

Pastor Pete Kontra

Prayer: 24/7/365

Nehemiah is a Jewish man who has risen to high office in the Persian administration—he is cupbearer to King Artaxerxes. All is good until Nehemiah's brother comes and shares the news that their people, the Jews, are in trouble and shame in Jerusalem, and that the walls of the city are broken down. So in his grief, Nehemiah weeps and mourns for days, and eventually asks the king's permission to go and help his people. Nehemiah would find many challenges, including outside forces that attempted to hurt and confuse the Jews as they rebuilt the city wall and restored dignity to the people. But the wall would be rebuilt and God given the glory in the end.

But before he did anything, Nehemiah prayed.

Nehemiah prayed when he heard about his people's situation. (ch.1)

- *Our first and continual response to all things must be prayer.* Before we do anything, we need to fall on our knees before God for peace, for strength, and for wisdom. Rather than react to circumstances, good or bad, let us respond to them by first seeking God's face, humbling ourselves before Him.

Nehemiah prayed in response to the insults that were directed his way. (ch.4).

- Just as Nehemiah experienced, there are always those "outside forces" that would love for us to become discouraged. There are those who would say we are foolish to give our lives to Jesus. There are times when it would seem as though our efforts in this world are insignificant.

But our response must be to pray. Stay focused on what we are to do, always living for the purpose of serving God and doing His work.

Nehemiah and his people prayed when outside forces tried to rattle them and confuse them. (ch.4)

- In moments of crisis, in challenging or stressful times, we can get confused, bewildered, disoriented. Satan would love for that to happen to us, Christ's Church. He would love for us to fall apart, be torn apart, and perhaps lose sight of what we are doing and doubt our purposes.

But we must pray so that our defenses are up and we see it for what it is. Nehemiah helped God's people stay on their guard, always at the ready, focused, working together. So it must be with us. Be on your guard. Don't get confused, but be courageous by the power of Christ given to us His Body. Pray. Do the work. Stick together. Stay focused on our purpose.

Nehemiah made sure to give proper credit where it was due—to God—for all their success.

- Remember to always give God the glory in all the great things He is doing here at Hempfield. Anything and everything we have is from Him. God's purposes will prevail, as they always have. Praise be to God! -Pastor Pete

From Pastor Doug

Why Follow Jesus?

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

—Matthew 16:24-25

Why do we follow Jesus? What makes him different than other gods, other ways of life, other philosophies? I've been pondering this question for a few weeks while being bombarded by questionable media, people seeking answers, and the busy schedule that summer brings. Tied closely to this question follows another: In trying to follow Jesus, am I making any kind of impact around me or am I doing this in vain?

Why follow Jesus? In our political season and theological discussions among fellow followers of Christ, I often hear the phrase, "I need to go with my conscience." *My* conscience. Thinking about this phrase has troubled me for some time now. Being a 'pull yourself up by your bootstraps, red-blooded, self-directing American,' I understand and have used this statement. But, if we carry it to its end, who is the ultimate judge then? It becomes me. It becomes you. And there is a propensity toward division. This is not difficult to see: political parties divided, churches divided, nations divided, marriages and families divided, and the list goes on. If my conscience is the ultimate judge, am I able to listen to or learn from someone I disagree with? If I am the ultimate judge, where does that leave Jesus and his teachings? Looking at the passage from Matthew found above, it seems as though following Jesus may impede upon our conscience; become a hindrance, a stumbling block. Yet, if we are to live as God intended – seeking right relationship with him and those around us (greatest two commandments) – then we must die to our desires and need to be ultimate judge in order to bend and break our will toward His. In doing so, our lives and being can be transformed to represent Him and therefore bring us into the work which he began: reconciliation. As human beings created in his image, we need to seek and understand the truth, but we do not own it. It is his, it is Him. He *is* the truth. So, if my conscience, my judgment yields to Him - and this is done through Bible study both individually and with others, through prayer and then practice of his teachings - does this impact those around me?

