

The World According to God

Pastor Pete Kontra

On the way to Jesus' tomb the women ask, "Who will roll away the stone?" All too often that is the question we find ourselves asking. Who will roll away the stone of my anger? Who will roll away the stone of my fear, my guilt, or the stone of this terrible, hopeless situation I am in right now? "Who will roll it away?" we ask, because we know we couldn't move it even if we tried. Left to our own there is no way to do it. That's our world. But what about in God's world?

When the women arrived at Jesus' tomb, what did they find? The stone was already moved, and not only that, but Jesus was gone! While the women were walking and wondering how in the world they were going to move the stone, God had already taken care of it. They just had to get there to see it.

There are so many times in my life that I walk along wondering how in the world I am going to move the stone that's blocking my life, but just when I arrive at the end of my road I find the stone is already rolled away. While I'm wondering how I'll do it, God is already taking care of things.

The great message we have in Easter, in knowing Jesus walked out of that tomb, is that God doesn't leave things as they are, dark, hopeless, dead. God always has the last word. God won't leave us where we are, down in a hole, in the dark, afraid, beaten, left for dead. That may be the world according to us, but not to God. William J. Bausch says, "In the Greek Orthodox tradition, the day after Easter was devoted to telling jokes... They felt they were imitating the cosmic joke that God pulled on Satan in the Resurrection. Satan thought he had won, and was smug in his victory, smiling to himself, having the last word. So he thought. Then God raised Jesus from the dead, and life and salvation became the last words."

God gets the last word. No stone is large enough to keep God locked up. Death is not the end, but only the beginning. The world as we know it is turned upside down—the irrational becomes rational, the impossible possible. From a small band of frightened followers, Christ's disciples would grow to billions of believers around the world! From the tomb Jesus arose. This is the world according to God. And if all this is true, which it absolutely is, then you will not ever be the same. Believe it. Shout it for all to hear! God bless you.

-Pastor Pete

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Parables as a Way to Receive Truth & Grace

Pastor Doug Hinton

And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” Jesus answered them, “...Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; You will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; For the heart of this people has become dull, With their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes, Otherwise they would see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I would heal them.[Isaiah 6:9-10]’” **Matthew 13:10-15**

Why would Jesus speak in parables? Why would He not just speak clearly to people and tell them exactly what needs to be done to enter the Kingdom of Heaven? I mean, isn't this kind of mean? If He is indeed God, would people not receive His teaching? I wrestled with these questions and after a conversation this morning with another believer, I was reminded of them because I'm not the only one who struggles with this. After all, if we serve a loving God, why would He do this?

As a child, I learned new things in three different ways: watch other people make mistakes, listen to what my parents or teachers told me, or go out and make mistakes, often going against what my parents instructed me to do. While sitting behind a childhood friend holding onto to his shoulders and looking into an electrical outlet, we learned not to put a paperclip in there. We learned this after the electrical current traveled through our bodies. Sure, maybe our parents told us not to do that, but we had to find out *why*. Will I do that again? Certainly, not on purpose.

Now that I am a parent, I do all I can to instruct my children in the right and wrong ways of living. I teach them why we don't touch the hot stove, why we pray before a meal, and why it is important to respect their parents and teachers. Sometimes they get it. Sometimes, they do not. And here is what I am learning: I can be crystal clear about the rewards or consequences of behavior, but there are times they will not listen and instead, will end up in one kind of pain or another: physical, emotion, or spiritual. If they can learn from a story that does not explicitly tell them what to do, but carries the same truth, maybe they can learn the same lesson without having to go through the consequences of not listening to the explicit instruction.

Two things to come out of Jesus speaking in parables: 1) *Even if God spoke directly to a person, he/she has the choice not to listen.* This would be a hard concept to accept, but we see it in our daily lives. People who love us, instructing us how to live Godly lives and practices that can protect our faith, marriage, and children, and still we don't listen until the consequences of our poor choices arrive. 2) *The truth of God is all around us, but we must be willing to listen and see it.* Parables involved God's truth intersecting everyday life. We can remember God's truth because we remember the story of the parable. People have told me, “Doug, I will not remember your sermons without a story. Provide a story to model the point, and I will remember the story. In doing so, I will remember the point.” It's hard to argue this because I am the same way! Jesus spoke in parables, in part, because people will accept the truth when they are ready. How graceful a way to present truth (parables) so that people can remember one (truth) and receive the other (grace)!

