



CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

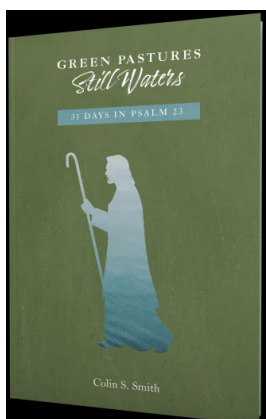
3950 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 • 616.949.5690
AED-equipped, wheelchair accessible • www.crosswaygr.com • crossway.communitygr@gmail.com

Guess Who's asking the questions

When it comes to spirituality, we've all had questions over the course of our lives. And last summer, in planning his summer sermon series, Pastor Bob invited the congregation to ask the questions ... and suggest the topics.

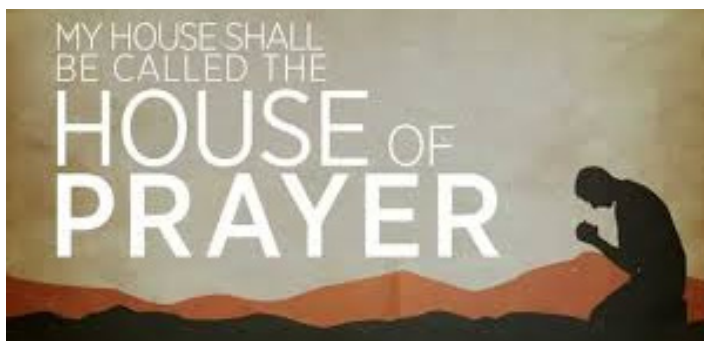
This summer, he's decided to let God Himself ask the questions. Our pastor will be exploring the wisdom we can gain from select Biblical passages in which it is God Who is asking questions (to which, of course, He already knows the answers) as a means of opening various conversations. Intrigued? See schedule, at right.

New to the CrossWay Library



Comfort, encouragement, assurance...straight from the Scriptures. *Green Pastures: Still Waters* is a 31-day devotional by Evangelical Free Pastor Colin Smith with inspiring writer Tim Augustyn. It's on the book table in the lobby for you to borrow this month. One request, though: Please use your own note paper for your reflections, so you can

return the 126-page book to our library for the next reader. And breathe in the Lord's message to you.



All are invited to join in prayer together in the sanctuary following the worship service, the first Sunday of each month, as we go to the Lord together in praise and supplication. And there is more room around the table in the lobby classroom for prayer circle that meets at 9:30 each Sunday morning. (The door is closed for sound-control purposes, not to limit participation!)

- June 30: "Where are you?" – Genesis 3: 9-13
- July 7: "Why are you angry?" – Genesis 4: 6-9
- July 14: "Where have you come from, and where are you going?" – Genesis 16: 7-8
- July 21: "Where is Sarah?" & "Why did she laugh?" & "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" – Genesis 18: 9-14
- July 28: "What is your name?" & "Why do you ask My Name?" – Genesis 32: 27-29
- August 4: "Where have you come from?" & "Have you considered My servant Job?" – Job 1: 7-8
- August 11: God asks 77 questions! (In the entire book there are 330 questions) – Job 38 and 39

Back-to-school comes early

It's time for CrossWay folks to be thinking about serving our neighboring children by providing much-needed supplies for stuffing into backpacks for the 2024-2025 school year.



Once again, our Camelot ministry partners have met to divide the task of filling those backpacks for children whose families don't have the means of doing it for them.

CrossWay's assignment: 200 boxes of 24-ct. crayons and 400 70-sheet wide-ruled spiral notebooks. Bring your donation to the narthex no later than July 14. Bless the children, in Jesus's Name.

Coming Up at CrossWay Community

- Sundays • 9:30^{AM} • Prayer, lobby classroom
- Sundays • 10^{AM} • Gather for worship together
- Tuesdays • 1^{PM} - 3^{PM} • Neighborhood prayer walk
- Wednesdays • 6:30^{PM} • Underhill Club
- Wed., July 3 • 6^{PM} • Elder meeting
- Sat., July 6 • 9^{AM} • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
- Sat., July 6 • 9^{AM} • Women's breakfast @ Russ's
- Sun., July 7 • 11:30^{AM} • All church prayer meeting
- Sun., July 14 • Deadline for backpack supply donation**
- Sun., July 21 • 11:30^{AM} • Summer Missions at CrossWay
- Sat., July 27 • 9^{AM} • Camelot Neighborhood Block Party



As we celebrate our nation's "birthday" in July, I'd like to share with you this month a few thoughts on the subject of "freedom." Our first-born, Melissa, was born on the fourth of July. We used to joke a bit saying July 4th was our "Loss of Independence" Day! Having a newborn, no longer were we "free" to do whatever we wanted.

Of course, none of us would ever, I don't think, define "freedom" only as the ability to do whatever we want. That kind of "freedom" often leads only to some sort of bondage. (Rom. 6:15-23) There are so many things we could talk about regarding what it means to be free. Jesus said *"If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."* (John 8:31-32) The Apostle Paul said it was for freedom that Christ set us free (Gal. 5:1), and he implores us to not go back to a life of bondage.

