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Christian Filmmaker Under Fire for Movie on Netflix Critiquing Hook-Up Culture



by **Tess Farrand**

A recent Netflix documentary is coming under flack by liberal critics for having a hidden agenda. *Liberated: The New Sexual Revolution*, released in 2017 and follows the sexual culture of today by looking at spring break and the consequences of partying behavior during this infamous week off from school. Yet, in contrast to many Netflix options, *Liberated* poses a very telling question about the sexual landscape of our world and the darkness behind it.

Benjamin Nolot, a Christian documentarian, directed *Liberated*. Within the first few minutes of the movie, audiences are confronted with the sad truth of today's oversexualized cultures. Many spring break partiers were interviewed on the beach or on the way to celebrate the week and were asked about their motives for sex, and the

■ Please see **HOOK-UP** page 3



Legendary country singer Johnny Cash is one of many artists that have recorded the famous Christmas carol, *Silent Night*. I can usually get the first verse by memory, but the second I always need a little help. It goes like this, "Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar. Heavenly hosts sing, "Alleluia! Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!"

Savior. It is a word that shows up in many Christmas carols and used a lot around Christmastime. Jesus name



CLINT DECKER

President and Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.

hopefortoday

means "Savior" and it conveys the idea of to save or deliver.

Jesus was a Jew and in His culture

the meaning of someone's name carried great significance. It was not given to Him by His parents though, as was typical. In a stunning event, an angel from heaven announced a message from God to Joseph and Mary, saying they would have a child and "... you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

This beautiful and miraculous little baby was destined to grow up and provide a way for all mankind to be deliv-

■ Please see **SIN** page 2

"A Big Band Christmas" comes to Jayhawk Theatre



Several downtown businesses have partnered to bring "A Big Band Christmas" to the Jayhawk Theatre on Saturday, December 8, beginning at 7pm.

Topeka Swing Dance has collaborated with Jayhawk Theatre and others to present this special event, and there will also be a limited edition Jayhawk Theatre ornament created by Wolfe's Camera Shop downtown, and sold as a part of the VIP package. Leaping Llamas and David's Jewelers have contributed to the VIP ticket as well.

Christmas music will be presented by 785 Big Band and Topeka Swing Dance. There will be a beginner dance lesson from 7 to 7:30 pm.

The Celtic Fox and Hazel Hill Chocolate will also be part of this event, providing spirits and chocolate treats.

A portion of each ticket sold goes toward the restoration of the historic Jayhawk Theatre to help bring entertainment to Topeka for years to come.

To purchase tickets to "A Big Band Christmas" go to www.jayhawktheatre.org

TBC presents LIGHT SHOW

Topeka Bible Church will once again present their legendary Light Show with all the sights and sounds of Christmas, telling the story of the birth of Christ through brilliant Christmas lights and talented live musicians and vocalists.

The show includes toe-tapping Christmas favorites as well a few new numbers. There will be complimentary refreshments, a children's play area with inflatables, and as always - free glow sticks for everyone!

TBC is presenting this free event as a gift to the Topeka community. Donations will not be accepted.

Light Show will be presented Friday thru Sunday, December 14 through 16,

with shows hourly at 6, 7, 8 and 9 PM in the College Avenue Building. Saturday and Sunday will also have a 5 PM show.

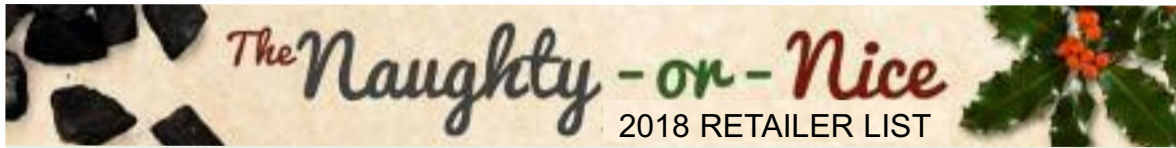
Last year, more than 5000 people experienced the Light Show. There's no reserved seating, so be sure to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to performance time.

Guests should enter the east parking lot on Mulvane St, between 11th and Munson.

- Overflow parking locations are:
- TBC north parking lot, NW corner of 11th & Mulvane
 - Lowman Hill Elementary parking areas

■ Please see **LIGHT SHOW** page 3





Which companies made the naughty list this Christmas?

Have you grown sick and tired of national retail chains bowing to the very small anti-Christmas minority?

If so, then take a good look at the list below, and use it to fight back when you do your Christmas shopping!

The American Family Association and Liberty Council have each released their annual "Naughty-or-Nice" list that categorizes retailers and how they approach the Christmas season.

The two organizations reviewed up to four areas to determine if a company was "Christmas-friendly" in their advertising: print media (newspaper inserts), broadcast media (radio/television), website and/or personal visits to the store. If a company's ad has references to items associated with Christmas (trees, wreaths, lights, etc.), it was considered as an attempt to reach "Christmas" shoppers.

If a company has items associated with Christmas, but did not use the word "Christmas," then the company is considered as censoring "Christmas."

AFA continually updates the list, so check afa.net for updates. Want to report a company? Send your detailed report to christmas@afa.net.

"You might ask why we think this is

an important battle. Well, secular liberals in our nation are bent on minimizing and even removing any mention of Christianity from the public square. And no other time of the year reminds people of Jesus Christ and America's Christian heritage more than the Christmas season," AFA President Tim Wildmon explained.



Liberty Council also monitors cases across the U.S. where there is intimidation by officials and groups to remove the celebration of Christmas in public and private spaces.

These threats include atheist groups seeking to ban nativity scenes from public property, senior living centers that prohibit residents from singing Christmas carols, public schools that ban students from wearing the Christmas colors of red and green, school officials who censor religious words from Christmas carols, and retailers which

profit from Christmas while pretending it does not exist, according to the group's statement.

Liberty Counsel provides a memorandum to offer guidance regarding publicly and privately sponsored religious holiday displays, religious holidays in public schools and the rights of public school students in the context of religious holidays. For example, publicly sponsored nativity scenes on public property are constitutional so long as there is a secular symbol of the holiday in the general context. Privately sponsored nativity scenes or religious symbols are also permissible on public property that has been opened to the general public for expressive activity. No secular symbol is necessary.

"Celebrating Christmas is legal in public schools and in public venues. In the private retail market, consumers can choose to patronize stores that recognize Christmas and refuse to buy from those that pretend it does not exist," said Mat Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel.

More information is available at the website, www.lc.org. You can also stay up to date on the subject and participate in the discussion by visiting the Liberty Council Facebook page.

2018 listing of top retailers and how they recognize Christmas

Companies FOR "Christmas"

- Ace Hardware
- AFA Online Store: afa.net
- American Eagle Outfitters
- Banana Republic
- Bass Pro Shops
- Bath & Body Works
- Bed Bath & Beyond
- Belk
- Big Lots
- Books-A-Million
- Cabella's
- Cracker Barrel
- Dillard's
- Dollar Tree
- HSN.com
- Hallmark
- Harbor Freight
- Hobby Lobby
- Home Depot
- Hy-Vee
- JC Penney
- JoAnn Fabrics & Crafts
- Kirklands

- Kmart
- Kroger
- Lowe's
- L.L. Bean
- Macy's
- Marshall's
- Mejor
- Menard's
- Michael's Stores
- Neiman Marcus
- Pier One Imports
- QVC.com
- Sam's Club
- Scheel's Sporting Goods
- Super D Drug
- Toys R Us
- True Value
- Walmart
- Zappos.com

Companies marginal on "Christmas"

- Academy Sports
- Amazon.com
- CVS Pharmacy
- Dollar General

- Dick's Sporting Goods
- Kohl's
- Rite Aid
- Sears
- Staples
- Starbucks
- TJ Maxx
- Target

Companies AGAINST "Christmas"

- Best Buy
- Barnes & Noble
- Family Dollar
- Foot Locker
- Gap Stores
- Limited Brands
- Maurice's
- Nordstrom's
- Office Depot
- Office Max
- Old Navy
- Petsmart
- Stein Mart
- Victoria's Secret
- Walgreens



Life Lessons From a Little One

BELIEVE

by Jessica S. Hosman



Jessica Hosman

Zechariah is a snuggly and lovable kid when it comes to his momma. He runs to me with excitement when he's happy; he calls out to me when scared. He cries to me in pain... the heart pain and wounds inflicted by others, and the physical pain when his body is failing or weak. In all of these instances, he runs to me because he belongs. He believes that he's loved and knows he won't find rejection in my arms.

I also work with children every day who are just the opposite of Zechariah in many of these ways. Their young little lives have been shattered by traumas and their innocent eyes and hearts tainted by the stains of this world. Though only in their first few years of life, at times the pain within them is so great they forget how to be kids and don't realize they are loved or belong.

When they feel joy, they try to hide it for fear others will mock. When they're afraid, they run away instead of into the arms of those who are safe. When they feel pain, the silent tears may fall yet they try to mask it, faking a front of bravery to try and protect themselves from the vulnerability so often abused in the past.

Even so, the same love and compassion I have for my son, though different, is the same. It overflows from my heart for each one of them. Though they run, I keep trying. Though they yell, I keep loving. Though they fight, I keep embracing. They may not be "my" children, but they are children; and they do belong.

God looks down and sees all of these children. The ones who are warm and snuggly, and the ones who pretend to be hardened and cold. Though their outward actions are different, in God's eyes, they are the same. Children. Loved. Accepted. His. Not just when they are endearing. But also when they are running away, yelling, angry and scared. Especially then. He's there.

Similarly, we don't have to be perfect. We just have to be His. And even when we don't feel like it, act like it, or believe it - that's who we are.

I've been rejected much over this past year and seen children with behaviors so extreme that very few would even try to go near. But I've seen those same children over time - after many months, endless prayers and countless tears - begin to transform... once they began believing the truth that they are loved.

What do you believe? Do you believe you're just going through the motions of life and no one really cares? Or do you believe God has a purpose for your life - even today, even in your mess - and that you are fiercely loved?

For a moment, imagine your most treasured possession here on earth. Now imagine giving that gift to someone who you know will receive it with joy, take care of it, and treasure it just as much as you do. Now imagine giving that same gift to someone you know who has rejected your love, trampled your heart, abused you or inflicted great pain. Can you imagine it? It's probably not easy. Yet that's what Christmas is.

God gave His most treasured possession to those who would, with gratitude, receive; and those who, with resistance, would not. Jesus. A babe. Given to us, so that we too could become children. Children who, regardless of how we've behaved in the past, can today be transformed by God's love. But we have to receive it. And to receive it, we have to believe.

We have to believe we are worth it. We have to believe we are accepted. And we have to believe we are loved. Just like Zechariah. Just like the small children I work with who fight to believe it every day, but eventually embrace it and are transformed. It's a truth that rings clearer than any Christmas bells that will chime, and louder than any sleigh bells that will ring. May you hear it, embrace it, and be transformed as you do. Merry Christmas with love. You are accepted. You are loved. And you are indeed His.

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For appointment, please call 785-233-4247
Hairslingers - 1406 SW 17th St., Topeka

TNO Youth Ministry to reach more at-risk kids

Currently, Shawnee County statistics report 759 children are in Foster Care, and 554 youth are homeless. These numbers do not reflect the high number of children who live in neglect and abuse. Topeka Public Schools report over 75% of students receive free or reduced lunch at school. But on the weekends, holidays and summer they are at risk of Food Insecurity/Childhood Hunger. This means they may not know where their next meal will come from.

The Topeka North Outreach's (TNO) Youth Ministry provides vital services for children in our community by reaching out and meeting basic needs such as food, hygiene, clothing and school supplies. TNO then workd to build a relationship with the child to teach them of their true worth and value by mentoring, tutoring and discipling them. TNO's Youth Ministry shares the love of God and encouragement in the following ways:

OPERATION BACKPACK: Works to alleviate childhood hunger by providing Weekend Food Sacks filled with nutritious, kid-friendly food items that are easy for youth to prepare. Sacks are sent home with school children on Fridays, and the day before a holiday to ensure they have food every day of the week. The summer



program distributes food sacks at several pick-up sites.

VBS CLUB: Works directly with children to provide after-school and summertime activities. Shares Bible stories, crafts, music, games, service projects, field trips, home-

work help, snacks and an evening meal each Friday. Teaches social skills, manners & etiquette.

HYGIENE MINISTRY: Distributes hygiene kits to area children and schools. Teaches personal care.

SCHOOL SUPPLY GIVEAWAY: Bookbags and school supplies are given away at the start of the new school year.

SCHOLARSHIP: Limited assistance for school enrollment, activity fees, and clothing needs.

TNO's Youth Ministry serves children from Low Income, Working Parent, Single Parent, Foster/Adoptive Parent, Grandparent Parent, and/or Disabled Parent homes.

This ministry provides these vital services to over 600 children every week. TNO's Youth Ministry goal is to raise \$12,000 in order to reach 50 more children every week during 2019. The yearly cost to provide these services is approximately \$240 per child, \$20 per month.

Topeka North Outreach Inc. is an all-

volunteer ministry, so every dollar goes directly to serving local children. You can lend your financial support in the following ways:

Secure Online Giving: Visit our website at www.topekanorthoutreach.org and select the second DONATE button, which is reserved for TNO Youth Ministry.

Checks: Make payable to: TNO Youth Ministry

Mailing Address: TNO Youth Ministry, 210 NW Menninger Road, Topeka, KS 66617, 785-286-1370

Email Address: youth@topekanorthoutreach.org

If you are interested in helping this ministry with your prayers and tax deductible financial support, visit www.topekanorthoutreach.org for more information

LIGHT SHOW

continued from page 1

• Topeka Public Library parking lot, NE and SE corner of 11th & Garfield

When guests arrive, traffic attendants will help them find a parking space or direct them to overflow parking.

Seating will begin approximately 10 minutes before performance time.

NOTE: Be aware that Light Show is a concert-style event, with flashing lights and music at a high volume.

For more information, call 785-234-5545, 8:30 AM-5 PM Monday-Friday.

C5Alive Christmas Luncheon to celebrate with music, games

The monthly C5Alive "POWER Luncheon" will be a Christmas Celebration held at fairlawn Plaza Mall, on Dec. 13, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Christmas music, games, photos and fun will be the order of the day.

The cost to attend the luncheons 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.

Luncheon meals are high quality, usually catered by Aboud's/Engroff's or other fine caterers.

Lamar Hunt, Jr., will be the featured speaker at the January 10 luncheon.

For more details on these and

other luncheons, stay tuned to the C5Alive facebook page and website: www.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 N. Kansas Avenue and in Garfield Park on the day before Easter.

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.



Hunt, Jr.

SIN

continued from page 1

ered from their sins. This is where the American version of Christmas loses some of its glitter. It is a statement of truth to say, sin is the reason for Christmas. If there was no sin, there would be no need for a Christmas Savior.

Sin is an unseen spiritual element that lives in each of our souls. It is an evil that dwells inside us. This mysterious presence reveals itself with every subtle lie, burst of anger or gleaming sign of pride we show. It condemns us before our Creator to eternal death. This is who we are, but most likely we cannot imagine thinking about ourselves this way when opening Christmas presents, gathering for holiday dinners or solemnly singing Silent Night.

We generally think of ourselves as good people. Not perfect by any means, but to say evil lives within us and we are sinners sitting under the judgment of God, that does not sound very merry. Even so, it is true.

The good news of Christmas is that Jesus came to deliver you from your sin. He grew up and suffered, died, was

buried and rose again from the dead. When He rose, He conquered sin and death. He rose to give you a new heart, new mind and new life.

The good news of Christmas is truly good, but you cannot appreciate it until you understand and accept the bad news about your condition. No matter how you think of yourself. No matter how others perceive you. Before God you are a sinner with a dark and evil heart. When you accept that, you will begin to understand why Jesus was born to be your Savior. Then you will behold the glory and wonder of Christmas like never before.

A prayer for you to pray— "Lord God, help me to see myself as you see me. A sinner with a dark and evil heart. Help me to see how Jesus came to be my Savior from my sin. Oh God, forgive me. Take my life. Change me. Be the Lord of my life this Christmas. In Jesus' name. Amen."

Listen to Clint Decker's radio broadcast, The Unbreakable Truth, at 2:50am & 10:50am on Upper Room Radio, KFGB 97.7FM, Topeka's local Christian radio station. He can be reached at cdecker@greatawakenings.org

HOOK-UP

continued from page 1

answers are usually exactly what you'd expect.

A recent article came out against the documentary, calling Nolot and his team "Christian fundamentalists." The piece blindsided Nolot, and as such, has spurred controversy around his intention for his documentary. For instance, when he and his team took Liberated to screenings and universities around the country and abroad, many viewers were unhappy with the portrayal of onscreen events because they showed the emptiness in hook-up culture and one-night-stands. One viewer relayed his distaste, saying Liberated painted "casual sex as inherently disempowering."

These liberal critics gathered that Nolot and his Liberated team kept their conservative beliefs about sex before marriage quiet in order to "push their

agenda." Yet, Nolot never hid his thoughts on how society has devalued sex. He said, "Sex means something, and if it doesn't, then why is adultery a thing? And if it doesn't, then why is rape a thing? Treating [sex] with the reverence or respect it deserves is a way to move past the rape culture that we are currently living in."

The piece went through Nolot's previous documentary about sex-trafficking along with his connection to religious institutions such as the International House of Prayer in Kansas City and Exodus Cry, an organization that was birthed out of prayer to help end sex slavery. In addition, a tweet from 2013 on Nolot's was unearthed that states Nolot opposes homosexual marriage as it contradicts God's heart for marriage.

