



# CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

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## Holiest time of the year



Our children's choir began the season by leading us in the joy of Palm Sunday. And as we head into April, the week of seeming triumph turns quickly to the darkness of Good Friday and the sadness of the grave.

But Easter is coming, So, invite family and friends to breakfast and a blessed time of worshipping our King together. The time of year when Spring begins and newness of life is celebrated, even on the spiritual plane. We can joyfully declare together: He Is Risen! And He offers us eternal life!

### The Books series continues

Following our Easter celebration, Pastor Manuel will resume his book-by-book exploration of the whole Bible, looking for major themes and the presence of Jesus, even in the Old Testament. This month, to prepare, you might want to scan through the Chronicles, those records of the many years of the kings, including the division of the kingdom. Then, we'll see the rebuilding of Jerusalem under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah.

If you thought the Israelites struggled to obey their God in the wilderness, just wait till we see how they handled life under a human king!

### Coming Up at CrossWay Community

- Sundays • 9:30<sup>AM</sup> • Prayer, lobby classroom
- Sundays • 10<sup>AM</sup> • Gather for worship together
- Sundays • 11:30<sup>AM</sup> • Sunday School for all ages
- Tuesdays • 1<sup>PM</sup> • Ladies Bible study
- Wednesdays • 6<sup>PM</sup> • CrossWay Family Nights
- Thurs., April 2, 16, 30 • 6<sup>PM</sup> • Veurink/Le small group
- Fri., April 3 • 7<sup>PM</sup> • Good Friday service, with Holy Communion
- Sat., April 4 • 9<sup>AM</sup> • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
- Sat., April 4 • 9<sup>AM</sup> • Women's breakfast @ Russ's
- Sun., April 5 • 9<sup>AM</sup> Breakfast, followed by 10<sup>AM</sup> Easter Celebration of Worship
- Mon., April 13 • 6<sup>PM</sup> • Elder meeting

## SUNDAY

11:30 a.m.

Increase your knowledge of the Bible and the Christian life by attending CrossWay's adult Sunday School offerings, this month focusing on the Intergenerational Church:

- April 12 The Church and the Elderly
- April 19 The Church and Children
- April 26 The Church and Singles
- (May 3 The Church and Married Couples)

### Family Nights:

Eating together,  
Learning together,  
Playing together!



We're back to pizza, then break into our learning pods, with adults continuing in our series "An author or artist the church should know:"

- 4/1 Nick Sparks — Johann Sebastian Bach
- 4/8 Jed Ostoich — J.R.R. Tolkien
- 4/15 Jeff Lash — A.W. Tozer
- 4/22 Pastor Bob Manuel — Marva Dawn
- 4/29 Cody Hinkle — TBD

## The end of an era



Many of us remember her, smiling in the back row of our worship service; many others, who have come to CrossWay in recent years, do not. But we have all heard about – and joined in prayer for – Alice Sides, the last founding member of CrossWay, who has now

passed into the arms of Jesus. In the photo above, taken in 2018, Alice participates joyfully in the groundbreaking for our south-wing (gym) addition. What joy to see her long-loved church growing here on the corner of Burton & East Paris, ready to welcome more families and offer more fellowship and teaching and even music.

Alice leaves a legacy of service to our Lord and to His people, and she leaves a loving daughter, who is a dear servant in our congregation, often greeting worshippers at our lobby door and teaching our young ones in selfless service to CrossWay. We offer our sympathy to Jane Tucker and our appreciation for your years of selfless service to Mom and to all of us, your CrossWay family.

