

*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 2026

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
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Bike Blessing & Bike & Car Show

Please join us for the Annual Blessing of the Bikes & Bike and Car Show on Sunday, May 17, 2026. Registration will be from 9 - 11:30 am. The Bike and Car show begins at 12:00 pm with the Blessing of the Bikes at 12:15 pm. All are invited to attend worship service beginning at 10 am. Event sponsored by: St. John's Evangelical Church and Christian Motorcycle Association, God's Thunder. Boy Scouts will provide food for purchase. If you have any questions, you can contact the church at 419-673-7278 or stjohnskenton@gmail.com. We plan to hold this event the 3rd Sunday in May each year.

Please join us for our Annual Bike Blessing



And Car and Bike Show



May 17, 2026

211 E. Carrol St., Kenton, OH

9:00 - 11:30 Registration

12:00 - 2:00 Car and Bike Show

12:15 - Blessing of the Bikes

1:30 - Presentation of Trophies

Food available at 11:00 from Kenton Scouts 121

Open to the Public
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



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

211 East Carrol Street
Kenton, OH 43326

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

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MAY 2026

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

A group that I recently joined online shares Latin phrases. I sometimes share those in hopes that people will continue to keep the classics alive. One phrase that was posted recently was *Memento Mori*: Remember that you will die. Without context, it sounds like a threat. One could hear the phrase dripping from the lips of a villain in a movie. However, it's not a threat. Rather, it's an invitation to live. As the picture below shows, the phrase was often paired with *Memento Vivere*: Remember that you must live. In that same picture appears the phrase *Carpe Diem*: Seize the Day, which was seized upon by the Romantic writers of another era.



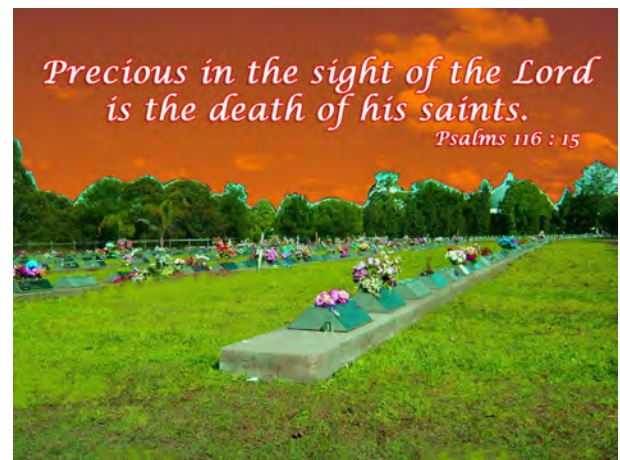
Knowing that we will die should force us to live. Knowing that our days are numbered should cause to embrace the moments we have. Knowing that all good things come to an end, we should enjoy and savor those moments while they are with us.

I thought of these things recently as my journey through the Bible this year took me to **Ecclesiastes 12**. There, Qoheleth (translated the preacher or teacher) reminds the reader to remember God in your youth (v 1) "before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain" (v 2), which is a descriptive way of describing how one's eyesight fades as part of the aging process. What follows are other illustrations of the body's decay in the latter years. This is not to depress us or warn us of what is to come. To the contrary, it is to awaken us to the life we have to live in the here and now.

We are to embrace life with God at the center. We should order our lives around Him. We should accept adversity with grace, dignity, and courage. When blessings come, we should not squander them or indulge in pursuing more of them. We should accept them with an equal measure of grace, dignity and courage. At some point, blessings and joy may seem elusive, but God's presence never is. We

should see Him equally as near to us in good times and bad.

Memento Mori may seem like a rather morbid thought, but it has been a central theme in art, literature, and philosophy for thousands of years. In music, it was central to the genres of the blues and early country music. Many spirituals that came out of the African-American community were born from the Laments in scripture. In all of these cases, death was not seen as a burden to weigh us down or to prevent us from living. Understanding that Death would come for us one day should cause to breathe more deeply of Life while we may.



