COOKIE BAKER NEEDED – We are looking for someone to make approximately 3 doz. Cut-out sugar cookies for our school Open House to be held on Sun., Feb 23rd. If you can possibly help in this way or would like more specific information, please call or text Bonnie Niermann (419-960-5880) or call the school office by Tues., Feb. 18. Thank you so much for sharing your baking talent!

PTL PANCAKE BREAKFAST – Do you love St. John? Can you stir? Flip pancakes? Serve or refill drinks? If you answered yes to any of those questions, then we need you!!! On Sunday, February 23rd we will be hosting a Pancake Breakfast here at St. John. In order for the pancake breakfast to run smoothly we need your help. To sign up to help out, please call the school office at 419-598-8702.

Breakfast will be served from 10:30-12. Come help out at the breakfast, bring your family to enjoy breakfast, check out the work your children are doing in their classroom and join activities for the whole family. Bring a friend and show off St. John. Enrollment will be in full swing for next school year.

SGO – It is tax time and not too late to make a donation to the LSGO (Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization). (<https://lsgoohio.org/about/>). Your donation will provide scholarships to St. John students. You will also have a dollar for dollar reduced state income tax liability up to \$750 per filing individual or \$1,500 as a couple. You make the donation, your tax dollars come back to you, and the donation goes to a student at St. John. It will cost you nothing out of your pocket to make a difference! Please call Tracy at 419-598-8702 or email her at tgermann@sjl.org with any questions. There are SGO giving envelopes on the narthex table.

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE – St. John School continues to collect donations of empty egg cartons that hold a dozen eggs. Please make sure they are clean and not damaged.

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.



ST. JOHN OPEN HOUSE

It is the mission of St. John Lutheran School to nurture the faith of students for their life and salvation through Christ in a respectful, responsible, and safe environment.



- ✓ Small class sizes/individualized instruction
- ✓ Scholarships for ALL K-8 students
- ✓ High Quality Curriculum
- ✓ Preschool-8 Christian Education
- ✓ Character Education
- ✓ Community Involvement



*"It takes a village to raise a child, and I am happy with St. John being a part of my children's village."
~Parent of 1st and 5th grader*

Register Now

Sunday, February 23 11-1
Pancake Breakfast 10:30-12

📞 419-270-8863

🌐 tgermann@sjl.org

📍 16035 County Road U
Napoleon, Ohio 43545