Mission Possible

Pastor Kent Rice

Am I Doing it Right?

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God – Micah 6:8 (NIV)

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this--to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. – James 1:27 (KJV)

Do you remember any of those times when you showed children how to do something? You explained the steps, encouraged them to try, and then off they went.

Some kids do not want any help beyond that—they want to figure out the nuance for themselves and will not even take helpful constructive criticism. But others will immediately ask, “Am I *doing* it right? Like *this*?” They may be seeking personal affirmation or simply a validation of the process so that they may be successful. Or both.

We are all children—God’s children. And so it should be no surprise that we behave similarly. When a truth from God is revealed, some put their head down and want to figure out how to apply it themselves while others stop more often along the way and ask God (and/or other people) “*Am I doing it right?*”

The Micah and James scriptures above are encouraging, simple instructions! They remind us that we don’t have to have everything figured out before starting to put our faith in action. If we do those things, God is pleased! In the same way, we will not be able to fully understand the mystery of the Trinity and so many other important aspects of our faith but we don’t *have* to know everything to get started. When asked what is most important, Jesus answered, “Love God and love your neighbor as yourself.”

So let’s review: *Act justly; love mercy; walk humbly with God; love God; and love your neighbor.* If you do all those things, you can’t help but “do it right!”

HCOB Kids News

Karen Rice



Spring has sprung! Thank you, Lord, for such a glorious time of year!

Recently, we talked about the story of Bartimaeus in the preschool/kindergarten class in Kids' Church. He was a blind man who Jesus came across on His way into Jericho. (Just before He rode into Jerusalem as King.) Bartimaeus knew that Jesus was headed his way and wanted to be healed. He kept calling out to Jesus. The people around him told him to be quiet. I can just see it...“Keep it down! You’re bugging Jesus!” Jesus heard Bartimaeus and healed him. He didn’t pause to think about it. He didn’t check His schedule to see if He could pencil in a healing. He just did it. One of our children, when asked what they thought about this story, said “Jesus always has time for us!” He was SO right! Our heavenly Father always does have time for us. How hard is it for us to find time for Him?

During this blessed season, remember that Jesus took time out of His schedule to give the supreme sacrifice for us. Find time for Him.

Messages in April

April 2



The Pain of Progress— *Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75*

Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

Peter boldly declares that he will never deny Jesus, and then immediately does when the pressure is on. Jesus knew it all along. As we walk with Jesus we sometimes face painful times. And so the question for us is: Do we want relief or deliverance? Do we want to avoid the pain and stay where we are, or step into it with Jesus and go deeper in our faith as we experience His deliverance?

April 9



The Road to Deliverance— *Luke 19:28-44*

Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

The crowd cheered and praised Jesus as He entered Jerusalem. They experienced a moment of relief from their struggles and in the hope of Jesus establishing Israel to their rightful place as God's people in the world. Yet, there was more to do. Jesus' journey was not over, but one that would lead Him to the cross and true deliverance of His people. He faced the cross, but didn't stay there. We face trials, but there is always hope when we walk with Jesus through it.

April 16



Love Wins— *John 20:1-18*

Pastor Pete Kontra Preaching

Jesus is alive! We are never without hope. While it was still dark, while no one could see, God raised Jesus from the dead. God has delivered us from evil. *"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us."* -Ephesians 1:7 Love always wins.

April 23



Called By Name—*Luke 20:11-18*

Pastor Kent Rice Preaching

Three years earlier, Jesus first revealed his Divinity to the woman at the well. Now he reveals himself to Mary, who recognizes him once he speaks her name. The Resurrected Jesus does not get assimilated into some cosmic blob—He gets personal. He still does.

April 30



Special Delivery—*Luke 24:13-35*

Del Kautz Preaching

Probably everyone has experienced or will experience a season of gloom, despair, or agony in her/his life at some time or other. Even those of us who follow Christ are not immune. In those trying times we need a special delivery of resurrection hope, an invigorating visit from Jesus to give us new perspective.

