

*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

March 2024

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

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday (March 24): 10 am Morning worship
Community Palm Sunday Service w/ KHS Chorale (March 24): 7 pm
Maundy Thursday Service (March 28): 7 pm
Good Friday (March 29): Replaying of the Passion Play Online
Sonrise Service (March 31): 7 am Informal service at Boy Scout Lake
Small pavilion- May want to bring lawn chairs.
Easter Festival Service (March 31): 10 am Traditional Easter Service

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

211 East Carol Street
Kenton, OH 43326

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

Phone: 419-673-7278 (o)

Phone: 724-290-3651 (c)

MARCH 2024

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

E-mail: PastorRandall@stjohnskenton.org

Last year, our Lenten journey focused on Christ and His Church. The theme was:

Lent: Who is this Jesus?

What Church do you want?

What Church do you need?

I never planned for those questions to take root in such a powerful way in the spiritual lives of our congregation. Those questions popped up in sermons throughout the rest of the year. People expressed to me that they found themselves asking those questions as they read their devotions, prayed, and read through the Bible.

During Holy Week, we gathered in the Fellowship Hall for dinner on Maundy Thursday before commemorating the Institution of the Lord's Supper. Simple things took on even more profound meanings. A remembrance of God's deliverance (the Exodus) in the past had a very present fulfillment in Jesus' Death upon the Cross. Now and forever, that sacrifice has ongoing and lasting impacts on the lives of those who believe in Him.

And here we are in the midst of Lent again. It is a time to examine ourselves and our spiritual walk with God. It is a time to measure ourselves against the plumb line of God (**Amos 7:7-9**).

I am often surprised at how so many people in the faith and outside of it think of Christianity as what adherents cannot do. They fixate on rules, lists of sins, or the borders God places on His followers' lives. They hear the Ten Commandments read, and all they can hear is, "Thou shalt NOT..."

In doing so, people fail to hear what God is calling us to say, "Yes!" to. After all, in the scriptural passage where Jesus revealed Himself as the Great Shepherd, He proclaimed, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (**John 10:10b**). God's desire—

the Father's heart—has always been to bless and love (study the Hebrew word *hesed*) His people and to give them shalom—overwhelming and overflowing peace and abundance.

The Holy Spirit inspired people to write the Holy Word of God not as a fence to enclose and imprison us from the outside world, but as the plumb line by which we could build flourishing and thriving lives.

Left to our own devices, we would be like children attempting to build a clubhouse with found scraps, no tools, and no understanding of building methods. The outcome would be laughable, ramshackle, and potentially dangerous.

With God's plan and provision, we are able to build something where we and others can gather together to receive shelter in the storm, to fellowship together, and to grow in faith. We are to build spiritually in a way that lasts. In **I Corinthians 3:10-15**, you can see how our works will be revealed as to whether we have built to have a lasting impact or not.

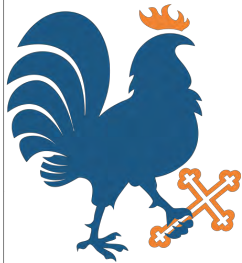
To truly have a lasting impact, we need to know more than what not to do. We need to take time to read and learn about how to build good and fruitful lives. More than that, we need to look at the Master Builder and emulate His work by building a life as He did (see **Hebrews 12:2**; **Psalms 127:1-2**).

This Lent, please join me and ask...



Am I/Are you:
Walking...TOWARD God
Walking...AWAY from God
Walking...BACK to God
Walking...WITH God
Walking...BEHIND God
Walking...AHEAD of God
Walking...BESIDE God
Walking...AGAINST God
Bowing...BEFORE God and God alone?

While this Lenten question may not enter into our sermons as last year's did, I want us build on the lessons from last year. While we may not have a Maundy Thursday service where we gather for a meal before Holy Communion, I want you to seek for ways that you can share your life with others—those in your current social circle, those in this church, and those in this world that the beatitudes in **Luke 6:17-26** and the following passage on loving our enemies—verses **27-36**—call us to love. (After all, those scriptures in **Luke** will be the focal point for the Lenten sermons.)



