

Pastor Pete Kontra

Perfect Love

J.E. Miller shares this story, taken from "Stories from Brethren Life": "B.F. Moomaw, a member of the Church of the Brethren, while living in Virginia, had a Confederate regiment camp on his farm during the Civil War. The regiment was directed to the Moomaw farm by some of his neighbors who hoped to embarrass the pacifist. Moomaw, however, set out to win the friendship of the men of the regiment. In good Brethren fashion he invited the officers of the regiment to dinner. Then, when a serious epidemic of measles broke out in the camp, the Moomaw family cared for the sick in their home. These services were, of course, provided in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, even though some of Moomaw's enemies circulated the story that Moomaw charged the regiment for his aid."

The Church of the Brethren has its beginnings within a land full of conflict and violence, strict adherence to the laws of the government and strict punishment for nonconformity to the ways of the religious establishment. Out of the Germanic area of Central Europe in the late 17th and early 18th centuries came the early Brethren. They were anabaptists who were ostracized and in some cases executed for their refusal to go along with certain practices they found to be unChrist-like.

As we think about following Christ and loving as He loves us, maybe that doesn't seem so powerful in our world which exerts such destructive power everyday. But His is a different kind of power.

Luke 23:35-39 says,

"The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One.'

"The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.'

"There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the Jews.

"One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: 'Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!'"

Where's your power now, Jesus? But what they didn't see is the greatest power He showed, not in saving Himself as we try to do in the world, but in staying on the cross and finishing what He started: Salvation by defeating the power of this world.

We, too, find ourselves living in violent times. But we are always under God's watchful eye, and in Him we have the strength to continue on with the mission He has set before us—to go into the world, making disciples of Jesus Christ by sharing the love of God with all people.

Please be in prayer at all times, for the Church and for the world, that we would all know the love and peace and true power of Jesus Christ. God bless you. -Pete.

From Pastor Doug

What's your story?

Luke 21:10-15 *Then he [Jesus] continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors, for My name's sake.*

It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.

So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

In our leadership team meeting last night, someone said, "Everyone has a story." What's your story? We sing, "I love to tell the story..." – but do we? Do we share our story of how we encountered the Risen Savior? Do we listen to those around us and seek how He may be moving in their life? Do we pray for our enemies and hope that may meet Jesus as well? *Can we share our story with them?* I see a lot of fear in the news, a lot of fear on social media, a lot of fear in people's eyes. Americans, especially the dying middle class and working poor, fear what they may lose; but they do not consider what already may be lost.

As followers of Jesus, we must not lose our voice – we must not lose our story! If we strive to follow Jesus closely, our decisions about money, time, and focus are directed by his teaching. Reading the passage above drives this home. Are we aware of current and/or impending wars right now? Are we aware of natural disasters affecting people and nations? Are we aware of plagues and those starving in the world? Are we aware of our persecuted brothers and sisters in the faith? *Make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves...because...It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.* No matter what happens, no matter what we may lose, we must not lose our story – we must not lose our voice! But, if we continue to share, if we continue to plant seed, if we continue to take the gospel to those around us, we lose nothing but gain our life!

My encouragement today: in humility, wisdom, and love, share your testimony, share your story with those around you. You don't know who? Pray and ask God to bring a person to mind or lay someone on your heart. It may be an individual; it may be a group. Then take courage! Share your story. We have nothing to prove that Jesus has not overcome. Rest in his work on the cross. You may be rejected, you may be persecuted or harassed. Remember, if they accept what you say, they may accept and follow Jesus. If they reject what you say, they do not reject you but reject Jesus. *But*, if you never share because you feel you have no voice, they never have the opportunity to decide. Everyone has a story. What's yours?

Mission Possible

Pastor Kent Rice

How Things Start

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. – Nehemiah 1:4

As we read our Bibles, it's very clear that God tends to "start things" with individuals. From Moses to Jonah to Nehemiah and even today, God speaks into the heart of someone because something must be done. Wouldn't it be more efficient to speak to an entire group, all at the same time, so that they can all unite in purpose? Apparently not, because the Bible has few if any examples of God doing that.

