

FIVE THINGS TO READ IN 2023

It's time to put a new calendar up on the wall and that means it's also the time of year when people consider if they will pursue any new goals or resolutions. I enjoy this process of goal-setting and for me it usually includes a reading goal. Whether you are also goal oriented or you just like reading and are looking for something new to grab off the shelf, I want to share five things with you that I believe could be a blessing if you take the time to turn through their pages.

1. The Book of Matthew. I think everyone should read through one of the gospels every year. I know that many of you may have Bible reading plans that include going through at least one of the gospels, but I want to encourage you to take your time through this one. Like taking communion, I think regularly reading the gospels is a helpful reminder of who God is and what He has done for us. It fixes our eyes back on Jesus and points us towards the powerful good news that we need to be reminded of every day of our lives.

2. Liturgy of the Ordinary by Tish Harrison Warren. This book encourages us to see the practical nature of our theology. It defines liturgy as the small practices and habits that form us. The practices and habits we develop may point us to Jesus or something else. Warren encourages us to be aware of God's presence and find the sacred in the ordinary. After all, God created every last detail of our world and any of those details can point us back to Him. I appreciate this book for challenging me to slow down and seek God in all things and all moments. But I also appreciate the reminder to view theology as practical and not just intellectual. What I know about God should impact my life and transform me, not just fill the pathways of my brain with knowledge. Quick note: Be aware that your beliefs will likely not align perfectly with hers. For example, she is Anglican and practices infant baptism. As with anything you read, use your understanding of scripture to help you filter and digest the many valuable words she has to share with us.

3. How to Reach the West Again by Timothy Keller. Of course I had to include a Keller book. He is masterful at taking complex things and communicating them in a simple and helpful manner. This book is no exception and it's rather short. Our country has moved more and more into a post-Christian state the last couple decades. He argues that this should change how we approach evangelism if we want it to be effective. He encourages us to look to the early church as an example of relational ministry. But he also upholds the value of apologetics and being prepared to share the hope that we have. He encourages a kind of apologetics that speaks to the hopelessness of our current cultural values and paints a picture of Jesus as the only real hope. This book is a little more of a difficult read than some of his other works, but the brevity balances out the technical hurdles and helps keep this book fairly accessible.

4. Bearing God's Name by Carmen Joy Imes. The subtitle of this book is, "Why Sinai Still Matters." If you struggle to find value in reading the Old Testament I cannot recommend this book enough. Imes is an Old Testament professor and her love for this text is contagious. She has a gift for helping us to see the practical value of God's commands to His people. She makes a good argument for why the old covenant and law should not be swept under the rug but have been fulfilled through Jesus. But by far the most valuable lesson from this book is the deep meaning she brings to the practice that every Christian takes on of bearing God's name. She argues that the command to not take the Lord's name in vain is not about foul language, it's about claiming Yahweh as our God and living in a way that doesn't reflect that allegiance. I found it to be deeply convicting, compelling, and encouraging.

5. What God Has to Say About Our Bodies by Sam Allberry. This is a book that I referenced last spring during our Gospel Sexuality series, but I think it's worth mentioning here again. There are so many questions in our culture right now about our physical bodies and it's hard to know what we should believe and what the Bible really has to say. I especially encourage you to read this if you have teenagers because they seem to be coming home with questions about this topic every week. Of course, while this topic is very relevant today, it's nothing new. The Bible speaks about our bodies because we have had questions through all generations. Sam Allberry is a gifted theologian and writer. I especially appreciate his balance of compassion and truth, and his desire to see God's Word applied in our lives. He approaches these hard topics with love and grace and reminds us of the hope that exists in the pages of God's precious Word.

Even if you read just one or two things from this list I hope that these resources will help you draw closer to God in 2023. And if you do make it through one and want to discuss what you read, let me know! Coffee's on me!

Serving Him Together,

Pastor Joey

AGELESS WONDERS CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Let's Try This Again!

I've heard it said that the third time is the charm. Let's see if that's true.

After postponing our Ageless Wonders Christmas Lunch , TWICE, we're going to give it another try.

On Tuesday, January 10th, from 11:00 - 1:00, you are invited to join us for a delicious lunch and a "belated" Christmas celebration, including singing some of the beloved carols, reminiscing about Christmases past and inspiration from some of our favorite authors. Feel free to invite a friend as well.

Please RSVP to Nancy Nelson if you plan to attend, at Care@crossroadschurchff.com or 320-815-4724.