This Lent, I want you to think about how God can use your life for His glory. What ordinary things can be transformed by His redeeming love? How can you use your time and talents to bless other people? It could be as simple as sharing a meal with someone else,

teaching someone how to sew a button, change their oil, or repair a cabinet door. It could be taking the time to hold someone's hand and pray with them.

Since my cancer diagnosis 07 February 2023, I have ruminated often on the scriptural passage concerning the foolishness of the Cross. I commend that passage to you this Lent—perhaps a good one for our prayer time at the altar on Good Friday. It can be found in **I Corinthians 1:18-31**.

This past year caused me to lay aside a lot of things, so I could run the race God has appointed for me (**Hebrews 12:1**). Even my lack of strength and stamina have become gifts to me. I have learned what it means in **I Corinthians 1:25b** when it says, "the weakness of God is stronger than men." As I have become more vulnerable, I have become more approachable to people in the community.

One day, as I was having breakfast at the Midway, a woman tapped me on the shoulder. She began to tell me about her cancer diagnosis and the treatments that were set before her. She told me about previous bouts with this disease. She asked me to pray for her. I was feeling tired and unwell. I was ready to say, "I will pray with you," when the Holy Spirit stopped me, and reminded me what a dear friend and mentor taught me, "Why do we say, I *will* pray for you when we have the opportunity to pray **RIGHT NOW?**"

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH:

MAKING AND MATURING
DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

I stood up a little unsteadily, embraced her, and told her I was going to pray for her. After I prayed, I held her a little closer, whispered, "God bless you," in her ear, and gave her a tender, fatherly kiss on the top of her head. Nobody really noticed amidst the busyness and clamor, but for the two of us, that was a sacred space. I did not have to don my priestly garb, have scripture tumble from my lips, or have sacred music blaring through organ pipes or guitar strings.

God shows up in surprising places if we let Him, if we walk with Him, and if we are trying to enact His Will with our lives. As you journey with God this Lent, seek for ways that you can crow about His presence to others. More than just being the Rooster Church of Kenton, we need to be a people who proclaim His presence in our midst on a daily basis.

Also, as you walk with the Lord this year, I want you to think about how we can invite people into deeper worship with the Lord. It may be by incorporating common things (like a meal) into our worship time as we did last Maundy Thursday. It could be about taking sacred things like our prayers and anointing tears into the world as I did for that woman in Midway.

Wherever we go and whatever we do, may it be because we are walking with God and following in His Way (see **John 14:6**). May this Lent draw us closer to Christ as the Holy Spirit fills us more and more, and may we bring glory to the Father as we share His blessings with those around us in this world.

A fellow pilgrim on the way,

Pastor Randall

Preaching Series

This Lent, please join me and ask...

Am I/Are you:

Walking...TOWARD God
 Walking...AWAY from God
 Walking...BACK to God
 Walking...WITH God
 Walking...BEHIND God
 Walking...AHEAD of God
 Walking...BESIDE God
 Walking...AGAINST God
 Bowing...BEFORE God and God?

Throughout Lent, we will be focusing on **Luke 6:17-36**. I want you to ask yourself, "How can I enact Jesus' teaching in my life?" As you answer that, please be a part of doing that work in our church as well through our congregation's current ministries and, perhaps, those God is calling us to build as we minister to people in our community and world.



03 March
 Scripture **Joel 2:12-17**
 (See **Proverbs 14:13**)
Luke 6:17-26
 (See **James 4:9**)
 Sermon **Blessed are those who Weep**

10 March
 Scripture **Isaiah 37:21-32**
 (See **II Chronicles 36:15-16**;
I Samuel 17:10 (Goliath))
Luke 6:17-26
 (See **Hebrews 11:26**;
I Peter 4:14)
 Sermon **Blessed are the Excluded**

17 March
 Scripture **Jeremiah 5:25-31**
 (See **Micah 2:11**; **Amos 2:12**;
Isaiah 30:10; **Ezekiel 13:6**)
Luke 6:24-36
 (See **Hebrews 11:26**;
I Peter 4:14)
 Sermon **Woe, Woe, Whoa (Repent)**

