



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

May 11, 2025

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NO. 19

Rev. Gary Bender, TIM
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

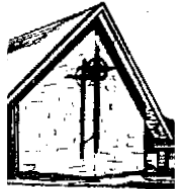
Sermon: “Apostle’s Creed – Second Article – I”

Order of Service: Service of Prayer and Preaching *LSB pg. 260*

Hymns: 694 ~ 954 v. 2 ~ 917 v. 1, 2, 4

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS AND ALL MOTHERS

God speaks to us, and we listen and respond with our hymns, prayers, and praises. Together we bless the Lord, whose purpose is to save us and keep us in His faithful flock. He is the God of Grace and the God of Glory. We also ask His blessing on all the mothers who are with us today. If you are visiting with us this morning, please 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 today.



SERVING IN GOD’S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✦ Sharon Damman *Organist* ✦ Kenlee Coressel, Piper Speiser *Acolytes* ✦
- ✦ Carey Damman, Scott Van Valkenburg, Mike Maassel *Ushers* ✦
- ✦ Deb Wachtman, Nancy Short, Kathy Gruenhagen *Altar Guild* ✦

MOTHER’S DAY JAVA JOY – Today we celebrate godly mothers and the role they play in bearing testimony to us of our one Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Truly, they are more precious than rubies! (Prov. 3:15) After worship, the Stewardship Board is hosting a Mother’s Day *Java Joy*. There will be some special coffees and treats for all of our moms and for all of us who love our moms.

HOLY LAND MINISTRY MOMENT – We welcome the “Christian Families of Bethlehem in the Holy Land” this morning! They will share a few minutes of a “ministry moment” during the service, and then following the service will have a table display selling their handmade olivewood crafts. Please help support our brothers and sisters in the town of Bethlehem.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY is cancelled on this Mother’s Day morning as many families take time over the lunch hour to visit or to treat the mothers in their lives to a special meal or celebration.

Date	Time	Activities
TODAY	9:00 AM	Worship Service with Communion to Follow Mother's Day <i>Java Joy</i> and "Christian Families of Bethlehem in the Holy Land" sale/display after worship
	10:20 AM	Sunday School
Mon.	5:15 PM	School Board Meeting
Tues.	8:35 AM	School Chapel
	7:00 PM	Church Council Meeting
Wed.	6:15 PM	Junior High Confirmation Class
	7:00 PM	Adult Choir Practice
Thurs.	7:00 PM	Confirmation Questioning Service
Sun.	9:00 AM	Confirmation Sunday Communion Service
	10:20 AM	Adult Bible Study; Sunday School
	1:30 PM	Gerald BusyFingers 4-H 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!*

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
- ❖ *Eli Damman* recovering from heart surgery

FINANCIAL FACTS:	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 5/4/2025	\$6,323.50	\$546.50	\$536.50

ATTENDANCE: 170

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.


MILITARY SERVICE BOARD – Do you know who is currently managing (or who was the last person to take care of) the military display in the Narthex? There are some changes to be made, and we aren't sure who is to make them. Anyone involved in this project or who has background information that may be helpful is encouraged to call Leah in the church office at 419-598-8961.

PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *The Good Shepherd Cares for His Sheep*.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came from the Father and became flesh among us in order to rescue us, His sheep. He laid down His life for us and took it up again in order to give us eternal life. By the preaching of His Gospel, He calls His sheep to Himself and keeps them with Him forever. As they hear His voice and follow Him, “they will never perish” (John 10:28), for “no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (John 10:29). In the same way, faithful pastors (literally, “shepherds”) “care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (Acts 20:28), “testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). Therefore, with all the company of heaven, the Good Shepherd gathers His flock in worship, as they cry: “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Rev. 7:10).

THURSDAY EVENING WORSHIP services have resumed. However, this Thursday, May 15th, we will be observing the public examination of our catechumens in place of Thursday service. Pastor Gary will publicly examine our 2025 catechumens: *Erin Damman, Brayden Damman, Maxton Howard, Zeek Kramer, Anika Rosebrock* and *Anna Sausser*. We will gather in the fellowship hall at 7:00 p.m.; the congregation is invited to join! Then next Sunday, we will witness the confirmation of these young individuals and their first Communion. Please keep them in your prayers as they prepare to make the good confession of faith and to participate with us at the Lord’s Table.

ADULT CHOIR will practice this Wednesday at 7 p.m. and then go on “summer break” until sometime in September. Thank you, choir, for sharing your musical gifts!

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! If you would need training or more information, we are happy to provide it. Anyone with interest or questions can email Leah at churchsecretary@sjl.org. 

THANK YOU TO OUR PRAYER PALS – A big thank you to those of you that signed up to be prayer partners with the St. John students. The students went home with a magnet that has your name on it, so they can pray for you as well. Thank you for praying for our students. We also want to thank those that were able to attend *The National Day of Prayer* with us. Praying together with all of you and the students was powerful. We look forward to continuing to plan for ways to join prayer partners throughout next school year.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE RECOGNITION – On Sunday, May 25th, we invite high school graduates to gather with us in the worship service for graduate recognition. We’ll remember your confirmation theme, we’ll ask you about your plans for the future, and commend those plans to God in prayer. In the meantime, we’d appreciate having a picture of each graduate that we can project during the recognition. Email them to Leah at churchsecretary@sjl.org, or drop a picture off in the office during the school day.

