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## NEW RESIDENT churchguide



House of the Lord Church

See inside back cover!

## Bell Ringing Applications Being Taken



The season of giving is right around the corner, and the familiar sound of bell ringing will announce the beginning of The Topeka Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign.

The Salvation Army is now accepting applications for the 2021 Red Kettle Bell Ringing Campaign, Mondays through Fridays, starting – Monday, September 27, through Tuesday, December 14, from 8:00am to 4:00pm. ID is required as well as social security cards. A passport will work for both forms of ID. Pay is \$11.50 per hour.

Interested persons may apply at Topeka Salvation Army, 1320 SE 6th St.

The Campaign kicks off Friday, November 19 at 7:00pm in collaboration with Washburn University. Gary Yager, President and CEO of Vision Bank, is the 2021 Red Kettle Chair.

There are several ways to volunteer: Online:

■ Please see BELL RINGERS page 2



## As America Has Become More Secular, It Has Become Less Free

By Dennis Prager

Here is something any honest person must acknowledge: As America has become more secular, it has become less free.

Individuals can differ as to whether these two facts are correlated, but no honest person can deny they are facts.

It seems to me indisputable that they are correlated. To deny this, one would have to argue that it is merely coincidental that free speech, the greatest of all freedoms, is more seriously threat-

ened than at any time in American history while a smaller-than-ever percentage of Americans believe in God or regularly attend church.

The United States became the freest country in the world, the sweet land of liberty, the recipient of the Statue of Liberty, the country whose flag freedom fighters around the world have often waved. This freedom was rooted in the deeply religious nature of its founding ideals. America was founded by God-centered individuals to be a God-cen-

tered country. The claims that America's founders were mostly deists and that America was founded to be a godless secular society are not true.

Some of the Founders were not orthodox Christians, i.e., they did not believe in the Christian Trinity or in the divinity of Christ. But none of them were deists (with the possible exception of Jefferson). Deists believed in a creator God who was not only uninvolved with his creations, but he also did not

■ Please see AMERICA page 3

## River Access Closed at Saline Road

Starting on October 1st, the Kansas River Public Access on Saline Road in North Topeka will be closed while necessary construction takes place at the river weir and boat ramp area. The river will be completely closed during construction due to the contractor building a bridge over the boat chute to drive equipment over the weir.

There will be no access to or from the boat ramps on Saline Road in North Topeka. Portage of boats through the construction zone is possible on the north bank. This project is phase 2 of the Kansas River weir construction project. Phase 1 of the project was completed earlier this year and included a boat chute for safe passage.

For safety reasons the entire area will be closed to the public during construction, including the safe passage area, and construction is expected to last until early 2022.

The project underway at this location will include additional safety features on the south side of the river weir. The project includes the installation of rock and concrete surfaces on the downstream side of the weir to improve public safety.

■ Please see RIVER ACCESS page 2

## Topeka Fall Fest offers outdoor concert, market, games, health fair, food trucks

Two to three thousand people are expected to attend the Inaugural Topeka Fall Fest, to be held October 9 at The Vinewood, 2848 SE 29th St. Families will be able to listen to live music, visit over 80 vendors & food trucks, attend the Health Fair and take part in the kids activities, such as inflatables, ball toss, cake walk and face painting.

Dozens of local businesses and non-profit organizations take part in the event as vendors or sponsors, and several live music acts will perform on the outdoor stage. The Topeka High Drumline will also make an appearance.

An outdoor vendor market will

offer a wide variety of products and services, with food trucks nearby.

Inside Vinewood hall, Emerald City Cosmopolitan Club will present Health Fair 2021, which will showcase a variety of health care and fitness businesses and services, several of which will offer presentations or demonstrations to fair goers.

Various local businesses and non-profits will present education and information on healthy eating, mental health, fitness, personal safety, skin care, sanitation, life coaching and other topics. Various vendors will also offer demonstrations of fitness and exercise routines. Other vendors will

■ Please see FUN FEST page 2



Topeka Fall Fest will include health and wellness presentations and health screenings.

