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HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS | Page 13

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Happy New Year

STORIES OF 2016
Five stories of 2016 that should hold a special significance to Christians



PAGE 24

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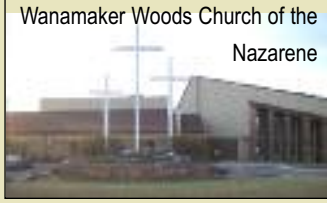
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Wanamaker Woods Church of the Nazarene



See inside back cover!

Kansas woman makes a cross-country run for life



Anna Hoduski is a young woman with a passion, a purpose and a plan. Through an initiative she started, Project If Life, the 23-year-old is running 3,000 miles across the United States to bring awareness to the pro-life movement and spark conversations about abortion. Her journey took the Kansas native across the Sunflower State and now she finds herself in the west nearing her goal.

"I want to bring attention to the movement, but there is often no open door to talk with people about it," Anna explained. "But if you are doing a run of some kind, people will ask you 'why are you doing it?' and that gives you an open door."

Her interest in the pro-life movement began as a child and continued into college.

"I became passionate about the pro-

■ Please see **RUN FOR LIFE** page 8



RESPECT FOR LIFE



Annual March for Life in D.C. draws thousands from Kansas, Missouri

Stephanie Boothe | Metro Voice

Marching with hundreds of thousands of people down the streets of Washington, D.C. is an experience Jean Fahlstrom of Raytown will never forget.

"I thought we could really go and say we are against this and someone would really hear us," Fahlstrom said.

Fahlstrom was part of a delegation from the Kansas City

■ Please see **MARCH FOR LIFE** page 8

KS high school graduation rate above national average

by **Dwight Widaman**

U.S. Department of Education data shows Kansas' high school graduation rate stands at 85.7 percent for the 2014-2015 school year, ranking No. 20 in the nation.

That compares favorably to the national average of 83.2 percent, but that's still not good enough, according to education commissioner Randy Watson.

Kansas must work with students and families to improve high school graduation rates, Watson stated, while highlighting challenges the state faces, including high turnover among superintendents and principals.

■ Please see **GRADUATION** page 3



New facilities like this at the \$65 million Blue Valley SW High School in Overland Park look impressive but raise questions as students struggle to graduate.

18th Annual K-12 and College Expo coming March 4



Metro Voice will host its 18th Christian K-12 Education and College Expo Saturday, March 4, from 10-2 p.m. at Colonial Presbyterian Church, 9500 Wornall Road in South Kansas City. The annual free event is a local tradition for families looking at all levels of education including high school juniors and seniors considering Christian college, plus families looking for K-12 and homeschooling options.

The event draws families and students from across the region seeking answers to their many questions. Popular mini-seminars include such topics as college financial aid, a K-12 parent panel discussion and homeschooling.

Over 40 Christian colleges from over 15 states will be in attendance plus the area's best private K-12 schools.

All events are free and open to the public. The Topeka and Kansas City editions of Metro Voice are the sponsors of the event. For more information visit metrovoicenews.com or call 816-524-4522.

Fourth Annual Easter Parade and Fun Fest to be held April 15



The Topeka Easter Parade & Fun Fest will be back for the fourth consecutive year on Saturday, April 15, 2017. Previous events have attracted thousands of people who came to watch the parade, visit the Fun Fair, listen to live

■ Please see **EASTER** page 3

Topeka Rescue Mission's Children's Palace to Host Ribbon Cutting and Open House

The Topeka Rescue Mission broke ground on May 8, 2015 to begin the extensive work of developing a palace for children. This month's First Friday will mark a time of celebration as they host an official ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony at the Children's Palace, located at 601 NW Harrison St. The public is invited to attend the brief ceremony, which will begin at 4:30 p.m. on January 6, followed by an open house that runs until 7:30 p.m. Guests will have the opportunity to tour the facility which, once fully operational, will care for up to 124 homeless and formerly homeless children. The mission of the Children's Palace is to bring help and hope by sharing the love of Jesus



and showing children they are "royalty in God's eyes... and ours."

Need for Laborers

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Luke 10:2).

Construction of the nearly 18,000 square foot Children's Palace is com-

plete, but the need for qualified ministry staff remains a need for doors to officially open. The Rescue Mission is currently looking for Christian missionaries who are interested in serving the Lord fulltime through ministry to homeless children and their families at the Children's Palace. Candidates must be ministry-minded with a strong passion for Jesus and children. Because the Children's Palace will be licensed through the State of Kansas for childcare, there is also a need for previous experience working in the field of early childhood education. For a list of positions currently available, along with qualifications needed, visit trmonline.org. Resumes and/or inquires can be sent to jhosman@trmonline.org or directed to 785-730-8802.

Life Lessons From a Little One

LOOKING BACK

by **Jessica S. Hosman**

I found myself staring at my son the other day and remembering what life was like just six short years ago. He had just been born, and I was determined to protect him from every trace of darkness in the world that I possibly could. I remember holding him for hours, staring at this innocent face and vowing to the Lord that I would do everything in my power

got plenty of regrets but I recognize that I cannot allow them to cloud the beauty of today.

"...but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead" (Philippians 3:13).

My son isn't perfect, and neither am I. The fantasy I envisioned six years ago



Jessica Hosman

to nurture Him, love him and make known to him the immeasurable love of Jesus. I would be the perfect Mommy, and he would be the perfect son.

Then came colic. Inconsolable wails would monopolize our time. I'm not sure who cried more, me or him. Daily I would call out to the Lord in desperation



wondering what I was missing that I could not console my own child.

Then came the sleepless nights that weren't being outgrown. For years, I longed for sleep as Zechariah struggled to sleep through the night. I felt like I would never be alert again, but I knew it was worth it. God had blessed me with a gift; I was determined to treasure it.

But then he turned three. I'm not sure how it happened but it seemed as though the very day his new year of life began, so began a new chapter of adventure as he discovered a strong will and decided to make it his own. I began developing a greater compassion and sensitivity for the moms I would pass who had a blank look on their face and weren't quite connecting with their child. I've lived there. I've experienced the pain of feeling like a failure and being confident I was the worst mom on the planet.

Fast forward a few more years, and a few more tears, and I look at my child – really look at my child. Six years of life has seemed to pass before my eyes. I've

when I held him in my arms hasn't played out the way it once did in my mind. He's still a kid with childish ways, and I'm still an imperfect mom. I can't allow my dreams of what I thought life would be like take away from what is. What is may not be perfect, but it is a gift. And each day is a

new opportunity to start afresh, cherishing the gift of life God has given and what, or who, He has entrusted into our care.

I could drown myself in tears of regret with the many ways I feel I've failed my son over the past six years. But those tears won't do me, or him, any good unless I'm willing to dry them and ask the Lord for His grace and guidance to do better in the next six that follow.

What's holding you back? Are there regrets that are weighing you down, robbing you of any hope that this year will be any different or better than the last?

Cast your cares upon the Lord for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7).

He cares for you. He cares for me. He knows we're not perfect and He loves us anyway. He trusts us anyway. May this be the year when we feel the weight of past regrets roll off our backs and onto His feet. And may we see with new eyes the gifts He's placed into our care. May we love them and cherish them, imperfections and all.

Rally and March For Life to be held in Topeka Jan. 23

In 2015, when Kansas became the first state to ban dismemberment abortions, one Kansas judge stopped it, claiming such a law isn't allowed under the KS constitution. That ruling is now under appeal to the KS Supreme Court.



Kansans For Life had hoped to get enough Kansans to vote not to retain the liberal members of that court in the November election. The vote was close: only 55% of Kansans voted to retain them, but to succeed, the effort needed to push their votes under 50%.

Mary Kay Culp, director of Kansans For Life, says they are not finished – the efforts will continue. She is asking all pro-life Kansans to meet at the Kansas Capitol in Topeka on January 23rd to discover how they can help. The annual Kansans For Life Rally and March will celebrate life, and demonstrate to help change the Kansas judicial nomination process to the federal model, in an effort to save those and other babies from liberal Kansas judges.

The agenda for the event is as follows:

8:30 AM: REGISTRATION - Location this year for registration/donuts/exhibit booths, as well as workshops, will be in the downstairs Capitol's Visitor Center inside the North Entrance, NOT, as before, on the first floor rotunda. Enjoy donuts, visit booths, drop off donated baby items, pick up legislator room lists, etc.

9:00 – NOON: LOBBY - Take a tour, watch KS House in action, and other activities to be announced. Info at registration.

9:00 - 10:00: WORKSHOPS - Location: Rooms 3 & 4 North, Capitol Visitor's Ctr., basement level, North

Capitol Entrance. Room 3 North: Denial of care at the beginning and end of life, by Kathy Ostrowski, KFL Legislative Director. Room 4 North: How activist Courts Harm Kansas Pro-life Laws by Jeanne Gawdun and Mary Kay Culp

10:00 - 11:00: WORKSHOPS REPEATED

11:00 - 12:30: CATHOLIC MASS - Location: Topeka Performing Arts Center Auditorium (TPAC)

11:30 - 12:30: EVANGELICAL PRAYER SERVICE - Room 4 North, Capitol Visitor's Ctr., basement level. With Topeka Pastor David Epps, director of Billy Graham ministry in Kansas

11:30 - 2:30: LUNCH - Mater Dei-Assumption Church basement. Lunch available for free will donation, or bring your own

12:30 - 12:45: MARCH FROM TPAC TO SOUTH CAPITOL STEPS LED BY THE KANSAS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

12:45 - 1:15: RALLY FOR LIFE on the south Capitol steps featuring: Governor Sam Brownback, introduction of pro-life legislators by David Gittrich, and more

1:30 - 2:30 PM: WORKSHOPS - Location: Rooms 3 & 4 North, Capitol Visitor's Ctr., basement level, North Capitol Entrance. Subjects to be announced

To enter the Capitol, enter on the North side only. There is a drive-way for drop offs. Metered parking on the street is available. Under the capitol there is a two-hour maximum. Other options are the Crosby Parking Garage, 8th Ave between Kansas & Jackson; Centre City Parking Garage, 9th & Kansas Avenue; Park-N-Shop, on Quincy between 6th & 7th; Coronado Parking Garage, on Quincy between 9th & 10th.

For late-breaking information and updates go to the Kansans for Life Facebook page; KFL web site - www.kfl.org; or Twitter: @kansansforlife. Emergency Numbers for KFL Personnel are (785) 383-8636 and (913) 406-4446.

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Bleeding Kansas Series Returns to Constitution Hall State Historic Site

LECOMPTON, KS — Dramatic interpretations and talks about the violent territorial and civil war history of Kansas, 1854-1865, will highlight the 21st annual Bleeding Kansas series, which begins January 29, 2017. The programs are held at 2 p.m. Sundays, through March 5 at Constitution Hall State Historic Site in Lecompton, KS.

Bleeding Kansas describes that time in Kansas Territory, from 1854 to 1861, during the struggle to determine whether the new state would be free or slave. Each of these programs explores aspects of the state's unique history:

January 29: "Kansas on Appeal: Highlights from 156 years of Sunflower State Advocacy in the Supreme Court of the United States" a Kansas Day program by Kansas Attorney General,



Derek Schmidt, with remarks by Kansas State Archivist, Matt Veatch

February 5: "Ride with the Devil: Hollywood and the Border Wars" Dr. Carl Graves, historian and educator

February 12: "Lee and Grant at Appomattox" reenactment by historic performers Randy Durbin, as General Grant & Lane Smith, as General Lee

February 19: "Gettysburg, the Spark

that Torched Lawrence" Dr. Charles E. Heller, Col (Ret), historian, author

February 26: "Guns of Bleeding Kansas" Pat Donahue, Esq., gunsmith, gun historian

March 5: "Border Agitator, David R. Atchison" Chris W. Taylor, Executive Director, Atchison County (KS) Historical Society (special appearance by "Senator Atchison")

The suggested donation is \$3 adults. Constitution Hall is located at 319 Elmore, Lecompton, KS. For more information, call 785-887-6520 or visit kshs.org/constitution_hall.

Constitution Hall State Historic Site is one of 16 state historic sites operated by the Kansas Historical Society, a state agency. It can also be found on facebook at facebook.com/kshhistoricalsociety.

January C5Alive Leadership Luncheon to feature Langley

Mitch Langley to provide music, devotional

The monthly C5Alive "POWER Luncheon" will be held at The Peak, 1920 SW Gage Blvd. on January 12, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Mitch Langley, worship pastor at Northland Christian Church, will provide a devotional and music for the event.

The cost to attend the luncheon is \$10 for C5Alive members and first-time guests who RSVP, and \$12 at the door. Non-members and other guests pay \$15. C5 luncheons are open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend, organizers said. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to info@C5Alive.org.

C5Alive is an organization founded in 2009, dedicated to developing and uniting Christian Leadership in the community,

involving businesses, non-profits and churches.

In addition to monthly "POWER" luncheons held on the second Thursday of each month, C5 also hosts periodic business fairs and other events, including the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Family Fun Fest, held on the day before Easter.

The luncheons are held in different locations around the Capital City each month. In February the luncheon will be held on the 9th at Ramada West, 605 Fairlawn. The format will be a "Matchmaker" speed marketing event.

C5 members may also sponsor luncheons and other events as a way to promote their organizations. For more information about C5, go to C5Alive.org, facebook.com/C5Alive, or call 785-640-6399.



Langley

EASTER

continued from page 1

music, visit over 70 vendor booths and take part in the egg hunt or other activities.

Every year, dozens of churches, businesses and non-profit organizations take part in the parade, and dozens more set up vendor booths and kids' games in as part of the family fun fair. There have been lots of floats with a variety of themes, and all shapes and sizes of other vehicles, as well as walking entries such as schools, military groups, marching bands and



more. The event is coordinated by C5Alive, a Christian leadership offshoot of the Capital City Christian Chamber of Commerce (C5).

"We've had a great response and new entries each year," said Drew Walker, Parade & Entertainment Coordinator. "I expect it to just keep growing every year."

Details of the 2017 event are still being finalized, but there will still be a Parade and Egg Hunt, plus vendor booths, food trucks and kid's activities going on all afternoon. This year, even more churches, non-profit organizations, schools and local businesses are expected to enter floats and marching bands, etc., in the parade, as well as set up activity booths at the fun fair.

The Family Fun Fair will consist of activities geared toward children and families, as well as health & wellness vendor booths, vendor exhibits, and more. Live performers will be on hand all day, such as jazz bands, dance troupes, praise bands, solo artists, street entertainers and more.

For more information, email info@C5Alive.org or call 640-6399.

More Christmas Joy for Kids with Nothing 'BOX OF JOY' COUNT TRIPLED IN 2016

BOCA RATON, Fla. — A record-setting number of Boxes of Joy this year helped spread Christmas smiles to more than 35,000 of the most impoverished kids in our hemisphere.

Last year's Box of Joy campaign—an outreach of Cross Catholic Outreach—sent gift-filled treasures to 11,500 children in the Caribbean and Central America. The 2016 goal of 20,000 kids pales next to this year's figures actually tripling last year.

"For too many children, Christmas is just another day of want—no gifts," Cross Catholic Outreach President Jim Cavnar said. "But from generous people across the country, 35,000 children will know that someone cares."

Nationwide, Box of Joy is the love in action of parishes, churches, schools, and groups. Participants



pack a shoebox with gifts such as small toys, bar soap, pencils, a toothbrush, toothpaste, hard candy, crayons, coloring books or T-shirts--and a \$9 check to cover shipment and support local charities. In November, all boxes go to drop-off centers across the country. Folks who miss Box of Joy Week have mail-in and online options at www.CrossCatholic.org/BoxOfJoy.

In 2014, Cross Catholic Outreach piloted the Box of Joy program in just two dioceses. In 2015, that number jumped to 12--including 156 parishes, Catholic schools and other groups. This year, 314 schools, churches and groups participated--sending tangible love to children in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala.

"It's humbling and encouraging to see so many people give time and resources to send Christmas to a child with nothing," Steve Bostian, Box of Joy director, said. "Is there a better way to celebrate Jesus' birth than by giving to people in great need?"

GRADUATION

continued from page 1

"Eighty-six isn't good enough," Watson told the Kansas State Board of Education.

"Fourteen (percent) will have a difficult time making it to the middle class. They just will."

The state education department is promoting a vision in which high schools work more closely with students and their families on developing individual study plans that help each teenager prepare for life after high school.

The individual plans would take into account each student's interests and goals — from joining the military to pursuing technical careers or a four-year college program.

This could mean helping more students explore career interests while still in high school, such as by connecting them with job-related coursework and internships.

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New Year Resolutions That Strengthen Your Faith

by **John Potter | Military Chaplain**

A New Year is like a blank page of paper, just waiting for the words to be written. It is full of hope and endless possibility. As you consider items for your resolution list, here are five items that can strengthen your faith in 2017.

Meditate on the Bible. You can read the text, receive an email, or listen to Scripture on your smart phone. Once you have a mode that is meaningful to you, make it a routine. Spending time with God's Word is vital to any Christian. It encourages and educates us. It provides direction when we feel lost. It reminds us that God is near.

Allow God's Word to shape and mold you in 2017.

Strengthen a relationship. Odds are good you live a busy life and have allowed some personal relationships to wither on the vine. Reach out to a family member or friend you have not contacted recently. Make an effort to renew and strengthen the relationship. If you see each other for lunch even once a month, it can forge a strong bond. When we sharpen one another in real Christian fellowship, we are more effective and useful in God's service.

Be more grateful. It is easy to get in a mental rut. Our human nature is always focusing on the next task, another event, or something else that needs to be done. It often seems that we are never happy or pleased with what we have. Slow down and focus

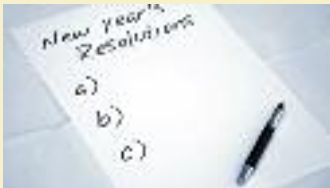
on the people and blessings around you. Practice gratitude in your life. Every day, express thankfulness to the Lord and to others. Seeing the good in your life will allow you to keep your heart compassionate and loving.

Answer Softly. I enjoy a good debate, but one that is respectful and considerate. Our conversations can promote unity, remove tension, and demonstrate spiritual maturity even when difficult topics arise. What we say and how we say it should reflect our faith. Proverbs 15:1 reminds us that, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." The way you

respond to distention can do much to either quiet it or stir it up even more.

Volunteer your time. You can make a huge difference in someone's life by investing just minutes a day. Take time to volunteer at a local charity, non-profit, or ministry organization. Live your faith and demonstrate that you are a servant of Christ. There are programs designed to help pregnant girls, teenage parents, and their children. There are programs to feed the hungry. There are programs to mentor married couples. All of these programs need volunteers to strengthen people in need. Your time as a volunteer can make an eternal impact.

As we prepare for 2017, make faith a part of your New Year resolution list. Make a plan to strengthen your faith today and watch how God uses you in the year to come.



Washburn Tech Fulfills Big and Small Holiday Wishes

From homemade toys to cars, and we mean real cars, Washburn University Institute of Technology (Washburn Tech) has taken the season of giving to a whole new level. Washburn Tech's Recycled Rides program gave away two refurbished vehicles to families in need while students donated hundreds of toys to the Toys for Tots program in December.

