



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

April 6, 2025

VOL. 91

NO. 14

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

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Sermon: "Water in the Wilderness" *Isaiah 43:16-21*
Order of Service: Divine Service Setting One ~ LSB pg. 151
Hymns: 421 ~ 430 v. 1, 2, 7 ~ Offertory: 781 v. 1, 2, 5 ~ Communion: 543, 433 ~ 918 v. 1 & 3

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Welcome in the name of the Lord. We pray that through this time of stillness and song, prayer and proclamation, you may experience the Spirit of God at work in your life. May God richly bless your worship today! 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. If you do not have a local church home, we extend a warm invitation to you to become a part of our church family.

SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Sharon Damman *Organist* ✠ Brayden Damman, Westen Cowell *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Derek Damman, Greg Kehnast, Ian Rosebrook *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow *Altar Guild* ✠



ALTAR FLOWERS this morning are placed in honor of Denny and Kathy Behnfeldt's 55th wedding anniversary coming up this Friday the 11th. The flowers are given by their family. Happy anniversary, Denny and Kathy! *We love because he first loved us.* -1 John 4:19

PORTALS OF PRAYER BOOKLETS for the next quarter (April, May, June) are on the desk in the narthex. There are also large print booklets available for anybody to pick up.

FACEBOOK VOLUNTEER NEEDED! – We are looking for a volunteer to help manage 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 interest or questions can email Leah at churchsecretary@sjl.org.

Date	Time	Activities
Today	9:00 AM 10:20 AM 1:30 PM	Communion Service Adult Bible Study; Sunday School and "The Lamp" Gerald BusyFingers 4-H Meeting
Mon.	5:00 PM 5:15 PM	Groups 1 and 2 Church Cleaning School Board Meeting
Tues.	8:35 AM 5:00 PM 5:30 PM 7:00 PM	School Chapel Group 1 Church Cleaning Welcome to Kindergarten Night Church Council Meeting
Wed.	5:45 PM 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Junior High Confirmation Class Midweek Lenten Service ; Offering – <i>Mission Endowment</i> Organist: <i>Elaine Buenger</i> Acolyte: <i>Brayden Damman</i> Ushers: <i>Derek Damman, Greg Kehnast, Ian Rosebrook</i> Altar Guild: <i>Karen Germann, Diana Kruse, Mary Kossow</i> Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	6:30 AM 5:00 PM	Men's Bible Study Breakfast Group 3 Church Cleaning
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:20 AM	Palm Sunday Worship Service with Communion following Adult Bible Study; Sunday School and "The Lamp"

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!*

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, 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
- ❖ *The family and friends of Gloria Maringer* who are mourning her passing on Monday
- ❖ *Eli Damman* whose surgery is rescheduled for this coming week

FINANCIAL FACTS:	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 3/30/2025	\$13,008.63	\$255.00	\$320.00

ATTENDANCE: 191

LENT 4 (3/26): \$1,107.00 for Worship Anew; Attendance- 74

THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT is available on the Narthex table. If you didn't get your directory updates in, please still let Leah (churchsecretary@sjl.org) know if you have any changes.

PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *God’s Beloved Son Has Redeemed Us*.

Our life and works apart from Christ, no matter how they may glitter to the eyes of the world, are ultimately rubbish and have no righteousness. Rather, in the scandalous cross of Jesus, we find our righteousness alone “through faith in Christ” (Phil. 3:9). By such faith, we “know him and the power of his resurrection” (Phil. 3:10). For the same God who brought Israel out of Egypt has done a “new thing” for us in Christ Jesus (Is. 43:19). He has sent His beloved Son into His vineyard to be killed by sinful men and to become “the stone that the builders rejected.” Yet, the One rejected by men “has become the cornerstone” of His Church (Luke 20:17). Through the waters of Holy Baptism, He provides us daily refreshment in our earthly pilgrimage, “a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” (Is. 43:19). *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 11:15).*

OUR LAST WEDNESDAY SERVICE is on April 9th at 7 p.m. Join us as Pastor Gary preaches on the word “FINISHED!” Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday next week.

