



August 2020

# CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 • 616.949.5690

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

## Maintaining our worship together

With the viral pandemic continuing to confront the health of Michiganders, our church's board has decided to continue CrossWay's "phase one" strategy for corporate worship through August.

This means our sanctuary will continue to offer spaced seating, and coffee service in the west lobby will not yet resume. Facial coverings are "strongly encouraged," though not mandated.

## Blessings abound

From the pastor's report to the financial picture, from the ministry reports to the election of elders, the proceedings at our annual business meeting in July showed the Holy Spirit is blessing CrossWay Community in many ways.

Thank you to elder Bob Greenhoe, who agreed to serve for another two-year term on the board. And thank you, too, to Dennis Veurink and Mike Bryant for accepting election to their own two-year terms.

Thanks also to elder Bob Johnston for his hopeful report on building completion and repair projects.

In addition to her report on CrossWay's Missions support efforts, it should be noted, coordinator Pam Reed put out a call for a volunteer to understudy her during the next year, the final year of her term. Pray about it? (and talk to Pam!)

## Help still wanted!

We need a volunteer to step forward to operate the sound and projection booth during the Sunday service. Not a weekly assignment but a key role for our worship time. Training will be provided — no experience needed. Please approach Pastor Manuel or Jane Schultze (find her in the Fellowship Directory) to ask questions or offer your service.

Now that we have a garden brightening our new west entrance, we will welcome experienced or just-willing greenthumbers to keep it weeded and looking bright. (Our north-entrance gardeners would welcome some help, too.) Please offer your services to Pastor Manuel.

(Though the governor has stepped up her "mask order," she continues to exempt worshippers during "religious services" while continuing to "strongly encourage" breath covering.)

We welcome children worshipping with their families in the sanctuary and during August will offer lobby telecasting of the service for those who prefer not to sit in the sanctuary.

## Saying 'farewell'

As elder Mike Kramer finished his term on our church board in July, his church family wished him well in his new ministry post across the state.

His servant's heart and gentle spirit will be greatly missed at CrossWay. Our prayers go with you, Mike!



## Interested in membership?

If you see yourself as part of the CrossWay Community family but have not formally joined the church, you are encouraged to pray about becoming a member and to approach Pastor Manuel with your questions or interest.

And this goes, too, for the young family members who have reached your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday but have not yet become a member in your own right. Come on board!

A getting-to-know-you (and us) "class" is scheduled for 10 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 8, for those exploring membership or just wanting to know more about CrossWay and/or our denomination, the Evangelical Free Church of America.

## Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Sundays • 10<sup>AM</sup> • Gather for Worship Together

Tuesday • 1:15<sup>PM</sup> • Ladies' Bible Study, fellowship hall  
(resuming *Walking in God's Grace*)

Wednesdays • 7<sup>PM</sup> • Hinkle small group

Sat. Aug. 8 • 10<sup>AM</sup> • Getting to Know You class

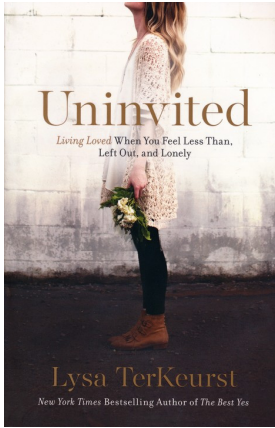
Wed. Aug. 12 • All day • Elder Board Retreat

Sun., Aug. 23 • 6<sup>PM</sup> • All-church prayer meeting

Sun., Aug. 30 • 11:15<sup>AM</sup> • Missions Meet & Greet

with Nancy & Luke Cutherell

## New to the CrossWay library



From the back cover: “With Biblical depth, gut-honest vulnerability and refreshing wit, Lysa TerKeurst will help you:

- Stop feeling left out ...
- Change your tendency to either fall apart or control the actions of others ...
- Know exactly what to pray for ...
- Overcome the two core fears that feed your insecurities ...”

*Uninvited* is in the west lobby along with other recent additions to the church library, which is fully stocked near the north door.

## Book clubbers, take note

Brenda Weilnau is continuing to lead a book club but finding regularity challenging during the pandemic.

She invites you to stay in touch if interested by sending her email inquiries; you'll find her in the church's new pictorial fellowship directory.

