

## Which Came First?

Pastor Pete Kontra

Psalm 67:5-6 says: “*May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us.*”

You know the age-old question: Which came first, the chicken or the egg? It's the question that seems never to have a clear answer until you find yourself trapped in a never-ending circle. Well, being the believer in creation that I am I would say the chicken came first, along with all the other creatures God created in the beginning. Okay, moving on...

Sometimes I liken this to my own life and my relationship with God. I have been fortunate to live where I live and have the riches of a good family, good food, good medical care, and a life free from knowing the ravages of war (at least so far). I was raised in the church and have known God as long as I can remember. Yes, I have great reason to praise God!

Now take that all away. It makes me think, do I praise God because of who He is, or because of what He has given me? Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

Psalm 67 makes it clear—Praise God, “*then the land will yield its harvest.*” God has been and always will be first, before all things. Remember, He said Himself, “I am the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *end.*” (Revelation 21:6).

It is to God that we must first give our praise, in all things and all times, simply for who He is. Thanksgiving is nearly upon us, when we celebrate God's goodness to us and the bounty with which He has blessed us. We gather around tables filled with food and are reminded that God is indeed good. Or, perhaps like many of our fore-fathers and mothers did, we simply celebrate that we are alive and pray we have enough to make it through the winter.

But how does this action of thanks-giving function in our lives everyday?

One of the most powerful testimonies I have heard came from a fellow student when I was in seminary. Wafulu is from Nigeria. As we sat around the tables one evening discussing our thoughts on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the poor in spirit...Blessed are those who mourn...Blessed are the meek...,” Wafulu began to share with the group his experience with his African brothers and sisters. “I have been with those who have suffered in great droughts,” he said, “hurting, starving people who are in great need. And yet, I watched as they never stopped praising God, thanking Him for His goodness, growing ever more faithful as they endured their plight.”

Hebrews 13:15: “Through Jesus, therefore, let us *continually* offer to God a sacrifice of praise.”

“I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever.” (Psalm 145).

Keep the praises flowing constantly to God, no matter what the day or the situation. Because His glory and majesty do not solely depend on what we receive. In the days of plenty *and* in the droughts of life praise the Lord and, no doubt, as the psalmist says, you will be blessed. God bless you.

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# Grains of Rice

Pastor Kent Rice

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## Taking the Long View

*“I have a new microwave fireplace—I can spend all evening in front of it in eight minutes.”* – Steven Wright

The other day one of our youth posted a picture of herself and a friend on Facebook. The picture was only two years old but the change in both of these young ladies was remarkable—they looked like little kids in the picture and now it won't be long until they are graduating high school. So much has changed.

One of the wonderful things about youth ministry is seeing the growth in young people from year to year—especially spiritual growth. How exciting it is when one sees a hunger for righteousness growing within someone, or their need to reach out in service not because they are *supposed to* but because they *need to*.

We are *all* works in progress until the very second that the trumpet calls us home. But how easily we forget this when we're working with someone who is not believing or acting the way we think they should. With our face pressed up against today's timeline we can't see yesterday or tomorrow.

Have you ever been in an interview and been asked, “Where do you see yourself in five, ten years?” I always wanted to say, “I see myself answering this same question from somebody else!” But let's turn it around: Where do you see yourself five or ten years *ago*? Have your beliefs changed since then? Do you respond to situations the same way? I'll bet you see the world differently.

The church should be a safe place for people to learn and grow. The world is not very patient with mistakes but we are not the world! We do not call for someone to be taken out of the game and put on the bench when they fumble. Why? Because that's the way the world operates and we have different goals in mind. John 15:19 says, *“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.”*

We are called to reach out in love to the world, but it's important that we do not apply too many secular principles to Kingdom work. If we are to make disciples, then we are to follow Jesus' example of being loving and patient with people and remembering that God has a plan and a timeline for them to which we are oblivious. If someone in your past was loving and patient with you, extend that to someone else. If nobody has been loving and patient with you, then be careful not to make the same mistake because you know how that feels.

None of us really know what we'll be doing in five or ten years...or if we'll even be here at all! So take the opportunity today to help someone along in their life's journey—even if they've left a few muddy footprints on your floor in the process!

