

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

**Do Not Delay**  
**Dated Material**

February



## St. John's Evangelical Church Newsletter

February 2022

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](http://www.stjohnskenton.org)  
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<sup>9</sup> As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. <sup>11</sup> These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:9-11

Love, in our culture, is often reduced to sentimental feeling. Love is seen not primarily as an action but as an emotion that comes and goes. When the feeling of love goes, the culture tells us, we can end relationships and go our own way.

Certainly, we do not deny that love has an emotional component. However, the biblical authors do not define love as a mere feeling. Love, in Scripture, consists also in purposeful action. We see that very clearly in today's passage. Jesus instructs us to abide in His love, but the primary way that we do that, He tells us, is by keeping His commandments (**John 15:9-10**). Abiding in the love of Christ is not a passive thing or something that consists only in a feeling of affection toward Jesus. Instead, we abide in the love of Christ by doing something, namely, by following His commands.

This makes good sense in light of our doctrine of God. We distinguish God's attributes, but we cannot ever separate them or treat them as independent entities. God is holy and God is love, but properly speaking, God's holiness is His love and His love is His holiness (**Isa. 6:3; 1 John 4:8**). His love is a holy love, so if we are to abide in His love we must strive after holiness. John Calvin comments: "Christ does not reconcile believers to the Father, that they may indulge in wickedness without reserve, and without punishment; but that, governing them by his Spirit, he may keep them under the authority and dominion of his Father. Hence it follows, that the love of Christ is rejected by those who do not prove, by true obedience, that they are his disciples."

We must note that although our obedience to Christ is necessary for abiding in His love, His love for us is not ultimately grounded in our obedience. After all, "we love because He first loved us" (**1 John 4:19**). God loves us, and the fruit of that love in the outworking of our salvation is obedience to Him, by which we abide in His love. Calvin comments that "the obedience which believers render to Him is not the cause why He continues His love toward us, but is rather the effect of His love." We persevere in faith, but we persevere because of God's sustaining love and power.



# 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)

FEBRUARY 2022

## THE PASTOR'S PAGE

E-mail: PastorRandall@stjohnskenton.org

If I asked how your New Year's Resolutions are going, what would you say? Better still, how far have you gotten in reading the Word this year? Each January, I ask you to commit to reading through the Bible in the coming year. I know few begin the process and far fewer make it to the end. As I write this, I am currently at the beginning of Leviticus, which is where many a well-intentioned Christian has called it quits. For me, I am often ready to stop while in the middle of Second Chronicles.

If you have fallen behind on the reading plan or never even dared to start, I encourage you to reconsider. This year, the calendar actually does us all a favor. Ash Wednesday doesn't arrive until March 2nd. If I had my druthers, Easter would always be in April and Lent would always begin in March.

Too often for me, that is not the case. Lent usually begins at some point in February. For many of us, we feel as though we just survived the mad dash of the holidays at the end of the year and have barely had time to process the start of the New Year when Lent arrives.

I remember in my younger days, when one fair lass lamented that she had just promised God that she would forego chocolate for Lent, only to have her beau take her on a romantic date a day or two after Ash Wednesday. She was anguished over whether to keep her sacred vow or to enjoy young love.

This year would not provide such a dilemma for her. For you, it gives you the opportunity to enjoy Valentine's Day without worry. It also gives you the opportunity to simply take a beat and breathe deep and enjoy what God is doing in this world. February gets to be a bit of a pause before we take hold of the Lenten journey that takes us to the Cross and Christ's Resurrection.

I encourage you to use this time wisely. Find some extra

time to read the Word of God. Read it not just to get to the goal of reading it from cover to cover or even to complete a single book. Read it to savor it, to enjoy it, and to receive it for what it is—God's love letter to His people.

God delights to be with His people. That is why He walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It is why we see God as grief stricken in the prophets when His people go astray. Most of all, it is why He sent His Son to live for us, to die for us, and to rise again. Christ did all that, so we could regain what we not only lost but squandered away. In Jesus, we receive a new relationship with our Heavenly Father, and we receive an eternal inheritance to abide with Him forever.

God loves us that much that He would die for us. Such love should stir a passion in our souls. How do we re-



I RISE BEFORE DAWN AND CRY FOR HELP;  
I HOPE IN YOUR WORDS.