Here we are in the midst of the Easter season. Last month in these pages, I wrote to you of the hope that the Easter message gives. Now, I want to encourage you to model that hope, to live it out, and to practice what hope means for Christians. I want you to breathe deeply the hope and faith that resides in you because Christ has risen and one day you will too. In **Psalm 116:15**, we are reminded that the Lord sees the death of His saints as something precious. God sheds light on a stream of thought that some take as dark and dreary.

The Bible teaches us that death is the consequence of sin and that Christ came to defeat both. In **Genesis 3**, we see the Fall of humanity with the consequence being death. We are told that we will die (v 3) and return to dust (v 19). Thankfully, that is not the end of the story. As we celebrate (sometimes on the day of the

Resurrection) in Easter, Christ has overcome Death and the grave. In **I Corinthians 15:55**, Paul (quoting **Hosea 13:14**) asks: "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

In the Gospel of **John**, Jesus makes several "I am" statements. Among them, He states that He is the Door (**10:7-9**) which leads to a life that is abundant (**v 10**). Later in chapter **11**, Jesus tells us that He is the Resurrection and the Life and whoever believes in Him will never die (**vv 25-26**). He says this before raising Lazarus from the dead to demonstrate what is to come for all believers.

As such, death is not to be feared. For the Christian, death is an important part of the journey. "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face" (**I Corinthians 13:12a**). Now, we cannot comprehend the fullness of the glory of Christ, but death allows us to see Him and know Him fully. Living for God now is great, but death brings us something even greater. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (**Philippians 1:21**).

As Christians, we do not long for death; nor should we hasten it for anyone. Likewise, we should not fear it or have anxiety over it for when it comes for us or someone else. We should remember, as poet Malcolm Guite writes, God's grace is "pulling us through the grave and gate of death" into the fullness of Jesus. Until that day comes, we have much to live for. We should be using this time to live for God and neighbor and thus fulfill the Greatest Commandment (and its close second) (**Matthew 22:36-40**).

Still, Death is not easy to face. I have officiated at my fair share of funerals over the last few months. As I often remind people: it doesn't get easier dealing with death and its impact with more practice. I feel the weight. You should too, O Christian. After all, standing before the tomb and after having declared what He was about to do for Lazarus, Jesus wept (**John 11:35**).

Death should cause us to weep, mourn, and lament. As we

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

grow older and our capabilities our diminished, there should be a degree of sorrow. When blessings fade, we should remember the 'good old days' with a tinge of nostalgia. However, we should not be stuck there.

As I reminded Council, we have much to celebrate in this church beyond a blessed Holy Week with the Kenton Chorale on Palm Sunday, the Living Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, the Cross Walk on Good Friday, and Sunrise Worship on Easter Sunday along with our regular service with Communion. We had a wedding the day before Easter Sunday and two more on the horizon. We accepted five new adult members by affirmation, and we will accept one more by Confirmation on May 31st.

One of the greatest moments came in March on a Sunday when we celebrated an infant dedication in our worship service. At the conclusion of our service and at the beginning of Stone Table Church's worship, I had the privilege of baptizing Logan, the father of Gideon, who was dedicated earlier. Seeing Logan's face when he came out of the water was a Spirit-filled moment. He was breathing in life, and it was life abundant for it was from the hand of God. Spontaneously, he embraced me. A moment like that strengthens and encourages me. Any trials or tribulations that I have faced in life or ministry melt away, and a moment like that keeps me focused on what God can do.

I pray you feel and understand what that moment means. I pray you see what God is doing here. I pray that you open your heart to receive God's Word into your heart, you set your mind on things above (**Colossians 3:2**), and allow the Spirit to lead you into greater acts of faith and service. I pray that you will remember that you will die. Even more, I pray that you become greatly convicted that you must live. Breathe in the Spirit of God and live for Christ!