# Messages in November

November 4



**Unashamed—1 Peter 3:13-16**

***Pastor Kent Rice Preaching***

Remember when you were a kid and did something stupid and tried to defend yourself by saying, "Everyone *else* was doing it!" Then mom or dad would invariably reply, "Oh, and if <insert name> jumped off a bridge, would you jump too?" Peter reminds us that we are *not* like everyone else. With Christ set apart in our heart, we can venture out into the world ready to respond to those who wonder why we have hope in the first place. And *how* do we do this? With gentleness and respect!

November 11



**Are You a Builder or a Blocker?—Matthew 16:13-23**

***Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching***

Are you building the Way or blocking the Way for all the people around you? Stop and consider how what you do will affect the other person. Will it build them up in Christ? Am I opening the way for them to fullness in Christ? In Christ we are builders.

November 18

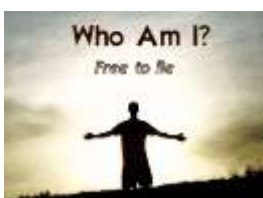


**What Have You Done Lately?—Luke 18:9-14**

***Pastor Geoff Davis Preaching***

We live in a world where it seems the main goals are to better ourselves at the expense of others, to acquire more stuff than anyone else, and to aspire to enjoy the lifestyles of others. But Luke reminds us of a story that Jesus tells to help us really understand the goals of the Christian life that enable Christ to live through each of us. Our identity in Christ needs to be deeply rooted, but how does 'humility' prepare the way for Christ and what does it mean to our daily living?

November 25



**Free to Be—Philippians 2:1-8**

***Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching***

God loves you, and what that means is freedom to be who He made you to be. Freedom from the opinions of others. Freedom from the opinion of yourself. Freedom from the sin and burdens that weigh you down. You just simply need to accept that. Because once you become alive in that freedom we have in Christ, then you are free to fulfill the purpose and meaning for your life, which is to do for others what God has done for us in Christ.

# November Ministry Schedules

November 4  
November 11  
November 18  
November 25



November 4  
November 11  
November 18  
November 25

## NURSERY—SUNDAY SCHOOL

Bob & Mary Ellen McEvoy  
Steph Moyer & Carolyn Gingrich  
Jill Stout & Karen Rice  
Carolyn Gingrich & Jody Kettering

## SOUND TECHNICIANS—8:00

Rich & Jamie Bushong  
Matt Markey  
Dave Schott  
Rich & Jamie Bushong

## WORSHIP LEADERS—8:00

November 4  
November 11  
November 18  
November 25

Kent Rice  
Tom Fritz  
Pete Cope  
Janice Haldeman

SPECIAL MUSIC



November 4  
November 11  
November 18  
November 25

## CHOIRS/SPECIAL MUSIC

Sanctuary Choir  
TBA  
Sanctuary Choir  
TBA

## DEACON GREETERS

November 4  
November 11  
November 18  
November 25

Paula Connelly  
Pete Moore  
Mary Ann Fisher  
Doris Wright

## OFFERING TABULATORS

Glenn Brubaker, Marcia Root & alternate

## NURSERY—WORSHIP

Donna Schaidle & Betty Lull  
Shelley Basom & Marg Zurin  
Sherry, Katie & Lauren Miller  
Betty Cox & Lydia/Sarah Fisher



## SOUND TECHNICIANS—10:15

Blaine Garber & Jaynelle Troxell  
Rich Bushong & Jaynelle Troxell  
Rich & Jamie Bushong  
Matt Markey & Rich Bushong

## WORSHIP LEADERS—10:15

TBA  
TBA  
TBA  
TBA



## VIDEO TECHNICIANS—10:15

Dave Bendit  
Derek Witmer  
Alex Troxell  
Doug Howard

## SUNDAY SCHOOL SEC.

Faye Rohrer

# HCOB Adult Sunday School

✠ **THE CHRISTIAN PATHFINDERS** class meets in the room across from the nursery, just outside the side door to the sanctuary. We study the International lesson. We have three or four regular teachers who each teach about one Sunday a month. We have several socials a year with the majority of our class participating. Our offerings are used for special needs within our congregation or community. The contact person is Ruth Johnson.

November 4	Paul before King Agrippa	Teacher: Denny Bushong
November 11	Paul Sails for Rome	Teacher: Butch Nachbar
November 18	Paul Ministers in Malta	Teacher: Jim Kettering
November 25	Paul Evangelizes in Rome	Teacher: Bob Heffley

✠ **THE HOME BUILDERS** class meets in the library. We study the International Lesson each quarter. Millie Hoffman is the contact person.