As we follow Jesus, as we learn from Him, our lives are transformed and we gradually and continually interact differently with the world around us. If I am not the ultimate judge, I interact with my neighbor differently because Jesus says to love your neighbor as yourself. So often I hear people speaking in order to state their point – no matter how it is received. What if we can communicate in such a way as to both hear our neighbor *and* speak so that they can hear and understand us? As judge and master of my own life, I become the authority and can keep people out. When Jesus is master and judge, I humbly learn from him and invite others to do the same in both word and action. We may disagree with those around us, but the door stays open for conversation. This allows us to be the hands, feet, and mouthpiece of Jesus to those we work, play, and live with. And his Kingdom and will are done both in heaven and on earth.

How are you learning from Jesus today? How are you challenging others to do the same? How are you being the hands, feet and mouthpiece of Jesus to those around you? Be transformed by Christ and watch the transformation begin around you!

Mission Possible

Pastor Kent Rice

Content with Our Ignorance

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. –Isaiah 55:8

Much of our discontent seems to come from our perception that things aren't going the way they should go. But do we really know how things are supposed to go?

Imagine a group of church folks in the temple when the veil was torn during the crucifixion. Just before the earth started shaking, I would guess people were horrified that the curtain separating the Holy place from the rest of the temple was gone. “This is terrible! Who is going to fix it? How are we going to keep people out of the Holy place?” Once the earthquake started, I imagine people worried about that instead!

The point, of course, was that through Christ all have access to the Father. But no one understood that until later. God is doing all kinds of things all the time and is often doing them in ways we wouldn't understand if he wrote them in burning letters 100 feet high across the sky. Would Nehemiah have faithfully overseen the rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall if he had known that the city would figure so prominently in the murder of the Messiah hundreds of years later? We are called to obedience and faithfulness. And while it is a good thing to ask for and seek God's wisdom, we must also understand that there are many things we may never know or comprehend. God is big and we are small. If we are not content with a certain level of ignorance where He is concerned, maybe that's because we don't really trust Him all that much.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight – Prov 3:5-6

HCOB Kids News

Karen Rice



Can you believe that August is here?!?! How did that happen? What a great summer we have had though...and there is still some left.

VBS was amazing! Thank you, again, to all who came out to help. I hope you have some understanding what a blessing you are to our church, our kids and me. I also hope that you had a wonderful time. I sure did!

Kids' Church is moving right along! We have gotten to hear about some wonderful family activities people have been enjoying. I might be a little jealous. I love hearing how close our families are and how much they love spending time together. What an incredible gift!

We have been watching a series of DVDs by Phil Vischer, the creator of Veggie Tales, that is called “Buck Denver asks...What's In the Bible?” It has been bringing up some really neat conversations! We are hearing about who wrote the Bible, how it is put together, and what is it really about. We found out that “testament” means “promise”, so the Bible is God's promise to us! Cool!!!

Keep enjoying your summer routines! Know that you are in my prayers!
Enjoy! --Mrs. Rice

Messages in August

August 7



Love Keeps No Record of Wrongs — Acts 15:36-41; Col. 4:10-15
Pastor Doug Hinton Preaching

Our theme for this month is “Love keeps no record of wrongs.” How fitting after spending a month talking about love and anger. But what does this quality look like? How can we live it out better? Many believers know that Jesus forgives our sins, but also struggle forgiving themselves. Many believers know that Jesus forgives others and can also forgive people, but some keep a running list of all the ways people have done them wrong. Let’s look at Paul, Barnabas, and Mark to see if and when we have a dispute or disagreement with a fellow member in Christ, how we can move forward together.

August 14



God’s Way Is the High Way— Psalm 103/Matthew 7:1-5
Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

In understanding “love keeps no record of wrongs,” we begin by remembering who God is and what He has done: “He does not treat us as our sins deserve...As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” Forgiven once; forgiven forever. You don’t have to hold on to anything. So too we are called to love others.