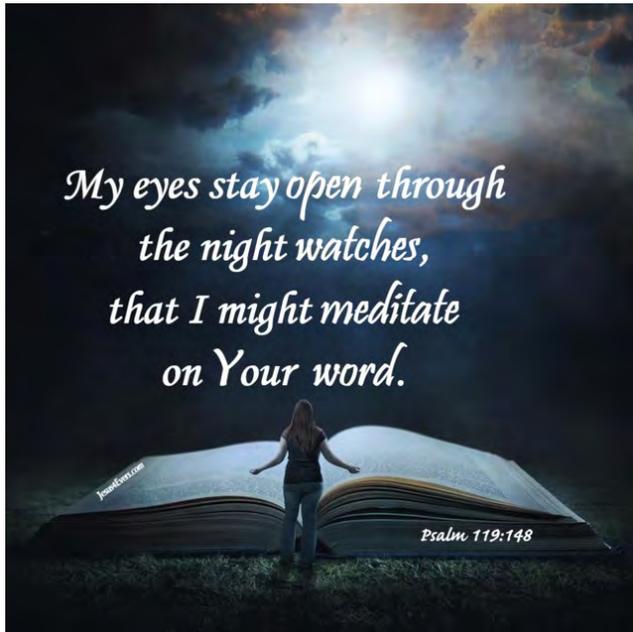
PSALM 119:147

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spond? We do so by learning more about this love and how to get it deeper into our lives. In recent months, we have discussed a couple of sections of **Psalm 119**. It is the longest chapter of the Bible and it is devoted to God's Word. The psalmist tirelessly expresses his love for God's revelation in His word and how he delights in learning the Lord's statutes. May we learn from him and cry out as he did, "I rise before dawn and cry for help; I

(Continued on page #)

hope in Your words. My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on Your promise" (Psalm 119:147-148).



In these early weeks of 2022, we are discussing spiritual gifts. A way to respond to God's love is to give glory to Him in worship and in service. To do so, we need to utilize our spiritual gifts. In reading the Bible, we see how God impacted the lives of saints and used them to fulfill the promises found in the Kingdom of God. When we look deeper, we see that the saints of all were regular people like us touched by the hand of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

When we read the Bible, we see that it could have been us in those pages. We see that those stories are our stories. We have the opportunity to determine if we will be found faithful or faithless. We can climb the mountain to encounter God, or we can build idols. We can ignore God's call on our lives, or we can commit to following Him and leaving this world behind.

In the Bible, we see how ordinary people did extraordinary things by simply being faithful followers of Jesus Christ. By His Spirit, they were empowered to proclaim the Good News and to perform miracles. In reading the Word, we hear over and over again how God desires to be present in the lives of His saints—the true believers. God wants to be central in your life, and He wants to be a part of all that you are and all that you do. He loves you that much.

## ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH:

MAKING AND MATURING  
DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

In the Word, we also hear how God came to give us not only a new life but an abundant life in Christ (**John 10:10**). How do you know what that abundant life looks like, and how do you discover your spiritual gifts and how to use them for God's glory? You start by reading the Word. You spend time with God in prayer. You seek for those answers by encountering the One who can provide those answers, satisfy your soul, and empower you to finish well in this life.

And this February is a good place to start. Begin your journey with God with a pure heart. You don't have to do it because I suggested as your pastor that you should. You don't have to do it as a New Year's resolution or a Lenten discipline. You can do it simply for the love of discovering more about God and His ways and His plans for you.

Who knows? You may discover after a month of seeking the Lord in this way that the Holy Spirit may impress an even greater path for you in Lent. You may find a way to share your spiritual gifts with others in this church, or you may find a ministry to people in this community. When people fall deeper in love with God, they cannot help but share that love with others. You may find yourself joining with other believers in prayer or Bible study. You may find God drawing you into the orbit of other likeminded believers who want to share their gifts, grow the ministry of this church, and advance the Kingdom of God in this world.

And it all begins with taking the time to fall deeper in love with God and His Word. I pray that this February provides the space and time to respond to God in a deeper way. Use this time wisely for God's glory.

A fellow pilgrim on the way,

*Pastor Randall*

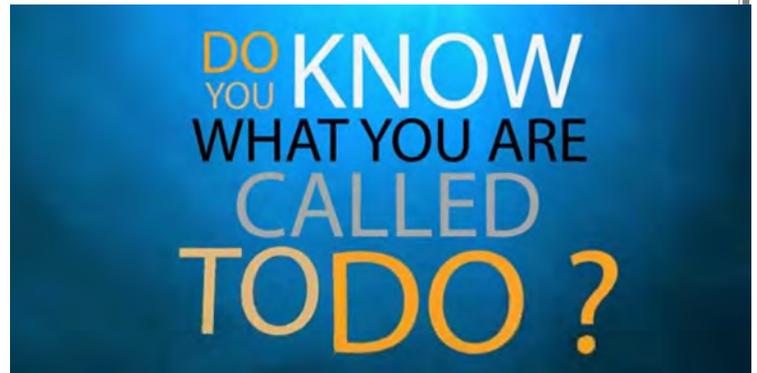
## Preaching Series

In February, we continue the sermon series on spiritual gifts. Like so many churches in our land, we need revitalization. Churches can make dramatic strides when a few people are committed to using their spiritual gifts for the glory of God.

