

*St. John's Evangelical Church
211 E. Carrol Street
Kenton, Ohio 43326
(Non Profit Organization)*

**Do Not Delay
Dated Material**



St. John's Evangelical Church Newsletter

December 2019

211 E. Carrol Street
Kenton, OH 43326
Church Phone: 419-673-7278
Pastor Randall cell: 724-290-3651

Rev. Dr. Randall J. Forester, Senior Pastor
Website: www.stjohnskenton.org
Email: stjohnskenton@gmail.com

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

The Christmas Eve Candlelight services on December 24 will include a contemporary style service at 7:00 PM and a traditional style service at 10:00 PM. A special Christmas cantata performance will take place during the 10:00 PM service. Please invite your family and friends.



We look forward to seeing you!

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

211 East Carrol Street
Kenton, OH 43326

REV. DR. RANDALL J. FORESTER, PASTOR & TEACHER

Phone: 419-673-7278 (o)
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DECEMBER 2019

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

E-mail: PastorRandall@stjohnskenton.org

Last month, we spent our time in worship focusing on gratitude. I discovered there's an unfortunate downside to doing this – the more one focuses on gratitude, the more one notices how ungrateful people generally are. This reality grieves my heart as the ingrates don't all live outside of the church.

During our time of great thanksgiving and praise, I noticed people who would not attend church if they could not come at the "right" time or if it wasn't done in the "right" style. Some people came to the church seeking something in return, and some tried to trade on their membership for something that personally benefitted them or a special interest.

At this time of the year, people come knocking on our door seeking assistance. If it's not given or done they way they want, we often hear some form of the following: "I thought you called yourselves Christians." Sometimes this is said by people outside the church, but sometimes it comes from people within our walls. It's the opposite of what James said we do if we are hearers and doers of the Word AND possessors of a pure religion (**James 1:19-27**).

As someone who mentors and trains leaders, one of my constant refrains is: "It doesn't matter what you decide, someone will complain." In other words, someone will be ungrateful for the work, planning, and preparation that often attends every decision in the church. (And for

that, I am thankful for our leaders, staff, and volunteers who are diligent in their duties and faithful to God in carrying them out.) And usually, the complaints are about minor things.

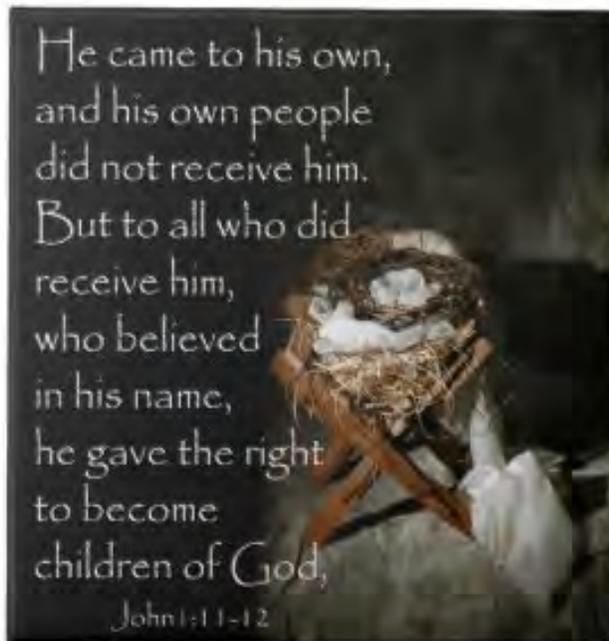
We live in a world fraught with danger, heartache, and pain – a world that desperately needs Jesus, His healing touch, and the pres-

ence of His body, which is the Church, His people (you and I) – and we're distracted by styles of worship, the time of a meeting, or the day of an event – especially if it keeps us from a sporting event or our favorite show.

I know. This doesn't sound very Christmas-y. It might sound judgmental – perhaps, it's a bit too prophetic. I'm not saying this just

to vent or to put people down. I want us to reflect if we truly are grateful and if we are grateful for the right things.

As I write this, there is a lump in my throat and tears in my eyes. I weep for you and this church. I weep for this world. And to be completely honest, I weep for myself. When I read John 1, I am amazed at God's love for this world. The Father gave His only begotten Son, and He gave Him in such a beautiful way. The Father could have force-fed us our medicine. He could have sent Jesus on a flaming horse with a sword in His hand.



