



July 2019

CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 • 616.949.5690

www.crosswaygr.com

Now is the time!

Now that we have tangible evidence that we've built more than a big empty cave on the south and west sides of our church, the time is ripe for going beyond the dreams into the realm of planning!

Our elders have been mulling future uses for our multipurpose center and lobby for some time now. And many of us will remember a Sunday School class that offered the congregation opportunity to brainstorm and submit ideas for consideration.

As we approach the concrete completion of our dream, it's time for all to engage by putting in our "two cents." To discuss your ideas and even projects you'd like to participate in, please see one of our pastors and/or members of the Elder Board: Bob Greenhoe, Bob Johnston, Mike Kramer, Paul Samuelson, and Mike Stevens.

Our new construction is designed to provide more fellowship and education opportunities for our congregation...and a means of offering hospitality to the community around us. So, dream big or small. There'll be spaces useful for a full range of activities.

It's coming, CrossWay! So, let's go!



Pastor Bob Manuel, dreaming of ministry opportunities when the ladders come down and the walls go up.

Landscape day is here!

It's time to beautify CrossWay on the outside, too.

Please come on Saturday, June 29, anytime after 9 a.m. to roll up your sleeves, don your gardening gloves and put a shovel in the ground!



There will be a wide range of tasks, some requiring brains, some brawn, some simply willingness to kneel down on the ground and, as they say in baseball, "get dirty."

Questions? Check with Pastor Bob Funk. Or show up and ask!

For the gals...

Sandy Williams is opening her home and 10-acre property to girls and women of all ages for a time of fellowship and camping. Come out to Freeport at 4 p.m. on Friday, July 26, and stay over 'til 2 p.m. the next day. The less adventurous among us are welcome to go home for sleepytime and come on back in the morning for more fun and rejuvenation! Sign up outside the sanctuary, and watch for more details through the month.

Coming up at CrossWay Community

Every Sun. 10 a.m.

Every Tues. 11:30 a.m.

Every Wed. 7 p.m.

June 29 9 a.m. ...

July 2 & 9 1 p.m.

July 6 9 a.m.

July 6 9 a.m.

July 11 & 18 6:15 p.m.

July 26/27 (see above)

July 28 6 p.m.

Worship together

Neighborhood lunch chat

Hinkles' small group

Landscaping at CrossWay

Ladies' Bible study ("Miracles")

Ladies' breakfast @ IHOP

Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans

Wholyfit exercise (church hosting)

Ladies fellowship @ Williamses'

All-church prayer meeting

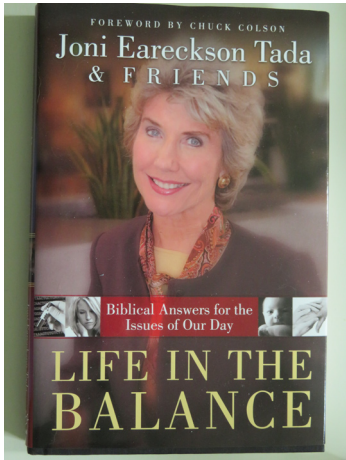
Can you give us a boost this summer?

Summer is here, and just like last year, we're seeing a drop in the offerings needed to keep our budget on course. Please dig deep as the Lord moves you, and bring your cash or check gifts to the offering plate on Sundays.

Or take advantage of giving through our website at crosswaygr.com; click on "give online" and complete the form, a secure way to give once or to set up regular, automatic giving.



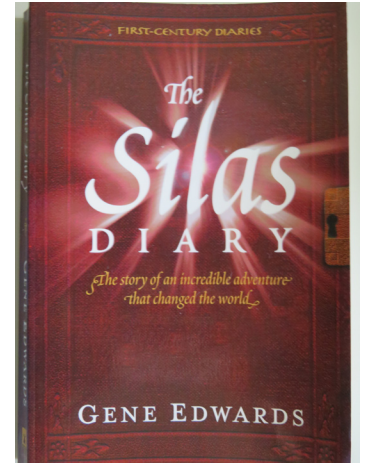
New to the CrossWay library . . . available to you!



Always an inspiration, Joni Eareckson Tada is one of our featured authors this month, with her *Life In the Balance: Biblical Answers for the Issues of Our Day*, recently donated to the CrossWay library. From autism to self-image, abortion to "the American Dream," Joni helps us think more deeply and prepare to defend the ethical answers from Scripture.