Washburn Tech's Recycled Rides gifted a 2006 Dodge Caravan, donated by the Kansas Corporation Commission, and a 2014 Ford Fusion, donated by Geico Insurance. Recipients of the new rides, chosen through a nomination process, also received a bag of car-care products and the promise of the first oil change and check-up.

Recycled Rides is a nationwide community service project of the National Auto Body Council (NABC) that partners auto students with instructors and professional mentors in the community to refurbish vehicles, which are awarded to local individuals, families or organizations in need during both the fall and spring semesters. Washburn Tech's SkillsUSA chapter sponsors the program and student members participate in refurbishing efforts as well as help recruit volunteers and donations. Area businesses and individuals also donate parts and supplies to get the vehicles on the road again. These vehicles became the 17th and 18th Recycled Rides to be given away in our community since Washburn Tech began participating in the program.

In addition, Washburn Tech donated hundreds of toys to the Toys for Tots cam-



Above: Kevin Williams, Tanya Daniel (recipient of the 2006 Dodge Caravan), 41, of Lawrence, one of her twin sons, Paula Carvell, and Johnathan Kooser. Below: Kevin Williams, Johnathan Kooser, Amanda Wallace (recipient of the 2014 Ford Fusion), 38, of Meriden, Paula Carvell, and Eric Showalter, head of Washburn Tech's Auto Collision Repair program.



aign. The homemade wooden step stools, hobby horses and yoyos were made during Washburn Tech's Toys for Tots Build Day. The event involves students, instructors and volunteers who make homemade toys for local children

in need. Last year, approximately 850 toys were built. The Toy Build annual event is sponsored by Washburn Tech's Student Government Association and SkillsUSA Chapter.

Envista CU Partners with Topeka Community Foundation to Offer Giving Cards

Envista Credit Union has committed \$8000 to purchase 800 \$10 giving cards in partnership with the Topeka Community Foundation. Each person that opens a virtual checking account at Envista will receive a \$10 Envista Giving Card. The Envista Giving Card allows the member to give \$10 to any nonprofit organization through an online portal.

"Envista is committed to giving back to the communities that we serve," said Tara Dimick, Senior Vice President of Envista Credit Union. "The Envista Giving Card lets our members decide where that support should go."

The donation program connected with the Envista Virtual Checking has provided \$14,000 in contributions since 2014. The Envista Giving Card will streamline the process thanks to the partnership with the Topeka Community Foundation.

"Giving cards are a way to make giving convenient and serve as a great gift anytime of the year," said Marsha Pope, President of Topeka Community Foundation. "We are excited to be a part of Envista's giving program and their encouragement to share that giving with their members."

Envista Credit Union is a full service financial institution established in 1957 to provide members quality products and services to achieve their financial goals. Envista current-



For more information call 785-228-0149 or visit www.envistacu.com.

The mission of the Topeka Community Foundation is to connect donors with their interests and community needs, increase charitable giving in the community, provide leadership on key community issues and ensure stewardship and accountability for effective community investment of donor dollars.

ly has \$324 million in assets and serves 38,000 Kansans with offices in Topeka, Lawrence and Hutchinson.



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FINANCIAL PLANNING

Paying cash doesn't make it smart

Dear Dave,

What is your opinion on paying cash for a "tiny house?"

Wes

Dear Wes,

This may be a really un-hip or un-cool thing to say, but I wouldn't buy a tiny house at all. Paying cash for something like that might make the mover smarter, but that still doesn't mean it's a smart choice.

Now, don't take what I'm saying the wrong way. I don't have a problem with people who build tiny houses or buy them. My problem with these things is that there's no track record on them. There's also a pretty good chance they're going to be just a fad. Another problem is that you'd have a really small market when it comes time to sell your tiny house. In other words, they probably won't go up in value like a traditional home. They may actually lose value over the years.

There's a thing in economics called the supply-demand curve, and from what I've seen tiny houses also have a tiny demand and pretty narrow market appeal. Their appeal seems to be mostly for early adopters and people who think they'll never be able to afford a house. That means they're not going to have broad appeal when you get ready to sell them, either. And that creates a problem.

I could be wrong, though. I mean, if enough people buy tiny houses and they become a real part of our culture, then maybe they'll do okay. But right now it's an unproven product line and an unproven concept. So I wouldn't buy a tiny house. Honestly, I wouldn't even buy one at half of its current value because I'd be afraid it would drop to a fourth of its value. There's just no proven record at this point of these things going up in value.

—Dave

DID DAD DO HER WRONG?

Dear Dave,

My father loaned my husband and I money 20 years ago to help us start a business. The business eventually failed, and it forced us into bankruptcy. After this, we never seemed to get around to paying him back. He died earlier this year, and when we got together with my brother and sister for the reading of the will, we realized he had deducted the amount of the loan from my inheritance. Everything was equal between us before that. I think that's wrong. What's your opinion?

Karen

Dear Karen,

I'm really sorry about your dad. I'm also sorry this was never taken care of or discussed while he was still alive.

There are a lot of emotions at play, so I don't want to beat you up too much. But legally, he didn't have to leave you anything in his estate. The stuff we're talking about, money included, was his to do with as he saw fit. It was a little odd that he didn't address this with you beforehand, but there are lots of instances where kids get nothing from an estate or not as much as others. It's not uncommon.

In my mind, and, from the sound of it, his too, he left you an equal share minus what you still owed. He loaned you the money, and he had the right to set terms on that. I understand your frustration. You feel like he took something away that was yours. My point is it was never yours; it was his.

I know it still hurts though. This is one of the reasons I advise never borrowing money from, or loaning it to, relatives. The best of intentions can end up in places like this.

—Dave



DAVE
RAMSEY

Financial author,
radio host, television
personality, and
motivational speaker

davesays

ADJUSTABLE RATE MORTGAGE

Dear Dave,

Considering all the market volatility, why do banks offer adjustable rate mortgages? How did they come into being?

Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

I was in the real estate business in 1978, and that was the year fixed rate mortgages went to 10 percent for the first time in history. It created all kinds of chaos, but that wasn't the worst of it all. By 1981, rates were as high as 17 percent. Banks were paying 10 to 12 percent on savings accounts, but they were making just five percent back from their products. Essentially, banks began looking for a way to prevent themselves from losing money in the future. Out of that, the adjustable rate mortgage was born.

With the adjustable rate mortgage (or ARM), banks offer a lower interest rate in the beginning to grab your attention. Then, when rates adjust

they adjust up. It transfers risk to the consumer, and puts the homebuyer in a position where they're at the mercy of the markets when it comes to the amount of their mortgage payments. Adjustable rate mortgages are a bad, bad deal. If you currently have one I'd encourage you to refinance now!

—Dave

DOES ELDERLY MOTHER NEED LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE?

Dear Dave,

I'm trying to help my elderly mom with her finances. She has no debt and

more than \$1 million in assets. There was also another \$500,000 trust left for her by my dad. With access to all this, does she still need long-term health insurance?

Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

Absolutely! She also needs an estate planner. When you hit 60, you need long-term care insurance, period. Whether you have \$1 million-plus in the bank or not, I strongly recommend it as a wise part of any asset management plan.

—Dave

Stronger Security Filters and Tax Refund Processing

By Peggy Beasterfield

Owner, Peggy's Tax and Accounting Service

As the IRS steps up its efforts to combat identity theft and tax refund fraud through its many processing filters, legitimate refund returns sometimes get delayed during the review process. While the IRS is working diligently to stop the issuance of fraudulent refunds, it also remains focused on releasing legitimate refunds as quickly as possible.

Recently, the Internal Revenue Service, state tax agencies and industry partners finalized plans for 2017 to improve identity theft protections for individual and business taxpayers. This comes after making significant inroads this year against fraudulent returns. Additional safeguards will be set in place for the upcoming 2017 filing season.

The IRS and its partners saw a marked improvement in the battle against identity theft in 2016. This is highlighted by the number of new people reporting stolen identities on federal tax returns falling by more than 50 percent, with nearly 275,000 fewer victims compared to a year ago.

"These increased security screenings are invisible to most taxpayers," John Koskinen, IRS Chief said. "But we want people to be aware we are taking additional steps to protect taxpayers from identity theft, and that sometimes means the real taxpayers face a slight delay in their refunds."

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But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness
like an everflowing stream. - Amos 5:24

opinion

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Finding Happiness in a New Year



**CLINT
DECKER**

President and Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.

hopefortoday

This year an estimated 139 million Americans will do some type of New Year's resolution. That is about half of our nation. By June, 92% will have failed, leaving only 8% to celebrate victory.

A resolution is a statement of purpose backed up with an initial resolve to make a change like "I make a resolution to lose 25 pounds this year." They typically cover areas like our health, finances or relationships.

Why do we do them, especially if the majority of us fall short? Likely, it is something deeper than the resolution

itself. One driver could be a lack of satisfaction. When someone looks at different areas of their life, they might not like what they see. As a result, they might think "If I can just get this mountain of debt paid off I'll be able to breathe," while another says to themselves, "If we can just turn our marriage around that'll make all the difference."

With that in mind, consider this statement from author and motivational speaker, Stephen Shapiro. After reviewing the data from a major research project he said, "People who achieve their resolutions every year are NO happier than those who do not set resolutions or who are unsuccessful in achieving them."

Wow! What a mind-blowing finding. What is the deeper motivation in setting your resolution or goal? Is the focus just to lose the weight or do you think it will bring greater happiness or satisfaction to your life? Consider this - if we believe that working hard on the outside of our lives is going to change the



inside, we will be sadly disappointed.

When we achieve what we set out for, yes, we will be happy for a moment or a brief season of time, but then it will wear off. Eventually we will be right back where we started. Honestly, are the changes you want deeper than just your health, finances or relationships?

The Scriptures say, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death" (Proverbs 14:12). This is saying, "I am going to look for happiness here and there, but when I get there

I find it is only a vapor - emptiness."

Where do we find the answers to the deep things of the heart and soul? Where do we find meaning, happiness and satisfaction? They are found in Jesus. In Him we will find all we need. You will get temporary happiness in your resolutions, but you will find lasting peace through Jesus.

Clint Decker is President & Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.
cdecker@greatawakenings.org

letter to the editor

The Anthem, the Flag, and the Nation

Certain things should have been taught when you are young. There is a proper etiquette in a cultured society that all enlightened people must follow in order to remain civilized. To turn your back on such propriety is to turn your back on civility.

The people of a nation are expected to respect their own flag. The people of a nation are expected to stand (if able) and put their hand over their heart when their own national anthem is played. As a courtesy, foreign nationals would stand during a foreign anthem just as a show of respect. We are talking about civilized people.

Why?

The obvious response most people would answer is the military. These men and women of the armed forces have sacrificed their lives for their country. They fight and have fought, they bleed and have bled, and many die and have died for this nation. They paid the price for our rights, a debt paid for in blood. For that reason alone, we should stand for the anthem out of respect to these men and women. That's not why I stand?

The why for what the citizen soldier serves is the reason why we stand for our anthem.

Each flag, each anthem represents the whole nation. It represents the fat cat on Wall Street as much as it represent the minimum wage burger flipper at McDonald's. It represents the farmer and programmer. It represents the artist and the engineer. It represents the corrupt politicians as much as the patriot who gives all for his country. It represents you and me.

"But you don't understand, there's a lot a bad



stuff in America," is the argument. For every Trail of Tears there is and an Oregon Trail. Every nation is made up of imperfect people, yet our founders formulated a form of government that has been the best form of manmade governance in the history of the world. The Jim Crow laws could not defeat the Constitution.

Every nation has its negatives, but no nation can claim as many positives as our great nation. In fact, many nations have had the similar negatives except they have been far worse. Slavery still exist in many nations of Africa and Asia. Those same nations are rampant with racism and religious intolerance.

Yet the finger keeps being pointed at our nation which sins are minor compared to the atrocities committed in countries like China, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, etc. Many who suffer under this tyranny would look at us in confusion at our (from their point of view) laughable definitions of injustice. They live in true fear. They live under true suppression. They understand the value of how great our nation is.

The anthem and the flag should never be politicized. It's not about a point of view. It's

not about making a point. It's about us. When you decide to not stand (if you are able to) for our anthem, you disrespect a nation; and not just any nation, but the greatest nation on earth. You disrespect the likes of Jesse Owens, the Jim Thorpe, and the Jackie Robinsons (all men who have suffered true injustice). You disrespect the likes of Booker T Washington, Frederick Douglas, George Washington Carver. You disrespect the likes of Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and the Wright Brothers. You disrespect Washington, the Adams, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Jefferson. I realize that many of these men have been devalued, but their greatness has allowed us freedom.

Most importantly by not standing for the anthem, you have to understand if you are an American, they disrespect you. That may not be their intention, but disrespect whether on purpose or not is still disrespect. It's a sad state if you do not get offended by some overpaid athletes (paid by you) who willfully and possibly ignorantly disrespect you.

Your nation matters.

- George Felieu

Hillsong pastor shares with Oprah

Mark Ellis | Assist News

[Editor's Note: In 2008, Metro Voice, along with several other Christian newspapers across North America, commissioned an investigative article exploring the faith of Oprah Winfrey titled: "Oprah's God. Entertainment Mogul Raises Questions About 'many paths' to God". Because of Oprah's public spiritual search and proclivity for New Age gurus as guests on her TV show, we thought it was important to learn what she believed and what she wanted her viewers to believe. The story won awards and received national coverage on cable television and major publications. Now, 10 years later, in an interview with Hillsong pastor Carl Lentz, we have an opportunity to check in on the spiritual journey of America's most influential personality.]

Her cultural and spiritual influence on America is immense. As the richest self-made woman in the U.S., her spiritual path veering into New Age influences has received sharp criticism from some Christians. But in a rather deep discussion with Hillsong's pastor in NYC, nothing was held back as he boldly declared the need to put Jesus first.

The 41-minute program with Pastor Carl Lentz on Super Soul Sunday, Oprah's self-help TV show designed to let viewers "awaken to their best selves." The show has featured an eclectic mix of prominent people, including Maya Angelou, Elie Wiesel, Ram Dass, and Marianne Williamson.

It seems a close friend of Oprah had talked up Hillsong's 8,000-member community in the heart of Manhattan and extolled its rock star pastor who preaches in nightclubs and theaters across the city.

Lentz began by telling Oprah his core mission is soul transformation. "If you get your soul right, your behavior will change," he noted. "This is not behavior modification. You can change your behavior and still have a rotten soul."

Oprah said she was struck by the fact that his approach de-emphasized "religion" in favor of a relationship with God.

He told her he didn't have the power to transform anyone. "People waste so much time doing it in their own strength and they can't figure out why it's not working," he noted.

"If you allow God, if you will bow your knee... admit your need of God and if you do that... there is a moment where repentance matters," he said. Lentz said it's important to "hand over the keys" to God and let him drive your life, because "God can drive better than you can."

While Lentz directed his remarks generally to viewers, his message also seemed pointed at Oprah herself. He said salvation begins with looking in the mirror and saying, "All right, I'm not going to make it, I can't do enough, God I need you."

"In that moment I believe there's a rescue, a salvation, that you can't counterfeit any other way."

Oprah asked if he believes only Christians can be in relationship with God.

"No, I believe that when Jesus said, 'I am the Way the Truth and the Life,' the way I read that is Jesus said he is the road marker. He is the map, so I think God loves people so much that whether they accept or reject him he is still gracious, He is still moving, He is still giving you massive red blinking lights for chances to take a right turn if maybe you've taken a left."

Lentz said at the core of the Gospel message there is love. "If you take the love out of it you have a moral book. The love is what makes it different. That's a message America is missing."

Lentz said people's behavior patterns are secondary to knowing Jesus. "Do you know who Jesus is, do you know how much he loves you, do you know what he's done?"

He said if you resolve God's revelation about Jesus the way you treat people will inevitably change.

Oprah recalled her own uncomfortable moments growing up in the church, when she felt embarrassed to attend because she saw herself as a sinner. She also described going through a hurtful church split and how it turned her off that people talked about love but couldn't seem to reconcile with each other.

"Church sometimes is a barrier to God when it's supposed to be a conduit," Lentz admitted. "People tell me they tried church and it didn't work for them. I always say I hope people didn't get in the way of you having a relationship



Pastor Carl Lentz with Oprah Winfrey

with the supernatural God."

Oprah asked Lentz if he preaches from the Bible.

"That's all we got!" he exclaimed. "People ask if we are a hip, cool church. I tell them we're preaching an ancient Word, the Gospel is timeless, it's old, it doesn't need a remix, it doesn't need to have a publicist, or be made trendy?"

"When were you able to align with the Jesus you know now as opposed to the Jesus you grew up hearing about?" Oprah asked.

He said at 18 or 19 he got to a point when he couldn't continue without Jesus. He was playing basketball at North Carolina University and came to the conclusion that his life was empty and that his actions had been hurting people around him.

"I got to a point where the grace of God opened up my eyes. You have to make a decision to accept or reject the truth you see. I still believe the number one question people have to answer is who is Jesus?"

"I was just going to ask that," Oprah replied. "You read my mind. Who is Jesus?"

"He is God. He is everything. He is the answer," Lentz replied. "He is the sacrifice, the atonement. He is the Way in. I know people who think Jesus was a good guy, a moralist. I don't see Jesus like that. I see Jesus as salvation because I read things in the Bible that demanded a verdict."

"Jesus said I am the Way, the Truth, the Life and that's why the Gospel confuses people. It is still the good news but it begins with bad news, which is, we're all in trouble, we're in a burning house."

Oprah admitted people must choose a path of light or darkness. "Jesus came to say, 'I'm going to show you the way, this is how you do it, right?'" she asked. "You've said Jesus is your role model, but even the Old Testament? Come on..."

Lentz said the entire Scripture is "a love letter" if read in context. "If somebody says in Exodus it says this... I always say if you walked into a movie and you saw minute 22 of the movie and then you walked out and built a life on it, you would be an idiot."

Oprah acknowledged the Bible reflects the time in which it was written.

"Absolutely!" Lentz said. "The cross is right in the middle of it; the Old Testament shines a light on the need of who Jesus is. Jesus is active in the Old Testament."

Oprah mentioned one of several stumbling blocks for her in the Scripture. "Segregationists used 'slaves love your masters' to justify slavery. If you only pick out a line..." Oprah said.

"We'll be in trouble," Lentz replied. "For Christians who like to camp in one passage, I always say be consistent in your hypocrisy."

Oprah said her understanding of the Holy Spirit is that it's "a thing, a power, a force... I call it divine energy and I also call it the Holy Spirit."

Lentz said he believes people have hijacked terms like energy, faith, and trust, and given them their own definitions. He said he could accept Oprah's term, "divine energy."

Oprah said she has experienced this "divine energy." She said her favorite Bible verse is Acts 17:28: "for in Him we live and move and have our being." Oprah said that in any instance where she feels anxiety, Maya Angelou taught her to use that verse as her mantra.

"I would say that all day and I would be in a peaceful space," she affirmed.

Lentz told her his mantra is from Ephesians: "God is

■ Please see OPRAH page 15



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RESPECT FOR LIFE



RUN FOR LIFE

continued from page 1

life movement in fifth grade when my teacher taught me that life begins at conception," she explained. "I've always been passionate about it, but I had no idea how to get plugged in to help. As a sophomore in college, I felt led by God to do a run across the U.S. I like running and I did a half marathon as a junior. I ended up deciding to wait until I graduated college before doing it and we spent the next two years planning it out."