He could have sent legions upon legions of angels to annihilate the evil in this land.

Instead, He did none of that. The Father sent the Son as a little Babe birthed into an impoverished family in an impoverished land. His first bed was a feed trough. As **John 1:11** states: "He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him." Every time we are ungrateful, every moment that we complain because we are NOT getting OUR due, we are NOT receiving Jesus. In other words, we are the people spoken of in **John 1:11** – it's not just *those people* back in Bible times. We have met those people, and they are we.

That's why when we read the Christmas story in **Luke 2**, it is the shepherds in the fields who end up being the first to bearing witness to the Savior's arrival in this world. The priests and the religious people – the Lord's own people – were too busy with themselves and their lives to meet the One who would fulfill the promises and prophecies of old.

The shepherds would be the night shift janitors of their day. They were doing a thankless task at a forgotten hour. Nobody notices them unless they messed up. It was one of the least glamorous jobs. Yet, God deems the lowly and the humble as the honored first guests who met Jesus, the Messiah.

The Word became flesh, and He wanted to be introduced to the meek and the humble. He was introduced to the ones who had nothing to offer but their presence and gratitude. These shepherds also knew what to do with Good News as **John 1:17** tells us: "And when they saw

**ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL
CHURCH:
MAKING AND MATURING
DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST**

it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child."

Gratitude, true gratitude, is not passive; it leads to action. That is why the Holy Spirit has impressed this theme upon my heart, and it's for my sake and for the sake of the Church. The world is filled with enough hubris and self-absorption. We are called to a new, the way of our Savior who came lowly and humbly surrounded by the lowly and the humble, and He desires the same today.

May we hear the Christmas story with joy this year, and may we listen undistracted as we attend to the humble service to which we are called. When the angels bring to us the Good News of Great joy" (**Luke 1:10**), let it fling us to meet our Savior, and let that interaction lead us into the world to share joyfully what God has revealed to us. My hope and prayer is the presence of Christ changes us from the inside out – our transformed desires will lead to revitalized speech and action that glorifies God.

May we be the shepherds of this generation.

**With the joy of the Savior,
Pastor Randall**



Preaching Series

For December, we are going to stay with the classic themes given to us in the Advent wreath: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, which will lead us to the Light of Christmas, Jesus Christ our Lord. No matter how many times I hear the story and think about it, I stand in awe of what God does for us. For our sin, He could have banished us to Hell. He could have demanded



our righteousness. He could have even deemed it necessary for us to suffer in Purgatory for our cleansing before joining Him in Heaven.

Instead, the Father takes the radical course that only a God who is Love could—He gives His only Son to live a perfect life in our stead. He becomes the atoning sacrifice for our sin. By His Holy Spirit, He brings the gifts of Heaven to us. He gives us a hope that does not disappoint, a peace that blesses us, a joy that stands through the storms of life, and a life that overflows our hearts and reaches out to others. And He does it through His beloved Son. The Father gives what is most precious to Him in exchange for us.

This Christmas, may our focus be on God and God alone that our celebrations may be God-inspired, Bible-borne, and Christ-centered, so that we may truly receive what the Father has intended for us and that we may share that with a world who needs to hear the Good News and see it in action through the lives of God's people.



01 December First Sunday of Advent: Hope

Scripture: **Romans 13:11-14**
Matthew 24:36-44

Sermon: **Stand Ready**

08 December Second Sunday of Advent:

Peace

Scripture: **Romans 15:4-13**
Matthew 3:1-12

Sermon: **Stand Reconciled**

15 December Third Sunday of Advent: Joy

Scripture: **James 5:7-10**
Matthew 11:2-11

Sermon: **Stand with Joy**

22 December Fourth Sunday of Advent:

Love

Scripture: **Romans 1:1-7**
Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon: **Stand Loved**

24 December

Christmas Eve: the Light of Christ

Scripture: **Hebrews 1:1-12**



Guatemala Mission Trip—July 25-August 1 2020

How YOU can help...