August 21



The Big Picture—Genesis 45:1-8
Pastor Kent Rice Preaching

If Joseph kept a rap sheet on his brothers for their crimes against him, it would have been quite long indeed. But love keeps no record of wrongs and Joseph saw God's hand and purpose in events that could easily have ruined him. Instead, he saved the entire region and the very family that had betrayed him. Is there a greater purpose being served amidst difficult circumstances in your life?

August 28



I Have Prayed for You— Luke 22:24-34
Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

Jesus knew all that the disciples were about to do as He was arrested and crucified. He knew that Peter would deny Him, yet He prays for Peter and knows the potential that he has to become the leader of the early church. How do we see others? Do we see someone as a list of all the things they’ve done wrong, or do we pray for them and see the potential that is there in Christ? Where is your focus?

August Ministry Schedules

August 7
August 14
August 21
August 28

NURSERY

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



August 7
August 14
August 21
August 28

SOUND TECHNICIANS—8:00

Dick Caldwell & Rich Bushong
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



August 7
August 14
August 21
August 28

WORSHIP LEADERS—8:00

One of the Pastors
Ray O'Boyle
Randy Ziegler
Pete Cope

WORSHIP LEADERS—10:15

TBA
Sue Brubaker
Jason Hoffman
TBA

SPECIAL MUSIC



August 7
August 14
August 21
August 28

CHOIRS/SPECIAL MUSIC

Kent Rice
Lisa Polonchak
TBA
TBA

VIDEO TECHNICIANS—10:15

Doug Howard
Dave Bendit
Ben Johnson
Dave Bendit

August 7
August 14
August 21
August 28

DEACON GREETERS

Millie Hoffman
Paula Connelly
Wes Bowers
Penny Kettering

JNH GREETERS

Nicolas & Joanna Huacani
Earl & Betty Zimmerman
Curtis & Jean May
Tom & Carolyn Fritz



OFFERING TABULATORS

Glenn Brubaker, Marcia Root

HCOB Adult Sunday School

ADULT COMBINED SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS will feature a series of mission reports along with Bible studies from the International Sunday Lessons.

- ✠ August 7--Mission Report by Deborah Foti concerning United World Missions
- ✠ August 14--Annual Conference Report by Dave and Deb Bendit
- ✠ August 21--International Sunday School Lesson
Romans 11:11-16 "God Prunes and Grafts"
Teacher: Dennis Bushong
- ✠ August 28--International Sunday School Lesson
Romans 12:1-2, 13:8-14 "Love Fulfills the Law"

Praying Attention

Take a Praise Pause

"Seven times a day and all day long do I praise You because of Your righteous decrees" Psalm 119:164

Stopping to praise the Lord while in the middle of a difficult situation averts the attention from the situation to the Almighty One and He meets us there to offer us His peace that passes all understanding.

Outreach @ HCOB



This month's featured Outreach partner is On Earth Peace (OEP). It began in 1974, when Brother MR Zigler brought together people seeking a renewing of the Church of the Brethren's historic peace witness in New Windsor, MD. In 1988, OEP became an agency of the Church of the Brethren. Their mission is to "help individuals, congregations, communities, and other groups grow in peace through powerful programs of training and accompaniment."

What does it mean that OEP is an "official agency" of the Church of the Brethren? As its current Executive Director told me, OEP feels that they are an integral part of the church and that the church is an integral part of OEP. So even though OEP operates independently from the COB, they report to the COB Annual conference and approximately one-half of their Board members are elected at the COB Annual conference. They raise all of their own funding but are heavily supported by COB congregations and individuals.

Programs

The Executive Director told me that they measure their success not by what they can do, but by what they can help others to do. "He must increase, I must decrease." John 3:30. On Earth Peace equips our congregations and our members in many ways, so let's look at a few.

Youth--It is encouraging to see the youth programs that OEP champions. They are dedicated to developing leadership for peace in each generation. They offer a youth leadership training program teaching skills for conflict resolution and social change. They also conduct weekend Peace retreats where youth engage in adventure-based learning and creative problem solving.

