

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

May 2023

211 E. Carrol Street
Kenton, OH 43326
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Graduation Sunday & Scholarship Presentations

On May 21, we will recognize any graduating members during the morning worship service. Please contact the church office with the information. The scholarship committee will also recognize the students selected to receive the Carl Lotz Scholarships this year.



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

211 East Carol Street
Kenton, OH 43326

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

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MAY 2023

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

I often wonder what the disciples were doing between the Day of Christ's Resurrection and Pentecost. From the snippets of their lives that we see in scripture, we know they waffled a bit. After the Resurrection, some of them went back to work fishing. They figured it was over, so why continue following a dream. In acts, with the disciples on the Emmaus Road, we see they were struggling to reconcile the Old Testament, Jesus' teachings, and their current circumstances. Even after seeing the risen Jesus, they struggled to fully comprehend the impact of it all.

We'll discuss this some more in the sermon May 14th, but I want you to wrestle with this too. What were the disciples doing during the period between Jesus' Ascension (**Acts 1:11-12**) and Pentecost (**Acts 2:1-2**) (a period of 10 days)? We know from scripture they were in Jerusalem as instructed in an Upper Room. However, what were they doing?

I believe they were rehearsing all they had heard during Jesus' ministry, then the events of His last days, His Crucifixion, His Resurrection, and His Ascension. Then, I believe they came to a very real and genuine place. They recognized how, compared to God's holiness, they fell far short and were unrighteous in and of themselves. They were not ready to lead the Church. They were sinners. No longer were they pointing at how they were greater than the next guy as they did with Jesus in that Upper Room.

They were confessing and repenting. They were doing this to themselves. They were doing this to one another. They realized they were not worthy of God's grace, but they also recognized their calling from God. They were opening their hearts for Pentecost—they were preparing themselves to receive the Holy Spirit. They were humble AND faithful!!!

As I often point out, when I prepare the preaching calen-

dar, I often believe God is leading in a certain direction, but when the time comes to actually preach those sermons, He is leading us in a new direction. Sometimes, it is something God lays on my heart. Sometimes, our circumstances have changed. Sometimes, the Holy Spirit intervenes and says, "This is the Word for God's people here and now!!!"

When God first laid these passages and outlines on my heart, I had no idea that I would be battling cancer and facing my mortality. I never thought that this year could be the year when I cease to be your pastor or simply cease to be upon this earth. Then, the diagnosis came, and my world has been upside down ever since.



Now, when I preach about you, the members of St. John's Evangelical Church, maturing in your faith, it's not simply about taking a step forward in faith as I had envisioned months ago. Then, I was thinking I can see the church maturing and ripening and 2023 would be a good year to focus on bearing fruit for God's kingdom. I could see the church praying together and growing in faith as you disciplined one another one-on-one and in small groups. I could see renewed interest in ministry and service in our community. I even envisioned evangelism in the streets of Kenton where members of our church went into the community, shared the Gospel, and

brought people into a meaningful relationship with Christ and active membership in our church. Then, I saw the church growing spiritually AND numerically and repeating the process again and again.

Of course, in all that, I saw myself at the helm of the ship and guiding the course of the congregation. Now, that may not be my mission and ministry. Now, the vision of 2023 being a step in the right direction may need to be a necessity for the future viability of our congregation. Instead of being at the helm, I may have to watch all this develop at a distance. Now, we all need to trust in the Holy Spirit, be led by the Holy Spirit, and have absolute faith in Christ.

The story of the disciples in the Upper Room between the Ascension and the day of Pentecost is our story. Now is the time for each and every one of us to discern what God is doing in our lives here. We need to wrestle with God's calling upon our lives and our commitment to living that out. We need to look at our lives and see where we have fallen short. We need to

confess and repent—to ourselves and to one another. And then, we need to commit to open our hearts to our heavenly Father and remain in a position of openness.