April Ministry Schedules

NURSERY

April 2 Carol Koser, Ivy Davis, Peg Layman
April 9 Marg Zurin, Carolyn Gingrich, Jen Lugar
April 16 Sue Brubaker, Sallie Hoppert, Kensey Rice
April 23 Betty Cox, Sarah Fisher, Jake Rannels
April 30



WORSHIP LEADERS—8:00

April 2 Pastor TBD
April 9 Ray O'Boyle
April 16 Joel Kettering
April 23 Randy Ziegler
April 30 Tom Fritz

WORSHIP LEADERS—10:15

Jim Eshleman
TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD

SPECIAL MUSIC



CHOIRS/SPECIAL MUSIC

April 2 Sanctuary Choir
April 9 Donna Reed
April 16 BJ Haverstick (8:00) Sanctuary Choir (10:15)
April 23 Doug Hinton
April 30 BJ Haverstick

VIDEO TECHNICIANS—10:15

Doug Howard
Dave Bendit
Ben Johnson
Dave Bendit
Doug Howard



SOUND TECHNICIANS—8:00

April 2 Dick Caldwell & Rich Bushong
April 9 Rich & Jamie Bushong
April 16 Dave Schott
April 23 Matt Markey
April 30 Rich & Jamie Bushong

SOUND TECHNICIANS—10:15

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



DEACON GREETERS

April 2 Ruth Johnson
April 9 Lois Killian
April 16 Ruth Johnson
April 23 Tom Connelly
April 30 Wes Bowers

JNH GREETERS

Earl & Betty Zimmerman
Tom & Carolyn Fritz
Edith Martin
Richard & Carolyn Gingrich
Nicolas & Joanna Huacani

OFFERING TABULATORS

Jim Stauffer, Dwayne Hostetter, Sue Hostetter

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.

April 2	Shepherding Love	Teacher: Denny Bushong
April 9	Saving Love	Teacher: Butch Nachbar
April 16	Victorious Love	Teacher: Jim Kettering
April 23	Reconciling Love	Teacher: Galen Brumbaugh
April 30	Protecting Love	Teacher: Tom Fritz

‡ **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.

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.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: If you, or a family member is graduating this year from High School, please submit the name and contact information to Donna Reed by April 30, 2017 (church mailbox, via Breeze, or rdreed2@verizon.net). Then you will receive a short questionnaire that is due May 7, 2017, so that we may recognize your achievements on Graduation Sunday, June 4, 2017.

THE MESSENGER is a denominational publication which contains valuable information about what is happening among the Church of the Brethren worldwide. Copies are available each month on the narthex table for you to borrow. For those who have a "paper" subscription, there is also a BONUS online. It has some of the same articles, but also some extras such as Bible studies & pictures.

New subscriptions: If you would like your own copy mailed to you, now is the time to subscribe. You can do it on your own, or take advantage of our church group rate. In an effort to keep our church expenses within our budget, we are asking that all Messenger subscribers pay for their own subscription. However to get the lowest possible price (\$14.50 per year) we will send in all the requests together. There is a promotional price for new subscriptions of \$7.25. If you are interested in a personal subscription, please contact Donna Reed by Apr. 21.

HCOB Family News

FURNITURE NEEDED FOR CHAPEL HALL - The hospitality team is looking for a buffet server or side board with storage for the coffee area in chapel hall. If you have a piece you would like to donate please contact Mary Lou Ruth at gmlruth@gmail.com or [717-682-6488](tel:717-682-6488).

THE CONGREGATIONAL GATHERING DATE has been changed from Thursday, April 20 to Sunday, April 23rd after church.

STAY AFTER CHURCH FOR OUR CONGREGATIONAL GATHERING AND LUNCH, SUNDAY APRIL 23RD! Let's create a stronger HCOB community as we discuss important issues in the life of our church at the Congregational Gathering and then share lunch together. We will be serving pulled pork sandwiches for the adults and hot dogs for the children and young at heart. Drinks, rolls, baked beans and condiments will also be provided. If your last name begins with A-K please bring a dessert to share. If your last name begins with L-Z please bring a salad, relish or fruit to share. One of the great things about a pot luck is trying new tastes and getting new recipes. Any financial donations will also support our youth for future mission trips and NYC. The good news? No clean up, great fellowship! See you there!

GOD'S GROUNDSKEEPERS NEEDS YOU!

If you have a green, blue or brown thumb, love flowers and enjoy working in the soil, then God's Groundskeepers may be the team for you! We will not have any meetings but the only time we will meet is when there is a need to play in the soil and get dirty.

Our goals will be:

- Maintain the flowers and landscape around the church.
- Planting and watering of flowers
- Mulching – congregation and youth will be invited to help
- Spring and fall cleanup – congregation and youth will be invited to help
- Trimming bushes
- Weeding the beds when needed.