This year, Lent begins March 2nd, and our Ash Wednesday service will revolve around **Luke 10:1-24**, which speaks to the power of God's people when they utilize their gifts at Christ's leading.

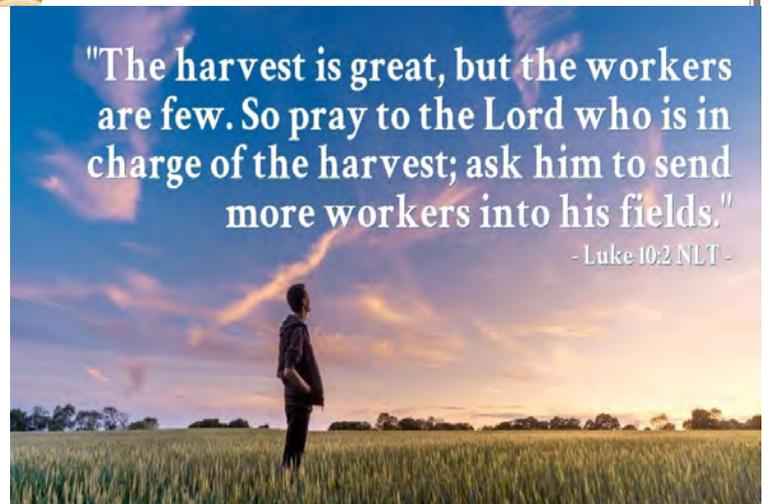
In Lent, we will spend time with some of the parables of Jesus, which will lead us to Easter. We are still thinking of ways to commemorate Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

20 February	Scripture	<b>Judges 4:1-7</b> <b>Matthew 25:14-30</b>
	Sermon	<b>Spiritual Gifts Invested</b>
27 February	Scripture	<b>Ecclesiastes 3:1-13</b> <b>Matthew 25:31-46</b>
	Sermon	<b>Spiritual Gifts to Glorify God</b>



02 March	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>
Scripture for the Ashes	<b>Luke 10:13-16</b>
Scripture for Communion	<b>Luke 10:1-12</b>
Consecration	<b>Luke 10:21-24</b>
Scripture for Anointing	<b>Luke 10:17-20</b>

06 February	Scripture	<b>I Peter 4:1-11</b> <b>Luke 17:20-21</b>
	Sermon	<b>Spiritual Gifts to Glorify God</b>
13 February	Scripture	<b>Amos 5:18-24</b> <b>Matthew 25:1-13</b>
	Sermon	<b>Spiritual Gifts Employed</b>



# Upcoming Events

## Chancel Choir

The next Choir practice will be Wednesday, February 2 at 7 pm and will sing Sunday, February 6. All are welcome! They have practice at 7 pm the Wednesday before the first Sunday of each month. Please see Dave Beazley with questions.

## Mental Health First Aid Training

A Mental Health First Aid Training has been rescheduled for Saturday, March 26 from 12 pm – 4 pm & Sunday, March 27 from 12 pm – 4 pm in the fellowship hall. There is no cost for this training. To register, email Donna at [ddickman@passaah.org](mailto:ddickman@passaah.org) by February 15.

## Carl Lotz Scholarship Applications

Purpose: To provide a scholarship to a Hardin County student or church member who plans to further their education and/or training for their career. Application, eligibility requirements, and procedure list is available online at <https://forms.gle/BxSY59hvCfpdEM2J6>. A copy of the application can also be found on the church website at [www.stjohnskenton.org](http://www.stjohnskenton.org). Deadline to apply is April 22.

## 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.

February 4—Skinny's (Kenton)

February 18—Homecoming Rest. (Bellefontaine)

March 4—Eagle's (Kenton)

March 18—Western Sizzler (Lima)

## Birthday Blessings (over 80 yrs. Young)

\* No February Birthdays on File

## Ash Wednesday Service

The Ash Wednesday Service is March 2 at 7 PM.

## 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.



## 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 and Fourth 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 6 pm in the kitchenette across from the chapel. Any questions, please see Anna LaWarre or Jerry Pfister.

## Mission of the Month— Celebrate Recovery

### A Christ-Centered Recovery Program

Recovering from Hurts, Habits and Hang-ups. This ministry meets every Tuesday night from 6:30-8pm. They meet at St. John's Church. If you or someone you know is struggling with addictions, depression, bad habits, past hurts, or hang-ups this group is place of Hope and Freedom. Dinner and childcare included.

