

*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

April 2024

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Kenton, OH 43326
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*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*



Second Annual Bike Blessing

On Sunday, May 19, St. John's and God's Thunder Christian Motorcycle Association, will host a bike blessing following the morning worship service. All are welcome to attend!

We will be serving cookies and coffee at 11:30 that day. If you can volunteer to make cookies, please sign up in the back of the sanctuary.

We would also like volunteers to pray with those in attendance. If you have any questions, please see Anna LaWarre.

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

211 East Carrol Street
Kenton, OH 43326

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

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APRIL 2024

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

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SEIZE THE DAY!!! Many people of a certain age were introduced to that phrase while watching the movie **Dead Poet's Society** when Robin Williams character taught his class about *carpe diem*. The reason we use the Latin in this case is due to the fact that the first use of that phrase—that we know of—was by the Roman poet Horace. Since then, many poets have utilized the thought. In English, poets have put their distinctive stamp on the *carpe diem* motif, exhorting us to seize the day, to make the most of life, to 'gather ye rosebuds while ye may', in Robert Herrick's well-known phrase, or to 'Stop and consider! Life is but a day', as Keats has it in 'Sleep and Poetry.'

As for so many others, that phrase captured my attention in my youth. I felt like I had been sleepwalking through life. *Carpe diem* reminded me to wake up and do what I could with the days I had. It reminded me that life was short, and I may not have a tomorrow. Instead of procrastinating or waiting for a more perfect time, today was the day to live life to its fullest.

Carpe diem crept back into my life this past year when I was confronted with the reality that the number of my tomorrows could be quite limited. It was a humbling and harrowing time.

Hopefully, I have not depressed you too much by dwelling on that fact. My hope in sharing has always been to encourage you when you face life's challenges. When faced with tragedy and travail, our hope is to be found in God and God alone.

Even in my darkest moments, I found that my life was best lived in the light of God's love. I rediscovered my passion for preaching, teaching, and service to God in His Bride, the Church. I found joy in mundane acts. Simple little things became sacred acts when I thought about maybe doing them for the last time. Whether I was delving into deep theology or reading a comic strip to help me relax, I found that God could be in those details if I was doing it for

Him and the service of His people.

And that's the rub, we need to be living for Him and in Him and through Him. When our hearts and minds and souls are fully engaged with the Lord, we not only find our purpose, but we can simply be our true selves in the light of His love.

When facing your mortality, you can be driven inward in your thinking. Coming out on the other side can be a glorious relief. However, it can also come with great guilt. Even though I am still undergoing treatment, I have had to watch as others did not survive the past year. Many were younger and were just as 'worthy' of a healing as I was. Somehow, I survived and they did not. The prayers prayed for them were just as holy and pure as the ones lifted for me.

That's how I came to know *carpe diem*. In my teens and early 20s, more than a handful of my contemporaries died. They never had the opportunities to be at our high school graduation, go on to school, start a career, or form a family. As I experienced those things, I could not always enjoy those moments fully. I suffered from survivors guilt. This year, I still do—only a bit more acutely.

Last year, as I led this congregation to Holy Week and Easter, I shared that I could not celebrate the Resurrection until I walked out of the hospital after my surgery in June. Easter for me was going to be delayed, but in some ways it still is. However that is foolishness.

Our lives don't follow some cookie cutter blueprint like the houses in a planned community in suburbia. We have a plan and a purpose for our lives but it was one that was uniquely given to us by our heavenly Father. We need to receive it and accept it, and we need to live it out in the freedom of His love.

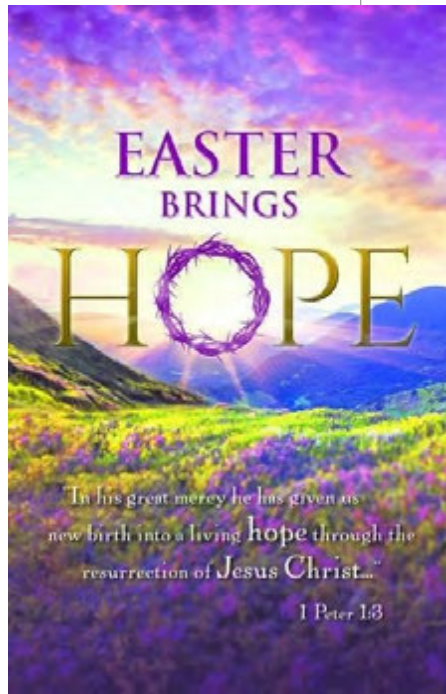


Jesus understood this. There were moments when He said that His time had not come. Then, in **John 17:1** in the Upper Room, He proclaimed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You." This is the beginning of Jesus' Priestly Prayer as He was about to go to the Cross. He knew His suffering would be immense, and He would feel pain and desolation in every fiber of His being. He knew He could only accomplish this work if He was obedient to His Father, and He was showing us how to live.