This team is an extension of the Stewards Team and will be under their guidance and funding. We are hoping to have enough volunteers to make this team easily fit into anyone's schedule. We will be working out a schedule for weeding of the beds and watering flowers. This team will be under the guidance of a few master gardeners so you will have a chance to learn some new cultivating skills. If you are interested please contact Mary Lou Ruth at [717-682-6488](tel:717-682-6488) or gmlruth@gmail.com.

A SAFECHURCH RETREAT FOR ADULT SURVIVORS OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE--April 22, 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM; Gretna Glen Retreat Center, 87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA Adult survivors are invited to join with others from faith communities on April 22 for a day of reflection on how the story of Tamar, a daughter of King David, who was raped by her brother, speaks to us today about healing, resilience, and hope. Through art, journaling, and discussion we will explore how our stories speak out about surviving, resilience, and ways to use our voices for healing and justice in our churches and community. Those who have previously attended these retreats are welcome to come back! We are including some new activities and fresh material, so please add your voice! Registration forms with more information about the retreat are available in Deb Bendit's mailbox in the church office.

Easter Season 2017

Easter Egg Hunt Saturday April 8, 10:00 AM

Come join us for our annual Easter Egg Hunt! All ages welcome! Bring your own bucket to collect, or make a fancy bag when you get here. We will have it, rain or shine!



Love Feast Thursday April 13, 6:30 PM

Why Thursday? It is Maundy Thursday, the day Jesus shared in the Last Supper with His disciples. Why is this important? In John 13 it says that this is when Jesus showed them the full extent of His love. Jesus prayed that we would be one as He and His Father God are one, and so He showed us how to live this out by humbly serving one another in washing feet, sharing in fellowship around the table, and sharing in communion as we remember and celebrate the true life we are given in Christ. For our young families, children are welcome to sit at the table with their family. There will be childcare available as well.

Good Friday Breakfast April 14, 6:00 AM

Join with other Christians in our community to enjoy a delicious breakfast, and hear from a special speaker, Bishop Christopher Mwita Ndege. Bishop Christopher is a Tanzanian seminary student attending Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, VA. His seminary education will empower him to help Tanzanian churches improve their teaching and training material as they equip followers of Jesus Christ to share the Gospel. With friendships in the Lancaster area and at Hempfield Church of the Brethren, Bishop Christopher comes to share his story of God's calling and the work he is engaged with. An offering will be taken to support the cost of Bishop Christopher's education.



GOOD FRIDAY BREAKFAST



Easter Sunday Sunday, April 16, 8:00 & 10:15 AM

Pastor Pete Kontra preaching

Join us for an inspirational service to sing joyful songs together, special music from our choir and a meaningful message from Pastor Pete to remind us of the true significance of Easter.

April 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 9:00 AM Barger bridal shower 12:00 PM Basom Family Birthday Party 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
2 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 1:00 PM Miller Family Dinner 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	3 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class 7:30 PM Education Team	4 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class 7:00 PM Deacons Meeting	5 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 8:00 AM Quilting Group 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	6 9:00 AM Ladies Bible Study 7:00 PM Prayer Experience	7 6:45 PM WORDD Worship	8 10:00 AM Easter Egg Hunt 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
9 Palm Sunday 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	10 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class	11 8:00 AM Sewing Circle 11:00 AM Silver Singles 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class 6:30 PM Fellowship & Hospitality Team 7:00 PM Worship Team	12 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	13 Set up Good Friday Breakfast 6:30 PM Love Feast	14 Good Friday Office Closed 6:00 AM Good Friday Breakfast	15 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
16 Easter Sunday 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	17 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class 6:30 PM Outreach Team	18 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class	19 HERALD DEADLINE 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 8:00 AM Quilting Group 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	20 9:00 AM Ladies Bible Study	21	22 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
23 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 11:30 AM Congregational Gathering 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	24 Pastor Pete on Vacation 3:00 PM Pastor Doug at class	25 Pastor Pete on Vacation 12:30 PM Pastor Doug at class 7:00 PM Leadership Team	26 Administrative Professionals Day Pastor Pete on Vacation 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 8:00 AM Quilting Group 6:00 PM E 100 Study 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	27 Pastor Pete on Vacation	28 Pastor Pete on Vacation	29 Pastor Pete on Vacation 8:00 AM Caldwell Family Get-Together 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
30 Pastor Pete on Vacation 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 3:00 PM Kautz Birthday Party 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group						

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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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

Hempfield Church of the Brethren
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