## Weekly Family Ministry Schedule

**Community Men's Bible Study:** Saturdays at 7:30 am in the Fellowship Hall

**Sunday School (K-Grade 5):** Sundays at 9 am.

**Community Women's Bible Study:** Sundays at 9 am in the Fellowship Hall

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

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

**Wednesday Bible Study:** Wednesdays at 7 pm

**Intercessory Prayer:** 2nd & 4th Friday at Noon in the sanctuary



We're looking forward to Valentine's Day, Super Bowl Sunday, and (more than anything else) a great month of ministry with you and your family!

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

Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> -Youth Winter Retreat

Sunday School with Ms. Natasha 9am before Church each Sunday.

### What we're Teaching this month...

**Wednesday Kids-** A 4-week series from the New Testament on Jesus' teachings. **Up is Down. Right is Left. Cold is Hot.** That's right, we're celebrating opposite day this whole month (or should we say, not celebrating? This could get confusing!) This series will give kids a chance to talk about the counter-culture things Jesus said. It sounds impossible to believe that struggles bring us closer to Jesus or that our enemies can teach us about love. However, these beautiful opposites remind us that a God we can't see is always with us and that it's better to follow Jesus than our own instincts. Happy Opposite Day!

**Sunday Youth-** we have started Biblical journal prompts. Journal writing is great for triggering teenagers' imaginations, getting them to look at the world in a new and precious ways. But like most writing, it has to be fun or they simply won't do it. In these prompts teens will be asked to put themselves in a Bible characters' shoes. Others ask them to think of their own lives in new and interesting ways. Each one will encourage Christian growth, though sometimes such is subtle. The ultimate design in each prompt is to keep interest. Along with each prompt, there is one Bible lookup. Sometimes the lookup is a Bible story, and sometimes just a Scripture that either closely or very loosely relates to the assignment. Again, the lookups are meant to inspire but not to give the prompts as "assignment" feeling.

### Tip of the Month

Remember you can't pour from an empty cup. The best thing you can do for your kids is to take care of your own anxieties and struggles. #d6

### Question of the Month

Hey families, help us out. What's one thing our church could do to better show up for and help you? Let us know!





## From the Archives (a reprise of my 1<sup>st</sup> article)

We have had undoubtedly hundreds if not over a thousand love stories that are associated with St. John's over our 180 year existence. When asked to write about one, I realized I have only one 1<sup>st</sup> hand account of past members, and therefore this is a very personal reflection.

Ginny and Gerry were born within a month of each other in 1915. Gerry was the son of a minister at a mission church in Hudson, Kansas and Ginny the daughter and only child of Charles Hill, a pharmacist in Kenton. They met in confirmation class at St. John's, after Rev. Pfister accepted the calling here in 1927. The next year they were "married" in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade operetta and went on to attend Kenton High in the old school building on East Columbus Street. Their dating through their high school years was restricted by the depression, Mr. Hill's belief that no one was good enough to date his daughter, and the need to work to make money for college or for that matter to have any money to spend. By the end of their senior year, they had come to an understanding, that they would date others during college but marry when they got out and could afford it. In 1933 Gerry went to Wittenberg on a football scholarship and Ginny went to Ohio Northern to study teaching. Gerry transferred to the University of Michigan after a successful freshman year at Wittenberg. Ginny loved Ohio Northern and her pictures are on the ONU web site in the 1935 show her as one of the "beauties" and appearing to have a wonderful social life. Then the Depression cut short her college and she left with a teaching certificate to work teaching in Kenton to help make ends meet. Gerry went on to graduate in 1936 with a degree in accounting, but since there were no jobs decided to stay in school. During this time he worked at several jobs and told me he would have starved to death had his sister not been the head nurse of a hospital wing that provided an occasional meal. In 1938 he received an MBA for Michigan and a job offer with Goodyear in Minnesota. The only problem was it didn't pay enough to support a wife. This meant the next few years for the two of them to save every penny they could and finally in November of 1940 they were able to be married by his father at St. John's. Gerry had been offered a much better job in Chicago with Montgomery Ward and they moved from Kenton in 1941. As with many couples during that time in history, fate was not kind and War was declared in December of that year. I was born in June of 1942 in Chicago and we moved back to Kenton that year as Gerry joined the Navy. He left for the Pacific in 1943. The letters from the Pacific that remain in the family show not only a deep love but a desperate desire for a real life between them. One written during a bout with Malaria is literally delusional with visions of her alternating with the horrors of Japanese shells killing his comrades. As with many servicemen, Gerry returned from the war carrying a tremendous desire for life as well as the seeds of his eventual demise, but they were to have a wonderful 19 years together. They enjoyed success, worked hard and provided a loving home for their children. At the end for Gerry there would be six years of deteriorating health and the knowledge for both of them that his time on this earth was short. Their Faith sustained them and in 1965 he passed away. Forty two years later at the end of her life, my mother told me that the quality of a life with the one you love is more important than the amount of time you have together. She looked forward to joining her only true love and now they rest together awaiting the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming in Grove Cemetery.