1. **Chicken & Noodle Luncheon:** December 15 from 10:30 am—1 pm in the church fellowship hall.
2. **Bake Sale:** December 22 in the church lobby
3. **Sausage, Gravy, Biscuit & Eggs Breakfast Fundraiser—** January 19 from 9:30 am—Noon.
4. **Taste of Italy Dinner:** February 15 at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Presale tickets only
5. **Garage Sale & Food Trucks:** April 4 (\$10/table or spot)
6. **Paint & Sip—**Possibly May 3 at 1:00 PM. More information to come.
7. **M&M (Mission Money) or Pill Bottles—**fill with quarters or any type of bills or checks—All donations are appreciated. These are now free and are located at the Welcome desk or church office.
8. **Donate Spare Change and Place in our Change for a Change Water Jugs** (currently located at Welcome Desk in lobby)
9. **Pray for our team members:** Jane Donnelly, Angel Forester, Augustin Forester, Kathy Forester, Randall Forester, Jay Garmon, Alisha Kapanka, Anna LaWarre, Abigail Penhorwood, Dexter Penhorwood, Shawn Penhorwood, Mary Ralston, Becky Rish, and LeVern Weaver.

Thank you for your continued Support!

Chicken Noodle Lunch



St. John's Church Fellowship Hall

211 E. Carroll St.
Kenton, OH 43326
419-673-7278

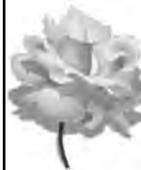
All proceeds benefit the
Guatemala Mission Trip



Menu

Chicken and Noodles
Mashed Potatoes
Salad
Green Beans
Bread & Butter
Dessert
Drink

Adults— \$9
Kid's under 9—\$3



Valentine's Day Dinner

Experience a Tour of Italy!

Menu:

Beverages

Your choice of Lemonade, Iced Tea, Coffee, or Water

Starters

Sliced French Bread served with Butter
Mixed Greens, Tomatoes, and Croutons tossed with an Italian Vinaigrette

Main Course

Tour of Italy: Samplings of Lasagna, Fettuccini Alfredo, and Spaghetti with Meatballs

Dessert

New York Style Cheesecake Drizzled in Strawberry Sauce

Where: St. John's Evangelical Church, Fellowship Hall

When: Saturday, February 15, 2020 @6:00 pm
Doors open @ 5:00 pm

Tickets: \$15.00 per person, \$30.00 per couple

All Proceeds Benefit the Guatemala Mission Trip

Upcoming EVENTS

HCC Youth Group Meeting

Hardin County Collective Community Youth Group will meet on December 1 from 5-7:00 PM to go Christmas Caroling. All Middle School and High School Youth are welcome! See Michele Sherman with any questions.

Advent Food Tree— Angels for the Elderly

Due to lack of need, instead of a hat and mitten tree this year, the church is collecting food for Angels for the Elderly. The mission committee created suggested donations by week but will take anything at any time and will put under the tree.

Week 1: Proteins (canned meat & peanut butter)

Week 2: Fruits and Vegetable (canned)

Week 3: Pre-made meals (spaghetti, tuna and noodle)

Week 4: Personal care & paper products, laundry detergent

Community Hymn Sing

The Community Hymn Sing this year is December 8 at 6:30 PM at the Kenton First United Methodist Church.

Lake of Lights—Live Nativity

The church is scheduled to be the Live Nativity on Sunday, December 8 from 6-8 PM. Leaving the church at 5 PM that evening. If you would like to volunteer. Please see Michele Sherman. **The youth program will receive a portion of the proceeds that night. Come out and support them that evening and see a great display of lights! Please see Michele Sherman with questions.**

Salvation Army Bell Ringer Volunteers Needed



St. John's Church will be ringing the Bell for the Salvation Army at Kroger's in Kenton on Saturday, December 21. See Michele Sherman to volunteer.

Christmas Adopt-a-Family

Please watch the bulletin for more information and deadlines. We will place the lists for families from Angel Tree Prison Ministry and Helping Hands at the back of the sanctuary.



St. John's is partnering once again with Helping Hands and Angel Tree Prison Ministry to make sure that the children of our community have a nice Christmas. If you are able to purchase items, please follow the instructions below:

- Remove the tag for the gift you select.
- On the front of each tag you will find a number.
- On the table is a sheet listing all the tag numbers.
- **Please write your name beside the number on the sheet that corresponds to the number on your tag.**
- If you able, **please wrap your gift.** But please don't let that stop you from participating! If you want to drop off your gifts unwrapped, we will wrap them prior to distributing them. Also, if you want to participate but don't want to shop, cash can be dropped off at the church office and we will do the shopping for you.
- **Please be sure the original tag you selected or number is on the tag is somewhere on the gift! This will ensure that the gift gets to the correct person.**

Thank you for sharing God's love by blessing these families! If you have any questions, please contact Heather (567-674-0020) or the church office.

