



January 2019

CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 • 616.949.5690

www.cwcgr.org

Honoring God's creation on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday



Churches across America — including CrossWay — observe the third Sunday in January as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. The 2019 date is **Jan. 20**.

The observance arises from a 1984 proclamation by Pres. Ronald Reagan designating Jan. 22 as National Sanctity of Human Life Day in America as the nation's response to the Jan. 22, 1973, Supreme Court edict invalidating laws restricting abortions in all 50 states.

We will have the opportunity during January to offer financial support to the Pregnancy Resource Center of Grand Rapids via their annual Baby Bottle cash collection drive. Please dig deep!

Any least coin will do (a lot!)

What does the content of a baby bottle accomplish? It sustains life and causes babies to thrive.

Be it our loose change to personal checks, we can each fill a baby bottle this month to sustain babies through the work of the Pregnancy Resource Center (PRC).

The Christian staff of this organization take great joy in counseling moms (and dads) through the term of crisis pregnancies, supporting their decisions for life and providing them assurance in tumultuous times. They continue to support young families three to four years after babies are born, offering them practical help and referrals for services. They even provide a Bible study, through their Cradles of Grace program in which CrossWay Church is participating as one of the host churches.

Won't you dig deep, fill that bottle and pray for this life-giving ministry? Watch for PRC baby bottles on Sunday mornings this month.

Inclement Weather?

On rare occasions, we need to call off or postpone activities — even (though infrequently!) a Sunday service. If you are wondering, tune in to WOOD-TV (ch. 8), WZZM (ch. 13) or WCSG Radio (91.3 FM). We'll notify them if we need to cancel.



Welcome, New Members!

Our CrossWay Community fellowship recently welcomed two new church members . . . Amanda Le and Leigh Basler, and we look forward to their fellowship and service among us.

Of course, we regularly welcome visitors and regular attenders who have not taken the formal step of membership. But we joyfully extend to those non-members among us an invitation to take formal part in our congregation of believers.

A "new member" class will be offered soon for those considering joining us formally. Please watch the Sunday bulletin for an announcement, and/or approach one of our pastors for more information.

Coming up at CrossWay Community

Every Sun. 10 a.m.	Worship together
Every Thurs. 6:15 p.m.	Wholyfit exercise (church hosting)
Every Thurs. 6:30 p.m.	Hinkles' small group
Jan. 5 9 a.m.	Ladies' breakfast @ IHOP
Jan. 5 9 a.m.	Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
Jan. 6 11:30 a.m.	Sunday School resumes
Jan. 6, 20 6 p.m.	Alveses' small group @ Doerrs'
Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29 1:15 p.m.	Ladies' Bible Study
Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 7 p.m.	Every Man A Warrior
Jan. 12, 19, 26 10 a.m.	Spiritual revival prayer meeting
Jan. 20	Sanctity of Human Life Sunday
Jan. 20 11:30 a.m.	Semi-annual congreg. meeting
Jan. 27 6 p.m.	Monthly prayer hour

New! Online giving

Did you know that CrossWay has a new way to give? With our new website, you can make your donation online. It's safe, secure and very easy to use!

Just go to the new website: www.cwcgr.org. Scroll down until you see "Give Online."

For new users, you'll "Register For An Account" and fill in your contact information. Once you're registered, all you'll need in the future to sign in is your email address and the password you choose.

You can give by credit card or from your checking account. You choose the amount, and, if you'd like, you can set it up to make a recurring gift.

When the weather gets bad this winter, or if you're on vacation, you can still give to CrossWay! If you have any questions, contact Cindy at the church office (616/949-5690).

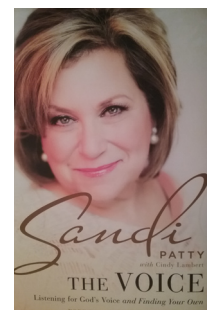
How about pitching in?

Here at CrossWay, we are a fellowship and a community, worshipping the Lord together, and serving Him together as well.