## 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 featured, one each month, in the *Current* this year. In this August edition, we offer the Statement's seventh principle:

### The Church

We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

## Welcoming neighbors

The day before our church reopened our doors for Sunday worship at the beginning of June, elder Bob Johnston hung a large banner along Burton Street, just past our western driveway. “You Are Welcome • Sundays at 10” proclaims the sign.

Whether because of seeing that sign on the way past or perhaps folks have found our church website on the Internet, we have been blessed with a stream of visitors the past two months. May all find in CrossWay a safe place of welcome and worship to our Lord and caring fellowship among His people.

## A very special thank-you note

*Here I am, one more time, with a message for the members and friends of CrossWay Community Church. No sermonic meditation. No big plans. And no big news. Just a very big “Thank You!”*

*I want to thank everyone who helped with our send-off on my last official Sunday as co-pastor of CrossWay. I know there were special challenges due to the Covid-19 concerns. Still, Florence and I truly appreciated everything; from the speakers to the fellowship, the gifts and kind words, and the videos and music and cake.*

*We are also and especially grateful for the privilege of eleven years of partnership in the Gospel with you, the elders and Pastor Manuel.*

*As you may know, we are staying in Grand Rapids, in our home, and we are keeping all of you in our prayers and in our hearts. We will see you again, as the Lord wills.*

*I close this simple letter of gratitude with some very appropriate words from God's Word through the Apostle Paul: “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)*

*Once again, Thank You!*

*Sincerely in Christ's love,  
Bob and Florence Funk*

# The Work of Prayer



In last month's *Current*, I shared a bit on some potential future direction (5-year plan) for our church. This included some comments on prayer I learned from one of my pastors. Learning the "comments" of any truth is the easy part, right? But truly learning (living out) the truths, well, that takes a lifetime.

Here, by way of reminder, are my old pastor's comments on prayer: "1) Prayer is work, 2) Prayer works, and 3) Prayer leads to work." I will use this month's *Current* to talk mainly about the first comment and then unpack the other two comments in subsequent *Currents*.

What is meant, then, by "Prayer is work"? Perhaps one of Jesus's parables can help. We read in Luke 18: 1-8, "Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: 'In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to Him with the plea, "Grant me justice against my adversary."'

"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'"

"And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off? I tell you, He will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?'"

Related to our thought that prayer is work, I gather the following from His parable:

- Prayer is not glamorous and requires perseverance. "Day and night (v. 7) this widow pleaded with the judge." Many of us give up too quickly on our prayers. While it is true that God is sovereign and we are to always pray with the attitude of "If it be Your will," I have seen many of us give up on praying faithfully because we haven't received our answers quickly. So, we might still pray, but it will be with cynicism and doubt, not believing that God is good or that He cares.

- Prayer is an expression of faith. (v. 8) We are called to walk by faith not sight, but emotionally, when we are not yet seeing the answers to our prayers, this can wear a person out. To keep praying in faith rather than just going through the motions is a vulnerable thing to do and is hard work.

I'll say more about this in the next few *Currents*, but for now, I'll close with a quote from *Longing for Revival: From Holy Discontent to Breakthrough Faith* by James Choung and Ryan Pfeiffer. Speaking of this widow in Luke 18, they say: "Jesus could have drawn on the heroic exploits of David, Moses or even Gideon. He didn't. And the judge is a man with prominence, position and worldly power. This widow, however, is helpless, vulnerable, weak and overlooked. She represents someone from the most powerless class of society, but she's a contender. ... Contending is about learning to pray in such a way as to not give up, precisely because perseverance requires us to fight against the voices and circumstances that pressure us to quit." (pp. 106-107)

As we move ahead in the work of ministry here at CrossWay, we desperately need to be a community that will be willing to engage in the work of prayer together. If you don't need glamor and quick results, and if you are willing to roll up your sleeves and ask God for the faith to pray believing, then prayer is work will be a welcomed message. The good news and exciting parts that flow from this — that is, prayer works and prayer leads to work — can now be entered into as we expect to see Holy Spirit-infused fruit. (John 15: 7-8) But it all starts with the work of prayer. Whatever we do together as a church must start with and continue with this truth: that prayer is work. I hope you will join me in the near future as we re-engage once again in our monthly prayer gathering and perhaps some new prayer initiatives related to revival.

Bob Manuel





# Input, anyone?

Our church board will meet in “retreat” on Wednesday, Aug. 12, to discuss plans for the coming months and years — perhaps even a “five-year plan” for ministry, which no doubt will include discussion of facility use as well as personnel options.