Annual Congregational Meeting



The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, January 26 at Noon in the sanctuary. Following the meeting, please join us for a time of fellowship with a potluck lunch. Everyone is asked to bring a dish to share.

If you have any reports to submit for the annual meeting booklet, please turn them in by December 31. Thank you!

Council Nominations: If anyone is interested in running for council, please see Jim Bidwell, Heather Erwin or Kristina VanBuskirk.

Friends
are Angels that Lift us to our Feet
when our Wings have trouble
remembering how to fly

Friday With Friends

Friday With Friends is a wonderful group of widows, widowers, and single seniors who meet twice a month for a special time of food, fellowship, and fun. We meet the first and third Fridays of every month. Please join us if you are a widow, widower, or single senior adult. This is not exclusive to St. John's, so pass the word along to someone that you know who could be blessed by this special group. For more information, contact Ethel Koch at 419-674-6344.

Forthcoming outings will be as follows:

If out of town, meet at St. John's at 10:45 am to car-pool. Please note time change for out of town meeting. Still eating at 11:30 am.

December 6: Jac & Do's—Kenton

December 20: Eagles—Kenton

January 3: Moose—Kenton

January 17: Ralphies—Kenton

February 7: Salsa's—Kenton



When you think of Christmas, you probably think about an event — an event that is (hopefully) filled with gifts, food, family, and fun. But what happens when that event isn't as joyful or peaceful as we wish it were? And is the "event" even what Christmas is about anyway? Our Wednesday Night Youth will be focusing on a 4-week series, we'll discover what this season is truly about. It's about getting ready to receive God's gift of Jesus, sharing that gift with others, rejoicing in the surprising gifts God gives us, and taking time to enjoy God's presence.

Hardin County Collective will be meeting Sunday December 1st. We will be traveling to the local nursing homes to spread Gods word with others and get them into the Christmas spirit. Thank you to everyone who has bought Texas Roadhouse peanuts.

With your support this will bring the cost down for our Youth for the Winter Retreat in February.

This month the Youth will be apart of the Live Nativity at The Lake of Lights. Anyone (all ages) that would like to dress up and help out that night is more than welcome. This will be December 8th and we will leave the Church at 5pm. Another date to keep in mind is December 21st. The Youth will be ringing bells for The Salvation Army again this year. We will be located at Kroger. Any Youth that would like to help please contact me for a time.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Youth through the Poinsettia Sale. Thank you to Nancy Weaver for all her help. She's the one that keeps them alive while here at the Church. Don't forget to pick them up after the 2nd service, December 29th.

We figured the holidays were the perfect time to share this month's tip: create a new family tradition. Your time is limited. So enjoy it! And make it count. Merry Christmas and God Bless!

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35

Upcoming Dates to Remember:



Youth Live Nativity - Lake of Lights:

December 8 from 6-8 pm. They will leave at 5 pm.

Community Hymn Sing: December 8 at 6:30 pm – First Methodist Church

Chicken & Noodle Fundraiser Luncheon: Dec. 15 from 10:30am – 1pm- FH

Ringling Salvation Army Bell: December 21 at Kroger's—see Michele for times

Mission Team Bake Sale: December 22 in the church lobby

Christmas Eve Services: December 24 at 7 pm and 10 pm

Undecorate the Church: January 11

Sausage Biscuit Gravy & Egg Breakfast: Jan. 19 from 9:30 am-12 pm

Taste of Italy Valentine's Dinner: February 15 at 6 pm – Fellowship hall. Presale tickets only.

Garage Sale & Food Truck Event: April 4 from 9 am – 2 pm (\$10/table)

Paint & Sip: Possibly May 3 at 1:00 pm



HAPPY BIRTHDAY ST. JOHN'S!!!!

1839-2019

180 years old and still going strong. Only a few institutions in this country can make that claim. Yes St. John's was founded at Christmastide so we celebrate not only the greatest event in history but our own humble beginnings.

