



# CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 • 616.949.5690

[www.crosswaygr.com](http://www.crosswaygr.com)

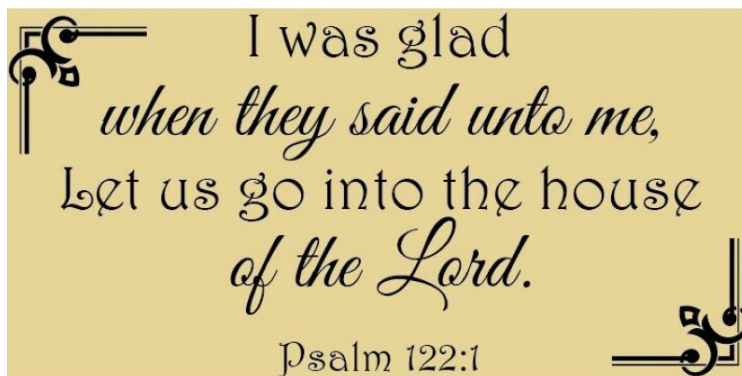
## Come, let us worship together

The church board has designated Sunday, June 7, as likely reopening day for worshipping together at CrossWay.

Plans are being laid for safety, with spacing of our sanctuary seating and plenty of liquid sanitizer at hand. And preparations for a different means of offering communion elements and receiving offerings are being considered as well.

Children's church will not be offered for the time being; parents are invited to keep their children with them in the sanctuary as we worship together. The nursery will be open for families with the youngest among us.

Though we have all appreciated the work our pastors have devoted to bringing us a message on-line every Sunday, worshipping our Lord together is something our church leadership is no longer willing to forego. On-line sermons will continue for those who are unable to gather.



## Major changes coming soon

Pastor Bob Funk has announced he will retire at the end of June, looking to spend more time with his dear wife Florence and others in their family, and to enjoy retirement life while still in good health.



How we will miss them! Send-off festivities to say thank you and Godspeed to this treasured couple are planned for after worship on June 28 in our new multi-purpose room.



Mike Kramer will be leaving us in July, so is not seeking re-election to the Elder Board.

Mike is taking on increased responsibility in the ministry he serves, and his new role requires a move to eastern Michigan. He too will be missed.

## Annual meeting on hold

The church's annual membership meeting has been put on hold until sometime in July. Watch next month's *Current* for date and time.

Election of new elders is on the agenda, as are financial updates, ministry reports and adoption of the church budget.

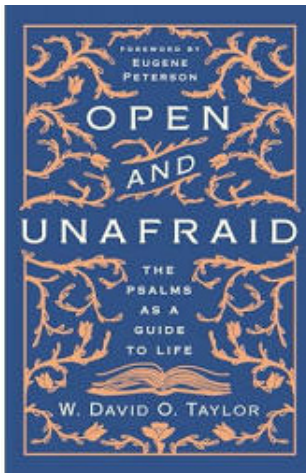
In the meantime, ministry leaders are asked to submit reports for the benefit of the congregation. Please address them to Pastor Bob Manuel and Elder Board Chairman Bob Greenhoe before sending them to the office for inclusion in the meeting packet.

Please increase your prayers for our Elders, as they face many decisions for the upcoming season.

## Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Sun., June 7 • 10<sup>AM</sup> • Gather for Worship Together  
Sundays in June • Sermons posted on-line  
Wednesdays • 7<sup>PM</sup> • Hinkle small group  
Wed., June 10 • 8<sup>PM</sup> • EFCA United in Prayer (see pg. 2)  
Sun., June 28 • 11:15<sup>AM</sup> • Celebration for the Funks

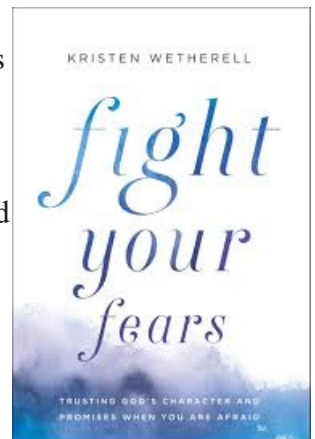
## Two new books in the CrossWay library



How timely is this? *Open & Unafraid* by W. David O. Taylor is subtitled “The Psalms as a Guide to Life.”

