



CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

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Let's celebrate...our pastor

October each year is "Pastor Appreciation Month" . . . a time for us as individuals and families of CrossWay to show love and support to our own shepherd, Pastor Bob Manuel, who first came to CrossWay in 1997.

October is

Pastor Appreciation
Month



With degrees from Grand Rapids School of the Bible & Music, Grace College & Seminary of Winona Lake, Indiana, and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, Bob brings us the Good News from the Scripture every Sunday and generally superintends the functions and ministries of our church. Married to Sue, he is father to four adult children and grandfather to a seven-year-old. He is an avid hiker, reader and Cubs fan and has a peppery sense of humor.

How do Americans observe this month each year? Some write an appreciative note or e-mail. Some leave a little gift in the church office. Some write a personal check and drop it in his mailbox in the narthex. Some smile, shake his hand and say a heartfelt thank-you for all our shepherd does. It's up to you!

Come one, come all!

Ready for some good, clean fun? Come to CrossWay's South Wing gym on Saturday, Oct. 28, from 3 to 7 p.m.

The Underhill Club is inviting us to drop in... or spend the whole afternoon demonstrating your gaming skills at one or even several board and card games, organized for all ages and skill levels. Games, instruction, and food will be provided.



Bring the family, invite some friends. Let's have fun and get to know each other better!

Harvest Potluck on Tap in October



It's on the schedule for Sunday, Oct. 22, right after our worship service ... a harvest potluck feast in the South

Wing. Plan now for food and fun and fellowship.

Speaking up for Life

Actor Kevin Sorbo will keynote the benefit banquet Monday, Oct. 16, of Right to Life of Grand Rapids, 6:30 p.m. at DeVos Place. For info on the Focus on Life Benefit Dinner, check www.grrtl.org/dinner.



Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Sundays • 9:30^{AM} • Prayer, south wing classroom
Sundays • 10^{AM} • Gather for worship together
Tuesdays • 1^{PM} • Ladies weekly Bible study
Tuesdays • 2^{PM} • Neighborhood 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'
Sun., Oct. 1 • 11:30^{AM} • All-church prayer meeting
Wed., Oct. 4 • 7^{PM} • Elder meeting
Thurs., Oct. 5 & 19 • 6:30^{PM} • Veurink small group @ Le's
Sat., Oct. 7 • 9^{AM} • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
Sat., Oct. 7 • 9^{AM} • Women's breakfast @ Russ's
Sun., Oct. 8, 15, 29 • 11:30^{AM} • Adult Sunday School
Mon., Oct. 16 • 6:30^{PM} • GR RtL benefit @ DeVos Place
Sun., Oct. 22 • 11:30^{AM} • Congregational Harvest Potluck
Sat., Oct. 28 • 3-7^{PM} • Fun and Games in the South Wing
Thurs., Nov. 2 • Save the Date! Pregnancy Resource Ctr Gala

Party in the park



Several CrossWay families and singles enjoyed a fall Sunday afternoon in Camelot Park last month at our first all-church outreach event for the season. Mike Ward and Cody

Hinkle have been walking the neighborhood every Tuesday this summer, along with Pastor Bob Manuel and Paul Samuelson, meeting people and opening conversations that often include prayer. We look forward to more such events by which we can extend a hand of friendship and talk with people from around the world about our Savior, in our own neighborhood. All are welcome to join them, leaving church at 2 each Tuesday.

Men at work, getting the job done

It takes a lot of willing, skillful men to take down a chimney from the roof of a church.



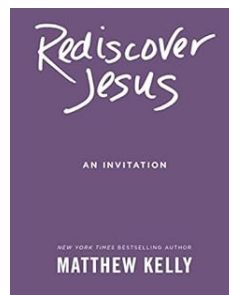
Crossway is blessed with just such a crew.



And now, the old chimney is gone, and our roof is ready for what

winter throws us. Thank you to the men of CrossWay. You came through again!

New to the CrossWay library



How well do you know Jesus? The best time to rediscover Jesus, says author Matthew Kelly, is right now. And encountering Jesus, he says, will help you answer such questions as, Who am I? Who is God? What am I here for?

Explore these questions in this 187-page softcover book, at the lobby library table.

A fond farewell...

Sunday, Sept. 10, after our worship together, our CrossWay family adjourned to the South Wing to enjoy refreshments and give a loving send-off to Pat Sanford. Widowed many years ago, Pat has been a faithful member of CrossWay and long served on the Missions Committee. Her faith and concern for others have been hallmarks of her time with us.



A recent health scare led her daughter to invite Pat to live closer to her Atlanta family, where she's now going to church where her son-in-law is pastor following the younger couples' years on the field with Wycliffe Translators. We know she's in good hands, with her family and her Lord.





Running Well to the End

Will we finish this brief life well? As I complete preaching through II Timothy, this question has often been on my mind. Can I, will I say with confidence, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”*? (II Tim. 4:7)

To help answer this question with a hearty “yes,” I’ve been reflecting on II Timothy 4:10-11. In vs.10 we have Demas, a one-time co-worker in the Gospel with Paul. (Col. 4:14; Philemon vs.24) Yet now, we are told he has deserted the Apostle because he *“loves the world/the things of this life.”* (vs.10) Perhaps he no longer has the love of the Father in him? (I John 2:15) Then, in verse 11 we see John Mark, a one-time deserter of Paul and Barnabas in Gospel work. (see Acts 13:13; 15:36-39) Yet now we read he is once again “useful” to the Apostle as Paul’s life comes to an end.

