St. John Lutheran Church

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP 16035 CO. RD. U ◆ NAPOLEON, OH 43545

Serving Christ in Freedom

Worship ◆ Stewardship ◆ Mission

December 28, 2025

VOL. 91 NO. 52

Pastoral Vacancy
Miss Tracy Germann, Principal

Church Office: 419-598-8961
School Office: 419-598-8702
Church Website: www.sjl.org

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Guest Preacher, *Rev. Matthew Montgomery*
Order of Service: Printed Service
Hymns: **374 ~ 388 ~ 384 ~ 389 ~ 392 ~ 390 ~ 368**

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A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Welcome to our worship service here at St. John. If we can be of service to you in any way, please speak to our Pastor. If you are looking for a church to call home, please consider joining this church where we seek to help each other grow in faith, in love, and in service. Simply fill out the blue Rite of Fellowship card from the pew rack in front of you and drop it in the baskets at the door as you leave.

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SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THIS MORNING

✠ Bethann Gerken, *Pianist* ✠ Sadie Bickel, Emma Damman, *Acolytes* ✠
✠ Dennis Showman, Dean Badenhop, Richard Elling, *Ushers* ✠
✠ Kathy Behnfeldt, Pat Maassel, Anita Badenhop, *Altar Guild* ✠

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.

PORTALS OF PRAYER for the next quarter, *January, February*, and *March* are available on the desk in the narthex. Pick up a copy today!

CHURCH COUNCIL NOTICE: In the event that church services need to be cancelled due to weather related (or other) circumstances, please refer to the 3 different ways below to be notified:

1. Go to the church Facebook page at **St. John Lutheran Church**
2. Go to the church website at **www.sjl.org**
3. Tune in to **WTVG Channel 13 - Toledo**

In God's House This Week		*Online church calendar: https://74058984.view-events.com*
Date	***Time***	***Activities***
TODAY	**9:00 AM** 10:15 AM	**Worship Service** Sunday School; Adult Bible Study; "The Lamp" Confirmation class after church until 11:15
Mon.		**No School – Christmas Break** (runs thru Sun., Jan. 4, 2026)
Sun.	**9:00 AM** 10:15 AM	**Communion Service** and Installation of Officers Adult Bible Study; Sunday School; "The Lamp"

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: *Eric Maassel, Justin Atkinson, Jason Rohrs, Jordan Lange, Joshua,* and *Kyle*

INSTALLATION OF 2026 CHURCH OFFICERS – We give thanks to God for everyone who submitted their names for nomination to our various church offices. Your servant hearts and willing spirits provide an example for us all! **Those who were elected or appointed to offices for the coming year will be installed into those offices on the first Sunday of the New Year, January 4th.** *Please note that if you are currently serving a multi-year term of office, you have already been installed and do not need to present yourself for installation again.*

LIST OF 2026 CHURCH OFFICE NOMINATIONS*:*

ELECTED: Vice Pres. – *Brad Rosebrook*
Treasurer – *Cathy Gerken;* **Financial Trustee** – *Diane Norden*
Elder – *Glenn Badenhop, Derek Damman*
Stewardship Board – *Teresa Damman, Joyce Wiechers*
Board of Education – *Micah Behnfeldt, Steve Marshall, Alicia Wakefield*, (take office in July 2026)
Alt. Delegate Synod – *Todd Hesterman*
APPOINTED Secretary – *Sara Myles* **Church Deacon –** *David Badenhop*
Trustee – *Doug Dietrich, Matt Schroeder;* **Cemetery Sexton** – *Ben Kruse*
Cemetery Board – *Brady Gerken, Dave Rosebrock, Mitchell Kruse*
Asst. Sunday School Supt. – *Nicole Stier*

BULLETIN STUFFER VOLUNTEERS – Last call…We are still in need of two more volunteers for stuffing bulletins. Why not give it a try in 2026! ant to get involved? It's not too difficult and can be done either at church or in the comfort of your own home. The bulletins are pre-folded. You can call Lori Langenhop at 419-966-3472 or email her at lahop@bright.net with any questions.

THE 2026 USHER (blue) & ALTAR GUILD SCHEDULES are available today and can be picked up on the narthex table. Thanks again to all who are willing to be of service to the Lord at St. John.