In the words of the publisher, this book “shows us how to read the psalms in a fresh, life-giving way, and to access the bottomless resources for life that they provide.” How refreshing and comforting.

A timely reminder of God’s sufficiency: Kristen Wetherell’s new book, *Fight your Fears: Trusting God’s Character & Promises When You are Afraid* — the latest book to be donated to the CrossWay library for your benefit.



Here is the summary, reprinted from the back cover. See if it intrigues you!

“We all have fears, and many of us struggle with very real anxiety caused by our fears. Fears about the future, fears about health, job and family; fears about inadequacy and failure; fears about how much fear itself seems to affect our decisions, plans and growth in this life. In His Word, God commands us not to be afraid, but how is this possible?”

Check them out; it’s easy! (The library is near the north entrance, just off the “old” kitchen, with a small “new books” outpost in our new lobby.)

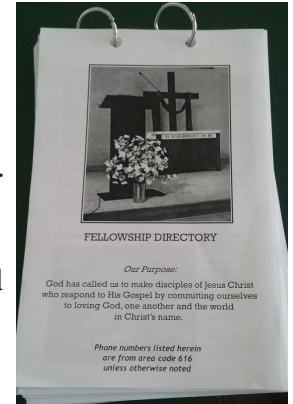
## Fellowship directory is here!

CrossWay’s new pictorial fellowship directory is at the printer as we write, and we anticipate it will be ready for you when the church regathers June 7.

A big thank-you to those who furnished previously unpublished info and who provided photos after we were no longer together to take fresh ones.

Thanks, too, to Julia Stevens for serving so well on the photo team.

We are pleased to offer this to our church family as one more way we at CrossWay “reach in” for fellowship in the Lord. ~ Penny Pullen & Pam Reed



## Reaching out to bless

Linda Stevens has brought to our attention the “wish list” of Heartside Ministry and asks that you bring items to our southwest lobby for donation to this local ministry to homeless people.



HEARTSIDE MINISTRY

A division of Mel Trotter Ministries

The Heartside “Wish List” can be found online at <https://heartside.org/giving-options/wish-list>. And while you’re there, check out Heartside’s mission and work.

## About our denomination

CrossWay Community is the only church in Grand Rapids which affiliates with the Evangelical Free Church of America, an association of autonomous churches united around the same theological convictions.

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 10 topics of the EFCA Statement of Faith are being featured, one each month, in the *Current* during 2020. In this June edition, we offer the Statement’s fifth principle:

### The Work of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

## EFCA united in prayer



Our denomination’s board has invited us all to an online prayer gathering Wednesday, June 10, 8 to 8:30 p.m. via *Facebook Live*, *Vimeo* and *YouTube*.

We hope to circulate the sign-on info via e-mail closer to the “gathering.”

This message  
from Pastor Bob Funk

## *Transitions & Anticipations*



As I write my last *CrossWay Current* article, at the end of May, we are all in the midst of transitioning from the “stay safe at home” season to a gradual reopening of stores, businesses and, yes, churches. While some may be fearful or hesitant, others are “chomping at the bit” to get out and resume more normal lives. CrossWay resumes its worship gatherings in June, as you know, and we are hoping we can strike the elusive balance between concern for our physical well-being and our psychological and spiritual well-being.

Transitions are part of life. We all go through them again and again. Some are anticipated, prayed over and planned, while others come suddenly and surprisingly. Some of our members and friends have graduated from high school or college. They have anticipated graduation for some time, but none could have anticipated cancelled graduation services or cancelled schools. Their transition to further education or training may also be very different from what they had planned for. The same is true for those planning weddings. I have been involved in helping with two weddings recently. One has been rescheduled three times! Then again, I remember people of my own parents’ generation who had to postpone or hurry up getting married, because many men, like my father, had to leave to fight in World War II.

Those are just two examples of transitions that many anticipate. Transitions will continue to occur for all of us but, realistically, what we anticipate needs to be flexible and yielded in faith to our Sovereign God. That’s where the peace is. The Lord is in charge.