A good part of serving is right here in our church building, where we have many opportunities to be "the hands and feet of Jesus" to each other and to those in our community. You can find several examples of serving together in the *CrossWay Current*, and below we are publishing a means for you to offer your talents in service to CrossWay during the first quarter of this year. Please prayerfully consider how best to offer your talents in service to CrossWay, complete the form below and hand it to a pastor or leave it in the office.

New to the CrossWay Library

Well known and loved Christian artist Sandi Patty brought out a new book in August appropriately titled *The Voice*, with the subtitle *Listening for God's Voice and Finding Your Own*. The book offers intimate, untold stories of her past that robbed her of her voice in her personal life and drove her to despair until God broke through with His own liberating song.



The 200-page hard-bound book's jacket offers this promise: "With timeless wisdom and stunning insight, *The Voice* welcomes you into the journey of uncovering a God-given song of your own."

Enjoy this peek behind the curtain of Sandi Patty's journey and find your own blessing, by checking this one out from the CrossWay library.

Dressing the church in our Christmas best . . . *More photos on page 6!*



Reaching Up, Reaching In, Reaching Out ... Serving Christ Together 2019 • 1st Quarter

As a frequent attendee of CrossWay Community, I am willing to serve the Lord by helping the church in the service needs I have checked below. Please contact me about how I can apply my skills, interests and gifts:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aid in nursery during service | <input type="checkbox"/> Set up and/or take down tables & chairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Man sound booth during service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aid in children's worship/
Sunday School | <input type="checkbox"/> Bring soup & bread for Lenten
Wednesday night fellowships | <input type="checkbox"/> Set out refreshments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer projection during service | <input type="checkbox"/> Lenten fellowship set-ups/take-downs | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspect grounds for repair/
maintenance needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worship team/music | <input type="checkbox"/> Lenten fellowship kitchen help | <input type="checkbox"/> Help lead women's ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greet worshippers on Sundays | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear & salt parking lot & sidewalk | <input type="checkbox"/> Join a missionary support team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collect offerings on Sundays | <input type="checkbox"/> Chair Jan. fundraising appeal for
Pregnancy Resource Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Befriend a child at Ridge Park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take photos at church events | <input type="checkbox"/> Assist in nursing home worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Host a small group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aid in the kitchen | | <input type="checkbox"/> Light carpentry/indoor maintenance |



Signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Phone # (_____) _____ E-mail _____

This message
from Pastor Bob Funk
Start the New Year
Small

As I write these reflections, I am particularly aware of the ending of the year 2018 and the soon arrival of 2019. Of course, I am also thinking of you, the members and friends of CrossWay Community Church. I am hoping you will allow me to make two small suggestions for your spiritual reading and reflection in the coming weeks or months.

In addition to the Bible, I want to suggest two, literally, small paperback books, written long ago by two very different spiritual figures that I respect — Mother Teresa of Calcutta and John Calvin.

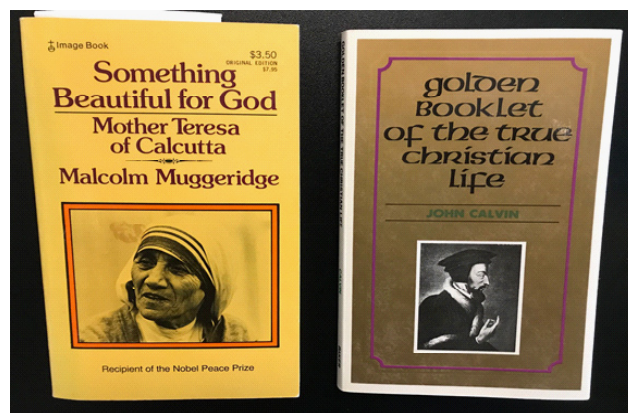
The first little book, *Something Beautiful for God*, by British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge, is a “potpourri: vignette, collection of Mother Teresa’s prayers and comments, and the transcription of an interview with Muggeridge.” Mother Teresa was best known as the humble leader of the Sisters of the Missionaries of Charity who labored among the poorest of the poor and those literally dying in the streets and slums of Calcutta, India. The book contains photos of the sisters in the midst of their ministry.

