



October 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)

## Welcoming new members

We are so pleased to welcome new members into the official CrossWay family!

At a special congregational meeting on Sept. 27, the following were voted into official membership:

- Kevin Coleman
- Samantha Montgomery
- Joan Faught
- Scott Montgomery
- Cody Hinkle
- Tammy Winters

## Serving young families

Jesus welcomed the children, and so do we at CrossWay!

It begins with the nursery during worship and Sunday school hours, with separate but connected rooms for babies and toddlers.

During the worship service, children beginning at age 2 worship with the special adults in their lives and then go out to their own enrichment opportunities. Little Lambs is for age 2 to pre-K. Grade-school children go to Children's Church.

As the new program year begins, our children's leader Becky Alves is looking for more help to serve the children. Right now, the nurseries need "extra hands" to lighten the burden; Little Lambs are hoping for someone to lead them for a month at a stretch, every three months. Will **you** say "yes" and bless the children?



## 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.

Each of these dear brothers and sisters met with one or more of our elders to review the basics of our statement of faith, an overview of the Evangelical Free Church denomination and their own individual confessions of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are thankful for their devotion to our Lord and for their fellowship with us at CrossWay and commitment to membership in our church family.



From left: Joan Faught, Tammy Winters, Scott and Samantha Montgomery, and Cody Hinkle. Kevin Coleman also joined CrossWay but was unable to stay for the meeting; his photo can be found in the CrossWay pictorial fellowship directory.

## Your testimony is welcome

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.

## Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Sundays • 10<sup>AM</sup> • Gather for worship together  
Sundays • 11:30<sup>AM</sup> • Sunday School for all ages  
Tuesdays • 1:15<sup>PM</sup> • Ladies' Bible Study, south wing  
Wednesdays • 7<sup>PM</sup> • Hinkle small group  
Sat., Oct. 3 • 9<sup>AM</sup> • Women's breakfast, south wing  
Sat., Oct. 3 • 9<sup>AM</sup> • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans  
Sun., Oct. 11 • 11:30<sup>AM</sup> • Birthday party for Tom Wriedt  
Sun., Oct. 11 • 6<sup>PM</sup> • All-church School of Revival  
Thurs., Oct. 22 • 2<sup>PM</sup> • Alan Doerr memorial, visitation at 1  
Sun., Oct. 25 • 6<sup>PM</sup> • All-church School of Revival

## Alan Doerr, RIP

A memorial service will be held for our dear brother Alan Doerr in a tent outdoors in the church parking lot on Thursday, Oct. 22, with visitation at 1 p.m. and service at 2.

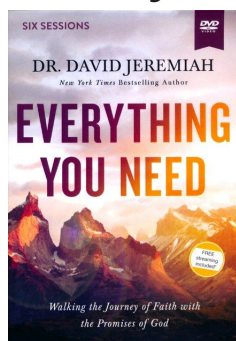
At the request of the family, those attending are asked to wear face shields.

Alan was a member of CrossWay, as are his wife Annette and son David.

Alan's devotion to Christ led him to a long life of service in Gideons International, an evangelism organization best known for faithful placement of Bibles in hotel rooms and emphasis on sharing scripture for salvation of souls.



## Pastor Jeremiah featured



A video series by noted pastor David Jeremiah – studying II Peter – will focus discussion by the Ladies' Bible Study, meeting in the multipurpose room (south wing) on Tuesday afternoons at 1:15 p.m. – a timely complement to Pastor Manuel's current sermon series.

All ladies are welcome!

## Prayer focus

During a recent Sunday School, Pastor Bob commended to our reading a "Declaration of National Spiritual Emergency," to be found at [www.onecry.com](http://www.onecry.com).

## 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 elders 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 October edition, we offer the Statement's ninth principle:

### Christ's Return

We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

## Let us pray



Photo  
by  
Bob  
Manuel

Pastor Manuel's family joined hundreds at the state capitol on Sept. 26 for prayer for our leaders. Won't you pray, too?

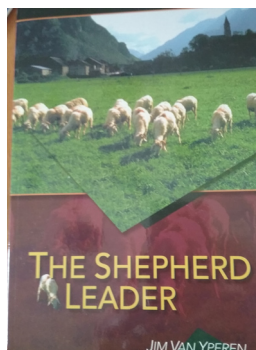
## A special occasion



Plan to celebrate with the CrossWay family after worship on Sunday, Oct. 11. Shirley Wriedt invites us all to sing a proper "Happy Birthday" to her dear husband Tom as he reaches the impressive milestone

of 90 years young! The ladies' Bible study participants are putting together a party to make it a festive occasion. All are invited.

## New to the CrossWay library



In the west lobby of the church, you can find a small collection of new books that have been added to CrossWay's library for your personal use.

Check out *The Shepherd Leader* by Jim VanYperen, a book about shepherding and about leadership.

"Leadership cannot be measured by the performance of the leader but by the fruit of those who follow. Success cannot be tallied by the attraction of a crowd but by a persevering faith in the face of suffering or persecution. ... Shepherding forces us to change our mind about how we understand leadership and about how we equip those who lead."

Much to think about, after reading prayerfully.



# Prayer Leads to Work



In this space I have been introducing three interrelated ideas: #1, **Prayer is work**; #2, **Prayer works**; and #3, **Prayer leads to work**. This month, I'll focus on #3.

In #1, the idea is simply that prayer takes work. It's not easy to keep up a consistent, fruitful and satisfying life of prayer. #2 encourages us to pray with expectancy, that indeed our prayers do accomplish something. This month, let's look at #3.