I prayerfully anticipated my personal transition to what some call “retirement.” (I think a better word is “reirement,” since the Lord always has more for us to do!) Florence and I did not anticipate the massive social

and personal upheaval of the Covid-19 virus. That delayed my “retirement” announcement for a month for several reasons. We realize that CrossWay members, leaders and friends did not anticipate our departure. It means, among other things, that CrossWay will be prayerfully navigating through some transitions in the coming months.

While this is my first retirement, of course, Florence and I have experienced pastoral and church transitions before. We know that the Lord is good and faithful. We are quite aware that CrossWay belongs to Jesus. He is the Lord of the church. He is in your hearts and in your midst. We are praying and hoping that, by His grace, you will navigate well through this transition and into a season of blessing and great fruitfulness.

We will miss you all. I, Bob, have enjoyed being a co-pastor, teacher and shepherd in your midst for over a decade. You have been kind and gracious. You have been amazingly faithful, giving and loving. I have learned much from you, and I hope that, by the grace of God, I have contributed to your faith and to the community of CrossWay. As I often write, “Soli Deo Gloria” — to God alone be the glory!

Transition well, CrossWay! Anticipate the future with a big dose of optimism and faith, and with a healthy flexibility so that the Sovereign Lord can steer the way into the very best future He has prepared for you. Florence and I will remain in our current home. We will still be around. We might stop in occasionally. After all, I will still be one of “the Bobs.”

We are sincerely grateful, and we look forward to seeing you at church in June!

*Pastor Bob and Florence*

*Following Jesus. Walking HIS Way.*



## This message from Pastor Bob Manuel

### *'Well Done'*

Most of you know of — and perhaps were a bit surprised by — Pastor Funk's recent resignation announcement and plans for retirement. We want both Bob and Florence to know we are grateful for their years of service here at CrossWay and will miss them dearly. In this month's *Current*, I'd like to add a few thoughts of gratitude and respect for the Funks' service here at CrossWay, and all the other churches they served over the years.

My father-in-law was a pastor for many years. A few years before he passed away, he told me that in his view, vocational pastoral ministry had radically shifted/changed over the years, and it was much harder to do. He listed a number of reasons, the chief being the changing and varied expectations from both church folk and the culture at large, of what a pastor is to be and do. Is a pastor mainly a business/religious leader, a cheerleader, a motivational speaker, a ministry manager, counselor, shepherd, etc.? What is the main hat a pastor is called to wear? Is he to be a generalist or a specialist in his ministry duties? While the purpose of this brief article is not to elicit pity for pastors (!), it is meant to say, when you see a man like Pastor Funk and Florence make it to the end and with joy, it is something to be commended. Let me just close with a few thoughts . . .

- You have equipped us well! I was told many years ago a good one-word job description for a pastor would be an "Equipper." (See Ephesians 4:12) That is, in everything a pastor does, he is to have equipping others in ministry in mind. Our job is to work ourselves out of a job by teaching others how to do the work of ministry. I think especially in the area of our corporate worship, Pastor Funk has served us well. He leaves us with worship teams, sound/video teams, equipped and confident to carry on. Good job, Bob!

- You have fought well! When Paul tells Timothy that he (Paul) has fought the good fight, he has finished the race and has kept the faith, the context is one of Paul telling Timothy to "discharge all the duties of ministry." (I Tim. 4:5) Many of these duties were outlined in verses 2-5 and are related to the ministry of preaching and teaching. You have done all of these things well — with "great patience and careful instruction." (v. 2) You were always prepared, in season and out of season. We have learned much from you.
- You have led well! We have enjoyed watching you help lead us the last several years. The Scripture says, "those who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching." (I Tim. 5:17) We were making progress toward an eventual (!) start of our new building construction, but when you came, you carefully and prayerfully learned the history of our hits and misses in this area and then greatly helped us get over the hump. That was no easy task, and we are grateful for your gifts of strategic/structural leadership.
- And Florence, whether this is true or not, I heard years ago the only job that is harder than being a pastor of a local church is to be the pastor's wife! It can be a lonely calling. It's like church folks may have an unspoken expectation of the pastor's wife being involved in much ministry and service to the church. Well, at least more than the "average" attender. Perhaps when a church hires a married pastor, they assume they are getting "two staff members for the price of one!" You have served this church well, Florence. Your cheerful heart and servant spirit have not gone without notice. You, too, will be missed!