Jerry Pfister, Historian

## My Child,

I know everything about you ... **Psalms 139:1**

I knew you even before you were conceived ... **Jeremiah 1:4-5**

I knit you together in your mother's womb ... **Psalms 139:13**

You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book. **Psalms 139:15-16**

I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love ... **1 John 4:16**

And it is my desire to lavish my love on you ... **1 John 3:1**

Simply because you are my child and I am your father ... **Matthew 7:11**

Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand ... **James 1:17**

My plan for your future has always been filled with hope ... **Jeremiah 29:11**

For you are my treasured possession ... **Exodus 19:5**

When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you ... **Psalms 34:18**

As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart ... **Isaiah 40:11**

One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes ... **Revelation 21:3-4**

And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth ... **Revelation 21:3-4**

Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled ... **2 Corinthians 5:18-19**

His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you ... **1 John 4:10**

And nothing will ever separate you from my love again ... **Romans 8:31-32**

I have always been Father, and will always be Father ... **Ephesians 3:14-15**

Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen ... **Luke 15:7**

Love,

Your Abba Almighty God

St. John's Evangelical Church  
Church Council Agenda  
Thursday, December 9, 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

- November 11 minutes – Motion to accept minutes and seconded, council vote, motion carried.

REPORTS

1) Finance - Jerry Pfister

- Books are good

2) Christian Education—Michele Sherman

- Doing well—averaging 20-25 kids

3) Women's Ministry - Carol Wilcox

- Women's celebration was a success, and they liked the double squared tables. Sharon would like to help again. Around 110 women.
- Blinds are in- will be hung in 2022

4) Worship, Arts & Music

- Christmas is under control
- Talked to Janet—starting up coffee hour in January 2022

5) Personnel Committee - Jerry Pfister

- Contemporary Service discussed

6) Pastoral Relations - Carol Wilcox

- Next meeting—2022

7) Trustees

1. Audio Visual—Jerry Pfister

looking at more contemporary in the future, might be looking for a full-time position.

2. Van—Anna LaWarre

updating the bus policy to the van policy

3. Farm—Greg Martin

2 new awnings installed. ATR is installing the new furnace. QMS checked the boiler, and the fan was seized. Fan was changed.

8) Missions, Evangelism - Heather Erwin, Mark Sherman

- Money was donated \$500 to Salvation Army, Heartbeat for Hardin County, Full Gospel Food Bank, & Angels for Elderly.

9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall

- Discussed Pastor Randall's sabbatical

Old Business

- NCD Survey – 30 people chosen with backups
- Church Survey: will be handed out at the General Meeting

**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, Cinda Shea

- Nominating Committee Update – Motion made and seconded to accept slate of Anna LaWarre & LeVern Weaver. Motion approved.
- Budget for next year Jerry still needs to get meet with Kay. 7% for cost of living for Michele, Kathy, and Denny. Motion made and seconded— Motion carried.
- New Committee Members named after the annual meeting
- All Committees: reports due for annual meeting
- Submit Annual Meeting agenda items
- Safety of Church/Alice Program – tabled  
Church cameras
- Church inventory – Heather Erwin working on

#### New Business

- Paid staff—  
Christmas gift cards

#### Correspondence:

- United Way  
Thank you for use of building for the Radio Auction
- Salvation Army – Red Kettle Campaign

Next Meeting:  
January 13, 2022  
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 Foundation for Suicide Prevention

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From 1999 to 2016,  
**630,000**  
people died from drug overdose.  
– Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Nearly  
**1 IN 5**  
U.S. adults lives with a Mental illness.  
– National Institute of Mental Health via the National Survey on Drug Use and Health 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.

**MHFA Training**  
Saturday, March 26th &  
Sunday, March 27th  
12:00PM – 4:00PM  
St. John's Evangelical Church  
211 E. Carrol St.  
Kenton, Ohio

To register - email Donna at [ddickman@passaah.org](mailto:ddickman@passaah.org)

Last day to register: February 15th

#### Who Should Take it

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

#### 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.” – **Nikki Carber**, Speak Out Against Suicide