

*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 2021

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 Service December 24 at 8 pm

This year, the service will be a little different than in recent years. This evening will be narrated by God and include the children's choir and youth members leading various parts of the service. Come back with us to a simpler time as we remember the Christmas story and experience it with the faith of a child. Open your hearts as we embark on a journey. We will visit the manger and experience that first Christmas night. Casual dress is appropriate.

The service will be available to watch online at 11:00 PM that evening or at your convenience. We will not be able to live stream it due to all of the moving parts, If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 419-673-7278.

All are welcome to attend! Let's Celebrate the True Meaning of Christmas and go back to the manger.



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

211 East Carrol Street
Kenton, OH 43326

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

Phone: 419-673-7278 (o)
Phone: 724-290-3651 (c)

E-mail: PastorRandall@stjohnskenton.org

DECEMBER 2021

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Christmas, for many people, comes with a host of memories. Some of those memories are brought with something akin to the Ghost of Christmas Past and bring to mind our shortcomings and failures. Some memories bring a tear to the eye as we remember loved ones lost or sweeter days that will never be seen again.

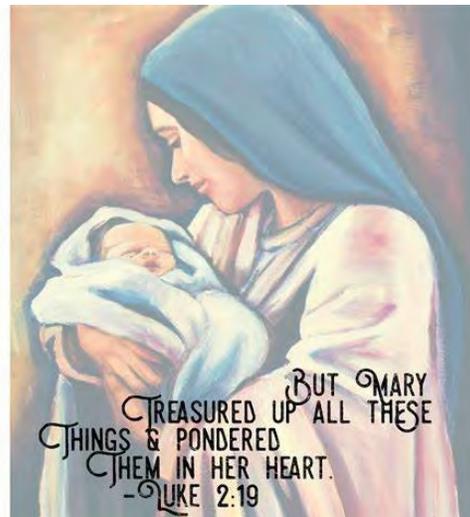
But for the most part, Christmas brings memories that warm our hearts. We remember joy-filled mornings gathered around the tree or a dinner table. We think of family coming together to laugh and share. We think of a special gift from a cherished loved one. The smell of pine can cause those memories to flood back as can the smell of fresh baked cookies.

At this time of year, I often wonder what was going through the minds of Mary and Joseph. They had to deal with the rumors of people in the community as many – if not most – doubted the miraculous nature of Mary's pregnancy. They were probably concerned and a bit fearful as they had to travel far from home to Bethlehem for the census. On top of that, they had no where to stay but a stable.

Then again, there was something joyful about those days. After all, Mary and Joseph had each had angelic visitations to confirm what was going on in their lives – they had been specially chosen to bring God's Messiah into the world. Whatever the circumstances may have been, they were bringing a child into the world. Their family was growing, and there was hope for something new – if not for them, then at least for the generation to come.

Like these days for us, Mary and Joseph's first Christmas was filled with strange occurrences. In the midst of their joys and fears, there came shepherds as the first witnesses to the birth of Jesus. With them came a story of angels – a whole choir of them. As quickly as they came, these shepherds run out to tell others this story only to return again to bring more praise to God (**Luke 2:16-18, 20**).

Amidst the good and the bad, the weird and the wonderful, Mary drank in the moments and created memories. **Luke 2:19** tells us: "But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." She wasn't just some hapless bystander witnessing events as they unfolded. She wasn't the victim of circumstances beyond her control.



In some ways, I am sure that she and Joseph wondered who and what they were and what everything meant in those days and would mean in the days to come. Still, they were not passive. At least we know Mary was not. She took the time to drink in those moments. She stored

those memories like treasure in her heart. Additionally, she pondered those moments.

In some ways, she was creating heirlooms. Over time, I have inherited some things. When I received them, it was a nicety to accept

this gift. As the days and years go by, I appreciate those gifts in ways that I did not in my younger days. Similarly, Mary did not fully understand what was unfolding before her eyes, but she had enough faith to accept that God was there in the midst of her life. God was there in her new marriage. God was there in the stable. God was there with uninvited guests telling tales and giving praise to God. God was in Bethlehem, and He was even behind the edict that took them there.