What stands out to me, though, is the simple way Mother Teresa articulates her perspectives on life, ministry, holiness, love and service, to name a few. Here are three examples:

- “True holiness consists in doing God’s will with a smile.”
- “Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls.”
- “Be kind and merciful. Let no one ever come to you without coming away better and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness.”

I don’t know about you, but those little statements alone offer me enough to work on for all of 2019!

The other small book I bring to your attention is John Calvin’s *Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life*, first published in 1550 in Latin and French under the title, *On the Life of the Christian Man*. It was purposely written in a simple style, similar to Thomas a Kempis’s *Imitation of Christ*. It appealed to many groups, including the Pilgrims and the Puritans, who needed a balanced application of Christianity that related the teachings and values of the faith to everyday life. Calvin wrote 58 volumes in his lifetime, including his Institutes and commentaries on the Bible. However, I do



think you will enjoy the clarity, brevity and practical devotion of the *Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life*. Here are a few of its gems:

- “Holiness is not a merit by which we can attain communion with God, but a gift of Christ, which enables us to cling to him, and to follow him.”
- “And that no man might call sadness a vice, he (Jesus) has pronounced a blessing on them that mourn.”
- “Is it not very reasonable that our flesh should be subdued, and that we should be accustomed to a yoke, so that our carnal impulses should not get the best of us, and drive us into intemperance?”

We live in an information age full of emails, text messages, tweets and various social media, yet many find they are left with an emptiness of heart and a spirit of busy distraction. Beyond the Bible itself, countless Christians today and throughout the history of the Church have gained wisdom, strength and peace through some simple classics of the faith.

There are many big and little books worth our slow reading and meditation. I hope some of you will spend some quality time with Mother Teresa and John Calvin. The short and small books I have mentioned would be a great place to begin — and a great way to begin a new year as well!

Have a blessed New Year. The peace of God be with you.

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 Manuel*

Time to Count Our Blessings!

Every New Year, the usual topics seem to draw my attention. Things such as time, opportunity, newness, fresh starts and, yes, even growing “older” comes to my mind.

Some of you might know, our son Jared turns 30 this April! We also celebrated Megan’s (our youngest) 22nd birthday last month! When we moved here, Sue and I still qualified as “young parents,” as Megan was only six months old at the time. We are thankful for each year. It’s good, especially at the beginning of a year, to count our many blessings.

If you were to make a “gratitude list,” how long would it be? How many items/people would you find on that list if you made it right now?

Let me list a number of things I am thankful for as a way of priming your gratitude pump. I believe a spirit of praise/thanksgiving can help us enter the new year with joy, optimism and the power of God. (Nehemiah 8: 10; Ps. 28: 7) Here’s my brief (not exhaustive!) list of things I thank God for, in no particular order of importance . . .

- Each one of you. “I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He Who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 1: 3-6)
- The Blessed Trinity. I am thankful for a Heavenly Father Who always loves me back Home to His heart every time I come to my senses and return to Him (Luke 15: 22-24; Rom. 2: 4), Who doesn’t lecture me but loves me back to Him; for Jesus, Who is not ashamed to call me His brother (Heb. 2: 11) and encourages me to come to Him boldly in my time of need (Heb. 4: 14-16); and for the Holy Spirit, Who guides me into all truth (John 16: 12-13) and transforms me, bit by bit, into the Image of Jesus (2 Cor. 3: 18).