Anna started her run on July 23, 2016, with no money, no vehicle and a small team to go with her, including her brother Nicholas (who works as a co-runner and trainer), her sister Sarah-Marie Hoduski as their web manager and her friend Megan Maier as project manager.

They have covered 800 miles so far, starting at the Kansas/Missouri border

(where Anna and her family are from) and heading to Los Angeles.

Anna runs 15 miles a day at least, then takes note of where she stops once they are done for the day.

The next morning, she starts at the exact same spot and continues her trek. Thursdays and Sundays are used to rest and speak at churches. She also does speaking engagements at schools and other organizations throughout the week. Once they arrive in Los Angeles, they'll take a break for a couple weeks and start back in Kansas City, heading to Washington, D.C.

Anna's favorite part in doing her run so far has been seeing people helping out in their community. "When I'm done speaking, I see people realize how big a deal it [abortion] is and how it needs to change," she said. "But I don't leave them helpless,

"...if you just save one life in your lifetime, that is a miracle."

I work to put the hope back in their heart. People will get excited and want to get involved, but they don't know how to turn their passion into action. That's where they can help at pregnancy centers, whether through donations or even as being client advocates."

One goal is to encourage people to connect with their local pregnancy centers. "They are the boots on the ground, day in and day out fighting for kids and their families," she said.

"They see the decisions that parents make about their babies every day. To

help them is the most effective, practical way to get involved [with the pro-life movement]."

But what Anna really wants to leave people with as she runs on from city to city is that it is so easy to get involved, not only in the pro-life movement but in helping new families.

"...if you just save one life in your lifetime, that is a miracle," she said. "Laws need to change ... but you can do your part in your community, whether it be donating diapers or volunteering.

"People think that they have to do a big run like this to make a difference and I say, 'no, God called me to do the run. God can use you in a different way, no matter how big or small.'"

For more information and to learn how you can support Anna and her team, visit Projectiflife.org or search



Anna and her brother, Nick, begin each morning with prayer and the road before them.

@Projectiflife on social media.

—reprinted with permission from montrosemirror.com

MARCH FOR LIFE

continued from page 1

St. Joseph Diocese to participate in the annual March for Life demonstration in Washington, D.C. Fahlstrom attended the rally in 2007 and again in 2012.

The march – which draws hundreds of thousands of pro-life supporters from around the country – begins at the National Mall and meanders through the streets of Washington, D.C., and is aimed to raise awareness of the pro-life message.

"When we got to the Supreme Court building, there were hundreds of women holding signs that said 'I regret my abortion,'" Fahlstrom recalled. "That just broke my heart."

Fahlstrom and other delegates from the local diocese rode on a charter bus to Washington. She enjoyed spending 24 hours on a bus with her sisters in Christ.

"It was more like a pilgrimage," Fahlstrom said. "We prayed, we said a rosary. There were educational films."

For Fahlstrom, the most rewarding part of the whole experience was listening to the speakers at the National Mall at the pre-march rally. The speakers ranged from legislators to women who have suffered abortions.

The pre-March rally is something Mary Kay Culp, director of Kansans for Life, enjoys. She attended the rally last year so she could see Gov. Sam Brownback, R-Kansas, receive an award for passing pro-life legislation.

"The Kansas folks always make it a point to be at the front of the rally,"

Culp said.

An important part of the pro-life movement – one most people don't consider – is the pain an abortion causes the mother. And for Culp, the March is about more than saving babies.

"We all owe the women of America an apology for letting them believe abortion is liberating when, in fact, it sets a burden on their shoulders for the rest of their lives," Culp said. "A lot of people don't know how much we care about that issue. They think that we just love babies."

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart."

Jeremiah 1:5



Culp enjoys seeing how many youth are involved in the movement. During the 2016 march – when Washington was caught in a blizzard – some student made an alter out of snow and held mass. "Our young people are strongly pro-life. To see it is really encouraging," Culp said.

One such young person is Emma Widaman of Pleasant Hill, Mo. Widaman attended the march with her mother six years ago – when she was just a freshman in high school.

She had been attending youth group with a friend where they discussed sex trafficking and abortion.

Widaman said she felt like the Lord laid those two issues on her heart.

"I really felt convicted that I would be involved in both of those later in

my life," Widaman said.

Widaman is now seeking a nursing degree in hopes of using her education to help in that realm. Widaman's parents encouraged her to get involved in the movement and have her voice heard.

"It was crazy," Widaman recalled. "It was crowded with people. It was awesome because you know all the people around you are like-minded."

Widaman recalled how videos of abortions were being played during the rally – showing the graphic images of abortion and what it does to the mother – let a lone child.

"It made it so real that these are real lives they are murdering," Widaman said.

Overall, the three women believe their voices were heard.

"You're adding to the crowd," Widaman said.

"Your prayers and your support matter in the spiritual world."

For Culp the rally serves as a way to remind the other side the pro-life movement is not going away.

"Every few years someone declares the movement dead," Culp said. "Even though I know they're completely wrong, it's still gratifying."

Culp has met pro-life supporters from Ireland, France, England. Even a few celebrities like Kelsey Grammer.

For Fahlstrom, she was honored to lend her voice to something she believes in so strongly.

"Just the fact that I was able to go and say 'I'm against this,'" Fahlstrom said. "And it's the fact that we have the right in this country to stand up and say 'this is wrong.'"

The Challenge of Being a "Respect Life Christian"

In probably no other area of life are Christians as counter-cultural as we are in the area of respecting the dignity and worth of human life. The culture in which we live was described aptly by Pope John Paul II as a "culture of death." By this he meant that our cultural norms accept war, starvation, poverty, lack of freedoms, abortion on demand, capital punishment, euthanasia and countless other affronts to human life and dignity as normal. It is, also, very clear that today we cannot depend upon either law or custom to reflect the fact that our country grew out of a Christian worldview and set of Christian principles. These are enshrined in our Constitution, Bill of Rights and other foundational documents.

Even though it might not be true for long, our currency still proclaims the original spirit that "In God We Trust." We stand out, however, as Christians in a secular, anti-spiritual, materialistic and hostile culture that would like to marginalize us and our faith as a quaint story that once made life easier to bear. While we do not have to undergo martyrdom in a Roman coliseum today, we do have to suffer the cynicism, hostility and ill-informed rantings of newspaper and television editorials.

In the face of all of this, it is critical that we make clear our stand for life and freedom. We believe that all human life is a sacred expression of the love and creativity of God. We believe that as such all-human life deserves protection, nurturance and the right to thrive. For us, no human life is without value or unworthy of societal status and reverence. Beginning with the foundational right to life, we also fight for basic rights of healthcare, education, employment, freedom

from racism and prejudice and for freedoms of religious practice. Our systems of education, healthcare and charity embody and express our core respect-life commitments. To treat these core ministries of our church as mere "social services" that can be defined and managed by government rules and regulations is a particularly odious attack upon our rights and respect life principles.

Misinterpretations of the "separation of religion from the state" or the "sacred from the secular" that would seek to justify intrusion upon religious liberty need to be exposed for the fictions that they are.

It is our responsibility as Christians to express our respect for human life in our own behaviors, in our public activism and through the ballot box. Life in a democracy respects diversity and freedom and works for the common good. At times we must express our beliefs assertively as in the "March For Life," letter writing, phone calls and personal visits to legislators. It is also important that we pray and show active spiritual and material concern for all the citizens of our country, especially the most vulnerable and at-risk among us.

To be counter-cultural and to stand out is not such a bad place to be. We can be a fulcrum for change, a haven for growing the most human of all emotions and attachments: to life and to its enhancement. We believe in a beautiful and "seamless garment" of respect-life commitments.

As "respect-life" Christians, we are making and can make even more of a difference in our country. We just need to be courageous and persistent so that our voices are never silent.

—Msgr. Michael D. McGraw

The Judas Connection

by Kay Lyn Carlson

Story after story, you can hear post-abortive women say, "They told me it was a blob of tissue, a cluster of cells, a product of conception. I didn't know it was a baby!"

That's how it was for me.

It was the denial I needed to hear to rationalize my decision to go through with the abortion. Removing a "blob" didn't seem as bad as aborting a child. Deep inside, however, I knew that whatever its form, it was an innocent baby.

Seven years after my abortion, when I became pregnant with my daughter, Emily, I had an ultrasound.

I saw the truth.

I saw a baby – arms, legs, fingers, toes, a face and a heartbeat.

"Oh look, she's waving at you!" the sonographer exclaimed.

Shocked, I wanted to bolt. Run away. Escape to anywhere! But where? I couldn't get away from myself.

Sadly, of all the characters in the Bible, the person I can relate to the most is Judas Iscariot. As one of the twelve disciples, Judas betrayed Jesus by offering His innocent blood to the chief priest and elders in exchange for thirty silver coins.

Matthew 27: 1-4 – "When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said "for I have betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility."

So, Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself."

Similarities between Judas and me include:

1) We were both traumatized ("seized with remorse") by the realization of betraying innocent blood.

2) We ran from the truth. I wore a mask that said "everything is fine, no problem here."

3) We both wanted to die. Although I never seriously contemplated suicide, I did want to die. I even prayed to God to take my life because I could not live with the pain any longer.

Unfortunately, my story is not unique: Getting pregnant, in crises, and having the typical feelings associated with an unplanned pregnancy – fear of:

• **The future** – how would I make ends meet? Go to college? Have a career? Would anyone want to marry me?

• **My reputation** – I was popular, prideful, still in high school, and feared the judgment.

• **Rejection** – I was told that if I got myself pregnant that I would be "kicked out of the house so fast..." (later to learn, this was just a threat and not true).

• **Judgment** – "What would the neighbors think?" was the mantra growing up. I wanted to save myself and my family the embarrassment.

My reaction after the abortion is typical as well. It's incredible how many women share their abortion story after hearing mine. They nod their heads in agreement when I speak about the depression, trauma, horror, nightmares, wanting to die and feeling like a murderer, etc.

According to Alliance for Post-



Abortion Research & Training, the specific mental health disorders that have been found to be associated with elective abortion include substance abuse, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.

"Using a nationally representative data set, women who had an abortion, compared to women who did not report one or more, had an increased risk for experiencing: PTSD (95%), Agoraphobia with or without Panic Disorder (124%), Agoraphobia without Panic Disorder (132%), Alcohol Abuse with or without dependence (105%), Alcohol Dependence (134%), Drug Abuse with or without dependence (70%), and Major Depression with hierarchy (42%)." For additional research information, go to www.standapart.org.

Abortion no doubt can cause your overall well-being (biological, psychological, social and spiritual) to be disrupted and recovery is essential for restoration and wholeness to occur.

As for the spiritual recovery, the vast difference between Judas and me is how we chose to deal (or not) with the sin in our lives. Judas chose to run away from God and I, eventually, chose to run toward Him. I accepted His grace that He offers through his son, Jesus Christ. I had always believed in Jesus Christ, I just didn't believe he would forgive me for my abortion. The shedding of innocent blood felt like an unforgivable sin.

Today, I understand that any sin mankind wants pardon for is forgivable. To believe otherwise may eventually even be considered blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Judas could have been forgiven if he would have humbled himself and asked. God doesn't make it hard to forgive sin; we do because of our pride.

John 3:17 – "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

Grief can still tug at my heart, but I know there will be a day when "God will wipe away every tear from our eyes" (Rev. 7:17) and we will be reunited with our loved ones soon.

Kay Lyn Carlson, LMSW, specializes in post-abortion recovery. She can be reached at (785) 640-0567 or emailed at kcarlson20@cox.net.

ABORTIONS IN AMERICA

A look at the issue by facts and figures

INCIDENCE OF ABORTION

• A total of 699,202 abortions were reported to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for 2012, the most recent year numbers are available. (Reporting is voluntary and not 100%.)

• In 2012, the total number of abortions decreased by 4.3% over 2011 numbers. In 2011, the total number of abortions decreased by 5% over 2010 numbers.

• The Associated Press reported in June 2015 that nationwide the number of abortions decreased by an average 12% since 2010.

• CDC showed that 3,988,076 babies were born in the U.S. in 2014, the most recent year numbers are available.

• In the United States, about half of all pregnancies are unintended.

• Of all unintended pregnancies, 4 in 10 are aborted.

• Twenty-one percent of all pregnancies in the U.S. end in abortion (not including natural miscarriages).(2011 numbers)

• There has been a steady decline in abortions since 1980.

• Each year, about 1.7% of all women aged 15-44 have an abortion.

• Of the women obtaining abortions in any given year, about half of them have had at least one previous abortion.

• By age 45, one third of American women will have had at least one abortion, although this figure is now in dispute and may be much lower.

• Some 1.06 million abortions were performed in 2011, down from 1.21 million abortions in 2008, a decline of 13%.

• The U.S. abortion rate in 2011 was 13.9 abortions per 1,000, down from 19.4 per 1,000 in 2008.

• 88.7% of all abortions take place by the twelfth week of pregnancy.

• 12% of abortions in the U.S. occurred in teenagers.

WHY WOMEN GET ABORTIONS

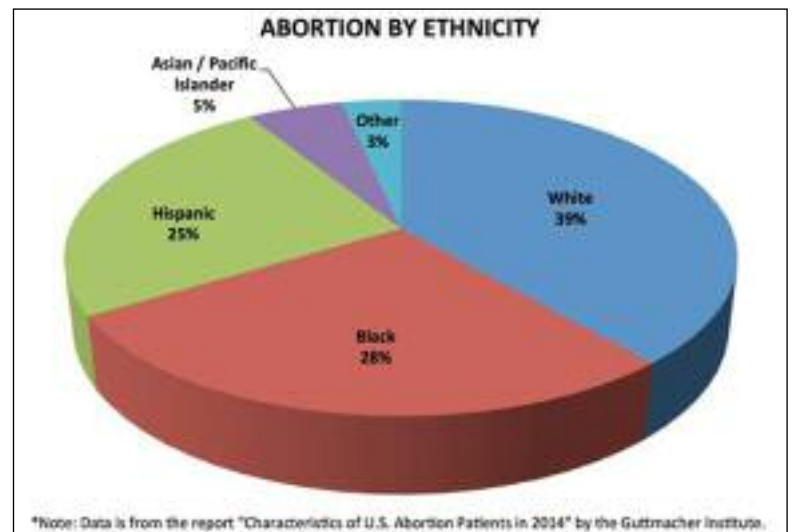
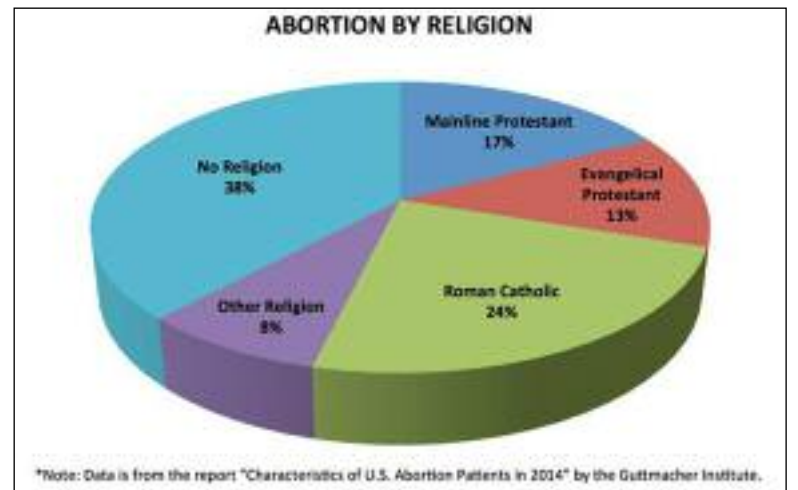
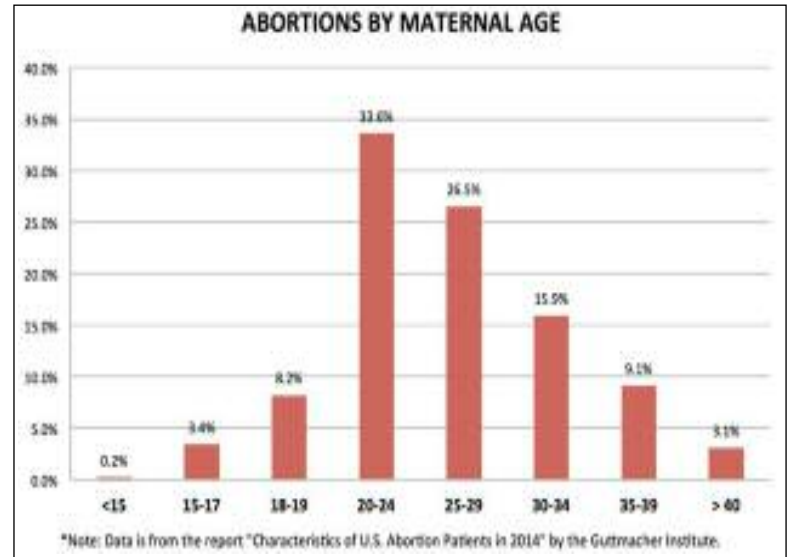
• Some 1.06 million abortions were performed in 2011, down from 1.21 million abortions in 2008, a decline of 13%.

• Women who have never been married account for one-third of abortions in America.

• Less than 1% of all abortions take place because of rape and/or incest.

• Women give an average of 3.7 reasons why they are seeking an abortion including the following:

- 21% Inadequate finances
- 21% Not ready for responsibility
- 16% Woman's life would be changed too much
- 12% Relationships, unmarried
- 11% Too young and/or immature
- 8% Children are grown; she has all she wants



- % Baby has possible health probs.
- <1% Pregnancy caused by rape/incest
- 4% Other

are unintended, while that number is 54% among Hispanics and 40% of pregnancies among whites.

ABORTIONS BY RACE

• Blacks comprise only 13% of the population of America but account for 28% of all abortions.

- Black women are five times more likely to abort than white women.
- 69% of pregnancies among blacks

• Planned Parenthood, the largest seller of abortions in the United States, has located 80% of its abortion clinics in minority neighborhoods, disproportionately targeting minorities for abortion.

For more info, read the report: "Racial Profiling and Population Control," by Mark Crutcher, Life Dynamics

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Nation elects pro-life prez: Kansas budget woes affect pro-life bills

By Kathy Ostrowski
Kansans for Life Legislative Director

After a November presidential election which developed into a national referendum on abortion, pro-lifers can share a collective “whew!”

For the first time ever, political parties and their presidential candidates publicly staked out totally opposite positions—unlike previous elections, in which most candidates tried to minimize their positions on controversial issues. Hillary Clinton made abortion-on-demand a cornerstone issue of her 2016 campaign: abortion available to everyone at any time up until delivery, and at taxpayer’s expense!

In addition, in spite of the national furor over the sale of aborted baby parts to the highest bidder, Clinton wanted to expand taxpayer funding to America’s largest abortion provider, Planned Parenthood.

Trump spoke with passionate opposition to late-term abortion and promised to put pro-life candidates on the U.S.

Supreme Court and defund Planned Parenthood. He eked out a victory in state after state, effectively turning all but the states in the Northeast and West Coast bright red.