Likewise, we still know that God is with us, that is one of the reasons Jesus was to be revealed to us as Emmanuel (**Isaiah 7:14**). God is there in the midst of separation and pain. God is there in joy and gatherings. God is there in the holiday goodies, and He is there in seasons of want. God is present in the scriptures and carols that cause our souls to worship Him. He is there as history unfolds in these strange and wonderful and uncertain times.

These days are the memories that our children and grandchildren will tell future generations about. Things that may seem tragic today may create sweet memories tomorrow, or they may cause young hearts to be more thankful when days of blessings come.

One of the temptations of the season is to try to tell the Christmas story in a new and more exciting way. However, wisdom reminds us: "The story just needs to be told. It will create the memories it needs to make. It will elicit the proper response just by being told."

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

This year, WAM—our Worship Arts and Music committee—is working with me to create a Christmas Eve worship service that will ask us all to regain the faith and joy of a child at Christmas. It will help us to remember good memories of Christmases past. Most of all, we hope it will create a new special memory this year. Whatever you are going through, whatever you may feel about these times, we want to stand with you as we hear the Christmas story and sing the songs of this season as one family united together in Christ who came for us 2000 years ago and who still stands with us and for us today.



May God bless you with all the blessings of this season—hope, joy, love and peace. May you listen to what God is speaking into your life today. Drink in these memories—hold them like treasures in your heart and ponder how God is using these days to advance His kingdom. He is blessing us still as He did Mary and Joseph. I am glad that I get to share and make these memories with you.

God bless us one and all!

With Christmas hope,

Pastor Randall

Preaching Series

This has been a long year in many respects. One of the things it has given us is an appreciation for previous traditions as we wait for things to normalize once again. It should give us an appreciation for Advent and Christmas. The promises that Christ fulfilled were made in ancient times. Some people probably thought they would never be fulfilled, but lo' and behold that day came in Bethlehem 2000 years ago.

We will celebrate that birth this Christmas Eve in some new and different ways this year, but also in some ways that hopefully recapture the joy of days gone by. We want people to recall the good ol' days while making new memories that will last a lifetime and nurture faith in a new generation.

Our Advent and Christmas worship looks back while speaking to our times and preparing us for greater days ahead as God continues to fulfill His promises for us while working in and through us by His Son and Holy Spirit.



28 November First Sunday of Advent
Scripture **Jeremiah 33:14-16**
 Luke 21:25-36
Sermon **The Promise Fulfilled**

05 December Second Sunday of Advent
Scripture **Malachi 3:1-4**
 Luke 3:1-6
Sermon **Famous Last Words**
 (and First Words)

12 December Third Sunday of Advent
Scripture **Zephaniah 3:14-20**
 Luke 3:7-18
Sermon **What Shall We Do?**

19 December Fourth Sunday of Advent
Scripture **Micah 5:2-5a**
 Luke 1:39-45
Sermon **Blessed is She!**

24 December Christmas Eve
Scripture **Isaiah 9:2-7**
 Titus 2:11-14
 Luke 2:1-20
Sermon **The Light Shines!**

26 December First Sunday after Christmas
Scripture **Psalms 119:81-88**
 Luke 2:21-38
Sermon Nunc Dimittis
 Lord, You Dismiss Us...



Upcoming Events

Chancel Choir

Choir practice will be Wednesday, December 1 at 7 pm and will sing Sunday, December 5. All are welcome! They have practice at 7 pm the Wednesday before the first Sunday of each month. Please see Dave Beazley with questions.



Family Gingerbread House Making Party

We will be having a family gingerbread house making party on Saturday, December 18 at 1 pm. It will also include crafts, sweet treats and hot chocolate. Please register by December 13 if attending.