One day soon, God is going to pour out His Holy Spirit upon His people here. When that day comes, we need to receive, and we need to rise up like the disciples and proclaim the Good News. We need to go into the streets of this town and minister. We need to transform lives. We need to impact one another, and we need to impact our community. We need to realize that we CAN do all these things in the name of Jesus Christ. We are capable. You are capable—with me or without me.

I pray that our impending separation will be short and temporary. I pray that I will return soon. Whether I return or not is irrelevant to the work that God desires to do in this place through His people—YOU, YOU, YOU—in the

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

this place. Just as 2,000 years ago, God's desire is that His people—all His people—rise up and minister in His name as a priesthood of all believers.



You know the Good News. You are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. You know the love of the Father. The Holy Spirit dwells in you. Now is the time to allow the gifts of God to grow and flourish in you so they overflow as a blessing to one another in this church and into this community and into the world.

Twelve Disciples did that 2,000 years ago, and they changed the world. Imagine what a few of you can do to enhance the trajectory of St. John's Evangelical Church, Kenton, and beyond!!! I have a vision of it. I hope you see it too. Even more, I hope we give ourselves to God's vision of the future. Whatever we imagine it to be, His is more glorious than ours ever could be!

With Christ's eternal love,

Pastor Randall

Preaching Series

May brings my last month of service and preaching before my surgery. Hopefully, prayerfully, my hiatus will be temporary. Whatever may come, I have faith that you will be quite all right. God is watching over you, and He will provide the leaders you need to guide you until I return. God has guided this church through tumultuous times before, and He is with us in this season. Still, I believe in you, and that is what these sermons are about—you have within you the spiritual gifts and abilities that are needed for this season and beyond. You have to have faith, and you have to be willing to apply it. You can do it. I know it. God knows it too. Now is the time to live out that faith to God's glory, to build up the church, and to preach the Good News to one another and to our community, and to this world!!

I encourage you to go back and review the sermons in April after Easter. Together with our sermons in May, there is an outline of a shared life together as church members. Being in the church is about more than worshiping together on Sunday morning or giving to a few ministries. Being in a church together is about sharing our whole lives together—the good and the bad—and reminding one another of the grace lavished on us by Jesus Christ.

As your pastor, I want you to have the joy of that wisdom and knowledge. I want you to share your lives together with intimacy, with grace, and with forgiveness. I want you to accept people in their brokenness and sinfulness. I want you to reconcile with one another. I want you proclaim forgiveness to one another. Most of all, I want you minister with grace and power to one another in this church and to the world around us!!!

07 May

Scripture **Proverbs 10:8-14**
Luke 15:11-32
Message **The Brother's Lie**

14 May

Scripture **Colossians 3:12-17**
Emphasis v 16
Luke 18:9-14
Message **Call me Plankeye**

21 May

Scripture **Esther 9:20-22**
Luke 14:12-24
Message **Come to the Banquet**



**All of them were
filled with
the Holy Spirit!**
Acts 2.4

28 May

Scripture **Ephesians 4**
Message **Live By the Spirit**

Pentecost

04 June

Scripture **Acts 1:12-26**
John 21:20-25
Message **The End Is Never The End**

Upcoming Events



Blanchard Place Nursing Home Ministry (First Tuesday)

Our nursing home ministry at Blanchard Place is May 2 at 1 pm. We visit Blanchard Place the first Tuesday of the month to provide a time of song, scriptures, reflections, and prayers. If you would like to participate, please contact the office. You can lead parts of the worship service, visit the residents, or come to be supportive of this outreach.

