



# St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

16035 Co. Rd. U ♦ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

## Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship • Stewardship • Mission

November 23, 2025

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Pastoral Vacancy

Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

Church Office: 419-598-8961

School Office: 419-598-8702

Church Website: [www.sjl.org](http://www.sjl.org)

### LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR

Sermon: Guest *Seminarian Nash Ringquist*

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

Hymns: 336 ~ 534 ~ 516

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#### WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

*We welcome all who have come to worship our God with us today! Each day we live is a priceless gift from God, loaded with possibilities to learn something new, to gain fresh insights into His great truths. May we be showered with those blessings as we together profess His Name today. Please fill out the 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.*

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

- ✠ Sharon Damman, *Organist* ✠ Westen Cowell, *Stryker Oyer Acolytes* ✠
- ✠ Doug Dietrich, Neil Badenhop, Joe Badenhop, Nick Sonnenberg *Ushers* ✠
- ✠ Deb Wachtman, Nancy Short, Kathy Gruenhagen *Altar Guild* ✠

**WEDNESDAY SERVICES** – We will begin worshipping on Wednesday evenings again starting this week as we celebrate **Thanksgiving Eve** together on **November 26<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.** As always, we encourage you to consider two offerings that evening – the regular monetary offering for Christmas Cheer and the offering of food items for our **Bread From Heaven Food Pantry**. We will have a table in the back for you to drop the food offerings before or after the service.

Then, beginning the following Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, we kick off our mid-week Advent series with the theme of “Stir Up the Power of **Hope**.”



**LOOKING AHEAD TO CHRISTMAS DECORATING** – A day for decorating the sanctuary for Christmas has been set for Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup> (the Monday after Thanksgiving). We plan to begin around 6:00 p.m., and decorating usually can take one and a half hours. Everyone is welcome to come and join the fun!

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
TODAY	9:00 AM 10:15 AM	<b>Worship Service</b> Sunday School; "The Lamp;" Adult Bible Study Confirmation class after church until 11:15
Mon.	5:30 PM	<i>Bread from Heaven</i> Food Pantry Distribution
Tues.	8:35 AM	<b>School Chapel</b>
Wed.	7:00 PM	NO SCHOOL- Thanksgiving Break 11/26-11/30 <b>Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service</b> Guest Pastor: <i>Rev. Matthew Montgomery</i> Acolytes: <i>Alana Naveau</i> and <i>Sadie Bickel</i> Ushers: <i>Doug Dietrich, Neil Badenhop, Joe Badenhop, Nick Sonnenberg</i> Altar Guild: <i>Deb Wachtman, Nancy Short, Kathy Gruenhagen</i>
Sun.	9:00 AM 10:15 AM	<b>Worship Service</b> Children's Christmas practice; "The Lamp;" Adult Bible Study Confirmation class after church until 11:15

**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* and *Norma Damman* at Genacross
- ❖ *Rozella Gruenhagen* and *Bob Nemoyer* at Vancrest
- ❖ *Lawrence Behrmann* at Northcrest Nursing & Rehab
- ❖ Our Shut-Ins: *Irene Joost, Leona Durham, and Marlene Showman*
- ❖ *Brenda Elling, Anne Rausch, and Julie (Kern) Patterson* for health concerns related to cancer
- ❖ *Stan Gerken* and *Rev. Ken Schroeder* for health concerns
- ❖ Military: *Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Jordan Lange, Joshua, and Kyle*

<b>FINANCIAL FACTS:</b>	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	\$11,710.59	\$500.00	\$961.54
Rec'd 11/16/2025	\$8,916.20	\$125.00	\$345.00

**ATTENDANCE:** 179

**ADVENT DEVOTION BOOKLETS** are available starting today on the narthex table. They are titled *Born to you... a Savior* and are provided to us through Lutheran Hour Ministries. You may also access the Advent devotionals online by visiting [lhm.org/advent](http://lhm.org/advent).

**MY DEVOTION BOOKLETS** for the next quarter, *December, January, and February*, are available on the desk in the narthex. These are nice kid-friendly family devotions. Pick up a copy today!

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE** – The Children's Christmas service will be held on Sun., Dec. 21 at 7:00 p.m. This is a combined church/school event, with practices being held on Sundays after church during the Sunday School hour. The first practice will be November 30, and they will continue each of the following Sundays, December 7, 14, and 21.