## Nursing homes using fake Schizophrenia diagnoses to force elderly into submission

A new New York Times investigation discovered a troubling nationwide trend in nursing homes, one that is likely to make Americans even more weary of placing their loved ones in the care of these institutions. Many nursing homes are giving their residents false diagnoses so they can prescribe them antipsychotic medicines—many of which make the patient more docile—the Times investigation found.

According to the Times, “Antipsychotic drugs—which for decades have faced criticism as ‘chemical straitjackets’—are dangerous for older people with dementia, nearly doubling their chance of death from heart problems, infections, falls and other ailments. But understaffed nursing homes have often used the sedatives so they don’t have to hire more staff to handle residents.”

Medicare data backs up the findings from this investigation. The share of residents with a schizophrenia diagnosis soared 70 percent between 2012 and 2021. Today, one in nine residents has a schizophrenia diagnosis. The disease’s prevalence in the general public hovers between 0.25 percent and 0.64 percent, or about one in 150 people.

A report by a federal oversight agency said nearly one-third of long-term nursing home residents with schizophrenia diagnoses in 2018 had no Medicare record of being treated for the condition.

According to reporting by Yahoo News, “In May, a report by a federal oversight agency said nearly one-third of long-term nursing home residents with schizophrenia diagnoses in 2018 had no Medicare record of being treated for the condition.”

It’s important to know that schizophrenia is a lifelong condition that usually presents itself in one’s early twenties. It’s exceedingly rare for someone to be diagnosed past the age of 40. It is not believable that someone would develop this condition in old age, or live without it undetected for so many years.

Dr. Michael Wasserman, a geriatrician and former nursing home executive, said, “People don’t just wake up with schizophrenia when they are elderly...it’s used to skirt the rules.”

The rules Dr. Wasserman is referring to were put in place in 2012 by the federal

government and require nursing homes to report the number of patients they have on antipsychotic medications—because they pose such a threat to the elderly. Medicare tracks this number, rates facilities based on it, and seeks to reduce the number of patients being given these powerful drugs. But, their metrics exclude patients with a schizophrenia diagnosis from being counted.

Nursing homes are able to incapacitate them with antipsychotic medications while not taking a hit on their rating or their public image.

This is likely the reason so many nursing homes are diagnosing patients with this specific illness. In doing so, they are able to incapacitate them with antipsychotic medications while not taking a hit on their rating or their public image.

If this story shocks and outrages you, good. It is in defiance of globally accepted human rights standards, our Constitution, and the principles of individual liberty.

In the US, we’ve long known that it is ethically wrong to force medications on people. All the way back in 1987, President Reagan banned the use of medicines that serve the interests of the staff or nursing home rather than the patient for this very reason. But, as is so often the case, laws have not been sufficient at eliminating bad behavior.

It is evident that these nursing homes are using the schizophrenia loophole, and the drugs meant to treat it, as a way to subdue dementia patients, who can be difficult to care for. There is no conceivable reason why these patients would be given these diagnoses or these drugs for their well-being.

While this story revolves around medical freedom later in life, it’s similar to another abusive practice that begins in childhood: the overmedication of children with ADD, which is often used to subdue rambunctious kids for the classroom.



Protection of bodily autonomy is an issue that follows us throughout our lives.

Nursing homes have struggled to pay their bills and retain staff for some time, but the pandemic exacerbated that problem. Nursing home employment is down more than 380,000 since February of 2020, and that trend coincides with an increase in the use of these medicines.

And, this is merely the latest in a long-line of troubling stories about the care the elderly receive in our nursing homes across the country. Many were killed at the beginning of COVID-19 by the decisions of lawmakers that placed contagious people back in their midst. Others have been blocked from seeing loved ones who might keep an eye on their treatment and prescriptions.

These events raise serious and far-reaching concerns about the safety and viability of these institutions.