We would like to thank our church family and community for all of your love, support, and prayers through this difficult journey that we must travel. This has been such an emotional and humbling experience to embark upon. We appreciate all of you! We could not do this without you! Thank you to all who continue to pray for Randall and our family, provide transportation, meals, cards, donations and/or gifts of any kind, and organizing and supporting the spaghetti fundraiser in any way. Your continued support is appreciated more than words can express. Thank you again for everything!
Love, Pastor Randall, Kathy, Gus & Angel



We would like to thank everyone who supported the Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser for Pastor Randall and his family. It was a huge success and while the Foresters' were thankful, the Women's Ministry of St. Johns' are also thankful for everyone's help and support. Thank you all! Blessings!
St. John's Evangelical Church Women's Ministry



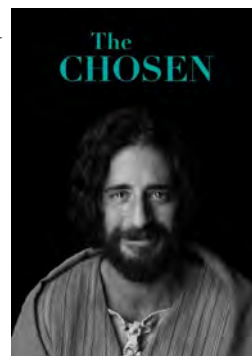
Operation Christmas Child

A decorated box is located in the skylight room to place any items for this year's OCC shoeboxes. See Toni Pfister with any questions.



The Chosen Bible Study

We are gaging interest in starting a Bible Study in the fall on The Chosen Series. We have received permission to view the episodes at church. There are study guides available on Angel Studio's website on each season. We are looking at Saturday mornings from 8:30-10. It takes approx. an hour to watch an episode and 30 minutes for discussion. If you would be interested in this Bible Study, please contact Anna LaWarre or the church office.



Summer Preaching

Feel free to submit topics, themes, or scriptures for summer sermons. Also, you may submit songs or hymns or other elements of worship (like a call to worship or prayer of confession) that you may like to see as part of the worship life of the church. You may contact the pastor or the church office by phone or email, or you may put your suggestions in the offering plate during the worship services. With the pastors return and recovering dictating events, these items may or may not be used in worship. Still, Pastor Randall would like to begin the process as he continues to reflect on worship and his service here to St. John's Evangelical Church.

Please join us for the First Annual Blessing of Bikes hosted by St. John's Evangelical Church and God's Thunder.



May 21, 2023

211 E. Carrol St., Kenton, OH

11:30 - Coffee and Donuts served

12:00 - Blessing of the Bikes

Open invitation to all to attend worship service beginning at 10am.

Sponsored by:

*St. John's Evangelical Church
and Christian Motorcycle
Association, God's Thunder*



Friday With Friends

Friday With Friends is a wonderful group of widows and widowers who meet twice a month for a special time of food, fellowship, and fun. They meet the first and third Fridays of every month. Please join them if you are a widow or widower. 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.

May 5—Casa Fiesta (Findlay)

May 19—Skinny's (Kenton)

June 2—Cranberry's (Indian Lake)

June 16—LaPizzaria (Indian Lake)

July 7—Luke's (Bluffton)

Church Office Hours

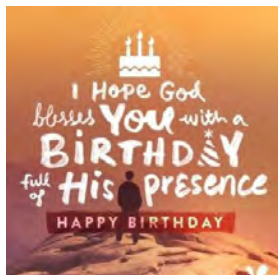
The office hours are Monday – Friday, 8:30 – 10:30 AM & 12:30-2:30 PM. If Simon Kenton has a delay those will change as I need to report at 8:30 am. If you are not sure, please call first. Thank you!

Birthday Blessings (over 80 yrs. Young)

May Birthdays on File:

May 13 Dick Jones
 128 Oak Lane
 Kenton, OH 43326

May 14 Dorothy Ziegler
 16316 SR 309 E
 Kenton, OH 43326



Mission of the Month—

Bryan & Katie Crabtree—Thailand

Bryan and Katie, both of Northwest Ohio, each came to personally know Jesus Christ as savior in their teen years. Bryan previously attended St. John's and helped with the youth group. After they met, Katie joined Bryan in attending St. John's where they would eventually marry before moving to their first home in Bellefontaine. Now they are missionaries in Thailand.

The Lord has laid it on their hearts to share this hope that they've found with those that have yet to hear. In Thailand, Katie teaches a Christian curriculum to her first grade students who primarily come from Buddhist families. Bryan is laying the groundwork needed to see a church planted in this unreached area. Both are engaged in learning the Thai language to connect with more and more people. The Crabtrees have 2 beautiful, lively daughters- Elli & Ava (with another child on the way).