Our Church history confirms that it isn't the first structure a log cabin that burned, the brick replacement building, the 1903 Sanctuary or the 2004 addition that makes St. John's a church. Through seven wars, four depressions and numerous cultural changes, St. John's has survived solely on God's providence. Who made it happen? Thousands of those who preceded us and yes those of us active today. The Holy Spirit has given our members the faith, perseverance and fortitude to overcome many trials.

A brief summary of our history and some facts:

1837 The Bark Hertha arrives in Baltimore with German settlers destined for Hardin County.

1838 Rev. Frederick Wilhelm Furmann, a circuit riding Pastor from Springfield comes once per month to preach at homes of the Evangelical German settlers. 1839 Rev. Furmann preaches the Christmas and inaugural services of St. John's.

1840 The old log courthouse is secured for services and remained until destroyed by fire in early 1851. The Congregation then purchased our current location for \$50 and constructed a brick Church using bricks, timber and labor primarily from members.

1865 A bell was purchased for the Church and hauled by oxcart from Springfield.

1872/1873 The Congregation went through two votes to disband, 63 members voted to continue and St. John's continued.

1877/78 A major renovation of the Church brought the steeple up to a height of 100 feet and greatly increased size of the sanctuary including gas lights for evening services. The cornerstone from this rededication is in our skylight room along with a stained glass window. It was termed the "handsomest structure in the City"

1891 Sunday evening services in English begin twice per month.

1894 The Congregation formally becomes part of the Evangelical Synod of North America. Prior it was served by both Evangelical and Reformed Pastors.

1895 Church membership doubles to 410 since 1890.

1902/1903 In response to the increase in membership the brick church is razed and the current Sanctuary constructed.

1914 Rev. Henry Katterjohn accepts a position as Professor at Eden Seminary. "To him, St. John's owes more than it ever could repay." Membership now exceeded 600 and the cost of the new church was almost entirely paid off.

1915 German services reduced to once per month and then eliminated when the US entered WW I. 21 St. John's members served in this war.

1934 Our Church becomes St. John's Evangelical & Reformed on the merger of those denominations

1927-1951 Rev. Herbert E. Pfister our longest serving Pastor led the Congregation through the Great Depression and WW II. A light in the Sanctuary was dedicated posthumously to his memory in 1972. Our Church became noted for its outreach to those in need and the community. 105 members of St. John's served in the War.

1951 St. Peter's Church in Goshen Township formally merged with St. John's Prior to this time the churches shared the Minister.

1957 St. John's becomes St. John's United Church of Christ on the merger of the Evangelical & Reformed denomination with the Congregational Church.

1968 Rev. Erwin R. Koch began another very successful long Pastorate at St. John's. Many major improvements were made to the facilities but more importantly the membership was revitalized with clubs forming and church school enrollment emphasized. Church membership topped 700 and church school enrollment hit 250. We were blessed that God called this great man to St. John's.

1990 Rev. Scott Johnson begins his 20+ year Pastorate. The first 10 years were marked by exciting growth in membership and outreach activities. The Audio Visual Committee was established, a new organ was purchased with significant help from the Rogers Family. Air conditioning was installed, hand bells purchased and a long range plan resurrected and developed. The church continued to support missions and in 1999 began a Contemporary Worship Service.

2001 St. John's became a Faithful and Welcoming church within the United Church of Christ denomination.

2004 Our Church Addition is completed, more than doubling our facility. In our normal manner we have used this space to become host to many outreach programs to those in need.

2015 Rev. Randall Forester assumes the Pastorate of St. John's continuing the proud tradition of the 29 prior shepherds who have guided our Congregation. We are blessed by his calling and the service of his family.

2017 Reflecting our emphasis on outreach (evangelism) and the theological position of 2001, the Congregation voted to return to our original name – St. John's Evangelical Church.

As you celebrate the birth of our Savior, think about all of the blessings God has given us through this old Church of ours. We are brothers and sisters of a family whose service humbles us. Together we advance the message of Jesus Christ. Let's pray that at the 200 year celebration we also are those counted to have been good and faithful servants.

Jerry Pfister, Historian

Mission of the Month— December -

Love Inc. of Hardin County

Love In the Name of Christ is a Christian based service and referral agency that assists people with a variety of needs by connecting them with churches or other organizations/agencies.



The mission of Love INC is to mobilize local churches to transform lives and communities in the Name of Christ.

The organization bridges resources by working with local churches, agencies, and other community resources.



St. John's is the Church of the Month for December & January. Service from the week before will air at 10:30 am on WKTN during these months.