Congregations--The Nonviolent Social change ministry of OEP provides tailored training for congregations or groups in how to be an active, positive, reconciling force that seeks to build a hopeful future. This work is rooted in the philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Ministry of Reconciliation (MoR) strives to equip individuals and congregations with peacemaking skills through workshops and training events. Rooted in Jesus' teachings, participants learn healthy responses to conflict and pro-active practices for generating understanding in the midst of diverse perspectives. They train MoR practitioners and serve as a resource to Shalom teams which "empower congregations and Districts to maintain and enhance healthy relationships."

Not Without Objection

On Earth Peace has raised objections by some (certainly not a majority) within the denomination because of their approach to teaching peacemaking, inclusion, and social justice, and by statements that they have made regarding inclusion. Some of their approaches were intended to generate questions for discussion and push for a re-evaluation of Biblical understanding as read and interpreted in community and they surely did.

As a result of disagreements with some of their approaches, two queries were presented to the 2016 Annual Conference regarding whether they should remain an agency and whether they should be dissolved and their work rolled into the staff of the COB. As the COB Review and Evaluation committee reviews these queries, hopefully the strength of the COB membership and our ability to come together in our differences and work together to resolve them, will support a unified approach that will help us all continue the work of peace and reconciliation in the world.

If you like to read original documents rather than someone else's interpretation of an issue, check out the links to On Earth Peace's response to the Queries, which were published in the COB Newline - <http://www.brethren.org/news/2016/newline-for-june-24-2016.html>. The On Earth Peace website also has some good resources, so here are just a few: Ministry of Reconciliation Resources - <http://onearthpeace.org/bringing-reconciliation/resources>

A biblical Basis for Inclusion -

<http://files.ctctcdn.com/0c07cc78001/4bf72fc0-9f80-4793-aae6-6bb94a08f734.pdf?ver=1459192397000>

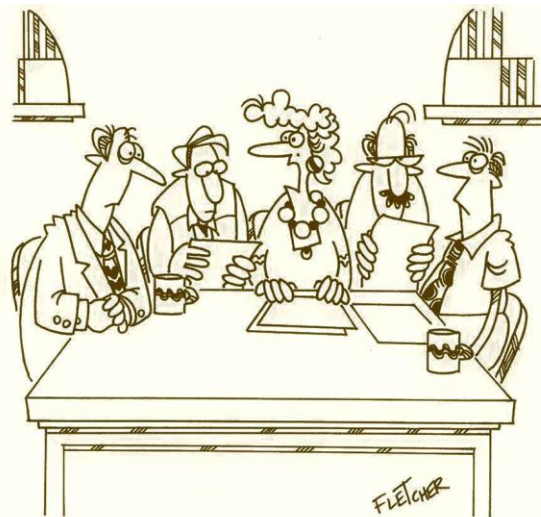
August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:00 PM Education Team	2 7:00 PM Deacons Meeting	3 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 6:30 PM Young Adult Fellowship & Study	4 7:00 PM Prayer Experience	5	6 3:00 PM Luke Hinton bday party 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
7 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	8 4:30 PM Friendship Community Picnic	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 9:00 AM Sewing Circle 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice	11	12 6:45 PM WORDD Worship	13 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
14 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	15 Pastor Pete on vacation	16 Pastor Pete on vacation 6:30 PM Outreach Team	17 HERALD DEADLINE Pastor Pete on vacation 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 6:30 PM Young Adult Fellowship & Study	18 Pastor Pete on vacation	19 Pastor Pete on vacation	20 Pastor Pete on vacation 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
21 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	22 4:00 PM QE Brass Rehearsal	23 6:00 PM QE Brass Rehearsal 7:00 PM Leadership Team	24 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice	25	26	27 9:00 AM QE Brass Rehearsal 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
28 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	29	30	31 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice			

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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"We're hoping you'll lead us on a journey of transformation without requiring any real changes."

**Toon of
The Month**



RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

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