

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

**Do Not Delay
Dated Material**

JULY



St. John's Evangelical Church Newsletter

July 2022

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**Happy
4th of July**

Blessed
is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people he chose for his inheritance.
Psalm 33:12

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

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JULY 2022

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

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These days, our culture seems obsessed with freedom. There are debates about how much freedom is good, or whose freedom trumps whose. We see this in discussions about whether Elon Musk's proposed purchase of Twitter will make "America's town square" more free by opening the flow of thoughts and ideas to more people. We see it also in the debate about Roe v. Wade where one side promotes a woman's freedom 'to choose' and another promotes the unborn child's right to be born and to live freely in this land.

When we enter into debates about freedom, we often do so seeking our own freedom or freedom for those like us. Rarely, do we seek the greater good and the bigger picture as our nation once did. Even rarer, do we think about what freedom means for those who are called to live their life in Christ and for Christ.

**WHOEVER WALKS IN INTEGRITY
WALKS SECURELY,
BUT HE WHO MAKES HIS WAYS CROOKED
WILL BE FOUND OUT.**

Proverbs 10:9

bit.ly/sola_scriptura

In **John 8:36**, Jesus says, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." This isn't an absolute freedom to pursue your heart's desires. First, that would be a libertine fantasy that would lead to chaos as each person has conflicting desires and personal definitions of what freedom means for them and others. Secondly, and biblically, we hear the Holy Spirit speaking through the prophet in **Jeremiah 17:9**, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" Apart from God, our heart is corrupted. There are some who bring that corruption into the church to justify their behavior, to exclude others from the fellowship, or to divert others from focus-

ing on Christ and taking His message into the world, which is our Great Commission (the purpose for which we are to use our freedom—see **Matthew 28:18-20**).

*"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning
to breathe free,
The wretched
refuse of your
teeming shore.*

*Send these,
the homeless,
tempest-tossed
to me,
I lift my lamp beside
the golden door!"*

~ Emma Lazarus



As a nation, we should strive to live out those ideals etched into our conscience on the bronze plaque on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. People, in their natural state, know they have no freedom. Instead, they have people guising their lust for power as a pursuit of personal freedom at the expense of other people's freedoms. Our nation was built by those who fled such abuses and oppressions in their native lands. We as a nation welcomed those who yearned to breathe free. We believed that those deemed the "wretched refuse" could flourish if only they were granted freedom to grow and thrive. We as a nation proved that notion correct as we have thrived and grown in prominence and wealth due to the innovation of those cast off by their native lands. Those who pursue true freedom bless others with the fruit of their labor—those blessings are an amazing byproduct of breathing freely.

The Bible understands that notion. That is why Peter was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the ironic sounding verse **1 Peter 2:16**. There, Peter reminds all Christians to live freely, but to never use that freedom as an excuse to sin or to pursue evil. Rather, we are to live as God's slave. Ironically, those who live as God's slaves are the freest people on this earth because they

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

Live as free people,
but do not use your freedom
as a cover-up for evil;
live as God's slaves.

1 Peter 2:16



verses.net

know what it means to truly be set free in Christ.

Proverbs 10:9 is contained in the image on the previous page. There it talks about if you walk in integrity, you will walk securely. As Peter was saying, we curb our heart's appetite to walk in the way of the LORD. A person who walks in integrity is governed by God's Law, which puts us on a rigorous path. That path produces character. As someone once said, "Character is who you are when no one is watching." In Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, we know the true freedom of being the person God has called us to be. No longer are we slaves to sin or the heart's deceitful desires that pervert what is true and good.

This year, as our nation celebrates freedom on the Fourth of July, I want you pause and reflect upon the freedom of integrity that rests in Christ. When you understand what that freedom is, it is not a burden. Quite the opposite, this freedom calls us to lay down our pretense, our prejudice, our prided, and our sin. Then, and only then, can we live as a free people.

As a free people, we will share this freedom with others. We will export it to others as we proclaim the Gospel of Freedom in Christ. We will import the broken wretches

of our community into our church as we invite them to come and celebrate what it means to be free indeed in Christ. Such freedom will drive us to build up others in their faith. We will allow those who yearn to breathe free to do so. In the end, we will find that teaching and training others to live free indeed will end up blessing us and our church and our community for generations to come.

Living freely in Christ, we will discover the power of being *The New Colossus*. That is the name of the sonnet by Emma Lazarus written in 1883 that graces the base of the Statue of Liberty. The French were inspired to make this a collaboration with the Americans when they gifted our nation this statue. We as a nation would have the freedom to decide what should stand beneath this grand monument to freedom and liberty.