Mental Health First Aid Training

A Mental Health First Aid Training will be held here on Saturday, January 22 in the fellowship hall. There is no cost for this training and lunch is provided. It is being organized by ONU students. To register, email Donna at ddickman@passaah.org. Last day to register is January 7.

Women's Ministry

The Women's Ministry meetings are the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6 pm. All women of the church are invited to the meetings, it is not necessary for you to attend the meetings to be involved in the activities of the church. All women of the church are considered members of the group and your input is valued. Toni Pfister is currently the president. If you have any questions or concerns, please let her know.

Upcoming activities:

December 2—Women's Celebration 6:30 pm

December 7—Ag Banquet 6:30 pm

Christmas Adopt-a-Family

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 and return by December 12:



- 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 are 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.**

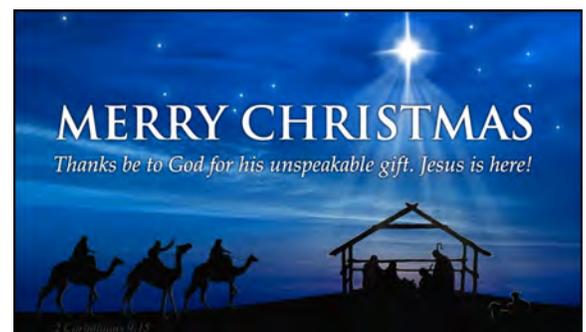
Thank you for sharing God's love by blessing these families! If you have any questions, please contact Heather (567-674-0020) or the church office.



Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be January 30 immediately following the morning worship service.

Please submit year end reports for the Annual Meeting Booklet by December 31 or financials by the beginning of January.





Bible Study Wednesday Nights

A Bible Study led by Jerry Pfister meets Wednesday Nights at 7:00 pm in the chapel. All are welcome to attend!

Community Men's Bible Study

A Community Men's Bible Study meets Saturday mornings at 7:30 am with a new location to be determined. Our Place is no longer open for breakfast at the time they meet. If you would like to know the location once it is determined, please contact Pastor Randall at 724-290-3651.

Community Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study is meeting on Sunday morning at 9 am in fellowship hall. The ladies are going studying a Chip Ingram Study called "Doing Good". All are welcome!

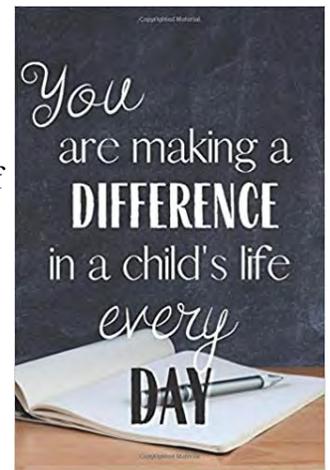


Intercessory Prayer

Prayer time meets the 2nd and 4th Fridays at Noon in the sanctuary. All are welcome to attend or contact Pastor Randall or the church office with prayer requests.

Wednesday Kids Volunteers

If you are able to help on Wednesday Nights (even if you cannot be here every week or want to be a sub) please see Michele Sherman. Areas you can help: van driver/riders, teachers/helpers.



Family Ministry Schedule Kids & Youth

Sunday School (K-Grade 5): Sundays at 9 am. Miss Hope teaches K-Grade 2 and Miss Natasha teaches Grades 3-5.

Youth Group (Grades 6-12): Sundays from 5-7 pm

Wednesday Night Kids (K- Grade 5): Wednesdays from 5-7 pm.

If you have questions,, please contact Michele Sherman or the church office.

Thank you for your continued support!

Celebrate Recovery Meal Sign Up

St. John's would like to supply a meal for Celebrate Recovery once a month. The meals will be the second Tuesday of each month for approximately 10-15 people. If you are able to provide food, please sign-up in the back of the sanctuary.

