



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

History takes center stage

Our pastor Bob Manuel continues his Bible survey series this month, leading us to seek Jesus in the pages of the Old Testament's history books of Judges, I and II Samuel, and I and II Chronicles. We'll be finding recurring themes as we visit the Israelites in their relationship with God, continuing the progress begun under Joshua's leadership of possessing the Promised Land in battles with neighboring kingdoms and internal struggles, as they went through cycles of sinning, repenting, and obeying, only to sin against God again.

We'll see God relent and give them what they demanded: a king. And we'll see contrasts in those kings as they humanly related to our Holy God, some with great heart and some with great weakness. We'll see how very much Israelites — and all humans — needed and need a Savior, even as we anticipate our celebration of His sacrifice to accomplish what no human leader could, salvation that leads to eternal life.

Attention, CrossWay children

Our worship leader Mrs. Lash is inviting you to lead the congregation in worshipping our King Jesus on Palm Sunday, March 29. Come to church ready to rehearse and sing when she puts out the call. Hallelujah!

SUNDAY

11:30 a.m.

Increase your knowledge of the Bible and the Christian life by attending CrossWay's adult Sunday School offerings:

March 1 Missions: Tom & Dora/ReachGlobal —
 Banjara unreached people of India

March 8 Missions: Mike/Mission India —
 a virtual reality experience

March 15 Missions: Paul/CrossWay —
 a report on his recent visit to the Philippines

March 22 Missions: Anne & Dave/ReachGlobal —
 overseas ministry of training in the sanctity of human life



If winter storms ever make calling off Sunday worship a necessity, we will post the cancellation by 8 a.m. on a given Sunday on WOOD-TV (www.woodtv.com/weather/closings) and on WCSG Radio, 91.3 FM (secure.wcsg.org/closings).

Family Nights:
 Eating together,
 Learning together,
 Playing together!



For Lent, we enjoy homemade bread and soup, then break into our learning pods, with adults continuing in our series "An author or artist the church should know:"

- 3/4 Jason Stevens — the great Medieval poet Dante
- 3/11 Doug Groothuis — the 20th c. French sacred painter Georges Rouault
- 3/18 Annie Lash — the music of the band Page CXVI (contemporary Lenten hymns)
- 3/25 Wendell Gafford — the music and ministry of Keith Green
- 4/1 Nick Sparks — the ministry and music of Johann Sebastian Bach

Coming Up at CrossWay Community

- Sundays • 9:30^{AM} • Prayer, lobby classroom
- Sundays • 10^{AM} • Gather for worship together
- Sundays • 11:30^{AM} • Sunday School for all ages
- Tuesdays • 1^{PM} • Ladies Bible study
- Wednesdays • 6^{PM} • CrossWay Family Nights
- Sun., March. 1 • Holy Communion during worship
- Sun., March 1 • 12:30^{PM} • Baby "Sprinkle" for Jocelyn
- Thurs., March 5 & 19 • 6^{PM} • Veurink/Le small group
- Sat., March 7 • 9^{AM} • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
- Sat., March 7 • 9^{AM} • Women's breakfast @ Russ's
- Mon., March 9 • 6^{PM} • Elder meeting
- Sun., March 29 • Palm Sunday

Catching up with our own



Mike and Kari G. brought their children Grant, Clark, and Gracia to CrossWay in February to spend time at their home church and update us on their ministry through the Black Forest Academy (BFA) in Kandern, Germany. The couple met at this boarding school for the children of Christian missionaries, situated in an area of rolling hills, vineyards, red roofs, and church spires some 20 minutes from Switzerland in one direction and 20 minutes from France in another.

Mike began as a resident assistant and soon became a science teacher, now spending his days heading the department at the school. Kari serves as “taxi mom” for the family and mentors young moms in families associated with the school.

The idea for BFA was hatched around a kitchen table, with a modest launch. The school has since grown to become an important part of the town and serves the academic and social needs of many children of missionaries, most serving in countries where sharing the Gospel is difficult because of governmental restrictions and/or cultural and spiritual hostility. Knowing their children are safe and well educated gives these dedicated servants freedom to serve.