PALM SUNDAY CHILDREN’S PROCESSION – Parents, please note that next Sunday, April 13th, is Palm Sunday, and that the children will process into the sanctuary at the beginning of the service with palm branches in hand. There will also be a children’s message while the children are up front. Children should arrive ten or fifteen minutes before the service and head to the fellowship hall for their palm branches and instructions.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY resumes this week. Join us as we take a “Longer Look at the Lessons” after worship this morning in the north end of the fellowship hall.



MEN’S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY will meet each Thursday in Lent until Maundy Thursday. **Join us this Thursday morning** at 6:30 AM for **Men’s Bible Breakfast**. It’s a great way to start your day! Good food, good friends, and a good Word from God!

EASTER FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST – The sign-up sheet for our annual Easter Fellowship Breakfast is on the Narthex table. The breakfast will start around 8:15 a.m. between the Easter Sunrise and Festival services on April 20th. The menu includes eggs, sausage, and hash browns. Thank you for helping in this way as we celebrate the joy of Easter together!

ANNUAL CHURCH CLEANING – A list of the people appointed for this year’s church cleaning is available on the narthex table. If you feel you are not physically able to help with the cleaning, let your co-chair know and we’ll make a note of that. Thank you to all who show up to do this each year!

1. **Group 1 will be having its cleaning sessions on Mon. April 7th and Tues. April 8th starting at 5 p.m.** If you have questions, please contact co-chairs *Nick and Kelly Sonnenberg* or *Larry and Cheryl Sausser*.
2. **Group 2 will be having its cleaning session on Mon. April 7th starting at 5 p.m.** If you have questions, please contact co-chairs *Tom and Sandy Von Deylen* or *Bob and Ronda Wentworth*.
3. **Group 3 will be having its cleaning session on Thurs. April 10th starting at 5 p.m.** If you have questions, please contact co-chairs *Neil and Anita Badenhop* or *Josh and Margo Behnfeldt*.

“WHAT I HEARD” REPORT – Pastor Gary has written a report titled “What I Heard” based on his one-on-one meetings that were held in the fall. Copies are available on the Narthex table.

OLD CHURCH PEWS – If you are looking for a restoration project, we may be able to help you out. There are 2 church pews from the old church available to anyone interested. They will need some TLC (*tender loving care*), but are very sturdy yet. They are different lengths. If you are interested in them, please see/contact *Dan or Joyce Wiechers*.

EPIC AUSTRALIAN ADVENTURE! – Mark your calendars for **Vacation Bible School** the week of June 9th to 13th from 9-11:30 a.m. This year's theme will be "Epic Australian Adventure" from Concordia Publishing House. More details to come!



ENDOWMENT FUND CONTACTS – Do you have questions about the St. John Endowment Fund? *Krista Gerken* and *Dave VonDeylen* are happy to provide more information to anyone who has questions or interest in making a donation. *Krista* can be reached at 419-966-2596 or lkgerken@henry-net.com. *Dave* can be reached at 419-438-1844 or davevd21@gmail.com.

VOTERS' MEETING – Tracy Germann, principal, and the staff at St. John School would like to extend a "thank you" to the voters' assembly for moving forward with the hiring of a part-time first and second grade teacher. "We are blessed to have such a supportive congregation that enables us to work hard to help St. John School provide the best education possible to the children God entrusts to us."

ENROLLING NOW – St. John Lutheran School is enrolling students preschool-grade 8 for the 2025-'26 school year. Interested families can contact Tracy Germann at 419-598-8702 or tgermann@sjl.org.

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.

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 to visit our donation page.



AREA EVENTS

- ◆ **CPC WOMEN'S HEALTH RESOURCE** (our local pregnancy center) is having its annual **SPRING BENEFIT AND SILENT AUCTION** in Archbold on Tues., April 8th at 5:30 p.m. The event features a meal and guest speaker. More details are on the bulletin board.
- ◆ A **"CHRIST IN THE PASSION" PRESENTATION** will be held at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Liberty Center, on Tues., April 15th at 7 p.m. More details are on the bulletin board.
- ◆ **COMMUNITY CHOIR EASTER CANTATA PRESENTATIONS** will be held at Delta Assembly of God **TODAY** at 6 p.m. and then at Haven Heights Baptist Church in Wauseon on April 13th at 6 p.m.. More details are on the bulletin board.

✱ ✱ ✱

Thought for the Week...

God can make all things new... even you!