When our hour comes, we are not to shrink back, but we are to move forward knowing that we are propelled by God and His will for our lives. We need to seize the day when we can. As Jesus said in **John 9:4-5**, "As long as it is day, we must do the works of Him who sent Me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

And that is what the Easter season is all about. Easter Sunday this year was March 31st and Pentecost will arrive May 19th. In between those two dates is the season of Easter. It is a time to live in the light of the reality of the Resurrection. We remember how Christ suffered and died for us in our place on the Cross. Even more, we remember how He rose again from the grave and ascended into heaven. Most of all, we remember that we will one day rise with Him to be with Him eternally (**I Thessalonians 4:16-18**).

As with any great point, there is always a counterpoint. The same is true with the idea of *carpe diem*. Throughout history, it was enjoyed by many who were seeking pleasure and enjoyment. It came to be about engaging the present moment of today while neglecting the past and our need to live for the future. Robert Frost in his poem *Carpe Diem*



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

provides a wonderful counterpoint to seizing the day. (You can find the poem on page 4 of this newsletter.)

As Christians, we do need to seize the day—to hear Jesus' admonishing us to work while it is still day. Like Christ, that work is not about one's self. The work to which we are called in Christ is to be focused on others. For our church, our now this year is about working in the light to improve the lives of others in our community. We need a leader for our Wednesday Night Ministry—someone who wants to inspire our teachers, helpers, and kitchen staff. We need people who want to see people in recovery by meeting people from Celebrate Recovery and our Anonymous groups.

For all these people, we need to seize the day by walking alongside of them across the bridge of Christ as they travel from living in this world to living for the kingdom as they meet Him here in His Bride, the Church.

May you discover (or if like me, may you rediscover) the joy of seizing the day by living for Christ in serving Him and glorifying Him even in the mundane details. May it be a joy for you to teach the scriptures to a child or a new believer. May it be a joy to help someone to budget their finances, find a job, or shop for healthy food. May it be a joy to help someone parent their kids or to help a child to see their parent as a parent for the first time.

In our sacrifices of service, may we seize the day for the glory of God, the blessing of His children, and the fulfillment of working in the light of Christ.

Alleluia. Christ is risen! May we live basking in His light.

With Christ's eternal love,
Pastor Randall

Preaching Series

In April and May, we will be focusing on the Easter season and Pentecost. May we ask ourselves, “How shall I live in light of Christ’s Resurrection?” and “How shall I live as led by the Holy Spirit?”

He's Risen!

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.

14 April

Scripture **I John 3:1-7**
Luke 24:13-35

Testimony

Amazing Grace
Shane Harkenrider

Sermon **Grace to See**

21 April

Scripture **Acts 3:12-19**
Matthew 15:21-28

Sermon **Good Morning, Saints of St. John's!**

28 April

Scripture **Ephesians 2:11-22**
Luke 24:36-49

Sermon **Preaching Peace to You**

Te Te Te Tai
it is finished.

05 May

Scripture **Acts 1:6-11**
Luke 24:50-53

Sermon **Why Do You Stand Looking?**

12 May

Scripture **I Kings 19:9-18**
Acts 1:12-14

Sermon **The In-Between Times**

alleluia!
Christ has Risen!

19 May

Pentecost

Scripture **Joel 2:28-32**
Acts 2:22-41

Mission Moment **Blessing of the Bikes**
Chris Thomas
Christian Motorcycle Association

Sermon **Save Yourselves**



26 May

Scripture **Acts 16:25-34**
Acts 2:42-47

See also **John 16:22**

Sermon **The Great Outpouring**
Concerning revival in our days.

Carpe Diem
by Robert Frost

Age saw two quiet children
Go loving by at twilight,
He knew not whether homeward,
Or outward from the village,
Or (chimes were ringing) churchward,
He waited, (they were strangers)
Till they were out of hearing
To bid them both be happy.
"Be happy, happy, happy,
And seize the day of
pleasure."