## Save the dates

Two major missions organizations that work in the dark places of the world to support indigenous church planters are having major fundraising dinners next month. Make your plans ... and even your reservations ... for these eye-opening events, both set at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park:

Mission India — 11:30 a.m. lunch or 6:30 p.m. dinner  
Monday, May 11  
(RSVP: [missionindia.org/banquet](https://missionindia.org/banquet))

and/or

Unknown Nations — 6 p.m. dinner  
Thursday, May 28  
(Register at <https://www.unknownnations.com/dinner>)



## Can you help?

CrossWay member and missionary Tom Narwold is looking forward to welcoming his son's family here for three weeks in July but has only a one-bedroom apartment, so needs housing and a vehicle ... for seven! His son is a former missionary in Germany who was asked to pastor a local church there. We're hoping to bless this servant and his family.

Can you help? Or perhaps you have a friend in mind whom you could ask to participate in filling this need. If so, feel free to contact Tom or Verna, in the church directory, to discuss specifics.

## Notes from a conference call

Every so often, The Voice of the Martyrs sets up a conference call to inform supporters about specific projects the organization is undertaking in various parts of the world. Late in March, the *Current* editors listened in and took notes on the VOM's workers' reports about the situation for Christian believers in Iran:

Believers have become more active in Gospel spreading in response to the disillusionment they are finding among their neighbors. At the same time, the government is actively imprisoning Christians and using them as shields. Yet hope is rising. People in Iran are sensing that light is coming.

For the last year, VOM has found it greatly challenging to provide Bibles within Iran; now the chaos has actually hampered the regime's interference, and Bibles are moving. We're asked to pray that Bibles will get to the right hands and for recipients to offer a bold witness. According to the report, 20,000 Bibles have been delivered within Iran in the last few weeks.

Christians and church leaders (average age 18-25) are leaving the cities for protection and gathering in rural areas for training in discipleship, times of prayer and fasting, and Bible study. Satellite programs are getting through, offering the Gospel and worship, constituting a lifeline of truth. These dear ones are marginalized, brutalized, but standing in the gap every chance they get.

When the house churches are raided, leaders are given three choices: reconvert, go to jail, or leave the country. As a result, there's a big turnover in leadership, as most leave. The church in Iran is, therefore, quite fragile. Let's pray for light to shine in the darkness and for wisdom for people on all sides of their struggle.



## ***Everyday Resurrection***

Will we, are we, being formed by Jesus's resurrection, today? In Jesus's day, "Resurrection, if you believed in it, had to do with the next life. It was something that happened to you after you were dead and buried and then found yourself with God in heaven for eternity ..... But the disciples' familiar concept of resurrection as life after death was now being totally recast as life 'in the land of the living.'" (Eugene Peterson: *Living the Resurrection*, pp.67-68)

In this month's article, I'd like to whet your appetite some, to help us experience resurrection now. These resurrection texts help unfold the practical, everyday implications of Jesus's resurrection upon us today. Here are the texts:

**Luke 24:13-32 and John 21:1-14:** Two ordinary meals. In one we see the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, meeting up with our resurrected Lord. In the other, a "stranger" on the seashore who has made breakfast for His followers. There is no "religious" context in either of these passages. "The unimaginable transcendence of resurrection is assimilated into the most routine and ordinary of actions – eating a meal." (Eugene Peterson: *Living the Resurrection*, p.59)

An application: Look for Jesus in the "normal" routines of life. "Formation-by-resurrection does not depend on a specially prepared setting or a carefully selected time and place. The norm is the normal. There is nothing more normal and routine and everyday than eating a meal..... Christian practice in matters of spiritual formation goes badly astray when it attempts to construct or organize ways of spirituality apart from the ordinariness of life. And there is nothing more ordinary than a meal." (Peterson: pp.70-71)

*As a side note:* I can't recommend to you enough Eugene Peterson's book *Living the Resurrection* — especially his insights on the power of sharing an ordinary meal with your brothers and sisters.

**Rom. 1:1-7:** Note, the ideas of "holiness" or "set apart" occur three times in these verses. And the ideas of "called" or "appointed" we see five times. The connection? Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, was appointed (validated) as the Son of God in power by His resurrection from the dead. We, too, are called by God to be His holy people, and, as His holy people, we call others to become obedient to Jesus.

