

Thanksgiving in the Face of Reality

Pastor Pete Kontra

It's November and Thanksgiving, when we're all supposed to feel good and happy, right?

The thing is, there is so much happening in the world that is not good, and so it can sometimes put a damper on the Thanksgiving enthusiasm. For some, it can be a painful time, remembering loved ones lost, or dealing with broken relationships, or facing the reality that they don't have enough to put much at all on the table, if there is a table to put it on.

All of us deal with the realities of life—illness, loss, stresses, you name it.

As I got a little older and, praise the Lord, now have a family of my own, I began to understand that behind the Norman Rockwell image of my early years with my family there was always a “backstage”.

Now I can think back to those days when I was young, sitting around the table with all the great stuff before me, and I know that not all the relationships were perfect—in fact, none were.

I know that my Grandma sat there with us, fresh with the pain of losing her husband. My mom and her sisters fresh with the pain of losing their father. I know now of some of the personal struggles some of my family were dealing with. I now know and understand that my parents and all the other adults went back to work Monday morning, working hard to make their way in life.

Things were far from perfect. And yet, thanks be to God, I now can look at my Grandma as an example of what Thanksgiving really means. Because, even in the midst of her pain, she remained a pillar of faith, living in true, unshakeable joy, and continued to serve as long as she was able.

It's the stage of thanksgiving God has created us to live within each and every day:

God-centered, in the deep awareness that God has done something amazing here.

The Lord has promised, that *“Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.”* -

Hebrews 12:26

Why? So that only what cannot be shaken will remain, which is God's eternal Kingdom.

Hebrews 13:14: *“For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.”*

God's kingdom--the power and presence of God and His eternal purpose--cannot be shaken.

Jesus came to us and declared that the kingdom of God is near. He is here, in all His resurrected glory and transforming power. Power to heal our wounds. To shine His light into our darkness. To forgive. To make us His children, as part of God's family. Living now in peace, in His grace and the fruit of His Spirit, knowing that all the rest of the stuff of this world is secondary. Not unimportant or somehow wrong. I am thankful for food, for my house, for football and fun things. There's nothing wrong with that.

Just don't get stuck there.

The author Fleming Rutledge writes:

“The life of thankfulness—biblically speaking—is lived in view of the hard things of existence. As the life of thanksgiving deepens, we discover that the more mature prayers of thanksgiving are not those offered for the obvious blessings, but those spoken in gratitude for obstacles overcome, for insights gained, for lessons learned, for increased humility, for help received in time of need, for strength to persevere, for opportunities to serve others.” --*Fleming Rutledge, The Bible and The New York Times (Eerdmans, 1999)*

Yes, I am thankful that I have enough to eat and a house and many comforts. But all of that can be gone tomorrow. And no matter what I have compared to my neighbor, we are all the same—fragile people who need love, hope, peace, and the knowledge that there is a kingdom that will never be shaken. Praise God that He has delivered! -Pastor Pete

9 Weeks

Pastor Doug Hinton

*Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour, But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. **1 Peter 5:5-9***

We have nine more weeks in the year. Eight more weeks with Pastor Pete. Eight weeks until Christmas. I have seven more weeks until I complete my degree. We have four weeks until Thanksgiving. One week until Pastor Kent gives his final sermon here at Hempfield. We are going through many changes right now as a body of believers. And yet, we serve our Risen Savior who is the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. And His Spirit is moving through this body right now; during the transition, during this change. People are beginning (or continuing) to step out in faith to strengthen the body: there are those who would like to begin visiting our widows, our shut-ins, and those not able to drive. There are people who are leading small group discussions or Sunday school classes who may not have before. As I write this, there are people bring in donations for the Eastland Alpaca fundraiser for our Youth Missions Fund. Why am I writing this to you? It's in times of transition that the enemy wants to plant seeds of doubt and division, discord and disbelief. Be aware of that. Be alert! Pray for members of the church. Pray for your Leadership Team (once known as the Church Board). Pray for the Pastoral Search Committee. Participate in a Sunday school, a small group, the Gingerbread House competition (Dec 6), Thanksgiving Eve or Christmas Eve worship services. If you typically go to the 8:00am service, go to the 10:15am service one Sunday to meet new people. If you go to the 10:15 service, get up early and go to the 8am service one Sunday. In all things, pray and seek God's guidance through the Spirit. Stand firm in your faith as we stand together, empowered by the Holy Spirit who searches the depths of God! Remember: God is good, God is near.