The Silas Diary by Gene Edwards is a fiction-based-on-fact fleshing out of the journeys of Paul and the challenges of building the church in a hostile environment.

Check out a good book for your summer reading!



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 half of this year. It's time now to plan for your engagement as "the hands and feet of Jesus"

during the **third** quarter of 2019. Please prayerfully consider how best to offer your talents in service at 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 • 3rd 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"/> Computer projection during service | <input type="checkbox"/> Set up and/or take down tables & chairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspect grounds for repair/maintenance needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worship team/music | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve at neighborhood events | <input type="checkbox"/> Join a missionary support team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greet worshippers on Sundays | <input type="checkbox"/> Assist in planning church events | <input type="checkbox"/> Visit shut-ins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Man sound booth during service | <input type="checkbox"/> Manage new lobby info desk | <input type="checkbox"/> Host or lead a small group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take photos at church events | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide refreshments | <input type="checkbox"/> Light carpentry/indoor maintenance |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer ideas for bldg. addition use | |



Signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Phone # (____) _____ E-mail _____

This message
from Pastor Bob Funk

'Under God'

In his latest book, *The Book of Signs*, David Jeremiah writes briefly about America in light of Biblical prophecy. He reminds us that America's founders subjected themselves to God as the ultimate authority for law. They submitted to God's authority and "realized that once America failed to acknowledge that we were *under God*, our basis for freedom and equitable government would come crashing down."

Since we are about to celebrate the 4th of July in these United States, I thought you would appreciate the following quotes from a few of our founding fathers and Presidents:

- **George Washington:** "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."
- **Abraham Lincoln:** "It is my constant anxiety and prayer that both myself and this nation should be on the Lord's side."
- **Benjamin Franklin:** "The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this Truth — that God governs in the Affairs of Men." He continued, "Without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political Building no better than the builders of Babel."
- **Pres. Woodrow Wilson:** "The Bible ... is the one supreme source of revelation of the meaning of life, the nature of God and spiritual nature and needs of men. It is the only guide of life which really leads the spirit in the way of peace and salvation. America was born a Christian nation. America was born to exemplify that devotion to the elements of righteousness which are derived from the revelations of Holy Scripture."



- **Pres. Calvin Coolidge:** "The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country."

Dr. Jeremiah adds, "In other words, when America turns from its position of being *under God*, we can no longer expect His blessings on this nation to continue."

Let us pray fervently for our nation, our world and, especially, for the Church's witness. *Under God* isn't just a phrase from the Pledge of Allegiance. It is a worldview that distinguishes our nation from atheistic Communist and totalitarian nations. It also describes the humility of those who submit to God's authority.

Under God is the way to freedom, liberty and justice. It is also at the center of God's purpose in Christ, "to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment — to bring all things in heaven and on earth together *under* one Head, even **Christ**. (1 Cor. 1:

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

A Rose Garden God?

"I beg your pardon, but I never promised you a rose garden." While this is not a Bible verse, perhaps it should be!

I recently read an excellent article written by Colin Hansen on the Gospel Coalition website titled "Life is Hard, Jesus Doesn't Make It Easier". (I encourage you to read it!) This *CrossWay Current* article is a bit of a reflection on that one.

Yes, life can also be incredibly beautiful and satisfying, but with both the fallen nature of this world and the way God has wired this world (the Best is yet to come), we are assured both a groaning and an incomplete satisfaction in this life. (Rom. 8:22) In fact, counter-intuitively, much of the *blessings* we are promised are intimately connected to *hardships* (think of the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12). Sign me up! Maybe not.

Let me suggest, most followers of Jesus throughout church history and even today would say, *"Yes, God is good, but life is incredibly hard, and sometimes following Jesus makes it even worse, at least for the short run."* The septic strains of a health/wealth prosperity "gospel" miserably fails persecuted or suffering believers. Nor does it serve you well when Jesus (for reasons we may never know) doesn't "come through" for you on some of your most anguished prayers. As far as you can tell, you are not asking with wrong motives (James 4:3), and you want God to be glorified (Matt. 6:9), but prayer increasingly ascends/descends into *"Lord, how long ... ?"* (Hab. 1:2; Rev. 6:10) Some might say to you, "If you just have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can move mountains" I always get a bit suspicious whenever someone uses the word *"just,"* as in, "If you *just*" Most often they are wrong.

