



January 2020

CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

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It's official!

Just before Thanksgiving, the city of Grand Rapids issued a provisional permit giving us access to our newly erected and appointed building addition.

Just before Christmas, the city approved our occupancy permit for permanent use of our long-awaited new facility, and using it we are!

Our Christmas Eve service welcomed members and guests through our new entrance and lobby, just off the parking lot at the west side of the church. Though we used our long-loved fellowship hall for refreshments that evening, several of our youth went south, after the sanctuary service, to take shots at the basketball hoop in our huge new multipurpose room.

Coffee service is now offered in our new lobby at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays, before 10 a.m. worship. And our new restrooms are available just off the lobby. Just a few steps further south brings the member or visitor to our gleaming new, modern kitchen, our new classroom/conference room and the big-as-a-barn multipurpose room.



Dawn has broken over CrossWay Community Church and our new western entrance.

'Grace for standing firm'

That is the title of our pastors' sermon series beginning Jan. 5 – based on I Peter.

Begin now to read Peter's profound first letter (near the end of the New Testament) and then invite friends to bring in the new year with you at CrossWay, to hear sound Biblical preaching, to sing praises with us to our Lord and to fellowship with some of this world's most warm, welcoming neighbors. 10 a.m. each Sunday – coffee served in the lobby at 9:30.

Welcoming 2020

Ring in the new year with your church family in CrossWay's new ministry center on Tuesday evening, Dec 31, 6:30-10 p.m. Music, games, non-alcoholic refreshments and the joy of fellowship as we bid adieu to 2019.

Basketball, cornhole, boardgames – you're invited to bring your own! And the whole family.

It won't be the same without you!

Semi-annual business meeting

Members, please mark your 2020 calendar now and plan to participate in the church's semi-annual business meeting on Sunday, Jan. 19, 11:30 a.m. in the sanctuary.

Ministry leaders are asked to prepare brief reports for the congregation's attention at this meeting. Reports should be deposited with the church office, for the board's attention.

Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Every Sun. 10 a.m.	Worship together
Every Sun. 11:30 a.m.	Sunday School (all ages)
Every Sun. 6 p.m.	Book Club (coordinator Brenda Weilnau)
Every Tues. 1 p.m.	Ladies Bible study
Every Thurs. 2 - 4 p.m.	Learn Biblical Hebrew (here)
Jan. 4 9 a.m.	Ladies' breakfast @ IHOP
Jan. 4 9 a.m.	Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
Jan. 5 & 19 6 p.m.	Alves small group @ Doerr's
Jan. 8 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.	Pregnancy Ctr. counseling (here)
Jan. 8, 15, 22 & 29 7 p.m.	Hinkle small group
Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30 6:30 p.m.	Wholyfit exercise (church hosting)
Jan. 14 & 28 6:30 p.m.	Veurink small group @ A. Le's
Jan. 19 11:30 a.m.	Church business meeting

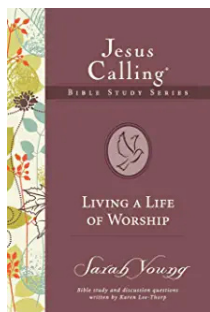
Such good news!

Just two days before Christmas, Sarah and Cody Hinkle welcomed their third daughter, Tirzah Noel, into their loving family of seven.

We are all looking forward to welcoming her into the CrossWay Community family!



Ladies: This is for you!



CrossWay's weekly Ladies Bible Study group is looking forward to resuming study and fellowship on Tuesdays at 1 p.m., beginning Jan. 7. The group will continue the *Jesus Calling* series with *Living a Life of Worship* by Sarah Young. Specific location to be announced.

About our denomination

CrossWay Community is the only church in Grand Rapids and immediate environs which affiliates with the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Many of us were drawn to acquaintance with CrossWay by the denomination's commitment to sound Biblical preaching. Upon formally joining, our members become knowledgeable also about the denomination's Statement of Faith and are asked by our pastors to subscribe to that statement.

The 11 topics of the EFCA Statement of Faith will be featured, one each month, in the *Current* during 2020. In this January introduction to this anticipated series, we offer the Statement's official introduction and a brief outline of the principles to be featured in future editions:

Introduction: The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around the same theological convictions.

