

Forever?

Pastor Pete Kontra

What's something you do everyday? I know, there are many things you can name I'm sure. Because not only is there a whole host of things we do everyday, but there are many reasons why we do them too—you know, things we need to do, are required to do, want to do, are expected to do, love to do, hate to do. On and on.

How do you sort through those? What are the things at the top of your list? Why?

We recently had our Outreach Team meeting here at Hempfield, which always reminds me of how much good work we are doing here. And so I realized that I needed to change the meeting time on my calendar since it is different than when we met last year. So I pulled out my phone and began typing it in.

Event: Outreach Team; Location: Hempfield; Start time: 6:30pm; Repeat: Every third Monday

And then I saw a box to check next to the word "FOREVER". Hmmmm.....Forever? Really? Am I going to be on the Outreach Team on the third Monday night of every month for rest of time? I mean, if that happens that's okay—I love all of you on the team. But there will come a day when I leave this earth, so forever is kind of a big commitment.

So it made me think: What would I check the "FOREVER" box for? There's a lot of great things I enjoy in this life, but forever? It starts to zero in on what matters most in life.

FOREVER:

- ✓ God's love.
- ✓ Following Christ.
- ✓ My love for Shelley.
- ✓ My love for my family.

There's not much more to add to the list. Because that includes you the church, that includes loving all others, that includes praying, studying God's Word, worshiping Him.

Jesus said, **"I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."** And He said the greatest thing is to **"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And love your neighbor as yourself."**

His steadfast love endures forever. It quickly puts all things in perspective. There are many important things we put on our calendars everyday, but few worthy of the "FOREVER" box. We now enter this season of Lent as we journey to Good Friday and Easter which is always a good time to take a look at where you are in your walk with Christ. Take time to be with Him and make sure you have the right boxes checked. Blessings! -
Pastor Pete

Rights and Love

Pastor Doug Hinton

Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to order you to do what is proper, yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you—since I am such a person as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me. —Philemon 1:8-11

The book of Philemon can be found between the books of Titus and Hebrews toward the latter half of the New Testament. Containing less than a page of content, it remains one of the shortest books in the Bible. In this letter, Paul pleads on behalf of Onesimus that Philemon accept him back as a brother in Christ. You see, Onesimus was a slave to Philemon and from what we can gather from the letter, stole from his master and then ran away. By law, Philemon had every right to punish this man with prison, hard labor, or even death. According to the passage above, Paul seems to ‘have enough confidence in Christ to order’ Philemon to do what was right—Paul had every right to order his brother to accept Onesimus back, ‘yet for love’s sake rather I appeal to you.’

As I ponder our society, I hear ‘rights’ come up time after time. According to dictionary.com, one definition for **right** says, “*a just claim or title, whether legal, prescriptive, or moral.*” i.e., “I have the right to...” In America, some of these rights are old: free speech, bearing arms, or freedom of religion. Some are relatively new and can be found in heated discussions: right to support or not support gay marriage, the right of an individual to choose their gender identity, the rights of immigrants and refugees living among us—what are they and who enforces them? And I wonder, how do we practice our ‘rights’? Do rights supersede our love for Christ? Do our rights supersede the sacrifice of the cross? Do our rights void the resurrection power given us through the Holy Spirit to testify to those around us? In other words, when we speak of our rights, are we serving the Kingdom of God first? Or are we serving our national, state, or local government? Or even our own desires that may be contrary to God’s kingdom? Now know that I am not speaking to a political left or right, but rather to my brothers and sisters in the One Body of Christ. When we speak, do we stand self-justified, or do we appeal to those around us in love seeking to reconcile them to God through the sacrifice of Christ?

Here’s the interesting thing about the book of Philemon. I once read (and forgive me because I forget where) that one of the early church leaders in Jerusalem carried the name *Onesimus*. We believe this letter to be preserved because Philemon listened to Paul’s appeal and accepted Onesimus not as a slave, but as a brother in Christ. And his ‘usefulness’ (Onesimus’ name means useful) allowed this former slave to become a leader in the body. The rights and labels of the time became secondary to the sacrifice and spirit of Christ. Now, I’ve been told I can be direct and even at times harsh. My prayer today: appeal to one another in love. As we see in this letter of Paul, the truth does not have to be sacrificed for grace’s sake, nor grace for truth’s sake. Rather, holding them in tension, the church of Paul’s time was strengthened through these followers’ words and actions. And the good news: the church continues to be strengthened 2,000 years later through this small, impactful letter. Not because men practiced their rights, but rather appealed to one another in the love of Christ.