With Christ-filled blessings,

Pastor Randall



Preaching Series

Listed on this page are upcoming sermons for May and into June, which is when the summer sermon series begin. On the next page is a fuller explanation. Often, Pastor Randall uses the summer to respond to questions and requests that may be in the hearts of St. John's members. It is also a time to share hymns and songs that inspire us or to reflect on a topic that is in someone's heart. This is a way to include everyone in the worship life of the church and to have the priesthood of all believers be active in what is proclaimed from the pulpit as well as included in the worship service.



At the end of April, Morgan's Place took center stage in our worship. Greg Wilt delivered the sermon, and we had a luncheon to discuss more about this ministry or to reflect on the loss of children for ourselves, family members, and people in our community. If you would like to learn more, please contact our Missions Committee. If anyone needs counseling or prayer around this issue, please contact our pastor.



Next year, the Kenton high school band and chorale will be taking a trip to Florida. There will be no Palm Sunday evening service. This could be a time for us to still gather for a prayer service, a hymn sing, a community service, or some other type of worship or fellowship. If you have any suggestions or be willing to participate or organize, please contact Pastor Randall or WAM (the Worship Arts and Music committee).

03 May Fifth Sunday of Easter
Scripture **I Peter 2:2-10**
John 14:1-14
Sermon **Remember Who You Are**

10 May Sixth Sunday of Easter
Scripture **I Peter 3:13-22**
John 14:15-21
Sermon **The Glorifying Limited Atonement**

17 May Seventh Sunday of Easter
Scripture **I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11**
John 17:1-11
Sermon **Eager to Emulate Jesus**

24 May Pentecost Sunday
Scripture **Numbers 11:24-30**
I Corinthians 12:3b-13
John 7:37-39
Sermon **Praise Flows!**

31 May Trinity Sunday
Confirmation Sunday
Scripture **8th Psalm**
II Corinthians 13:11-13
Matthew 28:16-20
Sermon **The Blessed Trinity**

07 June Graduation Sunday
Scripture **Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3**
Matthew 10:7-16
Sermon **Be a Barnabas**

Summer Preaching Series

14 June
Scripture **Judges 11:29-40**
Hebrews 11:29-12:2
Sermon **Know Your Bible: Jephthah**

21 June
Scripture **Deuteronomy 24:1-5**
Mark 10:1-12
Sermon **Happiness in Marriage**





Once again, Pastor Randall is seeking your input for the summer worship services. After graduation Sunday (June 7th) until the end of September, he is receiving requests. Suggestions can come in the form of scriptures that challenge you, comfort you, or uplift you. It could be hymns or songs that you want to see be a part of the worship life of the church. It may be a topic that you would like to see shared from the pulpit. You can share questions for which you are searching for answers. All these open the possibility for future sermons. This also allows the whole church to participate in the formation of the worship life of the church. Feel free to drop ideas into the collection baskets or at the office. Thoughts and ideas may be texted, emailed, or messaged directly to the pastor at his phone, email, or Facebook while the same holds true for those same methods of contacting the church. Please include your contact information in case there is a need for clarification. (Anonymous submissions are acceptable, but please make sure they are legible and clear.) Pastor Randall has shared that he finds doing this a joy-filled challenge. In doing this, he sees the Holy Spirit working through the priesthood of all believers as each member of the church has an ability to lift up an insight or to spur a greater discussion of what God is doing in and through these times. Your question or topic may be one that others in our church have been thinking about in like manner. Many of the topics that have arisen in recent years have been ones our pastor was thinking about as well. Your willingness to share may provide confirmation to what is already percolating in the hearts of others.



PASTOR'S PAGE

IRS Agent Serves as a Parable of the Church

Christian leader Mark Labberton relates a personal story about when he had a seemingly unsolvable problem with the IRS. He writes:

After several months of correspondence and legal advice, the day finally came to begin the talks in person. Those who knew the IRS suggested this would take many months, probably longer, to get settled. I went to the IRS office in Oakland. I waited. And I waited. Eventually I was escorted through a warren of cubicles to meet the agent who would assist me. The agent there listened to my case, took all the relevant paperwork, and excused herself to consult with someone else. I waited ten minutes, 15 minutes ... 45 minutes but no one checked in. As far as I could tell, the agent had disappeared ...