The age-long theme is Age's.
'Twas Age imposed on poems
Their gather-roses burden
To warn against the danger
That overtaken lovers
From being overflowed
With happiness should have it.
And yet not know they have it.
But bid life seize the present?
It lives less in the present
Than in the future always,
And less in both together
Than in the past. The present
Is too much for the senses,
Too crowding, too confusing-



Summer Preaching

As has been my habit at times, I am asking you, the people invested in the life and ministry of St. John's Evangelical Church, to suggest scripture, topics, music, and themes for worship on Sunday mornings during the summer.

This can take whatever theme you may want. It could be a scripture that causes you to ask questions. You may have a theme that you may think is appropriate for us as a church to think about more deeply. It may be hymn or praise song that uplifts your soul.

I am a big believer in the Priesthood of All Believers (see **I Peter 2:5-9**), which itself could be a sermon topic or series. It brings joy to my heart when I see believers engaged in worship, its planning, and its outworking.

As I stepped back at times last year, I was impressed as people took a more active role in leading aspects of worship.

So please, feel free to ask questions, share observations, or offer to lead aspects of the service. As always our WAM (Worship Arts and Music) Committee can use your support and service in an ongoing basis.

Christ died on the Cross that we may be reconciled to God and one another. He rose that we might live a new life for Him. May we live together the unity to which He called us by sharing our gifts where we may—perhaps, it could be in planting a seed that becomes our sermon one Sunday this summer.



Upcoming Events



Blanchard Place Nursing Home Ministry (First Tuesday)

The First Tuesday visit to Blanchard Place is April 2 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.



Upcoming Events- Mark Your Calendar

Bike Blessing: May 19 at 11:30 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

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).

Confirmation

Any students that are in 7th grade or above who are interested in a confirmation class to join the church, please contact the church office or Pastor Randall. The class would probably start in the fall.

New Member Class

Interested in joining the church? Please contact Pastor Randall or the church office about a New Member Class. We will try to find a time that is convenient for all participants.

Volunteer Opportunities

Kids Activity Bags: We would like to provide kids activity bags again each week. If anyone would like to donate a prepackaged snack or items for the bag, that would be great.

Wednesday Night Organizer Needed: We are looking for someone who would be willing to organize the Wednesday night program for next year. This would include working with the Christian Ed Committee in selecting a curriculum/program and having it prepared for the teachers each week.

Seeking Bed Ministry Leader: We are looking for someone to take over the Bed Ministry along with others to be on a committee to assist. Please contact Anna LaWarre or the church office for more information.

Nursery Subs Needed: If you would be willing to help out in the nursery periodically when needed, please contact the church office.

Children's sermon: If you would like to be added to the Children's sermon list, please contact the church office.

LifeWise Kenton Seeking Donations for Bibles



We want each of our kids at LifeWise Kenton to take home a Bible at the end of the school year. We have 207 students enrolled. We received a donation for 75 Bibles and we are raising funds to purchase 132 more. Each Bible costs \$20. We will be purchasing the One Big Story Bible because this is the Bible that we use in the classroom that ties to our curriculum.

To donate: We have a fundraising link set up for the Bibles. Please use the link below to donate. [Link to Donate](#) or contact Julie Turner at 567-674-4657 or lifewise.org/kentonoh.



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.

- 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— SOUP

The "us" that is our fellow Hardin County citizens who have fallen on hard times and need meals to get them by. People will be served up a wonderful meal, overseen and prepared by a great team of volunteers. Please support S.O.U.P. as our special monthly mission for the month of April and help warm the hearts and tummies of the truly needy in the county. The group currently serves meals at First Christian Church in Kenton.



Birthday Blessings (over 80 yrs. Young)

April Birthdays on File:

- April 12 DiAnn Weaver
 c/o Blanchard Place
 825 Richard Lane Room 107
 Kenton, OH 43326
- April 15 Dana Musser
 363 N. Barron 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







In our faith, we are surrounded by many symbols and symbolic acts. For example the Christ Candle which enters our sanctuary to represent His presence at our worship. At the end of the service, the congregation **should be following** the Christ candle out of the sanctuary to signify our willingness to follow Christ in our daily lives. Are you leaving early?