24 March Palm Sunday
 Scripture **Isaiah 40:4-9**
Mark 11:1-11
 Sermon **Hosanna in the Highest!**

28 March Maundy Thursday 7PM
 Scripture **116th Psalm** verses **12-19**
Exodus 12:11-14
Mark 14:12-21
 Sermon **The Son of Man Goes**

29 March Good Friday
 —no worship service
 Theme: **The Foolishness of the Cross**
 Scripture: **I Corinthians 1:18-31**
 Noon-1PM Prayer at the altar
 6-7PM Prayer at the altar
 Passion Play online

31 March Easter Sunday
 Sunrise service 7AM, Boy Scout Lake
 Scripture **Proverbs 8:1-8**
John 20:1-18
 Sermon **Wisdom Calls, Christ Calls**
 Festival Service 10AM
 Scripture **Isaiah 25:6-9**
Mark 16:1-13
 Sermon **Trembling and Astonishment**

07 April
 Scripture **Amos 8:9-12**
Luke 21:25-28
Matthew 24:29-31
 Sermon **Open our Eyes**

08 April—total solar eclipse occurs over Kenton around 2PM.

HOLY



WEEK

Holy Week Notes

This year, our Holy Week journey will be a bit more traditional. On Palm Sunday, we will distribute Palms. We will also host the Community Palm Sunday Service featuring the KHS Chorale at 7 PM. On Maundy Thursday, there will be a service with **Communion** in the sanctuary at 7PM. On Good Friday, there will be two opportunities for people to gather at the altar for prayer—from noon-1PM and 6-7PM. On Easter Sunday, sunrise service will be under the small pavilion at Boy Scout Lake at 7AM with our festival service at 10AM. If there is a desire to have an Easter Egg hunt or other activities between the services or at some other time, please feel free to contact me or to volunteer to help and lead such events through one of these committees: WAM (Worship Arts and Music), the Missions and Evangelism, or Christian Education. The Council and I want to see

many activities from our past resume, and we, along with many others in our church, want to build up our church with the love of Christ and reach out to our community with that same love. To do so, it will take the faithful commitment of us all to demonstrate that love. I am thankful for what we have to offer this year and look forward to building on that foundation. Please help if you can. As always, be supportive with your prayers and presence at the Holy Spirit enables you, prompts you, and guides you as you complete your Lenten journey.

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



May 19, 2024

211 E. Carrol St., Kenton, OH

11:30 - Coffee and Cookies served

12:00 - Blessing of the Bikes

Open invitation to all to attend Worship

Service beginning at 10am.

Hosted by:

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



Upcoming Events



Blanchard Place Nursing Home Ministry (First Tuesday)

The First Tuesday visit to Blanchard Place is March 5 at 1 pm. If you would like to participate, please contact the office or Janet Jones. You can lead parts of the worship service, visit the residents, or come to be supportive of this outreach.



Easter Flower Sale

Easter flowers available: lily, daffodils, hyacinths, tulips, or pansy bowl for \$15 each. If interested please complete an order form and return with your payment no later than March 3. Any proceeds from the sale will go to the Good Samaritan's Fund. Any questions, please see Nancy Weaver or contact the church office



From KGB to Christ

On March 13th at 7:00 pm, Dr. Sasha Tsutserov, president of Moscow Evangelical Christian Seminary, will be coming to speak at Walnut Grove Methodist Church. Dr. Tsutserov was a KGB agent keeping surveillance on several Christian missionaries when he found himself compelled by their words and converted to Christianity. God put a goal on his heart to train as many pastors as the KGB killed during the Soviet years. He'll be discussing his work and how we can support vital ministry in Russia. All are welcome to attend.