- For the multi-faceted, often surprising, always new mercies of God. I suppose this one is a bit of an expansion of the above, but really, one can never spill enough ink or time exploring and praising the goodness of God. Just stop and think, how good He is to us! So often we see His goodness to us through the people He has placed in our lives. Think of family. If you are married, think of your spouse. If you are single, think of the friends and family who love you. If you have children, thank God for them. Oh yes, I know: our relationships, while a source of our greatest joys, can also be a source of much pain and disappointment. But among other things, that simply means we have had and still have the opportunity to learn love. Loving and being loved can be painful. Just ask our nail-scarred Savior. Thank You, Father, for Your many mercies.
- Thank God for your health. Health is sure a funny thing. Like most of God’s gifts, we don’t really treasure it until it is being threatened with some kind of disease, ailment, disaster or injury. Thank God for every day He gives us to glorify Him!
- Thank God for this country. Sure, we have our problems, but we still live in a country that has been shaped by truths from Scripture like no other country on earth. And, while we and our elected officials, all like sheep have gone astray, we have been entrusted with unprecedented freedoms and opportunities that much of the world still long for and would die for.

The list of things for which to be grateful could go on and on. I think of ... books, music, good food, walking/exercise, a child’s laughter, seeing people smile, a good joke, the Word of God, a wonderful church staff and co-Pastor with whom to share ministry, chocolate (dark and milk), coffee, silly cats, dogs who wag their tails, a church building addition, art creativity, whatever abilities God has given . . .

So what would be on your list? May this New Year find us faithful in looking for the many ways and means in which God is blessing us. We might even become pleasantly surprised as our gratitude list continues to grow. God, may You give us a spirit of praise. And may the joy of the Lord be our strength. Amen!

Support our missionaries — sign up for a team!

Under our church's new Missions Policy, teams were formed in September to support nine front-line workers in Christ's Great Commission. In all, 18 of us made a commitment to regularly pray for and/or communicate with our missionaries, under the leadership of our Missionary Support Steering Committee (Marcy Greenhoe, RaeAnne Hansberry and Dennis Veurink).

It's never too late to sign on for this exciting Kingdom adventure! Please consider making your own commitment to supporting one or more of these dear people.

How? Pray through the list available on the Missions table behind the sanctuary and then contact Missions Coordinator Pam Reed to join the team of a missionary the Lord has placed on your heart. Once you've been through a brief training, you'll be reporting to the appropriate Steering Committee member, but any team meetings are likely to be few.

What a unique opportunity to discover a new way of living in obedience to Christ and to become involved in supporting a cross-cultural ministry worker.



Trouble in Paradise

We've all seen the news coverage of the "Camp" fire in northern California, which has finally been conquered by heroic efforts of countless firefighters. The devastation was shocking to us all.

By now we know that 90% of the homes in the town of Paradise have burned to the ground. Few public buildings remain, as well.

"I can't express what I'm seeing," shared Pastor Art, senior pastor of the Paradise Evangelical Free Church. "The magnitude and scope are beyond belief." Yet by some miracle, the flames bypassed the church building.

Eighty homes of EFCA congregants were destroyed by the fire, leaving just two families from Paradise EFC with homes to which to return. Still, by the grace of God, all the congregants' lives were spared.



Paradise Lost

EFCA's Crisis Response Team has arrived and, along with the physical restoration efforts, is focusing on trauma care, providing support and counseling to those who experienced this disaster firsthand.

As part of the Body of Christ, we can help. Our denomination's Internet web page has a mechanism for donation. Go to www.efca.org/wildfire-response-paradise-california or you may write a check, including on the memo line "Paradise CA Fire Response 21709-39286" and mail it to:

EFCA
901 E. 78th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55420

Even as we are building our addition, let's bless our now-homeless Paradise brothers and sisters and keep them in our prayers.

Ladies: We're starting a new study in the new year

Irwin Baxter's *Understanding the End Times* will be the featured DVD series with study guide for the ladies' Bible study beginning Tuesday, Jan. 8. All are welcome to join the 1:15 p.m. gathering in the church library.

Baxter is the founder and president of Endtime Ministries. He is a television and radio talkshow host, author, publisher and international prophecy teacher. Come for the learning. Stay for the fellowship.

Looking back to December at CrossWay



Outside . . .
Raising the Roof!



& In . . .
Decking the Halls



Plus Food & Fellowship
at Our Christmas Potluck