2026 FLOWER CALENDAR is posted in the narthex. If you wish to sign up for a certain Sunday to place flowers on the altar or the piano, sign your name on that Sunday and then about two weeks before that date, call *Nancy Glaser* at 419-906-0963 to let her know if you are getting your own flowers or if you want the Women of Freedom to take care of them. **The price for the flowers through the Women of Freedom is $30.00.** Remember that it is your responsibility to contact *Nancy Glaser*. Also, please contact the church office with the information for the bulletin the week before you are placing the flowers in church. This will ensure that you are not forgotten or overlooked.

FINANCIAL FACTS:	Home Fund	Synod & Missions	Building Fund
Weekly Need	$11,710.59	$500.00	$961.54
Rec'd 12/21/2025	$12,912.00	$1,745.00	$360.00

ATTENDANCE: 176
3rd Advent Service: *CPC Women's Health Resource* - $845; Attendance – 62
Children's Christmas Svc (12/21): Sufficient Grace Ministries – $821.00; Attendance: 245

BE A JAVA JOY HOST IN 2026! Would you like to be a JAVA JOY host on the second Sunday of one of the months of 2026? Sign up now at the narthex table! Please remember that hosting does not need to cost you anything – you may reimburse yourself from the Java Joy kitty. Hosting guidelines are available with the sign-up sheet. Thank you for providing this service for your church family!

2026 OFFERING BOXES –There are still several boxes that need to be picked up by members. Please pick yours up, and may God prosper the work of our hands and the giving of His people! If someone did not get a box and wants one, contact *Jerry Langenhop at 419-966-3473 or* lahop@bright.net and we'll make sure one will be assigned.

AN EASY OPPORTUNITY TO BENEFIT ST. JOHN SCHOOL: What if you could give more without it costing more? What if that giving helped St. John School? Learn about contributing to the Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization (LSGO), recognized as a charitable organization by the IRS, by seeing the purple sheet on the narthex table or going to https://www.lsgoohio.org/

WHY NOT CONSIDER ST. JOHN? Saint John Lutheran School offers preschool to 6th grade Lutheran education. Students are taught the Word of God. In addition, all the other subjects are taught. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of athletics. Bus transportation is available to students in all the local school districts. If you have any questions about enrollment or would like a tour of the school, please call the school office for an appointment.

LARGE PRINT & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BULLETINS are available today on the table in the narthex. The Children's Bulletins are coordinated with the Bible texts for each Sunday, and provide activities that tie in with the weekly themes. Pick one up today for your child.

WOMEN OF FREEDOM - The 2026 Women of Freedom program booklets are available at the narthex table. Please pick up you copy today!

A REMINDER: If you are the LAST person to leave the building at the end of the day or after a meeting, etc., please make sure that the hallway and restroom lights are turned off and that the main entry doors (*where the buzzer is located*) are closed. With a tight budget, every little bit of electrical savings will benefit the church and closing the doors assures the safety of the building. Thank you!

ST. JOHN CHURCH LIBRARY – Stop in and check out the growing number of books available in the church library, located in the hall next to the sanctuary. The books in this library have been screened to assure that they are true to the Word of God and can be trusted to be theologically sound. To borrow a book, just take it with you, and then return it to the basket when you've finished reading. A complete list of the books in the church's library can be found by clicking on the "Book Inventory" link on the library page of our church's website. http://www.sjl.org/library.html

COUNCIL MINUTES – This is just a reminder that council meeting minutes are not published until they are approved a month later. If you would like to read about the most recent council meeting, an unofficial and unapproved copy of the minutes is available for viewing in the church office, usually within a week after the meeting.

THE LUTHERAN HOUR – Locally you can listen to the Lutheran Hour Ministries broadcast on WMTR 96.1 FM, Archbold at 7:30 AM or on WNDH 103.1 FM, Napoleon at approximately 9:00 AM every Sunday. They cover many interesting topics relevant to today's issues.

PROJECT CONNECT – There are many free booklets in the rack in the narthex. Be sure to check for some informative reading. Some titles are: *"Alzheimer's: Facing the Loss of a Lifetime," "Talking with God," "Forgiveness is a Choice," "Talking Openly with Kids," "Setting Priorities," "Your Place in God's Plan," "Stressed but Connected," "Beyond Divorce," "For Better, For Worse," "What Is Faith in Jesus?"* and many more. These booklets are furnished through the Lutheran Hour Ministries.

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.

VENMO IS HERE! Exciting News…St. John now accepts donations via Venmo!
If you need internet access, use our guest Wi-Fi **SJL Open** with the password **sjleagles##** Then scan the QR code to visit our donation page.

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Thought for the Week…

No day is complete without a talk with the Lord.