Youth

Our youth meet on Sunday nights from 6:30-8:30. We have some free time, play an organized game for 20-30 minutes, and then 30-40 minutes for study and prayer. We completed a 6-week study exploring the attributes of God called Beyond Belief. On October 29th, we are going to the Observation Tower at Governor Dick's in Mt. Gretna. The following week we will begin a 6-week study exploring difficult questions in the faith called Honest to God. We typically have 10-14 youth join us on Sunday nights. We also meet Sunday mornings from 9-10 to discuss faith and life in a more relaxed setting. We typically have 1-6 youth.

Eastland Alpaca Open House fundraiser will be happening the first two weeks in November (4,5,11, & 12). As mentioned, people are already donating drinks, food, and baked goods. We will have hotdogs with or without sauerkraut, pulled pork sandwiches, walking tacos, baked goods, drinks (including tea, lemonade, and orange drink from Kreider's Dairy), and **French fries!** We invite you to join us as a guest to the farm or as a worker behind the stand!

DC Missions Trip. Finally, the third weekend in November we will be going to DC to join our brothers and sisters from St. Stephen's Baptist Church and Lititz COB. We are taking donations for new or gently used shoes of all kinds for distribution domestically and internationally. Pray for all those involved in the trip that Christ may move through his body!

Messages in November

November 5



It's All About the Kids—*Matthew 18:1-5*

Kent Rice

From all the available examples, Jesus calls forth a child and teaches that we are to be like them. At our 8:00 service we will examine the redemptive qualities of children. The 10:15 service will be designed especially for the kids—because we love them just like Jesus did!

November 12



The Path to Peace—*Proverbs 3:5-6*

Pastor Pete Kontra

Sometimes life feels like we're in limbo, leaving behind where we were, yet not quite where we want to be. The old is gone—the new has come. So now what? How do we figure all this out? Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.*” Our call by God is to move forward, to take that next step. And it requires of us that, In all your ways acknowledge Him. In some of your ways? In most of your ways? In the ways that I don't understand? No, in ALL your ways: relationships, decisions, hopes, fears, work, play, taking a walk or pondering the meaning of it all.

November 19



Be Strong and Courageous—

Deuteronomy 31:1-9; Deuteronomy 34:1-9; Joshua 1: 1-9

Pastor Geoff Davis

Change always brings with it an emotional component. When change is thrust on us, we react emotionally until we can process the change and see the possibilities of a new beginning. The Israelites had experienced dramatic change when they left Egypt, but over a 40 year period, had adjusted to the new normal – the wandering in the desert under Moses' leadership. But now God had decided it was time for a new leader, Joshua, and he gives him three reminders: be strong and courageous; don't be afraid or terrified because He goes with you; He will never leave you or forsake you. As we experience change in our congregation, these timeless lessons are still vital to our ability to carry on the work of our Lord.

November 26



Start Walking—*Acts 1:1-14*

Pastor Pete Kontra

Jesus ascends into heaven and leaves the disciples. He assures them that they will be given what they need to continue on, but there's just one challenge: They won't know all the details. So finally it's time for them to start walking—start taking steps into their new life. Transitions happen in life—sometimes big ones. We are called, not to stand still, but to start walking into the new day God has for us. And as the disciples show us, it requires faith, prayer, and the strength from each other.