If you have thoughts or ideas on those or other topics involving CrossWay, you are invited to contact one (or more) of the elders, whose contact information is listed in the CrossWay pictorial fellowship directory. (Regular attenders and members: Contact the church office if you do not yet have a copy.)

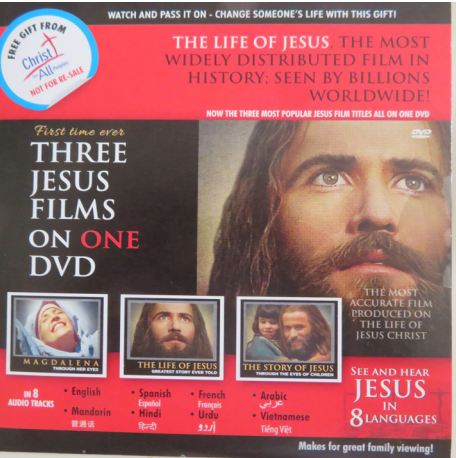


**Elder Board**  
 Bob Greenhoe, Chairman  
 Mike Bryant  
 Bob Johnston  
 Paul Samuelson  
 Mike Stevens  
 Dennis Veurink  
 Pastor Bob Manuel

# Blessing our neighbors

This year’s backpacks for Ridge Park youngsters will have something extra ... a multilingual Jesus DVD provided through CrossWay’s “special projects” line of the church’s Missions budget.

The Good News will be tucked in with crayons and notebooks which CrossWay folks provided in abundance for this annual back-to-school project organized by the Camelot Community Partnership, an association of churches serving families in our neighborhood.



	Goal	Donations
crayons	200	223
notebooks	400	415

Bonus: 200 Jesus DVDs

May  
 Jesus Christ  
 be Praised!



## From Abbottabad to CrossWay

Dr. Luke and Nancy Cutherell are coming to CrossWay Sunday, Aug. 30, and will bring us stories of frontline ministry and service from Abbottabad, Pakistan! Join us for a time of rejoicing and Kingdom significance in our new community room south of the church lobby after our 10 a.m. worship service on that day.





Cutherells have long served at the Bach Christian Hospital, where Luke serves as medical director. They have much to tell us about the Body of Christ in the trenches.

After many months of praying for permission to travel this summer, they have arrived at their stateside home in Virginia, finding their house stocked with food in the cupboards, an inviting bed already made up and ready for tired travelers, and a car in the driveway for their use. "Friends have been the instruments of God's goodness to us in providing all we have needed."



Following a period of quarantining, they have begun their American adventure of visiting supportive churches to report to mission-minded congregations and inspire continued support for their ministry, including recruiting medical personnel to add to the Bach staff, even as they prepare to hand over the reins to a Pakistani doctor who is currently taking their place so they can retire as early as next year from decades of service. They plan to return to Pakistan in November but are, in the meantime, finding pleasure in being able to sleep through the night without having to answer emergency calls.

As we prepare for their visit, please pray for:

-  Continued smooth functioning of the Bach hospital and safety for the staff as they care for the ongoing medical needs of patients, with the added burden of the pandemic;
-  Safe and successful travels across America;
-  The Lord's leading for others as Cutherells meet in person or virtually with medical personnel who are looking for a mission hospital where they can serve the Lord;
-  The Lord's leading for Luke and Nancy as they mull the direction He has for their own future in service.

## Building up men for a better tomorrow



The renowned men's conference Promise-Keepers is back in 2020, going the extra mile to organize church-based simulcast opportunities on July 31 and Aug. 1.

And the Grand Rapids area is on the list where you can participate with a buddy in a life-changing adventure. For a list of outstanding speakers or to register, go to [promisekeepersevent.com](http://promisekeepersevent.com) on the web.

Here are three churches hosting the event:

**Cornerstone Church - 84<sup>th</sup> St. Campus - Caledonia**

**Hope United Methodist Church - Hastings**

**City Church Rockford, 3233 10 Mile Road NE - Rockford**

It's going to be a great time of fellowship and growth, building integrity for a whole new generation. For more information and encouragement, contact Pastor Bob Manuel. Recharge, replenish, maybe even repent....