Now why such a gloomy article?! Actually, I want to encourage you. You see, we can thoroughly discourage one another with well-meaning advice, suggesting the right "formula" of faith/perseverance/application of Scripture will make everything okay. I've seen a number of people over the years grow cold and cynical in their faith because God doesn't seem to care. They've applied the "right" formula, and He remains silent. Let me suggest a couple things in closing that I hope will encourage you:

- *Throw away the formulas.* Don't trust them. And I won't tell you to "hang onto" Jesus. Sometimes we can't even do that. But I would pray, "God help us to see Jesus. (Heb. 12:1-3) Give us all the grace to believe HE IS HANGING ON TO US." The echo of our Savior's cry, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me" was not a cry of cognition. That is, Jesus *knew* why He was dying and why the Father was silent. His cry was one of *emotion*. No formula or "answers" would work here.
- If it helps, try to remember, you are in good company. Every "saint" and our Savior would nod their heads and their hearts to you, saying, "It might not get better now, in this life, and though it may be small consolation, later you will enjoy everlasting, true, enduring and uninterrupted Life. Yes, you will get small tastes of it now. A bit of respite here and there. And sometimes even great splashes of joy. What is promised now is the garden of Gethsemane. Later? The unblemished Garden of God and your enjoyment of our Gardener. (John 15:1, Rev. 21:22)

And in the meantime (which can be quite a *mean time!*), we will find *ALL* the promises of God, not in what we think we have coming to us but in Jesus Himself. (II Cor. 1:20)

Oh for grace to trust Him more.

Amen.

CrossWay missions this month

Some 1,500 people from all over the country and beyond converged on a large church in southwest suburban Chicago for three days in June at the EFCA One conference, a meeting that occurs every couple of years somewhere in America. This one being so close by, CrossWay was able to send both Pastor Bob Manuel and Missions Coordinator Pam Reed to participate, network and worship with our big church family.



Pam Reed runs into CrossWay missionary Tom Becker at the EFCA One conference.

Among other opportunities, Pam participated in a three-part learning lab titled: Is My Global Mission Strategy Working? Both there and in conversations with others outside of the formal setting, she explained the dual track Missions Policy that CrossWay adopted in 2018 and the steps we are taking as a congregation to implement the policy. The response was most encouraging. It seems we are on the right track!

Please pray for:



your own participation as a missionary support team member. Our nine missionaries are currently supported by 17 people, plus our steering committee members Marcy Greenhoe, RaeAnne Hansberry and Dennis Veurink.



the new endeavors of our Outreach Steering Committee (Annette Doerr, Stella Michael and Paul Samuelson), who are studying and planning CrossWay's efforts to build relationships in our neighborhood.

**To join a CrossWay communications & prayer team,
or to explore friendship evangelism opportunities in our church's neighborhood,
please contact Pam Reed.**

Indonesian Christian released!



Last November, more than 40 of us gathered to write Christmas cards to Christians imprisoned for their faith. One such prisoner was Abraham Ben Moses, whose story began with his academic exploration of Christianity as compared to his own religion of Islam. In 2005, Abraham began studying the Bible in order to disprove the Christian faith. Instead, Abraham became convinced that the Bible was the truth and publicly became a Christian on March 4, 2006. Since then, he's been active in debates and online, discussing the differences between Christianity and Islam.

His Muslim wife eventually left him, and in 2014 he married another Muslim convert to Christianity. His wife, Ayu, was pregnant when he was arrested, and she later gave birth to their daughter. Abraham also has four adult children from his first marriage. The Voice of the Martyrs website pictured him beaming, reaching through his prison bars to cuddle his newborn baby.

In May 2018, Abraham Ben Moses was sentenced to four years in prison along with a 50 million rupiah fine (\$3,500) on blasphemy charges. However, what man meant for evil, God meant for good. While in prison, he has consistently preached the Gospel to his fellow prisoners, baptizing 50 at latest count!

Coming up on the one-year anniversary of that sentence, Voice of the Martyrs now reports that Abraham Ben Moses received parole on April 26. He is back home with his family, but he must report weekly to the police station. Let's give praise to our Father for His great compassion and blessing for this, His outspoken champion in Indonesia.



We are family...
at CrossWay Community

Happy 50th Birthday,
Mike Stevens,
“The Professor!”



Rest in peace, Evie DeVries.

Fond memories of our friend,
a staunch defender of truth,
an avid nursery worker,
fun companion at the table,
long-time faithful member
of CrossWay.

Now with Jesus, face to Face.
We will miss her!