November Ministry Schedules

November 5
November 12
November 19
November 26

NURSERY

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



November 5
November 12
November 19
November 26

WORSHIP LEADERS—8:00

Pastor TBD
Joel Kettering
Ray O'Boyle
Tom Fritz

WORSHIP LEADERS—10:15

SPECIAL MUSIC



November 5
November 12
November 19
November 26

CHOIRS/SPECIAL MUSIC

Sanctuary Choir
TBD
Sanctuary Choir
TBD

VIDEO TECHNICIANS—10:15

Dave Bendit
Dave Bendit
Ben Johnson
Doug Howard



November 5
November 12
November 19
November 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



November 5
November 12
November 19
November 26

DEACON GREETERS

Wes Bowers
Penny Kettering
Ruth Johnson
Betty Cox

JNH GREETERS

Tom & Carolyn Fritz
Curtis & Jean May
Faye Rohrer
Jerry & Jean Barger

OFFERING TABULATORS

Glenn Brubaker, Allen Hurst

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. Our theme for November is “An Everlasting Covenant”

November 5	Faithful God, Unfaithful People	Teacher: Denny Bushong
November 12	Persecuted Church Program	Teacher: Rich Bushong
November 19	Mediator of the New Covenant	Teacher: Jim Kettering
November 26	Remembering the Covenant	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 currently studying a book by Chuck Swindoll named *So, You Want To Be Like Christ? Eight Essentials to Get You There*. Chuck guides readers into a greater understanding of eight spiritual disciplines of the Christian faith—prayer, humility, self-control, sacrifice, submission, solitude, silence, and hope. Each chapter defines and discusses the concept. Rich Bushong is the contact person.

November 5	Calling Out: Understanding Prayer	Teacher: Pete Kontra
November 12	Persecuted Church Program	Teacher: Rich Bushong
November 19	Calling Out: Pray without Ceasing	Teacher: Galen Brumbaugh
November 26	Humility: Bowing Low	Teacher: TBD

✠ **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 studying Romans for the fall. “The letter to the Romans is a book that repeatedly changes the world by changing people... Romans is about the gospel. Paul was writing to the church in Rome about 57 AD because he wanted them to understand the gospel and then to experience the gospel – to know its glorious release... They seem to have been a church suffering from tensions between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians... Paul... knew what it was they most needed to hear – the gospel. Reading and reflecting on this letter today, we should be prepared to have our hearts shaped and our lives changed by God’s gift of righteousness... and how it applies to us today.” – Tim Keller
For November: Romans 8:26-39 – 10:21. Geoff Davis is the teacher.

HCOB Kids News

Karen Rice



So many things ahead for us, and you, this fall!!!

*We are saving our collection to use toward buying turkeys to donate to Water Street Rescue Mission!
The turkey's will be collected here at the church on November 19th to be at their destination in time for celebrating Thanksgiving. You will have to check out our Turkey upstairs to see how we are doing~

*Sunday, November 5th at 10:15, there will be a special service aimed at the kids in our church! Kent will be leading the service with the help of our children. Please try to attend! I have no doubt it will be a blessing to all ages!

*Mark those calendars! Two super wonderful events coming up in December: Christmas Family Celebration - December 3rd, fun and worship for all ages!!! (there will be sign-up sheets; Gingerbread Competition - December 6th, wonderful time of laughs, fellowship, and candy!

Please consider all these amazing activities!!!

HCOB Family News

THE CONGREGATIONAL GATHERING WILL BE HELD THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16 AT 7:00 PM. Please plan to attend.

PERSECUTED CHURCH SUNDAY—Please consider joining us during the Sunday School hour on November 12 for the Persecuted Church Sunday. Learn, hear and see what is going on around the world to our brothers & sisters in Christ who are being persecuted, just because they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We will meet in the Choir room 9-10am. See Rich Bushong if you have any questions.

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE--On behalf of the Leadership Team we would like to introduce you to the Senior Pastor Search Committee. Janelle Witter is the chairperson. Pete Cope is an ex-officio member. The remaining members include Kevin Zurin, Tim Basom, Jason Hoffman, Dennis Bushong, Carolyn Gingrich, and Ronald Myer. Please pray that the Holy Spirit fills them with direction and discretion as they fulfill their responsibilities in this endeavor. --Ray O'Boyle, Leadership Team Chair

CHURCH ADDRESSES

Many of you send checks, notes and other mail to the church which are greatly appreciated. **When you send this type of mail to the church, please use the church's P.O. Box address listed below.**

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

Following this guideline will help keep our mail safe & secure.