**PREPARING OUR EARS TO HEAR** – In today’s Scripture readings we hear that *Jesus Christ Reigns, Enduring the Cross — Its Scorn and Shame.*

The Lord Jesus reigns in love among those who are baptized in His name. “They shall be mine,” He says, “and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him” (Mal. 3:17). Jesus’ service through crucifixion for sinful men anchors us in new life. In the proclamation of His Son, God makes His justice clear, defining “the distinction between the righteous and the wicked” (Mal. 3:18). He truly is “the King of the Jews” (Luke 23:38), who governs His Church with all authority in heaven and on earth. He has come into His kingdom by His cross, and He graciously remembers us in paradise. Therefore, do not weep for Him, but with repentant faith “weep for yourselves and for your children” (Luke 23:28). Then the mountains and hills of Jerusalem, His holy Church, shall cover you with His righteousness and peace. For He “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation” (Col. 1:15). “All things were created through him and for him” (Col. 1:16), and “all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell” bodily in Him, reconciling all things to Himself “by the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:19–20). ***“He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 11:15).***

**AFTER-CHURCH OPPORTUNITIES** – **Adult Bible Study** will meet in the cry room. Thank you to *Rev. Montgomery* for leading this! **Sunday School** will open in the Fellowship Hall then disperse to classrooms. **The LAMP** (high school age) will meet at the Youth and Family Center. **Confirmation Class** will meet in the North End of the Fellowship Hall.

**THE NOMINATIONS PROCESS**– The Stewardship Board would like to announce that letters have been sent to members of our congregation asking if they would be willing to serve in one of the offices of our congregation. Please keep this process in your prayers, and if asked, please give it prayerful consideration. **We are so thankful to God for all those who choose to serve!**



**CHURCH SECRETARY MATERNITY LEAVE** – *Joyce Wiechers* has generously agreed to step back into the Church Secretary role while Leah is out on maternity leave. Joyce's regular hours will be **Wednesday & Thursday from 8:30am - 2:30pm.** Joyce will have access to Leah's e-mail, so please continue to use [churchsecretary@sjl.org](mailto:churchsecretary@sjl.org) and the church office line (419-598-8961) for any communications. **NOTE:** Bulletin notes will still need to be submitted by **Wednesdays at 9 a.m.**

**‘BREAD FROM HEAVEN’** – Our food pantry’s next distribution will be tomorrow, **November 24<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 p.m.** A note to St. John members needing food assistance – If you could use food assistance from our food pantry, please contact the church office. We are required by the *Northwestern Ohio Food Bank* to keep a record with your name, but we will keep your record separate and confidential.

Contributions can be made 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. Food items especially needed at this time are noted on the whiteboard by the door. Any and all contributions are always greatly appreciated. Thank you so much!

**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!

**COLD WEATHER IS HERE!** – Will you help keep our neighbors warm? The Women of Freedom invite the congregation to share with those in need. We continue to collect **new winter hats, scarves, and gloves/mittens for all ages** for *Together We Can Make a Difference* Initiatives. You can now hang your donations on the “giving tree” in the Narthex.

**ENDOWMENT FUND CONTACTS** – *Krista Gerken* (419-966-2596 or [lkgerken@henry-net.com](mailto:lkgerken@henry-net.com)) and *Dave VonDeylen* (419-438-1844 or [davevd21@gmail.com](mailto:davevd21@gmail.com).) are happy to provide more information to anyone who has questions about the endowment fund or interest in making a donation.

**IT'S CHRISTMAS CHEER TIME AGAIN!** – Henry County Christmas Cheer is beginning its annual campaign for monetary donations **ONLY** for the purchase of food for low income and needy persons in Henry County. If you would like to make a donation, please mail your donation to Henry County Christmas Cheer PO Box 193 Liberty Center, OH 43532.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS & CUTLERY** – Check out the table in the hallway! The Women of Freedom have put out boxes of Christmas Cards for sale. Additionally, if you are interested in purchasing any Rada cutlery items such as: Paring Knives, Stubby Butcher Knives, Pie Servers, Vegetable Peelers, Slicer Knives, Granny Forks, Carving Forks, Pizza Cutters, Tomato Slicer, or Small Spatula, please contact *Linda Meyer* or *Deb Wachtman* to purchase these.

**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.

**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., DirectTV Channel 377 at 9:30 a.m., or anytime online at [worshipanew.org](http://worshipanew.org).*



**ALTAR FLOWERS** – Anyone who wishes to place flowers on the altar for Sunday worship, please contact *Nancy Glaser* at 419-906-0963. **NOTE:** **The price for flowers through the Women of Freedom is now \$30.00.** Please make checks payable to *Women of Freedom*. Remember that it is your responsibility to call Nancy either way; if you would like the Women of Freedom to order the flowers or if you are going to take care of ordering the flowers yourself. Please also contact the church office with any “in memory/honor of” notes to be put in the bulletin. This will alleviate any confusion.

**CHURCH HISTORY BOOKS** – If at any time during the year you need a gift for a current or former member of St. John, why not consider one of our Church History Books. This book is full of interesting facts about St. John's and is available in the church office at a cost of \$12.00.

