



March 2019

CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 • 616.949.5690

<https://www.grandrapidscrosswaycommunitychurch.com>

It's up to God ... and it's up to us!

As we approach the completion of our addition — a long-sought dream for CrossWay — it's time to face the fact: The land sale proceeds have been put to good use in building. Now we need to finish the job!

The Lord has led us to increase our footprint for a reason: there is much Kingdom work to be accomplished in our little corner of His world. He has the plan, but He chooses to work through His people for the fulfillment of His will.

Are you ready to dig deep?

Picture yourself approaching the front door in great anticipation, stepping into a lobby and finding a chasm that stretches to the sanctuary door with no furniture in sight. You step a few feet to your right and enter our new addition, a large open space with no particular distinction, no basketball net, no meeting tables and chairs, a kitchen with counters, cabinets and appliances but no means for serving coffee. A sad picture indeed!

Take a look at the check list at right, and prayerfully consider your part in fulfilling the needs.

We hope to occupy our new space in time for Easter. So, **now** is the time to make it happen!

Wednesday Nite Lent Lite

CrossWay is the place to be at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays for six weeks, beginning March 6.

Last year during Lent, we focused our attention on things to avoid...some vices, or "thou shalt nots." This year, we'll be turning our attention to virtues, or "thou shalts." Don't worry, though. Pastor Funk will not be laying down the law! Rather, we'll be exploring together some things we can do to cultivate and cooperate with the grace of God that has saved us and which also transforms us.

Come for the simple supper of bread and soup. Stay for the teaching, discussion, and prayer. You, and those doing life with you, will be glad you did!

Basketball Equipment	\$3,450
Volleyball Equipment	\$2,940
Athlete-safe Flooring	\$25,000
Lobby Furnishings	\$4,500 est.
Kitchen Pass-thru Doors	\$5,045
Coffee Service Equipment	\$1,200 est.
Classroom Tables/Chairs	\$1,500 est.
Sanctuary A/C	\$3,600
Parking Lot Paving	\$17,667

Pray for discernment in what the Lord is calling you to do for CrossWay!

Coming up at CrossWay Community

Every Sun. 10 a.m.	Worship together
Every Sun. 11:30 a.m.	Sunday School
Every Mon. 7 p.m.	Every Man A Warrior
Every Tues. 1 p.m.	Ladies' Bible Study
Every Wed. 6 p.m.	Lent Lite
Every Thurs. 10 a.m.	Hosting <i>Tips for Stressed-out Moms</i>
Every Thurs. 6:15 p.m.	<i>Wholyfit</i> exercise (church hosting)
Every Thurs. 6:30 p.m.	Hinkles' small group
Every Thurs. 6:30 p.m.	Hosting neighborhood Bible study
Mar. 2 9 a.m.	Ladies' breakfast @ IHOP
Mar. 2 9 a.m.	Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
Mar. 3, 17 6 p.m.	Alveses' small group @ Doerrs'
Mar. 9, 16, 23, 30 10 a.m.	Spiritual revival prayer meeting
Mar. 24 6 p.m.	Monthly prayer hour

Reaching out...

Rockin' the halls for Jesus

What better way to beat the winter blahs than getting together for music and entertainment and fellowship in the name of Christ!

God was honored, and our hearts were blessed at the Feb. 22 CrossWay Coffeehouse, attracting a full house for live music and artistic talent . . . even a "balloon sculpture" act! Wow, Annette! Who knew?!

We've included some photos from the exciting evening of praise on the last page of this *Crossway Current*.

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.



Putting on something for Lent

Some faith traditions call on adherents to give up something for Lent, but at CrossWay this year, we'll be putting on Christian virtues instead!

Come at 6 p.m. for a light supper, and stay for the teaching by Pastor Bob Funk. Below, you'll find the schedule of topics leading up to Holy Week. (See next month's *Current* for our schedule of Holy Week gatherings in mid-to-late April.)

The classic Christian virtues —

What they are and why they matter today:

Mar. 6 Introduction: Lent, Vice and Virtue

Mar. 13 The Theological Virtues: Faith, Hope and Love

Mar. 20 The Cardinal Virtues: Prudence

Mar. 27 The Cardinal Virtues: Justice

Apr. 3 The Cardinal Virtues: Temperance

Apr. 10 The Cardinal Virtues: Fortitude



Serving at CrossWay

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

Several have responded to the call for volunteers during the first quarter of this year. It's time now to plan for your engagement as "the hands and feet of Jesus"

during the second quarter of 2019. 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, even if you filled one out last quarter; perhaps the Spirit is whispering to you a new way to serve Him and your church family.