To those in leadership—and especially to "servant leaders"—this is sometimes hard to accept. Remember Moses, who tried to push the job off onto Aaron? A good leader knows that he or she is *not* good enough for any job that God gives them. And that's good, because that's where reliance upon Jesus comes in. We should, in fact, be distrustful of anyone who lusts to lead (as we so often see in politics). Tozer says this:

The true and safe leader is likely to be the one who has no desire to lead but is forced into a position of leadership by the inward pressure of the Spirit and the press of the external situation. Such were Moses, David and the Old Testament prophets; and I think there was hardly a great Christian leader from Paul to this present day but was drafted by the Holy Spirit for the task and commissioned by the Lord of the Church to fill a position he had little natural heart for.

In Nehemiah's example, it was the people who pulled off the rebuilding by working together for a purpose that united them. I'm sure after the last rock was put into place they had disagreements on the value of a bushel of wheat, or how to raise their children, or even if Nehemiah was all that great of a person. That's just human nature. But today God still speaks into the hearts of individual to start things, just as He spoke to Dan West to start Heifer Project and the work continues today.

It's exciting when God starts something and people join in. And it's exciting to see what God does through his people in the process!

HCOB Adult Sunday School

† **THE CHRISTIAN HOMEBUILDERS** classes will meet in the library. 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 people are Ruth Johnson and Millie Hoffman.

February 7	Passover	Teacher: Denny Bushong
February 14	Feast of Weeks	Teacher: Del Kautz
February 21	Day of Atonement	Teacher: Jim Kettering
February 28	The Feast of Booths	Teacher: Galen Brumbaugh

† **THE SEEKERS**—Please join us for teaching and discussion that will help us to delve deeper into our Christian faith and life. We meet in the Prayer Room just off the Sanctuary. We are studying the scripture the pastors are preaching on each week. If you would enjoy discussing the sermon scriptures with others please join us. Rich Bushong is the contact person.

February 7	Ephesians 4:29-5:2	Teacher: Galen Brumbaugh
February 14	Luke 10:25-37	Teacher: Rich Bushong
February 21	Acts 3:1-10	Teacher: TBD
February 28	Proverbs 3:3-4	Teacher: Tom Fritz

† **CONVERSATIONS**—Conversations Class meets in the Conversations classroom on the second floor each Sunday during Sunday School hour. All are welcome to come. Conversations Class will be completing its study of Acts and Paul's journeys throughout the world, fulfilling the initial understanding of the 'great commandment'. When we've completed Acts, we'll begin a study of "Why Trust the Bible?" by Greg Gilbert. The Bible stands at the heart of the Christian faith. But this leads to an inescapable question: why should we trust the Bible? Written to help non-Christians, longtime Christians, and everyone in between better understand why God's Word is reliable, this short book explores the historical and theological arguments that have helped lead millions of believers through the centuries to trust the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Written by pastor Greg Gilbert, author of the popular books *What Is the Gospel?* and *Who Is Jesus?*, this volume will help Christians articulate why they trust the Bible when it comes to who God is, who we are, and how we're supposed to live. Geoff Davis is the teacher.

Messages in February

February 7



Be Imitators of God — *Ephesians 4:29-5:2*

Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

We know how the world works: As soon as something good comes along someone quickly makes an imitation of it. Cheap. Mass-produced. It's often easy to spot a fake. So God says, Be imitators of Me—not a fake, but living as dearly loved children in a life of love. Show others the kindness we have been shown in Christ.

February 14



Love Is Kind—*Luke 10:25-37*

Pastor Geoff Davis Preaching

Kindness defines God's love for us and is part of the Fruit of the Spirit. Living a life of love marked by kindness is one way of living that pleases God. Kindness is characterized by benevolence and tenderness. A kind person automatically wants to help others and to do so with sympathy and consideration. Godly love will make a person kinder. No one can be loving and unkind at the same time. The Samaritans were despised by the Jews in Jesus' day, yet Jesus continued to show kindness to them. His parable of the Good Samaritan shows us insight into the true meaning of kindness – the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate – and how that kind of love can come from anywhere; that love's kindness is defined by the way we live and act, not just by what we say or who we are. Are we living in such a way that we experience and share God's kindness through his love? In all situations? Or are we more like modern-day Pharisees than we like to believe?

February 21



An Unexpected Gift—*Acts 3:1-10*

Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

Who's a kind person you know? Why does s/he come to mind? Probably because they're different than what you so often experience in life. A crippled man expected to get just another hand-out from Peter, but instead he got the power of Jesus. Kindness is that unexpected gift that stands a person up, shows them they matter, and opens the door to healing through Christ.

