

The CrossWay Current

May 2018

*Notes from CrossWay Community – an Evangelical Free Church
3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546*

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The ground is broken! Let the building begin ...

With a delay of just one week, we finally got to sink our silver shovels into the ground on Sunday, April 22, after our customary worship service in the sanctuary and a special ceremonial ground-breaking service written for the occasion outside in the sunshine.

Who can ever forget the reason for our week-long delay? A sleet storm so dire the church called off even Sunday worship!

The day dawned bright for our rescheduled event, and the Lord smiled down on us with abundant sunshine and dry ground for our shovels (and our feet).

After hearing from our two pastors, the church chairman, the builder and the architect, we recited together a responsive reading written for the occasion, praising the Lord, the Almighty for His glorious works in the life of our church, and a congregational prayer.

Reaching out

Love in the form of cookies, in the name of our Lord

Our church has signed up to offer a blessing to the staff at our neighboring Ridge Park Academy — cookies!

As we did in December, we are closing the month of April with a gift of cookies from the families of CrossWay Community.

They can be home-baked or your favorite store-bought treats. Please bring them to church on Sunday, April 29, to bring a smile to those who are caring for and teaching tomorrow's generation. ♥

Nat'l Day of Prayer • Thurs., May 3



Loving...Serving...Building! CrossWay Community Church

Our celebration continued inside, with a beautifully decorated chocolate cake served by Linda Stevens and Florence Funk, along with a selection of yummy cookies.

And our “under construction” banner was displayed for all to see. (Check out our photos on later pages.) Years of planning and sacrifice rewarded and now on to loving, serving and building to the glory of our Lord!

Coming up at CrossWay Community

Every Sun. 10 a.m.	Worship together
Every Tues. 6 a.m. & 6 p.m.	Every Man a Warrior men's discipleship program
Every Tues. 1 p.m.	Women's Bible study
Every Thurs. 6:15 p.m.	Wholyfit exercise (church hosting)
Every Sat. 9 a.m. (exc. 1 st week)	Spiritual revival prayer mtg.
May 3 7-9 p.m.	National Day of Prayer event @ New Hope Baptist Church
May 5 9 a.m.	Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
May 5 11:30 a.m.	Ladies' salad luncheon
May 6 & 20 7 p.m.	Youth Group
May 17 7 p.m.	The Movement CityFest* youth gathering
May 20 11:30 a.m.	Annual congregational meeting
May 27 6 p.m.	Monthly prayer hour

* CityFest is the evangelistic festival of the Luis Palau Assn., being planned for next September in Grand Rapids.

Reaching in . . .

Ladies: This one's for you! Our Spring Luncheon

After a delightful getting-to-know-you-better evening at Audrey Johnston's home, the ladies of the church are invited this month to a salad luncheon at the church at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 5.

Ladies are asked to bring a salad to share in fellowship hall. Women's Ministry will arrange for the beverages, rolls and dessert.



Amy Richey of our denomination's mission arm, ReachGlobal, will be our special guest, sharing with us her heart for equipping missionaries and challenging us on the crisis of human trafficking.

Along with your salad, do bring friends! Our usual first-Saturday breakfast at IHOP will not take place this month, to give our cooks a morning of salad-fixing and last-minute primping!

& Students: This one's for you!

Rapper
Andy Mineo
and Texas
Pastor Jarrett
Stephens will
rock the roof
at The Move-
ment, the
next exciting

evening put on by the Luis Palau Evangelistic Team as a lead-up to September's dynamic CityFest.



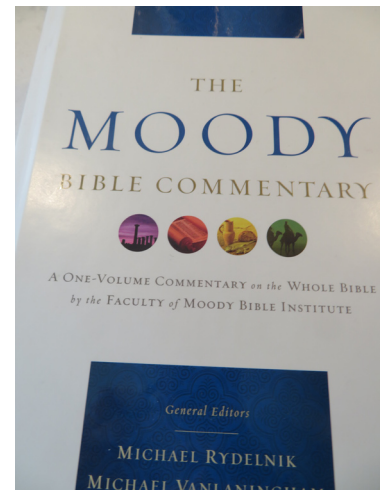
It kicks off at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 17, at Grand Rapids First Church, 2100 44th Street SW, Wyoming.

Register for this free ticketed student event at www.cityfestwestmichigan.org.

New to the CrossWay library

The 2,028-page Moody Bible Commentary, published in 2014, compiled with contributions from 30 Moody Bible Institute professors, gives helpful information and knowledgeable insight into all 66 books

of the Bible, in a single volume. A must for those sticky-wicket moments when the passage you're studying just doesn't seem to make sense. 📖



Construction financial forecast

Our \$ goals to meet our timeline goals . . .

Balance needed to begin construction \$15,436 by 4/13



Add-ons needed . . .