### The Pandemic and Individual Liberty

The policy disagreements throughout the pandemic have often come down to an age-old argument: the individual versus the collective. And throughout these debates, it has become apparent that many people do not actually, consistently, believe in individual liberty. That has been especially visible when it comes to discussions around medical freedom.

But this story should serve as a reminder that the questions of bodily autonomy are not nuanced; they are as

black and white as they come. If one does not have a right over their own body and what goes into it, they certainly cannot claim to be free. Pre-pandemic, this was a pretty basic standard for human rights and civil liberties.

After World War II, the United Nations enshrined this concept in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 3 of this Declaration states, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” This clause is often referred to as the right to informed consent.

Essentially, what this means is that it is a violation of human rights for an individual to be given medical procedures or pharmaceuticals without their voluntary, informed consent.

And, long before the United Nations came along, our own Constitution detailed this principle in the Fourth Amendment of the Bill of Rights. In it, our Founders enshrined the right to be secure in one’s person and property. When it comes to medical procedures, we are not truly a free people if we do not have the ability to determine what goes into our bodies.

These nursing home patients are almost certainly not giving their “informed consent” for their medications. Many have dementia and are unable to make these determinations, or they are unaware of what they are being given in the first place. In these circumstances, such decisions should go through their next of kin—but that is not happening.

For millions of the nation’s elderly, pandemic lockdowns have prevented their families, who serve as their medical advocates, from personally observing their condition.

This practice in nursing homes is a foul one, and as it is now exposed in major media outlets, the public will push to stop it.

—Hannah Cox | Content Manager and Brand Ambassador for the Foundation for Economic Education.

## BELL RINGERS

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www.registertoring.com; by telephone: 785-233-9648; or by Email: shelley\_robertson@usc.salvation-army.org

In Shawnee County, The Salvation Army has been assisting families and individuals since 1886. Our social service program includes community evening meal, food pantry, rent/utility assistance, clothing, disaster relief, and supportive services for men and women available through Veteran’s Services. Worship services are offered every Sunday morning well as weekly bible study, character building programs for children, weekly women’s ministry and monthly men’s ministry groups.

## RIVER ACCESS

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For river users, recommended alternate locations for river access during construction are the boat ramps in Kaw River State Park or Seward Avenue Access.

You can learn more and follow the progress of the project using the Topeka Open Projects Dashboard under Project Number T-281058.01, KS River Weir Upstream Modifications.

## FUN FEST

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offer information on assisted living, home safety, health products, healthy foods and more.

Businesses and organizations represented at the health fair will include Midland Care, Rebound Physical Therapy, Thornton Place, Innov8tive Nutrition, NAMI Kansas, Perfectly Posh, GraceMed, St. Croix Hospice, SoulFire Nutrition, Emerald City Cosmos, Valeo, Pruvit Ketones, Rasmussen University and more.

Many of the vendors will have healthy activities and other options for kids, including Bonkers, Ultimate Bounce, MyGym and more.


The event, which takes place from 10am to 3pm, is coordinated by C5Alive, Metro Voice Newspaper, Health & Wellness magazine and Emerald City Cosmopolitan Club.

Other sponsors include Golden Eagle Casino, Integrity Insurance, Rasmussen University, Peggy Beasterfeld Tax & Accounting, The Pad Restaurant, ServPro, Reser’s Fine Foods, Shannon Nichol REALTOR, SoulFire Nutrition, College HUNKS, Rebound Physical Therapy, Capital City Flooring, Kansas Fencing, Big Phil’s Auto Plaza, Davidson’s Funeral Home and more. Media Sponsors include WIBW, Cumulus, AlphaMedia, WREN Digital, TV25 and others.

For more information, visit Topeka Fall Fest on Facebook, email info@C5Alive.org or call 785-640-6399.

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## Southern Baptist executives defy vote of members on sexual abuse

The Southern Baptist Convention continues to wrestle with questions about how to handle sexual abuse allegations.