Mission Possible

Pastor Kent Rice

Thinking Small

“Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the LORD that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hand of Zerubbabel?” – Zechariah 4:10

“Big-picture” folks like me would do well to reflect upon this wonderful passage at least once per day. Like our Good Father, we are to rejoice in the “small” victories of our brothers and sisters. In those all-too-rare moments when we have a good Kingdom perspective, we realize that our “biggest” moments are infinitely small compared to what God has done and is doing. Yet God rejoices at even our small stuff. This past week I carried this scripture close to my heart and in so doing became a part of some amazing things. It works!

So what does God despise? Scripture would suggest that He despises when we consider Him unimportant or irrelevant. Is my lack of attaching importance to small things “despising” them? I think it is. If something or someone is important to God, it should be important to me, too. Rivers begin as a few droplets. Ministries begin as a moment of conviction. A short note can pierce someone’s darkness with a shaft of heavenly light. And who is to say what is “big” and “small” anyway?

One thing is for sure—seven eyes are not going to miss much! So be seen celebrating a small thing today!

HCOB Kids News

Karen Rice

VBS VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP



Before we know it, VBS will be upon us! Let’s make sure we get it on our calendars AND set aside time to share ourselves with our children during VBS. VBS 2017 will be held Monday, July 10th to Thursday, July 13th. It will run from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

★Our theme is Galactic Starveyors: Discovering the God of the Universe!★

Theme verse: Colossians 1:15-16

Our first outer space theme!!!

PLEASE check out the sign-up sheets in the narthex beginning March 5th and be sure to put VBS on your calendars!!!!

Praying Attention



Prayer is weakness connecting with Omnipotence.

Messages in March

March 5



One Way—*John 14:1-6*

Pastor Doug Hinton Preaching

On this first Sunday of Lent—the 40-day period before Easter (except Sundays)—we will consider the question, “Why Christ?” In a culture that likes to ‘leave my options open,’ how can Christians claim that Jesus is the only way to God? Jesus claimed to be ‘the way, the truth, and the life.’ How do we understand this saying and why is it important? Further, can its understanding impact how we live and walk with those people in our daily lives? Let’s take a look at this passage and see how we might follow Jesus this week.

March 12



Why Such a Place?— *Luke 4:1-13*

Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

Jesus is baptized and then immediately goes into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Why would the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into such a place? Why is it important for Jesus to do this? It is important for us as brothers and sisters in Christ to understand how our personal walk with Him impacts us as the Body and how we can encourage each other to grow deeper in Him.

March 19



The Gospel of John— *John 16:17-33*

Pastor Kent Rice Preaching

This morning we will hear portions of John’s gospel dramatically presented, including John 17 in which Jesus prays “that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

March 26



Rejoice in Our Suffering?—*Romans 5:-1-11*

Pastor Geoff Davis Preaching

Paul tells us that, as Christians we rejoice in our suffering. The Greek word for rejoice means “to display or proclaim publicly (and ostentatiously) a satisfied contentment with one’s own or another’s achievements.” The Greek word for suffering means “an oppressive state of physical, mental, social, or economic adversity; trouble.” That means that, at some point in our lives, we all suffer – we’re all united by the concept of suffering. How do we normally approach suffering? What would it be like to “rejoice in our suffering?” What are we looking for – relief or deliverance from our suffering?

March Ministry Schedules

March 5
March 12
March 19
March 26

NURSERY

Carol Koser, Ivy Davis, Peg Layman
Marg Zurin, Carolyn Gingrich, Karen Rice
Sue Brubaker, Sallie Hoppert, Kensey Rice
Betty Cox, Sarah Fisher, Jake Rannels



March 5
March 12
March 19
March 26

WORSHIP LEADERS—8:00

Tom Fritz
Dennis Hughes
Pastor TBD
Randy Ziegler

WORSHIP LEADERS—10:15

Deb Bendit
Kent Rice
Laura Meiser
Laura Meiser

SPECIAL MUSIC



March 5
March 12
March 19
March 26

CHOIRS/SPECIAL MUSIC

Sanctuary Choir
TBA
Sanctuary Choir
Kent Rice

VIDEO TECHNICIANS—10:15

Doug Howard
Dave Bendit
Ben Johnson
Dave Bendit



March 5
March 12
March 19
March 26

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



March 5
March 12
March 19
March 26

DEACON GREETERS

Millie Hoffman
Lois Killian
Nancy Haas
Penny Kettering

JNH GREETERS

Butch Nachbar
Jeff & Bev Moyer
Jim & Sue Musser
Bruce/Bonnie/Abby Wright

OFFERING TABULATORS

Dave Dum, Rick Schaidle

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.

March 5	The Source of All Love
March 12	God's Overflowing Love
March 19	God's Love Manifested
March 26	God's Love Restores

✠ **THE OTHER ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BE STUDYING THE E100 CURRICULUM.** The readings for the upcoming week will be in the bulletin every week. Then they can be discussed in the various Sunday Schools and small groups. If you have any questions about the E100, please contact Pastor Doug.