CIRCUIT ASCENSION DAY SERVICE – Mark your calendars! St. John Stryker will be hosting this year’s circuit Ascension Day service at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 29th. Rev. Stephen Niermann will be preaching, and Holy Communion will be given. We will not be having our own Thursday service that week, so we encourage you all to attend the service at St. John Stryker. There will be ice cream provided afterwards.

CALL LIST NOMINATIONS – Do you know a pastor that would be a good fit at St John? Would you like to see them on our call list? Simply fill out a nomination form, available on the table in the narthex, and turn it into the church office by May 22nd. We will forward the names of these pastors to the district for their consideration.

MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST will not meet this week. They are done for the summer and will resume sometime in September. Thank you to the men who have taken the time to be part of this.

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." We are seeking adult volunteers to coordinate each of the five site rotations, leaders for our preschool, as well as additional helping staff. Please consider ministering to the children as a volunteer with our VBS. It is a wonderful way to bring the children to Jesus, as He bids us to do, "Let the children come unto me." (Matthew 19:14) Anyone interested in volunteering, please reach out to Andrea Oyer at (419) 966-1806.



THE WOMEN OF FREEDOM will have their next meeting on Tuesday, May 20th, at 7 p.m. Leah Saylor will be presenting a bit about the CPC Women's Health Resource, a local pregnancy center ministry. If you'd like to bring a pack of diapers (sizes newborn to 6) to the meeting, Leah is willing to drop them off at CPC as a donation from the Women of Freedom. May is also a mites (Women of Missions) meeting. All ladies of the church are invited to join in!

THE CPC WOMEN'S HEALTH RESOURCE is hosting its annual baby bottle fundraiser, kicking off on Mother's Day. For the next few weeks, there will be a box of baby bottles on the Narthex table. If you'd like to donate to the pregnancy center, pick up a bottle, fill it with change, and return it to the church office by June 8th.

SCRIP FOR GRADUATION – Why not use the PTL SCRIP Program to order gift cards for those graduating seniors in your lives? Blue order forms are available at the narthex table. Please turn those orders in by Wednesdays, with payment to St. John School PTL Scrip Program. Payment must accompany orders. Any questions about SCRIP can be directed to SCRIP Coordinator Kristyn Honemann at 419-966-0207 or email at honemann@embarqmail.com.

THE "BREAD FROM HEAVEN" food pantry will be having its distribution on **May 19th** this month due to the holiday. A note to St. John members needing food assistance – If you could use food assistance from our food pantry, please speak with *Pastor Bender*. We are required by the *Northwestern Ohio Food Bank* to keep a record with your name, but pastor will keep your record separate and absolutely confidential.

Contributions can be made to the pantry at any time. Monetary gifts can be given to the *Good Neighbor Fund* (note it on your offering envelope). Food donations for our pantry can be dropped off in the box by the Archives display cases.

THE TRANSITION TASK FORCE will have its next meeting on Tuesday, May 27th at 7 p.m.

LUTHERAN WITNESS RENEWAL – It's time to renew subscriptions to the *Lutheran Witness* magazine for this year. **To subscribe or renew your subscription, simply place \$20.75 in an envelope, along with your name and address, and place it in the Sunday collection plate or bring it to the church office.** Deadline for subscriptions is May 26th.

MAGAZINE RACK IN THE NARTHEX – Speaking of magazines, visit the rack above the back table in the Narthex! There are magazines from Lutheran organizations such as our Seminaries, Worship Anew, Lutherans for Life, and many others. Anyone may freely borrow copies!

WE CONTINUE TO COLLECT EGG CARTONS for the organization “Together We Can Make a Difference.” There is a collection box in the Narthex for clean, 12-count only egg cartons. Thank you!

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.

HIRING NOW – St. John Lutheran School has several staff positions open for the upcoming school year: **preschool teacher, part-time 1st and 2nd grade teacher, short and long-term substitutes, school cook, and music teacher.** Interested candidates, contact Tracy Germann at tgermann@sjl.org.

PRESCHOOL GRADUATION – Preschool graduation will take place on Monday, May 19th at 6:00PM. Refreshments will be served following the ceremony. Congratulations to our preschool graduates!

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL – Join us for the final chapel of the school year at 12:45PM on Thursday, May 22nd. We will celebrate with a final chapel led by Pastor Gary followed by awards. We will end the day with an early dismissal at 2:00PM.

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 the coming Sunday's bulletin.

AREA EVENT

◆ **BBQ CHICKEN DINNER** - On Sun., May 18th from 11 a.m. until gone, the Ridgeville Volunteer Fire Dept will be hosting a Drive-thru Chicken BBQ at the fire station. The menu is: ½ Brookview Chicken, Potato, and Dessert. Freewill donation!

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.



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Thought for the Week...

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.

Happy Mother's Day!

coloring page



Mandy Grace '10

<http://ministry-to-children.com>