Reaching Up, Reaching In, Reaching Out ... Serving Christ Together 2019 • 2nd Quarter

As a frequent attender 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"/> Help plan Easter breakfast | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspect grounds for repair/
maintenance needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer projection during service | <input type="checkbox"/> Help serve Easter breakfast | <input type="checkbox"/> Help lead women's ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worship team/music | <input type="checkbox"/> Assist in nursing home worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Join a missionary support team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greet worshippers on Sundays | <input type="checkbox"/> Bring refreshments | <input type="checkbox"/> Web design coordination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collect offerings on Sundays | <input type="checkbox"/> Set out refreshments | <input type="checkbox"/> Host a small group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take photos at church events | <input type="checkbox"/> Plant flowers | <input type="checkbox"/> Light carpentry/indoor maintenance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aid in the kitchen | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep gardens weeded & trimmed | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer ideas for bldg. addition use |



Signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Phone # (_____) _____ E-mail _____

This message
from Pastor Bob Funk

“Tidying Up” with Marie Kondo & Jesus

You may remember that I once recommended the book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up — The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*. Marie Kondo, the young Japanese author, has been called by *The London Times* “Japan’s preeminent guru of tidiness, a warrior princess in the war on clutter.” Her work has been in great demand around the world. Individuals and businesses often wait months for her schedule to free her up to pay them a visit. Her book has sold millions of copies worldwide, and she also is featured in her own TV series, which demonstrates the effect her work has on people’s homes, emotions and relationships. America is “taken” with her and her guidance. That makes me take notice...

What is it about this seemingly odd topic — “tidying up”— that is striking such a nerve across America and the world? How does her help with de-cluttering change so many people’s lives, often bringing them to tears? (The first sentence in the book reads, “In this book, I have summed up how to put your space in order in a way that will change your life forever.”) I can share only a few thoughts in this brief letter, although I do invite your thoughts and ideas about this phenomenon...

First, Marie writes, “I know that tidying can transform your life... there is one thing I can say with confidence: **A dramatic reorganization of the home causes correspondingly dramatic changes in life-style and perspective. It is life transforming.** I mean it.” (pp.2-3) Her clients find that “tidying has changed their way of thinking and their approach to life.”

Here is one more quote, “...when you put your house in order, you put your affairs and your past in order, too. As a result, you can see quite clearly what you need in life and what you don’t, and what you should and shouldn’t do.” (p.4)

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.



Jesus taught about our relationship with our possessions. We are not defined by them. We should not be “stressed out” over them. They can “own us.” We are called to be stewards, good managers. We should not worry about them but instead, “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” This is not the time for a Bible study on stewardship, but I believe Jesus would applaud our getting good counsel on de-cluttering, letting go of things and returning to some semblance of outer and inner simplicity.

Secondly, Marie acknowledges that “the root of the problem lies in the mind. Success is 90 percent dependent on our mind-set.” (p.5) I say, now you’re talking our language!

The Apostle Paul wrote about two spiritual mind-sets: those who have their minds set on what the fleshly nature desires and those who have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. (Romans 8:5f.) We also have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor.2:16) And we are “transformed by the renewing of our minds.” (Rom.12:2) Those who do not know Christ have their minds “on earthly things.” (Phil.3:19)

Possessions are normally not bad, in themselves. Some are good and necessary and joy-inducing. But it is not good for us to have our minds set on them. We accumulate. We get stressed out around clutter. We get “owned” by things and the memories and feelings they elicit. We lose our perspective. We lose our freedom.

As Jesus said, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.” (Luke 12:15)

I think Marie Kondo would agree with that.



*This message
from Pastor Bob Manuel*

Our quest for God

As I write this, I am preparing to preach from Exodus 15. The verse that struck me most profoundly is verse 2: “The LORD is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.” What moved me about this verse was what Moses did not say in his song. Moses did not say “God gave me strength,” “God gave me a song” or “God gave me salvation.” We often talk this way or pray this way. We say, “God, give me strength. Give me a song to sing, and give me salvation, or save me.” Nothing necessarily wrong with such requests, but that’s not what Moses says in his song. Instead, to Moses, God *was* these things. God Himself became Moses’s strength, song and salvation. We can learn much from this. Let me suggest just a few things:

God as strength, song and salvation becomes more personal and dear to us. If I want salvation — true, lasting, and satisfying salvation — I must want God, too. If I don’t want God, I really don’t have salvation. I immediately think of the Christ figure, Aslan, in C.S. Lewis’s *Narnia* series. Oh, yes, He’s a good Lion, but also not a “safe” Lion. Do I really want salvation? If so, I must receive the grace to trust this not-tame Lion is good and He can be trusted. For some of us, because of our backgrounds and perhaps even our temperaments, trusting God is harder than it is for others. But trust Him we must, if we are to receive and enjoy strength, song and salvation.

