



September 2020

CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 • 616.949.5690

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Moving ahead

Our church elder board met in August to mull many plans for the direction of CrossWay Community Church.

Among the decisions taken is a plan to move into the next phase of recovery from the viral pandemic which has thwarted ministry and fellowship since March.

CrossWay will resume adult Sunday School after Labor Day, beginning Sunday, Sept. 13. Offering of Sunday School for children of all ages is intended for

this phase but is dependent on volunteers stepping forward to shepherd our children.

The regular church prayer meeting will resume Sunday, Sept. 27, at 6 p.m., transitioning in October to a "school of revival" on the second and fourth Sundays monthly at 6.

Our traditional monthly men's and women's breakfast fellowships will resume on Saturday, Sept. 5, with the men scheduled to go back to Bob Evans on 28th and the ladies invited to bring a breakfast to CrossWay's south wing.

Can you help make it happen?

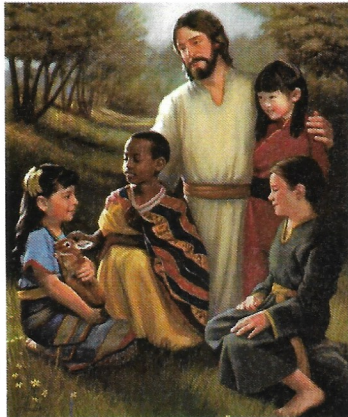
Our children need you! The board's intent is to re-open Sunday School for all – including our children – Sunday, Sept. 13. We need volunteers to step forward to serve in Sunday School for the children, nursery on up, including leading children's worship.

Can you take a Sunday – once a month or even just occasionally?

The more volunteers step forward, the fewer Sundays each one will need to be called on. But our Sunday School cannot function without a staff of committed volunteers ... cannot function without you.

Please answer this call by contacting Pastor Manuel or Becky Alves (who's in the fellowship directory) to explore this opportunity to shepherd the little ones.

Our children's Sunday School is growing ... and our children need you to give it a try.



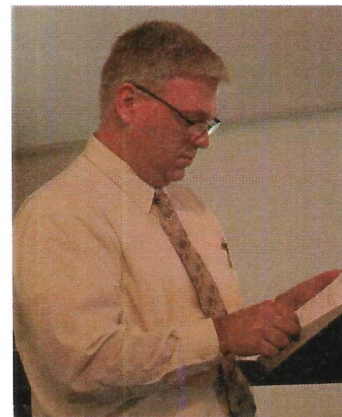
Still looking for sound-booth help

Can you aid our worship by operating the sound and projection booth during Sunday service? Not a weekly assignment but a key role for our worship time. Training will be provided. Please approach Pastor Manuel or Jane Schultze (find her in the fellowship directory) to ask questions or offer your service.

New leadership

Among the decisions made by our elder board in August was election of new church officers.

Elder Bob Johnston (at left) will serve as church chairman for 2020-2021.



Bob is a long-time member of CrossWay Community, is a businessman in the construction industry and was overseer of our recent church addition building project. He and Audrey are parents of two adult children.

Former church chairman Bob Greenhoe agreed to continue serving as an officer, taking on the role of church treasurer.

We thank God for the dedication of both officers.

Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Sundays • 10^{AM} • Gather for worship together

Sundays • 11:30^{AM} • Sunday School for all ages (see call for volunteers at left)

Tuesday • 1:15^{PM} • Ladies' Bible Study, south wing

Wednesdays • 7^{PM} • Hinkle small group

Sat., Sept. 5 • 9^{AM} • Women's breakfast, south wing

Sat., Sept. 5 • 9^{AM} • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans

Sat., Sept. 26 • 10^{AM} • Caravan from church to Lansing for Global Day of Repentance & Prayer

Sun., Sept. 27 • 6^{PM} • All-church prayer meeting

Reaching out

Welcoming others to CrossWay

Finding adequate meeting space for safe spacing is among the challenges being faced by ministry partners like the Pregnancy Resource Center of Grand Rapids, under the governor's public health orders still in effect.

When our outreach coordinator, Pam Reed, met recently with a PRC administrator to discuss how CrossWay folks could be helpful to PRC's programming in the coming months, Pam gave Bev a tour of our new south wing, and Bev quickly saw how useful our large multipurpose room could be for a variety of events.