Carl Lotz Scholarship Applications

The Scholarship 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/p3Zdp3zHfsJmaqB16>. Deadline to apply is April 30 (Must complete All 3 steps).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming Events- Mark Your Calendar

Community Palm Sunday Service w/

KHS Chorale: March 24 at 7 pm

Maundy Thursday Service: March 28 at 7 pm

Good Friday Prayer Time: Noon & 6 pm in the sanctuary

Easter Sunrise Service: March 31 at 7 am at Boy Scout Lake

Easter Festival Service: March 31 at 10 am

Bike Blessing: May 19 at 11 am

CEF Good News Club: June 17-21 from 1-2:30 pm

Rock the Lake: August 3

Back to School Bash & Rise FM Concert: August 17 from 4-8 pm at Wharton Park



Coffee Hour Update

Coffee Hour is offered as a time of fellowship in our lobby, and we hope you have time to greet one another before worship. If you take beverages into the sanctuary, please advise ushers of any spills. If spills are not cleaned up promptly, it creates stains on the carpet. Thank you for your understanding

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.

March 1—Eagles (Kenton)

March 15—Cracker Barrel (Findlay)

April 5—Jac & Dos Pizza (Kenton)

April 19—Longhorn (Roundhead)

May 3—Village Restaurant (Upper Sandusky)

May 17—Beer Barrel (Lima)

June 7—Kiyomi (Bellefontaine)

June 21—Cranberry (Indian Lake)

July 5—Acheson's (Indian Lake)

July 19—Tilton Hilton (Indian Lake)

August 2—BC Diner (Belle Center)

August 16—Casa Fiesta (Findlay)

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.



Birthday Blessings (over 80 yrs. Young)

March Birthdays on File:

March 4 Walter Baughman
7692 SR 53
Kenton 43326

March 9 Nancy Rickenbacher
20551 SR 67 E
Kenton 43326

March 31 Ethel Koch
522 N. Wayne St.
Kenton, OH 43326

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!

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 25-30 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.

website: stjohnskenton.org

Facebook: St Johns Kenton, Ohio

Youtube: St. John's Evangelical Church





It seems that March this year is a political free-for-all here in Hardin County. No matter your affiliation or independence it is almost impossible to avoid being hounded for donations or bombarded with commentary. Our mail boxes are filled with negative attack ads and sometimes dubious claims about an opponent's bona fides. At times it is difficult to realize, but Christianity was the bedrock of our

Nation and way of life.

"Almost all the civil liberty now enjoyed in the world owes its origin to the principles of the Christian religion. Men began to understand their natural rights, as soon as the reformation from popery began to dawn in the sixteenth century; and civil liberty has been gradually advancing and improving, as genuine Christianity has prevailed. By the principles of the Christian religion, we are not to understand the decisions of ecclesiastical councils...No; the religion which has introduced civil liberty, is the religion of Christ and his apostles, which enjoins humility, piety and benevolence; which acknowledges in every person a brother, or a sister, and a citizen with equal rights. This is genuine Christianity, and to this we owe our free constitutions of government. " *Noah Webster*

"Among the thousands of documents and events that demonstrate America's Christian origin are the sixteen spiritual proclamations issued by Congress during the American Revolution. Following the pattern of fasting, praying, and offering of thanksgiving to God that was in use in the New England Colonies, Congress asked the American states to fast and pray in the spring and offer prayer and thanksgiving in the fall of the year. States were asked to invite their citizens to cease their labors and observe the day as proscribed by Congress. The first of the sixteen spiritual proclamations was issued in late spring on June 7, 1775 and was a fasting and prayer proclamation. The sixteenth and last spiritual proclamation to be issued by Congress on August 3, 1784 was a thanksgiving proclamation. By far, the most spiritual proclamations to be issued by Congress in any single month was March. In all, six Prayer and Fasting proclamations were issued by Congress in the month of March from 1776 to 1782. *Credit to Christian Heritage Fellowship.*

I think we all can agree with Webster and look for his definition of Christian behaviors during the current political storms.

Jerry Pfister, Historian

Brothers and Sisters at St. John's Evangelical Church of Kenton, OH:

My wife Qian (Pronounced "Chen") and I want to express our gratitude for your warm welcome to us as your guests. You all were amazing hosts. Richard is an amazing vigorous tech guy (Richard we still want to get a picture with you!) Tom was a wonderful calm "mic guy" that suited us up well. Randall and Kathy were absolutely incredible to us in so many ways. Please let the kitchen team know that we enjoyed their meal. Not to mention the numerous people who treated all of us with great kindness. You all did an excellent job. Due to time constraints, we weren't able to share everything we had hoped to share. So if St. John's is ever interested in hearing more, we could set up another time to come back and visit should you like.

