

# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

May 18, 2025

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NO. 20

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Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

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### FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER / CONFIRMATION

Sermon: "Apostle's Creed – Second Article – II"

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

Hymns: 411 ~ 953 v. 2 ~ 864 v. 1-3 ~ Communion: 687, Choir Anthem, 548 ~ 864 v. 4-5

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#### WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

A warm welcome to all, especially friends and relatives of our Confirmation Class. If you are visiting with us this morning, help us get to know you better by filling out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and dropping it in the baskets at the door as you leave today.

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#### **SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING**

- ✠ Sharon Damman *Organist* ✠ Westen Cowell, Brynnleigh Kehnast *Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Carey Damman, Scott Van Valkenburg, Mike Maassel *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Deb Wachtman, Nancy Short, Kathy Gruenhagen *Altar Guild* ✠

**CONFIRMATION 2025** – This morning we rejoice to witness the confirmation of six catechumens as they confess their Christian faith and receive the Lord's Supper for the first time. This is a day of rejoicing for them and for this congregation! Our catechumens are:



- ❖ **Brayden Damman** (*Isaiah 45:6*)
- ❖ **Erin Damman** (*Joshua 1:9*)
- ❖ **Maxton Howard** (*Philippians 4:13*)
- ❖ **Zeek Kramer** (*Matthew 10:38*)
- ❖ **Anika Rosebrock** (*Isaiah 40:30-31*)
- ❖ **Anna Sausser** (*Philippians 4:13*)

Please keep them in your prayers, that God may strengthen them in faith to life eternal!



**WEDDING BELLS** – Today we also rejoice with *Connor Wyse* and *Lydia Schroeder* on their marriage ceremony conducted here at St. John yesterday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. We pray for joy in life as they begin their journey as husband and wife. Congratulations to the Wyses!

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
TODAY	9:00 AM 1:30 PM	<b>Confirmation Sunday Communion Service</b> Gerald BusyFingers 4-H Meeting
Mon.	5:30 PM 6:00 PM	<i>Bread from Heaven</i> Food Pantry Distribution Preschool Graduation
Tues.	7:00 PM	Women of Freedom Meeting
Thurs.	12:45 PM 7:00 PM	Last Day of School (K-5) <b>School Chapel</b> <b>Thursday Evening Worship Service</b>
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:15 AM	<b>Worship Service</b> Adult Bible Study

**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*
- ❖ *Brenda Elling, Lowell Petzoldt, and Cheryl Yaw*, for health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *William Niebergall* undergoing heart surgery
- ❖ *Eli Damman* recovering from heart surgery

<b>FINANCIAL FACTS:</b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 5/11/2025	\$9,088.00	\$517.00	\$228.00

**ATTENDANCE: 193 (38 Thurs./154 Sun.)**

**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](mailto:lkgerken@henry-net.com). *Dave* can be reached at 419-438-1844 or [davevd21@gmail.com](mailto: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.

**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!


**PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR** – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *Jesus Turns Sorrow into Joy*.

On earth “you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy” (John 16:20). Already the Spirit grants you peace and joy through the forgiveness of your sins. For by the cross of Christ, “God has granted repentance that leads to life” (Acts 11:18). His Gospel is “a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household” (Acts 11:14). He gives freely “from the spring of the water of life” (Rev. 21:6), “and death shall be no more” (Rev. 21:4). He dwells with His people, adorning His Church as a bride for her husband, “making all things new” (Rev. 21:5). Therefore, as the Son of Man is glorified by His cross, “and God is glorified in him” (John 13:31), so He is glorified in us by our “love for one another” (John 13:35), which His Spirit works in us by His grace.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** will not meet this week, beginning a summer break until the next school year.

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY** is cancelled on this Confirmation Sunday. The class will continue to be offered throughout the summer.

**LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP** – Attention ALL Officers, Board members, and Committees, elected and appointed. Pastor Gary will lead a training workshop on Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, from 9:00AM to 3:30 PM. Topics will include the Lifecycle of a Congregation, St. John’s Mission Statement, and the Bylaw Job Descriptions of all positions within the Congregation. Lunch will be included. **PLEASE PLAN TO BE THERE.**

**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](mailto:churchsecretary@sjl.org). 

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE RECOGNITION** – On Sunday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 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](mailto:churchsecretary@sjl.org), or drop a picture off in the office during the school day.

**THURSDAY EVENING WORSHIP** services have resumed. These services will be a preview of the upcoming Sunday’s service. One exception— we will not gather at St. John *Freedom* on Thursday May 29<sup>th</sup> but rather encourage you all to attend the Ascension Day service at St. John *Stryker*.

**CIRCUIT ASCENSION DAY SERVICE** – St. John Stryker will be hosting this year’s circuit Ascension Day service at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Stephen Niermann will be preaching, and Holy Communion will be given. 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 him 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 22<sup>nd</sup>. We will forward the names of these pastors to the district for their consideration.



**THE WOMEN OF FREEDOM** will have their next meeting this Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 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 will 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. 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 8<sup>th</sup>.

**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](mailto:honemann@embarqmail.com).

**THE "BREAD FROM HEAVEN"** food pantry will be having its distribution tomorrow, **May 19<sup>th</sup>** 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 27<sup>th</sup> 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 26<sup>th</sup>.

**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!

**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](mailto:tgermann@sjl.org).

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

**PRESCHOOL GRADUATION** – Preschool graduation will take place tomorrow, May 19<sup>th</sup> 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 this Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. 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](mailto: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.

**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](http://sjl.org).

### **AREA EVENTS**

- ◆ **BBQ CHICKEN DINNER** - Today, May 18<sup>th</sup> 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!
- ◆ **FRIENDS OF ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN** will be hosting a Bake Sale, Food Stand, & Thrift sale at the Florida Ohio, Fire Station on June 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> during the Historic Route 424 Yard Sales. Stop in to enjoy great food from the lunch stand or baked items and help support this worthy cause! The Florida Fire Station is located on Rt. 424 in Florida, OH.

**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 that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.**

*Martin Luther's Explanation of the Second Article of the Apostle's Creed*

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** – Registration is open for our *Epic Australian Adventure* Vacation Bible School! To register your student(s), please visit: <https://vbsmate.com/events/StJohnLutheranFreedom/30780> (or scan the QR code). If you have questions or are interested in volunteering to help with the program, please contact Andrea Oyer at (419)966-1806 or [oyerandrea@gmail.com](mailto:oyerandrea@gmail.com). This program is free to all, so invite a friend to join the adventure!



## **2025 Vacation Bible School**

**June 9-13 | 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.**

Together we will journey through Bible stories to see how Jesus calls, leads, teaches, saves, and sends us! We'll enjoy songs, activities, crafts, and snacks on our *Epic Adventure*.



St. John Lutheran Church,  
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