LifeWise Academy Update

The first is that we now have a LifeWise website! - Lifewise.org/kentonoh On that page you can register your child for Lifewise, sign up to volunteer or donate. We are still adding to it but are thrilled to have the page up already. We also have a Facebook page- <https://www.facebook.com/LifeWiseKentonOH>

The second item is that we have hired our first teacher, Melissa Weaver! We are looking for 3 more teachers. Currently, we have received inquiries from 7 interested people and are awaiting applications. Please pray for us as we seek to find these teachers.

The third item is that we have been notified that we definitely will be able to purchase a bus directly from LifeWise! We should receive it in late May or early June. This will help with cost and we know the bus will have been maintained.

We will be starting our capital fundraising campaign soon. Starting this week I will be traveling to churches to present LifeWise as well as explaining our needs for personnel and finances in establishing our first-year program.

Here are our needs as of today:

1. Prayer team- If you are interested in being on our prayer team, please email me.
2. Teachers- we need 3 more.
3. Volunteers- We need 20 people.

Thank you for your support and prayers! It is fantastic to see how God is working as we prepare to share His word with the children of Kenton.

In Him,
Bjorn Thomsen, Program Director
567.674.0493

lifewiseacademy.org

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





Hey moms, step-moms, grandmas, sisters, and mom-figures. Happy Mother's Day! Thank you for the way you love, influence, and mother the kids and teenagers in your

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

May 7th- Hardin County Collective Senior Night 4-6pm @Boy Scout Lake

May 10th- Last night before Summer Break for Wednesday Night Kids/Youth.

May 17th- Wednesday Night Volunteers, Thank You Dinner 6pm in Fellowship Hall.

Wednesday Night- This month we are finishing our series about Easter and Jesus' triumph over death! We have been trying new things here and there and a lot of great ideas have arisen. I want Wednesday to not feel like school, as they have sat in school all day.... Do not get me wrong, I still want them all to have a Bible lesson and learn. But they all need to feel God presence and love through each of our volunteers on Wednesday night. This Church is their safe place, a place to feel welcomed, loved and wanted.

Youth Group- Heather and Anna have been doing an amazing job with this group of Youth. They have been doing lessons from a book called "The 13 most important Bible lessons for teenagers". They have learned about the Holy Spirit as part of the Trinity and identified several of the Holy Spirits functions. In the weeks to come they will be recognizing that the Holy Spirit is for all Christians and discuss how the Holy Spirit's power is perfect and complete.

Hardin County Collective- Last month we met here at St. Johns for the Easter Escape Room. The Youth were put into groups and working together through the Bible puzzles to make it out first. They enjoyed pizza for dinner and ended the night with a devotion from Nathan Ruhlen from Walnut Grove.

Sunday School- We will have class after the Children's message on May 7th & 28th.

Vacation Bible School- We have started planning for VBS... we are looking at August. If you or anyone you know would like to be a part of this group, please reach out. 😊

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13

PEANUTS ARE BACK!!! Texas Roadhouse Peanut Fundraiser: Hardin County Collective Youth are selling Texas Roadhouse Peanuts again. \$5/bag plus a coupon for a free appetizer (with purchase of meal). The proceeds will help with the cost of food each month and activities which include, bowling, movies, swimming, camp etc. Please contact Michele to purchase them.





Pastor Randall's favorite scripture is in the end times discourse in Matthew 25: Verse 40 "And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me.'" As a church, St. John's has been so blessed by God over the 184 years of its existence. Looking back at our records of giving gives us a challenge to meet going forward. It all started with our theological father Martin Luther. Martin Luther's Top Ten Quotes about Ministry among People in Poverty:

10 *"According to this passage [Matthew 25:41-46] we are bound to each other in such a way that no one may forsake the other in his distress but is obliged to assist and help him as he himself would like to be helped."*

-Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague (1527)

9 *"Christians are to be taught that the one who sees a needy person and passes by, yet gives money for indulgences, does not buy papal indulgences but God's wrath."* -Ninety-five Theses (1517), #45