Anyone interested in hearing what we are doing is welcome to give us a call—my wife or myself would gladly talk to folks one-on-one. Currently we limit what we reveal on the internet and consequently have a low internet profile. We can be reached at 724-506-2754 or at ariandewayne@skiff.com. We would love to hear from St. John's if they have a particular vision that you are hoping God will fulfill so that we could join you in prayer for it.

Thank you for the opportunity,

Qian and Arian Dewayne Metzler

St. John's Evangelical Church
Church Council Minutes
Thursday, January 11, 2023
6:00 PM

Call to Order - Anna LaWarre, President
Opening Prayer— Pastor Randall
Leadership Development - Pastor Randall
Officer Reports

Secretary's Report - The December Secretary's report was approved as submitted.

REPORTS

1) Financial Report—Jerry Pfister/Kay Rush

- Jerry Pfister stated that we had a very good December and had positive cash flow for the month. He stated that although our envelope giving was down versus last year and plan, reductions in spending allowed us to come in below plan. Therefore, our loss in revenue to be made up by using farm income was \$16,282 less than planned.

Despite a downturn in market value during most of 2023, the markets rebounded sharply in November and December and our portfolio increased in value by over 10% versus last year. In viewing our investment portfolio, it should be noted that Endowment funds can be used only as specified by the donor. The Church may not use these funds for any other purposes.

2) Christian Education—No committee report

3) Women's Ministry—Kay Rush—No report due to illness

4) Worship, Arts & Music—LeVern Weaver

- Ash Wednesday services will be combined again this year with Payne Chapel. Pastor still awaiting details from Rev. Deborah. It was decided to hold a Maundy Thursday service, not have Good Friday service and a Sunrise service during the Easter season.

5) Personnel Committee—Hal Elsasser- nothing to report. Pastor indicated we have received no interest from our outreach for filling the Family Minister position. It seems to be a post covid situation where applicants for ministerial positions are in very short supply.

6) Pastoral Relations- Anna LaWarre—meeting in March

7) Trustees (LeVern Weaver, Greg Martin, Richard Katterjohn)

- AV Report Submitted-: Richard Katterjohn stated that there needs to be a review of charges for certain AV functions such as video for funerals. Now that his schedule is changing at the Times, he will recommend changes were needed
- Van: LeVern Weaver—no report
- Farm: Greg Martin met with Watkins regarding renewing farm lease . Jerry also talked about renewing hunting lease.
- **Other Trustee issues:** The handle on the attached storage area outside the church was broken in what was probably an attempt to break in. Greg has replaced this. Snow plowing will be done again by Temple this year and Greg will contact them to make sure it includes cleaning of the sidewalks. Due to the safety issues caused by freezing water, the North Entrance of the church will remain locked. The congregation will be notified to use the East or South entrances.

8) Missions, Evangelism -Anna stated that the calendar was in place for the 2024 events and it will be in the packet for the Congregational Meeting. Presentations for the individuals missions this year will be in advance of the month designated so everyone knows what they are donating for. This year the mitten tree at Christmas will be changed to benefit those serving in the armed forces. There has been a surplus of mittens and hats for children donated in the community for several years, so this change will be made without a negative impact to the children.

9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall report submitted

Old Business: Discussed in Pastor's report in detail.

New Business:

- Current identified candidates for the three openings are:
Hal Elsasser for 2nd term; Jerry Pfister for 2nd term; Janie Risen for 1st term
- Election of Officers will occur after the Congregational Meeting on the 28th of January.
- Installation of officers will occur at a service in February as well as recognizing those going off Council.
- Richard will get copies of the existing trifold letter introducing St. John's to prospective attendees.
- Anna will work on a "get involved with a committee" letter to go to the congregation.

Correspondence: We received a thank you letter from the Gideon's noting that our contribution equated to almost 400 scriptural handouts.

Next Meeting: February 8 at 6 pm

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