November 4	Paul before King Agrippa	Teacher: James Kettering
November 11	Paul Sails for Rome	Teacher: Dennis Bushong
November 18	Paul Ministers in Malta	Teacher: Paul "Pete" Cope
November 25	Paul Evangelizes in Rome	Teacher: Todd Basom

✠ **THE SEEKERS** class is currently meeting upstairs. This month we will be starting a 12 week study in the book of Galatians with the following theme: "If I want to be a really good Christian, I must.... ." How you finish that sentence is critical. Finish it incorrectly, as many people do, and you fall into the same trap that ensnared first century Christians in Galatia. Feel free to join us for this study in the New Testament. We meet upstairs in the educational wing. Rich Bushong is the contact person.

November 4	Galatians 1:1-10
November 11	International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church
November 18	Galatians 1:11-24
November 25	Galatians 2:1-10

✠ **CONVERSATIONS**— Conversations class meets in Chapel Hall weekly. We will continue our examination of Donald Miller's 'Convergence' series: "Frustrations and False Gods: Living in a Fallen World". We'll continue looking at three video conversations and then having our own conversations about what we've seen and what the Bible has to say. And, as always, we'll be examining the questions that you bring to class. Geoff Davis facilitates.

## HCOB Family News



**SAVE THE DATE!** Family Christmas Celebration will be on Sunday, December 2, 2012. Come at 4:00 p.m. for a program, fun, and fellowship. A meal will follow, prepared by the Fellowship and Hospitality Team. Watch for details in the November bulletins!

**BI-ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL GATHERING** will be held Thursday, November 8 at 7:00 PM here at the church. If you are a church member or regular attender, please plan to attend this important meeting in the life of our church. The agenda will include approving the 2013 budget and confirming church leadership for the new year. Please pick up an informational packet on the narthex table to read before the meeting.



# Alternative Christmas Gift Fair



- ★ This year, give gifts that are truly life-changing and meaningful!
- ★ Enable individuals to overcome injustice and poverty!
- ★ Help non-profit ministries change our community and world for the better!



Hempfield Church  
of the Brethren



November 3, 2012

10 AM-2 PM



Food will be available for purchase  
to support our youth missions program

# Youth News

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Nov 3 and 4: Missions Fundraiser at Eastland Alpaca!

Nov 9-11: Sr. High Missions Trip to Washington, DC

Nov 10 and 11: Missions Fundraiser at Eastland Alpaca!

## How Can I Pray For The Youth?

1. School is stressful, divisive and worldly. Pray for them during the day when you think about it.
2. Plans beyond high school are being made—pray that the right doors open and that they have the courage to walk through them.
3. God is calling certain people to become more active in the lives of the youth. Please pray for His voice to be heard and understood.
4. The transition from middle school to high school is not easy—pray for those who are still adjusting.
5. Other youth groups routinely comment that they wish “their group could be more like ours” – more open, friendly and nurturing. Pray for the young people out there who could really benefit from becoming part of the HCOB youth to find a connection.

# New Members

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**Jason & Hilary Hoffman—sponsored by Karen Rice**—What a thrill to have Jason, Hilary, Jordan and Micah as a part of our church! I originally met the Hoffman’s when I was the preschool teacher for Jordan in the 2-Day Class at Trinity Preschool here in East Petersburg. I was also blessed to be Micah’s preschool teacher as well. Jason is currently a teacher and Hilary is “sort of” an at home Mom. She left her teaching position to be at home with the children and has been getting a catering/cake decorating business up and going. The Hoffman’s are a close knit family, who enjoy time together as well as time with extended family and friends. Hilary has already put time into helping decorate for our VBS ... the blue windows were her idea. ☺ So excited to have them with us!!!

**Del & Mary Ann Kautz—sponsored by Millie Hoffman**—Del & Mary Ann have 4 daughters -Heidi, Christel, Emily, and Stephany- all married. Del graduated from Millersville University and Eastern Mennonite Seminary then became a minister at Millersville Mennonite for 23 yrs. Prior to ministry he was a carpenter. Del is currently driving a tanker-tractor trailer for D.M. Bowman at the present time-something he wanted to do since he was a little boy! He enjoys working in his shop making and restoring furniture. Mary Ann works in the kitchen at John Herr’s village Market. They have 3 grandchildren- all came at the same time - triplets - boys. Mary Ann loves to sew and bake, but right now most of her spare time is spent with the “3 boys.”