**IF YOU'RE EVER IN A PINCH** and could use a little help, the *Good Neighbor Fund* is there to assist you too! Please don't be bashful about asking – everything is strictly confidential. Just give the church office a call, and we'll see what we can do.

**OHIO ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN:** The Ohio Division OGT is located in the north end of the Culligan Water Conditioning building on Independence Drive in Napoleon. Someone is usually there to receive items on the first Tuesday of the month from 9:30-11:30 AM. If you need to drop off items at another time, please contact *Nancy Helmke* (419-758-3539), *Diann Meyer-Grieser* (419-267-3485), or *Vicki Grieser* (419-445-2986) and they will be happy to meet you and open the facility to receive your donations! PLEASE do not drop off items at the warehouse when it is closed. Thank you!

**LIONS RECYCLE FOR SIGHT – How You Can Help?** If you have used prescription or nonprescription glasses or sunglasses in your drawers, desk, or closet, you can donate them now! Children's glasses are especially needed. Both plastic and metal frames are accepted. There is a box under the narthex table for the collection of these used glasses.

**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**

- ◆ **THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE CRAFT SHOW** will be held at the Ridgeville Legion Hall, Sun., Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Come and browse the shops!
- ◆ **SIBERIAN SOLSTICE CONCERT – Sunday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. @ St. Caspar Catholic Church 1205 N. Shoop Ave. Wauseon, OH.** There is a flyer on the bulletin board with more information about this free-will donation concert.
- ◆ **WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY – Sat., Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. @ Bethlehem Lutheran Cemetery, Okolona.** Ridgeville Son of Legion will be helping Bethlehem Lutheran Cemetery to Remember and Honor our veterans by laying Remembrance wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes.
- ◆ **TOLEDO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT – Wed., Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. @ St. Paul's Lutheran Church 16976 CR-Q1 Napoleon, OH.** Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased Mon.-Fri. 10a.m.-2p.m. in their church office (419-758-3522). \$30 for adults, \$20 for school-age, and free for 4 & under. A flyer with more information is on the bulletin board.

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*Thought for the Week...*

**Come before Him with thanksgiving, for the Lord is a great God.**



# From the **Classroom** to the **Congregation**

*Notes & Updates from St. John Lutheran School*



**CONGRATULATIONS** – Congratulations to *Max Worchuck* and *Lucy Weddelman* in third grade for being chosen as the winners for the 2025 Henry County Snow Prince and Princess Essay Contest. They represented St. John Lutheran School in the Annual Christmas Parade on Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> in Napoleon.

**FIELD TRIP FUN** – Last week, grades K-6 visited the Peristyle Theatre at the Toledo Museum of Art to see impressive photos from places around the world while listening to music played by the orchestra. What a fun way to bring global cultures to life through music! We are truly blessed to have so many wonderful experiences to add to our daily academic life here at St. John.

**SAVE YOUR CARDBOARD WRAPPING PAPER TUBES** – As you prepare Christmas gifts, please save the cardboard wrapping paper tubes for an upcoming school project. There will be a collection box by the school entrance. Thank you!

**SIGNS, SIGNS, EVERYWHERE A SIGN!** Tell your friends and neighbors about St. John Lutheran School by picking up a corrugated plastic yard sign in the back of the church. Place it in your front lawn or other obvious place to promote the school. Thank you for telling others about our school!

**BASKETBALL SCHEDULES** - The 2025-2026 St. John Eagle basketball schedules are posted on the church website and can be viewed on the church calendar. GO EAGLES!

**GIRLS' BASKETBALL PHOTOS** – We are looking for girls' basketball photos from 2005 to the present. If you have any to share, please email them to [info@sjl.org](mailto:info@sjl.org).

**SCRIP** - Plan to start your Christmas shopping! The SCRIP Order Form is available on the Narthex table. Thank you and happy shopping! Please turn those orders in on Wednesdays, with payment to *St. John School PTL Scrip Program*. Payment must accompany orders. Any questions about SCRIP can be directed to coordinator *Kristyn Honemann* at 419-966-0207 or [honemann@embarqmail.com](mailto:honemann@embarqmail.com).

**ATHLETIC BOOSTER MEMBERSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE** – Prices are \$20.00 for a couple and \$10.00 for an individual. Make checks payable to **St. John Boosters**, and turn them into the school office. Forms are available on the Narthex table or outside the office.

**HIRING NOW** – St. John Lutheran School has staff positions open: **short and long-term substitutes and school cook**. Interested candidates, contact Tracy Germann ([tgermann@sjl.org](mailto:tgermann@sjl.org)).

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS** – There will be NO SCHOOL for Thanksgiving Break November 26<sup>th</sup> through 30<sup>th</sup>. The students will get another break around Christmastime, December 22<sup>nd</sup> through January 4<sup>th</sup>.