An application: Our resurrected Lord gives us a ministry, a calling, to call others to become obedient to Him. This is why we exist, no matter what your vocation. We exist, by His power, to call others to Him.

**Ephesians 1:18-20; 3:16-29:** Don't think you can simply think your way to experiencing the love of God in your life. It is a love that must be unfolded by prayer and goes beyond the mere intellect. It has been called a "supra-rational" (mind you, not "irrational"! ) love.

An application: To experience the resurrected power of God in your daily life, it must be "prayed down."

**Philippians 3:10ff:** If we want to know Him, not just have an impressive religious resume (see Philippians 3:1-6), we must be willing to not just knowing the power of His resurrection, but also participate in the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings. The obvious reason Jesus needed resurrection was because He was crucified. Likewise, to know the power of His resurrection presupposes we are people who have been crucified with Christ, who will then live by faith in the Son of God Who loved us and gave Himself for us. (Galatians 2:20)

An application: We can't cherry-pick our experience of Him, saying in essence, "Give me your power, but not your sufferings." Be ready and willing to meet Him in your sufferings.

I close with what I consider some wise words once again from Eugene Peterson. To experience Jesus this Easter, remember: "Jesus is host, always. We are never 'in charge' of our spiritual formation. We don't decide the menu. We don't customize the details according to our tastes and appetites. But at the same time, we are completely present and participatory, engaged in the actual formation — by resurrection itself." (Peterson, p.78)

## Our month of missions



Our friends Dora and Tom kicked off a month of adult ed programs following worship during March. They brought us news of their partnership with Bible Pathways to exponentially expand their impact among the **Banjara people group in India**. They've connected with

a pastor there who has formed a leadership network and now looks forward to assistance with training these indigenous church leaders and putting their language into a written form for the first time to enhance their own learning and their ability to bring the Gospel to the Banjaras, who number nearly 120 million and are considered unreached by the Gospel because so few of them have been given the opportunity to hear the Good News.

When they visited us, Tom and Dora were actively seeking to meet a matching grant for this new project by March 31. Here's Tom's report:

Praise God, we got \$17,352 in donations to be matched. But the [match] church has given the full \$25,000. That is a total of \$42,353 towards establishing Bible Pathways among the Banjara Tribal People.

At least \$3,000 was given from Crossway people. I suspect that another \$1,000 gift that was anonymous also came from Crossway. This will be used for necessary travel, establishing a Coaches' Council, getting 6 groups started, and presenting Bible Pathways to 120 pastors at the Banjara Network Conference in June! The Lord has really guided this and clearly has big plans.

Thank you for your gift, your championing this, and your commitment to the Gospel!

Tom

***To join a prayer and communications support team, or to donate to missionaries, please contact CrossWay missions coordinator Pam Reed, in the directory.***

Mid-month, we enjoyed a virtual reality visit to the field presented by our own Mike W., acquainting us with the work of **Mission India**. M.I. is recipient of CrossWay's funding for indigenous church planting for this fiscal year, doubled by a matching gift that was active at the time of our donation.

And our member Paul S. gave us insight into his and wife Elma's experiences in **the Philippines** as they prepare to split their time between Elma's native land and Grand Rapids, once Paul retires from his "day job." True to form, along with setting up their living arrangements, they have begun making valuable contacts, as they have no plans to retire from ministry.

We concluded on March 22 with a visit from Anne and Dave N., ReachGlobal missionaries who bring workshops and training sessions on the theology of the sanctity of human life to people in third-world countries, by invitation of local pastors. They introduced their ministry and then led us through a brief training by using brainstorming conversations to explore the differences between our culture's view of marginalized people and the value placed on such people from a Biblical worldview. Thanks to Anne and Dave for opening our eyes to some of the attitudes that make us Christians a special people group within our culture. May we go forth and share God's love in our neighborhoods and workplaces, leading those around us to view the "other" as a valuable image bearer.