Back in Kansas, which has been leading the nation in pro-life laws, elections turned a bit backwards, with 23 lawmakers retiring in May and 27 pro-lifers losing their primary or general election. While the pro-life majorities in both chambers are holding, there has been an influx of state reps and senators elected primarily to “fix” school funding and tax receipt deficits.

Despite a very successful educational campaign to ‘Not Retain’ Judges on the State Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, they all kept their jobs.

However, the liberal, pro-abortion judges we targeted (who received 76-84 % approval in past elections) barely survived at 55% support (they needed 50%). The three judges supported by Kansans for Life each received 115,000 more votes than any of the others.

The 2016 state legislature was a victim



“Simon’s Law” to protect parental rights, is promoted by the Crosier family, shown here with baby Simon before his untimely death

of the focus on budget issues, and the session was abruptly shortened by a few weeks to save on expenses. This damaged Kansans for Life’s push to enact Simon’s Law, and after passage in the Senate 37-3, we ran out of time to move it through the House.

Under Simon’s Law, “Do Not Resuscitate” (DNR) orders on children will be barred unless the parents give permission. Shocking testimony revealed that infants and even older children suffering chromosomal abnormalities have been denied life-sustaining treatment due to physician bias against their “quality of life.”

Parents found out too late —after their child died —that “DNR” orders were ordered without their knowledge or consent. This session, we will bring back the bill for consideration.

Kansas did enact two pro-life laws:

- 1) The very popular budget prioritization of Title X “reproductive service” federal money. This is funding that Planned Parenthood used to get, but now goes to full-service public clinics and hospitals.
- 2) A ban on midwives in independent practice from performing abortions. People were shocked to learn that midwives were on staff at abortion clinics.

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Topeka, Kansas Monday, Jan. 23rd

Rally, Learn, Pray & March for Life!

When we became the first state to ban dismemberment abortions, one Kansas judge stopped the ban. That ruling is now under appeal to the KS Supreme Court. We hoped to get enough Kansans to vote not to retain the liberal members of that court. We came close: only 55% of Kansans voted to retain them, but to succeed we needed to push their votes under 50%. We’re not finished! JOIN US at the Kansas Capitol in Topeka on January 23rd to discover how you can help!

8:30 AM **REGISTRATION** - Location this year for registration/donuts/exhibit booths, as well as workshops, will be in the downstairs Capitol’s Visitor Center inside the North Entrance, NOT, as before, on the first floor rotunda. Enjoy donuts, visit booths, drop off donated baby items, pick up legislator room lists, etc.

9:00 - NOON **LOBBY** - Take a tour, watch KS House in action, and other activities to be announced. Info at registration.

9:00 - 10:00 **WORKSHOPS** - Location: Rooms 3 & 4 North, Capitol Visitor’s Ctr., basement level, North Capitol Entrance.
Room 3 North: Denial of care at the beginning and end of life, by Kathy Ostrowski, KFL Legislative Director
Room 4 North: How activist Courts Harm Kansas Pro-life Laws by Jeanne Gawdun and Mary Kay Culp

10:00 - 11:00 **WORKSHOPS REPEATED**

11:00 - 12:30 **CATHOLIC MASS** - Topeka Performing Arts Center Auditorium (TPAC) --see map below.

11:30 - 12:30 **EVANGELICAL PRAYER SERVICE** - Room 4 North, Capitol Visitor’s Ctr., basement level. With Topeka Pastor David Epps, director of Billy Graham ministry in Kansas

12:30 - 12:45 **MARCH FROM TPAC TO SOUTH CAPITOL STEPS LED BY THE KANSAS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**

11:30 - 2:30 **LUNCH** - Mater Dei-Assumption Church basement. Lunch available for free will donation, or bring your own.

12:45 - 1:15 **RALLY FOR LIFE** on the south Capitol steps featuring:
Governor Sam Brownback, introduction of pro-life legislators by David Gittrich, and more.

1:30 - 2:30 PM **WORKSHOPS** - Location: Rooms 3 & 4 North, Capitol Visitor’s Ctr., basement level, North Capitol Entrance.
Room 3 and 4 North: Subjects to be announced

6th Avenue					I N T E R S T A T E 7 0		
Lunch: Mater Dei Assumption Church Basement		TPAC					
8th Avenue							
H A R R I S O N	North Capitol Entrance		J A C K S O N	K A N S A S		Q U I N C Y	
	<p>12:45 RALLY</p>						M O N R O E
	South Capitol Steps						9th
10th Avenue							

Capitol Entrance:

Enter on North side only. There is a drive for drop offs.

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Coronado Parking Garage: Quincy btw 9th & 10th.

Emergency Numbers for KFL Personnel:
(785) 383-8636 and (913) 406-4446;

For late-breaking info and updates go to the KFL Facebook page: [Kansans for Life](#); KFL web site: [www.kfl.org](#); or TW: [@kansansforlife](#)

Family values, Fifth Commandment show why we are pro-life

Not to mention respect for the Lord's gift of life

Family values become such only as they are owned and shared by husband and wife, passed along intentionally to children, reinforced by siblings and grandparents, applied to concrete issues and decisions, practiced in the lifestyle of the family.

It is not enough to pay lip service to a traditional, Judeo-Christian ethic - whatever that means. It is not enough to call oneself conservative, mouth all the politically correct positions of a so-called "moral majority," and express appropriate horror at what has happened to values in America. Values are convictions made practical. They are personal principles applied to real issues. They are the consistent expression of what you are and believe, in actions as well as words. Values are woven into the fabric of your being. They frame your window on life. They trigger your response to situations.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in the issues of life which God addresses in his Fifth Commandment, "Thou shall not kill." We are a society confused over the issues of life, from genetic engineering to living wills. We are a society driven by issues of health, traumatized by news-cameras' images of death, challenged by the problems of aging. But more than anything, we are a society in search of reasons for living. That calls for something beyond public opinion and pious platitudes. That calls for a clear and consistent life ethic from God to guide us into "Lasting Values For Every Family."

Let us state, before elaborating, three simple "Life Principles:" Life is FROM God. Life is UNDER God. Life is FOR God.

It makes a huge difference how one views the origin and source of life. If life is no more than the serendipitous conse-

quence of evolution, it has no meaning or value apart from the biological system and physical universe of which it is an inconsequential part. If life has no Creator, then it has no Ruler. In short, life has no objective values if secular humanism and biological evolution explain life. The loss of values in contemporary western civilization is no mystery.

By stark contrast Christianity asserts that life is from God. He is its creator, not simply in some general sense, but the creator of all life and each life. Listen to Psalm 139: "You, Lord, created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made...All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Because God is the creator of life, each life has intrinsic value. Your life is precious because God made you. Not what you're like or what you can do to establish your worth. God has already done that. And when you have grasped that truth of God for yourself, you will begin to understand the value God has placed on every other human being created specifically by Him.

The principle that life is from God has another important implication. If God alone creates life, then God alone has the right to terminate life. Because He is the Ruler of life, He makes the rules that govern life.

Life is also under God. He is no mere transcendent deity, uninvolved and disinterested in the lives of those he has made. He didn't pass laws of nature and retire from his legislative office. God has an active role in life in general, and in your life in particular. In Psalm 75, the Author of Life writes, "I choose the appointed time; it is I who judge uprightly." Some



times in your life are hard and some times are happy, but all the time your life is in God's hands.

Some people's lives are described by illness and incapacity, by poverty and oppression; but nobody's life is defined by its condition. The so-called quality of life is simply a flawed human effort at quantifying and categorizing the blessings of God upon life. Life is not less because God allows physical, psychological or socioeconomic suffering.

That life is under God assures also that life is in God's care. "The eyes of all look to you, O Lord, and you give them their food at the proper time," the psalmist David

affirms. "You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made.

Because we exist for God, it is also true that God establishes the values for our life. He determines what is right and wrong, good and bad, important or insignificant. He establishes priorities and principles for living life. In fact, he IS the priority that fixes the value of all the rest of life. The prophet Isaiah used a potter and pottery to illustrate the point.

We pots exist to serve the potter according to how he designed us to serve. If one is a cup, one acts like a cup not a vase. If one is storage jar, one holds what the potter stores in us rather than wishing to be a plate. He who made us not only establishes our value, but our values thereby.

Three biblical principles: Life is FROM God, UNDER God, and FOR God.

Jesus shapes our values in the issue of life, because as Colossians 3 says it, "JESUS IS OUR LIFE."

—by Pastor Paul Kelm

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THE BERRYTON PICKERS - First Sat. of ea. month, 7-9pm, Berryton Baptist Church. Bring snacks, have fun!

THE WRIGHTS - Jan. 1, 11am, Kansas Ave. UMC, 1029 N. Kansas Ave. 289-8905. thewrightministries.com

JAM4DAN X 2017 - Jan. 13-15, The Celtic Fox, 118 SW 8th. 3-day music benefit honors Dan Falley & raises scholarship funds to give youth an opportunity to further their musical studies. Fri. 5:30pm to 2am; Sat. 11:30am to 2am; Sun. 12pm to 11pm. For info: Facebook @Jam4Dan or Jam4Dan.com/j4dx

THE WRIGHTS - Jan. 15, 5pm, Berryton Baptist, 6741 SE Berryton Rd. 289-8905. thewrightministries.com

THE WRIGHTS - Jan. 22, 9:30am, Oakland UMC, 801 NE Chester. 289-8905. thewrightministries.com

2017 WINTER JAM/JAM NATION - Jan. 29, 6pm. Sprint Center, 1407 Grand Blvd., KCMO. Crowder, Britt Nicole, Tenth Avenue North, Andy Mineo, Colton Dixon, Thousand Foot Krutch and NewSong. A pre-jam party will feature artists OBB, Sarah Reeves and Steve Malcolm. Sadie Robertson, from "Duck Dynasty," and Tony Nolan also will make appearances. Cost is \$10 at the door, no advance tickets. For info: (816) 949-7100 or www.sprintcenter.com or www.jamtour.com.

THE WRIGHTS - Jan. 29, 1:30pm, Heritage Baptist, 801 NE Poplar. 289-8905. thewrightministries.com

SKILLET - Feb. 16, 6:30pm. Midland Theatre, 1228 Main St, KCMO. 816-283-9900.

SPECIAL CHURCH EVENTS

HARVESTER'S PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS - every second Sat., takes place at Christian Lord Ministries, 2421 SE California. Call 266-4979.

FIRST SATURDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET - First Saturday of every month, 7:30-10am. Shawnee Heights United Methodist Church. Free will offering.

FREE WEEKLY COMMUNITY PANCAKE BREAKFAST - Sundays at 10am sharp, at Oakland Church of the Nazarene: 900 block of NE Oakland, followed by church services at 10:45am with Pastor John Menkvelde - which is in turn followed at noon by The Hope House FREE Community Food & Clothing Banks..

BINGO AT FAIRLAWN HEIGHTS ASSISTED LIVING - 3pm, 1st Sat. of ea. month. Facilitator: Pastor Carole

SPIRITUAL PAUSE - Every Wed., 12-12:30pm, Carole Chapel at Washburn Univ. Informal worship service. 785-233-1844

LIFEEST - First Thu. of the month, 10am-12:30pm, Covenant Baptist Church, 5440 SW 37th St. Seniors

ministering to seniors - celebrating with fellowship, fun, food, learning & entertainment. Potluck lunch at noon. If transportation is needed, call 354-4994 or 478-1729

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM - every Mon., Wed., & Fri., 1:30pm, Rolling Hills Christian Church, 4530 NW Hiawatha Place (US Hwy 75 & NW 46th St.) 785-286-0601 or office@rhctoepka.org

"WATCH NIGHT SERVICES" NEW YEAR'S EVE - Dec. 31, 9:30pm, Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln St. Anyone is welcome! This night, we will continue in reflections of 2016, testimonies, prayer, and praise and worship! Everyone is encouraged to come on out and celebrate our Lord with us, as we "Welcome in the New Year with Great Expectations!" 785-235-1834

HIGH NOON SERVICE - Jan. 1, 12pm, Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln St. Anyone is welcome! We will give God praise as we reflect upon the outgoing year, and prepare spiritually for the upcoming year! There will be praise and worship, and testimonies to the goodness of God throughout 2016. We will pray for the Lord's guidance, grace and mercy as we embark upon our journey in 2017. 785-235-1834

LASER TAG FUNDRAISER - Jan. 2, 3-6pm. Antioch Family Life Center. \$7.50 per game. Concessions.

FIRST WEDNESDAY WESLEY CAFE - Jan. 4, 6-10pm. Susanna Wesley United Methodist Church, 7433 SW 29th St. Smothered Pork chop dinner, sweet potato cakes, quinoa, mashed potato, green beans, dinner roll and bread pudding for dessert, with worship service to follow. For info: 478-3697 or swumc.org

NATIVITY SHOWCASE DISPLAY - Jan. 8, 11:30-2pm, St. Patrick's of Scranton, 302 Boyle St. Come to the beautiful and historical St. Patrick's of Scranton house of worship adorned for Christmas and view many, many Nativity sets Cookies will be served Free will donation accepted. For info: 836-7887

LADIES PRAYER BREAKFAST - Jan. 14, 9-12. Great Commission Baptist Church, 1319 SW Huntoon.

RESOLVE, RENEW, REJOICE! WOMEN'S RETREAT - Jan. 14, 6:30-1. Christ The King Catholic Church. Author Hallie Lord is the keynote speaker. \$20. For tickets and info: ctktopeka.org or 221-8652 or 845-6805

TOPEKA MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP - Jan. 18, 12-1:30pm. First Assembly Church, 500 SW 27th St. Topeka ministers meet every third Wednesday for fellowship, strategy, and prayer.

FUNDRAISING CHILI COOK-OFF - Jan. 21, 1-4pm, Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln St. Bowl of Chili - \$5 Desserts \$1; 3-Samples and a drink - \$5; Each additional sample - \$1. To enter your Chili send an email address - shannon.keys@wichita.edu. Deadline to enter: Jan. 4. For info: 785-235-1834

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

MEDICARE MONDAYS - First Mon. of ea. month, 1-

3pm. Topeka/Sh. Co. Public Library (Menninger Rm 206), 1515 SW 10th. Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging and Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas offers Senior health insurance counseling. For info: 580-4545 or nhol@tsclp.org

ONE-DAY GLEN PENDLAY SEMINAR - Jan. 14, 9am-Jan. 15, 6pm, Lionheart Athletic Performance and Fitness/LH CrossFit, 5602 SW Topeka Blvd. Glen is a level 5 coach, which is the highest accreditation level in the US. Registration is \$200. 785-260-0532

2017 KANSAS WORKFORCE SUMMIT - Jan. 18 & 19, Capital Plaza Hotel and Convention Center. Annual forum for community leaders and chamber representatives, legislators and government officials, employers, educators, and local workforce board members to take action to address the new realities facing the workforce and economic development issues in Kansas. Registration is limited to 300. For info or to register: 3show.com/kWn

DUCK DYNASTY'S ALAN ROBERTSON'S UNCONVENTIONAL BUSINESS - Feb. 2, 6:30pm, OP Convention Center, 6100 College Boulevard, Overland Park, KS. Robertson will share 25 years of practical insight on how to use time tested principles from the Bible to successfully lead in the business world. (913) 645-3320

19th ANNUAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & COLLEGE EXPO - Mar. 4, 10am-2pm. Colonial Presbyterian Church, 9500 Wornall, Kansas City, MO. Sponsored by Metro Voice. 25 K-12 Schools, Homeschool 50 Colleges from 15 States, plus, Free Seminars! 816-524-4522.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

SHEPHERDS CENTER PICKLEBALL GROUP - plays Mondays & Wednesdays. Mondays at Countryside UMC, 32nd & Burlingame, from 3-5. Park on the NORTH side & use the furthest WEST door. Follow the hallway to gym. On Wednesdays at First Baptist, 30th & MacVicar, from 1-3. Park on the WEST side. Gym is right inside the doors. Group Coordinator is Judy Hartegan.

WOW - WORKIN' OUT ON WEDNESDAYS - 5:30 pm every Wed., south steps of the Capitol building. Free, fun and family-friendly. A combination of aerobic & strength training exercises, coupled with a fun line dance to end each experience. www.makinmoves.com

SAFE STREETS COALITION MEETING - First Wed. of the month, 11:45am-1pm. Great Overland Station. For info: 266-4606 or jwilson@safestreets.org

COUNTRY AND BALLROOM DANCING - Thursdays 6-9pm. Croco Hall. Info: Edwina 379-9538 or 478-4760.

SHEPHERDS CENTER LINE DANCING GROUP - meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 2-4:00 at First United Methodist, 6th & Topeka. Park on the WEST side and use the WEST door. Immediately inside, turn left and walk the ramp to the library, then left to the elevator. Push [B] to go to the fellowship hall.

SHEPHERDS CENTER HHHS WALKING GROUP - meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 9:30-11 at HHHS, 21st & Belle. Parking & entrance for walkers is on the WEST side of the building. Walking is done on an inside track. People who would like to walk a shelter dog must have completed an animal handling class that is given periodically at HHHS--arrangements are made through Kelsey Scrinopskie, 233-7325.

NOTO MARKET ON FIRST FRIDAYS - NOTO arts district. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, flea market items.

SAVING DEATH ROW DOGS ADOPTION BOOTH - Every Sat., 11am - 2pm, Petco, 1930 SW Wanamaker

TOPEKA FOLK DANCERS CLASSES - Sundays, 2-4pm, 2637 SE 41st St. Dances from 20 countries. No partners or experience necessary. No fee. 215-0968.

PUBLIC SKATING AT EXPOCENTRE - various dates and times. \$7 admission, \$3 for skates. Check www.ksexpo.com/events for details.

TARC'S WINTER WONDERLAND - Through Dec. 31, 6-10pm. Lake Shawnee. View dazzling holiday light displays, featuring one million lights, while winding through a 2-mile scenic drive. A suggested \$10 donation at the gate or pre-sale tickets are available for \$7 at TARC, Inc., 2701 SW Randolph

TBC LIGHT SHOW - Through Jan. 1, Topeka Bible Church. A free live performance combining talented singers, musicians and a spectacular light display. Our gift to the Topeka community! Live shows at 6, 7, 8, and 9 PM, Fri.-Sun. 12/9-12/11; automated shows at the same times 12/12 thru 1/1.

LMBC NEW YEAR'S DAY RIDE - Jan. 1. This annual ride takes place every year at noon on New Year's Day at the Lawrence River Trails. lawrencemountainbikerclub.org

NEW YEARS DAY RIDE - Jan. 1, 11:30-2pm. Historic Harley-Davidson of Topeka. Coffee, donuts, and cookies

at 11:30. Ride leaves at 1.

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION'S CHILDREN'S PALACE OPEN HOUSE - Jan. 6, 4:30-7:30pm, 601 NW Harrison St. First Friday will mark a time of celebration as they host an official ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony at the Children's Palace. The public is invited to attend the brief ceremony, followed by an open house that runs until 7:30 pm. Guests can tour the facility which will care for up to 124 homeless and formerly homeless children. For info: contact Jessica Hosman at jhosman@trmonline.org or 785.730.8802.