HCOB Family News

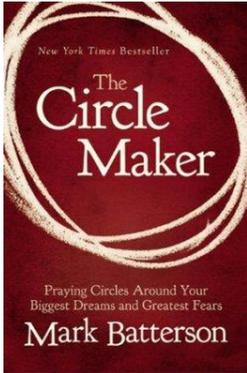
EDUCATIONAL GRANT—The Church, through the Education Team, is offering a GRANT to individuals pursuing a career in Christian Ministry or attending a Christian college or university. Inquiring applicants can send a letter to Donna Reed, secretary of the Education Team, via the church mailbox or rdreed2@verizon.net. Please include a short resume. The deadline for grant applications is May 1.

ATTENTION ALL YOUTH CURRENTLY IN 8TH GRADE THRU HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS. In July of 2018 you are invited to Fort Collins, CO for the COB National Youth Conference. If you are interested in attending that conference we need to start thinking about preparations for it. Please contact Ed Haldeman in the very, very near future to discuss your desires. It is a truly remarkable and impacting experience so let Ed know of your interest. It would be a good idea to let your parents know as well and we all can get together to answer any questions you may have about participating in this Rocky Mountain experience where God and beauty meet.

POST HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: If you, or someone you know is graduating from a college, university, or other post high school program, please send the name & contact information to Donna Reed, secretary of the Education Team, (church mailbox, via Breeze, or rdreed2@verizon.net) by April 16, 2017 in order to complete a short questionnaire that is due April 23, 2017 We would like to celebrate with you as you finish this chapter of your life! Graduation Sunday is June 4, 2017.

TIME CHANGE FOR SILVER SINGLES: Silver Singles will meet Tuesday, March 14 at 11:00 AM (instead of 12:00) at Olive Garden Restaurant.

Ladies Bible Study



The Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Study will be using the 4 session DVD series: *The Circle Maker* by Mark Batterson for our April and May 2017 study. There is a book and participant's guide for this series.

The four sessions are:

1. The First Circle – Dream Big
2. The Second Circle – Pray Hard
3. The Third Circle – Think Long
4. Keep Circling

How Big Is Your God?

Is He big enough to heal your marriage or heal your child?

Is He bigger than a positive MRI or a negative evaluation?

Is He bigger than your secret sin or secret dream?

In *The Circle Maker*, Pastor Mark Batterson shares powerful insights from the true legend of Honi the circle maker, a first-century Jewish sage whose bold prayer ended a drought and saved a generation. Drawing inspiration from his own experiences as a circle maker, Batterson will teach you how to pray in a new way by drawing prayer circles around your dreams, your family, your problems, and, most importantly, God's promises. In the process, you'll discover this simple yet life-changing truth:

GOD HONORS BOLD PRAYERS AND BOLD PRAYERS HONOR GOD!

To see series trailer and for more information please go to the following website: <http://thecirclemaker.com/watch>

The Bible Study meets at Ruth Johnson's home at 2014 Miller Road in East Petersburg from 9:00AM to 11:00AM. Our kickoff meeting will be Thursday, March 23rd and after that we will meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of April and May. An online Bible Study option led by Laura Meiser is also available.

Please contact Jamie Bushong (phone: 664-4395, email: jvb@dejazzd.com, or text: 717-405-9471) by March 12th if you want to join the study at Ruth's or the online study and would like to have a book (approximately \$14.50) and/or participants guide (approximately \$8.00).

MARCH 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ash Wednesday 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 9:00 AM Quilting Group 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	2 4:00 PM QEB Rehearsal 7:00 PM Prayer Experience	3	4 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
5 1st Sunday in Lent Communion in Both Services 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	6 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class 7:30 PM Education Team	7 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class 7:00 PM Deacons Meeting	8 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 8:00 AM Sewing Circle 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Stewards of Property	9	10 12:00 PM Setup Baby Shower 6:45 PM WORDD Worship	11 8:00 AM Witmer baby shower 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
12 2-Cent-A-Meal Offering Daylight-Saving Time Begins 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	13 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class	14 8:00 AM Sewing Circle 11:00 AM Silver Singles 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class 5:00 PM QEB Rehearsal 6:30 PM Fellowship & Hospitality Team 7:00 PM Worship Team	15 HERALD DEADLINE 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 9:00 AM Quilting Group 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	16 4:30 PM QEB Rehearsal	17	18 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
19 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	20 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class 6:30 PM Outreach Team	21 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class	22 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 9:00 AM Quilting Group 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	23 9:00 AM Ladies Bible Study	24	25 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
26 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	27 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class	28 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class 7:00 PM Leadership Team	29 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 9:00 AM Quilting Group 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	30	31	

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

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

**Toon of
The Month**



HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?

**Toon of
The Month**



RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

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