The article unpacks another person's negative view of the movie, "It's a 'shrewd' but alarming strategy... the solution offered by the groups behind this film is 'purity culture' and abstinence... It's very concerning to see this

film making its way to a mainstream audience via Netflix."

Liberated hopes to present the sexual landscape of our culture as it is rather than preach about it. Like it or not, Christian filmmakers have the right to make movies however they want, just as any other religious filmmaker has that same right in the U.S. Not to mention the fact that it's near impossible to create a documentary without calling audiences to a greater sense of awareness, no matter what side of the argument viewers will take. This is why media discernment is so vital!

With Netflix pushing dangerous views of sexual promiscuity in many of its shows, it's encouraging to see a movie showing the many dangers that come with it.

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Border Agent Goes Public After Media Refuses to Report Caravan Using Kids as 'Human Shields'

by Malachi Bailey

After the establishment media slammed Border Patrol agents for defending themselves with tear gas during a confrontation Sunday at the U.S.-Mexico border, a Border Patrol agent representative is going public to let the American people know what is really happening.

On Monday, the establishment media peddled a dubious photograph of a woman and her children apparently running from tear gas.

Obviously, the media loved that image because it falsely depicts the migrants as mainly peaceful women and children, despite the fact that the caravan consists of mostly adult men.

In reality, the migrants weren't peaceful. They were attacking Border Patrol agents with rocks and bottles.

Hector Garza, vice president of the National Border Patrol Council, appeared on Fox News' "The Ingraham Angle" to explain the situation to host Laura Ingraham.

"(Border Patrol agents) were actually under attack. They were assaulted," Garza said.

This isn't surprising information to anybody with an ounce of common sense, but the establishment media wants you to believe that tear gas was deployed on innocent women and children.

"These migrants were throwing rocks, they were throwing glass bottles," Garza continued. "Some of our agents were hit on their heads, their helmets, with these rocks. There were minor injuries."

Similar reports of migrants throwing rocks to attack Mexican police came out last month.

It gets even worse. Garza also confirmed reports of migrants using women and children as shields on the front line.

"These migrants were using these children as human shields as they were launching rocks at our agents. So, they had no regard for human life," he said. "They did not care about the other migrants. They did not care about the



kids."

Naturally, that wasn't a focus of any mainstream media coverage of the event. Even a statement posted on Facebook by Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen that there were children used as "human shields" was treated with evident skepticism by news outlets like The Washington Post and The Daily Beast or simply ignored by others.

It's frankly an evil plan by the migrants. They used children as shields while they assaulted border patrol so the media would get a few photographs of children fleeing.

Apparently, the establishment media was happy to fall into their trap and try to pin wrongdoing on the Border Patrol.

However, all indications are that it was the migrants who were the abusing children by intentionally putting them in harm's way. No children had to be at that confrontation unless they were brought there.

If the migrants went through the legal channels to move to the United States, there wouldn't be a problem. Instead, they are violent and trying to illegally enter the country.

Contrary to the establishment media's reporting, these aren't peaceful migrants fleeing violence. As Garza's interview with Ingraham made clear, many of the migrants are bringing violence with them and using their children as shields.

— Westernjournal.com

6 Tips on Joining a Church Community

Two years ago I moved to Denver. I was pursuing the woman who is now my wife. She was starting at Denver Seminary, pursuing a master's degree in counseling. I was working from home, so finding work wouldn't be an issue.

I arrived in town on a Sunday, and that night EA and I took off to try the first church on our list. Being new to town, we ended up driving around for 30 minutes without any luck in finding it. We threw up our hands and gave up.

The next week I think we ended up perusing websites, and eventually decided not to go anywhere. We were 0-2.

The following Sunday we were determined. We drove downtown, and showed up for our first Sunday service.

This particular church was celebrating its fifth birthday, and—this being our first visit—we sort of felt like we'd shown up in a living room with a bunch of people we didn't know as they reminisced over the past five years.

The next week we showed up at our current church—Park Church. About 30 minutes into the service, I leaned over to EA and said, "I think this is the one." She nodded her head in agreement.

After the service, we went to the quick "Introductions Meeting" and learned more about the church.

That Thursday night, we showed up at one of the many small groups happening around the city.

The next Sunday, I played bass guitar with the worship band.

The Sunday after that, we greeted folks as they walked in the door and we administered the elements during Communion.

And we haven't looked back.

I'm now a music deacon at Park Church, and EA is heavily involved with all things aesthetic.

Two years ago, we had no idea that we would end up buying a condo in Denver—that we would love this place and feel so committed to it. And joining a church community has been the driving force in that, without a doubt.

A church community is important

For some couples, especially when they show up in a new city, it's easy to go into isolation mode and not meet any new people. I want to strongly encourage you



to avoid that temptation; getting involved in a solid church community is critical for any married couple.

Just last night, we had about 20 people over to our house for our small group meeting. After discussing the sermon, we broke into a guys' group and a girls' group. We talked about what's going on in our lives and prayed for each other.

One of the guys who has been showing up for about a month spoke up. "Last year was one of the darkest years of our lives," he said. "I was working nearly 80 hours a week, and my wife started having serious panic attacks. We've grown a lot, but I would never wish the year we had upon anyone."

But then he said that the past month had been one of the best months of their lives. "Since we started showing up here, my wife hasn't had a panic attack. And as I enter another year of teaching, I'm determined not to let it take me over like it did last year. And I need you guys to call me out if I stop showing up here."

Now you might be thinking, *That would never happen to me!* And you might be right. But I hope that story highlights the importance of having others around you who know and love you—who will keep you accountable and seek your best.

Here are a few tips on getting established in a new church:

1. Dive in and serve. There's a tendency among church-goers to consume and complain. Meaning, they sit in the pews and listen to the music and the preacher and then find things to nitpick about.

This is my charge to you: Don't fall into that trap. Get involved. Serve. If you don't like something, find a way to respectfully bring it up with the leadership. And come to the meeting with a solution in mind.

2. Show up consistently. Film director Woody Allen once said, "Seventy percent of success in life is showing up."

Make church a priority. If you have to schedule a flight home a little earlier to make it to church, do it. If you have to come home early from camping, do it. If you're tired and overwhelmed, go to church anyway. In fact, go because you're tired and overwhelmed. And if you go to a church where you can't show up tired and overwhelmed ... it might be time to switch churches.

Hebrews 10:23-25 tells us, *"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

It's important that we are reminded of the gospel on a consistent basis—in the songs that we sing, the messages we hear, and the elements we consume.

So show up. On Sundays. To other events, too. It's important. So act like it!

3. Invite people into your home. Our first apartment was tiny—only 600 square feet. But definitely enough room to have a couple over for dinner.

Often, we'd have 10-20 folks over on the weekend, too. We found a way to make it work. And we all grew closer together because of it.

There are conversations that will happen in your home that will never occur at church. Inviting people over provides a context for them to open up and share their lives with you ... and for you to do the same. It provides a context for you to not only get to know each other better, but also to speak truth to each other.

Having people over gives us the opportunity to live out the things we hear taught at church on Sunday. It gives us the opportunity to help each other transform into the type of people God wants us to be.

4. Invite friends to join you. Not long after moving, I started recruiting my friends. If you have close friends who are able to relocate, ask them to come join your community. It's important to have close friends around, and it often makes building that community that much easier.

5. Do it even when you don't want to.

We host a small group on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. And every Tuesday at 4 p.m. I start thinking, "Man, I really don't want to have people over tonight. Maybe we should cancel." And then, every Tuesday night at about 8:30, I start thinking, "I'm so glad we did that. My soul is refreshed."

There will be days when you want to quit. To burrow into a hole and isolate yourself. Resist the urge. Realize that community is hard, but community is good. As Hebrews 13:1-2 says:

"Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

6. Do it with others in mind. We have a newly-married couple in our small group. They first came to our group about a month before getting married. I still remember their first week back after the honeymoon.

When we split into groups of guys and girls for personal discussion and prayer, I asked this new husband how married life was treating him. He answered, "Not great. We had a huge fight yesterday. We're almost back to normal, but not quite there yet."

All the married guys in the group smiled knowingly, and I told him, "I'm really glad you're here, man." We did our best to speak truth into his life and pray for him. He left feeling encouraged.

Philippians 2:4 reminds us, *"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."*

If you're hosting a small group at your house, it's not primarily about you. It's about the folks showing up every week and what they're struggling with, and listening to them and praying with them.

It's not easy, but it's good

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Fix it or buy another?

Dear Dave,

I'm driving a 12-year-old car with 210,000 miles on it. The car needs close to \$2,000 in repairs, and it's worth \$5,000. I have \$40,000 in cash saved, \$40,000 in investments, and I make \$80,000 a year. I also have \$15,000 in student loan debt, but the only other thing I owe on is my house. Should I pay to repair the car, or buy something else in the \$15,000 price range?

Brett

Dear Brett,

Let's see, if you wrote a \$15,000 check for a newer car and wrote a \$15,000 check for the student loans, it would leave you with \$10,000. I wouldn't buy a \$15,000 car in your situation. I'd buy a \$10,000 car. You could probably sell the old one for around \$3,000 if it needs repairs, combine that with your money and get a \$13,000 car. Then, you could write a check and pay off the student loan debt.

With no car payment, no student loan payment, and a good car, you can really lean into your budget and saving money. You'd have no debt except your home, and you could rebuild your savings in a hurry. You'd be in really good financial shape in about six months. Plus, you'd have \$15,000 in the bank in the meantime!

—Dave

Sell personal car to help pay business debt?

Dear Dave,

My husband started his own one-man, small business as a handyman a little less than a year ago. He has netted \$17,000 in that time, but the business has about \$13,000 worth of debt. We've always kept personal finances and business separate, but what would you think about us selling one of our paid-for cars to help with the business debt?

Robin

Dear Robin,

There's nothing wrong with small beginnings. On top of that, you should always keep your business and personal finances separate. Aside from the debt, it sounds like he's off to a good start.

I think you'll be able to pay off the debt from your future income. If your husband started his business less than a year ago, he has spent that time trying to get things off the ground and working with very little name recognition. If he's good at what he does, and he continues to work hard and market himself properly, he should be able to double what he made in the last year.

To do that, however, he's going to have to spend some time in accountant mode. He needs to figure out the types of jobs he makes the most money on for the time he puts into them. I know a guy in our area who made more than



DAVE RAMSEY

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

davesays

\$100,000 as a handyman in the last year. I'm talking about \$100,000 in profit! His prices are higher than most in that line of work, but he's the best. He provides superb quality work, and he's always polite, on time, and on schedule.

If your husband does the research and crunches some numbers, I think he can dial it in and make a lot more money than he's making now. Find that sweet spot, and he'll continue to grow the business!

—Dave

Spending money in the budget?

Dear Dave,

We are debt-free except for our home, and we have six months of expenses set aside in our emergency fund. Every time we do our monthly budget, we set aside a small amount of personal spending money for us both. Do you see anything wrong with this?

DeAnna

Dear DeAnna,

There's absolutely nothing wrong with having a little fun money calculated into your monthly budget when you're in good financial shape. The problems start when couples don't agree on these kinds of things — or worse — when they start hiding stuff and lying to each other about where the money's going.

People either grow together or they grow apart when they get married. When you start hiding things from your spouse you're essentially keeping separate lives. That's a bad sign in any marriage, and in many cases, this kind of thing leads to divorce.

Having an agreed-upon budget isn't just telling your money what to do. It's also an important part of a healthy sharing and communication process between husband and wife!

—Dave

Forgive the debt?

Dear Dave,

Recently, I loaned some money to a good friend. He's going to help me with a big home project over the next few weekends, so do you think I should pay him for the work or forgive the debt instead?

Marvin

Dear Marvin,

First, I don't recommend loaning money to friends or family. Once in a while, things may work out and everyone ends up happy. But in most cases, it changes the dynamic

of the relationship. The Bible says the borrower is a slave to the lender, and there's a lot of truth in that.

The big question is whether you've already agreed to pay him for the work. Another consideration is how he views the situation. He may be looking at this as just helping a buddy, and he still owes the money.

Ask him what his expectations are before you guys start the job. Just talk to

him, and figure out what seems fair to you both. If you've already agreed on a certain amount, and the value of the work is close to what you loaned him, you might discuss the idea of paying back the debt that way.

But in the future, if someone close to you really needs financial help — and you're not enabling bad behavior in the process — just make the money a gift.

—Dave

Steps taxpayers can take now to get ready to file their taxes in 2019

By Peggy Beasterfield
Owner, Peggy's Tax and Accounting Service

The IRS reminds taxpayers there are steps they can take now to make sure their tax filing experience goes smoothly next year. Taking these steps will also help them avoid surprises when they file next year.



To help get people the information they need, the IRS just updated a special page on IRS.gov with steps to take now for the 2019 tax filing season.

Check withholding — do a Paycheck Checkup soon

Since employees typically only have one or two pay dates left this year, checking withholding soon is especially important. Because of the many changes in the tax law, refunds may be different than prior years for some taxpayers. Some may even owe an unexpected tax bill when they file their 2018 tax return next year. To avoid these kind of surprises, taxpayers should do a Paycheck Checkup to help them decide if they need to adjust their withholding or make estimated or more tax payments now.

Gather documents

The IRS urges all taxpayers to file a complete and accurate tax return by making sure they have all the needed documents before they file their return. This includes their 2017 tax return and:

- Year-end Forms W-2 from employers,

- Forms 1099 from banks and other payers and
- Forms 1095-A from the Marketplace for those claiming the premium tax credit.

Taxpayers should confirm that each employer, bank or other payer has a current mailing address or email address. Typically, these forms start arriving by mail — or are available online — in January. Check them over carefully, and if any of the information shown is inaccurate, the taxpayer should contact the payer right away for a correction.

Taxpayers should keep a copy of any filed tax return and all supporting documents for at least three years. Also, taxpayers using a software product for the first time may need the adjusted gross income amount from their 2017 return to properly e-file their 2018 return.

Choose e-file and direct deposit for a faster refund

Electronically filing a tax return is the most accurate way to prepare and file. Errors delay refunds, and the easiest way to avoid them is to e-file. Using tax preparation software is the best and simplest way to file a complete and accurate tax return. The software guides taxpayers through the process and does all the math. Combining direct deposit with electronic filing is the fastest way for a taxpayer to get their refund. With direct deposit, a refund goes directly into a taxpayer's bank account. They don't need to worry about a lost, stolen or undeliverable refund check.

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Christian Revival: This Season, Donald Trump Brings Faith in God Back to the Presidency

by Alex Parker

I don't expect Donald Trump to announce a transition into the ministry any time soon. But the man has really turned things around in the aftermath of Obama, with regard to invoking God and his blessings.

Barack wasn't much for it.

Watching the President's Thanksgiving message, it's impossible to ignore his recognition of a higher power.

Such a thing was — not very long ago — normal. We all know the founders recognized a deity, but that national faith goes all the way through American leadership. On October 4, 1982, in fact, Congress passed Senate Joint Resolution 165, allowing President Ronald Reagan to declare 1983 the Year of the Bible.

Can you imagine Obama doing that?

The resolution even called the Bible "the Word of God," for Pete's sake:

Whereas the Bible, the Word of God, has made a unique contribution in shaping the United States as a distinctive and blessed nation and people;

Whereas deeply held religious convictions springing from the Holy Scriptures led to the early settlement of our Nation;

Whereas Biblical teachings inspired concepts of civil government that are contained in our Declaration of Independence and the constitution of the United States;

Whereas many of our great national leaders—among them Presidents



Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, and Wilson—paid tribute to the surpassing influence of the Bible in our country's development, as the words of President Jackson that the Bible is "the rock on which our Republic rests";

Whereas the history of our Nation clearly illustrates the value of voluntarily applying the teachings of the Scriptures in the lives of individuals, families, and societies;

Whereas this Nation now faces great challenges that will test this Nation as it has never been tested before; and

Whereas that renewing our knowledge of and faith in God through Holy Scripture can strengthen us as a nation and a people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President is authorized and requested to designate 1983 as a national "Year of the Bible" in recognition of both the forma-

tive influence the Bible has been for our Nation, and our national need to study and apply the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

As you're no doubt aware, the Bushes weren't shy about their faith, George Sr. having spoken at the Southern Baptist Convention in 1991 (his son later doing the same, via satellite) and George W. being outspokenly Christian.

But a lot has happened since W.

Trump's bringin' it back — along with prayer — as evidenced at Thanksgiving:

From the very beginning of our nation, Americans have come together to remember our blessings and give thanks to God. This Thanksgiving, we remember more than 200,000 brave Americans who are currently serving overseas. We thank God for every patriot who serves our nation in uniform. We also pause to pray for all of those who have suffered loss this year, especially survivors and families of the innocent Americans who were vic-

tims of the horrific and hateful acts of violence. And we pray for everyone affected by catastrophic storms and devastating wildfires that have ravaged communities in California. Every American heart is with those impacted by this terrible tragedy. ... We are all thankful for the incredible prosperity booming all across our land. We thank God for the blessing of being American, the joy of spending time with loved ones, and the sacrifices made by the heroes who keep American safe, strong, and free. Thank you, God bless you, and happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

Now that sounds like a leader.

At the White House turkey pardoning ceremony, we saw a similarly reverent (and grateful) Trump:

We are now at the beginning of a national period of Thanksgiving. And as we pause to give thanks for all of the blessings that we've been bestowed, it really has been blessing after blessing after blessing. We're all very thankful. And we also pray for those in need, especially our fellow citizens impacted by the devastating wildfires in California, where I just came back. I've never seen anything like it. Probably nobody has. All American hearts are joined with theirs.