I like how Pastor/Theologian John Piper described the necessary components of true biblical freedom. I'll share them with you here. Piper asks us, "What is true freedom? Are you free?"

Here are four things that need to be true if we are going to be fully free.

1. If you don't have the desire to do a thing, you are not fully free to do it. Oh, you may muster the willpower to do what you don't want to do, but nobody calls that full freedom. It's not the way we want to live. There is a constraint and pressure on us that we don't want.
2. And if you have the desire to do something, but no ability to do it, you are not free to do it.
3. And if you have the desire and the ability to do something, but no opportunity to do it, you are not free to do it.
4. And if you have the desire to do something, and the ability to do it, and the opportunity to do it, but it destroys you in the end, you are not fully free — not free indeed — when you do it.

Free Indeed!

To be fully free, we must have the desire, the ability and the opportunity to do what will make us happy forever. No regrets. And only Jesus, the Son of God who died and rose for us, can make that possible. *"If the Son shall set you free, you shall be free indeed."* (John 8:36)

Another way of looking at these four components of full freedom is to reflect some on the saying I've shared with you before made by the fourth-century theologian Augustine. Again, he said, "Love God and do as you please."

If we are truly loving God (following, obeying, enjoying Him), we will be truly free and empowered in our freedom to obey Him and love others.

As Americans, we are known for cherishing our "freedoms." The land of the free and home of the brave, we sing. Yet, if we are not walking in the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17), we will not have either the desire, ability (power!), opportunity to love/serve God and others; we will also experience some kind of regret after all is said and done. We are not truly living as "free" people unless these four components are working together in our lives.

These are just a few things to think about as you celebrate not only the freedoms our nation affords but especially the freedom Jesus offers. In your "free" time, think about the above. And may these thoughts lead you to freely enjoy our God.

Thank you, Jesus, for setting us free, and, thank you for restoring to us the true freedoms of the children of God! May Your Name be forever praised!



And so it began...



CrossWay's own Matthew Robles kicked off our Summer Missions at CrossWay series on June 9 with a report of his short-term mission trip (in April) to Hungary, where he attended the Summit Conference for the Budapest City Team of our denomination's ReachGlobal ministries. Matthew thanked our congregation for the wonderful support he received, enabling him to travel and to assist our frontline workers Kate and Matyas at the conference and in various ministry activities in which they were engaged, including an English-speaking worship service for the many international short- and long-term visitors to Budapest and friendship building with locals as well as Ukrainian refugees. He was able to experience the three branches of ministry for the Budapest City Team, encouraging growth in the churches, teaching children at the international schools of the city, and interacting with artists at an arts cafe the Team has established in the city.



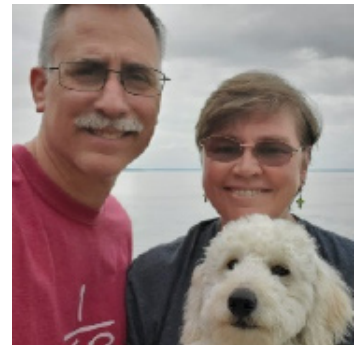
Matthew enjoyed his interactions, especially with the Kondor family, and came home uplifted by the passion of missionaries he met who give up so much to serve the Lord away from their families and friends.

...and continued!

Then, on June 23, Peter and Deb Bors visited CrossWay to introduce us to the EFCA/ReachGlobal ministry by which we meet physical, social, and spiritual needs of people in crisis on the heels of disaster.

Crisis Response deploys teams of 5-10 volunteers from member churches to assist churches and community members in the U.S. and abroad, having come to an understanding that a mission field is opened up for the Gospel to go forward in the wake of every crisis.

Any disruption in the normalcy of life creates an opportunity for us to serve those who need help, in Jesus's Name. It might mean gutting a flooded home or shoring up the foundation of a church or community center or perhaps cooking meals for those doing the physical work. It might mean taking the time to sit quietly with someone who's anxious about the future. It might mean engaging in gentle conversation or prayer.



Peter works with the Crisis Response director, assessing the needs of the local church when a new disaster opens a new field for service. Deb works in trauma and is currently training their service dog Camper to serve in the field with her.

We can all participate in Crisis Response by praying, serving, giving. Check it out: <https://crisis-response.ministries.efca.org/>



To support either of these missionaries, write tax-deductible checks to
EFCA - ReachGlobal
attn: Donor Services
901 East 78th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55420

Memo line: for Kondor #2348
or
Memo line: for Bors #2203

Let's get real...

on *New Beginnings Radio*

Sunday, June 30, 9 a.m. & 7 p.m., Pastor Manuel's guests are Peter and Debra Bors, EFCA/ReachGlobal—Crisis Response, on *New Beginnings Music Radio* on our church's website or as a podcast "on demand." Look for the drop-down menu under "Podcasts, Radio, and Blogs" or as a generally available podcast on *Spotify*.