# Praying Attention



So...I actually had an article completed for the Praying Attention segment of the Newsletter for November when I read a section from a book by Charles A. Haun titled "*Becoming the Expression of the Father*" and knew that I needed to share this great insight.

Charles Haun was from Pittsburgh, PA and taught a great friend of mine in Seminary who introduced me to the insights of this man. Charles was not a Christian lightweight by any stretch of the imagination, whose training ground included the jungles of Peru while a missionary to the headhunters there. While serving in this region, he ate contaminated food and felt no harm from it, faced warring native Indians and troublesome boa constrictors and lived to tell about it (ok, so he actually wrestled a 16' boa constrictor that was a grave danger to the children, to its death, sensing God's power and sufficiency to help him in this endeavor. The natives would only cheer him on but not help him, because to them, the boa constrictor was the third most powerful spirit in the jungle and would never touch the creature).

So how did Charles become such a Christian Heavyweight?? Well you would probably have to read the book to discover fully how he and God worked together for this to occur but here is just a glimpse of how he related to God.

In Charles's words:

*"For most of us, standing still is just too difficult. We would rather be doing something. After all, what will we tell our friends we have accomplished? But Jesus preferred that His disciples be His friends more than just His servants:*

***John 15:15 – Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.***

*Servants are often too busy to sit by the Master's side. They often have no time to hear His word. Stand still, and He will speak to you.*

*People pray in different ways, but most of the time that I spend before the Lord is done in absolute silence. I do praise Him, and I do make certain petitions, but I know that what is most important is that I hear from Him. What He has to say to me is far more important than what I have to say to Him. What He wants is so much more important than what I want. I cannot lose when I wait silently before Him and allow Him to speak to my heart. As you wait in silence before God, there comes a penetration of your soul by the Spirit of God that is deeper and far more eternal than any other touch you could possibly receive. It takes you to a whole new level in Him."*

I wonder what He would say to us if we would just sit silent before Him long enough every day to hear Him speak.....personally, I hope it's not that He wants me to go to Peru to wrestle boa constrictors...just sayin.....

## Our Church Teams

*Each month we will highlight the work of a different team. This month we are featuring the Stewards of Finance Team.*

The Finance team continues to track and monitor giving versus the budget. Year-to-date giving is \$15k ahead of last year and (\$16k) behind 91% of budget. We typically spend 91% of our budget. Giving is typically higher in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and spending this year is tracking under 91% of budget, which has allowed us to cover expenses and meet our donation commitments. Giving this year to 10 other causes was \$20k, which is the same as last year. The Finance team helped coordinated the budget building. The `13 budget is \$10k more than `12. All the teams had little change except Finance \$4k more for Annual & District Conference and \$1k administration, Evangelism net change \$3k (\$2k for new item- Outbreak), and Social Services \$1k more for Heifer Banquet. We are grateful for the dedicated giving during these difficult economic times that make giving harder, but the need greater.



# HCOB Calendar

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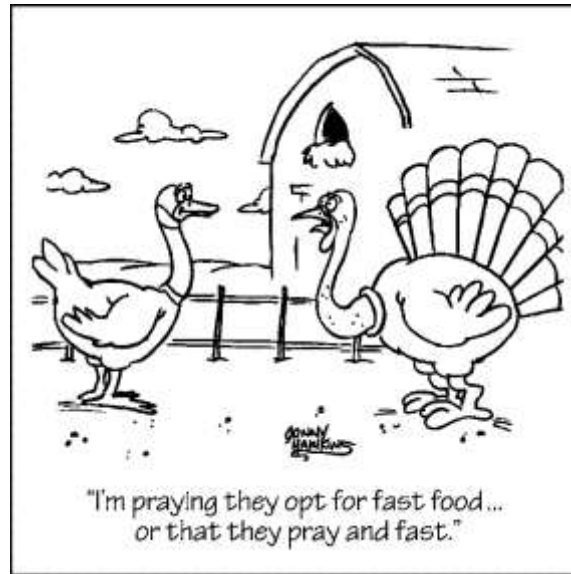
Keep up with what's happening at Hempfield COB by checking out our online calendar.

Please go to

<http://www.hempfieldcob.org/whatsup.html>

for a full calendar of events

**Toon of  
The Month**



**Toon of  
The Month**

Hempfield Church of the Brethren  
P.O. Box 246  
East Petersburg, PA 17520

**RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**

# November