We give thanks for the family, friends, neighbors and loved ones who enrich our lives, lift our spirits, and fill our days with

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At their peril, liberal elites ignore traditional theological belief

by Madeleine Kearns

At their peril, liberal elites ignore traditional theological belief.

In the first decade of the 21st century, New Atheism was all the rage. Students, with little appetite for Aristotle, Aquinas, or Augustine, devoured the pop philosophies and polemics of Harris, Hitchens, and Dawkins. And some 2,000 years of philosophical endeavor and inquiry — "Is there a God?" — was dismissed as a dumb question.

Despite the arrogance behind it, the sentiment found mass appeal. Book tours and debates were dedicated to the cause. Professors hurled insults and accusations at "organized religion." Atheism was cool; religion was not. In America, TV shows specifically designed to expose and ridicule creationist bumpkins were aired. In Britain, ad campaigns on buses ("There probably is no God, now stop worrying and enjoy your life") sought to dissuade the population from God-fearing.

Why this militancy was so urgent, however, remains unclear. In the West the purging of Judeo-Christian influence from the academy, media, and the entertainment industries had been underway for decades, if not centuries. In the 19th century, industrialization and the intellectual tour de force of Darwin, Nietzsche, Freud, Marx, et al., had sown the seeds of doubt, which two world wars later were

watered with blood.

By the time the 24-year-old William F. Buckley Jr. sat down to write *God and Man at Yale* in the early 1950s, the future elite was being reared on the intellectual diet of Keynesian economics and agnosticism. Religion became a private matter, then an embarrassing one. Today, after the fad of "New Atheist" zeal, the liberal elite's snobbery and hypocrisy are worse than ever.

For those with enough good fortune by way of talent or opportunity to attend colleges such as Yale, it may well be possible, of course, to get through life without ever encountering a vacuum of meaning, authority, and purpose. But for most people, especially the disillusioned and disaffected, this is not so.

G. K. Chesterton said as much when he argued that when people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing — they believe in anything. And in its various ideological and political forms, the 20th century saw fervent and oftentimes deranged pursuits of heaven on earth and salvation via man-made power.

In 1978, for instance, 912 Americans, including 215 children, took cyanide-



laced punch in the Peoples Temple commune in Guyana at the order of their leader, Jim Jones. "The most notable thing about cult leader Jim Jones and his Peoples Temple sect is the amount of liberal and leftist support this lunatic and implausible messiah managed to attract," the editors of *National Review* observed at the time.

It is notable, yes. But is it surprising? The Peoples Temple was an effective instrument of left-wing activism. In a "death tape" recovered by the FBI, Jones claimed that the act was one of "revolutionary suicide." The real villains, Jones argued, were capitalist American pigs.

The hippie era saw the prominence of figures such as not only Jim Jones but also the Weathermen and the Symbionese Liberation Army, which kidnapped Patty Hearst. Popular culture, and Hollywood in particular, were swept up in the craze. Jayne Mansfield drank fake blood at the altar of Anton LaVey's Church of Satan. And some of Neil Young's music was partly inspired by the murderer and cult leader Charles Manson.

Hence it is important to remember

that the fervently religious cults of the latter half of the 20th century were often enabled, if not supported, by the liberal status quo. In her essay "Cults and Cosmic Consciousness: Religious Vision in the American 1960s" (2003), Camille Paglia — an atheist, incidentally — explained that

there was a massive failure by American universities to address the spiritual cravings of the post-Sixties period. The present cultural landscape is bleak: mainline religions torn between their liberal and conservative wings; a snobbishly secular intelligentsia; an alternately cynical or naively credulous media; and a mass of neo-pagan cults and superstitions seething beneath the surface.

In 2018, these paradoxes are even further entrenched. For instance: Why do the liberal elite fail to address — no, acknowledge — the religiosity of ISIS? What is the stringent dogma of identity politics if not a bad religion? Why, as the Pew Research Center has found, do 1.5 million Americans identify as Wiccans (witches) or pagans, outnumbering Presbyterians? Note that a handful from the Wiccan-pagan community decided to put a "hex" on Justice Brett Kavanaugh.

If the cults and ideologies of the 20th century have taught us anything, it's that the liberal elite ignores the religious impulse at its peril.

The Other Side of Christmas or How to Have a Merry Christmas

by **George Feliu**

This past year my wife lost her mother and my children lost a grandmother. Christmas can be a time of loss and sorrow and thought this might be a help to all who read it.

Mt 2:16 – Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Luke 2: 25 – And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

Luke 2:19 – But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

In these passages we see a different side of Christmas, the other side. On this side there is no miraculous appearing of angels, there is no singing, there is no worshipping of the newborn king who came to save the whole world. There are no presents. On this side, every baby boy and every baby girl was slaughtered by a jealous man. In this story, a man knew the time of his death had come. In this story,

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

joy. And we give thanks to God, who continues to shed his almighty grace upon this magnificent land that we all love so very much. We are truly blessed to be Americans.

This is an incredible time for our country. Prosperity is soaring all across our land. We are especially thankful for the men and women who protect our families and who protect our flag.

As we gather together this week with those we love, we share our gratitude to all of those who spend this holiday very, very far from home, serving in our military overseas. We send our eternal gratitude to the heroes who keep America safe, strong, proud, prosperous, and free. And

this man Simeon told Mary that fall and rise of many in Israel would be caused by her son. In this story, Mary is told that her son is going to suffer, and she was going to watch. In this story, Mary is told that she will suffer like no other woman as she watches her son die for all of us.

I was eighteen years old when I sat in chapel and listened to the Vice President of our college read those very words of scripture you just heard. He talked of all the suffering and heartache that many of my classmates were going through. I did not know then that I was about to be greeted with the other side of Christmas.

My father, a high school dropout, grew up on the streets in a divorced home. He was a tough guy even worked for the mafia running numbers for some time. He was loud, mean, cussed and drank beer though he was no alcoholic. I learned that my father was incorrigible at the age of five.

He didn't get saved until late in my teen years, but the damage was done. Before I came home for Christmas, he hit a big yellow bus twice. He blacked out. The doctors discovered he had a brain tumor the size of a baseball. I can remember coming back from college and joining my mom as she begged and pleaded with the doctors to let him come home for Christmas.

He was still strong that Christmas, but not as strong. I saw frustration in the menial things he used to be able to do, he could no longer do. We had Christmas like normal, but things were about to get worse.

That spring, my father went into surgery to remove the tumor. We weren't too sure he would make it out alive. I flew back to see him. He pointed to his scalp. A scar had replaced the once jet black hair that he was once so proud of.

Twenty years ago, Christmas came once more. It would be his last. I did my usual job on Christmas Eve where I separated all the gifts by person and readied it for Christmas morn. Mom woke and made coffee and cinnamon rolls. I still remember the smell of Café Bustello filling the house.

I went to their bedroom where my father lay on his deathbed surrounded by stuffed animals I used sleep with as a kid. I lifted him and carried him in my arms like a babe. Understand I'm no strongman. All that was left of a once strong and proud man was skin and bones. I sat him

we ask God to always watch over these incredible, brave Americans as they faithfully defend our nation and as they defend our home.

He's often portrayed by his political opponents as brash, as insensitive, as a man who surely must think he's God. But he's brazen enough to unapologetically acknowledge the existence of a higher power, immune to protest enough to champion prayer, and sufficiently sure in his faith in God to proclaim it to an audience, a nation, a world. And that's one more thing to be grateful for this Thanksgiving weekend. 2018 may not have been the Year of the Bible, but it's been a year with a man in the White House who believes it's the Good Book.

And that's a good thing for America.



in his chair, one of those blue lift chairs. He grabbed a wine bottle container full of jelly beans and started eating them to stop his hiccups.

We went through the gifts, Mom got the most like she always did. Then Dad got his gift from my mother. He was like a little kid that Christmas morn as he ripped through the wrapping paper. He opened a white box. His fingers tapped the gift and wept. The frame wasn't special, you could get it at any \$.99 store. The picture probably cost even less, but that picture was special. It was a picture of him and my mom on their last date at a Christmas Party.

My mom told me later that she had seen that picture at work and hunted it down. Her coworker scrounged to find the original and gave it to her. That act meant so much to her and the gift meant more to my father. She blew it up and put in the frame.

That Christmas I watched how he made peace with those he wronged for so many years. He must have known his time was nearly up. He grew tired, and I carried him back to his bed.

A few weeks later on Monday, I got a phone call. "Your Dad has two to three days to live," my mother said. I flew out that Wednesday after chapel. Too late.

As my mother told it, several people from church sat around his bed. He wanted them to sing a "praise song." They sang "Blessed Assurance." He went to heaven during the second verse. They sang the third and chorus.

That was my other side of Christmas. During this time of year, instead of celebrating the coming of Christ, many are full of sorrow, anger, and/or depression. I hope with these three following thoughts, it can help you have a merry Christmas.

I. Remember there are those suffering at this time.

The highest suicide rate happens from now to December 31. Why? Because people hurt most during this time. Christmas is often a reminder of the pain of losing a loved one. This Christmas will be someone's first Christmas without a mom or a dad or grandpa or a grandma or aunt or uncle or a brother or a sister or a son or a daughter. I have had a bus kid one year lose a brother and had to deal with it during Christmas. Hey, before this Christmas season is done, you may lose a loved one. Don't forget that Jesus came to suffer and die for you and me.

Jesus left His home in heaven to be born in a manger, one of the lowliest of places. One of His own betrayed him.

His disciples abandoned him when they came to arrest Him. Peter denied him thrice. The Pharisees lied about Him. His people rejected him for a murderer, Barabbas. Then his people called for Him to be crucified. The Roman soldiers mocked Him, stripped Him naked, beat Him, whipped Him, and finally crucified Him. This His mother had to witness. He did it for us, but it was still suffering like no man had ever endured. Then while on the cross, as all the sins of the world were placed on Him, God the Father turned his back on Him. He suffered hell on the cross.

Years after my father went to heaven, I came upon a book, *The Christmas Shoes*, based on a true story. (It was a brother and sister instead of one boy.) I read it and wept. In the back was this poem.

The Christmas Shoes NewSong

It was almost Christmas time, there I stood in another line

Tryin' to buy that last gift or two, not really in the Christmas mood

Standing right in front of me was a little boy waiting anxiously

Pacing 'round like little boys do
And in his hands he held a pair of shoes

His clothes were worn and old, he was dirty from head to toe

And when it came his time to pay
I couldn't believe what I heard him say

Sir, I want to buy these shoes for my mama, please

It's Christmas Eve and these shoes are just her size

Could you hurry, sir, daddy says there's not much time

*You see she's been sick for quite a while
And I know these shoes would make her smile*

And I want her to look beautiful if mama meets Jesus tonight

He counted pennies for what seemed like years

Then the cashier said, "son, there's not enough here"

He searched his pockets frantically
Then he turned and he looked at me

He said mama made Christmas good at our house

Though most years she just did without

Tell me Sir, what am I going to do,
Somehow I've got to buy her these Christmas shoes

So I laid the money down, I just had to help him out

And I'll never forget the look on his face when he said

Mama's gonna look so great

Sir, I want to buy these shoes for my mama, please

It's Christmas Eve and these shoes are just her size

Could you hurry, sir, daddy says there's not much time

*You see she's been sick for quite a while
And I know these shoes would make her smile*

And I want her to look beautiful if mama meets Jesus tonight

I knew I'd caught a glimpse of heaven's love

As he thanked me and ran out
I knew that God had sent that little boy
To remind me just what Christmas is all about

Sir, I want to buy these shoes for my mama, please

It's Christmas Eve and these shoes are just her size

Could you hurry, sir, daddy says there's not much time

*You see she's been sick for quite a while
And I know these shoes would make her smile*

And I want her to look beautiful if mama meets Jesus tonight

Remember, there are those suffering right now more than any other time of year. They may not show it. They hide it, but they still hurt and need our love.

II. Picture your world without

Often on a Christmas morning since the death of my father, I lay in bed before anyone is awake, and I think of all those that are close to me. I picture what my world would be like without them.

My grandmother is in her 80's. I know she probably won't live much longer. Each Christmas, she puts her tree up and decorates it. She places presents all around it. Every year, she always places a few gifts for those who no longer are here. I asked my mom who Arlene was. My mom wasn't the oldest child. She had an older sister named Arlene who died at the age of six. I have no doubt she does the same for her oldest son, Ben who died at the age of 44. She has no choice to picture her world without her loved ones. They have died.

For some odd reason picturing their loss reminds me of their worth and helps me appreciate them more. Imagine living your life taking those close to you for granted and only missing them after they pass away. In the Christmas Carol, Scrooge doesn't change until he sees he lost it all, and I'm not talking about money.

Picture a world without Christ. Every man is a sinner. Every man must pay for that sin by dying and going to hell. Without Christ, we would have a one way ticket to hell with no chance for heaven at all. That thought makes me appreciate what Christ did for me more.

III. Be grateful for what you have

One Christmas, my mom got me two gifts I didn't ask for: a CD and a book. I thought they were stupid. In fact I was talking to my cousin Susan about it when I thought she wasn't listening. I said, "I bet she got this stuff for free." She walked in. Tears flowed down her cheeks. I felt very small. I hurt her with my words. I hurt her with my ingratitude. From then on, I never complained about any gift again.

We have so much, but we keep our eyes on what everyone else has. You'll never be happy with what you have until you stop looking at what others have. Christmas is a time of giving, not receiving, because God gave His only begotten Son. If you must focus on others, focus on those who are suffering right now. Open your heart to them and love them. Look at your own life and imagine your life without _____.

Then you may find it easier to be grateful for what you have. You may find how to have a Merry Christmas.

Christmas Memories

JIM BRICKMAN SHARES WHY HE LOVES CHRISTMAS

Jim Brickman is a man on a mission to remain true to himself and the music he enjoys providing others. Metro Voice caught up with the artist by telephone and asked him about growing up, how he responds to changing audiences and what drives him.

Jim Brickman's Christmas shows seem to be some of his most popular, and there may be a reason as he connects with the music from his youth.

Brickman returns to the area for "A Joyful Christmas" tour, on Monday, December 10, 7:30 p.m. in the intimate surroundings of The Folly Theater.

MV: This is a busy time of year for you with so many concerts.

JB: Yeah, it's the calm before the storm. There's so much in my head. Deadlines to finish and finalizing what I think I should go in the shows. It's different for each city.

MV: You've been to Kansas City several times. Do fans or music lovers look for anything different when it comes to Christmas music than other areas of the country?

JB: I used to think that I had to modify things based on taste, like if I were playing in LA vs. another place. Honestly, I think you have to just be who you are and hope that what you are doing connects with the audience. I do think that the shows for the most part resonate the best in places that are similar to the kinds of environment that I grew up in. Cleveland and Kansas City are very similar types of towns in they both have world class culture. But there is this Midwest sensibility with the weather and work ethic and I relate to that. When I come to Kansas City I feel I understand it more than Seattle or Las Vegas. The mindset in some cities is not as relatable to me as the Midwest mindset.

MV: When you put on Christmas music, do you go back to the classics of the 50s and 60s or maybe the Christmas songs you heard your parents playing?

JB: Definitely nostalgia. That's one of the

reasons that people love music during the holiday season because of the nostalgia. Do I have favorites or new standards or something? I really am kind of a traditionalist when it comes to songs that are definitive. Remix? Why bother! When you hear someone other than the original artist, it just begs comparison and you know what's coming. New songs don't create a mood the same way the classics do.

That's one of the reasons I don't tend to do the pop songs in my concerts. I do the hymns and my original songs and carols. I rarely do White Christmas. I definitely don't do the Christmas song. They're overdone. People sing them so earnestly they don't know what they're singing.

MV: Why do you think that Christmas music remains popular and relevant in a holiday that has been so commercialized and removed from its original meaning?

JB: I think because it's hard to make music really commercial. Music is like the art of Christmas that reflects the nostalgia of things. There are certain traditions that no matter how commercial it gets the true meaning remains. You can still visit Santa at the mall and you can still have the traditional Christmas morning you grew up with.

Anything that evokes an emotional connection to the past stays pure.

MV: When you are a kid your piano teacher gave up on you. What is one thing that helped you continue with your pursuit of music?

JB: My teacher had told my parents I didn't have the knack for it. But my parents said to the teacher "we don't care if he doesn't win any awards or is good. He just loves doing it."

I wasn't after achievement. I really did just love doing it. It wasn't so much that I cared about whether I was at a level or place it was more like I didn't feel it was hard. My parents never pushed me to practice. They never completely understood why I wanted

to do it, either. For them it was just typical: "If he wants to do it let him do it."

MV: How do you know when you have connected with the audience?

JB: It's a gut feeling. Any really good entertainer will tell you that you spend a lot of time on stage assessing the feel of the entire night. Everything goes through my mind: Is it raining outside? Did it not sell well and the audience is sparse? These all contribute to a unique one-night experience so one night is not like the other.

Some of it comes back to you not in applause, but rather laughter, timing and I can always feel it when I think that I may be losing people. If there's a lull, I'll change direction depending on how it is going. I try to have a good sense of how long I've been talking, or playing. It's a gut feeling. The audience is the most important thing. How it sounds to them is more important than how it sounds to me. I'm there to entertain and let people escape and wander and laugh and have wonderful emotional moments. It's about nostalgia and celebration and all the things that should be delivered to the audience.

This is the truth: art is not for the artist any more. Art is for the audience. If it were all about me, I shouldn't go out and tour it.

MV: Do audiences react or enjoy concerts differently today than when you started performing before large numbers of people?