Main entry canopy \$ 7,195 by 7/13



Complete/equip new kitchen \$12,310 by 9/14



Furniture, fixtures & equipment \$15,000 by 10/26

Sanctuary air conditioning \$24,034 by 6/2019

Phase I renovations of existing bldg. \$35,000 by 6/2020

Phase II existing bldg. renovations \$35,000 by 6/2021



CrossWay Community Mission Statement:

God has called us to make disciples of Jesus Christ who respond to His Gospel by committing ourselves to loving God, one another and the world in Christ's name.

This message
from Pastor Bob Funk

Peace

VS.

*Driving Ourselves
'WHACKO'*



Years ago, I attended a very interesting seminar by Dr. Archibald Hart called “Redeeming Our Tranquility: Counseling and Ministering to a Digital World.” It seems that we are increasingly reliant upon and addicted to the Cyberworld, and it has become the primary hijacker of our tranquility.

I learned that we all have a “tranquility system” that keeps us at peace and helps us deal with anxiety. However, the digital world is negatively impacting our peacefulness. We increasingly do not know what the Apostle Paul referred to as “the peace of God which transcends all understanding.” (Phil. 4:7) For instance, many children are suffering from anxiety disorders, and they constitute the fastest-growing market for anti-depressants. Opioid use and suicide are serious societal issues. We now must deal with new problems with new terms, such as “Internet Anxiety Disorder,” “Facebook Depression,” “Internet Insomnia” and “Digital Addictions.”

A study of sixteen countries found that most people now spend at least a third of their leisure time online. They have more contact with “virtual friends” than they have real relationships. They also are used to instant gratification, and they disregard books and reading in preference for the “dip in and out” of e-mails and text messages. Two-thirds of US undergraduates also score 30% higher on the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. “We are rewiring our brains for speed, not for content,” claims Dr. Hart. In short, he says, “We are driving ourselves WHACKO by not leaving time to power down!”

I really can’t end this brief message saying, “Other than that, have a nice day!” On the other hand, I don’t intend to over-simplify complex problems with simplistic solutions. So please allow me to mention just three things:

1. Dr. Hart strongly urged parents to **set boundaries**. That is, set some limits on how much time your children are connected to their digital world. He claimed that many parents have lost control or oversight of their children’s choices. Perhaps some parents may need to alter their own digital lifestyle habits as well.

2. He also suggested we “**embrace boredom!**” Rest and leisure are essential recovery systems, not expendable wastes of time. Perhaps we could rediscover a “holy leisure” that embraces the Biblical ideas of sabbath, fasting and nature as God’s realm of play and restoration.

3. Learn the practices of a mature **Christian spirituality**. In other words, learn how to spend time with God. We are steadily losing our contemplative ability as we are rewired for speed instead of content and shallowness instead of depth. We are losing our center, even our souls.

The antidote to the distraction, disorientation and “dis-ease” of the Cyberworld is a life-giving relationship with God. It is about living in the here-and-now of His Kingdom. The problem is, the average Christian spends less than three minutes a day in prayer. Few Christians are skilled in the restorative disciplines of solitude, silence, meditation and contemplative prayer.

This must change. Churches must become Kingdom-life centers that teach and train men and women and boys and girls in the ancient disciplines that are life-giving and that restore our sense of tranquility and peace.

That is one thing that I know God has called and equipped me to do. Will you join me? If so, text or e-mail me at ... No, wait! Just take a minute to reflect on these things. And talk to me later.

Peace



This month, I'd like to offer some brief reflections from the 15th chapter of the Gospel of John. It's a passage of Scripture that I have always loved, yet in the last few months, I have been drawn to it repeatedly as I seek to better understand my "life in the Vine." Here are some observations, highlights, questions, etc., that have occupied my thoughts and prayers. I hope they are a blessing to you:

Jesus expects fruitfulness from His people — vv. 1 - 5, 16. One of my seminary professors said this about the fruit mentioned here:

"'Fruit' in the vine imagery represents everything that is the product of effective prayer in Jesus's name, including obedience to Jesus's commands (v. 10), experience of Jesus's joy (v. 11), love for one another (v. 12), and witness to the world (vv. 16, 27). This fruit is nothing less than the outcome of persevering dependence on the vine, driven by faith, embracing all of the believer's life and the product of his witness." — D.A. Carson

The above paragraph could take pages to unfold. Let me mention just two words the Holy Spirit has been massaging into my heart. The words are *dependence* and *joy*.