# Practical Ways to Manage our Anxieties & Fears in Life

*Guest commentary by Elder Paul Samuelson*

This is the fourth and concluding article on learning how to manage our core fears and anxieties in life. We have learned already that all anxiety is caused by some kind of fear in our life (like the fear of death, of not being good enough, of not being accepted, of losing control, of feeling abandoned, etc.) and is often felt triggered by something we experience during the day that may have been related to some past trauma or past experience we have gone through. It also could be triggered by extreme exhaustion (mental, physical or emotional), experiencing a death, experiencing a fearful event or even a poor diet or lack of sleep. The key thing is to notice what you are experiencing in your body: increased breathing or shortness of breath, increased or pounding heart rate, increased blood pressure, sweating, trembling, hot flashes, chills, excessive worry, headaches, feeling of impending doom, tenseness in the shoulders, butterflies in the stomach and nausea. These and other symptoms could be signs of anxiety or going through extreme stress. The key thing here is to notice what is going on in your body (just notice it), accept it (don't fight it because it only makes it worse) and learn to calm your body down, because once you calm your body down, then you begin to reverse the anxiety you are feeling in your body. These symptoms will usually pass through your body for about 15 to 20 minutes.

Here are some practical ways to manage your anxiety:

1. Use deep breathing. Accept your anxiety and don't fight it or continue to catastrophize about it because you will just make it worse. Just notice it and accept it. After this, use deep breathing for about two to five minutes. Close your eyes, sit down, get comfortable and breathe through your diaphragm (notice your stomach going up and down). Take a deep breath in for four seconds, hold it for four seconds, let it out for four seconds, and hold it for four seconds. Repeat this for two to five minutes.
2. Practice mindfulness. Mindfulness can help ground you in the reality around you. Since panic attacks can cause a feeling of detachment or separation from reality, it is important you bring yourself back into the present by using all five of your senses like digging your feet into the ground or feeling the texture of your pants on your hands, or focusing on an object like a clock and noticing it how it ticks or the patterns, colors, or shapes of the clock. Mindfulness helps to distract ourselves from what we are feeling and brings us back into the present.
3. Use muscle relaxation techniques. Just as deep breathing and mindfulness bring us into a more calm and peaceful state, so muscle relaxation works this way as well. In this exercise, get comfortable on a chair or relaxed on a bed or couch and close your eyes and slowly start from your eyes, jaws, shoulders, biceps, arms, hands/fingers, buttocks, thighs, shins, and feet/toes. Clench each of them really tight for five seconds or so, then relax them for five seconds.

Start with your eyes and progress down the body and then go up the body.

4. Picture yourself in your happy place. What is the most relaxing place in the world that you can think of? A sunny beach with gently rolling waves? A cabin in the mountains? A walk through the forest? Picture yourself there and try to focus on digging your toes in the warm sand, smelling the sharp scent of the pine trees, the waves of the ocean and its sounds washing up on your feet, or the sun bringing warmth to your shoulders or body. This place should be a quiet, calm, and relaxing place you can go in your mind, and this can bring a lot of relaxation to your body and mind.

5. Engage in walking or exercising on a daily basis. Exercise and walking are one of the greatest ways to manage your anxiety and stress levels; a lot of research backs this.

6. Keep lavender on hand. It is known for being soothing, relaxing, and stress-relieving. It can help your body to relax.

7. Accept things for the way they are. Learn to accept life on life's terms. Use the Serenity prayer which says, "God grant the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change and the Courage to change the things I can, just for today."

8. Don't excessively worry about things — Excessive worry is useless. It is like a "rocking chair" — there's a lot of movement but it doesn't get you anywhere. If you can solve it, why worry about it — do something about it. If you can't change it, then why worry about it, because all the worry in the world will not change it. Just accept it for the way it is, and give it to God in prayer (Phil 4:6-7).

9. Remember to endure. Tell yourself, "This too shall pass." Remember that spring always follows winter, so what you are going through is only temporary compared to the eternity we have with God. Also remind yourself that God has a purpose in your sufferings.

10. Take things one day at a time. A lot of our anxiety is based on the past which we can no longer change or in worrying about the future which we cannot control or about things that never come to fruition. God does not want us fretting about the past or worrying about the future but wants us to stay focused just on today. (Matt. 6:25-34)

11. Focus on a particular passage of Scripture like Psalm 23 or Psalm 46, and let that picture of God as our Shepherd or God as our Warrior who fights our battles for us be a guiding truth we can rely on when we are anxious.

12. Finally, find a person to talk to, learn to journal, find another hobby to do, develop a gratitude list, pray daily and cast your anxiety on God, meditate on Scripture, develop a schedule, prioritize your problems, play with your dog or cat — these are all other ways to manage your anxiety.