



St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

August 17, 2025

VOL. 91

NO. 33

Pastoral Vacancy

Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

Church Office: 419-598-8961

School Office: 419-598-8702

Church Website: www.sjl.org

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sermon: Guest Pastor *Rev. Carl Rockrohr*

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

Hymns: **728 ~ 655 ~ Communion: 702, 580 ~ 923**

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Now is the hour of worship. 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. If you are visiting with us, please fill out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack, and drop it in the baskets at the doors as you leave.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

- ✠ Sharon Damman *Organist* ✠ Westen Cowell *Acolyte* ✠
- ✠ Dave Badenhop, Denny Von Deylen, Jerry Short, Dan Wiechers *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Deb Von Deylen, Elaine Buenger, Teresa Weller, Pat Mahnke *Altar Guild* ✠

THE FINAL REPORT FROM THE TRANSITION TASK FORCE has been approved by council, and copies are available to the congregation on the Narthex table. This report details the past, present, and future of St. John based on the interviews, workshops, questionnaires, etc. completed during our transition between pastors.

BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSINGS AND BRUNCH! – Next Sunday, Aug. 24th, during the worship service, we will observe the “**Blessing of the Backpacks**” for all students returning to school, **any school**. Have your student bring his/her backpack for a special blessing and time of prayer for the school year.

Following the service on Aug. 24th, School Board is hosting a “**Back to School Brunch**” in the fellowship hall. Church and school families are invited to join! Meet new staff members, tour classrooms, drop off supplies, and enjoy a delicious brunch as we kick off a new school year!

Date	Time	Activities
TODAY	9:00 AM 10:15 AM	Communion Service Adult Bible Study
Mon.	4:30 PM	“Sweet Start” to drop off school supplies
Thurs.	8:35 AM	First Day of School (K-6th) School Opening Chapel
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:15 AM	Worship Service with Backpack Blessing “Back to School Brunch” hosted by School Board

PASTORAL EMERGENCIES – Please contact **Pastor Kramer** at 567-277-1339 with any emergency pastoral care requests.

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, Jordan Lange, Joshua, and Kyle*
- ❖ *Brenda Elling, Lowell Petzoldt, and Julie (Kern) Patterson* for health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *Stan Gerken* for health concerns

FINANCIAL FACTS:

	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 8/10/2025	\$26,645.00	\$937.00	\$308.00

ATTENDANCE: 123

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.

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!

SHARE THE BOUNTY – Has your garden produced a bounty of beans? A crush of cucumbers? An excess of eggplants? If you’ve got more than you can use, consider sharing the bounty with your friends at church. There is a table outside under the carport where you can drop off the garden produce you *can't* use, and you can also pick up what you *can* use. It’s a wonderful way to share the blessing!



LARGE PRINT & CHILDREN’S ACTIVITY BULLETINS are always available on the table in the Narthex. There are also large-print hymnals that may be borrowed during service. The Children’s Bulletins are coordinated with the Bible texts for each Sunday and provide activities that tie in with the weekly themes.

PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *Christ’s Suffering and Death Bring Division*.

The Lord Jesus causes fear and trembling and division because His Word is “like fire ... and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces” (Jer. 23:29). His Law puts us all to death, whereas only His Gospel can bring us to life. He has fulfilled that Word for us by His cross and in His resurrection from the dead. He undergoes such a distressing baptism, accomplished by His death, in order to open the way for us through our Holy Baptism into His cross and resurrection. So, then, if we are able “to interpret the appearance of earth and sky” (Luke 12:56), let us mark this sign of His cross — recognizing that this world is subject to death, but knowing that Christ Jesus also has conquered death and obtained life everlasting for us. Let us fix our eyes on “Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith,” and “run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1–2).

ADULT BIBLE STUDY – We will be having Adult Bible Study following the service today in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you, *Rev. Carl Rockrohr*, for offering and leading this.

