



# THE HOPEWOOD HARBINGER

Ministry Update

Fall/ Winter 2007

## Critical Crossroads

### Mark your calendars and join us for these Upcoming events!

- March 8, 2008 - Ohio Christian Education Association, Akron, Ohio  
Keith to speak on "Hearing the Voice of God"  
Carol to speak on "Boundaries for Leaders" & "Practicing His Presence"
- April 19, 2008 - Women's One Day Retreat at Lochenhaven (south of Wellington)
- November 7-9, 2008 - Come Away to the Quiet Retreat  
Countryview Inn, Charm, Ohio

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Staying in touch is very important to us but costly. Help us to save on postage by registering at [www.hopewood.org](http://www.hopewood.org) and we will notify you of any upcoming news and events including our newsletter.

As a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization, Hopewood Retreat Ministries operates solely on tax deductible donations.

Checks may be made payable to:

**Hopewood Retreat Ministries, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 1122  
Amherst, OH 44001

All financial gifts are needed, appreciated and receipted.

*"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8)*

You'll notice this newsletter is trimmed down a bit. Despite a bare bones operation, the ministry has struggled for the past year to make ends meet. In fact, we have wondered if we should close Hopewood due to the financial and personal strain. In addition, Keith lost his teaching job this past spring in a rather bizarre layoff of one third of the Lorain City School teachers and still has not been called back. And this happened just after we moved into a new home!

As you might imagine, we have both been in a period of soul searching, seeking to discern God's will in all of this. After much prayer, we have God's peace in our decisions. While we believe we have heard Him clearly, we are learning deeper lessons in trusting Him more completely.

Interestingly, we are in our seventh year of operation. When we started Hopewood, it seemed very few people understood the need for a ministry like this. In fact, we encountered resistance to the idea that meeting God in solitude and silence was something worthy of a person's time and investment. Some had never heard their pastor speak of such a thing, others simply wondered

exactly "what we did." This perceived lack of productivity or something tangible to show went against the grain of many well meaning Christians.

In spite of these and other obstacles, God has allowed Hopewood to continue year by year encouraging us through regular donations and the ongoing participation of a growing number of people.

We are, in fact, greatly encouraged by some welcome signs of change that we see occurring. In June of 2007, we attended our first conference of other believers who had a similar vision to ours. It was sponsored by several well recognized organizations including Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. We were thrilled to discover hundreds of likeminded brothers and sisters in Christ who have also sensed the need to revive some of the forgotten spiritual disciplines such as solitude, silence, scripture meditation, contemplative prayer, etc. We believe God is calling the Church today to know Him more intimately, not just to know more *about* Him!

The disciplines are a marvelous means of drawing closer to God and enjoying more intimate fellowship with Him in our daily lives. We are now beginning to

see increasing recognition of how vital these disciplines are to discipleship and sustaining a vibrant life of Christian service.

We are seeing more books published on these topics by recognized and respected authors. The theme for the 2008 Moody Founder's Week is "Be Still and Know," and we have heard more and more radio broadcasts on listening prayer, silence and solitude—essential aspects of discipleship that have too long been set aside.

So here we are—perhaps seven years ahead of schedule—or perhaps in God's timing, right on schedule. **Will you pray for us that we will not lose heart just as the Church begins to awaken to its need for ministries like Hopewood? Would you be willing to stand with us with your prayers and financial support that we might have the means and opportunity to help build up the Body of Christ through disciplines that draw us closer to our Lord Jesus Christ?** We hope you'll join us for this journey and rejoice with us in the days ahead!!

Blessings this Christmas,  
Keith and Carol Klekota

## Come Away to the Quiet Retreat “No Room in the Inn”

Our 7th Annual “Come Away to the Quiet” retreat was held November 9-11, 2007 at the Countryview Inn in Charm, Ohio. We were blessed to have every room in the Inn filled by our retreat participants. We had 22 attend this year’s retreat with only 4 return attendees which was exciting indeed. We were so very thankful for each person that took the time and expense to come to a quiet place and rest awhile, spending time with the Father as was the pattern of our Lord Jesus while he was on this earth.

“Conversations with God: Lessons from the Life of Abraham” was this year’s theme.



Barry Kelley

Keith offered two devotions that helped us focus on the remarkable privilege of being in personal relationship with God. Having soaked himself in Genesis chapters 15 - 17 for several months in advance, he shared insights into the personal relationship that Abraham had with God, and how we could learn from this man’s example.

Throughout the retreat, we reflected on what it means to be “a friend of God” including speaking, listening and even asking questions. Keith shared that what struck him about Abraham and the conversations that this man had with God

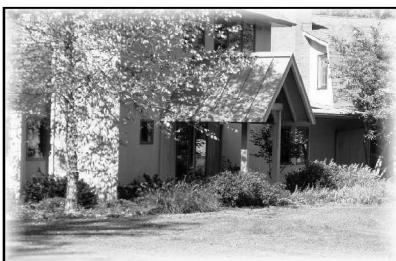
was the unmistakable presence of grace throughout Abraham’s life. If any of us feel we have to be perfect

At the communion service on Sunday morning, Barry Kelley shared a song he wrote especially for Hopewood called “Quiet Place” Thank you, Barry!

for God to speak to us, all we need do is study the life of Abraham. He was an imperfect man married to an imperfect wife, yet God chose to use them in His grand story of redemption. How grateful we all can be to know it is only by His grace that we can enjoy the close personal fellowship He offers us if only we would come! We hope maybe next year you will consider “coming away to the quiet” with us. Next year’s retreat is scheduled for **November 7-9, 2008**. We’d love to have you join us!

## Lochenhaven, Our New Meeting Place in Rochester Twp.

God indeed works in mysterious ways. It was while we were attending the Spiritual Formation Conference in June that we learned of Keith’s layoff from his teaching job. Upon our return home, we met with our pastor who told us about friends of his that he thought might be able to help us by allowing us to use their home occasionally for retreats. As he described the house and grounds, we began to wonder if it was the same place we had visited several years ago where Keith had commented that “we need a place like this to the one true God.” Sure enough, this very property had been purchased by a wonderful Christian



couple whom we believe God led to redeem it for His purposes. After meeting with them, they graciously offered for us to use it for days of prayer, special retreats and one day “come away to the quiet” retreats.

This fall, Carol held two “Listen UP” Prayer Retreats for a small group of Christian leaders and another for a small group of Christian counselors. It was the perfect setting for the women to spend time in the serenity of nature undistracted by the usual demands of daily life. There they were able to walk and talk with the Lord, read and meditate on scripture, journal their prayers and what they sensed God was speaking to them personally.

Keith had the opportunity to use the facility with his men’s spiritual formation group that meets regularly at the Quiet Place Cottage. Meeting at Lochenhaven was a special treat that gave the men 40

acres to roam, the tranquility of a large pond and gazebos for a shady spot to read for their retreat time.

We are so inexpressibly grateful for this opportunity that only the



Lord himself could have orchestrated. His wonders never cease to amaze us, and we praise Him for the blessing of this precious couple, Steve and Kathee Westbrook, who so faithfully serve their Lord and have responded to His call in their lives. Will you praise Him with us and ask Him to help us as we plan the year ahead and how to best use this gift that God has granted in the life of Hopewood?

**Be sure to register and check out our web site [www.hopewood.org](http://www.hopewood.org)**