Earlier this week, the executive committee defied the will of the denomination's members, or "messengers," by refusing to waive attorney-client privilege for an investigation into allegations of sexual abuse. In June, during the denomination's annual meeting, messengers voted overwhelmingly to create a task force charged with overseeing a fully transparent, third-party investigation into the matter.

Jared Wellman, an executive committee member and pastor of Tate Springs Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, submitted a motion during the meeting. "A historic moment in the SBC as the [executive committee] has chosen to defy the messengers in an investigation concerning themselves," he wrote in response to the 35-40 vote against waiving privilege.

At the close of the virtual meeting, the committee voted 77-23 to grant themselves another week to try to resolve disagreements with the task force. A similar vote last week is what necessitated the meeting this week.

The focus on the issue of sexual abuse stems from an investigation by the "Houston Chronicle," documenting the stories of 700 survivors as well as alleged efforts to keep accusers quiet. As a result, this summer, messengers called for an outside investigation, which would include a waiver of attorney-client privilege, into how the SBC's executive committee has



handled sexual abuse allegations over the last two decades

SBC President Ed Litton said he is "grieved the executive committee determined yet more time is needed before honoring the clear will of the messengers with regard to attorney-client privilege."

In a letter to the committee on Wednesday, members from across the nation stated, in part, "we write to express our frustration and disappointment with the recent actions of the Executive Committee. In June, over 15,000 messengers spoke with near-unanimous clarity by adopting the "Motion to Investigate the SBC Executive Committee." The messengers were clear when they moved, "that the task force agree to the accepted best standards and practices as recommended by the commissioned third-party, including but not limited to the Executive Committee staff and members waiving

attorney client privilege in order to ensure full access to information and accuracy in the review."

The powerful letter went on to state, "The rejection of the messengers' will is a repudiation of our SBC polity that endangers our continued cooperation for the sake of the gospel, and your committee's lack of compliance is a violation of your fiduciary responsibilities as entrusted to you by the messengers."

Litton agreed saying, "The only question that remains is whether the executive committee will pledge its full support and cooperation to this process by adhering to the messengers' direction. I remain prayerful that the executive committee will choose to take the necessary step of waiving attorney-client privilege and demonstrate that its commitment to full cooperation is more than mere words."

—Alan Goforth / Metro Voice

## State Senator Kristen O'Shea will speak at C5

The October C5Alive "POWER" Luncheon will be held October 14, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at The Peak, 1930 SW Gage.

The featured speaker will be State Senator Kristen O'Shea.

The cost to attend a C5 luncheon is \$10 for C5Alive members and first-time guests who RSVP, and \$12 at the door. Non-members and repeat guests pay \$15. C5 lunch-

C5Alive facebook page and website: [www.C5Alive.org](http://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



O'Shea

EASTERFEST, the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Family Fun Fest, held on N. Kansas Avenue and in Garfield Park on the day before Easter (cancelled for 2021).

The group is also planning a Fall Fest this year on October 9 at The Vinewood venue.

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](http://C5Alive.org), [facebook.com/C5Alive](https://facebook.com/C5Alive), or call 785-640-6399.



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## AMERICA

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even know them, let alone care about them. After creating the world, the deists' God abandoned it. The deists' God was Aristotle's "unmoved mover."

Every major Founder (again, with the possible exception of Jefferson) believed in the God of the Bible who heard prayer, acted in history, judged people in the hereafter, demanded ethical behavior, and without Whom morality did not objectively exist. Most importantly, they all believed that in order for a functioning democratic republic not to descend into tyranny, it was necessary to link freedom with God.

Whatever Jefferson's view of God was, he was as influenced by the Bible as every other Founder. He and Benjamin Franklin proposed that the great seal of the United States depict Moses leading the Jews out of Egypt; Moses raising his rod to divide the sea; Pharaoh, in his chariot, overwhelmed by the waters; and the divine pillar of fire that led the Israelites by night. The seal's proposed

motto: "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Jefferson and Franklin believed that freedom and obedience to God were synonymous. No God, no freedom.