1. God
2. The Bible
3. The Human Condition
4. Jesus Christ
5. The Work of Christ
6. The Holy Spirit
7. The Church
8. Christian Living
9. Christ's Return
10. Response *and* Eternal Destiny
11. Distinctives

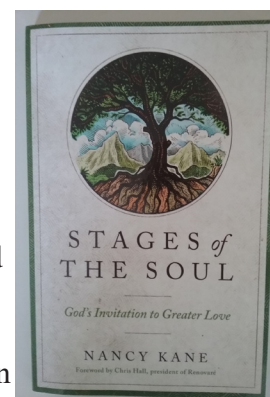
New to the CrossWay library

The subtitle of *Stages of the Soul* gives us insight as to what to expect on the pages of this book which has been donated to our church library: "God's Invitation to Greater Love."

By professional counselor and Moody Bible Institute professor Nancy Kane, *Stages of the Soul* seeks to teach us the five stages in the soul's journey toward wholeness. And it's an invitation to love God more and let His love permeate every aspect of our lives.

"God is inviting you deeper," says Mrs. Kane. "Are you willing to go with Him?"

Available for you to borrow by just signing it out on the clipboard near the library door. A fresh start on the new year, offered to you at CrossWay Community.



'Tis the season!

Early January is a great time to find deals on leftover Christmas cards! Please buy a box or two of sacred-style cards for the 2020 card-writing party for the persecuted church; give your sale-deal sacred cards to Pam Reed or leave them at the church office.



It's not too late!

Get your CrossWay mug!

In celebration of the expansion of our ministry center, CrossWay Community Church offers attractive commemorative mugs, featuring the architect's sketch, at \$6 each donation (or 2 for \$10). Sign up in the lobby to add CrossWay to your mug collection. (The first 20 "sold" during our Christmas potluck!) Proceeds to the building fund.

This message
from Pastor Bob Funk

Browsing for the New Year

Here are three of the thousands of photos I must have taken recently and over the years. I chose these three to represent many others. They are reminders both of God's blessings and of my priorities for the New Year. Do you have photos of your own that serve as reminders of your blessings and life-priorities? I now realize that these things evolve and change as the years go on. Perhaps this could be a good spiritual exercise for many of us. Pictures can be worth a thousand words, memories and inspirations.

The first photo reminds me of the blessing and priority of the church, its people and ministries that exist to serve God in Jesus' name. It's from a recent Christmas dinner at our home for the elders and spouses of CrossWay. I'm the guy in the mirror.



This photo below reminds me of the blessing of family. It also helps me to loosen up and not to take myself too seriously.



Little Norah gets it. The saying in the picture frame could have been taken from Paul's letter to the Philippians. "Remember, sayeth the Lord, to pause and looseneth upeth and chooseth joy."

At least I hear him saying something like that.



The last photo was taken outside of a club on Lake Michigan. Our band, the Blue Disciples, played for the event. Florence and I stepped outside at a break and ... blue sky, setting sun, serene waters, cool, fresh air, flowers, boats and I sensed God saying, "Take a look at this!" Sometimes the heavens really do declare the glory of God. What a blessing!



I wish you all a New Year filled with the peace of God's presence and promises. May I also encourage you to go browsing for the New Year? Take a look at your older and newer photos. Take some new ones. And browse everywhere for signs of God's big and "little" blessings.

Sometimes life can be hard. But God does give us opportunities to "chooseth" joy.

Rejoice
in the Lord always.
Philippians 4:4

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.



A few weeks ago, in a sermon I quoted a line from Mel Gibson's 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ*. In the scene, Mary the mother of Jesus sees Him, on the way to Golgotha, fall under the weight of the cross. She runs to Him, offering a mother's comfort with the words, "I am here." Taking a bit of artistic license, Gibson moves a line from the Book of Revelation (see Rev. 21:5) to this encounter. With eyes nearly swollen shut by the blows He has received, Jesus looks at Mary and says, "See, Mother, I make all things new."

While we have no proof Jesus said this on the way to His death, this is exactly what He was doing. Making all things new.

The incongruity of this statement amazes me. Apart from the eyes of faith, apart from the fulfilling of Old Testament Scripture, Jesus was doing anything but making all things new. Yet, God was making all things new with the death of the Jesus because the old prophesy from the earliest of days, that the Seed of the woman, while having His heel struck, would crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15) was being fulfilled. Again, one needs the eyes of faith to see this truth.