St. John's Custodial/Maintenance Job Available

St. John's is now accepting resumes for the custodial job. If you are interested, please drop off a resume at the church office. Any questions, please contact Kristina VanBuskirk at 419-348-6439.

Cookies Needed for Recovery Court Families

We were asked again to provide cookies for Recovery Court families for Christmas. We need enough cookies for 30 families. Cookies due to church by Sunday, December 22. A sign-up sheet is in the back of the church. Any questions, see Janet or Cheryl.



St. John's Evangelical Church
Church Council Agenda
Thursday
October 10, 2019
7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER - Carol Wilcox President

OPENING PRAYER - Pastor Randall

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT - Pastor Randall

OFFICER'S REPORT

Secretary's Report - Kristi Weaver

- September 12, 2019 Minutes – Revised report sent out for review. Motion to accept minutes and seconded, council vote, motion carried.

REPORTS

1) Finance - Kristi Weaver

- Review of the summary report, there were some insurance expenses this month that are cyclical.
- Discussion of the Mission Money that has been donated, and how the team is working with Kay to make sure that they are reconciling the amounts given.
- Review of budget projection that Russ put together. Think that based on what we know that we will break even by end of year.
- Russ discussed that when he presents the pew information at the congregational meeting it will be just the facts and unbiased.
- Have given Missions the amounts left to distribute for the year. On track to have increased interest for spending for next year.

2) Christian Education—Trish Wilcox-Michele Sherman

Trish Wilcox –

- Report given for review prior to meeting

Michelle Sherman –

- Report given for review prior to meeting

3) Women's Ministry - Carol Wilcox

- Women's Celebration in November

4) Worship, Arts & Music - Nancy Rickenbacher

- Working on lights for railing and windows for Christmas.
- Will be meeting soon
- Need a speaker for December 1st.

5) Personnel Committee - Kristina VanBuskirk

- Plan to have reviews done by November

6) Pastoral Relations - Carol Wilcox

- Meet November 17th

7) Trustees -

A. Jim Bidwell

- Church foundation should be fixed
- Air conditioner – getting a new coil, giving it to us as it was a manufacturer issue, but we have to pay to have it installed.
- Tree stands & updating hunting permits – Took down 6 or 7 stands and put them in the bus garage. Have 4 permits signed and have about 3 more to sign. Plan on only issuing 10-12. Council supports what the Farm Committee decides in this matter.
- Discussion on the AV stuff upstairs and when we will get rid of it.

B. Greg Liedel

- Have a seat to repair
- Oil level light/pressure light on – so will look into it
- Only have one bus driver now still would like to find someone else. With the new laws for CDL it will likely be harder to get drivers.

8) Missions, Evangelism - Heather Erwin/ Mark Sherman

- Met on Monday,
- Still have a lot of beds, so figuring out what else can be done on the Service Day.
- Distributed some of the money from the Missions
- Planning the maze for this year, asking for decorations that will be returned.

9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall

- Report distributed for review prior to meeting
- Thanks to everyone that helped at the fair gate they were able to cover all the shifts.
- Doing a lot of fund raisers for the mission trip – shirts, dinners, question on is it okay to do a raffle tickets – Council voted not to do raffle tickets.
- Surgery on October 28th.
- Discussion of the Alice Training – and how nice it was to have the soup and snacks.
- Discussion of other social gatherings that could be had like a Euchre or card night, game night, and how we just need volunteers to help organize it.

OLD BUSINES:

- Special Meeting – October 27- Pew repairs – Kristi will not be there so someone will have to take notes.
- Launch Women's Conference – November 2

NEW BUSINESS:

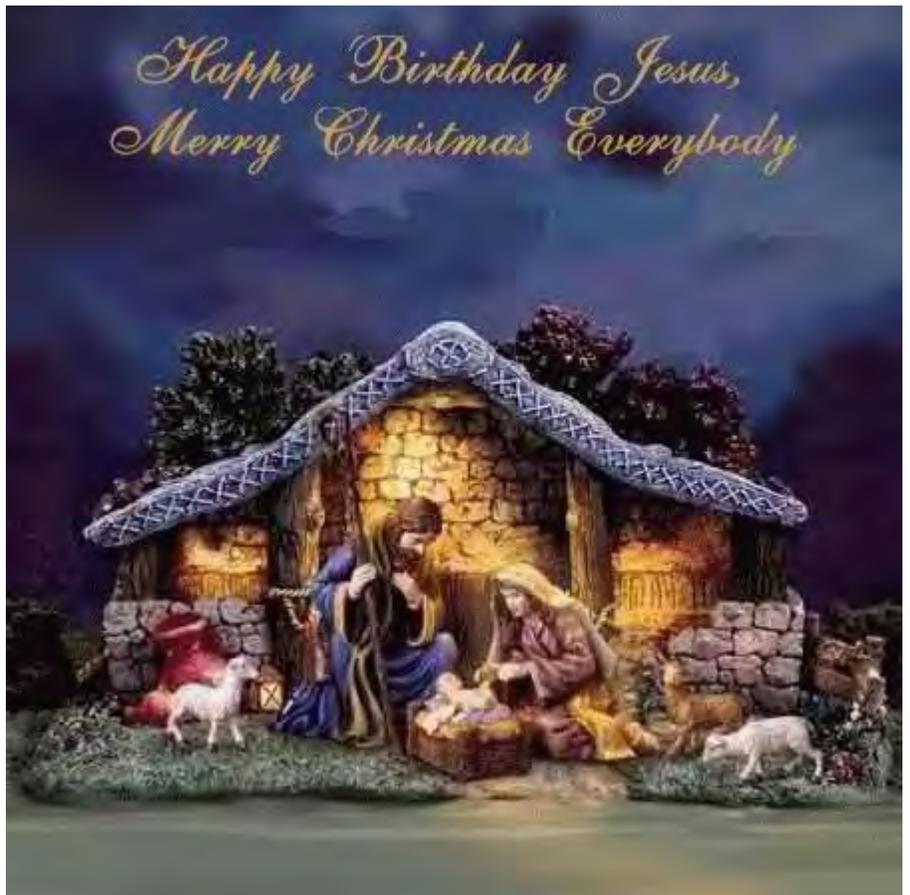
- Alice Training – Carol would like to ask for congregations input on what they want us to do – continue on or not, so will ask at the meeting on the 27th.
- Memorial service – November 3
- Community Thanksgiving Meal – Council agreed to hosting that event again.
- Door not latching on the north side all the time – asking Trustees to look at it.
- Greg Liedel needs a key. Kathy should ask Jim Bidwell if she needs to have any made.

Next Meeting: November 14, 2019 7:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT – Motion and seconded to adjourn, Council Vote, motion carried.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Merry
Christmas**
& **HAPPY NEW YEAR**



Merry CHRISTmas!

Children's Ministry

Greetings St. John's Family,

Welcome to December! I hope you are all staying warm. I want to give all of you a little background for those of you who don't make it here on Wednesday nights on the huge MISSION/OUTREACH that we are providing here on a weekly basis at St. John's.

I just want to say Praise the Lord!! We are bringing in 70-80 kids per week K-8th grade here at St. John's! I don't know if many of you know but here at St. John's Evangelical Church in Kenton, Ohio, we have a huge children's and youth ministry OUTREACH program. Every Wednesday night at our church, we are touching the lives of many children K-12th grade with the help of many wonderful volunteers! Around 70-80 kids join us at our church every Wednesday night September through April. Miss Jane takes the bus out on 3 different routes in the evening rounding up Children along with her bus rider volunteers Terry and Susan Hord and LeVern Weaver and Mary Ralston. When the children arrive we pray in with Pastor Randall then head on up to the fellowship hall where we are greeted by the wonderful kitchen staff who prepares a wonderful hot meal prepared weekly for the kids! Thank-you so much kitchen staff! (Kay, Cheryl, Kim, Bob, Becky, Shane, Toni, Jerry, Patty, and Janet). The kitchen staff serves the Children dinner. The children sit at tables with adult volunteers leading the tables (Nancy, Kathy, Jo Ann, Carol, Monica, Kay, Mykaela, Alisha, Hope, Linda). They head off to complete a Bible lesson with some wonderful teachers (Kristi, Donovan, Alisha, Cinda, Jo Ann, Shane, Kay, Mykaela. Also stepping in when needed Carol, Autum, Hope.) Then they go have fun in some games. Some children stay and sing bible songs with Miss Hope and Miss Linda in choir. We touch the lives of so many children each week for 2 hours a week. It's such a blessing to be able to spread God's unconditional love.