Suddenly, the agent was back. She handed me a sheet and said simply, "There, it's all done. It's settled." I assumed she was saying that she had taken the first step. What she meant was that the whole process was settled. She turned the paper over and revealed the nine signatures she had acquired all the way up the IRS ladder so the case was now closed, and closed in my favor.

There, in the midst of a warren of bureaucratic anonymity and powerlessness, I encountered a person who became my advocate, who heard my appeal and who took the initiative to do on my behalf what I could never have done for myself. She met me at a moment of isolation and fear and sent me out with resolution when I had anticipated nothing but delay.

Take this to heart. Mark Labberton comments: "For me, this has been a parable of what the body of Christ can be in the world. We are to be those who, in the vastness of the universe and in a context of human powerlessness, show up as advocates who represent and incarnate the presence of God, who is the hope of the world. We can, of course, choose instead to be bureaucrats. Show up and shuffle paper, engage very little, put in our time, and watch out for our own interests. At the Oakland IRS office, there was a system, but there was a person in the system who was ready to be an advocate. I don't know why, but she did it. And it changed everything for me."

Upcoming Events

Carl Lotz Scholarship Applications

Students must either attend school or church within Hardin County to be eligible to receive this scholarship. All three requirements are due no later than May 20. Please complete the application online at: <https://forms.gle/tBA1fMWDrkyh9esJ8>

Fishing Derby

The Fishing Derby will be May 30, 9:30-Noon at Boy Scout Lake. There will be tagged fish and prizes. See Bruce Mortensen or Janie Risner with questions.



ST. JOHN'S KIDS FISHING DERBY

FUN & PRIZES!
UP TO AGE 16

MAY 30, 2026
9:30 AM TO 12PM
FREE EVENT FOR KIDS

BOY SCOUT LAKE
15906 OH 309, KENTON, OH 43326

St. John's Evangelical Church

Graduation Sunday

Graduation Sunday will be June 7. Please contact the church office with information of church members graduating this year.



Joint Service & Picnic with Stone Table Church

On June 14, we will have a combined service with Stone Table Church, in the sanctuary at 10 am then go to Boy Scout Lake for a picnic.



St. John's & Stone Table PICNIC in The Park

FOODS - GAMES - FUN

JOIN US FOR A DELIGHTFUL DAY BRIMMING WITH SUNSHINE, JOY, AND A LOVELY PICNIC IN THE PARK.

SUNDAY 14 JUNE | **BOY SCOUT LAKE AT 11:30 AM - 3 PM**
15906 OH 309, KENTON - BIG PAVILLION

THE CHURCH WILL PROVIDE THE MEAT. JUST BRING YOUR FAVORITE SIDE DISH (NOT REQUIRED). ALL ARE WELCOME

UPCOMING Events

Mark Your Calendar

- Dinner Club:** May 15 at Bears Den (Mt. Victory) - meet at church at 5:30, dinner 6 pm
- Bike Blessing & Bike and Car Show:** May 17
- Fishing Derby:** May 30 from 9:30-Noon at Boy Scout Lake
- Confirmation Sunday:** May 31
- Graduation Sunday:** June 7
- Combined Service/Church Picnic:** June 14
- Dinner Club:** June 27 to G&R Tavern (Waldo) meet at church at 11:15 am
- VBS:** July 19-22
- Rock the Lake:** August 1
- Back to School Bash:** August 8
- Fait Booth:** September 8-12
- Elijah Profit of Fire Show:** October 3 at 1 pm
- Memorial Sunday:** November 1

A Prayer Blessing for Mothers & Grandmothers

Rebecca Barlow Jordan
Crosswalk, Updated Apr 21, 2026

If you are a mom or grandmom, you are deserving of blessing and honor for who you are and for all you do. No matter what your age - single or married - here is a prayer of blessing for you for every good work, every good word, and for every act of love you have ever offered on behalf of the ones you love.