CALL LIST NOMINATIONS – We are once again taking nominations of pastors to be added to our call list. Do you know a pastor that would be a good fit at St. John? Simply fill out a nomination form, available on the table in the Narthex, and turn it in to Leah in the church office **by August 17th**.

THE WOMEN OF FREEDOM have two opportunities to share with those in need, and the congregation is invited to join them! Collection boxes will be labeled and in the back of church for:

1. *Together We Can Make a Difference* Initiatives is in need of **new winter hats, scarves, and gloves/mittens for all ages**. We will be collecting up until Christmas, but cold weather will be arriving before we know it, so we will begin now.
2. *Orphan Grain Train* is in need of **new undershirts, underwear, and socks**. These will be collected for the ingathering for the Women in Mission (LWML) Fall Retreat to be held on Sept. 20th at St. John, Stryker. (*There are registration forms for this event on the Narthex table and a flyer on the bulletin board— details will be included in next week’s bulletin!*)

“ROAD TO DAMASCUS” BUS TRIP – St. John Lutheran Church in Defiance is planning a bus trip to Sugarcreek, OH, to the Ohio Star Theater to see the production “The Road to Damascus,” a musical theater journey through the book of Acts. They are opening the trip to area churches in order to reach the minimum number of attendees needed to charter the bus. The trip is scheduled for **Thurs., Sept., 25th**, and reservations need to be made by Mon., August 25th. The cost is \$125 per person. See the yellow flyer on the Narthex table for more information if you are interested. Please direct any questions or registration forms to the St. John **Defiance** church office (*Jenny George- 419-576-2911*).

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...

Want to starve your fears? Feed your faith!

News and Notes for the Upcoming School Year

- **The 1st Day of School** for St. John is this Thurs., Aug. 21st
 - All church and school families are welcome to join us for our **Opening Chapel Service** at 8:35 a.m. this day!
- **Sweet Start** – for parents of students grades K-6 on Tues., Aug. 19th from 4:30-6 p.m. *At this event, you may drop off school supplies and enjoy a sweet treat with us!*
- **School Parent Night** – for grades K-6 on Mon, Aug. 25th in the north end of the cafeteria, there will be time for questions, signing up for volunteer opportunities, and an informational session with your child's teacher.
- **Preschool Preview Days** will be Thurs., Aug. 28th for the 4-year-old class and Fri., Aug. 29th for the 3-year-old class. These provide an opportunity for parents and preschoolers to visit the classroom before the first day of school and receive information for the year. *(Check your e-mail for a link to sign up for a time slot!)*
- **School Pictures** will be taken by *Pictures by Marisa* this year and are scheduled for Wed., Sept. 17th at 9 a.m. for the 3-year-old preschool and K-6. On Thurs., Sept. 17th, Marisa will be back to take photos for the 4-year-old preschool class and anyone who missed picture day. Order forms will be made available shortly after school starts.
- We will once again be utilizing **Digital Academy** as our communication system. Back to school forms are available in your account; please have these completed.
- **Booster Memberships** are available for the 2025-26 school year. \$20.00 for a couple and \$10.00 for a single. Blue forms are available in the rack by the school office door.
- **SCRIP** will be offered again this school year. Any questions can be directed to *Kristyn Honemann* at 419-966-0207. Order forms are available on the Narthex table.
- **Freedom Flock**, St. John's afterschool program, will begin at 3 p.m. on the first day of school. This year's director is Miss Elle Mohler. If you will be utilizing this program, please contact Erica in the school office to pre-register your child(ren) and pay the \$15 per family registration. The handbook and registration forms are available in the rack outside the office and will also be available on school supply drop-off night.
- **We Welcome New Staff Members this Year:** Miss Elizabeth Myers (first grade), Miss Kelsie Drewes (preschool), and Miss Elle Mohler (Freedom Flock).

Let's
Make
a Joyful
Noise 2025-26

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 staff positions open: **short and long-term substitutes, school cook, janitor, and music teacher.** Interested candidates, contact Tracy Germann.