8 *"Let us also be generous [as Abraham was], and let us open the door to poor brethren and receive them with a joyful countenance. If we are deceived now and then, well and good. In spite of this our good will is demonstrated to God, and the kind act...is not lost on Christ, in whose name we are generous. Hence just as we should not intentionally and knowingly support the idleness of slothful people, so, when we have been deceived, we should not give up this eagerness to do good to others."* -Lecture on Genesis, Chapter 18

7 *"Therefore, we should be guided in all our works by this one thought alone – that we may serve and benefit others in everything that is done, having nothing before our eyes except the need and advantage of the neighbor."*

-Freedom of a Christian (1520)

6 *"But in times past, [Holy Communion] was so properly used, and the people were taught to understand this fellowship so well, that they even gathered food and material goods in the church, and there – as St. Paul writes in I Corinthians 11 – distributed among those in need."* -The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods (1519)

5 *"For this reason, true theology and recognition of God are in the crucified Christ...God can be found only in suffering and the cross."*

-Heidelberg Disputation (1518)

4 *"Now there is no greater service of God than Christian love which helps and serves the needy, as Christ himself will judge and testify at the last day, Matthew 25."* -Ordinance of a Common Chest, Preface (1523)

3 *"The rule ought to be, not 'I may sell my wares as dear as I can or will,' but, 'I may sell my wares as dear as I ought, or as is right and fair.' Because your selling is an act performed toward your neighbor, it should rather be so governed by law and conscience that you do it without harm and injury to him, your concern being directed more toward doing him no injury than toward gaining profit for yourself."* -Trade and Usury (1524)

2 *"We do not serve others with an eye toward making them obligated to us. Nor do we distinguish between friends and enemies or anticipate their thankfulness or ingratitude."* -Freedom of a Christian (1520)

1 *"If your enemy needs you and you do not help him when you can it is the same as if you had stolen what belonged to him, for you owe him your help. St. Ambrose says, 'Feed the hungry: if you do not feed him, then as far as you are concerned, you have killed him.'"*

-Treatise on Good Works (1520), reflecting on the seventh commandment

Let's never lose the passion we have for serving the "least of these" as we go forward in serving our Lord and Savior.

Jerry Pfister, Historian

St. John's Evangelical Church
Church Council Minutes
Thursday, March 9, 2023
6:00 PM

Call to Order - Anna LaWarre, President
Opening Prayer— Pastor Randall
Leadership Development - Pastor Randall
Officer Reports
Secretary's Report - Feb. 9, 2023 were approved

REPORTS

- 1) Treasurer's Report—Kay Rush
 - Money from Klingler fund was transferred into a 2 month CD
 - Looking into fixed interest rate investment
- 2) Christian Education—Michele Sherman—written report submitted including upcoming events
- 3) Women's Ministry—Kay Rush
 - Lamb Banquet—March 4— went well; Hosted funeral & meal for the family of Wayne Vaugh
- 4) Worship, Arts & Music—LeVern Weaver—No report
- 5) Personnel Committee—Hal Elsasser
- 6) Pastoral Relations - Anna LaWarre
- 7) Trustees
 1. Audio Visual—Jerry Pfister—Sound system needs reviewed—last replaced 13 yrs. ago
 2. Van—LeVern Weaver—changed oil
 3. Farm—Greg Martin
 - Church name signs need changed in parking lot
 - Vehicles in lots will be notified to move before special events etc.
 - Painting project being done by C&Y Painting
- 8) Missions, Evangelism - suggested to reduce missions from 12 to 4
- 9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall

Old Business—members to help assist Pastor Randall with worship service

New Business

- Purchase of drum panel was approved
- Kathy will be on a school trip April 3-6, office staffed with volunteers
- Spaghetti Benefit Dinner for Pastor Randall—March 26—successful

Adjournment – Motion and seconded to adjourn, Council Vote, motion carried. Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting: April 13 at 6 pm



Celebrate Recovery Meal Sign Up

St. John's supplies a meal for Celebrate Recovery twice a month. The meals is 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.