Do you see His new(ness) in your life this fresh New Year? At right is just a brief sampling of all the newness Jesus said He has brought, is bringing and will bring in the future. I encourage you to meditate on these verses about newness. If we do, I anticipate His newness will characterize our lives in a beautiful and deepening way. Here are the verses:

This message
from Pastor Bob Manuel

'I Make All Things New'

- We are a "New Creation" - II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15
- We enjoy a New Covenant - Luke 22:20; I Cor. 11:25
- We have been given a New Command - John 13:34
- We Have a New Way of Serving - Rom. 7:6
- * We are Competent Ministers of a New Covenant - II Cor. 3:6
- * We are a New Self with New Clothes - Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10
- * We Have a New Birth - I Peter 1:3 - New birth
- * We Will Enjoy a New Heaven and a New Earth - II Peter 3:13
- * We Have a New Name - Rev. 2:17
- * We Will Sing a New Song - Rev. 5:9

Part of the beauty of these "new" verses is that they encompass all of our lives. That is, they are both actual (already happened) and aspirational (things that will happen in our promised future).

I close with a few questions and a final word of encouragement. Are you seeing/feeling/experiencing this newness? Yes, our walk of faith is more than sight, emotion and experience. We are told to "walk by faith, not by sight." (II Cor. 5:7) While this is true, the very faith we walk by helps us to "see" the bruised and bloodied Christ, our bruised and bloodied lives, not as a tragedy, but as a joyful "comedy," that more is taking place than what we merely see with our physical eyes.

By faith, we see Him who is invisible (Heb. 11:27), at work, making all things new. Including you and your life.

May He give you eyes to see this truth in this fresh New Year!

Praying about a short-term mission trip?

If you are considering embarking on a short-term mission trip in 2020, you are invited to apply for CrossWay funding. Though we won't be able to foot the entire bill, we may be able to contribute to your support for such a venture.

The current Missions budget includes a line item for short-term missions. That line



item is a mere \$100 because no one has requested such funding from CrossWay for several years. However, the Missionary Support Steering Committee asked the board to set aside this amount as an invitation for consideration.

Please contact Missions Coordinator Pam Reed to discuss the application process. She's in the Fellowship Directory.

Missions this month – Mike & Kari Greenhoe

After spending a year Stateside, serving extended family needs, raising support and recharging, our own Mike and Kari returned to Germany with sons Clark (age 2) and Grant (age 4). Serving missionary families at the Black Forest Academy in Germany, Mike is teaching four chemistry classes – two of which are with Advanced Placement students. He enjoys teaching the BFA students about God's creation and how the universe was built with 118 different elements generating so many unique things. He also had the privilege of leading a trip to Normandy for the junior class, visiting three different military cemeteries, American, Canadian and German; the group also visited several museums on Utah, Omaha and Juno beaches, camping overnight on one of the historic beaches. Theological discussions ensued.

Coming up in April, the family will attend a global missionary conference for TeachBeyond, their sending organization, with about 700 missionaries expected to attend. Kari is involved with some of the planning and is serving on the international video chat committee in preparation for the conference. Grant attends a play-based German kindergarten.



Please pray for:



The FarBeyond conference in April



A friend and BFA teacher who is undergoing chemotherapy for recently diagnosed Lymphoma



Mike & Kari to seek God's wisdom as parents



Mike's chemistry students



Praise for God's continued provision for the Greenhoses!

Praise the Lord! Pastor Bakhrom Kholmatov released!

Participants in CrossWay's Christmas-card-writing party in November will surely recall addressing Pastor Bakhrom Kholmatov's card to his family in Tajikistan, as he had not been receiving mail in the prison where he was being held on charges of "extremism" and was imprisoned 982 days.



Good news! 42-year-old Pastor Kholmatov has rejoined his wife and three children, having been released more than three months early, just a week before Christmas. Very possibly, the Lord delivered our cards right into his hands as he celebrated the Lord's birth in freedom and the comfort of home.

December brought fellowship . . .



At Audrey Johnston's, the ladies enjoyed their annual cookie & ornament exchange. (Becky Alves & Clara Williams dig in!)



Our halls were decked with joyous light . . . including five added (donated) Christmas trees, this one in our new lobby.

. . . and food!



Jane Tucker, Bernie Burt & Becky Alves greet members and guests at the brand new CrossWay kitchen . . .



. . . while a good time was had by all at the sumptuous Christmas potluck spread in the new multipurpose center.