JB: When it first started with people taking video I would look out and see the red light on the video camera and it was such a distraction. I got it burned into my head. I became self-conscious of what I was saying. It's easy to get distracted. If you get indignant about it people just get mad. It is what it is. I don't fight it.

MV: The Folly Theater is a more intimate setting for music lovers. What's the perfect size for an audience that allows you to feel you are in touch? How is it different than playing with the Kansas City Symphony which you have done numerous times before?

JB: Because of the presentation of my show it tends to be a more touchy feely, cozy familial vibe to it. People do lose themselves in it. I've been careful not to try and build it up to a big show in the background with all the technical stuff. It takes it out of the intimacy. The simplicity.

MV: You've said you've always been a songwriter first. How does that inform your shows—having that ability to actually write what you perform? It is more intuitive?

JB: There's a fine line before me telling stories about myself and me telling stories that are relatable. Most of what I'm talking about are things that bridge a gap.

MV: Do you feel pressure to change?

JB: So much of the time you're around people telling you what to do to be hip or trendy or successful. If you don't stay the course of "this is what I do and this is why and this is who I am and it's my mission" then you might lose your core values. You can never take that away from someone who remains true. People may not subscribe to what I do. If I wanted to rock out



I would. I just say, "No I don't feel that way."

MV: Your motto is Hope, Faith and Peace. How have you consciously made that a center piece of your music?

JB: I really believe that it is my role in my life to share positive aspects, life, hope, promise, with my audience. The music grows out of that. If I have a platform to

share I want it to be a positive thing. The music reflects that.

MV: Is there still room for faith and the wonder of creation in today's world?

JB: I certainly hope so. There is of course. There's been lately an empowerment message in music. Any generation feels there's a loss of innocence in the next generation.

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Jesus is the Reason for Christmas

It's Christmas season again...already!

Can you believe it? It's Christmas season again...already.

It seems like I just reseeded and fertilized the yard yesterday. That was almost 3 months ago! It's Christmas season again...already!

I heard some weatherman say that we've already had more days of snow this year than we had all of last winter. I don't know if that's correct or not, but one thing I know for sure...It's Christmas season again...already!

I'm not really ready to get the Christmas tree up, get out the Christmas decorations, wrap presents...but it doesn't really matter because...It's Christmas season again...already!

I wonder if God ever thought that sort of thing. You know...up there in His heavenly city...sitting in His favorite orange Lazy Boy...feet propped up in front of the fireplace...going over His checklist:

- Creation in 6 days – Check.
- Disciplined Adam, Eve, & Satan for throwing creation into chaos – Check.
- Fixed problem after Cain killed his brother – Check.
- Got Noah started on ark – Check.
- Opened up the rain spigots, erupted fountains from the deep, move all the landmasses and reconfigure the surface of the earth with a flood – Check.
- Selected Abraham to begin a new line-age of holiness – Check.
- Picked Moses to perform great miracles and lead Israel out of Egypt – Check
- Appointed David as king – Check.
- Patiently extend loving grace to

Abraham's descendants under a variety of kings– Check.
• Sent angels to Joseph and Mary – Check.

Then suddenly He realizes...It's Christmas season...already! I've got to get Jesus down there and throw My redemption plan into full gear!

Okay, it didn't happen quite like that, but I hope you get my point here.

The Christmas event that we celebrate, the incarnation of Jesus as an infant child, was no afterthought. It was not a single isolated event. It was part of a redemptive plan that kicked in when Adam and Eve improperly ate that fruit from a restricted tree. They intentionally refused to obey God. They sinned.

From that point forward, all of history was directed to the arrival of Jesus to His parents, Mary and Joseph, in that nondescript stable. That remarkable history event was the foundational formation for the even more monumental passion events at the conclusion of Jesus' ministry on earth. All of history pivots on the fulcrum of that redemption action.

And now we find ourselves moving toward history's coming climactic event: the victorious return of Jesus.

Yes, it's Christmas season again...already. But that serves primarily as a reminder that before we know it, the season will change into the King's glorious arrival with His army of angels.

One of these days, maybe soon, we'll be thinking: It's Glory day...already!

What a great season that will be.
– Steve Seehorn, Minister at Rolling Hills Christian Church



Christmas can be a very stressful time. It is a frenzied season full of expectations and obligations. Decorations need to be put up, baking has to be done, presents have to be purchased and relatives must be visited. It is quite possible that in a season where you should experience peace and joy you may miss out on all of it. Here are ten steps you can take to manage your stress this Christmas season.

1. Establish your priorities - This is the time when we celebrate the birth of the Savior of the world. Whatever else may beckon for your attention the most important thing is the spiritual. Luke 2:10-11 tells us, "But the angel said, 'Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord.'"

Because of Jesus our imperfection can be replaced with Christ's perfection, we can be forgiven and begin a relationship with God. We can know inner peace, joy greater than mere happiness and learn to love others as Christ loves us.

We can have hope knowing God has a purpose and plan for our lives. All of this is because Jesus was born.

2. Have realistic expectations - We all want the season to be filled with happiness but the reality is that may not be possible. There are factors beyond our control that can negatively impact any Christmas celebration. Job loss, health issues, family problems do not disappear because it is Christmas. Be prepared that things may not turn out exactly the way you want or expect.

3. Keep spending under control - Establishing a budget for Christmas is crucial to managing stress. Knowing how much you can afford and sticking to your budget will make your holiday a whole lot better. Spend only what you have saved for buying presents and avoid using credit cards. In the end Christmas is about relationships and memories not material things.

4. Guard against perfectionism - Even people who are not perfectionists can get

wrapped up in wanting everything to be perfect at Christmas. Much like a wedding, if you are not careful you can get so stressed out over every detail that you miss out on enjoying the celebration. Striving for perfection in your gift giving, decorations and events can leave you frustrated and exhausted.

5. Ask For Help - If you feel overwhelmed with all that you have to do ask others to help you. Being a martyr will not make your holiday better. Let the people who care about you know that your stress level is too high and ask for their assistance to get everything done.

6. Practice moderation in activities - You simply cannot attend every party or event. You need to say "no" to those activities that you can't fit into your schedule. There must be enough time for relaxation and rest. Don't overdo anything (even the good stuff) and realize that you can't do everything.

7. Maintain your perspective - The reality is that the Christmas season lasts a fairly short time and then life returns to normal. The extra stress you are experiencing is not unending and will pass sooner than you realize. Certain challenging situations brought on by family or finances will only be for this brief season and then life returns to normal.

8. Continue healthy habits - Your schedule can get pretty jumbled during the holidays. It is easy to let certain positive habits slip away. Exercising is a proven stress reducer and should be done consistently throughout the Christmas season. Getting enough sleep is crucial to looking and feeling your best. As tempting as it is, don't overdue it with too much eating or drinking.

9. Have some fun - Make sure to have time for the things you truly enjoy at Christmas. Do the fun stuff this season provides. Whether that is a favorite holiday movie, special tree lighting, feeding the homeless or trip to the city those activities should be highlights of your Christmas season.

10. Remember the reason - After all the parties, shopping and events Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus. His teachings and His example are what we should follow. Showing God's love to others, serving those in need and giving gifts is what

Celebrate Christmas in Auburn Dec. 8

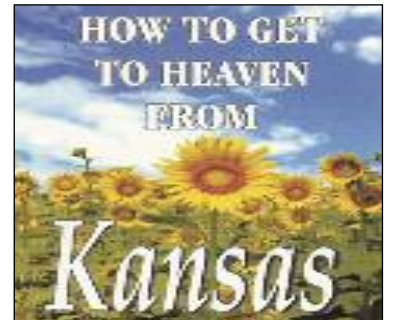
It's everybody's favorite movie, but how many have seen it on the big screen?

Well, now's your chance! On Saturday, December 15, the Historic Jayhawk Theatre, in association with Keith the Critic, will be screening the ever-popular holiday classic, "It's A Wonderful Life," starring Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed. The showing begins at 7:00, with doors open at 6:00.

While many see this movie on TV every year, seeing it on the big screen in a darkened theatre can be so much more enjoyable! Also, the Celtic Fox will be selling drinks and Hazel Hill will be selling their famous chocolates at the KandyNook.

Tickets are \$10.00 at the door, or in advance at www.jayhawktheatre.org. Ticket sales benefit The Jayhawk Theatre, Keith the Critic and The Rescue Mission. A sellout is expected, so get your tickets early.

Christmas really is. Wrap up your Christmas season at a Christmas Eve service and you will truly experience a less stress Christmas.



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.

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Celebrate the Holidays in Downtown Topeka!

As we enter the Holiday season, Downtown is looking better than ever! People are getting in the Christmas Spirit!

Christmas shopping in Downtown Topeka can be fun, with all the unique shops and a bit of nostalgia in the air. It might remind you of a time when shopping was more exciting, more personal, and less of a chore.

Following are some tidbits from some of your friendly downtown merchants. Why not take a trip downtown and visit them?

A Full-Service Florist & Gift Shop

Absolute Design by Brenda, 629 S. Kansas Avenue, offers hand-selected



flowers and exquisite designs with delivery throughout the Topeka area. They have an expansive line of gifts, jewelry and home decor for all your holiday and year-round needs.

Save \$5.00 by using the coupon on this page!

You can also order or wire flowers 24 hours a day at the website: www.absolutedesignbybrenda.com.

Let your sweet tooth run wild

Hazel Hill Chocolates is located at 724 S. Kansas Avenue. Owners Nick & Terry Xidis invest their hearts and hands in fine chocolate and confectionery. Hazel Hill, Terry's grandmother, is a symbol of their dedication to a family tradition of "the best in everything they do." Nick is the third-generation chocolatier, and they use only the finest ingredients, chocolate, fresh cream and butter, to produce handmade treats that explode with flavor.

"Stroll into our cozy shop, savor the intoxicating aroma of newborn sweets," Terry says. "You'll never leave empty handed."

Handmade chocolate truffles, home-style fudge, crispy-creamy caramel apples and more - they fashion delightful treats for every palate.



Need a gift basket, gift box, or just a few delicious chocolates to go? They'll take care of all the packing and shipping, too.

Diamonds are Forever

With the Christmas season in full swing, you'll find many specials and gift ideas at David's Jewelers, 623 S. Kansas - a family business that has served Topeka for four generations.



This year they are celebrating 50 years in business!

Diamond rings, pendants and earrings usually top the list but they also offer vivid colored gemstones in unique settings, watches, clocks, statues and fine crystal.

"Gifts can start at \$20.00 and go from there," said Mitzi from behind the counter at David's. "We will be glad to help you find that special gift for that special someone."

Pancakes and more



Hanover's Pancake House at 1034 S. Kansas Avenue has been a local favorite since 1969! With a wide variety on the menu, and friendly service, it's a great place to stop for breakfast, lunch or

brunch! They are also famous for the pork tenderloin sandwich, and it is huge!

With the friendly service and generous portions, you won't go away hungry!

One of a kind

For an eclectic selection of new and used items, check out Trails Market &



Gallery at 109 S. Kansas Ave. Jeff Hisey has assembled a large selection on two floors, where artists and traders can come together, create and share their ideas and passions with others and provide a unique experience and gifts for everyone. A wide variety of items, many of which are one-of-a-kind!

You owe it to yourself to check it out!

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Holiday Memories, Events, & Gift Ideas!

owned and operated business since 1929. Current owner Steve Lowry attributes their longevity to the emphasis they place on their customer service approach. Their goal is your complete satisfaction, and it is evident in each step of the sales process, including installation and follow-up of all new flooring.

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Flooring they sell includes carpet, vinyl, tile, hardwood and luxury vinyl. Popular brands sold at Stearns include Shaw and Mohawk. Steve specializes in complete, customized service for everyone who comes in. Call him at 785-232-0381 or stop by for more information.

A little bit of Heaven

Working side-by-side at Cashmere Gourmet Popcorn, Bill and Angie

Anderson's goal is to create a high-quality product in every handcrafted batch of popcorn, and provide it to you with unmatched customer service. Faith and family is the driving force behind this amazing company. In fact, their family motto has always been, and will always be, "Thanks Be To God!"

Along with daughters Aleigha and Emily, they produce, package and



market the popcorn. With about twenty flavors to choose from, you'll find a little bit of heaven in every bag.

There are so many other unique shops downtown, you won't believe it! Don't stop with this incomplete list! There's plenty more to discover in Downtown Topeka this holiday season!

Bring a friend, or the family, and re-discover the joy of shopping downtown!

Check Out Some of the Upcoming Holiday Events & Activities Downtown!

While you're making your way around the downtown area, check out all of the new things to look at on both sides of the street - there are lots of new features! And watch for these downtown events and opportunities during the holiday season:

SLIDERDAYS - Every third Saturday 12-1pm, Jayhawk Theatre, 720 SW Jackson. Join us for Line Dancing! Cost: Free-will donation! 50% of your donation goes to the renovation of the Jayhawk Theatre.

WINTERFEST TOPEKA 2018 - Dec. 1, 8 & 15, 10am-2pm, Downtown, 700 block of Kansas Ave. comes alive with winter holiday fun for this special event. Find Santa & other holiday characters, take a horse & carriage ride, take a selfie with a reindeer, enjoy carolers, ice sculptures and get some holiday shopping done at some of your favorite Downtown Topeka businesses.



FREE SANTA PICTURES - Dec. 1, 8 & 15, 12:00-12:45pm, Wolfe's Camera Shop. Come by the next day and pick up a free 8x10 of your visit with Santa.

SWING DANCE LESSONS - Dec. 6 & 13, 7-8:30pm, Jayhawk Theatre, 720 Jackson. Topeka Swing Dance will present swing dance lessons in the Main Theatre. On Dec. 6, dancers will learn or practice The Shim Sham. The Dec. 13 class will be a "Beginner Grab Bag" lesson. Tickets \$5cash at the door. No partner or prior dance experience needed. Wear shoes that will allow you to slide. All ages are invited

BALLET MIDWEST PRESENTS THE NUTCRACKER - Dec. 7, 7:30pm, Dec. 8, 1:30pm & 7:30pm, Dec. 9, 1:30pm. TPAC. Tickets at TPAC Box Office or at Ticketmaster

FIRST FRIDAY ART MARKET AND COOKIE WALK - Dec. 7, Downtown and NOTO arts district. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, flea market items, snacks & beverages, entertainment and more.

KRIS LAGER BAND - Dec. 7 at UNCLE BO'S. Live music on First Friday.

'CLOSET DIARIES' DINNER THEATRE - Dec. 7-8, 6:30pm. Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln. \$15 adults, \$25 couples, \$10 ages 13-18. For tickets or



info: 785-235-1834

A BIG BAND CHRISTMAS AT JAYHAWK THEATRE - Dec. 8, 7pm, 720 SW Jackson St. Christmas music with 785 Big Band and Topeka Swing Dance. Beginner dance lesson from 7 to 7:30. Gen. Adm. Advanced: \$18. At the Door: \$22. Stocking Stuffer VIP: \$50. 785-845-3464, www.jayhawktheatre.org.

T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS - Dec. 14. Doors open at 7pm. Jayhawk Theatre. Roger Ortega will be performing in the Jayhawk Theatre, along with dynamic guests Skinny Hendrix, Oceanside Hotels, Shah Trevon Payne, Marcus "Suavecito" Sanders, and more. \$15 in advance, \$20 at door. Refreshments will be available. For info: jayhawktheatre.com



"IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE" - Dec. 15, 7pm. Jayhawk Theatre. \$10. Celtic Fox will be selling drinks and Hazel Hill will be selling their fabulous chocolates. For info: jayhawktheatre.com

THE NUTCRACKER - Dec. 15, 7pm & Dec. 16, 1pm. TPAC. Kansas Ballet & Topeka Symphony. Tickets starting at \$18 Children, \$28 Adults at TPAC Box Office or at Ticketmaster: <http://bit.ly/KansasBallet2018>



TALK ABOUT TOPEKA LIVE AT TPAC - Dec. 18 & 19, 6:30pm. Topeka's own Chris Schultz showcases the best of Top City, a community social media production celebrating the people, places, events and ideas that make Topeka a great place to call home. Guests are encouraged to put down their cell phones and engage with fellow locals in talks to uplift & enrich Topeka's quality of life. Attendees will participate as members of the live studio audience. It's an evening of fun and community celebration that records our community narrative. Attendees participate after the show by sharing our video content of their favorite guests as the individual interviews are released on Talk About Topeka's media channels to large local audiences.

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Celebrate the Holidays in North Topeka!

Christmas is Special in North Topeka

The North Topeka area has a lot going on this time of year! Of course, NOTO Arts District has been a hub of activity for

NOTO are unlike any other part of the city!

All the stores are decorated for the holidays, Christmas lights are on, and many of the shops are open extended hours. Be on the lookout for the pallet trees all over NOTO! Thanks to Restore for this snazzy contribution to holiday style!

The holiday spirit is in the air!

But there are also many other events going on north of the river:

FIRST FRIDAY ART MARKET – Downtown and NOTO. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, flea market items, snacks & beverages, entertainment and more.



a while now, Holiday shopping and activiteis in



Dec. 6, 11:30am-2pm. Great Overland Station. Uniquely elegant luncheons served by our very own costumed Harvey Girls who enjoy sharing their knowledge of Fred Harvey and the historical Harvey Houses. Following lunch, a docent in authentic Santa Fe ticket agent uniform gives a guided tour of the Great Overland Station. Cost \$23.50. Reservations required by Dec. 2. greatoverlandstation.com; 785-232-5533 or contactus@greatoverlandstation.com

LIVE NATIVITY - Dec. 8, 5:30pm. Grantville United Methodist Church, 3724 South Street. For info: 785-246-3621 or grantvilleksumc.org

CHILDREN'S SHOPPING SPREE – Dec. 8, 10am-2pm, Garfield Shelter House. All gifts \$10 & under. Volunteers help children select gifts for loved ones & gift-wrap.