So much more could be said, but we do hope and pray that most of all, you will have a sense of satisfaction upon your soon-coming retirement, of hearing the voice of the Father say, "Well done, good and faithful servants."

# Our Core Fears Produce Anxiety in our Life

*Guest commentary by Elder Paul Samuelson*

It is important during these days of stress, fear and anxiety to reflect on the character and promises of God, along with meditating on the redemptive work of Christ for our lives.

Meditation, for me, is like a cow chewing her cud. The cow will chew on it for a while, swallow it, regurgitate it and then chew on it some more. Meditation is like that. We ponder and think about the truths of God's Word by chewing on it and thinking about its implication for our lives, especially when there is a disconnect between what we know and what we are doing. As we meditate, we take the implications of God's word deeper and deeper into all aspects of our lives, and the Word of God becomes richer, more pervasive, more meaningful and more impactful in our lives.

One of the difficulties in meditating on God's word is that our interpretations or perceptions of God's Word and His promises often become a powerful predictor of how we feel and will behave, rather than the actual truth itself. I may believe God loves me unconditionally, and I can point to many Scriptures concerning that truth, but in reality my emotions and behaviors sometimes don't reflect this.

For myself, I have struggled with low self-esteem and a fear of rejection, believing that I constantly needed to do things to get God to love and approve of me and feeling depressed and worthless when I let people down. If I really believed God loves me unconditionally, I would not feel worthless when I let people down or disobey the commandments of God. Why? Because I know "the truest thing about myself is what God says about me." I don't need to get approval from others necessarily to feel good about myself or to have value, because ultimately I have infinite worth in God, whether I deserve it or not. If I really believed God loves me unconditionally, I would know ultimately my true value and worth comes from God. The reason for this disconnect (of really believing that God loves me unconditionally but struggling to accept this truth) is because I am essentially misinterpreting God's truth and His promise (of His love for me) through the lenses of my core fears: that I am defective and that I am worthless if I don't get people to affirm and accept me. I know this is a lie, but if not challenged, it will constantly cause me to misinterpret God's love for me.

Bottom line: It is often our core fears that dictate our interpretations (or misinterpretations) of God's truths, resulting in great anxiety, depression and a sense of hopelessness, rather than the actual truths of God's Word itself.

We have all kinds of core fears in our life, such as the fear of rejection, the fear of not being good enough, the fear of failure, the fear of being abandoned, the fear of losing control, the fear of being defective, the fear of not being loved, the fear of not being validated, the fear of being judged, etc. These core fears are often developed from childhood, but if left unchecked, they cause us to misinterpret God's promises to us and lead us to try to find other ways to manage our core fears through defensive mechanisms, such as being a perfectionist, being a controlling person, being a people-pleaser, trying to be a "religious" or "good" Christian, being a workaholic, being angry all the time, having different addictions, being materialistic, blaming others, living in denial ... the list can go on and on.

While all of these defense mechanisms can temporarily manage our core fears, they ultimately lead to more destruction in our lives, illness, suicide, more addictions of all kinds, etc. In Jeremiah 2:13, God has an indictment against the nation of Israel that they have tried to serve broken cisterns that cannot hold water (*i.e.* defense mechanisms) and that they need to turn to God as their only true source of Living Water and eternal source of ultimate fulfillment. This also applies to us.

Learning to manage our core fears is important for at least two reasons. First, all fear leads to anxiety, because anxiety is essentially fear based. And essentially, if we don't learn about our core fears and find ways to manage them from God's perspective, we will continue to struggle with following God's Word. Second, if we continue to live by our core fears, then we will continue in our faulty defense mechanisms and will not experience the true and full joy and peace God wants to give us but rather will experience more anxiety, fear and depression in our lives.

Next month I plan to explore four aspects of Christ's redemptive work through His atonement and the profound and deep implications for our lives.