Already in August, the Pregnancy Resource Center booked the room for a week of staff training, an ideal, uncrowded facility for that purpose.

So CrossWay's building project is now becoming a blessing for one of our community ministry partners, in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus.

Thank you to all who dug deep over the past several years to give us – and our community – this blessing, and to all who spent so much time on your knees over so many years in expectation of what God would do at the corner of Burton and East Paris..

About our denomination

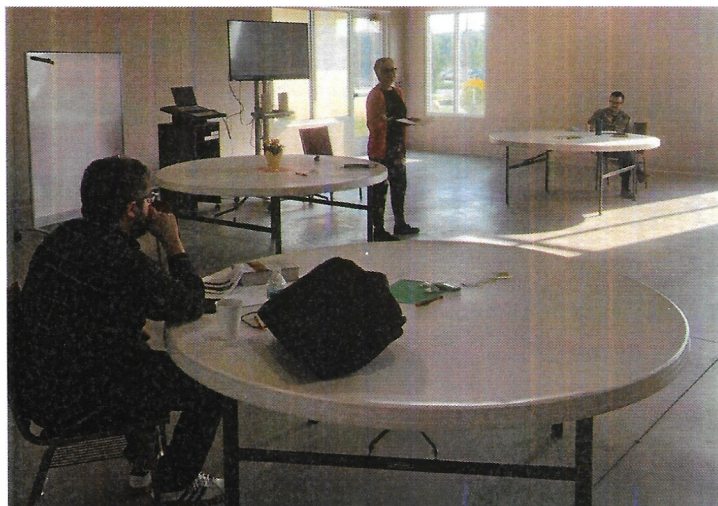
CrossWay Community is the only church in Grand Rapids which affiliates with the Evangelical Free Church of America, an association of autonomous churches united around the same theological convictions.

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.

We feature the 10 topics of the EFCA Statement of Faith, one each month, in the *Current* this year. In this September edition, we offer the Statement's eighth principle:

Christian Living

We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed.



Only the Lord knew that 2020 would be the perfect timing for CrossWay to be able to offer a large room for spacing out participants in a training session for the Pregnancy Resource Center of Grand Rapids. Just the beginning of using our new space to *Reach Out* in the precious Name of Jesus.

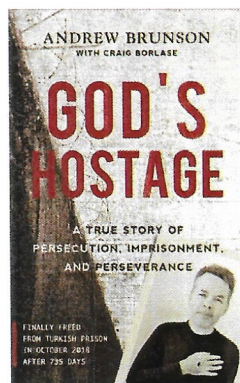
Your testimony is welcome

Would you like to share with your CrossWay family your own testimony of your life in Christ?

Our pastor is welcoming testimonies during the Sunday service.

If you have a story that glorifies God or encourages another believer, please mention to Pastor Manuel that you'd like to share your story with CrossWay.

New to the CrossWay library



Pastor Andrew Brunson loves the people of Turkey and worked for 23 years to bring the Gospel to them as a missionary. Spending 735 days in prison in that country was not in his ministry plan. He suffered greatly from the loss of connection with his family and his church. But he came to realize, in the middle of his nightmare, that God was not thwarted and had not withdrawn His hand.

His story is of working through fear, deepening faith and even international diplomacy. Do you remember joining in the unprecedented international prayer movement to release Andrew Brunson? CrossWay was involved through updates in the *Current*. Now you can read about "the rest of the story" from Pastor Brunson's point of view.

Available from the CrossWay library, just added to the side table in the new lobby.

The Work of Prayer (Part 2)

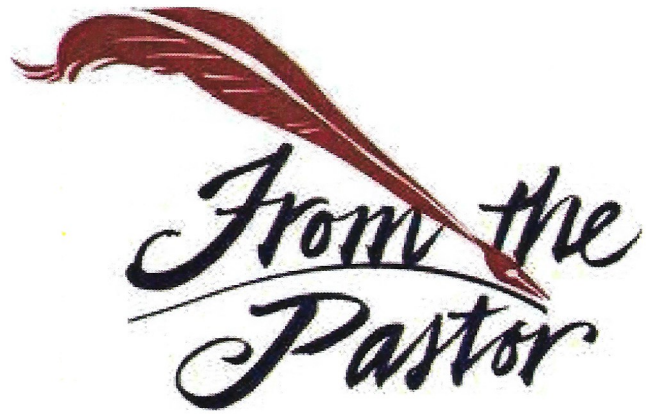
In last month's *Current*, I introduced three interrelated ideas promulgated by my own former pastor: #1, Prayer is work; #2, Prayer works; and #3, Prayer leads to work. We looked together at #1, which conveys the simple and realistic idea that prayer, especially consistent prayer, is a lot of work. It is not "sexy," in that it doesn't often yield quick results.