The Founders linked freedom inextricably to God. That is why the inscription on the Liberty Bell is from the Bible: "Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land Unto All the Inhabitants thereof." The verse comes from Leviticus, the third book of the Bible. The Founders knew their Bible. The present adult generation of Americans is more ignorant of the Bible than any in American history. And most young people know even less. I suspect that most students at Harvard could not identify Leviticus, let alone cite any of its verses.

The bell was named "the Liberty Bell" by the abolitionists. Their opposition to slavery was based entirely on the Bible. Their motivating principle, "All men are created equal," came from the Bible. They did not get it from the ancient Greeks, who would have scoffed at such a notion.

Freedom permeates the Old Testament: The Bible begins with the story of Adam and Eve, a story about


man's assertion of his God-given freedom ... freedom even to disobey God. The primary story of the Old Testament is the Exodus, a story about God liberating slaves.

For the Founders, the most obvious reason freedom was dependent on faith in God was that only if God is regarded as the source of freedom could men not rightfully take it away. If men are the source of the freedom, men can rightfully retract it. This is precisely what is happening today. Freedom is being destroyed primarily by those who scorn the idea that freedom comes from God.

The rule that the end of religion means the end of freedom does not mean that secularism would not be a welcome replacement for totalitarian theocracies such as Iran. But eventually that, too — a secular Iran — would lead to tyranny. Wherever God is delinked from freedom, freedom ultimately withers. When Christianity died in Europe, it was replaced by fascism, Nazism and communism.

Freedom is central to the Bible. This is especially apparent in America, which until now has linked its unparalleled commitment to freedom to God and the Bible. But freedom is peripheral to leftism. That is why freedom in America is threatened as never before: The foundations upon which freedom rests — God, the Bible, Judeo-Christian values — are threatened as never before.

Every American coin bears two inscriptions: "In God We Trust" and "Liberty." Every generation of Americans prior to the 1960s understood why. Most Americans today, including secular conservatives, do not.



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# FINANCIAL PLANNING

## Work first, play later

Dear Dave,

I brought about \$15,000 in student loan debt into our marriage. I'm 26, my wife is 27, and we've been married a little over a year. During that time, our parents have helped us out with financial gifts occasionally. Whenever this happens, my wife and I get into an argument. She likes to use the cash they give us to have fun, but I think we should use it to pay down debt and get our finances in order. What is your opinion?

Kent

Dear Kent,

If your parents didn't specify what the money is for, then it's up to you guys to decide together how it will be used. In my mind, the fun needs to be put on hold for a while.

You've already told me you have at least \$15,000 in debt. If there's more debt in the picture, I'd advise listing all your debts, and begin knocking them out from smallest to largest using the debt snowball system. Debt is risk, and as long as it's around it's eating up your largest wealth-building tool—your income.

I'm sure your wife is a good, smart lady. But it's time she started being a little more mature when it comes to financial matters. Let her know how important this is to you and why it's so important to your future as a couple. You two should be working together and getting your financial house in order as a team.

I recommend treating the money from your parents just like a paycheck. That means including it in a written, monthly budget, and taking care bills, debt, and any other financial responsibilities you have first. Trust me, there'll be plenty of time for fun later. The amount of student loan debt you have isn't astronomical, but it does need to be cleaned up as fast as possible.

Once that's taken care of, you'll be



**DAVE RAMSEY**

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

**davesays**

able to really concentrate on saving and investing—and yes, some fun along the way!

—Dave

## If you need a co-signer, you're not ready

Dear Dave,

My fiancée and I want to make an offer on a house. She has a lot of late payments and a bad credit record, though, but she is working hard to manage her money better and get out of debt. I don't make enough money to get a home loan by myself, and I have some debt to pay off, too. In order to help us out, my aunt and uncle said they are willing to co-sign a mortgage loan for us. What do you think of that idea?