BEDTIME STORY WITH SANTA – Dec. 13, 7-8pm, Shawnee North Community Ctr. Milk and cookies will be served. Preregistration required at parks.snco.us. Adm: \$2

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE - Dec. 24, 6pm, Rolling Hills Christian Church, 4530 NW Hiawatha Place.

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

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM - every Mon., Wed., & Fri., 1:30pm, Rolling Hills Christian Church, 785-286-0601

Come and be a part of what God is doing at Family of God Church

1231 NW Eugene St.
Sunday 10:30am & 6:00pm
FOGchurch.com

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TOLL FREE: (800) 894-2390 EMAIL: RICH@TARWATERS.COM
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Biker Sunday...Every Sunday!

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c/o Seaman Baptist Church
2015 NW Buchanan, Topeka, KS 66608
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www.church4bikers.org

FOR JESUS WE RIDE
Christian Cavalry M/M

Sunday School 9:30 AM
Sunday Service 10:45 AM
Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study 7:00 PM

All are welcome, casual dress ok!

TOPEKA'S ONE STOP FAIRY SHOP!
For ALL your Fairy Garden Accessories,
Mini Houseplants & Air Plants!!

Faerie Tale Gardens

919 North Kansas Ave in North Topeka (NOTO)

www.faerietalegardens.com 785.220.1477

Thu & Fri 10:00 - 5:00 & Sat 10:00 - 3:00

WE ARE OPEN TIL 9 pm EVERY FIRST FRIDAY!

Coupon for 40% off One Fairy Garden Accessory



The Area's Most Complete Guide to the Family-Friendly Events You Want to See!

the events calendar

FREE LISTINGS! E-mail your events to: Voice@cox.net; mail to Metro Voice, P.O. 5724, Topeka, KS 66605; fax to 785-235-3340 or enter online at metrovoicenews.com

Get your event in **Highlighted in Blue** in print, our online calendar and promoted in social media for only \$29!

CONCERTS

TOPEKA ACOUSTIC MUSIC JAM - First Sat. of ea. month, 3-5pm, Potwin Presbyterian Church (enter south door), 400 S.W. Washburn: 286-0227 hagen1525@gmail.com.

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

GRAND O' OPRY - 2nd & 4th Saturday, 6:30PM-pre-show, 7PM showtime, Ottawa Memorial Auditorium, 301 S Hickory, Ottawa KS. Ph. 785-214-0013

KANSAS PRAIRIE PICKERS - Fourth Sun. ea. Month, 1pm, Auburn Community Center. Foot-stomping, hand-clapping tunes. Concessions available

SPECKS SUNDAY FUNDAY JAM - Every Sunday 7-11pm, Specks Bar and Grill, 21st and Mission. Musicians / Bands of all ages and genres welcome! Family Friendly and Dog Friendly when held outside. Food available.

MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER - Dec. 7, 7:30pm, Expo Centre.

FOR KING & COUNTRY AND ZACH WILLIAMS - Dec. 21, 7pm, Sprint Center. "Little Drummer Boy - The Christmas Tour." \$28.50 to \$78.50. (913) 451-8850 or (888) 929-7849 or visit www.life885.com.

WINTER JAM 2019 - Jan. 26, 6pm, Sprint Center. \$15. Newsboys United; Danny Gokey; Rend Collective; Mandisa; Ledger; Hollyn. For info: jamtour.com

SPECIAL CHURCH EVENTS

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

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

HARVESTER'S PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS - every second Sat., takes place at Christian Lord Ministries,

2421 SE California. Call 266-4979.

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 Menkveld - which is in turn followed at noon by The Hope House FREE Community Food & Clothing Banks.

FIRST WEDNESDAY WESLEY CAFE - First Wed., 6:15pm, Susanna Wesley UMC, 7433 SW 29th. A worship service will follow at 7:00. 785-478-3697 or www.swumc.org/wesley-cafe-sign-up1.html.

FIRST SATURDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET - 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM, Shawnee Heights United Methodist Church, 6020 SE 44th

"WHY NOT WEDNESDAY" - every Wednesday 6:10 - 7:30pm from Sep 5 through December 5, Susanna Wesley United Methodist Church, 7433 SW 29th St. For children three years through 6th grade (as of Sep 1). Explore the Bible, cooking, games, missions, art, science, storytelling/drama. Free program. Children can join at any time during the session. hot meal at 5:30. 478-3697 jaimie@swumc.org.

SEVENTH ANNUAL NATIVITIES AND NOELS - Nov. 30 - Dec. 1, 10am-9pm, Dec. 2, 3-7pm, Topeka Stake Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2401 SW Kingsrow Rd. Vocal and instrumental Christmas music. For info: 785-554-8068

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR - Dec. 1, 9-1pm, Crestview United Methodist, 2245 Eveningside Dr. Lunch served from 11:00-1pm. Homemade craft items, home baked goods, Silent Auction items, and Cookie Walk.

'CLOSET DIARIES' DINNER THEATRE - Dec. 7-8, 6:30pm, Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln. \$15 adults, \$25 couples, \$10 ages 13-18. For tickets or info: 785-235-1834

COOKIE WALK - Dec. 8, 8-11am, Wanamaker Woods Church of the Nazarene, 3501 SW Wanamaker. \$6 per pound.

CHILI FEED - Dec. 8, 5-7pm, Susanna Wesley United

Methodist Church, 7433 SW 29th St. \$7 adult, \$3 child. Regular & vegetarian chili, and cinnamon rolls will be served. Tickets will be sold to allow the holder to choose someone to receive a pie-in-the-face. A special auction will be held to plaster the pastor with a pie. swumc@swumc.org, 785-478-3697

LIVE NATIVITY - Dec. 8, 5:30pm, Grantville United Methodist Church, 3724 South Street. For info: 785-246-3621 or grantvilleks.org

COOKIE AND CANDY CAFE - Dec. 8, 9-3pm, Lowman United Methodist Church, 4101 SW 15th. Cookies \$6.50 per pound and candy \$8 per pound. Free coffee and tea.

CRAFT AND BAKE SALE - Dec. 8, 9-4pm, Oakland United Methodist, 801 NE Chester Ave. Cinnamon rolls and coffee available for breakfast, and hot dogs and chips available for lunch. Craft vendors may purchase one or more 6-foot tables for \$25 each. For info: 785-969-9804

SWEET SHOPPE AND CRAFT SALE - Dec. 8, 9-3pm, Highland Park United Methodist, 2914 SE Michigan. Cookies by the pound, candy, crafts and more.

TBC CHRISTMAS LIGHT SHOW - Dec. 14, at 6, 7, 8 & 9pm; and Dec. 15 & 16 at 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9pm, Topeka Bible Church, indoors at 1135 SW College Ave. Free light & sound show, hot cocoa bar, children's play area, photo opps, glow sticks for all! No reserved seating, so be sure to arrive 30 minutes prior to performance time. 234-5545, DiscoverTBC.com/light.

CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM - Dec. 16, 11am, Perry United Methodist Church. A Birthday Party For Jesus will follow the service. Everyone welcome.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE - Dec. 24, 6pm, Rolling Hills Christian Church, 4530 NW Hiawatha Place.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES - Dec. 24, at 4:00pm, First Southern Baptist Ch., 19th & Gage

CHRISTMAS AT THE HOUSE - Dec. 24, 7pm, The House of The Lord Church, 2531 SE Wittenberg Rd. An evening of Christmas music that celebrates the Savior's birth featuring Gideon. Come celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. 785-266-5683

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

MEDICARE MONDAYS - First Mon. of ea. month, 1-3pm, Topeka/Sh. Co. Public Library (Auditorium) 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 nhonl@tsclp.org

MEDICARE EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR - Dec. 4 & 18; 2pm. Learn the basics of Medicare and all its options. Seminars are designed for those becoming eligible for Medicare and those considering making a change. Seminar will be held at the Heart Center at 929 SW Mulvane. For info or to sign up: centuryinsuranceagency.com or 270-4593 or info@century-health.com. Snacks & beverages provided.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

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

SENIOR STRETCHING EXERCISES - each Mon., Wed., Fri.: 9:30-10:15am, Seaman Community Church, 2036 NW Taylor St. Enter on the east side of Fellowship Hall. No charge. 785-354-8777 or 785-213-6016

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

LIBRARY'S LEARN & PLAY BUS - Every Tuesday 1-3pm, Auburn Community Center.

SENIORS NUTRITIONAL LUNCH - Weekdays, except holidays, at noon at Auburn Civic Center, 1020 N. Washington Street. Minimal cost per person. Reservations/cancellations required 24 hours in advance by calling Meals on Wheels of Jefferson & Shawnee Co. at 295-3980. Each meal includes 1% milk & sugar-free items for diabetics. 215- 0064.

SHAWNEE SWINGERS SQUARE DANCE LESSONS - Wednesday's, 7pm, Croco Hall, 6115 SE Hwy 40, Tecumseh. Call 785-845-2357. (1st two lessons free)

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

SHEPHERDS CENTER LINE DANCING GROUP - meets 2nd & 4th Thur, 2-4 at First UMC, 6th & Topeka. Park on the WEST side & use the WEST door. Immediately

inside, turn left & walk the ramp to the library, then left to elevator. Push [B] for fellowship hall 785-249-3258. .

SHEPHERDS CENTER HHHS WALKING GROUP - meets 2nd & 4th Thur, 9:30-11 at HHHS, 21st & Belle. Entrance for walkers is on WEST side. To walk a shelter dog call Kelsey: 233-7325.

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

SAVING DEATH ROW DOGS ADOPTION BOOTH - Every Sat., 11am - 2pm, Petco, 1930 SW Wanamaker. Some Sat. adoption booths are held at PetSmart, 2020 SW Westport Dr. Updates at savingdeathrowdogs.com

SLIDERDAYS - 12-1pm, Jayhawk Theatre, 720 SW Jackson. Join us every third Saturday for Line Dancing!! Cost: Free-will donation!! 50% of your donation will be applied to the renovation of the Jayhawk Theatre.

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

SQUARE DANCE LESSONS - Saturdays starting September 15th, 10:30am to 12:30pm, Fellowship Hall of Trinity Presbyterian Church, 4746 SW 21st Street. Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced Dancers come join in FREE dance lessons lead by a certified caller of 20+ years. Questions: 272-2620.

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

HEALTHY STEPS MONTHLY MEETUP - Mar. 6 - Dec. 4, West Ridge Mall. Mall walking; log each time you walk - at the kiosk near the lower level, northwest mall entrance. Each visit gives you another entry into monthly prize drawings. Monthly Meetups 9-10am, First Tuesday of every month - special speakers, free blood pressure checks and prize drawings. Mall Walking hours: Mon-Sat 7am - 9pm; Sun 11am - 6pm

TOPEKA ACAPPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS - Any Monday 7pm, at Seaman Community Church, Fellowship Hall, 2036 NW Taylor. More female singers are needed to sing four part acapella harmonies. Come be our guest any Monday night. Topeka Acapella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines, International. Call Cindy Patton at 785-640-7403 for more information.

DEC. CYCLING EVENTS - Various cycle rides are offered by Kansas Cyclist. For details: www.kansascyclist.com/

DEC. OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES - Outdoor events & activities in Kansas. www.getoutdoorskansas.org/calendar

150 CHRISTMAS TREES & ORNAMENT DISPLAY - Nov. 1-Jan. 1, 10am-4pm Mon-Sat. & 1-5pm Sun. at Territorial Capital Museum, 640 E. Woodson, Leocompton. Over 150 Christmas Trees decorated in antique, Victorian, vintage and theme décor - including turn of the century and WW II era decorations, a barb-wire tree and feather trees. Also tour Constitution Hall, a National Landmark. Leocompton is the "Birthplace of the Civil War, Where Slavery Began to Die." Leocompton was

recently named one of the "Best Small Towns in Kansas by Kansas Magazine readers. Christmas Vespers at 2pm Dec. 2. 785-887-6148. lecomptonkansas.com

TARC'S WINTER WONDERLAND - Nov. 21-Dec. 31, 6-10pm. Lake Shawnee, 3435 SE East Edge Rd. View dazzling holiday light displays, featuring one million lights, while winding through a 2-mile scenic drive. Advanced Tickets are available: TARC, 2701 SW Randolph, for \$7.00. \$10.00 at the gate suggested donation. 785.506-8720

OLD TIME HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS - Nov. 30; Dec. 1, 7 & 8, 6pm-9:30pm, Old Prairie Town, 124 NW Fillmore St. An elegant buffet will be served from the dining room of the Mansion to be eaten by candlelight in the reception room. Live music, tour the Mansion, hot cider and cookies by the fire in the cabin and hot fudge sundaes in the Potwin Drug Store. \$35 per person. Dinner served at 6:30pm. Reservations: 785-251-6993

HARVESTER'S MOBILE FOOD PANTRY - Dec. 1, 9-11am, Free Methodist Church, 3450 SE Indiana Ave. Free for families in need of emergency food assistance. topekafoodpantry@gmail.com; 785-266-6610

TOPEKA CHRISTMAS VILLAGE - Dec. 1 & 2, 8 & 9, 15 & 16, 22 & 23 at Forest Park, 3158 SE 10th St. Opening for our first year of business, a shopping celebration of the season with events the first four weekends of December. Crafts, food, entertainment, Santa visits and more. Send an e-mail to events@forestparktopeka.com for an information packet.

KANSAS PRAIRIE ANNUAL QUILT SHOW & HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE - Dec. 1, 9am - 2pm, Oskaloosa Middle School library, 404 Park St., Oskaloosa Ks. Includes a boutique of homemade items from the quilters. Admission is free. Drawing for two garden quilts.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA - Dec. 1, 8-11am, VFW at 3110 SW Huntoon St. Pancakes, sausage, fruit, milk or juice, coffee and water. 0-2: Free; 3-13: \$5; 14 & older: \$8. Get professional photo with Santa, decorate cookies with Mrs. Claus, write a letter to The North Pole, holiday story time, Christmas music. davidgeorge@learnplaygrow.org, 785-272-5051

HOLIDAY CRAFT SHOW - Dec. 1, 9am-3pm, Crestview Community Ctr, 4801 SW Shunga Dr. 50 booths filled with handmade crafts and baked goods.

POLAR EXPRESS TRAIN RIDE - Fri-Sat-Sun in Dec., plus other days near Christmas, Midland Railway, 1515 High Street, Baldwin City, KS. A magical one-hour trip to the North Pole. Once on board, your car hosts punch your golden ticket before hot chocolate and a delicious cookie are served by dancing chefs. Passengers then read along with the classic children's book, The Polar Express, by Chris Van Allsburg. Santa and his helpers board the train to greet passengers and each guest is given the first gift of Christmas - a silver sleigh bell. During the trip, characters on each car lead passengers in caroling and onboard entertainment. Arrive 45 minutes before listed departure time. \$45 Adult, \$40 Child. For info: MidlandRailway.org



"Christmas at The House"

**December 24, 2018
7:00pm**

 The House of The Lord Church
Pastor J. Michael Borjon
785-266-LOVE (5683)

2531 SE Wittenberg Rd., Topeka, KS 66605
North of Lake Shawnee Dam



DISCOVER THE WONDER

**Topeka Bible Church
Light Show**

Free • December 14-16

Performances at 6-7-8-9 PM on Friday;
additional 5 PM shows Sat/Sun

The Light Show combines Christmas lights,
lighting effects, live musicians and vocalists to fill
our auditorium with a concert-like Christmas
experience for the entire family. Free children's
activities, refreshments and glow sticks!

 Topeka Bible Church
1135 SW College Ave
DiscoverTBC.com/light
785.234.5545



Red Stocking Breakfast
Dec. 8, 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Carlos O'Kelly's Mexican Cafe

surban@aldersgatevil-lage.org

ANNUAL SOUP WITH SANTA - Dec. 7, 4:30-7pm. Perry American Legion. Homemade potato soup, chicken & noodle soup, and chili with all the fixings. Santanamals Balloons. Free will donation

COMMUNITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA CHRISTMAS CONCERT - Dec. 7, 7pm.

Main Lodge of Life's Finer Moments, 1285 16th Rd, Clay Center. A fun, family-friendly concert, Christmas carols, holiday songs, and selections from "The Nutcracker." For info: 785-926-4725, bclark@diode-com.net

BALLET MIDWEST PRESENTS THE NUTCRACKER - Dec. 7, 7:30pm, Dec. 8, 1:30pm & 7:30pm, Dec. 9, 1:30pm. TPAC. Tickets at TPAC Box Office or at Ticketmaster

COOKIE WALK & BAKE SALE - Dec. 7, 7:30am-2pm. Ronald McDonald House Charities, 825 SW Buchanan St. Homemade cookies and candies \$5 per dozen. Specialty cookies, cupcakes, cakes, jellies, pies & breads, handmade blankets, homemade mixes for hot chocolate and chai tea plus other gift items individually priced. For info: 235-6852

RED STOCKING BREAKFAST - Dec. 8, 7:30 - 10:30am, Carlos O'Kelly's Mexican Cafe, 3425 S. Kansas Ave. Cost is \$15 in advance at www.kcls.org and \$18 at the door. Children 10 & under eat free. Benefits KCSL's child abuse prevention programs and services.