Another interesting Christian symbol is the fish. Elesa Coffman writes in Christianity Today:

“The Greek word for fish is "ichthys." As early as the first century, Christians made an acrostic from this word: Iesus Christos Theou Yios Soter, i.e. Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. The fish has plenty of other theological overtones as well, for Christ fed the 5,000 with 2 fishes and 5 loaves (a meal recapitulated in Christian love-feasts) and called his disciples "fishers of men." Water baptism, practiced by immersion in the early church, created a parallel between fish and converts. Second-century theologian Tertullian put it this way: "we, little fishes, after the image of our Ichthys, Jesus Christ, are born in the water." Greeks, Romans, and many other pagans used the fish symbol before Christians. Hence the fish, unlike, say, the cross, attracted little suspicion, making it a perfect secret symbol for persecuted believers. When threatened by Romans in the first centuries after Christ, Christians used the fish mark meeting places and tombs, or to distinguish friends from foes. According to one ancient story, when a Christian met a stranger in the road, the Christian sometimes drew one arc of the simple fish outline in the dirt. If the stranger drew the other arc, both believers knew they were in good company. Current bumper-sticker and business-card uses of the fish hearken back to this practice. No symbol means the same thing to all people at all times. That early Christians succeeded in transforming an already powerful symbol proves their interpretive creativity, not their ignorance or a tendency to syncretism.”

I leave you with an ancient Christian Roman saying-“Pax vo biscum”

Jerry Pfister, Historian



St. John's Evangelical Church
Church Council Minutes
Thursday, February 8, 2024
6:00 PM

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

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

REPORTS

- 1) Financial Report—Jerry Pfister/Kay Rush
 - Prior Month's Financial Summary
 - Monthly Expenditure report
 - Balance Sheet
- 2) Christian Education—No committee report
 - CEF- Good News Club (VBS) – they are open the last 2 weeks in June
 - Pastor Randall discussed with Cheryl Lee and CEF to help put on our VBS this year and they agreed
- 3) Women's Ministry—Kay Rush
 - Upcoming events: Lamb Banquet – March; OSU Banquet – June; Social - July
- 4) Worship, Arts & Music—LeVern Weaver
 - Would like to have the Easter Flower proceeds go to the Good Samaritan's Fund
 - New leaf for flowers – Order due by March 3
 - Nancy – Chairperson - WAM meeting for music – Communion – Prayer services – Contemporary service - They will make a plan for upcoming services and will bring it to council to vote on.
- 5) Personnel Committee—Hal Elsasser- Janie will help with Personnel committee
- 6) Pastoral Relations- Anna LaWarre— Met Feb. 4 - It was a good meeting
- 7) Trustees (LeVern Weaver, Greg Martin, Richard Katterjohn)
 - AV Report Submitted- Uptick for live streaming watching about 10 people every week; avenue to watch – Facebook, Website, or YouTube
 - Van: LeVern Weaver—Running fine – added air pressure to the tires
 - Farm: Greg Martin—Rent has been finalized - \$185 increase
 - Safety/fire issues with the wood -We need to look into clearing the woods of dead brush as a preventative to fire
- 8) Missions, Evangelism -Feb 24 we are showing movie "Do you Believe" Popcorn, Drinks
 - Bike blessing in May; Rock the lake in AUGUST; Angel tree – Blue Star Mother
 - Hat tree – and or Items for care packages—Tree with hats on the tree and under the tree items for care packages.
- 9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall report submitted
 - Ash Wednesday – Payne Chapel
 - Who will lead next year?
 - Hardin Ministerial – Meeting in person again.
 - Need dates for VBS so we can get on the calendar with other churches
 - Hardin Memorial/Ohio Health Chaplin program -Pastor Randall was approached to be a chaplain at the local hospitals
 - Underground Church luncheon—Chili, Potato soup and grilled cheese

Old Business: February 18, 2024 – council installation; Preparations for Underground Church; Ash Wednesday

New Business: Communion distribution – Switch back to passing in the pews – Most people might prefer this option.

- Scholarship Committee– LeVern was added to the committee as council rep
- North door reminder – Locked and remained locked till further notice. Issues with the door
- Coffee Spills in Sanctuary: please let someone/ushers know so we can get it cleaned up right away.
- Cub Scouts: Council agreed to take possession of the items and store them in the barn for the current pack to use. The parking lot will be used as a fundraiser by the cub scouts during the eclipse - no public restrooms available

Correspondence: None

Next Meeting: March 14 at 6 pm

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