For me, the lesson is clear — our final chapter is still being written, and the “guarantee” of our faithfulness lies not in ourselves, but in our faithful God Who will always stand by our side. (II Tim. 4:17)

So the question still remains: Will we finish life well? Though God always remains faithful (II Tim. 2:13), we still have a responsibility to finish well, to fight the good fight and to finish the race. Hebrews 12:1-3 stands out to me as particularly helpful as I ponder the question/need of my own faithfulness, of running well to the end. It’s a well-known passage. *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.”* (Heb.12:1-2 NLT)

Of verse one, the Zondervan Study Bible says, “The athletic imagery lends itself to the call to set aside anything that ‘entangles’ or ‘hinders’ us from enduring.”

Then, the Reformation Study Bible adds this note: “every weight, and sin which clings so closely. Among the burdens to be thrown off are fear that shrinks back in the face of suffering (10:38, 39), bitter discouragement that defiles others through doubt (v. 15), and sensuality that seeks immediate gratification (v. 16).”

This leads to a few questions: How are you running? What extra “weight” are you running with that might be slowing you down, and cutting into your ability to endure, and so threatening your finishing the race well? One of the “weights” we are to throw off is, of course, sin. But notice in Hebrews 12:1, we are told to *“strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up.”* In other words, there are other things besides outright sin that can hinder us in this race of life. The writer to Hebrews is thinking about anything that does not help us run well. It includes sin, but not just sin.

So, what can slow us down? Really, the answer is: just about anything! There are things like attitudes, habits, recreational pursuits, our use of time/leisure, our “toys,” etc. I hope you get the idea. We are given so many wonderful things in this life (Ecc.3:13, I Tim. 6:17) and to God’s glory we must enjoy His gifts, but if we insist upon them, expect them and absolutize them, we turn them into dumb idols.

And, our running to the end is jeopardized. Pastor John Piper said it this way: “The greatest enemy of hunger for God is not poison but apple pie. It is not the banquet of the wicked that dulls our appetite for heaven, but endless nibbling at the table of the world.”

So, may we not be like Demas, who started well but ended up poorly, loving the things of this world. Rather, if and when we do falter, may God give us the grace to get back up, and, like Mark, be useful to the end.

Oh, our Good and Beautiful God, may You help us to fix our eyes on Jesus, and run for the prize which is to see and enjoy You and then to hear Your exclamation of “good and faithful servant” to each of us who run. (Matt.25:23)

A great opportunity for kingdom advance

Early in August, our ReachGlobal missionary Keith got a rare opportunity to join other ministry leaders by meeting on the island of Cuba to encourage its Christian pastors. We prayed for this trip and Keith's safe return during our Sunday worship that week. Keith's specialty is training Spanish-speaking faith leaders. Here is Keith's report:

Dear CrossWay Community —

Thanks for praying for the trip to Cuba in which five of us traveled to the island nation. I joined Pastor Ale (Chile), Pastor Abdy (the president of the Free Church of Venezuela), Omar (ReachGlobal international leader for Latin America and the Caribbean), and Yuri (a ministry leader and musician from Honduras).

I am thankful to the Lord for a fruitful time while there and returned with a renewed determination to stay connected with the Cuban church leaders while seeking ways to minister to their overwhelming needs. The team shared with the church planters (80 estimated) on the "Character [heart] of the Church Planter," interacted with church leaders, met with a smaller group of church planters of our partner denomination, preached Sunday morning, and spent hours engaged in encouraging conversation over meals and while walking through the streets of Havana.

It was wonderful to meet with church planters and hear their stories and share experiences. I am personally touched in these settings when I realize that these are members of our family, brothers and sisters whom God has called to press on in ministry and are faithfully doing what God has asked them to do.

So, how does one encourage them to "keep on keeping on?" That was a challenge to me personally as I spoke in a packed house church Sunday morning. As I looked at the group of approximately 40 believers, I was arrested by the thought, "What do I say to them? How do I encourage them to stay firm with their faith?" God answered those questions: "Speak My words, not your words!" So ... the text was David's lament psalm from Psalm 13. The Lord did use it to encourage them, and me, too, in the process!

Please remember your dear brothers and sisters who face tremendous challenges just to live out their day. In spite of their lack of resources and their suffering, they are burdened for their friends and neighbors — clear evidence of God at work! Their joy, in the face of their daily challenges, has indeed deepened their faith. They live out what Corrie ten Boom said years ago, "You may never know that Jesus is all you need, until Jesus is all you have."

Please pray for:

- 👉 The Church in Cuba, which is growing but faces many of the same challenges others face in this critical ministry;
- 👉 Church planters in Cuba who are working tirelessly to make disciples of Jesus and for pastors and leaders who are equipping the Church to fulfill God's call on their lives;
- 👉 ReachGlobal and ProMETA's strategic initiatives in response to the needs of God's people in Cuba;
- 👉 ProMETA's director Dr. Sepulveda as he leads the ministry, going to Cuba early next year to teach an intensive course to a different group of pastors;
- 👉 Three ProMETA "summit" events in Venezuela, scheduled for late September and early October, a first-time event of this nature.
- 👉 That God would raise up a robust team of funding partners in Latin America.



*Thanks,
Keith & Judy!*