Similarly, strength, song and salvation are not things God gives us apart from Himself. It’s not like God says, “Here’s strength for you; oh, and by the way, if you want Me as well, I’ll be waiting.” It’s so easy to say/think, “God, I need strength to get me through this day.” Yes. That is true. But what is even more true, is, we need Him (Who is our strength) to get us through the day. This also means we cannot

ask God for “salvation” if we do not want Him in our lives. He IS our Salvation. And He IS our Song. This makes me wonder if all song/singing/poetry/art is, really, in the end, a quest for God. Now, I admit, not all artists, singers, etc., may be consciously or conspicuously looking for God or expressing Him in their media, but the longing, the search, the ache is there. And only God can satisfy this quest, because He Himself put it there. I am convinced at least, this is why there is so often a felt “spiritual” or “mystical” side to song, art and poetry. But I digress!

Are we even vaguely and yet I hope increasingly aware of how much God loves us, of how much He is willing to fight for us? I recall a dad I knew a few years back who told me how he “crashed” a party full of (as he was told later!) some of the “coolest and toughest” teens and 20-somethings in the Grand Rapids area. You see, he had found out his daughter was inside, and she was clearly not supposed to be there! As he nervously approached the apartment door, which was vibrating from the loud music within, he knocked and waited. As the door was opened by a tough guy with a sneer, this dad was greeted by odors of harm and darkness. This dad said something like, “My kid is here. I’ve come to get her. She’s coming home now.” The disdainful stares, the just below the surface “who’s this old dude, but we’re not about to challenge him,” were heavily felt, but this dad did not back down. He had come to rescue his daughter. That night, he was her salvation. Though feeling very out of place and a bit humiliated, his duty was gladly done for the daughter he loved. This story is a pale shade of what it means for our Father to enter His world through His Son to rescue His children. This Son was humiliated to the point of death on a cross. Why? Because He loves His kids. He gave Salvation as He gave Himself. This is a Dad that can be trusted. That’s how much He loves you. May Exodus 15:2 put a song in your mouth and in your soul today. He, our LORD God, has become our strength, our song and our salvation!

Reaching out . . .

Cradles, redux

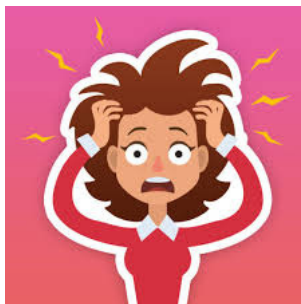
Sometimes it takes patience and perseverance to begin a new ministry. During the fall season, Marcy Greenhoe and RaeAnne Hansberry met with dedicated staffers of the Pregnancy Resource Center every Thursday morning, prepared to offer a Bible study for young moms. Problem was, this new time of day for a Cradles of Grace Bible study didn't attract any takers.

Never discouraged, our PRC partners took a break for Christmas and then put their heads together to develop a new plan.

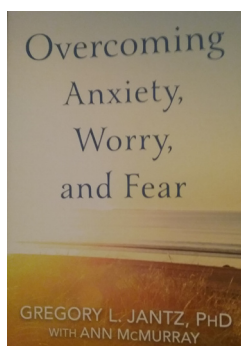
Same place, same time (10 a.m. 'til Noon), new curriculum: Tips for Stressed Out Moms will be offered at CrossWay for a few weeks beginning March 7.

Seems that this video/discussion series used to be the offering at PRC's service center before their partnership with Cradles of Grace. Some of the moms who've enjoyed TfSOM have been asking for its return. So, instead of offering it at the PRC office as before, PRC will bring it to CrossWay as an introductory effort. And they already have at least five moms signed up for it! The Pregnancy Resource Center is excited to bring this outreach ministry to the community at CrossWay, and we're excited to welcome them!

Please pray for its success in attracting and serving young moms from our area who need to develop some new skills and who will benefit from the fellowship that will arise out of this opportunity.



New to the CrossWay Library



Help is on the way from two Washington State counseling professionals, to help you find your way out of that proverbial paper bag.

Published by Revell, a division of Baker Books, this paperback will personally counsel you, including faith as a factor in obtaining health.

So, check it out from the CrossWay library, and see if it doesn't help you overcome your anxiety, worry and fear!



Getting closer . . .

It won't look quite like this, but our new kitchen has now been designed, with the invaluable aid of architect Nate Funk and our own Bob Johnston and a team of enthusiastic volunteers.

CrossWay's spacious new kitchen will occupy a significant corner of our new multipurpose room and will be equipped with two pass-through counter windows to facilitate food and beverage service.