Yet, #2 (Prayer works) is still true. I do not mean what a Sept. 30, 2019, blog post in *Psychology Today* means when it says "Research consistently shows that prayer can have numerous benefits. ... Clearly, people pray because it makes them feel better, or makes them feel hope, or makes them feel love, or makes them feel just a hair shy of being utterly powerless. So, concerning all of the above, it can be said that prayer works." While that blog post might contain some truth, that is not my focus here when I write of prayer working.

Instead, I'm interested in questions like: Does prayer change me, you, circumstances, the trajectories of nations, history, etc.? Do our prayers have anything to do with God being hallowed, and in bringing about His kingdom and will upon this earth? I sure hope so! If not, why would our Lord encourage us to pray like this?!

Here are a few thoughts that I hope will encourage us to pray, because prayer works:

- We have a good Father who wants to give us good gifts. (Luke 11: 9-11) Also, the tense of the verbs *ask*, *seek*, and *knock* (v. 9) are present tense, giving the force of "keeping on asking, seeking, and knocking." Now, why do we need to keep going to the Father like this? I believe it's because it is in the process of continuing to go to Him that we learn not only to ask for what's on His heart but to enjoy and trust Him. We find by persisting that He is what we are truly after, as prayer is about relationship. And in this deepening relationship, He shows us just how to pray, eventually seeing the very best thing to ask for is His Holy Spirit (v.13). We will receive. We will find. The door will be opened.
- When we pray, we must pray with the mental/emotional disposition that God does reward those who seek Him in faith. (Heb. 11:6) Granted, I may not know what shape or form this "reward" may take, but if I do not pray believing He will reward my seeking of Him, then, why pray at all? The key here, I believe, is not seeking "rewards" (*i.e.*, "answers") but seeking Him. If we seek Him first, the "rewards" WILL come. (Matt. 6:33)



- We are urged to pray with expectancy (Eph. 3:20) because God is able to do far above and beyond all that we can ask or imagine. And, He is glorified when answers to our prayers are things we cannot always foresee. You see, prayer works, not so much when we pray with expectations, but when we pray with a spirit of expectancy. When we pray with expectations, we limit God to our expectations. We think God should answer our prayers in such-and-such a way. Our expectations not only "limit" Him, they also set us up to become cynical when He doesn't meet our expectations. But, when we pray with a spirit of expectancy — that He is able to do above and beyond all that we can ask or imagine — we will experience power and "answers" that are truly God-honoring instead of ones that are limited to our own imaginations.

I'd like to close on that note of praying with expectancy instead of expectations by offering this quote from *Longing for Revival* (Chong & Pfeiffer), which I just finished reading:

"There is a difference between expectations and expectancy. Expectations demand a certain result; expectancy trusts and hopes. Expectations create anger and disillusionment in our faith when they aren't met; expectancy is openness to any outcome God desires. Expectations force God into a box to act as we want; expectancy allows God to be God in our lives, acting on His own will. Broken expectations, on their own, lead us to despair; expectancy takes our broken expectations back to God to rebuild our faith. The crisis gives us an opportunity to relinquish our expectations so that expectancy can grow in our soul. We've heard it said, 'Expectations are resentments under construction.' We need to kill our expectations, or they will kill our faith. The choice toward expectancy, however, transforms us. We are liberated from the deception of false hope to find a resurrection waiting for us in a revived hope in God. We give up on ourselves; we give up on our circumstances to tell us what is possible. We even give up, if needed, on the encouragement of others to reassure us. We don't know how God will do it, we don't know when God will do it, but we have made a choice to trust that God is able to do all that He has promised, and to leave the results to Him. We kill our expectations but raise expectancy."



**Food 'n'
frolic
at the
Ladies
Picnic
in Wyoming's
Palmer Park**