TOPEKA FARM SHOW - Jan. 10-12, Kansas Expocentre. Over 300 exhibitors. Free. 235-1986

HY-VEE SIMPLE FIX - Jan. 12 & 26, 5-7pm. Register by Jan. 8th for the 12th, and by Jan. 22nd for the 26th. For only \$115 and one hour of your time, you can have SEVEN meals ready to serve your family any night of the week. Save time & money because there's no shopping & no cleaning! Each meal serves 4. Choose 5 meals for \$85, 6 meals for \$100, or 7 meals for \$115.

VFW POST #1650 BISCUITS AND GRAVY BREAKFAST - Jan. 14, 7-10am. Phillip Billiard VFW Post 1650, 3110 SW Huntoon. For info: 235-9073

PERSPECTIVES CLASS - Starts Jan. 15, Sundays 6:30-9:30pm, First Southern Baptist Church. Get threaded into the biggest story of all time in this 15-week course. For info: Matt Matheis; 785-230-1449 or [perspec-](http://perspec-tives@gmail.com)

tivesks@gmail.com.

ANYONE CAN COOK - Jan. 20, 4-5 pm, Lingo Story Room, Topeka Library. Kids. For anyone who loves to eat but can't cook. Learn to follow a recipe, plan healthy and delicious meals and snacks and explore different styles of cooking. [All ages]

2017 TOPEKA AND AUBURN HALF-MARATHON AND RELAY - Jan. 21, 10-1pm, Indian Hills Elementary. Run solo or do the 2-person team relay

HISTORIC GRAVEL ROAD RIDE (MULLET RIDE) - Jan. 21, 10am, 6th & High St., Baldwin City. Ride has 28 and 56 mile options, connecting famous historical sites in the area. No cost. www.kansascyclist.com

PHYSICAL FITNESS FOR SENIORS - Jan. 23, 12:30-2pm, Marvin Auditorium 101C, Topeka Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Ave. Join Lorraine Mugler, certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor, as she leads you through her Neurobics program that uses props and classical music to help older adults of all abilities improve their core strength, cognitive and physical fitness, and helps with fall prevention. Free.

KFL RALLY & MARCH FOR LIFE - Jan. 23, 8:30 am-3:30 pm. Capitol Building, Topeka. 44th Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade. For a schedule and updates: www.kfl.org.

NATIONAL MARCH FOR LIFE 2017 - Jan. 27, Washington DC. The Power of One. www.MarchForLife.org.

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2 p.m. Sundays • Suggested donation \$3 adults

A series of talks and dramatic interpretations on the violent territorial and civil war history of Kansas, 1854-1865.

Jan. 29	"Kansas on Appeal: Highlights from 156 years of Sunflower State Advocacy in the Supreme Court of the United States" by Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt, with remarks by Kansas State Archivist Matt Weatch	
Feb. 5	"Ride with the Devil: Hollywood and the Border Wars" by Dr. Carl Graves, historian and educator	
Feb. 12	"Lee and Grant at Appomattox" reenactment by historical performers Randy Durbin as General Grant and Lane Smith as General Lee	
Feb. 19	"Gettysburg, the Spark that Torchied Lawrence" by Dr. Charles E. Heller, retired colonel, historian, author	
Feb. 26	"Guns of Bleeding Kansas" by Pat Donahue, gunsmith, gun historian	
Mar. 5	"Border Agitator, David B. Atchison" by Chris W. Taylor, executive director, Atchison County, Kansas, Historical Society (special appearance by "Senator Atchison")	

ing in Fort Sumner Military Clarke Guards, between 1861-1865; David B. Atchison; 1850; Lawrence Massacre; 1863; Sharps Rifle Manufacturing Company advertising item, circa 1855.

Kansas Historical Society

Constitution Hall State Historic Site
319 Elmore • Lecompton
785-887-6520
conshall@kshs.org • kshs.org

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Jan. 12, 11:30-1 - "POWER Luncheon" at The Peak, 1920 Gage; Catered by Aboud's Music & devotion by Mitch Langley!

RSVP to info@C5Alive.org or call Lee: 785-640-6399

- Feb. 9, 11:30-1, Power Luncheon, Ramada West, 605 SW Fairlawn; Featuring "Matchmaker" Speed Marketing
- Mar. 9, 11:30-1, Power Luncheon,
- Apr. 13, 11:30-1, Power Luncheon,
- Apr. 15 - Easter Fest & Parade

Save the Dates!

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For info: www.C5Alive.org or info@C5Alive.org



JAN 27 THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS, JAN. 27, 7-9PM. KANSAS EXPOCENTRE. FOR INFO CALL 235-1986

HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS - Jan. 27, 7pm. Kansas ExpoCentre. For info: 235-1986
MONSTER BUCK CLASSIC - Jan. 27, 3-9pm. Kansas ExpoCentre. For info: 235-1986
94.5 COUNTRY BRIDAL FAIR - Jan. 28-29, 10am-5pm & noon-4pm. Downtown Topeka Ramada. For info and tickets: bridalfair.94country.com

LAKE DABINAWA GRINDER - Jan. 29, Lawrence, KS - Part of the Guru's Gravel Grinders Series. gravel-grinders.blogspot.com
BLEEDING KANSAS 2017 - Sundays from Jan. 29-Mar. 5, 2pm., Constitution Hall Historic Site, 319 Elmore, LeCompton. A series of talks and dramatic interpretations on the violent territorial and civil war history of Kansas 1854-1865. Actors will portray Kansans from this turbulent era. Adm: \$3 adults, \$1 students. Children five & younger free. On tap for Jan. 29: "Kansas on Appeal: Highlights from 156 years of Sunflower State Advocacy in the Supreme Court of the United States" by Kansas Attorney General, Derek Schmidt, with remarks by Kansas State Archivist, Matt Veatch. For info: 785-887-6520, www.lecomptonkansas.com

WAKE UP WITH WASHBURN BREAKFAST LECTURE - Feb. 2, 7:30-8:30am. Washburn University, Bradbury Thompson Alumni Center. Breakfast served in Convocation Hall. Speaker: Rob Reilly, vice president of the south region at BNSF Railway in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Members \$10, non-members \$13. For info: 670-1641

POLAR PLUNGE & STRUT - Feb. 6, 9:30-Noon. Swim Beach, 3300 SE 29th St. Registration at 9:30am, 5k at 11am, Polar Plunge at 12pm. Save some time at pre-registration and packet pick-up: Feb. 3 - Noon-7pm at Gary Gribbles, 2130 SW Wanamaker Rd. For info: 620-408-4450

SHENYUN PERFORMING ARTS SHOW - Feb. 10-12. Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, 1601 Broadway Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64108. Colorful and exhilarating performance of classical Chinese dance and music. 913-701-7469.

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intensity; Fri. - 12-12:45pm Kickboxing; Sat. - 8-8:45am Kickboxing

TOPEKA TREASURE HUNTERS CLUB - 3rd Sun. of each month, 7pm, Papan's Landing Senior Center, 618 NW Paramore St. Family Memberships include children & grandchildren up to 18 yrs. A place to meet friends to discuss all aspects of Metal Detecting, club business, plus socializing & entertainment.

STEP UP - BUILDING THE SMART STEP-FAMILY - Every Sun. 11am, Northland Christian Church, Room 4, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. Focusing on the challenges facing step-families and blended families. Contact Thomas Munker at 249-3054 for info.

BOYS TRAIL LIFE & AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS TROUPS - Every Mon. 6pm, Cornerstone Comm. Ch., 7620 SW 21st. Faith-based scouting programs, age 5-18. Register at cornerstonetopeka.com. 478-2929.

INNOVATIVE NETWORKING GROUP OF TOPEKA - every other Wed. 11:20am - 12:30pm. www.INGTopeka.com - go to Event page to see times, locations & register

TIBA NETWORKING GROUP - 2nd Tues, 11:30a.m.-1 p.m. MUST RSVP: taradimick@gmail.com. Lunch is \$10. www.topekatiba.org

DEAF WORSHIP SERVICE - 3rd Sun., 3pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 17th & Gage. Also, every Sun. 9:30am service is interpreted.

FAMILY EXPERIENCE (FX) - Every Sun., 6:01pm, Fairlawn Church of Nazarene, 730 Fairlawn Rd. A time of high intensity, action packed, skit mania, worship music all centered around the word of God for 45 minutes. A free family worship event. For info: Emily Moore, 272-6322 or fxthelawn@gmail.com.

LADIES' SMALL GROUP - Every Sun., 6pm, Bethel Baptist Church, 4011 N. Kansas Ave. Studying the book of Esther, using the DVD series "It's Tough Being a Woman" by Beth Moore. All welcome. 286-0467.

THE FIRST PLACE 4 HEALTH PROGRAM - Mon., 6:30pm or Sat., 8am, Topeka First Assembly, 500 SW 27th St. This program points members to God's strength & creates a compassionate support group that helps members stay accountable in a positive environment & delivers faith-based health & weight management instruction. To join or start a new group, contact Jan Norris, 972-0582 or norris.jan@sbcglobal.net or visit firstplace4health.com.

THE FORCE (Students Taking Action) - 1st Mon. & 3rd Tue., 6:30-8pm, Safe Streets, 2209 SW 29th St. Committed to being alcohol & drug free. Associate with like-minded peers, plan activities & get involved in the community. All youth ages 12-18 invited. 266-4606.

HEARTLAND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS - 2nd Mon., 11:45am-1pm. Promoting neighborhood well-being by mobilizing people, ideas & resources. 233-1365.

TOPEKA LINCOLN CLUB - 1st Tue. of month, 7pm, Topeka Public Library. Discussing our greatest President, Abraham Lincoln, and his times. The public is welcome. For info, contact Kirk Nystrom 235-6977.

KC TRAUMA AND PTSD SUPPORT GROUP - Every Tue. 10am and Thu. 6:30pm. Call Denise at 816-885-9530.

OUR LADY OF THE FAITHFUL - Every 1st Tues., 6:30pm Mass followed by Dinner, Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church. A Catholic group for those in their 20-30s. For info: Michelle Ann 580-3071 or ourladyofthefaithful@gmail.com. Facebook: "OurLadyoftheFaithful."

SUNRISE OPTIMIST CLUB - Every Tue., 6:30am, Sunrise Optimist Complex, 720 NW 50th St. 246-1291.

MENNINGER BIBLE CLASSES - Tuesdays Noon -1pm. Amerus Room, YWCA, 225 West 12th. A new study group for Year One of Flo Menninger's course on Four Years through the Bible. Read and discuss Genesis through First Kings. Nominal charge for materials. For info call the YWCA at 233-1750 or Clara Gamache at 785-408-5433.

O.W.L.S. (Older Wise Loving Saints) - meets the second Tuesday of the month. Location varies and can be found at www.faithfamilylife.com

S.W.A.G. (Spiritual Warriors Anointed by God) youth group - Wed at 7:00 p.m. 3710 NW Topeka Blvd.

AWANA - Every Wed., 6-8pm, First Southern Baptist Church, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 272-0443.

AWANA - Every Wed., 6:30pm, Bethel Baptist Church, 4011 N. Kansas Ave. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 286-0467.

AWANA - Every Wed., 6:30-8pm, Auburn Christian Church. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 256-2515.

MACHINE EMBROIDERY CLUB - 1st Wed., 9am-3pm, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 2021 SW 29th Street (east door). Anyone with an Embroidery machine is invited to attend, there are no dues or formal meeting agenda. Lunch is on your own. Teach each other, enjoy fellowship & complete projects. Call 379-5159.

SAFE STREETS MEETING - 1st Wed., 11:45am, Golf Park Blvd, 2 blocks west of Adams. For info: 266-4606.

STUDENT IMPACT - Every Wed., 6-8pm, First Southern Baptist, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Youth games, teaching, worship, small groups. For info: 272-0443.

CHRISTIAN CHALLENGE - Every Thurs. 7-9pm, First Southern Baptist, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Worship for college students.

FULL GOSPEL BUSINESSMEN'S FELLOWSHIP - 3rd Thurs., 6pm meal, 7pm meeting, Coyote Canyon,

Huntoon & Wanamaker. Kirk Nystrom, 235-6977.

iMOM - 1st & 3rd Thurs., 9-11:30am, Topeka Bible Church Fellowship Hall, 1135 SW College. For all moms, helping them to be intentional! Info: 234-5545.

LIFE FEST - 1st Thurs., 10am-12:30pm, Covenant Baptist Church, 5440 SW 37th St. Celebrate Senior Life. For info: 273-2811.

OPERATION BACKPACK - 1st Thurs., 6pm, Lyman Learning Center, Lyman and N. Kansas Ave. Volunteers gather to assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. Sponsored by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 286-1370.

SINGLES BIBLE STUDY - 2nd & 4th Thurs., 7pm, Heartland Worship Center Church of God, 1401 NW Harrison. For info: 232-5503.

TOPEKA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY - 4th Thurs., 7pm, Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th St. No program in Nov. or Dec. Promotes & stimulates the education, knowledge & interest of the membership & the public in family history, genealogical records & research. For info: 233-5762 or tgstopeka.org.

KINGDOM ADVISORS TOPEKA AREA STUDY GROUP - 3rd Thu., 11:30am, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. Christian financial professionals: financial planners, accountants, attorney's & insurance agents invited. For info: kingdomadvisors.org or Jim Hanna, james.c.hanna@ampt.com or 357-6278 x19.

TOPEKA (Downtown) OPTIMIST CLUB - Every Fri., noon, Top of the Tower. Serving the youth of Topeka. Anyone welcome. For info: 272-1099 or fostern60@yahoo.com.

TOPS (Taking Off Pounds Sensibly) -- Every Fri. 8:30 to 10:00 am at 3221 SW Burlingame Road. 800-932-8677. Support for your weight loss journey. tops.org

VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS - Every Fri., Noon, North Topeka Baptist Church, 123 NW Gordon. FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. Free blood pressure checks the last Friday of every month, and birthday celebrations the 4th Friday. For info: 286-1370.

A GOOD YARN CLUB - 2nd & 4th Sat., 9-11am,

Wanamaker Rd Baptist Church, 2700 SW Wanamaker. Doing Good for Others: Knitting & Crocheting for Local Charities, free yarn, needles, hooks & patterns. All are welcome. Info: Anne, 272-9249 or kittens812@att.net

BIBLE QUIZZING - 1st Sat. Learn God's Word & have fun with area Christian youth age 9-19. YFC/YEA style quizzing & rules. 913-593-6427 or biblequizzing.org.

MONTHLY SCORE MEETING - 1st Sat., 8-9:30am, Washburn Tech, 5724 SW Huntoon (enter east doors facing Huntoon). No RSVP or fee is required. Small business owners are invited to a Breakfast Roundtable discussion with members of SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives). Info: 234-3049.

TOPEKA LOVE AGLOW - Once a month on Sat. morning. A time of worship, prayer and encountering God. Call Tawny Barton at 785-409-0232 or Linda Williams at 785-267-0600 for details.

FREE ENGLISH CLASSES - Every Sat. 9-10:30am, Central Congregational Church, 1248 SW Buchanan. For info: 235-2376.

RUSSIAN HOUSE OF PRAYER - Every Sat., 4pm, Williamstown Assembly of God, 1225 Oak St., Perry/Williamstown. For info: 597-5228.

SINGLES PLAY CARDS SR. - 1st Sat., 6-9pm, St. Peter's UMC, NW 35th & Hwy 75

SAVING DEATH ROW DOGS ADOPTION & EDUCATION - every Sat. 11am-2pm, Petco, 1930 SW Wanamaker.

UPPER ROOM COMMUNITY - second Sat., 10 am, Capitol Building

SUPPORT GROUPS

MIDLAND CARE GRIEF SUPPORT Groups: Building A, 200 SW Frazier Circle

Every Mon., 4-5pm: 12 Week Adult Group for Recent Loss

1st and 3rd Thu., 10:30am & 5:30pm—Ongoing Adult Group

1st and 3rd Thu., 5:30pm: Ongoing Young Adult Group (4-18 years of age)

For All Groups: Call for start dates and info packet.

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Postcards	12 pt. full color, two sided, 8.5x5.5	1,000-1,999	\$0.18 each
Postcards	12 pt. full color, two sided, 5.5x4.25	500-999	\$0.15 each
Postcards	12 pt. full color, two sided, 5.5x4.25	1,000-1,999	\$0.13 each
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ABORTION RECOVERY SUPPORT – Providing services for women & men who suffer from Post-Abortion Syndrome... we can help mend a broken heart! For info: Kay Lynn at KLCarlson20@cox.net

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS – for friends & families of alcoholics. For info: 785-409-3072 or topekaanon.org

PURSUIT FOR SEXUAL PURITY – Men struggling with pornography & sexual addiction. This bible study/accountability group uses the Pure Desire book by Ted Roberts. For info: 249-9509. All inquiries confidential.

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUPS – Monthly support group meetings for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. For info: Alzheimer's Association, Heart of America Chapter, 271-1844 or email cindy.miller@alz.org

"HEALING HEARTS" support group/Bible study – For women whose husbands struggle with pornography addictions or have had affairs. Videos & workbook will give you hope for your marriage & emotional healing. For info: Jane Goble, 249-0983.

BIKERS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE – NE Kansas Chapter (B.A.C.A) 3rd Sun., 4 pm American Legion, 3800 SE Michigan. Open to the public. For info: 817-5801.

FRIENDS WITH M.S. – 3rd Mon., 6:30pm, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 2021 SW 29th St. (Enter East door). A Multiple Sclerosis support group. Donna, 266-7383.

BOUNCE BACK SELF-HELP – 3rd Mon., 6:30pm, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 2021 SW 29th St. For those living with multiple sclerosis. For info: 273-0799.

INCARCERATED PERSONS & FAMILIES – 1st Mon., 6:30-7:30pm, YMCA, 421 Van Buren. 286-2329.

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS/BEREAVED PARENTS GROUP – Meets 4th Mon. in Formation classroom at Most Pure Heart of Mary, 17th & Stone. Discussion starts 7pm; fellowship & refreshments 8:30. 272-4895

GRIEF SUPPORT – Sponsored by Heartland Hospice for those dealing with death or major loss: 1st Mon., 5:30-7:30pm, individual appointments; other times are available. Call Terry Frizzell at (785)230-6730.

3rd Thurs., 11am, Lunch After Loss, Paisano's Ristorante, Fleming Place, SW 10th & Gage Blvd. Dutch treat luncheon to meet new friends who have sat where you are sitting. For reservations or info: 785-271-6500.

OVEREATERS / UNDEREATERS ANONYMOUS:

MON., 7pm – Westminster Presbyterian, south door, upstairs in Library; 233-6724.

WED., 7pm – St. Francis Hospital meeting room 6, 2nd floor; 234-8020.

SAT. - 9am – St. Francis Hospital meeting room 8, 2nd floor; 862-2326.

For info: 357-8774; sunflowerintergroup.ia.org.

NAMI TOPEKA – Every 2nd Tue., 6:45pm, lower level of Valeo, 330 SW Oakley. If door is locked, call 608-1317 to get in. The 1st hour is often a discussion of an important topic or video. The 2nd hour is usually a support talk time, w/ separate consumer & family groups. 608-1317.

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP – First Tue. each month at St. Francis Health, 1700 SW 7th St, Meeting Room, 2nd floor, 6-7:30pm. Anyone with an ostomy may attend. The goal is to provide education and ongoing support for individuals with an ostomy. Contact Teresa Kellerman at 785-295-5555 for info.

GRANDPARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP – 3rd Tue., 6:30-8pm, 2nd floor meeting room,

St. Francis Hosp., 1700 SW 7th. For info: Sharla, 286-2329; Jennie (English/Spanish) 231-0763.

THE GREATER TOPEKA MULTIPLE MYELOMA – 3rd Tue., 7-8:30pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 17th St. & Gage Blvd. Open to Multiple Myeloma patients, their family members & friends. Share support, information, & friendship. For info: Donna, 903-918-9553.

"HEALING AFTER THE SUICIDE OF A LOVED ONE" ("HEAL") – or Survivors of Suicide" (SOS). 1st & 3rd Tue., 7-8:30pm, Pozez Education Center of Stormont Vail Hospital, 1505 SW 8th St. Serving anyone who has lost a loved one by suicide.

PRISON OUTREACH MINISTRY – Every Tue., 7-9pm, Topeka Women's Prison, 815 Rice Rd. Reaching out to those who can't come in, finding freedom behind bars, inspiring inmates to seek salvation during a difficult time. Providing support & guidance through the Holy Spirit to offer strength. Director: Don Garner, 286-0489 or faithfamilylifeministries@gmail.com.

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS – Every Wed, 7pm, St. Francis Hospital, meeting room #8.

JAYHAWK AREA AGENCY ON AGING – 4th Wed., 1pm, Rosehill Place Clubhouse. Monthly support group for caregivers of seniors. For info: 235-1367 ext.30.

MOMS-IN-TOUCH PRAYER GROUP – Every Wed., 2:30-3:30pm, Library at Cair Paravel-Latin School. Experience God's power through prayer as we lift our students, teachers, staff, administrators & board up to the Lord. For info: 357-0369.

DIVORCECARE PROGRAMS – (For updates check www.divorcecare.org) locations and times:

WED. – 6:30pm, Topeka Bible Church, 1101 SW Mulvane. Cost: \$15. Child care provided. For info: 379-0505 or www.divorcecare.org.

WED. – 6:45 – 8:45pm, Walnut View Christian Church, 3634 SE 37th St. (just East of 37th & Croco). Cost: \$10 registration (scholarships available). The video seminar series featuring some of the nation's foremost experts on divorce and recovery topics, combined with support group discussion of the materials. Complimentary child care children up to the fifth grade. Info: 266-7550 or walnutviewcc@att.net. Contact: Pastor Thornton.

WED. – 6:30pm, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. No Cost. 286-1204, www.northland.cc

NAMI WASHBURN – 4th Thurs., 6-8pm, Spirit Building Room, University United Methodist Church, 1621 SW College Ave. NAMI is a student-run, student-led organization that provides mental health support, education, & advocacy in the Washburn Univ. setting. A support group is also available during this time.

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP – 1st Thurs., 7pm, Saint Francis Hospital 2nd floor conf. room of the cancer unit. For info: 266-9533.

NICOTINE ANONYMOUS – Every Fri., 6:30pm, Town & Country Christian Church Renaissance Room, 4925 SW 29th St., use west door cross red foot bridge. A fellowship of men & women helping each other to live free of nicotine. No fees. 402-321-486; Laboomaha@att.net.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY – Every Fri., 6pm, 1912 Gage Blvd. A Christ-centered program, based on 8 principles found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Applying these Biblical principles, become free from addictive & dysfunctional behaviors. 220-0017 or crtopeka.org.

TOPEKA NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUP – For families & friends who are affected by someone else's narcotic addiction. Every Sat. – 1005 SW 10th, next to Oxford House, noon-1:15 pm. www.naranonmidwest.org

COVENANT KEEPERS – 3rd Sat. Group for people who want to see their marriage saved when their spouse wants out. For info: 816-453-0884 or 816-966-0927.

OPRAH

continued from page 7

able to do more than you can hope or imagine or dream according to His power at work in you."

Oprah asked Lentz about his friendship with Justin Bieber, which led to an unusual baptism with the pop star last year at 3 a.m. in the bathtub of NBA star Tyson Chandler.

"He knows Jesus and he has known Jesus," Lentz said about Bieber. "His mom and dad did a great job to plant the right seeds."

Since Chandler is over seven feet tall, his bathtub was customized to fit a man of his size and was large enough to baptize Bieber, who stands at 5'9". Despite it being the middle of the night, Lentz described the whole scene as relatively normal. "Kim Chandler, Tyson's wife, had some food out," Lentz said. "This is like regular stuff for our type of church."

"It was probably one of the most special things I've been a part of," Lentz said.

Lentz went on to tell Oprah it's important to recognize the difference between a contractual relationship with God and a covenant relationship. "Once you have repented of your sin, you have bowed your knee, you have surrendered to the reality of the Gospel, from here on this is not a contract; this is a covenant.

"A contract is a mutually agreed upon deal that somebody can break. People think they're under contract with God. If you fail, God pulls out. But this is a covenant, which means he has given this as a sign for life. His end is not broken."

"Like a birthright, like Jesus is a bridge..." Oprah replied.

"I think you have to get to the place where you realize the grace of God is for you," Lentz continued. "That sin is real, the result of sin is real and if you don't have someone breaking that cycle we're all in this same boat. But because of Jesus you have the right to put your hand up and totally start a new cycle that

to me is the essence of what we're trying to do, which is to allow God to do what only God can do.

"It's a commitment. It's a decision. I have decided to follow Jesus' may be the best language to me.

"Your soul is who Jesus was always going after," he continued. "It doesn't matter how much money you do or don't have, it doesn't matter how much good or bad you've done, your soul, that's the mirror, that's the reflection, and that's what Jesus came for.

"I can't promise you a better life if you're going to follow Jesus. I can't promise you a Bentley or that you will get a promotion. But I can promise you that your soul can transcend any situation if you've given control back to the One who created it."

"That's big. That's big," Oprah said, nodding her head.

"If God never did another thing in my life, Jesus rescuing my soul is enough. There is peace in that," Lentz told the superstar.

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entertainment

MOVIES, BOOKS, MUSIC & MORE!

Professor warns film *The Shack* is 'greatest deception' to church in the last 200 years

entertainment

 by **Michael Foust**

PORTLAND, Ore. – An evangelical seminary professor is calling *The Shack* the "greatest deception foisted on the church in the last 200 years" and urging Christian leaders to speak out against it ahead of its release as a movie.

James B. DeYoung, professor of New Testament language and literature at Western Seminary in Portland, Ore., says controversy over the 2007 bestselling book by William Paul Young will resurface when the film is released March 3.

The Shack, a New York Times best seller, has sold 25 million book copies and was printed in 41 languages.

Though the author, like others, uses fiction "as a servant" of theology, the allegorical book has an unbiblical view of God, DeYoung said, and clearly affirms universalism – that is, that all people will be saved.

"I maintain that *The Shack* represents the greatest deception foisted on the church in the last 200 years!" DeYoung wrote in a column for *MovieGuide.org*. "Not since the time of the colonies and Isaac Backus has universalism been in such ascendancy in the public psyche. *The Shack* is not a new Pilgrim's

film411
THE SHACK
STARRING: Sam Worthington, Octavia Spencer, Papa / Elouisa, Radha Mitchell, Ryan Robbins, Tim McGraw
DIRECTOR: Stuart Hazeldine

Progress for our day but a house of deceit deserving destruction."

DeYoung is the author of *Burning Down The Shack*, a book that critiques the popular novel.

Although John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* has been compared to *The Shack* and both books employ allegory, the two could not be more different, DeYoung wrote. Bunyan "took the teaching of Scripture and allegorized it," but "the theology promoted in [William Paul] Young's novel is of a particularly sinister and heretical variety."

"William Young departs from an evangelical understanding of God, in whom holiness and love are equally balanced, to a universalist understanding of God, in whom love is paramount and judgment and holiness are considered to be in conflict with his love," DeYoung wrote. "In comparison with Bunyan, Young denies that there is future punishment and that God punishes sin."

Just as readers can learn a lot about the theology of "Pilgrim's Progress" by studying Bunyan, they also can learn about the theology of "The Shack" by examining that author's theology, DeYoung wrote.

"I have known the author of *The Shack*, Young, for more than a dozen years. In 2004, Young wrote a lengthy document in which he rejected his evangelical faith and embraced universalism," DeYoung wrote. "... He said then: that evangelical faith and its teaching about judgment makes God 'grossly unjust'; that 'Jesus is a million times more vicious and vindictive than Pharaoh, Nero or Hitler put together'; that Jesus Christ is 'not the Savior from sins'; that Jesus died 'a failure and in vain and never saved anyone'; thus Jesus 'is not even a good man but a liar, a rogue and a deceiving rascal'; that 'Calvary is a farce, a travesty and a sham.'"

Young then "began work on a novel proclaiming universalism for his children." And then three years later Young "rewrote the fiction and published it as *The Shack*, in part his autobiography."

In promotion for another new Young novel, *Eve*, he says: "The Shack shattered our limited perceptions of God. *Eve* will destroy our harmful misconceptions about ourselves. ..."

In the book *The Shack*, Young quotes



God as saying: "I am not who you think I am," and, "Perhaps your understanding of God is wrong."

Traditionally, evangelical churches have stood as obstacles to universalism, DeYoung wrote, such as in the late 1700s when the heresy was spreading throughout the colonies. Evangelical churches need once again to sound the alarm. Major Christian publishers, DeYoung added, largely "have failed" in warning Christians about *The Shack*.

So here we media people are faced with one of the greatest challenges in our nation's history, DeYoung wrote. "Will God grant once again to us a revival and a new reformation of biblical truth to withstand the onslaught of the inclu-

sivism and universalism of our day, represented by *The Shack*, or will we be overwhelmed by false teaching?

"Will we influence the church to become a 'complete man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so we may no longer be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men, by craftiness with deceitful scheming, but, speaking the truth in love, we may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, Christ Himself' (Eph. 4:13-15)?"

—Michael Foust is a Christian entertainment reviewer and author who also writes at michaelfoust.com.

Evangelist creates 'The Darkest Hour' TV series to reach people with the Gospel in moments of deep despair

A new late-night television series being aired on the Discovery Channel and ABC Family showcases real-life stories from people who reveal how Jesus Christ rescued them from the pit of deepest darkness.

Evangelist Jay Lowder of Wichita Falls, Texas, said in a recent interview that he first got the idea to create "The Darkest Hour" while on vacation with his family in New York City.

As he stood in the middle of Grand Central Station, he watched the masses of people walking around aimlessly yet still consumed by the rat race of life.

"A thought popped into my mind, and I can't say why but just that God prompted it," Lowder recalled.

He realized that the vast majority of the Northeasterners he was watching probably didn't share his Christian background and would likely not have the opportunity to know Jesus unless someone reached them unconventionally. Sharing the Gospel with them would require a new paradigm and some creativity.

Seemingly out of nowhere, he got the idea to create a decidedly non-preachy television show to be aired in the wee hours of the morning featuring people sharing their harrowing stories of life in the ditch and how coming to know Jesus Christ restored them.

After praying about it for a few months and then surrendering the matter he got a random phone call from a woman in the television industry and started exploring the possibility of launching such a show. The cost of doing this, he soon discov-

ered, was extremely expensive and he got discouraged.

"She said to me, 'Well, you know Jay, I don't know you but based on what I've heard about you and what I've seen on the internet, I would have thought that if there was anybody that could have believed God for something big, it would have been you,'" Lowder said.

"And, if you're worried about money, you're worried about the wrong thing," she added, "Because if God's in it the least problem you have is money. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills."

Gobsmacked, Lowder resolved to move forward, telling his wife that "the day we quit attempting to do something great for God is the day we need to quit ministry. If we're not going to do something that is so much bigger than us, that if God didn't get involved it wouldn't happen, we don't need to be doing it."

"The Darkest Hour" was thus born.

Each episode of the series lasts for 30 minutes and highlights real people with harrowing backgrounds whose lives have taken them to hell and back. As they describe how they emerged from the grisly pits of addiction, violence and torment they don't sugarcoat the sin and hopelessness they experienced.

The series is free from Christianese and trite religious platitudes. Lowder has interviewed people of all ages and races who've been raped and sexually abused, had limbs blown off their body in war, and people who suffer from PTSD.

Lowder said that he wants the show to reach those who come home late at night,

perhaps after an evening of partying, and turn on the TV.

Born and raised in Texas, Lowder described himself as an "unbelieving believer."

He had an intellectual grasp on the faith and said prayers as a child, but it never sank into his heart.

"I was a hypocrite, one of those who got wasted on Saturday night and went to church on Sunday morning," he said.

By the time he turned 21, his own life was such a wreck that he almost committed suicide.

But God miraculously intervened through a series of circumstances such that he knew the Lord was trying to get his attention.

"I ran to Jesus faster than Usain Bolt can run the 100-meter dash. I just wanted to know Christ. And when I met Him. My life changed so dramatically my mother said to me two weeks later, 'I don't even know who you are, you're not the same person.'"

"The Darkest Hour" is what Lowder calls "a backdoor approach."

How each interviewee on the show found hope in Christ isn't revealed until the final few minutes "because we want to use the power of story," Lowder said.

For viewers who are moved by what they watch and are interested in exploring what it means to follow Jesus, at the end of each episode a list of resources is provided, including his book, *What Do I Do Now?* as a means of follow-up discipleship.



A recent episode of *The Darkest Hour*, Alisa's story

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REPLACE THE HOLIDAY BLUES WITH GOOD MUSIC

Salvation Army celebrates another year of fund-raising

Happy New Year! I hope your first month of 2017 is an introduction to a wonderful new year of surprises and joy, as only our Father and His Son can give. I also pray the "holiday blues" are replaced by God's love and grace. Okay, now for the music news...

GRAMMY nominated Zach Williams released his new full-length album at the end of December, he announced at a performance in his hometown, Jonesboro, Arkansas. Slated for Spring 2017, this was a surprise to many fans and music media. The digital album, *Chain Breaker* (Essential Records) was released Dec. 19 after garnering so much support for his EP of the same name, and the physical version will be available January 27. The album contains the five original songs from his EP, and five new tracks. Any fans of NEEDTOBREATHE, Rhett Walker Band, and Brandon Heath would likely enjoy this new release.

The Salvation Army celebrated its traditional Red Kettle Campaign last month of course, but along with their campaign the Grammy-winning rock band Blues Traveler released their version of "Go Tell



D.C. Jeanes

Metro Voice Music Critic

musicscene

It On the Mountain," with all proceeds from the download sales going to fund The Salvation Army.

"Music is an important part of the Salvation Army's history, so there is no better way for us to celebrate the season than through song," Lt. Col. Ron Busroe, national community relations and development secretary for The Salvation Army, said in a recent interview, "to have an iconic group like Blues Traveler do something so selfless in the name of our organization is very inspiring to us..."

Blues Traveler vocalist John Popper was also honored to be a part of the cele-

bration.

"After learning all the ways the Salvation Army helps people in need, we wanted to help too. Their impact on feeding and sheltering people who need it most is undeniable, and we are grateful."

This is about a month late, but you can still purchase the song and contribute to Salvation Army. Blues Traveler's rendition of "Go Tell It on the Mountain" is now available for purchase through blustraveler.com or via the iTunes store and on Amazon.

Finally, set for release this coming spring, *The Beatitudes Project* will include an full-length album, *Beatitudes*, with *The Fuel Music*, a book: *Words From the Hill (An Invitation to the Unexpected)* from NavPress, and a documentary film currently finishing. Revealing connected stories, the *Beatitudes Project* presents "real people from all faiths and walks of life who embody mercy, poverty, meekness, the



hungry and thirsty, the peacemakers, the mourners, and the pure in heart--as seen, heard and experienced through a twenty-first century lens."

Guitarist, songwriter and author Stu Garrard's (Stu G) has been working on this venture for over ten years, using "blessings at the bottom of life" as inspiration. For the album, he explored in community with like-minded artists across a wide swath in the musical landscape. Celebrated artists like Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith and Martin Smith join singer/songwriters like Matt Maher, Audrey Assad, John Mark McMillan, Joel Houston and Amanda Cook and innovators like Propaganda, All Sons & Daughters, Terrian Bass and The

Brilliance--artists who collectively have sold more than 62 million records, won 11 Grammy, 90 Dove Awards and amassed dozens of hit songs and millions of followers on social media--to unearth the words of Jesus in unexpected ways.

"The *Beatitudes Project* is meant to be a reset button in a world plagued with violence and division," Stu G said. "These upside-down Jesus announcements on a hillside by the Sea of Galilee in Matthew 5 where Jews, Greeks, Romans and people of all ethnicities were gathered are a reminder that there is another way."

For more information, including free downloads (for a limited time), visit Noisetrade.com.

Christianity Today announces 2017 book awards

Christianity Today has released its annual book awards list. The annual list notes books most likely to shape evangelical life, thought, and culture.

"Reading helped fuel the Reformation, and in turn, the Reformation helped fuel the spread of reading," the magazine states. "As we mark the anniversary of the 95 Theses this year, our spiritual and theological debts to Luther are obvious. But it's worth remembering, too, how Luther's prolific pen and publishing genius helped mold evangelicals into a "people of the book," in more ways than one.

"These awards are just one small way of keeping that legacy alive," says Matt Reynolds, associate editor at CT. For a complete list and award of merit winners, visit ChristianityToday.com

Apologetics / Evangelism

Making Sense of God: An Invitation to the Skeptical

Timothy Keller (Viking)
"Making Sense of God is not a parade of logical evidence for God, but rather a profound reflection on the existential realities of being human. Keller asks, simply, "Is the secular view of the world capable of making sense of the things secularists themselves properly value: freedom, individuality, justice, community, rationality, personal meaning, human rights?" His answer is a convincing no. Not only does Christianity make rational sense,

Keller argues, but it also does justice to the totality of human experience." —Gregory Koukl, founder and president, Stand to Reason

Biblical Studies

Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels

Richard Hays (Baylor University Press)
"Hays reveals how deeply the Old Testament shaped the Gospel writers, showing how each of them uniquely expresses the stories of Israel, Jesus, and the church. The academy often views the New Testament authors' use of the Old as misguided at best or manipulative at worst, but Hays effectively shows how the their readings were inspired, intelligent, and imaginative." —David T. Lamb, professor of Old Testament, Biblical Theological Seminary



Christian Living / Discipleship

Crossing the Waters: Following Jesus through the Storms, the Fish, the Doubt, and the Seas

Leslie Leyland Fields (NavPress)
"Drawing from a trip to Israel and from her family's lives as salmon fishermen on a remote island in Alaska, Fields shows



what it means to be a child of God in the world today. We get a clear picture of what Jesus was doing with his disciples, his followers, his critics, and his family in and around the Sea of Galilee."—Lore Ferguson Wilbert, blogger at Sayable.net

The Church / Pastoral Leadership

How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth

Christopher J. H. Wright (Zondervan)

"Preaching from the Old Testament can intimidate the best of us. Wright's excellent book combines a robust biblical framework with practical communication steps in an easy-to-read style. Each Old Testament genre is given ample teaching examples along with hands-on checklists that help the preacher toward faithful proclamation. Even more refreshing is the emphasis on exalting Jesus in ways that are true to the text and relevant to our culture." —Zack Eswine, director of homiletics, Covenant Seminary



Culture & The Arts

75 Masterpieces Every Christian Should Know: The Fascinating Stories behind Great Works of Art, Literature, Music, and Film

Terry Glaspey (Baker)
"The prevailing assumption is that evangelicals and art don't really get along. Glaspey deftly undermines this



idea by making the case for integrating a range of masterpieces into Christian tradition. He does this in the best way possible, not by offering conceptual reasons why

Christians should care about art, but by getting down to business and revealing the work itself, piece by piece." —S. D. Kelly, essayist

Fiction

The Confessions of X

Suzanne M. Wolfe (Thomas Nelson)
"In this gripping, beautifully written historical novel, Wolfe brings the ancient city of Carthage to life, immersing readers in the experiences that shaped the theology of Augustine of Hippo.