February 28



Kindness & Truth—*Proverbs 3:3-4*

Pastor Doug Hinton Preaching

Love is kind. The writer of Proverbs 3 challenges to 'bind...kindness and truth...around your neck.' Why do we need to be reminded of these qualities on a daily basis? Imagine looking in the mirror every day and seeing kindness and truth wrapped around your neck. Would that change how we interact with the world? How? When? Why? Let's seek wisdom together.

February Ministry Schedules

February 7
February 14
February 21
February 28

NURSERY

Carol Koser, Ivy Davis, Brooke Davis
Marg Zurin, Diane Garber, Jen Lugar
Sue Brubaker, Sallie Hoppert, Kensey Rice
Betty Cox, Sarah Fisher, Abby Wright



February 7
February 14
February 21
February 28

SOUND TECHNICIANS—8:00

Dick Caldwell
Rich & Jamie Bushong
Dave Schott
Matt Markey

SOUND TECHNICIANS—10:15

Blaine Garber & Rich Bushong
Matt Markey & Rich Bushong
Mitchell Barnes & Rich Bushong
Matt Markey & Rich Bushong



February 7
February 14
February 21
February 28

WORSHIP LEADERS—8:00

One of the pastors
Tom Fritz
Dennis Hughes
Randy Ziegler

WORSHIP LEADERS—10:15

TBA
Laura Meiser
Shelley Kontra
TBA

SPECIAL MUSIC



February 7
February 14
February 21
February 28

CHOIRS/SPECIAL MUSIC

Sanctuary Choir
TBA
Sanctuary Choir
TBA

VIDEO TECHNICIANS—10:15

Dave Bendit
Christian Layman
Doug Howard
Ben Johnson

February 7
February 14
February 21
February 28

DEACON GREETERS

Gladys Metzler
Joel Kettering
Ruth Johnson
Tom Connelly

JNH GREETERS

Jim & Sue Musser
Carl & Lisa Polonchak
Earl & Betty Zimmerman
Faye Rohrer



OFFERING TABULATORS

Glenn Brubaker, Marcia Root

HCOB Family News



Membership Class!

MEMBERSHIP CLASS COMING IN FEBRUARY

Pastor Pete will be leading a membership class each Sunday morning in February during the Sunday School hour (9:00-10:00). Anyone who desires to join the church, has questions about what it means to join the church, or most importantly, has not yet given their lives to Jesus Christ and are curious about what that means, please join us for conversation. Nothing is expected other than to come open to God and one another. All are welcome! We will meet upstairs in the room labeled "Membership." Please contact the church office or Pastor Pete if you plan on joining us.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

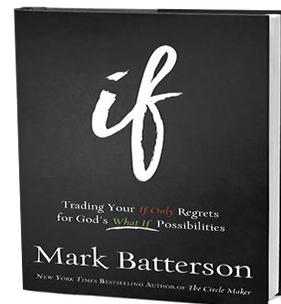
The Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Study will be using the 4 session DVD series

"if"

by Mark Batterson for our April and May 2016 study. There is a book and participants guide for this series.

The four sessions are:

1. If Only
2. As If
3. What If
4. No Ifs, Ands, or Buts about It



"If" That tiny two-letter word is the hinge on the door of possibilities. Some of us are stuck in *if only*, living lives marked by regret. But God can turn your *if only* regrets into a *what if* attitude, a faith that looks forward to the future with holy confidence. There are 1,784 *ifs* in the Bible. The most significant? "If God is for us, who can be against us?" It's the game changer! God is always on our side--every day, in every way. That one little *if* changes everything. With his trademark enthusiasm and contagious joy, Mark Batterson helps you overcome feelings of guilt, fear, and doubt, because in Christ there is no condemnation. Unpacking the promises of Romans 8, he shows you how to transform your *if only* regrets into *what if* possibilities. And because of that, the possibilities for your life are limitless. To see series trailer and for more information please go to: <http://ifbook.com/>

The Bible Study meets at Ruth Johnson's home at 2014 Miller Road in East Petersburg from 9:00AM to 11:00AM. We will meet the 1st and 3rd Thursday of April and May for this study. Please contact Ruth Johnson (569-2430) or Jamie Bushong (664-4395) by March 6th if you are able to join us and would like to have a book (approximately \$11.50) and/or participants guide (approximately \$7.00).