Those who decided ensured that all who looked on that monument should consider that liberty is for all. As such, it demands work, sacrifice, and stewarding in each generation. It would not come naturally, but it needed to be taught and emulated. It demanded that those who had freedom needed to walk it out with integrity and to maintain themselves on the narrow path of integrity.

May we continue to use our Christian freedom to do the same. May we sacrifice our freedom to teach others the Way in Christ. May we pour our blessings into those who are yearning to breathe free. May we break the shackles of sin, oppression, and the heart's deceitful of desires with the hammer of Christ's freedom.

May we live free in Christ. May we live free indeed!

In Christ's freeing name,

Pastor Randall

Preaching Series

I want to thank everyone who submitted ideas for sermons. They will provide the basis for the messages in July, August, and September (along with the last Sunday in June). In October, we will discuss

from the hearts of your brothers and sisters in this church. I see this as a way to celebrate how God is speaking through all His children. As such, our worship involves the whole family of God from planning to participation as we gather to grow in faith in our weekly worship.



JOIN US SUNDAY'S AT 10AM *summer worship*

some topics that are near and dear to my heart—the back page of my monthly pastor's report to Council, which hasn't changed much in a few years. Before you know it, we will be turning to our schedule of remembering the saints, stewardship, Christ the King Sunday, and Thanksgiving that concludes our liturgical year. Then, we will start the new liturgical year with Advent.

I also want to thank all who step into the pulpit to preach when I am away on vacation or study leave. I enjoy hearing their messages as I enjoy wrestling with texts and topics that come from the hearts of God's saints here at St. John's Evangelical Church.

I hope and pray that these messages bless you too as you hear Spirit-filled prompts

03 July

Scripture **115th Psalm**
Romans 14:13-23
Sermon **Let Freedom Ring**

10 July

Scripture **Jeremiah 29:10-14**
Romans 8:26-32
Sermon **Unheard Message**
Pastor Vacation—Tom Mauer, speaker

17 July

Scripture **Esther 4:10-17**
Matthew 6:25-34
Sermon **For Such a Time as This**
Bryan and Katie Crabtree, missionaries to Thailand, hope to be with us and share a bit in our service this Sunday.

24 July

Scripture **I Samuel 31:1-7**
I Thessalonians 5:1-11
Sermon **Hope Beyond Our Hurt**
Topic: The tragedy of suicide



Blanchard Place Nursing Home Ministry (First Tuesday)

Our nursing home ministry at Blanchard Place is July 5 at 1 pm. We plan to 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.

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.

- July 1—La Pizzeria (Indian Lake—Huntsville)
- July 15—Cranberry (Indian Lake—Huntsville)
- August 5—Saulisberry Park (Bring your own lunch)
- August 19—Acheson's (Indian Lake)
- September 2—DC Diner (Belle Center)
- September 16—Tilton Hilton (Indian Lake)

Drivers needed for Sunday mornings

We would like to provide transportation for adults and kids to church on Sundays by either the church van or carpool. Please contact the church office if you are able to volunteer.

Weekly Family Ministry Schedule

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

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

Wednesday Bible Study: Wednesdays at 7 pm

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

Celebrate Recovery Meal Sign Up

St. John's would like to supply a meal for Celebrate Recovery twice 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.

Nursery & Jr. Church News



The Nursery is now open during Sunday services for Children Infant – Kindergarten

Jr. Church will be the 2nd and Last Sunday of each month. Children that are K- grade 5 are eligible to go to Jr. Church following the children's sermon on those weeks.

A volunteer sign-up sheet is posted outside of Michele's office door for those weeks. Everything is prepared for you. Please see Michele with questions.

Mission of the Month—Fairhaven Life Enrichment Fund

Since 1916, Fairhaven Community has maintained a tradition of providing compassionate health care and senior living services in Upper Sandusky, Ohio.

Birthday Blessings (over 80 yrs. Young)

July Birthdays on File:

July 2: Jack Draper
805 Vernon Street
Kenton, OH 43326

July 2: Shirley Draper
805 Vernon Street
Kenton, OH 43326

July 12: Carole Spillman
PO Box 143
Kenton, OH 43326



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



Happy summertime! We hope your family is having a blast and enjoying the calm before a new school year.



W.O.W Summer- Thank you for all the donations and to our volunteers for donating their evenings. At Mission: Day 1, kids heard about how even when everyone was afraid, Moses trusted God would rescue them at the Red Sea.

At Mission: Day 2, kids heard about how Jesus used a kid's lunch of bread and fish to feed a huge crowd.

