



CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

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wheelchair accessible • www.crosswaygr.com

Walkin' in the neighborhood

Every Tuesday this summer, Pastor Manuel, Paul Samuelson and Mike Ward are walking into the neighborhoods near the church to meet folks casually and to offer prayers on their behalf. And while they walk, they pray to our Father in heaven His blessings upon the families who live all around us.

You are invited to join them on these excursions, whenever you can work a walk into your schedule — on Tuesdays at 2 p.m. (leaving together from the church) or even on your own at a time of your choosing.

Reach up, reach in, reach out, with a smile of friendship, a Gospel message and an offer of prayer.



Thanks,
Marie &
Dennis,
for tending
our sign's
garden bed!

Blessing our neighbors

Time to shop for sales on crayons and notebooks for Camelot Partners' drive to fill 200 backpacks for students at Ridge Park Academy, most of whom live

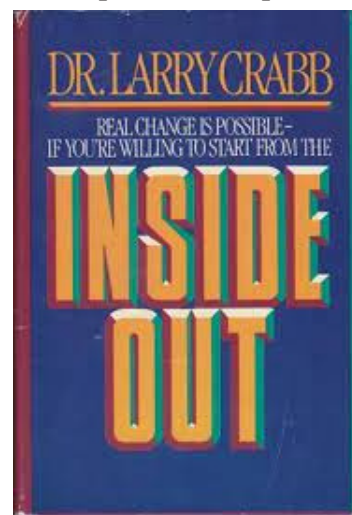


in CrossWay's neighborhood as refugees and immigrants. Our goals: 200 24-count boxes of crayons and 400 wide-ruled notebooks of 70 pages.

Please bring your contributions to the narthex or the church office by Sunday, July 16. And if you'd like to meet some of our neighbors, the block party on Saturday, July 29, is an ideal time to do that, 11:30-1:30 at the park in the middle of the Camelot neighborhood.

New to the CrossWay library

"Let Larry Crabb help you look inside yourself as you give God the opportunity to set you free from all that keeps you from living — by really loving — in a disappointing world" — from the back cover write-up for this 223-page hardback, at the book table in the lobby. A good book for "looking beneath the surface of life."



Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Sundays • 9:30^{AM} • Prayer, south wing classroom
Sundays • 10^{AM} • Gather for worship together
Tuesdays • 2^{PM} • Bless Every Home prayer walk — meet @ CrossWay
Tuesdays • 7 - 9^{PM} • Small group @ Hinkles' home
Wednesdays • 6^{AM} • Men's Discipleship @ church
Wednesdays • 6:30^{PM} • Underhill Club @ Marchiones'
Sat., July 1 • 9^{AM} • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
Sat., July 1 • 9^{AM} • Women's breakfast @ Russ's
Sun., July 2 • 11:30^{AM} • All-church prayer meeting
Wed., July 5 • 7^{PM} • Elder meeting
Fri., July 14 • 7^{PM} • VOM's *Hearts of Fire* virtual event
Sat., July 29 • 11:30^{AM} • Camelot Partners block party



Dabbling with 'the Preacher' (Ecclesiastes)

The next few months, with a break in December for holiday reflections, I plan to whet your appetite a bit for the book of Ecclesiastes by touching upon certain themes/textures of this book. I hope these articles will help the book become a bit more accessible and so make the sermon series more easily entered into.

As always, though, I think the best way to get acquainted with the book is to read it for yourself several times. Ecclesiastes is not the easiest book to understand, so give yourself some space and grace to wrestle with its teachings, but do so with confidence that this strange book is the Word of God and that our Lord has something to say to us in it.

Here are some Tips for Reading:

- First, read maybe only two chapters a day. With 12 chapters in the book, you would be on a pace to easily read through the entire book each week. By the time we get to the sermon series, you will have read through the book close to 20 times. If you do this, I can guarantee you that you will hit the ground running with me when the series begins.
- Second, take notes. If you like writing in your Bible, write out your questions/observations in the margin of your Bible. If you do not like writing in your Bible, type a document on Ecclesiastes, or get out an old-fashioned pen and notebook.
- Third, as you write, note recurring themes/questions. Keep a special page of your questions/insights. Pray over these observations/questions. God will lead you.
- Fourth, take note of "contradictions" that you might encounter in this book, or things that just don't seem to make sense to you. Pray over these "contradictions" and ask God to help you make better sense of the questions/struggles you have understanding the book.
- Fifth, I'd encourage you to listen to Ecclesiastes on an audio book. This is a great way to get your Bible intake, especially if you are not much of a reader. You will learn a lot this way! (Rom. 10:17)

- One last tip: Remember Ecclesiastes falls under the genre of wisdom literature. If I were to provide a most basic "definition" of sorts of wisdom literature, I would phrase it perhaps something like this: Wisdom literature seeks to grapple with, what does it look like to walk in a healthy fear of God and so make better sense of our lives in God's beautiful yet often crazy and chaotic world?

Next, here are some themes/textures you can look for as you read this book:

- Note the recurring word first seen in 1:2 which is variously translated as "meaningless" (NIV, NLT), "vanity" (ESV, KJV), "futility" (NASB), and "smoke" (Msg). In connection with this, as you read, ask yourself: What gives my life meaning, a sense of substance and significance? Be as honest as you can be. The answer should not be the good, acceptable, "Christian" answer, but the actual thing(s) in your life from which you find satisfaction and meaning.
- Next, what does the "Preacher" (see 1:1) mean when he talks about life "under the sun?" (1:3, 9, 14; 2:11, 17, etc.)
- Next, I would encourage you to take note of how many times the Preacher uses the word/idea of "better than . . ." (see 2:13, 24; 3:12, 22).
- Then, look for the themes of joy and gladness. As for some of the "texture," I would encourage you to take special note of the poetry found throughout the book. It's beautiful and haunting at the same time. For some of the poetry sections, see 1:4-11; 3:1-8; 11:7 - 12:7.
- Additionally, take note of the "proverbial" qualities of the book. Reading through Ecclesiastes often feels like reading through the book of Proverbs, another book that shows us what it looks like to walk in a healthy fear of God.
- Finally, I would tell you as you read Ecclesiastes, remember it is neither pessimistic nor optimistic! It is realistic. It shows us, without pulling any punches or giving us a saccharine view of things, what life truly is like on this beautiful and broken planet.