Dependence — I think a very helpful way to describe our fallen nature/flesh is to speak of it as the independent life. We try to do things on our own, apart from abiding in, depending on our Creator. Sometimes, this independent life is quite religious as we try to do God's work in our own energy. Don't misunderstand: we are called to exert great energy in our walk with Jesus, but this energy is to be an expression of His life in us as we abide in Him, the True Vine. (Jn. 15:5, I Cor. 15:10, Phil. 2:12-13, Col. 1:28-29). What I have been learning most in this area of dependence and fruit bearing is beautiful and simple: All fruitful-

*This message
from Pastor Bob Manuel*

Dependence...

and joy

ness must flow from dependence. If we abide in, remain in, depend upon Jesus's life in and through us, we WILL bear fruit. We won't need to "try" to be fruitful. Perhaps a good T-shirt might read, "Fruit Happens." Fruitful service flows from a life that is dependent upon Jesus. For a variety of reasons, at times we might be reluctant or fearful to draw near to God, to depend upon Him. Perhaps we don't trust Him, are afraid of Him, or feel as if He has let us down in the past. So, we practically don't abide in Him. That kind of "life" in Christ is so unsatisfying. He is patient and kind and will do whatever it takes to help us abide. He wants us to enjoy His life. Also, I don't want to pit being a worshipper of God against being a worker for God, but we must never attempt to do work for God that is not an overflow of our worship of Him. In fact, this kind of work for God that does not come from prior and ongoing worship can do much more harm than good. Oh, how I long to enjoy Him, abide in Him more deeply and consistently. And, how I long to experience a fruitful life that comes from such worship. This leads to the second word.

Joy — Did you notice Jesus wants/expects His dependent/abiding disciples to be joyful (Jn. 15:11)? Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, a by-product of our life in Christ. I recently read a story of a grocery firm in the area that had redone/redesigned their store. One of the first things they did was put the colorful and fragrant produce/fruit toward the front door, meaning to draw the customer in. Fruit is attractive. Fruit is fragrant. I want to be that kind of Christian, and I can be, as I abide. Joy is a rare thing, I believe, even among many Christians. Perhaps we have "happiness" that rises and falls in connection with our circumstances, but how about the deep abiding joy of Jesus in and through us? He promises us His joy as we abide. So, in summary, what must we "do" to experience His joy? 1) Admit to Him that, apart from Him, we can do nothing (Jn. 15:5), at least nothing of any God-honoring and lasting significance. 2) The best "doing" you can offer Him is to slow down, worship Him, enjoy Him, wait on Him and listen to Him. Someone once said, "Don't just do something. Sit there." He calls us to a life of dependence. And joy. And fruitfulness.



So long we have waited, so greatly we rejoice!

Church chairman Bob Johnston leads off the groundbreaking ceremony of dedication, while (from left) builder Dave Pray, architect Nathan Funk, Pastors Bob Funk & Bob Manuel and elder Mike Kramer prepare to address the crowd.



Charter member Alyce Sides makes her mark with a golden shovel.



Our banner proclaiming our good news to passing motorists . . . all through the building project!

Now thank we all our God,
with hearts and hands
and voices!

Sunday, April 22, 2018
• **CrossWay**
Community
Church •
Grand Rapids, Michigan





Released — but not free

One of the Christian prisoners to whom we addressed greetings at Christmas last year has received a conditional release on bail from the notorious Evin Prison in Tehran, Iran. Hadi Asgari spent 19 months in prison with two others from his church who remain in custody.

While in prison, Mr. Asgari endured a hunger strike and suffered from an untreated kidney infection. He and a fellow prisoner were sentenced to ten years in prison for “violating the national security by hosting house churches and promoting Christianity,” with Amin Afshar Naderi receiving a similar sentence plus five years for blasphemy. The two are joined in their appeal, to be heard shortly, by their pastor Victor Bet Tamraz.

These men and their families covet our prayers as they continue to endure persecution for the sake of the Gospel in Iran.

Remember Pastor Andrew

Andrew Brunson’s trial began April 16 in Turkey with his accusers disguised and appearing via video.

He was remanded to prison and awaits the next hearing date in early May. Please pray for his freedom and his ability to withstand persecution.



He is currently facing a sentence of 35 years if convicted of “Christianization,” characterized in the indictment as “terrorism.” His 23 years of living out his Christian faith in Turkey included providing “humanitarian aid, education and training.”



Praying for our persecuted brothers

Praying for our missionaries in Germany

Mike & Kari Greenhoe work as missionaries through the ministry of Teach Beyond at Black Forest Academy (BFA), a school for missionary kids in Germany.

Mike teaches AP chemistry and other science classes and chairs the entire science department.

Kari is mostly a stay-at-home mom of two young boys, but she does help out at Black Forest, using her background in English Language Learning to help advise the ELL teachers with their students.

She also does annual testing for the ELL students and placement testing for incoming ELL students.

Please pray . . .



for the family as they battle a round of illness.



for God’s help/wisdom as they prepare for a year-long home assignment in the United States, beginning at the end of June in Grand Rapids, with details of US housing, finding a subletter for their place in Germany and packing up their household.



for day-to-day needs in the meantime, along with resolution of health insurance issues and support raising.