Dear Lord,

Bless every mother and every grandmother with the finest of your spiritual blessings today. Confirm in her heart and spirit the work of her hands and the love that she has so freely given to those children under Your care. Validate her worth daily so she has no reason to doubt whether she is loved, valued, and cherished in the eyes of her Heavenly Father.

Create in her a deep sense of your protection and trust, so that worry and fear will disappear as she places her loved ones into Your care. Let her know that every prayer she has prayed and every encouraging word she has spoken on behalf of her children/grandchildren has been transformed into sweet, fragrant offerings before Your throne.

Whisper deep within her spirit the sweet words she longs to hear from You—that nothing can ever separate her from Your love. Help her to nestle daily into the promises of Your Word, standing with faith on the things You declare are true. Let her know that You reward faithfulness, but that true success doesn't lie in her accomplishments or accolades. Let her rest in the knowledge that she has done all she can—and that she and those she loves—truly belong to you. Bless her with a servant spirit so she can teach her own the joy of hearing one day, "Well done!"

Remove any guilt, false or real, and replace them with Your amazing grace and forgiveness. Help her see her children or grandchildren through Your eyes, knowing that in Your hands is the safest place they can ever be. Calm every doubt, and strengthen her confidence in the Only One who can bring good out of any situation.

Teach her that she cannot meet every need of her child's life, but that You can. Give her wisdom and guidance to train those precious children in Your path, and then to leave the results to You, Lord. Help her to love without limitations, to pray without ceasing, and to live without regrets. Bless her with such a sweet dependency on You that she will acknowledge her inadequacies, yet recognize and accept Your reward of praise—and Your sense of pleasure in having her as Your own beloved child.

Where prayers may still seem unanswered, and dreams are not yet realized, open her eyes to see beyond this world to a Hope that never disappoints, and to a Father who will never leave or abandon her. Give her the courage to persevere even in the most difficult moments of her life. Bless her with honesty, integrity, and a playfulness that shows her children she is human, yet unswerving in her desire to know You.

Let her joy be contagious; let her passion be pure, and let her life overflow with all the blessings she deserves—on special days, and on every day of her life.

In Jesus's name, Amen



Birthday Blessings (over 80 yrs. Young)

May Birthdays on File:

May 14 Dorothy Ziegler
16316 SR 309 E
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!

St. John's Evangelical Church
Church Council Minutes
Thursday, March 12, 2026
6:00 PM

Call to Order - LeVern Weaver, President

Opening Prayer— Pastor Randall

Leadership Development - Pastor Randall

Officer Reports

Secretary's Report - Feb. 12 minutes approved

REPORTS

1) Financial Report—Kay Rush—Motion to approve and accepted

2) Family Minister—Janie Risner—written report

3) Worship, Arts & Music—LeVern Weaver— will need 6 communion servers for Easter

4) Women's Ministry—Kay Rush—Lamb Banquet just served; OSU & Sports in Spring

5) Personnel Committee—No report

6) Pastoral Relations- No report— meeting June 1

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

- ATV—written report
- Van— LeVern—airbag light came on, but stayed off after restarting van
- Farm—need to renew this summer

Church Maintenance: Looking to reseal possible leak on north side - something causing mold behind white board in classroom. Grease trap needs cleaned out. Looking into putting a light on East side of church as handicap parking area is dark

8) Missions, Evangelism—Anna LaWarre—next meeting is April 6; Serve Day—March 15; Bring A Friend Sunday—March 22; Morgan's Place Speaker—April 26

9) Pastor's Report - Pastor Randall written report
Old Business: committee chairs were assigned; 2 computers and a color printer are being donated for the office.

New Business: Need to get a fireproof box big enough for legal-size papers. Denomination search committee is reviewing statements of faith presented by 2 possible denominations. Kay is getting 2 more credit cards from Quest

Correspondence— none

Next Meeting: April 9, 2026 6:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT—LORD'S PRAYER

Mission of the Month— Angels for the Elderly

Angels For The Elderly is a non profit organization helping the Elderly have food. They do food boxes for the needy elderly every month. Mary Roby has been doing this ministry for many years. She started doing this with Deanna Wages with Helping Hands. She does not get help through the state or any organization. all is with donations and fund-raisers.