In her deftly told and well-researched story, the unnamed woman whom Augustine loved and lived with for 13 years rises from the footnotes of history to become a dynamic, fully-fleshed character." —Amy Peterson, writer and assistant director of honors programming, Taylor University

Missions / Global Church

Joyful Witness in the Muslim World: Sharing the Gospel in Everyday Encounters

Evelyn Reischer (Baker Academic)

"Perhaps understandably, much of our attention to the Muslim world—on the news, and in the church—revolves around war, terrorism, and other pervasive challenges. But

Reischer shows us the story we're missing. From a lifetime of missionary service,

she reflects on how God's image is beautifully reflected in the Muslim men and women she's befriended. And she calls us to share our faith not out of fear or anger, but out of joy rooted in the hope of Christ." —Christopher Horst, vice president of development, HOPE International

Spiritual Formation

The Listening Life: Embracing Attentiveness in a World of Distraction

Adam McHugh (IVP)
"At a time when we are drowning in words—both digital and spoken—this quiet little book throws us a life preserver. The *Listening Life* is gentle, thoughtful, biblical, and eminently practical. It outlines a broad theology of listening alongside specific and clear practices that teach the reader to listen in a new way. Whether you are a loud lover of words or a shy lover of solitude, this book will likely convict you." —Tish Harrison Warren, author of *Liturgy of the Ordinary*





Medication Lists: Prevent Errors, Save a Life

Heartland Healthy Neighborhoods

What's most likely to cause you to return to the hospital if you are a senior over the age of 65? Medications. The highest risk to a seniors' health after a hospital discharge are problems with medications. Seniors can be over medicated, lack understanding of how to take medications, forget to take medications, or take the wrong medication due to an error on their medication list. Almost 1/3 of American adults take 5 or more medications which are often prescribed by more than one healthcare provider. This dramatically increases the potential for errors. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that each year over 700,000 visits to the emergency department are the result of an injury from a med-

ication. Sadly, many of the events could have been prevented with safe medication practices. Inaccurate medication lists can lead to drug interactions, worsening injury or illness and even death.

Keeping an accurate medication list requires a partnership between healthcare providers and consumers. Tiffany Noller, chair of the Topeka Community of Care, encourages everyone to, "Take ownership of making sure the list is correct. Don't be afraid to ask your healthcare providers questions about your medication list. It could save you or your loved one's life."

Here are some important tips to prevent medication list errors:

- Keep the list with you and update as your healthcare providers make changes.
- Always take your medications

the way your doctor ordered.

- Do not stop a medication without talking with your doctor first.

- Make sure to include any over the counter medications you take such as vitamins, cold and cough medicine, antacids reducers, or pain and fever reducers.

- Your list should include at a minimum the names of the medications, dosage, and times of day you take you each medication.

- Finally keep the list with you. Consider giving a copy of your list to family in case of an emergency.

- Take your medication list with you to all health care appointments.

What as a community can we do to reduce medication errors and the life threatening effects of improper medications? The Topeka Community of Care



group has been tackling this very issue. The group (composed of individuals from various health service agencies) works together to educate both healthcare providers and consumers on safe medication list practices in order to reduce the number of adverse drug events for Shawnee County residents.

Even though most healthcare providers have electronic medical records (EMR), most EMRs do not communicate between different providers. So without one complete list of your medications, your

provider may not be aware of all of the medications you have been prescribed by other providers. The Topeka Community of Care supports the use of a form provided by the Food and Drug Administration. This form can be downloaded and saved on your computer or printed out. <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AboutFDA/ReportsManualsForms/Forms/UCM095018.pdf>

For more information contact Lissa Staley at estaley@tscl.org or visit heartlandhealthyneighborhoods.org.

Sweet Little Lies (Really!)

By Dave Meurer

I find myself making the most outrageously misleading statements these days. I tried at first to avoid outright lies, out of deference to one of the 10 Commandments, but quickly realized that "misleading" and "deceptive" are pretty much the same thing. Any reasonable jury would convict me of flagrant and deliberate deceit. And then they would give me a standing ovation for Best Actor.

My creative abuse of the English language spares me the heartbreaking task of, once again, informing my 85 year-old mother-in-law that her spouse has been deceased for years. And my trickery is precisely what the doctor ordered.

Welcome to the wild and woozy world of Alzheimer's.

It happened pretty fast. My mother-in-law, Karin, had been mentally slipping for years, but she was still living on her own. Cooking. Dressing herself. Visiting with other residents in the Festive Acres Senior Retirement Community (all those places have comical names). My wife and I visited her often, and thus began seeing the signs. Perishable groceries stored in the closet instead of the refrigerator. Her sudden inability to operate the television remote



control. The complete surprise that Ronald Reagan was not still president, not to mention not still breathing.

We decided to bring her to our home for the weekend, and take her to the doctor on Monday.

It was a bit after 2:00 a.m. when I was roused by the arresting experience of having a police officer shine his flashlight in my face while explaining that he was responding to a 911 call.

"There mused be some kinder mistake," I said, blinking.

"Well, there is a confused elderly woman in your living room," he replied.

Ah. Yes.

My wife and I threw on some clothes and joined the officer in the front room.

"Ma'am, do you know these folks?"

"Yes. That is my daughter and her husband. But I have never been in this place before, and my husband is missing. So I called 911."

I was punchy, disconcerted, and completely out of my element so I stupidly replied, "Karin, you have been to our house a thousand times. And Gene passed away two years ago."

She looked utterly stunned.

"Well, this is the first I've heard

of it," she replied softly.

I have learned a great deal since that ordeal, both by reading voraciously and availing myself of the wisdom of the professionals who are helping us navigate Alzheimer's disease.

"Enter her world, and don't try to correct her misperceptions," is one of the best pieces of advice my wife and I have received.

If she believes she spoke with her parents on the phone an hour ago, I now say, "I hope you had a good conversation." If she tells me she is working the evening shift at the hospital, I tell her what a valued employee she is. If she tells me she flew to Europe last night, and asks me how they managed to get her back in time for breakfast, I simply ask, "Isn't it amazing what they can do these days?" And then I point out how beautiful the roses are.

With Alzheimer's or dementia, sometimes the best you can do is bring peace in the moment. Often, we find we can also bring joy. I don't think the standard biblical conventions about speaking the truth apply when you are dealing with someone with this disease. What good comes from making a loved one re-live the loss of a spouse or parents when she is under the happy illusion that everyone she has ever loved is alive and well?

So I thank the Academy for this



(Dave Meurer is an award-winning writer whose work has appeared in numerous EPA pub-

lications. He specializes in marriage and family issues. And extremely senior citizens.)

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How often we review your medical condition depends on how severe it is and the likelihood it will improve. Your award notice tells you when you can expect your first review using the following terminology:

* Medical improvement expected—If your condition is expected to improve within a specific time, your first review will be six to 18 months after you started getting disability benefits.

* Medical improvement possible—If improvement in your medical condi-



tion is possible, your case will be reviewed about every three years.

* Medical improvement not expected—If your medical condition is unlikely to improve, your case will be reviewed about once every five to seven years.

For more information, visit www.socialsecurity.gov.

Question:

I know you need to have limited

resources to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). But what does Social Security consider a resource?

Answer:

Resources are things you own that you can use for support. They include cash, real estate, personal belongings, bank accounts, stocks, and bonds. To be eligible for SSI, a person must have no more than \$2,000 in countable resources. A married couple must have no more than \$3,000 in countable resources. If you own resources over the SSI limit, you may be able to get SSI benefits while trying to sell the resources. Not all of your resources count toward the SSI resource limit. For example:

- The home you live in and the land it's on do not count.
- Your personal effects and household goods do not count.
- Life insurance policies may not count, depending on their value.
- Your car usually does not count.
- Burial plots for you and members of your immediate family do not count.
- Up to \$1,500 in burial funds for you and up to \$1,500 in burial funds for your spouse may not count.
- If you are blind or have a disability, some items may not count if you plan to use them to work or earn extra income.

You may also wish to read our material on "resources" in the booklet, Understanding SSI at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/text-understanding-ssi.htm.

Question:

My 15-year-old sister has been blind

since birth. I think she should apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), but my parents think because she's a minor, they're responsible for her and she won't qualify. Who is right?

Answer:

To qualify for SSI, an individual must meet certain income and resource limits. Since your sister is a minor, some of your parents' income and resources will determine whether your sister is eligible for SSI. Once your sister turns 18, their income and resources won't be considered when deciding her eligibility and payment amount. Tell your parents they can check at any Social Security office to see if your sister qualifies. To learn more, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

Question:

I'm 65, not ready to retire, but I want to apply for my Medicare coverage. How can I do that?

Answer:

The easiest and most convenient way is to apply online! Use our online application to sign up for Medicare. It takes less than 10 minutes. In most cases, once your application is submitted electronically, you're done. There are no forms to sign and usually no documentation is required. Social Security will process your application and contact you if we need more information. Otherwise, you'll receive your Medicare card in the mail. It's convenient, quick, and easy. There's no need to drive to a local Social Security office or wait for an appointment with a Social Security representative. Get started today at www.socialsecurity.gov/medicareonly.

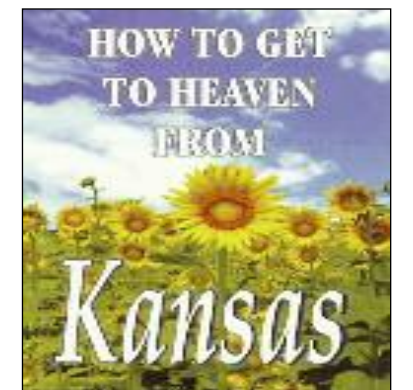
Question:

I pay my monthly premium directly to my Medicare prescription drug plan provider. Why can't I also pay my income-related monthly adjustment amount directly to my Medicare prescription drug plan provider?

Answer:

By law, we must deduct your income-related monthly adjustment amount from your Social Security payments. If the amount you owe is more than your payment, or you don't get monthly payments, you will get a separate bill from another federal agency, such as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services or the Railroad Retirement Board. Read our publication, Medicare Premiums: Rules for Higher-Income Beneficiaries, for an idea of what you can expect to pay. You'll find it at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

For more information, Contact your local Social Security office (www.socialsecurity.gov/locator). In Topeka, it is at 600 SW Commerce Pl., Topeka, KS 66615. The local office phone number is 1-888-327-1271.



More important than living in KANSAS is where you will live forever. Just as you would look at a map of KANSAS to find your way, so you must look at the Bible to find your way to heaven. The Bible says, "Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14). Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (Jn. 14:6). Jesus is the only way to Heaven and He gave these directions on getting there.

1. Realize you are a sinner. Everyone starts the same place spiritually. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of god." (Rom. 3:23). Sin's penalty keeps you out of Heaven and condemns you to Hell, separating you from God. Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death." Sin brings both physical & spiritual death. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." (Rev. 20:14).

2. Realize Jesus paid the penalty. Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection provided a way for you to go to heaven and restore your relationship with God. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8). Since Jesus, God's Son, was the only One who could pay for our sin, He is the only Way to Heaven.

3. Repent of your sin and receive Jesus as your Savior. In order to go to Heaven from KANSAS, or anywhere else, you must accept Christ by calling on Him in prayer. He tells us in Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Use the following prayer, or one similar to it, to receive Him now:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I believe that you died and rose again for me. Please forgive me of my sin, become Lord of my life, and take me to heaven when I die. I am trusting you completely, and in nothing I can do. Thank you Jesus! Amen.

senior news/events briefs

HARVESTER'S PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS - every second Saturday, at Christian Lord Ministries, 2421 SE California. Call 266-4979.

VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS - Every Fri., Noon, North Topeka Baptist Church, 123 NW Gordon. FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. For Info: 286-1370.

MEDICARE MONDAYS - First Monday of every month, 1-3pm. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library (Menninger Room 206), 1515 SW 10th. Senior health insurance counseling. For info: 580-4545 or nhonl@tscl.org

LIFEFEEST - First Thu. of the month, 10am-12:30pm, Covenant Baptist Church, 5440 SW 37th St. Notice: Seniors ministering to seniors - celebrating with fellowship, fun, food, learning & entertainment. Potluck lunch at noon. If transportation is needed, call 354-4994 or 478-1729

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM - every Mon., Wed., & Fri., 1:30pm, Rolling Hills Christian Church, 4530 NW Hiawatha Place (US Hwy 75 & NW 46th St.) 785-286-0601 or office@rhcc.topeka.org

SHEPHERDS CENTER LINE DANCING GROUP - meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 2-4:00 at First United Methodist, 6th & Topeka. Park on the WEST side and use the WEST door. Immediately inside, turn left and walk the ramp to the library, then left to the elevator. Push [B] to go to the fellowship hall

PHYSICAL FITNESS FOR SENIORS - Jan. 23, 12:30-2pm, Marvin Auditorium 101C, Topeka Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Ave. Join Lorraine Mugler, certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor, as she leads you through her Neurobics program that uses props and classical music to help older adults of all abilities improve their core strength, cognitive and physical fitness, and helps with fall prevention. Free.



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sports

THE ROYAL WAY

BY DREW VAN ESSELSTYN



This story appears in FCA Magazine's Sep./Oct. 2016 issue.

Luke Hochevar had just become a champion, the winning pitcher in an epic, World Series-clinching victory for the 2015 Kansas City Royals. Amid the hysteria of hugs and dogpiles and Gatorade showers, Hochevar found himself standing behind the pitcher's mound, taking all of it in with a macro, decade-long view.

"God just set before my eyes everything that this organization has come through," Hochevar said earlier this season, "... knowing God has His hand in it."

The Royals came from behind in eight of their 11 postseason victories, including a ninth-inning, two-run deficit in the Series-clinching Game 5. Team attributes such as relentlessness and clubhouse culture can be difficult to measure. They had to seem even more esoteric back in 2007 when Dayton Moore, entering his first full season as a general manager, cast a grand vision focusing as much on high-minded, heart-level principles as it did on arm strength or swing mechanics.

"The first meeting he had in spring training in 2007, he laid out what he foresaw this organization being down the road," Hochevar said. "Not only that, but how we're going to address that and change the culture and turn this into a winning atmosphere."

The slow build is a lost art in modern-day sports, where quick fixes rule and teams reinvent themselves more often than we see a new presidential election.

But the Royals placed their trust in Moore, who has led the franchise's return to the top of Major League Baseball. It happened in large part because they empowered a man who desires to tether nearly every major decision to Scripture and whose leadership principles come from Jesus, not the latest and greatest podcast.

"He's just a good man who really loves his family, really loves Jesus and really loves baseball," said Christian Newsome, pastor at Journey City International in Lee's Summit, Mo., and one of Moore's closest advisers. "He is the real deal."

For Moore, a humble deferral covers all of who he is—and who he strives to be.

"If there's anything good in me at all," he is fond of saying, "it comes from Jesus."

...

Dayton Moore holds his immediate family very close. When rattling off his

roles, husband and father are the "most important" he has.

Moore had just finished his graduate work and was an assistant baseball coach at George Mason University when he married Marianne on Sept. 5, 1992. They are now the parents of Ashley (20), Avery (17) and Robert (14).

All professions have the potential to be all-consuming, but general manager of an MLB team is uniquely demanding. Moore's baseball year begins with eight weeks—largely away from his family—at spring training. Then comes the six-month stretch of professional sports' most grueling regular season, flitting from roster decisions to disabled lists to draft choices to trade deadlines. The high-stakes, drama-filled postseason comes next—which took the Royals all the way through October in 2014 and 2015. And finally, the outdatedly termed "offseason" is filled with free agency, phone calls and organizational meetings.

The Moore Family: Robert, Avery, Dayton, Ashley and Marianne while in Israel in 2015.

Moore guards against being overrun by all of it and encourages others to do the same.

"Every year in spring training he says, 'Your family is more important than this,'" Hochevar

said. "You take care of home, and baseball will be fine. But you take care of home first."

Five days after the Royals won the 2015 World Series, the Moore family headed to Israel on a missions trip with a team from Journey City International. The trip overlapped with MLB's GM meetings, where the seeds of free-agent deals and trades often are planted. Moore's absence was questioned in some baseball circles, specifically the media.

But Moore was taking care of home first.

"To watch him walk through the streets of Jerusalem with his arm around his daughter," Newsome said. "To watch him throw rocks into the Sea of Galilee with his son, Robert. To see him holding hands with his wife, Marianne, walking through the Valley of Elah where David killed Goliath... I saw him at tremendous peace over there."

"And I saw him tremendously engaged with his family, probably in a way that everyday life being a general manager doesn't afford."

FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Rob Mooney

I've had a few conversations this past week concerning the amount of bowl games that are currently in play in college football. This year, there are 41 bowls that have been played or are going to be played. That's 82 college football teams that have been able to participate.

I think it's a good thing that teams are rewarded for a winning season by being able to extend their season a bit. Just think of all the extra practices that bowl teams get compared to non-bowl teams. Player development can ramp up during this time, allowing younger players to get more reps in practice and developing their skill.

One of my friends was complaining that a lot of the games are being played during times when it's hard to watch them, due to work and or family commitments. The game which was mentioned was the

Pinstripe Bowl which was played on Wednesday, December 28th at 1:00pm in the afternoon. That game was to feature an 8-4 Utah team against a 6-6 Northwestern team. He asked, will anyone actually watch that at that time? My response to him was "Would he watch it anyway if it were at a different time?"

That did get me thinking though. There are a lot of games that are played during the day during the middle of the week. I realize that many people will take time off to watch their teams or maybe attend the games in person. So I checked on some of the attendance figures so far during this bowl season. Eight games thus far and every game had an attendance of over 20,000 fans. The one exception was the Miami Beach Bowl, which featured Tulsa and Central Michigan. The attendance for

that game was 15,262. Several games pushed 30,000 and the New Orleans Bowl actually hit 35,000 fans.

Of course, a lot of it has to do with the teams that are in each bowl game. Tulsa and Central Michigan only drew 15,000 whereas the New Orleans Bowl, which pitted Southern Miss against UL Lafayette, drew the 35,000. Obviously, the location for both schools had a major impact on that games attendance figures.

Now I realize that a lot of the bowl games will have a lot more attendees once we get to the core of the bowl season, so the figures will go up dramatically. Obviously, the playoff games will be packed out, as will the end of the year bowl games when the top 25 teams begin battling.