Please have the food at the church at 5:30 pm in the kitchenette across from the chapel. Any questions, please see Anna LaWarre or Jerry Pfister.

website: stjohnskenton.org
Facebook: St Johns Kenton, Ohio
Youtube: St. John's Evangelical Church

The block contains three social media icons: the Facebook 'f' logo, the St. John's Evangelical Church logo (a cross over a globe with the text 'ST JOHN'S Evangelical Church'), and the YouTube logo.

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, corner of Wayne St. and E. Carrol St. to carpool. They leave sharply at 10:45. Still eating at 11:30 am.

December 3—Eagles (Kenton)

December 17—Viva Maria (Ada)

January 7—Salsa's (Kenton)

January 21—Our Place (Kenton)

February 4—Skinny's (Kenton)

February 18—Homecoming Rest. (Bellevue)

March 4—Eagle's (Kenton)

March 18—Western Sizzler (Lima)

St. John's Care Team

We have a group of people that make calls to members to try to keep in touch with each other and to just check in. If you would like to participate in any way, please let the church office know or contact Carol Wilcox. If you are not receiving a call and would like one periodically or know of someone who would, please let us know.



Birthday Blessings (over 80 yrs. Young)



We like to recognize members who are 80 years or older. Please contact the church office to add a name to our birthday list. Thank you so much!

December 5: Janet Jones
128 Oak Lane Drive
Kenton, OH 43326

December 10: Kay Rush
16839 SR 309E
Kenton, OH 43326

Mission of the Month— 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.

Angels for the Elderly Food Drive



We will be collecting food for Angels for the Elderly again this year. Below is a suggested donation list. Please place items in the tote in the back of the sanctuary by December 19.

Sample list of items needed....

- Bottled water
- Canned vegetables - don't forget canned potatoes
- Canned fruit, canned applesauce - (or small individual containers)
- Canned soup
- Instant potatoes as well as bags of potatoes which can be divided for a few homes
- Spaghetti sauce and pasta
- Pancake mix and syrup
- Canned meats (tuna, chicken, beef stew, etc.)
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Macaroni & cheese
- Cereal and/or instant oatmeal
- Biscuit or baking mixes, especially those that only use water (don't forget Jiffy Mix)
- Boxed meals that require only water – also Tuna Helper & Hamburger Helper
- Dried beans
- Raisins - small boxes
- Jello & pudding - small pre-mixed containers also appreciated
- Chapstick, hand or body lotion, body wash
- Bars of soap
- Cough drops
- Deodorant, razors, toothbrushes & toothpaste
- Shampoo & conditioner
- Toilet paper, paper towels and facial tissue
- Laundry detergent and dish soap
- Adult disposable underwear
- Socks and gloves



Can you believe Christmas is only a few weeks away? We hope you and your family are looking forward to a wonderful season!

Here are a few things coming up in our ministry...

December 5th - Youth HCC @Kenton Movie Theatre 1pm

December 18th - Family Gingerbread Party! 1pm

December 22nd - No Wednesday Kids Night

December 26th - No Sunday Youth

Sunday School each week with Miss Hope (grades K-2nd) and Ms. Natasha (3rd-5th grade) at 9am before Church.

Family Gingerbread Party- Bring your Family for a fun afternoon of making gingerbread houses. There will also be crafts, sweet treats and hot chocolate. Please register by December 13, if attending.

Poinsettia's- Thank you to everyone that supported the Youth with this Fundraiser! Many blessings to you!

What we're Teaching this month...

Wednesday Kids- A 4-week series from the New Testament on Christmas. What is your go-to Christmas traditions? It's amazing how different all of our Christmas celebrations can be, especially when you take into account how Christmas is celebrated all over the world. This month, we'll be reminded what a universal gift Jesus is, and how Jesus brought good news, joy, and peace on that very first Christmas so that the whole world could know God!

Sunday Youth- Christmas is almost here! Which means there's a lot for us to look forward to — sometimes impatiently. But you know the saying, "good things come to those who wait"? It's true for Christmases now, but it was true on the very first Christmas as well. You see, the day Jesus came to earth wasn't a sudden surprise. It was the first step in a long-awaited plan. In this 4-week series, we'll hear the Christmas story from the perspective of the prophets in the Old Testament, who foretold and then waited for the good things God had in store. Christmas is a reminder of what the prophets proclaimed: that God has always had a plan, that Jesus completes God's plan, that God's plans bring joy, and that God's plans require sacrifice.