CAR SEAT CHECKUP EVENT - Dec. 8, 9am, Mission Township Fire Department, 3101 SW Urish Rd.

COUNTRY CHRISTMAS, BURLINGAME - Dec. 8, 9am-7pm. Crafts, vendors, shopping, photos with Santa, music, food and much more. End the evening with a wonderful parade down our famous brick road at 6pm!

SWEET SHOPPE - Dec. 8, 3-8pm, Mater Dei Catholic School, 934 SW Clay. Soup Dinner starting at 5pm. Shop for baked goods, cookies and candies, pay by the pound. 785-640-8734 janddspindler@att.net

COOKIE SALE - Dec. 8, 9am-noon, Auburn Library. \$2.50 per Baker's Dozen. 256-2428

OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS PARTY - Dec. 8, 3:30-6:30pm, Auburn Community Ctr. A carnival atmosphere, story time, crafts, games, balloon animals, face painting, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, as well as a chili/soup supper from 4:30-6 p.m. Activities are

free of charge but donations of winter wear accessories and nonperishable foods accepted.

MERRY CHRISTMAS CITY MARKET - Dec. 8-9, 10-3pm. George J. Perry Memorial Armory, 110 S 5th, St. Marys.

A BIG BAND CHRISTMAS AT JAYHAWK THEATRE - Dec. 8, 7pm, 720 SW Jackson St. Christmas music with 785 Big Band and Topeka Swing Dance. Beginner dance lesson from 7 to 7:30. Gen. Adm. Advanced: \$18. At the Door: \$22. Stocking Stuffer VIP: \$50. 785-845-3464, www.jayhawktheatre.org.

CHILDREN'S SHOPPING SPREE - Dec. 8, 10am-2pm, Garfield Shelter House. All gifts \$10 & under. Volunteers help children select gifts for loved ones & gift-wrap.

CANDY CANE HUNT & S'MORES WITH SANTA - Dec. 8, 5:30-7pm, Crestview Community Center. Enjoy hot chocolate and S'mores with Santa, and hunt for candy canes. Pre-register at parks.snco.us or call 251-6800.

Admission: \$3 (including adults)

PERRY SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON - Dec. 10, 11am, Perry Community Building. Bring a covered dish and your table service and \$1.00. Ham and turkey will be furnished. Program will be The PLHS Singers.

BEDTIME STORY WITH SANTA - Dec. 13, 7-8pm, Shawnee North Community Ctr. Milk and cookies will be served. Preregistration required at parks.snco.us. Adm.: \$2

T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS - Dec. 14, Doors open at 7pm. Jayhawk Theatre. Roger Ortega will be performing in the Jayhawk Theatre, along with dynamic guests Skinny Hendrix, Oceanside Hotels, Shah Trevon Payne, Marcus "Suavecito" Sanders, and more. \$15 in advance, \$20 at door. Refreshments will be available. For info: jayhawktheatre.com

"IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE" - Dec. 15, 7pm. Jayhawk Theatre. \$10. Celtic Fox will be selling drinks and Hazel Hill will be selling their fabulous chocolates. For info: jayhawktheatre.com

WING FLING 2017 - Dec. 15, 2-6pm, Kansas Expocentre. 4th Annual one-day festival featuring hot wings, cold drinks, live music, party games, and more!

THE NUTCRACKER - Dec. 15, 7pm & Dec. 16, 1pm. TPAC. Kansas Ballet & Topeka Symphony. Tickets starting at \$18 Children, \$28 Adults at TPAC Box Office or at Ticketmaster: http://bit.ly/KansasBallet2018

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON - Dec. 20, 12:30pm. Thornton Place Retirement Community, 2901 SW Armstrong. Seniors 55+ welcome. Please RSVP at 785-221-2574

WINTER WONDER LAND - Dec. 22, 11am. Thornton Place Retirement Community, 2901 SW Armstrong.

Cookies and cocoa with Santa. Free photos and each child will receive a gift. For info: 785-221-2574

NITRO ARENACROSS - Dec. 28 & 29. Kansas Expocentre

MEETINGS & CLASSES

C5Alive "CHRISTMAS" LUNCHEON - Dec. 13, 11:30-1, at Fairlawn Plaza mall. Christmas music, fun & games.

• Cost: \$10 for C5 members & first-time guests who RSVP, \$12 at the door

• \$15 for non-members & repeat guests.

• Please RSVP to info@C5Alive.org, so we know how much food is needed!

Open to the public - Put POWER in your life with great food, great speakers and great company! Invite a friend to join you!

SAVE THE DATE: Jan. 10, 11:30-1, Power Luncheon featuring Lamar Hunt, Jr.

CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA MEETING - Join other concerned individuals to pray and unite in action for Shawnee Co. and our Nation. For info about monthly meetings: 785-260-5659 or ks.cwfa.org.

HEAT UP TOPEKA - Free fitness classes; learn and build healthy social & eating habits. Held at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 4746 SW 21st St. Florence Crittenton: 785-233-0516 www.flocritkansas.org

Sunday: 4-5pm Yoga
 Monday: 12:12-4:5pm Kickbox Fusion
 Monday: 5:30-6:15pm STRONG by Zumba
 Monday: 6:15-7:00pm Pilates Fusion
 Tuesday: 12-12:45pm Yoga
 Tuesday: 5:30-6:15pm Zumba
 Tuesday: 6:15-7:00pm Cardio Interval
 Wednesday: 12-12:45pm Kickboxing
 Thursday: 12-12:45pm Pilates
 Thursday: 5:30-6:15pm Cardio Interval
 Thursday: 6:15-7:00pm Zumba
 Friday: 12-12:45pm Cardio Strength
 Saturday: 9:00-9:45am Cardio Remix

TOPEKA TREASURE HUNTERS CLUB - 3rd Sun. of each month except May, Sep. & Dec., 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.

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 fxtהלawn@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.

BOY'S 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.

TOPEKA MANKIND PROJECT - Mondays, 6:30pm, 2112 SW Morningside Rd. Supports men in becoming their best selves, including physical, mental & emotional health & wellness. Open to any man. Brian Thomas: brian.thomas01@gmail.com or 785-727-9439

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. Youth 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.

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 ourladyofthefairful@gmail.com. Facebook: "Ourladyofthefairful."

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

MENNINGER BIBLE CLASSES - Tuesdays 11am-12:30. 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. (The Bible study is also taught on Sat. mornings on 101.5 FM radio.)

FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES Aerie 4319: First & Third Tue. 7pm; Auxiliary: Third & Fourth Tue. month 6pm, 2941 SE Fremont Street. The Fraternal Order of Eagles is an international non-profit organization uniting fraternally in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice, and equality, to make human life more desirable by lessening its ills and promoting peace, prosperity, gladness and hope. www.foe.com 785-266-7307



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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

DADDY'S GIRLS EMPOWERMENT MEETINGS - Do you want MORE... Come Join us for our More Luncheons where Real Women get together: share, learn and grow to return to our homes, families workplace, churches & other places of influence restored and rejuvenated to pursue God's MORE...at Topeka Public Library, 12 noon, every 3rd Wednesday. Sponsored by Daddy's Girls Inc. Please to RSVP make lunch reservations: daddysgirlsinc@gmail.com or 785-969-0491

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

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.

TOPEKA PRAYER GROUP - Every Wed., 6:30pm, 409 SW Buchanan St. Do you believe that God hears and answers prayers? Do you believe Jesus wants to lead His people by His Holy Spirit? Come join us in prayer as we seek His face for answers and direction. 785-845-1948; holmie2@sbcglobal.net

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. 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.

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

WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL EDUCATION EVENTS - Blue Moose Bar & Grill, 11:30 AM on the third Thu & Fri each month. Free, but RSVP required. On Thu Brian discusses family wealth strategies. On Fri. Amy discusses wealth strategies that apply to women. 785-271-2536 Jennifer.Ward@wellsfargoadvisors.com

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.

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. 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 JimHanna,james.c.hanna@ampf.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, Wana-maker Rd Baptist Church, 2700 SW Wanamaker. Doing Good for Others: Knitting & Crocheting for Local Charities, free yarn, needles, hooks & patterns. All are welcome. Anne, 272-9249 or kittens812@sbcglobal.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. Group and individual grief support available upon request. For info: 785-232-2044 ext.341

ABORTION RECOVERY SUPPORT - Providing services for women & men who suffer from Post-Abortion Syndrome... we can help mend a broken heart! For info: Kay Lyn at KLCarlson20@cox.net.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS - for friends & families of alcoholics. For info: 785-409-3072 or topekaalanon.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 - Sundays 6-8pm. For women whose husbands struggle with pornography addiction or have had affairs. Video & workbook will give you hope for your marriage & emotional healing. For info: Janet Mitchell, 633-4294.

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.

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 - First Monday each month, 3:30-4:30pm, 400 SW Oakley. Call Donna Park for info: 783-7527 or valeotopeka.org. Open to public. Free.

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.org.

EMOTIONS ANONYMOUS: a 12-step program for those suffering with emotional instability such as depression, anxiety, grief, etc. Meets every Tues. at Grace Episcopal Cathedral, Noon-1pm. For info: Sharon 785-633-7764

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, Pozze 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.

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.

WED. - 6:30pm, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW

Topeka Blvd. No Cost. 286-1204, www.northland.cc

GRIEFSHARE - Every Thur. 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Susanna Wesley UMC, 7433 SW 29th St., Mar 1 thru May 24. A Christ-centered program for those who have lost a loved one may be struggling and have questions on how to go forward. The class includes a video, sharing of stories, and a workbook (free). Call Shari Combs at 785-478-3697 for more information.

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..

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

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS - Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging provides an opportunity for caregivers to get together and share their ideas and feelings.

1st Wednesday of the month, 1pm, Baldwin Methodist Church, 708 Grove... Baldwin City.

2nd Monday of the month, 3:30pm, Topeka public library, Anton Rm.

3rd Thursday of the month, 2-3pm, Topeka Library, Perkins Room

3rd Friday of the month, 12 noon, Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, 2910 SW Topeka Blvd.

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. crtopekaks.org.

TOPEKA NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUP - For families & friends who are affected by someone else's narcotic addiction. Every Sat., noon-1:15 pm, rm. A, 1st Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar, enter on S. side, door A. 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.

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- Feb. 14, 11:30-1, Speed Marketing at Fairlawn Plaza
- Mar. 14, 11:30-1, Details to be announced
- Apr. 11, 11:30-1, Details to be announced
- Apr. 20, 10am-3pm, **EASTERFEST**



For info: www.C5Alive.org or [Facebook.com/C5Alive](https://www.facebook.com/C5Alive) 

entertainment

'My Pillow' inventor donates \$1 million to pro-life film • 'The Grinch' reflects on true meaning of Christmas

'My Pillow' inventor donates \$1 million to pro-life film

In addition to his pillow, his donation may also help him sleep at night. The inventor of the "My Pillow," Mike Lindell, is investing \$1 million into the pro-life film "Unplanned."

"I'm pro-life and I'm happy to do it," he was quoted by the *The Hollywood Reporter* on Nov. 23 as saying.

The movie "Unplanned" is a real-life drama surrounding Planned Parenthood.

The \$1 million investment is one-sixth of the entire production budget of "Unplanned," which is being made by the same people who created "God's Not Dead" and "I Can Only Imagine."

"I don't get into things for the money; I get into them if the message is right," Lindell told the Reporter.

Lindell faced attacks from the left when he did not pull his ads from Laura Ingraham's show on Fox News after she made comments about the individuals behind the anti-gun movement after the Parkland High School Shooting.

"I did not take my advertising down from @IngrahamAngle and @FoxNews, nor do I intend to," he tweeted in April of this year.

"When they tell me to back down, I double down, and my sales go up," Lindell added to the *Hollywood Reporter*, adding that he handed out 10,000 MyPillows to



"I just believed in Donald Trump so much after that meeting with him ... He has a heart that cares. And maybe people don't see that out there when he's on TV and stuff, because he's such a fighter and wants to win and wants to help this country so bad and help people," Lindell was quoted by CNN as saying. "They went out and bought their own pillows," Lindell told CNN. Trump also

told him he recently "went out and bought some more pillows," according to him.

Trump also said he and First Lady Melania Trump sleep on his pillows.

"You ever see this guy with the pillows on Fox? MyPillow guy, Mike Lindell, where is Mike? He is the greatest," Trump said. "First of all, he does make a great product, great pillows. I actually use them. He's been a supporter from Day 1."

Lindell has been to several other Trump rallies in addition to Missouri, including in Texas, North Dakota, Minnesota, and other places. In Rochester, Minnesota, he spoke to the crowd on stage.

"Because they trust me. I do my due diligence," he added. "When I put my credibility behind someone, or anything—even if it's a product," he said. "To me, it has to help people. I would ruin my credibility if I put my stamp of approval of anything I didn't do my due diligence on."

victims of Hurricane Michael in Florida several weeks ago.

In early November, he told CNN that he had a dream shortly before Donald Trump declared his presidency. "I actually had a dream that I would meet Donald Trump in an office, and then all of a sudden he ran for president," Lindell told the network. "I didn't know why and then he came down that (escalator), he's running for president."

His actions were a bold statement, say some, in an era of politically correct speech when any misquote, misstep or joke is likely to cost you your job if you are a conservative public or entertainment figure.

About a year later, he met with Trump and spoke about made-in-America products.

When Trump visited Missouri last month, Lindell was on the first row of the Columbia rally, cheering along with the general public.

MOVIES, STREAMING, BOOKS, MUSIC, INTERVIEWS & MORE!

Rated PG-13. CAST: Voices of Benedict Cumberbatch as the Grinch; Cameron Seely as Cindy Lou Who; Rashida Jones as Donna Lou Who; Kenan Thompson as Bricklebaum; Pharrell Williams as the Narrator; Tristan O'Hare as Groopert



"The frozen wind whips, the snow seeps with wet trickles into his garishly green furry ankles, and the Grinch sucks his teeth in frustration on his icy mountain perch.

They think their little Whoville is so delightfully charming and picturesque, he muses while gazing down upon the gingerbread-like buildings with their covering of garland and twinkling lights, *but they're more of a blight. They're a sugary, noisy blight.*

From the Grinch's perspective, Whoville's residents are altogether too ... *joyful!* They're hideously happy. Cloyingly cheery. And that's doubly true at this time of year: Christmas. He could almost barf.

When the townsfolk set up their holiday bingles and bangles and begin singing their syrupy songs of the season, it drives the Grinch to distraction. And this year, those caroling caterwaulers want to make their Christmas three times bigger than it's ever been before.

THREE TIMES!!!
From his snow-covered cliff he's watched them fly in a monstrosity of a Christmas tree and a treetop-crowning star the size of a small Who-mobile. And once they light and decorate that terrifying tree, why, it'll be bright enough to blind anyone with eyes within miles of Whoville. Disgusting!

How can I possibly wallow in lonely misery with all that searingly shiny and gaggingly giddy gaiety going on!? the Grinch wonders.

So after stomping back into his cave, the Grinch, voice by Benedict Cumberbatch, stews sourly with his only companion, a puppy pal named Max. Then it hits him. And the Grinch hatches a wonderful idea: What if he could steal all of the Whoville woo-hoos away? What if he could grab all their goodies and make them wretched and raging, weepy and woeful?

Now that would be a Christmas to remember!

As he plots and plans how to steal Christmas, the grumpy ol' Grinch starts researching the holiday, gathering the necessary tools and constructing his Grinchy tech. But this process reminds him of something unexpected: the youthful loneliness that drove him to his mountain hidey-hole so many years before.

The film makes it clear that being alone and being friendless is a very sad state indeed. Conversely, it applauds loving friends and family members, showing us exactly what those types of gentle relationships—and the people who pursue them—might look like in action.

Cindy Lou Who is one such praiseworthy individual. When someone points out that this young girl has made unselfish choices to help her friends, she replies matter-of-factly, "I did it because you're my friends. And when something matters to you, it matters to me." Her selflessness gets her buddies' attention, and

one says, "That's beautiful."

Cindy also tends to think more about her loving mom than about getting gifts for herself. She endeavors to talk with Santa Claus on Christmas Eve (who is really the Grinch, of course), because she hopes he'll do something special for her mother, Donna.

Later, when it looks as if the Grinch has stolen away everything for Whoville's Christmas celebration, Cindy Lou laments her talk with the wily Santa-suited interloper. But Donna assures her daughter that gifts are unnecessary, because Cindy is indeed her greatest gift. Donna also points out that no one can "steal" Christmas, because Christmas is inside us all. In fact, the whole town of Whoville reflects an attitude of contentment and ongoing Christmas joy, even without the "stuff" of the holiday.

In the end, the townsfolk graciously welcome the Grinch into their midst when he admits his wrongdoing and apologizes for his thievery. This act of friendship and kindness transforms him. "It wasn't Christmas I hated," he states with wonder, "It was being alone." The townspeople's choices and attitudes even cause the Grinch's heart to grow three times its normal size. He ultimately toasts his new friends, saying "To kindness and love, the things we need most."

The film subtly points to the holiday's real meaning, the celebration of Christ's birth, through some of the Christmas carols that many in Whoville sing. Cindy Lou tells the Grinch that sometimes when she just closes her eyes and listens to people singing Christmas songs, "all your sadness goes away."

There are, of course, some who will look at this newest version and grinchily grouse with grumbling gall about everything from its rejiggered rhyming narration to its padded storyline to the fact that the original version of the tune "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" doesn't even show up in the film.

All of that, however, is moot, because the Grinch's newest animated movie is here, and your little kids will likely want to see it.