At Mission: Day 3, kids heard about the story of Jesus and what He did to save us.

At Mission: Day 4, kids heard about how, after a few detours, Jonah went to Nineveh to tell the people about God.

Youth Summer Mission Camp- We served at a local 5K to benefit Downs Syndrome, Love Inc, several home projects, helping the Hardin County Museum, cleaning at Boy Scout Lake and Camp Common ground...the Youth were the hands and feet of Jesus that weekend of camp. Thank you to Everyone that supported, prayed for and supplied us with food that weekend!

Tip of the Month

You wear a lot of hats as a parent. You've probably been a driver, chaperone, friend, bank, campfire starter, uniform washer, and emergency room nurse over the years. You do a lot of fun, unique, and unexpected things, but you mean so much more than the long list of tasks that you accomplish! You are so much more than a babysitter or a chaperone and we love doing ministry alongside you!

Volunteers NEEDED

Nursery Attendees on Sunday Mornings (every other Sunday)

Sunday School teacher's 2nd and 4th Sunday of the Month. (After children's message)

Kids Choir

Please reach out to me if you have any suggestions or ways you would like to help out in Family Ministry. I am always open to new ideas and would love to chat with you about how we can better serve here at St. John's.

Many Blessing to you and yours, Michele

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10



Let's take a look back to the year 1932, the 3rd year after the crash of 1929 and the beginning of the worst of the Great Depression. The average wage in Ohio was \$1,048 per year down almost one third from the 1929 average. So, people were struggling with falling wages. All kidding aside, in 1932 you could buy a new car for \$650, gas for 18 cents a gallon and 10# of potatoes for 29 cents.

Now let's look at St. John's. In 1932, St. John's was by far the wealthiest church in Kenton with a membership that included many of the wealthiest people in Hardin County. The Church giving in envelopes that year was \$1,920.07. Of this amount 10 individuals gave over \$25 or over equating to ¼ of total giving. This figure represented giving by 170 people, adjusted for family (144 family units) giving yields \$13.31 per wage earner or 1.3% of gross income. This was about half of what it was pre-depression.

Using the same metrics **this year** our envelopes are back to the 1928-29 levels of 2.6% of gross income per giving family unit. Imagine adjusting to loss of a third of your income today. Believe it or not if inflation continues at the current rate for another two years, we'll be there (our real purchasing power will buy much less than it does today). But now we have a government willing to print money it doesn't have to pay people who won't work. As during the pandemic, we might get some of that. But don't count on it.

If our study of the Bible tells us one thing, it is that change will happen. As Christians we are to expect pain and suffering as well as a future void of those earthly realities. We as members need to commit our time, talent and treasure in the future at levels that may be painful, but remember "At the end we win".

Jerry Pfister, Historian

St. John's Evangelical Church
Church Council Minutes
Thursday, May 12, 2022
6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER - Anna LaWarre, Vice President

OPENING PRAYER - Pastor Randall

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT - Pastor Randall

OFFICER'S REPORT

Secretary's Report - April 21, 2022 minutes

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

REPORTS

1) Finance - Jerry Pfister

2) Christian Education—Michele Sherman

3) Women's Ministry

- Father's Day bags at next meeting
- Church Social—June 28 from 4-7
- Next meeting: May 24 at 6 pm

4) Worship, Arts & Music—LeVern Weaver

- Jennifer Whitaker (not sure if she will do all every Sunday) will be the worship leader for contemporary service a trial time. Need to find a coordinator. Pastor Randall is sending an email to Nancy about this (WAM)

5) Personnel Committee—Hal Elsasser

6) Pastoral Relations - Anna LaWarre (chairperson)

- Next meeting: August 7 at 9 am in the library

7) Trustees

1. Audio Visual—Jerry Pfister
2. Van—Shane Harkenrider
3. Farm—Greg Martin

8) Missions, Evangelism - Heather Erwin, Anna LaWarre

- Welter Fund \$3,323 mission gets half and half goes to Wednesday night kids for food. Hurt Fund (mission) \$7892.
- We are donating \$500 to the Hardin Freedom Celebration

9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall

Old Business

- NCD Committee Update: Shane (see last month's notes for roles)
- Safety of Church/Alice Program - tabled
- Church inventory – Heather Erwin working on

New Business

- A motion made and seconded that we accept the bid from ATR for \$193,774.00 to be paid in 3 payments of 30% down, 30% at equipment delivery, and balance at completion (net 30 days from invoice). Motion approved.

Next Meeting: June 9, 2022 at 6:00 PM

LORD'S PRAYER

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

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