So often, *we* are the answers to the prayers we pray. If we truly are engaged with our prayers and want to see them "answered," then we will roll up our sleeves and, fueled by our prayers, seek to be the answers to the prayers we pray. If we do not seek — are not open — to be the answers to the prayers we pray, we are just playing games with God. I'll explain.

- Let's say I am praying fervently for a dear one to come to believe in and follow Jesus as their Lord and Savior. I pray "someone" will share the Gospel with them. I've been praying like this for weeks, months, maybe years, yet I have never once (or rarely) shared the words of the Gospel with them. I ask you a simple question: If you are within driving distance, know how to send an email and/or have a phone, can text, etc., why are you even praying this prayer? YOU be the answer to this prayer.
- We pray for "someone" to reach out to the refugees in our city. Or, we pray that "God" will care for them — yet, we do nothing or very little to see how *we* can help answer such a prayer.

Sometimes I think saying something like, "well, let's pray about it first . . ." can be a pious way to say, "I am not planning on obeying God in this area." Yes, I know that's not always the case, and we just can't meet every need that is presented to us. But I do believe if we truly care about what/who we are praying for, "just praying" will not be satisfactory to us.

Three scriptures immediately come to my mind that help illustrate how "prayer leads to work." The first is in I Samuel 17:32. Young David is inquiring about the blasphemies being hurled at Israel by Goliath, the Philistines' champion. No one is doing anything but quaking in fear. In contrast, David says simply to King Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go fight him." Oh, how the church needs more "Davids."

Second, consider Isaiah 6:8. The Lord is asking "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" Isaiah doesn't say, "Well Lord, I know You need to send someone to the field, so let me pray about it. I'm sure You'll find someone." No! Isaiah says, "Here am I. Send me!"

The third scripture that gives some weight to this idea of prayer leading to work is I John 3:17-18: "If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

So, with the added weight of these verses, I ask us all, *"If we have the means to answer our own prayers, but neglect (or even refuse) to do so, do we truly have the love of God in us? We must not pray with only words or speech, but with actions and in truth."* Maybe we need fewer prayer meetings and should have something more akin to some "Prayer Doings."

On a personal level, one area where I see my own need to be an answer to the prayers I pray (prayer leads to work) is in this whole area of heightened racial tensions in our country. Politics, social agencies, marches, placing signs in our yard, and community organizers, while they may have their place, will decidedly not solve this problem.

So, I pray. And, I can sound so pious and sincere, when I pray for "justice" and racial equality to gain more traction. (Yes, I realize just the last few sentences demand definitions that could take up a whole article in itself!) Yet, as I ponder these things, I go back to the burden of this month's article. and ask myself, "what am I doing to have this kind of prayer lead to work?"

Well, I have been meeting and praying on a regular basis with Pastors of a "darker hue" (!). Friendships have developed. Retreats have taken place. (I've actually just returned from a mini-retreat with my brothers in a few days ago.) I am asking God how this Pastor (me!) and this church (us!) can pray/love beyond words or speech and move into actions and truth, not just in this area, but yes, in this area.

## Annual Christmas card writing party almost here

Check your supply of sacred Christmas cards and get your hearts prepared. Our annual Christmas card writing party for persecuted Christians is scheduled for early November.

Since Eritrea has released many prisoners, whose names are not yet known to us — but God knows! and we praise Him for it! — we won't be including that country's prisoners for the first time.

But we do have names and addresses for 19 brothers and sisters being held for their faith by the governments of China, North Korea, Iran and Pakistan.

Once again, we will supply some cards and heart-language Scripture enclosures, along with brief background stories on each of these dear ones. Plan to attend and bring friends to our spacious south wing.

## Doing the Lord's work in Spain

Not surprisingly, recent news from El Shaddai Church in Zaragoza, Spain, focuses on how the church is faring during this unusual summer.

Our missionaries Marlan and Mercedes Olson have endured some of the same stretchings as we have, purchasing new tech equipment and paying extra fees to allow internet usage of copyrighted



materials, following regulations for sanitation of their worship space, and wrestling with being understood through the muffling of a face mask.

Areas of Spain were hit hard by the virus, and several of their congregation members are mourning losses in their extended families. Member Carmen continues to gain strength during her own recovery.

Marlan can now be found on *YouTube* in Spanish and anticipates being able to extend his outreach by adding a language or two — perhaps English? The couple remains “relatively healthy,” which serves their need to double their workload to keep up with requirements and new ministry avenues.

They face the possibility of fines if discovered without a face mask but are grateful that the severe restrictions on their movement have been eased. Earlier in this “season,” Marlan alone left their home to buy groceries in long lines, as only one person was permitted per car. Folks walking around were subject to ID checks by police, with fines levied if they wandered more than a mile from home “for no valid reason.” In-person worship has been suspended twice for weeks at a time. But a Puerto Rican church that supports the Olsons provided the El Shaddai children and friends with a first-time online Vacation Bible School, with material packets supplied by their partner church and distributed by the Olsons. Themed “Jesus and Your Heart,” the program was well received and provided a much needed high point for this summer of uncertainty.

The Olsons pray for us, for our health and that we will also be able to worship freely once again.

Please pray for:



Those in the El Shaddai family who are mourning losses because of the virus,



Young children who attended the church's E-VBS, some of whom don't attend church,



Steady internet connection, especially on Sunday, for worship,



Additional support for their ministry during these strange days that have brought unexpected costs,



Freedom to sing in enclosed areas, under consideration for prohibition by the local government.

And join in their praise:



That El Shaddai has been able to meet for Sunday services,



That the Olsons have been able to broadcast on *YouTube* and display songs and announcements,



For all that participate in this ministry through financial, prayer and communication support.