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.

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 1—La Pizzeria (lake)

May 15—Kyomi Chinese (Bellefontaine)

June 5—Acheson's (Lake)

June 19—Beer Barrel (Lima)

July 17—Tony's (Findlay)

August 7—Casa Lu Al (Lima)

August 21—Tilton Hilton (Lake)

website: stjohnskenton.org

Facebook: St Johns Kenton, Ohio

Youtube: St. John's Evangelical Church



Kingdom Kid – We have come to a close this season. It will be nice to have this time to rest and plan for next year. I am excited and sad that we are ending.



Kids Fishing Derby – We are doing a kids Fishing Derby on May 30 at Boy Scout Lake. We will be getting some tagged fish. We will have prizes. IF you have any questions please talk with Bruce or I

VBS – We will be having VBS on Sunday July 19, through July 22. Our theme this year is The Armor of God. I am so excited to finally get to teach this lesson and have wanted to do it for a long time. I have a lot of great ideas.

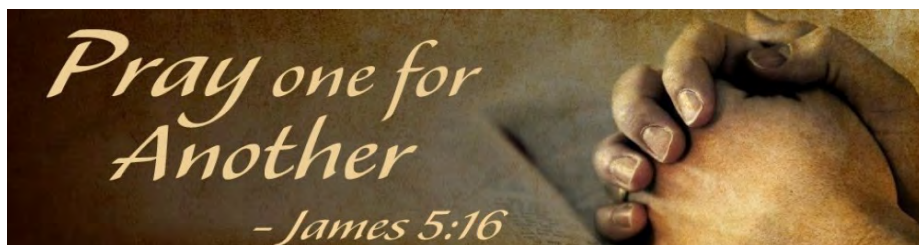
Kingdom Kickoff – We are doing the kickoff on October 4th at 2pm – 4pm. The theme will be a spin off of the VBS. We are having a Medieval theme to play off the Armor of God theme.

Lunch & Learn – I am in the process of planning a year of monthly learning sessions for Seniors. The sessions will be things like Balance and strength training, Financial planning and wills and trusts, Healthy eating, Brain Health, and Technology and Scam prevention. I am working with Area Agency on Aging, Alzheimer's Association, and OSU extension office to help plan these events. Please watch for more information on these events. I am very excited about this program.

Church Picnic – We are having a Joint picnic with Stone Table Church. They will join us for our service. June 14 after church at Boy Scout Lake. Bring your favorite side dish if you want but not required. The Churches will provide the main course. We will have fun, food, and games. Please plan on joining us.

MomCo Mom's group

The Mom Co Mom's Group will have Morning meet-ups on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 10:30 am and the evening meet-ups will be on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 6 pm. Janie is looking for volunteers to help with the meet-ups and for help with childcare. If you are interested in helping, please let her know. Moms of any age can help, these mom's need experienced moms for advice and support.



Prayer Request Opportunity

Our website has a new feature, a Prayer Request page. Any one at any time will now be able to send a request for prayer using this link. It will come into an email that Pastor Randall, the office, and Janie will have access to 24 hours a day. We can then reach out and pray with or for the person requesting prayers based on their request. We are working on a QR code that will take you to the page and that will be put it on business cards that we can give out during outreach or to someone who we meet that may need prayer. These cards will be made available to the church to hand out as well. Please take a moment and check it out.

Laundromat Ministry

The mission committee is inviting all members to join them in the Laundromat Ministry. If you are interested in going sometime, let Mary Ralston know when you are available. You may also support the ministry by filling pill bottles with quarters that are included in the packets. They are also available on the welcome desk. They distribute bags that contain church info. along with laundry pods, dryer sheets and coins. A sign-up sheet is available on the welcome desk.