Kari and the children enjoyed spending time with our Sunday School children, giving them a glimpse of what it’s like to live overseas and serve Jesus while they learn the German culture. The family is living for this year near Indianapolis and attending a classic school, where Mike has joined the teaching staff in his specialty for this year “in the states.” They’ll be visiting other friends and Kari’s dad this spring and summer, and we expect to give them a CrossWay hug once again in July before they return to BFA.

Mike and Kari have stated, “We wholeheartedly desire to serve our Father’s world, to love Jesus Christ, and to see individuals and communities transformed by His Spirit through education.” The BFA staff all raise their own support, and this couple is hoping to increase the monthly donations from their friends in America so that they can go back to serve without financial concerns. If you feel led to join their support team financially, please use the QR code (at right) or contact their sending organization TeachBeyond USA (PO Box 610, Downers Grove IL 60515-0610). All gifts are receipted for income tax purposes. TeachBeyond is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and is accredited by the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.



CrossWay also supports our frontline workers through prayer and communications. To join this couple’s team, please contact Marcy Greenhoe, in the directory.

Mission bites

Each year, our missions budget includes seed money for someone planning a short-term missions trip. This year, our congregation is helping Bryan B. travel to Asia on behalf of our denomination’s ReachGlobal ministry to encourage frontline workers and get to know the folks he serves with operations management.

On March 8, our Sunday School children and adults will come together to enjoy a special presentation by Mission India, with an opportunity to learn about what God is doing in that large Asian country through an 11-minute Virtual Reality presentation. Watch their work come to life through technology.



Our Good King

Palm Sunday is March 29th this year, followed by our celebration of Easter on April 5th. As we anticipate those blessed days on the church calendar, I can't help thinking of Jesus as our King, whose reign was "inaugurated" on the cross.

I've been thinking of Him as king, partly because of some of the texts I've been looking at for my sermon on the book of Judges. The infant nation-state of Israel, if you remember anything of the book of Judges, was a huge mess. Several times we read something like "*In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.*" (Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1) The book also ends on that ominous note (21:25). For centuries then, as Israel waited for their coming king, the gasping and grasping for someone who would lead them hung heavily in the air. And when it finally came time for the Anointed One to be crowned King, the acknowledgement of His rule over them was thoroughly rejected: "*We have no king but Caesar.*" (John 19:15) "Those wicked and stubborn people" we say. "I wouldn't have acted in such a way. I would have embraced Him as my King." But you know that isn't true, correct?

The whole point of the Gospel story is that this nation of Israel, this faulty vine, acted and spoke in our place on behalf of all mankind. Here, in America, we don't like kings, regardless of your political bent. Just recently we have seen "protests" with the theme "No Kings!" Each of us reading this has a stubborn rebellious streak that, boiled down, has the essence of "Don't tell me what to do." One popular phrase at the founding of our country said, "Don't tread on me." Bear with me now. "No Kings" and "Don't tread on me" may indeed be appropriate slogans if directed toward oppression or toward someone who is infringing upon our individual liberties. But that can often be our problem. We think, when push comes to shove, God is an Oppressor. We would most likely not say that (we're too polite!), and it may sound a bit over the top to suggest we see God this way, but I would suggest we read Genesis 3:4-5 in this light.

You see, apart from God's grace to us in Jesus, we believe God withholds certain things from us because He doesn't want us to be like Him, fully free and autonomous. He is an Infringer of our "Liberties." Of course, just the opposite is true. He came to set us free from power and consequences of our exercise of "liberty." "*If the Son sets us free, we will be free indeed.*" (John 8:36) "*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.*" (Galatians 5:1)

Our rebellion amounts to this: we want to be our own kings. Like the nation of Israel during the time of the judges, we are intoxicated with the idea of each of us being "free" to do what is right in our own eyes. I'll get along with you and you with me if we just stay out of each other's business, especially if you refrain from ever having the gall to correct me or tell me that I am wrong/mistaken in some areas. Pride, rebellion, and fear run deep. This is our "freedom." May God have mercy.

A closing Lent/Easter Prayer/Poem:

*We were and are free to put You on the cross.
At least we thought we caused You that loss.
But our Sovereign Good God, no Oppressor is He,
Had You nailed to the cross, to set these captives free.
"No Kings?" No, thank you.
May You ever rule over me.*



Our sanctuary —
transformed
to a showcase
of talent . . .



. . . amusement

music . . .



. . . drama



@ CrossWay's Coffeehouse

on a Friday night
in late February