Oh, and Mom, Dad, if your instant fear is that Hollywood is remaking one more classic into yet another toilet-humor rampage or disgruntled social-protest platform, well, worry not: This version of the Grinch's tale is well made, as clean as a crisp snow on a Sunday morning. It's honeyed with uplifting messages about the importance of friendship and family. And perhaps most surprisingly, it even musically links the birth of the baby Jesus to the Christmas festivities and soaring spirits in Whoville. (That alone was a very pleasant gift nestled amid the cinematic twinkle and tinsel.)

Yep. Dr. Seuss' *The Grinch* is nice. It's sweet. And parents will enjoy it, too.

—Focus on the Family

Top picks for latest music releases

By Cedric Austin
Metro Voice Music Editor

As my wife and I stood looking over our deck into the backyard, I began to thank the Lord for His beautiful creation. We watched the beautiful leaves of all different shades of colors fall to the grass in amazement. Not only is this my favorite season but surely the hand of the Lord has created the most amazing world. And now the snow has arrived! If you've ever wondered if there was a God, look around. He shows us in His creation. Happy Holidays!



November Releases Not to Miss:

Lauren Daigle – Behold (Deluxe) – Centricity Records – Capitol

Russ Taff – Believe – Independent – Sweetwater Studios – Fuel Music

Tasha Cobbs – Heart. Passion. Pursuit (Live At Passion City Church)

Gold City – Hope For the Journey – New Haven Records – Provident

David and Tamela Mann – Us Against the World – TillyMann – New Day

Crowder – I Know A Ghost – sixsteprecords – Capitol

Joshua's Troop – Another Chance – New Haven Records – Provident

Da' T.R.U.T.H. – Vet – Independent

Casting Crowns – Only Jesus – Beachstreet Records – Provident

NEEDTOBREATHE – Acoustic Live

Vol. 1 – Atlantic Records – New Day

Reach City Worship – Nothing Else Matters Vol. 1 (Live – Independent)

The Afters – The Beginning & Everything After – Fair Trade – Provident

Chris Tomlin

Chris Tomlin was born in east Texas on May 4, 1972 and he grew up listening to *country music* by bands like Alabama. His dad taught him to play guitar and he wrote his first song at the age of 14. Saved as a child, he always knew that God had a specific plan for him, but he couldn't see what that was beyond following the Lord. He finished high school and enrolled in college, graduating with a degree in Psychology.

It was at that point that he started spending a lot of time with Passion founder, Louie Giglio. He took a big step of faith and became involved in the first Passion conference in 1997.

The rest, as they say, is history."

When I hear the name Chris Tomlin I immediately think of the song 'Our God.' Our God was my faith anthem. Whenever I felt my faith was being tested or when I simply wanted to remind myself of the power of my creator, I would sing the lyrics to that song.

Tomlin is one of the greatest worship leaders, song writers and contemporary Christian artist of all times.

If you have attended church for any amount of time or listened to any amount of Christian radio, you have heard at least

one or two of Chris Tomlin songs.

Tomlin's latest project is titled *Holy Roar* and is filled with more dynamic songs with powerful lyrics such as the title song "Holy Roar," *Nobody Loves Me Like You* and "Is He Worthy."



If you by chance have never listened to a Chris Tomlin song, I would encourage you to go back and listen to all of his older music as well as pick up his latest project. Chris Tomlin's music is available on all digital music outlets.

For King & Country

"Soaring melodies, driving rhythms, theatrical instrumentation and personal themes were the heartbeat of for KING & COUNTRY's sophomore album, *Run Wild. Live Free. Live Strong.*

The duo, comprised of Australian brothers Joel and Luke, have accom-

■ Please see MUSIC on next page



family-friendly spotlight

‘Charlie Brown Christmas’ leads this month’s family-friendly spotlight

By Michael Foust

The commercialization of Christmas started in the early 1900s, grew out of control by the middle of the century, and has gotten only worse each decade since.

Thankfully, though, we have Charlies Brown and Linus to remind us about the true meaning of the season.

A *Charlie Brown Christmas* aired first on Dec. 9, 1965 and has been broadcast every year since to become the second longest-running Christmas special on television, trailing only *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. But unlike that latter holiday special, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* keeps the focus squarely on the baby Jesus.

A *Charlie Brown Christmas* leads this month’s list of “5 Family-Friendly Things.”

The half-hour special airs each December on ABC -- this year’s date wasn’t set at publication time -- but also can be purchased for a small fee on Amazon streaming. Sometimes it’s available for free on YouTube.

The story follows a gloomy Charlie Brown as he organizes a play while searching for the real meaning of Christmas.

“Isn’t there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?!” Charlie Brown shouts during the cartoon’s pinnacle.

That’s when his thumb-sucking friend Linus steps in, taking center stage and reciting Luke 2:8-14 from the King James Version of the Bible.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord,” Linus says, in part.

Upon conclusion, Linus tells his friend, “That’s what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown.”

The only thing missing is an invitation.

My family and I watch *A Charlie Brown Christmas* each December. It’s hilarious and inspiring, and it never gets old.

Also worth watching this month:

‘The Christmas Chronicles’* -- A Netflix original movie, it follows a brother and sister who accidentally cause Santa’s sleigh to crash. They then must help him deliver presents across North America. It is marred slightly by a few coarse words -- including the little girl saying h--l and a policeman saying d--n -

- but carries positive messages about family, tragedy, sibling rivalries and reconciliation. (We also learn the children haven’t gone to church since their father died.) My family doesn’t “do Santa,” but I nevertheless enjoyed this one. It began streaming in late November. Rated TV-PG.

‘Billy Graham: An Extraordinary Journey’ -- Billy Graham’s life is recounted in a documentary that includes interviews with dozens of people, including his mother (the footage is old but fascinating) and well-known names like Larry King, Tom Brokaw and President George H.W. Bush. The film tells us about his childhood, his marriage, his rise to prominence, his stance in support of Civil Rights, and his international travels. It may be the best documentary on Graham I’ve seen. The 70-minute film is available on DVD and streaming platforms. Not rated.

‘Sergeant Stubby: An American Hero’ -- World War I had its share of heroes, but one of those was a four-legged creature who saved American lives. His name was Stubby, a stray dog who found his way onto a ship across the Atlantic and brought joy to the men of the 102nd Infantry Regiment. He also took part in several battles. An animated film, *Sergeant Stubby* is a great way to teach children about World War I as we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of it. It contains no coarse language, and the war violence is minimal. I showed it to my 6-year-old twins. Available on DVD and streaming platforms. Rated PG for war action and some thematic elements.

‘Little Women’ (2018) -- This modern adaptation of the classic Louisa May Alcott novel includes the same characters as in that book -- Jo, Meg, Beth and Amy -- but is set in modern times. Like the book, it has dozens of positive lessons, too. Among them: don’t waste your life, prioritize your family and learn to forgive. Thankfully, it’s also family-friendly, with no coarse language and no sexuality. Rated PG-13 for some thematic elements and teen drinking. It releases on DVD Dec. 18.

Michael Foust is the husband of an amazing wife named Julie and the father of four small children. Follow his blog, MichaelFoust.com.

Adopting 3 kids brings mayhem and hilarity in film ‘Instant Family’

Instant Family is the story of a married couple who have postponed having children of their own but then try adopting a trio of foster siblings, who turn their lives upside down. Inspired by a true

story, the film has a strong Christian, moral worldview yet is somewhat blemished by some minor foul language and other elements.

The movie shines a remarkable light on the plight of foster children, particularly older ones, by telling the story of a suburban couple who experience an emotional rollercoaster when they adopt three troubled siblings from the foster system. Directed by Sean Anders from a screenplay he co-wrote with frequent collaborator John Morris (*Daddy’s Home*, *Daddy’s Home 2*), the story is rooted in his real-life experiences adopting foster children. That personal connection gives the film an impressive emotional honesty along with a hearty sense of humor.

Mark Wahlberg stars as a housing contractor named Pete, who buys shoddy homes and works with his wife, Ellie (Rose Byrne), to flip them. The couple realize they might want children after years of denying it. They decide to adopt, with Ellie exploring foster care sites. She hopes to make a genuine impact on a troubled life while also figuring that she and Pete will have it easier with an older child than raising an infant, thus skipping the early crying years.

Working through a pair of social workers, a by-the-book woman (Tig Notaro) and her sassy partner (Octavia Spencer), they join a support group designed to teach them about the difficulties inherent in adopting foster kids. They pick a pretty but feisty 15-year-old girl named Lizzy (Isabela Moner), only to find she has a



younger brother and sister whom she can’t abandon.

Thus, the couple suddenly has three children on their hands, and no idea what they’re facing both on hilarious comedic levels and on heartbreaking dramatic ones. They face down skeptical family members, earning the love and trust of the kids, and encountering numerous misadventures along the way. As a result, the movie is consistently engaging as both entertainment and a touching call to action for others to open their hearts and adopt more children from the foster system.

Wahlberg has developed a truly winning persona as a kind-hearted father figure in the two *Daddy’s Home* movies and proves here that the third time with writers Anders and Morris is the charm. A devout Catholic who overcame a hard-scrabble childhood himself on the streets of Boston, he made *Instant Family* as a passion project. Kudos not only to him and the writers, but also to Paramount Pictures for investing in the movie.

Instant Family has a depth in casting that goes well beyond most such films. Rose Byrne as Wahlberg’s wife continues her string of charming and funny roles. She brings a winsome charm to bear that’s especially effective when she’s striving to crack the emotional defenses of the three children. However, the real discovery in *Instant Family* is newcomer Isabela Moner as Lizzy. She displays a vibrantly real emotional range that signals she could be a big star and major talent to watch. Byrne,

MUSIC

continued from page 16

plished several notable feats on their new record. Perhaps the most remarkable is that the award-winning rock/pop duo has achieved the unexpected.

Not only have they ventured into new musical territories with some of the highlights being a collaboration with hip-hop artist Andy Mineo, their continued creative partnership with artist/producer Aqualung and their discovery of new soundscapes with producer Tedd T.



(MuteMath) as well as Seth Mosely, but for KING & COUNTRY also managed to surpass the bar that the brothers had set for themselves with their debut album.”

‘It’s a Wonderful Life’ Screening at the Jayhawk Theatre

It’s everybody’s favorite movie, but how many have seen it on the big screen?

Well, now’s your chance! On Saturday, December 15, the Historic Jayhawk Theatre, in association with Keith the Critic, will be screening the ever-popular holiday classic, “It’s A Wonderful Life,” starring Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed. The showing begins at 7:00, with doors open at 6:00.

While many see this movie on TV every year, seeing it on the big screen in a darkened theatre can be so much more enjoyable! Also, the Celtic Fox will be selling drinks and Hazel Hill will be selling their famous chocolates at the KandyNook.

Tickets are \$10.00 at the door, or in advance at www.jayhawktheatre.org. Ticket sales benefit The Jayhawk Theatre, Keith the Critic and The Rescue Mission. A sellout is expected, so get your tickets early.

Moner, and Wahlberg are backed by an ace supporting cast of Oscar nominee Octavia Spencer (*The Help*), as well as, top comics Tig Notaro, as the no-nonsense social worker, and Iliza Schlesinger, as a single mom comically obsessed with adopting an athletic African-American boy.

Happily, *Instant Family* has a strong Christian, moral worldview that spotlights a positive Christian family with two serious and one good-naturedly comical prayer scenes. Also, there’s another positive Christian couple in the support group. This is remarkable for a mainstream Hollywood movie and should be encouraged.

However, the movie has too much gratuitous foul language, which includes one “f” word, two uses of Jesus Christ’s name in vain, and more than 40 other obscenities, plus a few profanities. Also, there’s a positive depiction in a couple scenes of a homosexual male couple adopting a child.

– CBN News

As I sit here listening to their latest project “Burn The Ships,” I find myself intrigued to listen to the entire album. Throughout the project I realize I’m listening to faith-building lyrics that make faith-building songs.

The title song “Burn The Ships” has destiny changing lyrics. “Step into a new day. We can rise up from the dust and walk away. We can dance upon our heartache, yeah. So light a match, leave the past, burn the ships and don’t you look back.”

Go check out their newest project. All of for King & Country projects are available on all digital music outlets.

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Telemedicine: A Promising Model for Senior Health Care

Imagine if a senior could receive prompt, high-quality health care at any time, without even leaving their home. Telemedicine, or telehealth, makes this possible.

The American Telemedicine Association defines this unique approach to healthcare as “the use of medical information exchanged from one site to another via electronic communications to improve a patient’s clinical health status.” Once a novelty, this progressive care delivery model is gaining momentum as a means for lowering costs while also improving health care outcomes. In fact, 52 percent of hospitals now use telehealth with their patients in a variety of formats, ranging from phone and video conferencing to remote monitoring. In remote monitoring, high-tech sensors, health and activity monitors, touch-screen technology and secure websites are being used to automatically record and share vitals and physiological data, such as blood pressure, glucose levels, weight and activity levels, with medical professionals.

“Having a feed of information that tracks vitals over time is much more comprehensive than the snapshot assessment that’s obtained during an in-office doctor’s visit,” says Majd Alwan, senior vice president of technology and executive director of the LeadingAge

Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST), a non-profit organization that advocates for the development and adoption of new technologies to improve the aging experience. “Doctors can prescribe appropriate treatments and interventions, as well as detect the early onset of disease, without patients even leaving their homes.”

With today’s rapidly aging population and an increased prevalence of chronic diseases, seniors have become a key target for these services. Benefits include prolonged independence, easier access to care, and fewer headaches related to traveling to and from on-site visits. “Seniors are more likely to comply with a doctor’s orders when they can follow them in the comfort of their own homes with minimal effort involved,” Dr. Alwan notes. All of these factors can contribute to improved health and a better quality of life for both patients and their caregivers.

Telemedicine Can Help Keep Seniors at Home and Reduce Health Care Costs

Keeping elderly patients comfortable, happy and healthy at home, instead of



in a medical facility, has major financial implications as well. With telehealth technology, seniors can be evaluated and even treated remotely, eliminating unnecessary (and costly) office and emergency room (ER) visits that can wreak havoc on a senior’s overall mental and physical health. Physicians can spot early warning signs associated with worsening chronic conditions and the onset of new ones, allowing for early intervention and reducing the chance of hospital admission and readmission. Below are some examples of the cost-mitigating impact of this practice.

• One study found that the expense of implementing telemedicine programs in nursing homes could be offset by a reduction in costs related to transferring

residents to and from emergency rooms and physicians’ offices. For example, the use of hybrid telehealth technologies could eliminate as many as 387,000 transports to ERs annually, resulting in a cost savings of \$327 million. This technology could also eliminate 6.87 million transports to on-site physician’s office visits, yielding a cost savings of \$479 million.

• A nonprofit organization that runs senior living communities in Pennsylvania was able to reduce the percentage of patients moving into nursing homes from 20 percent to 12 percent by having frail seniors wear monitoring devices that alert nurses to a fall. Although there is an investment involved in implementing such a system, the cost pales in comparison to the expense of transitioning seniors into skilled nursing facilities.

• A chain of skilled nursing homes in Illinois is using telemedicine to reduce potentially avoidable hospitalizations (PAH), costly incidents that expose elderly patients to additional health risks while causing stress for patients and families. Through this program, which involves using two-way video communication to enable bedside evaluation by board-certified physicians, approximately 81 percent of patients using the

technology can be treated on site rather than hospitalized. This has the potential to save the health system hundreds of thousands of dollars each year by minimizing readmissions and eliminating unnecessary emergency department visits.

• In North Carolina, telemedicine is helping aging adults remain in their homes by decreasing hospitalization rates related to heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and diabetes. Patients with these diagnoses were monitored by telehealth technologies at home in between home health care visits. Both response and intervention times increased dramatically as well.

Vital Support for Caregivers

For caregivers who commit time and money to caring for an aging loved one, telemedicine can be a valuable lifeline. From a merely practical standpoint, it helps ease the burden of traveling for provider visits. Caregivers with full-time jobs can avoid taking excessive time off work to chauffeur a senior to appointments. Moreover, these services empower family members by giving them more opportunities to ask questions and take a proactive role in their loved ones’ care and recovery.

Signs a Senior Needs Help at Home

By Marlo Sollitto

Admitting the need for help and accepting assistance is not easy for people as they age. The responsibility often falls on family members to recognize the signs that an aging loved one might need support with completing the activities of daily living.

How do you know if it is time for in-home care? Look for the red flags listed below.

Changes in Physical Function and Mental Status

- Difficulty keeping track of time
- Sleeping for most of the day
- Poor diet or weight loss
- Loss of interest in hobbies and activities
- Changes in mood or extreme mood swings
- Difficulty getting up from a seated position
- Difficulty with walking, balance and mobility
- Unexplained bruising or injuries
- Marks or wear on walls, door jams,



habits and personal care (e.g. unkempt hair, untrimmed nails, lack of oral care, wearing dirty or stained clothing)

Neglecting Household Responsibilities

- Little or no fresh, healthy food in the fridge
- Dirty house and/or extreme clutter
- Dirty laundry piling up
- Stains or wet spots on furniture or carpet
- Spoiled food that doesn’t get thrown away
- Stacks of unopened mail or an overflowing mailbox
- Late payment notices, bounced checks and calls from bill collectors
- Utilities being turned off due to missed payments
- Unexplained dents and scratches on their car

Hiring a Home Care Company

If these signs are present, it doesn’t necessarily mean a move to assisted living or a nursing home is required. However, these red flags do indicate that daily supportive care is needed. Use this as a guide in the process of hiring home care or to help you make informed and confident decisions.

furniture and other items being used to help with stability while walking through the home

- Uncertainty and confusion when performing once-familiar tasks
- Forgetfulness, including forgetting to take medications or taking incorrect dosages
- Missing important appointments
- Consistent use of poor judgment (e.g. falling for scams or sales pitches, giving away money)

Poor Personal Hygiene

- Unpleasant body odor
- Infrequent showering or bathing
- A strong smell of urine in the house or on clothing
- Noticeable decline in grooming

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The Sacrifices of Caregiving

By Carol Bradley Bursack



One question that is often asked on the AgingCare.com Caregiver Forum is, "How do I deal with the reality of leaving behind the life I had to become the primary caregiver for my aging loved one?" The plain truth is that assuming the responsibility of caring for another person dramatically alters one's life. This change can happen abruptly, or it can subtly creep in over time. Either way, most caregivers are eventually struck by the realization that their present situation is nothing like the past and nowhere near what they had envisioned for the future. So, how do we cope?