Tip of the Month

Christmas is a wonderful time to celebrate with family and loved ones. Often, we celebrate with similar traditions year after year, but what if this could be the time when you start something brand new that you can remember forever? There are no shortage of new and creative Christmas traditions that you could try, join us this year for our first Ginger Bread Party on December 18th at 1pm.

Question of the Month

Here's a question for you. What's on your kid's Christmas list this year? Hit Reply on this email and let us know!



This year I thought we would take a look back at how St. John's celebrated the month of December prior to the ravages of the Great Depression. This article is excerpted from the St. John's Messenger Vol. IX No. 4. December 1929

"OUR PROGRAM FOR ALL

Sunday, Dec. 22-Sunday School 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M. The Christmas Program by entire Sunday School and Church 7 P.M. Christmas Carols, special music, and address on: The Origin and Development of Christmas. Special Offering. Monday, Dec. 23-7 P.M. The Primary Department Christmas program for primary scholars, teachers and parents.

Christmas Day-German Service 10:15 A.M.

Sunday, Dec. 29-Sunday School 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M. Young Peoples League 6:30 P.M.

Tuesday, Dec. 31-All 1929 pledges and dues paid in full."

"The pastor had the misfortune of suffering broken bones caused while cranking the car. As a result he was not able to occupy the pulpit on Dec. 15. He hopes to be able to take charge by next Sunday, Dec. 22."

"CHRISTMAS MISSION BOXES

Now wouldn't you like to travel along with the Christmas Boxes, which were sent to the poor children of the Ozark Mission, Back Bay Mission at Biloxi, and the National Home Finding Association (colored) at Louisville and see and hear those boys and girls on Christmas Day, happy and thankful for the friends of St. John's and Goshen? Through the efforts of the Martha Graebe Mission Society, which received the support of the Sunday Schools here and in Goshen, the following list of articles were sent: 21 tablets; 24 pencils; 3 combs; 27 wash-cloths; 31 pairs of socks; 6 prs bloomers; 25 bath-towels; 10 linen towels; 1 harmonica; 1 ruler; 18 boxes of crayon; 5 rubber balls; 3 strands of beads; 2 brooches; 2 toy tops; 1 slate; 1 box beads; 1 box modeling clay; 1 toy parrot; 1 set of toy harness; 3 ties; 2 girls tams; 2 story books; 1 pajama; 15 kerchiefs; 5 sets underwear; 2 shirts; 3 boys suits; 1 blouse; 3 books; 7 girls dresses; 1 apron; 3 house-dresses; 1 airplane; 1 truck; to this was added 6 dozen iron toys from a friend. A small box of wearing apparel for the colored girls and \$14 cash. The freight on these boxes was \$5.96, which was paid out of the Sunday School mission fund. One of our boy's classes was kind enough to donate 10 Yale locks, which were sent to our missionary at Raipur, India"

As you read the list above, let the realization of those times sink in. They were much simpler but certainly not without stress. I could not have come up with a better way to end this article than to use the words of my Grandfather that began that month's Messenger.

"THE SEASON'S GREETINGS

THE PASTOR'S WISH TO ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF ST. JOHN'S FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

CHRISTMAS

***MAY WE CARRY INTO AND BEYOND THESE DAYS THE SPIRIT OF HIM, WHO LIVED
"PEACE ON EARTH AND GOOD-WILL TOWARD ALL MEN.***

NEW YEAR

***LET US LEAVE THE OLD WITH A BURST OF SONG
LET US RECALL THE RIGHT AND FORGIVE THE WRONG
LET US DARE TO GO FORTH WITH A PURPOSE TRUE
TO UNTRIED TASKS OF THE YEAR THAT IS NEW
LET US HELP OUR BROTHERS ALONG THE ROAD
TO DO THEIR WORK AND TO LIFT THEIR LOAD
LET US ADD OUR GIFTS TO THE WORLD'S GOOD CHEER
AND THEN WE WILL HAVE AND WE WILL GIVE.***