Why is Children and Youth Ministry so important?

Children need to feel God's love.

Children's ministry may be the only time a kid truly gets to experience God's unconditional love, not only God's love but love in general. It's so important to raise up children that know their worth in Christ and know that they are loved.

Children need to feel God's love. Children's ministry may be the only time a kid truly gets to experience God's unconditional love. It's so important to raise up a generation of children that know their worth in Christ and know that they are loved. We don't know the background of each child we meet, but we get to make an impact on them just by loving them.

There are so many reasons children's ministry is important but even more so we need to remember how much of a gift and a blessing children are. This ministry is important but it's also worth it. Be a part of the children's ministry at our church and see how much of an impact you are making on the children and yourself. It is an incredible blessing to see the children grow and to get to love them and lead them in this season of their life.

"Children are a gift from the Lord, they are a reward from Him." (Psalm 127:3). Children are a gift and as a kid's ministry leader, I get to see how much of a blessing they are every week. I see their pure hearts, them singing sweet songs to Jesus, their little hands raised high, and Jesus' love that shines through them to their friends and leaders.

Children are important to Jesus. "But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.'" (Matthew 19:14). It's made so evident throughout the whole bible that children are important to Jesus which means they should be important to us, too! As Christians, we know how to show people Jesus' love, but it is so important to also share that unconditional love with children. In Children's ministry, we get the opportunity to love these sweet kids every week.

Children need a firm foundation. "Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it." (Proverbs 22:6). The time we spend with children at a young age impacts the rest of their lives because the things that are instilled as a child won't be forgotten when they are older. The Kid's ministry here at St. John's allows us to pour these core values into children while they are still growing so that when they grow older they will know these values. As we teach them bible verses to remember, they are able to recall those later in life in times of trouble.

On December 7, we will be taking 27 kids and 6 adults to Marmon Valley Farms Country Christmas and on December 18, we will be taking the kids to the Upper Sandusky Lights to enjoy.

I love this Children and Youth OUTREACH program here at St. John's and hope that it continues on way into the future for our future generations to learn the love of Christ. This wouldn't be possible without our wonderful, amazing volunteers!! Thank-you!

In Jr. Church we have been focusing on kids of the Bible. The verse we have been talking about each week that goes along with this is "I can do all this by the power of Christ. He gives me strength." Philippians 4:13. The idea is that sometimes kids think they have to be grown-ups for God to use them, but the Bible is full of stories of kids that God used. We will be finishing up this series by the beginning of December then we will be learning about the 66 books of the bible. All Children are welcome to attend K-5th. This is from 10:50am to 11:30am every Sunday.

Sunday School is with Miss Hope PK-1st and Miss Dyer 2nd-5th grade every Sunday between services from 9:30am to 10:30am.

God Bless you all!

Trish Wilcox



Children's/Youth Ministry Outreach

We have a huge outreach to Children on Wednesday evenings here at St. John's. You will all be able to read about it in the upcoming December

Newsletter. I have come up with an idea in hopes to just extend an open invitation to all of these families and make them feel welcome here at St. John's. I am asking the church for donations of dry cookie mixes or ready to bake cookie dough November 24 – December 15th. There is a box in the back of the Sanctuary you can place donations there. I will check daily to refrigerate anything needed. On Sunday December 15th at 3pm, we will bake the cookies in the church kitchen. There will be sign-up sheets if you would like to help in the back of the Sanctuary when time gets closer.

On December 16th and 17th we will go out as a church and pass out plates of cookies to the families of Wednesday night kids K-12th grade along with an invitation inviting them to both services for Christmas Eve. But then also inviting the families to attend our 8:30 or 10:30 services every Sunday along with Sunday school, Jr. Church, and Nursery info. Thank-you! God Bless!

Trish Wilcox

Church Staff:

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Randall J. Forester
Youth Ministry: Michele Sherman
Children's Ministry: Trish Wilcox
Financial Secretary: Kay Rush
Church Secretary: Kathy Forester
Chancel Choir Director: David Beazley
Contemporary Worship Leader: Kendra Dilts
Organists: Randall S. Rogers, Teresa Broseke and Linda Zeigler
Children's Choirs Director: Hope Cauley
Bell Choir Director: Jane Baker
Technical Support: Richard Katterjohn
Historian: Gerald Pfister