If you must ship something larger to the church using UPS or Fedex, please use the address for the church's physical location listed below.

Hempfield Church of the Brethren
1186 Stevens Street
Manheim, PA 17545

Following this guideline will help me avoid having to personally transport large boxes from the post office to the church.

Both of these addresses are listed in the front of the church directory for your future reference. Thank you for your cooperation. --Amy Smith

CHRISTMAS FAMILY CELEBRATION--Sunday, December 3rd—following 10:15 service--Mark your calendars and plan to attend! There will be a light lunch, crafts for all ages, an art show, talent show and music to bring in the Christmas season! Please keep an eye out for more information AND for sign-up sheets. The sign-up sheets will be in the narthex beginning November 5th. It will be a wonderful time of joy and laughter with your own family as well as the church family!!!

MCCASKEY HIGH SCHOOL GOSPEL CHOIR IS COMING TO HCOB! Saturday, November 4, 7:00 PM, join us to support the ministry of **Alpha & Omega Community Center** as we enjoy an evening of wonderful music and delicious dessert. The concert is free and a love offering will be collected to benefit Alpha & Omega. For more information call 717-394-3021 or go to www.alphayomega.us.

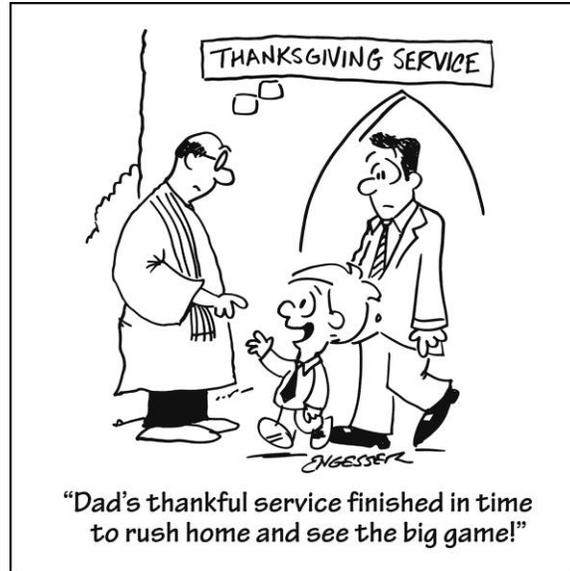
November 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 9:00 AM Quilting Group 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	2 9:00 AM Ladies Bible Study 7:00 PM Prayer Experience	3 6:45 PM WORDD Worship	4 Alpha & Omega Fundraiser 10:00 AM Eastland Alpaca Youth Fundraiser 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
5 Daylight-Saving Time Ends Setup WORDD Social 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 12:00 PM Eastland Alpaca Youth Fundraiser 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	6 Setting up voting Setup WORDD Social 7:30 PM Education Team	7 Voting Poll Open 8:00 AM Sewing Circle 6:00 PM WORDD Fall Social 6:00 PM Young Adults/Families Small Group 7:00 PM Deacons Meeting	8 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 8:00 AM Sewing Circle 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Stewards of Property	9	10	11 10:00 AM Eastland Alpaca Youth Fundraiser 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
12 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Persecuted Church Presentation 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 12:00 PM Eastland Alpaca Youth Fundraiser 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	13	14 12:00 PM Silver Singles 3:00 PM District Commission Meeting 5:30 PM District Board Meeting 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 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	16 9:00 AM Ladies Bible Study 7:00 PM Congregational Gathering	17 Sr. High D.C. Trip	18 Sr. High D.C. Trip 6:00 PM June Lantz practicing organ
19 Sr. High D.C. Trip 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Blended Worship 6:30 PM Youth Cell Group	20 6:30 PM Outreach Team	21 6:00 PM Young Adults/Families Small Group	22 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM Thanksgiving Eve Service	23 Office Closed Thanksgiving Day	24 Office Closed	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	28 7:00 PM Leadership Team 7:00 PM Practice for WORDD Worship Christmas Program	29 6:00 AM Ladies Prayer Breakfast 9:00 AM Quilting Group 6:30 PM Praise Band Practice 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	30 9:00 AM Ladies Bible Study		

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**

November

RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

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