I think the current bowl lineup is just fine. Maybe the numbers don't add up as far as attendance goes, but the Bowl games are supported by corporate sponsorships, so there is plenty of money to go around. Keep the bowls the way they are. Let kids on the 82 teams keep playing a little longer. What does it hurt anyway? Plus, we get to see more college football. How is that bad?

...

Moore was born in Wichita, Kan., to Robert and Penne. The family spent time in Kansas, Florida, Tennessee, New York and eventually Moline, Illinois, as his dad's career as an aviation mechanic instructor dictated.

While Robert's job meant he wasn't around "as much as we'd like," Dayton admired his father's work ethic and dedi-



The Moore Family: Robert, Avery, Dayton, Ashley and Marianne while in Israel in 2015.

cation to provide for his family. He also saw more than enough of a glimpse to understand what a "spiritual leader" looked like.

"I knew a relationship with Jesus was important because I saw that modeled," Dayton said. "My father, he was my hero, like a lot of little boys. When presented with the opportunity to have Jesus as a part of my life and accept Him into my heart and soul, it was a natural thing to do."

That decision grew deeper roots while Moore was playing baseball for Garden City (Kansas) Community College. He was invited to a Bible study, giving him perhaps one of his most formative early examples of what a positive clubhouse culture could foster.

"You're away from home for the first time, and you're looking for deeper relationships outside your family," Moore said. "And for the first time, I really understood."

That, in part, is why Kansas City always stayed with Moore and why he fully understands the privilege and platform that comes with being the Royals' general manager.

He is a driving force behind the Kansas City MLB Urban Youth Academy, which has a goal of providing free baseball, soft-

ball, educational and vocational programs for 1,000 local children. And, in 2014, he and Marianne started the "C" You In The Major Leagues Foundation to use youth baseball to develop character-driven leaders, help families in crisis, and support education and faith-based initiatives. His speaking calendar each December and January is packed with appearances on behalf of Fellowship of Christian Athletes and other ministries. He has encouraged and exhorted 300-plus pastors in the middle of Kansas City, and he has hopped in a car for a 10-hour round trip to Dodge City, Kansas, to share the gospel and motivate donors and FCA staff.

"He's the first person to the event and the last person out," said Marcellus Casey, FCA's multi-area director for Missouri and Kansas. "The resources he has he holds with an open hand, and that increases our FCA ministry."

For Moore, road trips are a swirl of relationship-building and competition. He always drives, Casey said, and he sets a clear goal of how many cars he must pass in between stops for gas. When he does slow down, he makes friends.

"At every gas station, I would be at the door ready to leave, and Dayton would be talking to them, asking how their crops are doing, knowing someone they know," Casey said. "He's going to get to know people, in the hotel lobby or wherever we stopped for lunch."

...

Some of Dayton Moore's favorite words—accountability, transparency, forgiveness, empowered, unashamed—are not merely tidy catchphrases to put on a Twitter bio. (He doesn't have an account.) Rather, they are the template for everyday life, in every area of his life, and Moore said they are "absolutely crucial to have the proper balance as a husband and father and professional."

Moore worked his way into Major League Baseball as an area scout with the Atlanta Braves, steadily climbing the ladder from 1994 through 2005 as a key member of a front office that oversaw 11 consecutive division titles.

Moore has made it a priority to engage with the Kansas City community, like speaking at local events.

In the early 2000s, Moore discovered the book, "The Management Methods of Jesus: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Business." The mix of everyday situations and eternal perspective resonated with

Moore. When he took the Royals job, he set his own management approach with many of those lessons in mind. Among the central tenets: forgiveness and relentlessness. He expects those of himself before everyone else, and he knows the



Moore has made it a priority to engage with the Kansas City community, like speaking at local events.

two are intricately connected.

"There's all kinds of critics in this game. Even people within your organization that think there's a better way to do things," Moore said. "I can never recall a single day in my life where I haven't thought about this game. But the truth of the matter is you go through periods where you do think about quitting."

In the mid-1970s through the 1985 season, the Royals went to the playoffs seven times and played in the World Series twice—winning once.

But following the 1985 championship, for nearly three decades, that era became nostalgic at best as hope dwindled in a city known for its sports passion. From 1986 through 2012, Kansas City lost 90 or more games 13 times and never even sniffed the playoffs.

Yes, that includes the first five-plus seasons of Moore's tenure. Under many modern paradigms, that would have had everyone from the fans to owner David Glass question the prudence of "the process" Moore is so fond of citing.

By 2013, the Royals turned the corner. They finished 86-76, which set the stage for the following two seasons: two American League pennants, one World Series title, 11 spots on the All-Star team.

"My only goal is to do the right thing every day and treat people the right way," Moore has told Newsome. "If I get to do it long enough, I promise it will work. If we run out of time, we will never regret a day of it."



5 Bathroom Upgrades for Style, Function

(Family Features)

Home upgrades are all about adding comfort, convenience and beauty, and the bathroom is no exception. It may be the smallest room in the house, but these ideas for enhancing the most functional features of your bathroom are sure to make a big impact.

Whether your goal is a spa-like oasis or simply bringing a new level of sophistication to this all-important room in your house, there are a few key areas to focus your attention.

Sink: More than just a bowl for capturing water when you wash or brush, the sink can actually be a statement piece within your bathroom. More traditional options range from decorative self-rimming to sleek undermount styles, while vessels in all shapes, sizes and materials lend an artistic flair. Wall mounted sinks reflect a trend toward floating vanities and today's pedestals are anything but boring.

Toilet: Keeping a sparkling clean bathroom is now easier with the new



American Standard ActiClean self-cleaning toilet, which also offers stylish design and affordability. The ActiClean combines the power of revolutionary VorMax flushing technology with a fully integrated self-cleaning system, eliminating the need for in-bowl or in-tank cleaning solutions. A convenient flip-up door on the tank's top houses the control panel for the cleaning system, which is activated at the user's touch for a one-minute Quick Clean or 10-minute Deep Clean cycle.

The toilet tank and bowl feature EverClean, a permanent finish that inhibits the growth of stain and odor-



causing bacteria, mold and mildew on the surface to help the toilet stay cleaner longer. The system, which operates on four AA alkaline batteries, runs independently from the normal toilet flushing operation, meaning the toilet will always flush, even if the cleaning cartridge or batteries have run out. Additional features include a slow-close lid and anti-slip bumpers that lock the seat in place.

Tub: Few people will argue that nothing beats a long soak in a warm tub. Now, the bathtub's appearance and special features can be specially tailored to satisfy your personal preferences. Extra-deep, extra-wide, with and without jets, free-standing or integrated into the architecture — the possibilities are nearly endless. Keep access in mind when you choose your style — don't select a tub so deep it's difficult to climb in and out, and remember practical considerations like bathing children.

Floors: Because it offers broad aesthetic appeal and it's relatively easy to keep clean, tile flooring is a top choice for bathrooms. Not only can you add style with the color and texture of

the tile, you can take your flooring to even greater levels with special patterns and designs. Another flooring enhancement: heated coils that run below the surface to keep cool tile warm and cozy when it's cold outside.

Storage: While aesthetic appeal is important, a bathroom without suffi-

cient storage space is truly lacking in function. Be sure your design includes a place to keep essentials like towels and personal grooming items. With the wide range of options available, it's easy to create a bathroom that delivers the perfect combination of style and function.

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Annette's Tip:
This is the time of year to begin planning this year's garden and getting your seed ordered. Seed catalogs are always interesting to read because virtually every variety offered is wonderful according to the description. However, some of the varieties offered may do better in the North Eastern U.S. while others are developed for Southern growers. Our Midwest climate is one of the most challenging because of the great variances in our climatic conditions. Temperatures, humidity, precipitation, wind speed and cloud cover fluctuate greatly. Before ordering any seed you are not familiar with, and paying the shipping and handling charges, give us a call to see if we stock the seed or to tell you if a certain variety will produce in this region.

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233-3537 www.CommunityChurchKS.com

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Scott Bond 423-0406, Jack Snavelly 760-3513
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First Friday is Big in North Topeka

First Friday is quite the celebration in North Topeka these days, bringing people to the area in record numbers. Besides the Art Walk in NOTO, other North Topeka businesses have begun joining in and coordinating complementary events. Many are making plans to make 2017 better than ever in NOTO and the entire North Topeka area.

On January 6, First Friday includes the ribbon-cutting event at Topeka Rescue Mission's new Children's Palace, located at 601 NW Harrison St. The official ribbon cut-



ting and dedication ceremony begins at 4:30 p.m. The public is invited to attend the brief ceremony, followed by an open house that runs until 7:30 pm. Guests can tour the facility which will care for up to 124 homeless and formerly homeless children. For info: contact Jessica Hosman at jhosman@trmonline.org or 785.730.8802.



Entertainment can also be found on First Fridays. Honeywise will be performing at J & J's, 917 N. Kansas Ave. Also, there is usually a variety of

street performers and other free live music during the artwalk up and down the Avenue.



The restaurants, locally owned shops, art galleries and studios have also become favorite art walk destinations.

Here are a few more scheduled events in the North Topeka area:


NEW YEAR'S EVE MASQUERADE! – Dec. 31, 10 PM - 2 AM, the Wheel Barrel, 925 N Kansas Ave. There will be a \$10 cover at the door which will get you free hors d'oeuvres, party favors, and a glass of champagne at midnight!!

THE WRIGHTS – Jan. 1, 11am, Kansas Ave. UMC, 1029 N. Kansas Ave.. 289-8905. thewrightsmministries.com

ARTIST MEET AND GREET – Jan. 5, 4-6pm, Creations of Hope: A gallery of advocacy through art. Want to learn more about the Creations of Hope Gallery? The public and other artists are encouraged to drop by, learn about the gallery, ask questions, or sign up to exhibit.

SUNRISE OPTIMIST CLUB – Meets every Tue., 6:30am, Sunrise Optimist Complex, 720 NW 50th St. For info: Gary, 246-1291.

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM – every Mon., Wed., & Fri., 1:30pm, Rolling Hills Christian Church, 4530 NW Hiawatha Place (US Hwy 75 & NW 46th St.) 785286-060 or office@rhctopeka.or

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FIVE STORIES OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO CHRISTIANS IN 2016

by **Palmer Holt**

As we look back on 2016, we see a year that brought celebration and sadness, hope and horror, the unexpected and the unbelievable. But, it was also a year where Christian prayer and action made a difference, even if challenges remain.

During the year, we saw a respected defender of Christian virtue laid to rest and an unlikely candidate triumph, as well as a fairy-tale summer sports miracle and a series of malignant massacres. 2016 writes its final chapters we can take a moment to reflect on news stories that might have special significance for Christians.

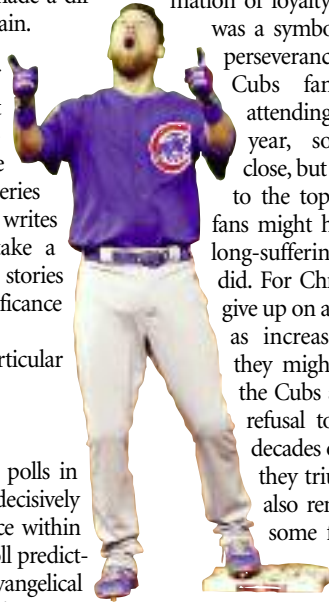
Five stand out, in no particular order.

Presidential election

Evangelicals flocked to the polls in November to demonstrate decisively that they remain a moral force within America. With nearly every poll predicting defeat of their candidate, evangelical votes surged beyond expectation, propelling Donald Trump into the White House. To be sure, not all evangelicals supported Trump, but by far the majority did. To them, he represented a candidate who was open to hearing their concerns about cultural and legal changes that run counter to common Christian values. Trump's positions also resonated with middle-class voters, a group that has been shrinking for the last 20 years, but is far from gone. As the new year approaches, Trump supporters will need to remain united in their desire for a better nation, if they want to see their concerns turn into concrete changes.

The World Series

Like the plot of a feel-good movie, the Chicago Cubs, after more than a century, finally brought home a World Series championship to the Windy City. For long-suffering Cubs fans, it was an affirmation of loyalty. For Christians, it was a symbol of the power of perseverance. For 108 years, Cubs fans have waited, attending games year after year, sometimes getting close, but never quite getting to the top. While individual fans might have despaired, the long-suffering fan base never did. For Christians inclined to give up on an America they see as increasingly secularized, they might want to look to the Cubs and their adamant refusal to give up. Despite decades of disappointment, they triumphed. And they also reminded us to have some fun and enjoy the excitement along the way.



Antonin Scalia

No one doubted the force of his convictions or the intellectual clarity of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. His voice stood for conservative Christian values in the highest court of the land for 30 years, and he often articulated those values with a vigor that gave added weight to his opinions and his dissents. He held that the court's decisions should be guided by what the Constitution meant to those who wrote it, leading him to oppose same-sex marriage and support attempts to curb abortion. Scalia, who was named to the Supreme Court in 1986, died in



Photos (clockwise from top): Trump began a "Thank You" tour in December, visiting the states not won by a Republican in decades. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. A Yezidi mother and children fleeing ISIS advances in Iraq. (Inset): Chicago Cubs outfielder Ben Zobrist celebrates after hitting a RBI double against the Cleveland Indians in the 10th inning in game seven of the 2016 World Series at Progressive Field in Cleveland, Ohio, on November 3, 2016.



February 2016. Republicans in Congress vowed to delay consideration of a replacement until 2017 to ensure that Scalia's seat would be filled by another conservative, and it will be up to President Trump to make that nomination.

Transgender bathroom bills

Few issues seemed more puzzling than the spate of transgender bathroom bills, one of which was a primary reason that North Carolina Gov. McCrory lost his bid for re-election. North Carolina was the only state that implemented a bathroom bill, though it was considered in 18 other states as well. Practically, a bathroom bill

is meant to bar transgender individuals from using a restroom other than the one that represents their sex at birth. But there were many other factors related to the new law. North Carolina's bill is in abeyance while a similar case is being reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court, giving thoughtful Christians a chance to pray that the right decision comes from our nation's highest judicial body.

ISIS genocide of Christians

The radical Islamic state of ISIS continues its appalling series of atrocities — slaughtering Christians systematically as part of its religious mission — as it fights

for its life in Syria and Iraq. ISIS has targeted Christians for several years, and many have fled towns and villages to avoid being under its control. ISIS's mantra of blood and death has been a scourge in the Middle East and a motivator of terror attacks in the West. Many Christian organizations have reached out to the victims of ISIS, and they continue to ask for prayers for God's guidance so that the afflicted may be comforted and the slaughter might end.

As 2017 begins, Christians can look back with both pride and alarm. Much has been accomplished, but much remains to be done.

The 10 best family-friendly movies of 2016

by **Michael Foust**

Too often, the phrases "family friendly" and "good movie" just don't go together. I watched several films in 2016 that certainly could be considered family friendly -- but artistically were atrocious. I also viewed quite a few movies that I'd label "good" -- but that had content not suitable for children.

Thankfully, though, I watched several very good films in 2016 that also are appropriate for families.

Here are my top nine, in alphabetical order:

Ben Hur (2016 – PG-13) – Perhaps Hollywood should not have remade the 1959 classic, but this new version is good, nevertheless. Ben-Hur is set during the time of Christ and spotlights two brothers: Judah Ben-Hur (Jack Huston),



a Jewish prince, and his adoptive brother, Messala (Toby Kebbell), a Roman army officer. Their relationship is tested when Judah is falsely accused of attempting to assassinate Pontius Pilate and is sentenced to work as a slave. Recommended for teens.

Finding Dory (PG) – Dory is a regal blue tang fish who was split up from her parents years ago and has been searching for them ever since. Her task would be difficult enough in the midst of a big blue sea, but it's compounded because she has short-term memory loss. She doesn't remember their names, where they lived, or even what they looked like. Finding Dory is among the cleanest mainstream films I've seen. It also has a great message about disabilities. Recommended for all ages.

Hillsong: Let Hope Rise (PG) – Hillsong United has sold more than 17 million albums, packed arenas around the world, and seen their songs skyrocket in popularity within churches. But few Christians know the story behind the band that produced "Oceans" and "Touch The Sky." Let Hope Rise was directed by acclaimed documentarian Michael John Warren and is one of the best music documentaries I've watched. Recommended for all ages.

I Am Not Ashamed (PG-13) – This one tells the true story of Rachel Scott, who was the first person killed during the Columbine High School mass shooting



in 1999. When asked by one of the gunmen, "Do you still believe in God?" she reportedly responded, "You know I do" – before being shot. But the massacre itself lasts barely a minute in the film, which instead spotlights her desire to live out her faith in a public school. Recommended for older children and teens.

Miracles From Heaven (PG) – Based on real events, it follows the story of a 9-year-old girl who was suffering from a painful and incurable abdominal disorder when she fell 30 feet from a tree and was feared dead, only to survive and discover that her body had been healed – not just from the fall but from the abdominal condition. It's a great film to discuss the role of miracles in today's world. Jennifer Garner stars as the daughter's mom. Recommended for older children and teens.

Pete's Dragon (PG) – For years, the older folks in the area have told stories of a dragon that lives deep in the wilderness, although most people assumed it was simply a legend. But not Pete, a 10-year-old Tarzan-looking orphan whose parents died in a car crash – and who wondered into the forest and befriended a real-life flying green dragon he calls Elliot. My favorite line in the film: "Just because you don't see something doesn't mean it's not true." There's some theological truth in that, don't you think? Recommended for all ages.

Risen (PG-13) – This historical fiction film is built on a simple premise: How would Roman officials -- and specifically Pilate -- have reacted when they learned of



the empty tomb? Risen posits that Pilate would have ordered his military to search for the body of Christ. What follows is a detective-type story that is inspiring and moving – even if we assume we know how it all will end. Joseph Fiennes plays Clavius, the man who searches for the body. Recommended for older children and teens.

Rogue One (PG-13) – Jyn Erso is like a lot of young people in the Star Wars universe -- separated from her parents at a young age, she has grown up with a streak of defiance and a dogged determination that either is going to make her the hero or the goat. In other words, she is just the type of person the Rebel Alliance needs in its quest to halt the Empire's march of death through the galaxy. Rogue One has quite a bit of violence, but it also has no language or sexuality. It's No. 4 on my list

of best Star Wars films. Recommended for older children and teens.

Storks (PG) – Nate is an only child who wants a sibling, and so he sends a handwritten letter to Stork Mountain, asking the company to bring him a brother. There's one big problem: The storks are no longer in the baby business. Fear not, though, because the letter ends up in the hands of a clueless company worker, who accidentally turns on the non-operational baby-making machine. The company CEO vows to stop the delivery. This hilarious movie has a great lesson for workaholic parents. But my recommendation comes with an asterisk: A rapid sequence at the very end shows different types of couples receiving babies, including two moms and two dads. My son missed the split-second scene, but it's worth knowing about ahead of time. Otherwise, recommended for all ages.

Jungle Book (2016 -- PG) – I'm not sure how many live-action Jungle Book movies we truly need – there was one in 1994 and another one is set for 2018 -- but this latest version is a delight. It tells the well-known story of a young boy named Mowgli, raised by wolves, who is trying to get back to the "man village." But his nemesis, the tiger Shere Khan, hopes to kill him first. The CGI version of the animals is spectacular. A little scary at times, but mostly recommended for all ages.