AWANA

Awana is a busy and exciting place to be any week, but that's especially true the last night before Christmas. From the pictures, you get the idea. These kids (and adults) really get into the season!

It was a wonderful evening worshipping, sharing about the REAL Christmas story and hearing kids reciting the scriptures they had memorized. How appropriate that, that particular evening, the older elementary kids were memorizing verses focusing on Jesus and what He taught about Himself. He is the Bread of Life, and The Light of the World.

Continue to pray for this vital ministry as we trust God to reach boys and girls in this community with the Gospel (Good News) of Christ, and train them to serve him. Even though many of the children in our club come from Christian homes, there are still some who have not fully accepted the Gospel for themselves. Pray that through Awana they will come to know the Saviour of the World personally.

A SEASON OF GROWTH AT CROSSROADS CHURCH

We are in a season of growth at CrossRoads Church. Not only is my family growing with the addition of our 5th boy in January, but all of CrossRoads Children's ministry is growing. We have more kids attending Sunday School than in years past, more families attending church, and more little ones using the nursery. Our nursery needed to expand to accommodate the need for nursery services during the Sunday School hour which meant the need for growth of our volunteers! What a wonderful, blessed, season we are in! As I prepare to take a step back and focus on the addition of this new little one in my family, I wanted to give you all an update on Children's Ministry. In my absence, Dawn Moenedick will be resuming her interim role of Director of Children's Ministry. The CrossRoads kids will be in great hands!

Our Sunday School curriculum is in year two of growth and we continue to see the fruits of this 3 year cycled curriculum which brings our Sunday school students through the entire Bible. We firmly believe the Bible points us to Jesus and equips us to follow Him well. Therefore, everything we do in Children's Ministry is focused on the Bible, who Jesus is and how we can learn to follow him well.

Our Children's Church is growing as well! We have added a few new Junior High helpers. It has been a joy to watch them jump in and be positive role models for our 4 year olds-2nd graders.

Our Christmas Program grew in numbers as well this year! Led by Brooke McConn (with Courtney Draxten) and Heather Miller (with Kim Kelly) expanded to include Junior High and Highschool students from our church family. These musicians and singers were a big blessing this year to our 1st-6th graders.

As we look to the Spring, the focus of Children's Ministry will continue to remain steady. Focused on Jesus and continually pointing our kids to Him. If you have a desire to join the ministry of Children's Church I would love to hear from you!

I am thankful for all who stepped in to serve the children of CrossRoads Church. We are investing in the future of our church family and that is not a responsibility we take lightly! Please be in prayer for our Children's Ministry, our volunteers and the kids we serve.

Thinking about the importance of Children's Ministry I am reminded of the passage from Luke chapter 18:16 (CSB); "Jesus, however, invited them: "Let the little children come to me, and don't stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these". May we be more and more like Jesus every day. Inviting the young ones of our church to sit at Jesus' feet and learn from Him.

Trisha Grove | Director of Children's Ministry

Christmas Program 2022, photo cred. Eric Strand



CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



MINISTRY STAFF

Joey Kalan *Senior Pastor*
Christi Horgen *Interim Youth Director*
Trisha Grove *Children's Ministry
Director*
Nancy Nelson *Care Coordinator*

OVERSEER BOARD

Dan Heikes **Dave Bjork**
Joey Kalan **Katrina Mouser**
Bruce Money **Charlie Smith**
Tim Swedberg **Sue Wilken**

CROSSROADS CHURCH

629 E Channing Avenue, Fergus Falls, MN
218-739-3391

crcff.com

OFFICE HOURS:

TUES, WED, FRI 8 AM – 12 PM

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Email
info@crossroadschurchff.com

AWANA

Listeners: Help kids understand and memorize God's Word.

ADULT MINISTRY

Men's Bible Study Leader: Help men connect with one another and grow in their faith by spending time in the Word and prayer.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

If you have something you would like to submit for inclusion in the newsletter, please email to **info@crossroadschurchff.com** by the 22nd of the month (to be published in the following month's issue).

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THUR

FRI

SAT

JAN

The Nursery is available each week during the Sunday service.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9 AM Worship 10 AM Family Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Sunday School & Connection Groups	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study	5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins)		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9 AM Worship 10 AM Family Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Sunday School & Connection Groups	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Unwind	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 11:00 AM Ageless Wonders Christmas Lunch	5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins)		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9 AM Worship 10 AM Family Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Sunday School & Connection Groups	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study	5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins)		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
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29	30	31				
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