HCOB Kids News



1 Corinthians 13:2 - "If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."

We continue to work on **Bible memorization!** How is yours going? 1 Corinthians 13 sure does drive home how important love is to God! What better place to start than in our own families and church. What a blessing that love reaches along ALL ages!

Take a minute and stop in our nursery. You will feel loved there! Such happy little faces! In a desire to help the nursery be a happy, comfortable place, I am hoping we are able to add two more comfortable chairs for those caring for our children. They are not only great to sit in, but safer for little fingers. We could use one more in the play room and one in the crib/nursing room. **Interested in donating** toward the purchase? Please contact either myself, or one of the pastors. The blue chair in the nursery is great for snuggling and reading!

VBS is just around the corner...okay, not super soon, but it will be here before we know it. February 7th, following the 10:15 service, we will be having a brief meeting to talk about our 2016 VBS. We will be using the curriculum Submerged from Lifeway. VBS will take place June 20th to 23rd. Tons of ways to participate!!!! Thanks for loving our kids!

Children's Praise and Worship is set to begin! Jen Hinton and Laura Meiser will be helping us get a children's praise time going beginning February 28th. It will be incorporated into our Kids' Church time. We will meet upstairs 11:15 to 11:40 the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. A letter with more details will be sent home with the kids.

Karen Rice
Children's Ministry Coordinator

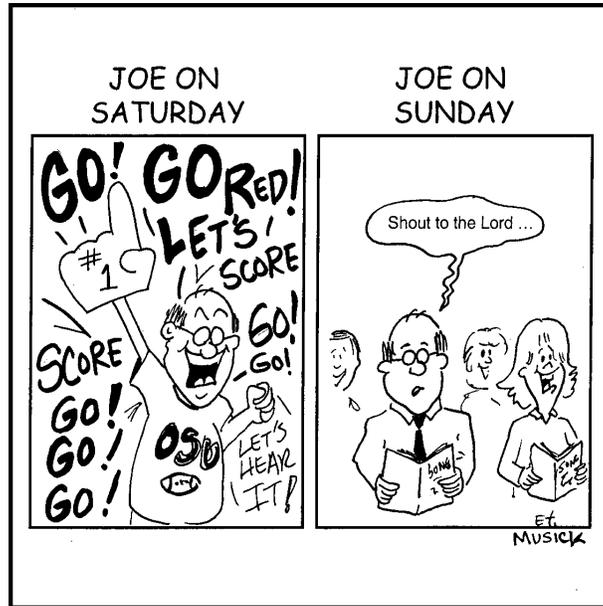
FEBRUARY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Pastor Doug on vacation 7:00 PM Education Team	2 Pastor Doug on vacation 7:00 PM Deacons Meeting	3 Pastor Doug on vacation 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 6:30 PM Young Adult Fellowship & Study 7:00 PM Brethren Village Worship 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	4 Pastor Doug on vacation 7:00 PM Prayer Experience	5 Pastor Doug on vacation	6 Pastor Doug on vacation
7 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Membership class 10:15 AM Blended Worship 11:30 AM VBS meeting 6:30 PM Young Families Fellowship & Study 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	8 10:00 AM Pastor Doug Seminary Class	9 9:00 AM Sewing Circle 12:00 PM Silver Singles 6:30 PM Fellowship & Hospitality Team 7:00 PM Stewards of Property 7:00 PM Worship Team	10 Ash Wednesday 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	11	12 6:45 PM WORDD Worship	13
14 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Membership class 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	15	16 6:30 PM Outreach Team	17 HERALD DEADLINE 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 6:30 PM Young Adult Fellowship & Study 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	18	19	20
21 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Membership class 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Young Families Fellowship & Study 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	22 10:00 AM Pastor Doug Seminary Class	23 7:00 PM Leadership Team	24 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	25	26	27
28 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Membership class 10:15 AM Blended Worship 11:30 AM Youth Grab 'N Go Lunch Fundraiser 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	29					

For more details about upcoming events and up-to-date calendar information, please visit

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

**Toon of
The Month**



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The Month**



RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

Hempfield Church of the Brethren
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