It may sound selfish to some, but to those who dove into caregiving with full hearts and no planning, then ended up in a months- or even years-long commitment, this is a perfectly rational question. People put their lives on hold to care for those they love – an admirable gesture. But when "on hold" becomes the new norm, a mental adjustment must be made. This usually includes acknowledging and dealing with difficult emotions like resentment.

Adjusting to the New Normal

Most caregivers take on this new role out of love and with good intentions. They rarely stop to think, "Hmm, this could go on for years... I'd better take a step back and make some plans first." We don't pause to think about what we're getting into or weigh our options. We don't hash out whether we should keep working full time or move to part time or if we'll have to wind up quitting altogether. We don't immediately ponder the impact that this new role will have on our children, our spouse, our bottom line or our own happiness.

We may have reservations but still rush in simply because we know we're needed. It's up to us to help, so we do what we must in the moment. But those weeks, months and even years of just squeaking by can have lasting consequences on our relationships, savings, career, retirement, and physical and mental health. No matter what age you are when you begin caregiving, this role is going to change your life as you've known it and the plans you had for the future.

Handling Resentment Over Making Sacrifices for Someone Else's Care

Most caregivers have some idea of how they intended to spend their lives. But thanks to medical advancements, aging parents are living longer than ever despite serious health conditions, such as dementia, Parkinson's disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and heart failure. Their care falls to loved ones whose plans and expectations are upended. Resentment isn't a pretty emotion, but it is high impossible to avoid as a care-

giver. Furthermore, admitting those feelings to others will not likely bring pats on the back.

Caregivers are left wondering how to handle the fact that they resent being stuck in a situation that seems to leave them few choices. What are our moral obligations? What are we to do as we watch our aging parents or spouses linger on, not living a quality life but not dying either? As with so many things in the caregiving world, there's no right answer for everyone. Each person, family, financial status and medical situation is different. However, there are always options and changes that can be made. They may not be easy or cheap or ideal, but they at least deserve some consideration.

If you start to feel even a twinge of resentment, it's time to act. Here are some suggestions for common caregiver scenarios:

- If your parents live in their own home, hire in-home help and learn to get comfortable with the quality of care they are receiving so you can take some time off from caregiving. It may amount to a few hours every other day, a whole week or even a month—whatever meets both your needs and those of your parents.

- If you and your care recipient live together, it is even more crucial for you to look for outside help so you can enjoy some time away from your responsibilities. Because it's harder for you to completely remove yourself from your caregiving situation, respite should occur on a regular basis. Even a good friend, family member or neighbor may be able to provide respite care for a few hours here and there. Adult day care is an excellent option for getting seniors out of the house and freeing up some time for caregivers.

- If you quit a paying job to provide care because you were under the impression it was temporary and then realized that it was, in-fact, a long-term arrangement, you're not alone. However, you must regroup and take time to prioritize your future. Regardless of whether you miss your career, you've depleted your savings, or you're worried about your Social Security and retirement, you need to formulate a plan. It's possible you may still decide you want to stay the course, but you need to make that a conscious choice, so you don't feel backed into a corner. Remember, you are not responsible for paying for a parent's care. It can be difficult to find and obtain financial assistance, but there are resources out there like Medicaid, the VA and Area Agencies on Aging

that can help your loved one cover care costs. This will enable you to get back to saving for and working towards your own future.

- If you are running to an assisted living facility or nursing home constantly to check on your loved one, and they aren't in dire health, try to take a step back. If you know they are receiving quality care where they're living, then take advantage of that care. Sure, visits are something to look forward to, but they shouldn't dominate your schedule. Explain to them that you must pull back some to minimize stress, focus better at work and spend time with your family. Set a less intense visiting plan and stick to it unless there is an emergency. Fewer visits doesn't mean that you care less or stop advocating for them. It just means that you're taking full advantage of the services that the facility is getting paid to provide.

If none of these scenarios resonate with you, ask yourself a few important questions to help you look at your caregiving objectively and spur you into action:

- Is everything you are doing for you loved one necessary?
- Are you trying to establish control over an uncontrollable situation?
- Are you doing these things so that your loved one and/or outsiders will say, "What a wonderful child/spouse you are?"
- Can some of what you do be delegated to other people?

Yes, some of these questions are hard. It's not always easy to delve into the reasoning behind our actions and come away with honest answers that we're comfortable with. Caregiving can easily turn into martyrdom, and that doesn't benefit anyone.

If you are guilt-ridden or filled with resentment no matter what you do, see a counselor. Talk through what your daily life is doing to you. A mental health professional will help you sort out the necessary sacrifices from the obsessive caregiving gestures.

How to Lessen the Burden of Caring for an Aging Loved One

Our care recipients may whine and complain if our worlds don't revolve around them, but are they really at risk without our undivided attention? If so, we need to look for a way to fix this that doesn't fall solely on us.

Leave no stone unturned until you get some help. If you need to move your loved one into an assisted living facility or a nursing home, then do your homework and find the best option available. Research and vet in-home care providers and adult day care centers. If your loved one protests, assure them that you are dedicated to seeing they get the best possible care but that you can't do it all alone. Given time, it's likely that they will adjust. Often, once they see you won't budge, they will accept the change and make the most of it.

The point is, you must find some balance in your life. If you go years being eaten up with resentment, your own health will suffer. Your abilities as an attentive, organized, compassionate and pleasant caregiver

er will deteriorate as well, so what's the point in working yourself into the ground? It's far better for you and your loved one to find some respite and balance. Maintaining your own physical and mental health through-

out your caregiving journey will make it much easier for you to fall back into your old routine or create a whole new one once caregiving ends. That is what your loved one would want for you.

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Pro Bowl Linebacker After Ex-Teammate's Tragic Death: 'I Gave My Life to Christ'



By Bryan Chai

Nov. 27, 2018, marks the 11-year anniversary of the untimely death of Washington Redskins superstar safety Sean Taylor.

Taylor was only 24 when he was shot and killed by intruders in his Miami home on Nov. 26, 2007. He was protecting his girlfriend and their 18-month-old daughter when he was shot in the leg, and he died a day later from a severed femoral artery.

For many football fans, especially in Washington, it was an unbelievably tragic event.

Taylor, who was an exceptional player for the University of Miami and was a part of the Hurricanes' 2001 national championship team, kept excelling as a player after being drafted fifth overall by the Redskins in 2004.

Despite his short career, he's considered by many to be one of the greatest safeties of all time, perhaps second only to former Miami teammate Ed Reed. Few players in NFL history were able to combine Taylor's ball-hawking coverage skills with the savagery of his linebacker-like hits.

Taylor made the play of the game in the last playoff win the Redskins have had this millennium, a wild scoop-and-score fumble return against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the 2005-2006 NFC wild-card game. Washington ultimately prevailed in the game by one touchdown, 17-10.

But for all of the incredible on-field plays Taylor made in his short four-year NFL career, it was the indelible impact he had on his teammates that still resonates 11 years later.

Take, for example, former Redskin and current Buffalo Bills team captain Lorenzo Alexander. In a video posted by Sports Spectrum in February, Alexander opened up about how Taylor's untimely death helped spur him to find God.

It's certainly not the first time NFL players have expressed their faith, but Alexander's reasoning particularly resonates on the anniversary of Taylor's death.

"I haven't always been a believer. I gave my life over to Christ right when Sean Taylor passed, it was 2007," Alexander told Sports Spectrum's Jason Romano. "It really made me reflect on who I was, and I had some other guys, James Thrash, Antwan Randal-El, our team chaplain, Pastor Brett (Fuller). Before that time, I wasn't seeking God at all. I had an emptiness in my heart; I didn't know how to fill it. But because of those guys, I said, 'Let me start seeking God.' I came in contact with people who were living out the Christian faith and being evangelical about it and sharing it."

"Once you find Christ and give your life to Him, now it's about seeking him every single day," he added. "Am I surrendering my life over to Him every single day? My will for His will."

Taylor's faith was an oft-cited reason for how he turned around a rough upbringing that included gang ties.

Christianity Today, citing an article by Adventist Review editor Mark Kellner, recounted how Taylor's faith was shaping his young adult life.

"At the time of his murder, Sean Taylor was running (not with gangs), but with God's crowd at the Perrine Seventh-day Adventist Church in Miami. (Taylor's Pastor David) Peay believes he was making a run towards heaven — and away from his former ways," Kellner wrote. "During a late night conversation last October with Peay at an International House of Pancakes restaurant in College Park, Maryland, Taylor reaffirmed a decision he'd made earlier in 2007 to return to the Adventist Church and to the Lord."

Perhaps most touchingly, Taylor told Peay one of the impetuses for his newfound faith.

"Pastor, I love going home to see my daughter. I'm not with all that other stuff anymore," Taylor told Peay, according to Kellner.

Rest in peace, Sean Taylor. You and the impact you had on your teammates and those around you will never be forgotten.

FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

By Rob Mooney

When the University of Kansas hired Les Miles to be their next football coach, they knew exactly what they were getting. Athletic Director Jeff Long and Miles have known each other for quite some time, having worked together previously at the University of Michigan in the 80's. The Jayhawks are getting a coach with a career record of 142-55 over a 15-year career between his stints at Oklahoma State and Louisiana State. He won a National Championship at LSU and was 7-4 in bowl games. KU now has the only coach in the Big 12 to win a national title.



KU has had some serious problems since they fired Mark Mangino. They brought in Turner Gill, who I

thought was a good coach, but he couldn't win at Kansas. He had little success at the University of Buffalo, going 20-30 over four seasons. The players he recruited to Kansas were the same type of players that he recruited to Buffalo, a school in the Mid-American Conference, not quite the Big 12. It's hard enough to win in the Big 12, but when you're trying to do it with less talented players, things aren't going to go well for you. At Kansas he went 5-19 in two seasons.

KU then turned the program over to Charlie Weiss who pulled it down to historical depths. His recruiting strategies backfired and he went 6-22 over 2 and a half seasons before the Jayhawks turned to David Beaty.

Beaty went 6-42 over four seasons and although the Jayhawks showed promise during this past season, KU pulled the plug on him and immediately went after Miles.

In Miles, they have a coach who gives them instant credibility. Recruits that would have never considered Kansas in the past will take a look at them now just because Miles is the head man. I expect the talent level to go up beginning with his first recruiting class. I realize that he faces some scholarship deficiencies, (thanks Charlie Weiss), but I believe that Miles can overcome those within a couple of years.

Miles has a great gig at Kansas. He's not expected to win big at first, he just needs to be competitive and win some conference games and maybe play in a bowl game within a few years. Getting to six wins shouldn't be a problem for Miles in a few years. Of course, it's not going to happen overnight, but Miles is the right man for the job. He sure has Jayhawk fans excited for next season, but when you bring in the most successful football coach KU has ever had, that's bound to happen!

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These 5 Home Design Ideas Will be Trending in 2019

Usher in the new year with a crop of inspiring fresh ideas across home design.

To help you keep up with the latest décor trends, celebrity interior designer, Taniya Nayak, has pulled together the top five home design trends for 2019 to provide inspiration no matter your personal taste.

1. Natural and Organic. Bring a touch of Mother Nature into your home with this trend that accentuates earthy, organic elements. Nayak recommends adding layers of textures, like natural raw jute, and incorporating muted tones, such as terra cotta, moss green or mustard, to achieve

this nature-inspired style.

2. Feminine and Free. This style embraces a pastel palette of pale blue, pink and cream to achieve a romantic and glam look. Infuse this trend into your space by creating a striped accent wall with soft-hued tones or alternate different paint finishes, such as eggshell and satin, in the same color for a dimensional effect. Bring the look to life with fresh



3. Eclectic and Bold. Nayak says "own your own style and show it off...make a statement!" An easy way

to achieve this bold trend is to paint a door, an accent piece or even a ceiling in a bright color, like Jester Red or Ceylon Yellow. Unsure if bold colors are for you? Take a look in your closet to see which shades you tend to gravitate toward most.

And when it comes to achieving clean, sharp paint lines, one of Nayak's go-to tools is a premium painter's tape like FrogTape brand painter's tape that delivers the sharpest paint lines possible. Treated with patented PaintBlock Technology, FrogTape is a foolproof way to get professional-looking results and eliminate the need for touch-ups.

4. Fluid and Fashionable. Create a space that exudes effortlessness by infusing repetitive patterns and fluid transitions of the same color. According to Nayak, the best way to incorporate varying shades of a single color is to use a paint sample strip like you might find at a paint supply store as guidance to achieve a serene look throughout the space. Otherwise, stick to a single shade and carefully play with patterns. For example, pair striped dining room chairs with a patterned rug for a fashion-forward statement.

5. Luxe Modern. A little design secret to keep in mind: mixing metals is back and in a big way. Nayak encourages DIYers to complement metallic accents, instead of matching them. She suggests creating a palette of two to four metal tones and distributing them throughout the space in ways that are intentional and maintain balance. For a look that is glam, yet modern, consider pairing rose gold with pewter or brushed gold and stainless steel.

Visit FrogTape.com/Trends for more trend information and ideas.

Ingenious and easy to achieve, these rising trends for 2019 will provide the necessary inspiration to update your home's interiors.

- StatePoint News



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Annette's Tip: There is still plenty of time to plant trees and shrubs for better growth and less watering next year. Prices are at the lowest of the year so take advantage of decent weather and get some planting done. It's important to remember that evergreen trees & shrubs should be well watered before winter sets in. This includes not only the needed evergreens (conifers) but also broad-leaved evergreens such as boxwood and holly.

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Topeka, Ks 66610
785.266.0100
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10:45 Worship Service
www.swtbc.org
- 2. CHRISTIAN CAVALRY MINISTRIES INT.**
Pastor Beaux Bryant
c/o Seaman Baptist Church
2015 NW Buchanan, Topeka Ks 66608
785-224-5419 • www.church4bikers.org
Sun. School 9:30 am
Sun. Service 10:45 am
Wed. Prayer & Bible Study 7pm
- 3. TOPEKA BIBLE CHURCH**
1101 SW Mulvane St., Topeka
785-234-5545
Worship: 8:00 - 9:30 & 11am
Sunday School & Bible Studies:
9:30 & 11am
www.discovertbc.com
- 4. NORTHLAND CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
3102 NW Topeka Blvd., Topeka
286-1204
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www.northland.cc.
- 5. INDIANA AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST**
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- 6. FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST**
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272-0443 www.fsbctopeka.org
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- 9. GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH**
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- 10. LORD'S HOUSE CHURCH**
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- 11. COMMUNITY CHURCH**
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Sun. 10:30am - Worship & Word, Children

- Wed. 6:30pm - Children, Youth, Adult
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- 12. BUCK CREEK COUNTRY CHURCH**
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5 mi. east of Perry on Hwy 24, 13th & Phillips Rd.
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Contacts: Logan Barnett 785-597-5498,
or Scott Bond 423-0406
 - 13. WANAMAKER WOODS NAZARENE**
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6 pm Life Groups; 6:30 pm Teen Service
Wed. 6:30 pm Adult & Teen Life Groups
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 - 20. HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH**
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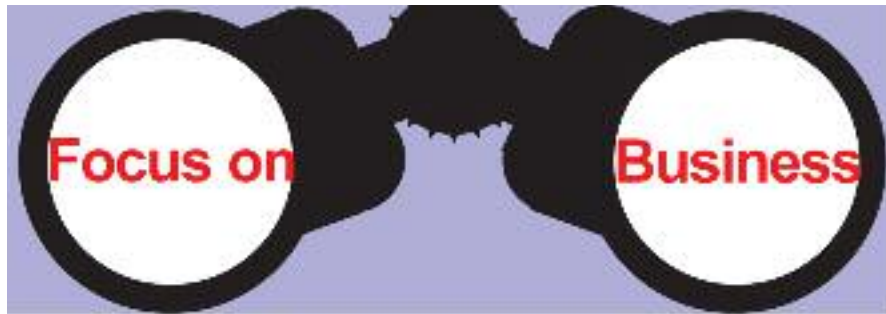
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To find out how he can help with your insurance needs, contact Chris via email at chobart@mistopeka.com or on his cell phone at (785) 213-8132, and make an appointment to visit with him at his office at 842 N. Kansas Avenue in North Topeka.

When he's not providing his legendary customer service for clients, Chris is enjoying time with his wife Tonya, and their three children: Holden, Trinity and Jasmyne.

He is also very active in the community working with various non-profits. He is chairman of the Social Committee of Emerald City Cosmopolitan Club, which has established itself as a leader in the fight to identify, treat and research diabetes.

Chris also put together a local networking group, Partners in Excellence, to help business professionals grow their businesses. The group is free and all are invited. For more information text Chris at 785-213-8132.

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