***A MERRY CHRISTMAS-
A HAPPY NEW YEAR."***

Herbert E. Pfister, Pastor

St. John's Evangelical Church
Church Council Agenda
Thursday, October 14, 2021
7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER - Terry Hord, President

OPENING PRAYER - Pastor Randall

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT - Pastor Randall

OFFICER'S REPORT

Secretary's Report - Heather Erwin

- September 16 minutes – Motion to accept minutes and seconded, council vote, motion carried.

REPORTS

1) Finance - Jerry Pfister

- past month had more expenses than income.
- Still financially sound
- Will attempt to meet with Tracy Strous Monday the 25th at 6:30 pm
- Stewardship theme paper passed out
- Possible date to distribute stewardship Nov. 14th
- Receive Nov. 21st

2) Christian Education—Michele Sherman

- Things are going well. Mark spoke about Hardin County Collective and the fact that it was very successful.

3) Women's Ministry - Kay Rush

- meet next on 10/26/21

4) Worship, Arts & Music

- Spoke about only having one Christmas Eve Service at 8pm
- Idea was to be centered around the children, have them sing and possibly do some other activities that may not be traditional.

5) Personnel Committee - Jerry Pfister

- nothing to report

6) Pastoral Relations

- nothing to report

7) Trustees

- HVAC system is still progressing and will have a Trane system
- Church Bell, Motion made and seconded to mount the original wheel to the church bell after it has been restored. Motion passed
- Jerry will get the wheel down to the company in Cincinnati.
- AV hours were down the past month
- No concerns with the van
- May need to look at DOT sticker if we travel out of state w/ van.
- No issues with the farm

8) Missions, Evangelism - Heather Erwin, Mark Sherman, Anna LaWarre

- Trunk or Treat MORE ATTENTION NEEDED
- Issues with the parade route and parking lot usage
- Community Meal pack will be Sat. the 23rd

Church Staff:

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Randall J. Forester
Youth Ministry: Michele Sherman
Financial Secretary: Kay Rush
Church Secretary: Kathy Forester
Chancel Choir Director: David Beazley
Organists: Randall S. Rogers, Teresa Broseke and Linda Zeigler

9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall

- Hardin County talks will be going virtual
- Evangelism and outreach importance was stressed.

Nominating Committee

- Shawn and Hal will be working on recruitment.
- Anna will stay on as a Trustee unless she decides to switch to Elder.

Annual Meeting Date;

- Date was decided on January 30th

Next Meeting: November 11, 2021 at 7:00 PM

LORD'S PRAYER

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



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

On average:
123
people die by suicide each day.
American Association for Suicide Prevention

From 1999 to 2018:
630,000
people died from drug overdose.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Nearly:
1 in 5
U.S. adults lives with a mental illness.
National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Why Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders. This training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care.

Who Should Take it

- Employees
- Police officers
- Hospital staff
- First responders
- Faith leaders
- Community members
- Caring individuals

MHFA Training

Saturday,
January 22, 2022
9:00am – 5:00pm
St. John's Evangelical Church
211 E. Carrol St.
Kenton, Ohio
To register - email Dorna at ddickman@passaah.org
Last day to register: January 7th

The course will teach you how to apply the ALGEE action plan:

- **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- **L**isten nonjudgmentally.
- **G**ive reassurance and information.
- **E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.

What it Covers

- Common signs and symptoms of mental illness
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use
- How to interact with a person in crisis
- How to connect the person with help
- **NEW!** Expanded content on trauma, addiction and self-care



This program is a top-notch service to area communities like ours and we are so grateful for the opportunity to have this program! – **NIKI Carber**, Speak Out Against Suicide