Two wall ovens are planned, as well as three microwave ovens . . . and two dishwashers! Cabinets and counters galore, and a food-prep table. *Now we need to ask the Lord to provide the funds to finish the job!*

It's coming . . . it's almost here . . . and it will serve the needs of growing ministry here at CrossWay. We can hardly wait!

Taming your sugar monster

February weather couldn't keep our ladies home *all* month! Some 15 of us turned out on February 20 to



take advantage of the vast knowledge of clinical health and wellness coach Sarah Bramstedt.

She spoke to us on "Decoding Sugar Cravings and Addiction," giving us the whats, whys and wherefores of adopting a healthy style of eating. The ladies enjoyed healthy refreshments following Sarah's talk.

The women's ministry team invites all the ladies to enjoy the Lent Lite program on its regular meeting night during March and check the April *Current* for next month's program!

Persecution updates

CrossWay participants in our annual Christmas Card-writing party for persecuted Christians may find these updates, from the Voice of the Martyrs, of particular interest:



Pastor Bakhrom Kholmatov was detained by police in April, 2017, during a raid on his church.

During the interrogations after his arrest, Christians were informed that “the purpose of conducting inspections is the closure of churches in **Tajikistan** and the confiscation of their property.”

In July of 2017, a court sentenced Pastor Bakhrom to three years in prison. As in other countries in the region, Tajik authorities often use accusations of extremism to punish Christians. Local Christians later said the charges were fabricated, because authorities could not find anything illegal in the church. People who are close to Pastor Kholmatov believe he was actually arrested because of a conflict over a building.

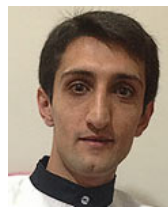
Update, posted 12/4/18: The wife of 43-year-old Christian prisoner Bakhrom Kholmatov says he is doing reasonably well. Bakhrom’s wife, Gulnora, reports that he feels good and that his fellow prisoners treat him well. His two sons, who live in Russia, were able to visit him recently, and Gulnora says she continues to receive letters of encouragement from Christians around the world, though she says Bakhrom has not received the letters sent to him. Please continue to pray for Pastor Bakhrom and his family.

Blasphemy acquittal confirmed

After nine years on Pakistan’s death row and several months in hiding after her release, our sister in Christ, Asia Bibi, is now technically free to leave her country and seek asylum abroad.

At the end of January, the Pakistan Supreme Court heard an appeal of her October 31 acquittal and dismissed the appeal without testimony. Ironically, she has been in protective custody — not actually free — since being released from prison, because religious extremists in that country spent days rioting. Unconfirmed reports have circulated that her opponents have been searching her neighborhood to threaten her life. It’s not unusual for released Christians to be murdered outside the court system once they have been “freed.”

Please pray for Asia Bibi’s safety and that of her courageous attorney, who returned from temporary asylum in the Netherlands to represent her at this most recent hearing and, in doing so, lost his asylum rights.



Ebrahim Firouzi is a Christian convert from Islam who has been in and out of prison in Iran since 2011, and though he was **due to be released in January 2015, authorities instead retried him**

for “acting against national security, gathering, and collusion” **and extended his sentence by five years.**

Update, posted 12/5/18: Ebrahim Firouzi’s mother died this week while he remained in prison, not even allowed to attend her funeral. His mother, Kobra Kamrani, died on Monday, Dec. 3. She had cancer and had lost her eyesight. In the last month, her health deteriorated rapidly, and she pleaded with authorities to allow her son to visit her one last time, but her requests were denied. Officials also denied Ebrahim’s requests to attend his mother’s funeral.

Voice of the Martyrs asks us to:

Pray that our persecuted families will

- sense God’s presence
- know that we are praying for them
- experience God’s comfort
- see God open doors for evangelism
- boldly share the Gospel
- mature in their faith
- be granted wisdom in covert ministry work
- remain joyful amidst suffering
- forgive and love their persecutors
- be rooted in God’s Word

Mission teams complete

During our worship service on January 20, CrossWay commissioned its new Missions Outreach Steering Committee: Annette Doerr, Stella Michael and

To explore joining a CrossWay missionary support team, contact Pam Reed, Missions Coordinator

Paul Samuelson. These representatives of the congregation have begun praying and working together to develop friendships among the refugees

and immigrants living in our church’s vicinity. Please pray for them as they begin a lengthy project to engage community members from overseas, in order to share Jesus and fulfill our part in Christ’s Great Commission (Matthew 28).



Yummy refreshments . . .



Stirring
music
. . .



. . . and entertaining artistry



Reaching Up,
Reaching In,
Reaching Out . . .
Honoring the Lord Jesus Christ
at the **CrossWay Coffeehouse**, Feb. 22