Evan

Dear Evan,

Here's a simple, solid piece of advice for anyone looking to make a purchase of any kind. If you need a co-signer, you're not ready to make that purchase—period. I'm not trying to beat you up or anything, but it's way too soon for you two to be thinking about buying a home. I mean, for starters you're just engaged right now.

When a lender requires a co-signer, it basically means they don't believe you'll pay back the money. And besides, you two don't need a house now or right after you get married. The two of you should get married, and live in a decent, inexpensive apartment for a while. During that time, you both need

to work hard on paying off all your debt. After that, save up an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses. Then, start setting aside cash for a down payment on a modest home.

When it comes time to buy a home, I recommend a 15-year, fixed rate loan with a down payment of at least 10%. Twenty percent is better, because it will help you avoid having to pay PMI (private mortgage insurance). Make sure the monthly payments on the loan are no more than 25% of your combined take home pay. Keeping the payments at 25% or below will make it easier to address other important financial issues, like saving and investing.

Your aunt and uncle are obviously generous people, Evan, but they're a little misguided in their offer. At this point, helping you two buy a house—something you obviously can't afford—would be a huge burden instead of a blessing.

—Dave

## Voted 'Best of Topeka' AGAIN for 2021 By Going Above and Beyond For Clients

By Ryan Shumaker  
Smartvestor Pro at  
The Retirement Team



It's been a season full of recognition for The Retirement Team, a financial advisory firm based out of Topeka. The business recently swept The Best of Topeka finance categories, earning Best Financial Planning Firm, Best Accountants and Best Financial Planner.

"I think we're unique in that it takes a team of professionals, each with specialized knowledge in order to really help our clients make sure they're doing the best they can with the resources they have," said Ryan Shumaker who won the category of 'Best Financial Planner.'

Shumaker believes that collaborative model when serving clients is the driving force behind The Retirement Team's sweeping of the awards.

"One of the main drivers towards us winning this year as well as in previous years is the excitement our clients feel by experiencing that team approach, particularly from the tax planning aspect."

According to Shumaker, many large financial firms don't allow their advisors to give tax advice, which he feels is a mistake.

"Taxes are part of good planning, and are different in retirement because there are a lot of taxes that are triggered when you retire that don't exist when you're working. We have clients who we've helped save tens and in some cases hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes."

Shumaker said that planning ahead for how to manage retirement accounts can mean the difference between a

lower tax rate or much more substantial tax consequences on retirement savings.

"We feel that retirees are one of the highest and most unfairly taxed groups. That's why we make sure that Uncle Sam gets the least so that our clients can enjoy more of their hard-earned dollars in retirement. Typically, most of our clients are within ten years of their planned retirement date; ten years before or ten years after. The sooner you



come to see us, the better we can work to reduce taxes and increase retirement income."

The Retirement Team also offers a free early investment warning system for anyone in the community called Wealth Guard, which is a portfolio monitoring service that monitors accounts day and night and alerts investors of future downturns.

One of the biggest mistakes Shumaker says he sees people make is allowing their emotions to creep into their investment decision-making. "A lot of people in or near retirement made some really bad choices in 2020. We know this because Fidelity did a study of all accounts and found that nearly 1/3 of those 65 or older sold everything at or near the market bottom in March," said Shumaker.

"It is clear these people that sold either had no plan or a pretty poor one. If someone is worried about the stock market, the problem is not the stock market; it's the lack of a good plan. It's not a question of if, but when and how many times a bear market happens when you're retired, unless you have a really short retirement. Failing to plan here is pretty much just planning to fail. With a properly setup plan you shouldn't have to ever worry in retirement about the economy, elections, stock market, etc."

The Retirement Team strives to educate its clients and the public at large through Retirement Team Radio on Saturday mornings from 7:30 to 8:30 and Sunday mornings from 8 to 9 on AM 1440. The show is also available via podcast on their website, RetireTopeka.com.

"A question we frequently pose on our radio show is, 'If what you thought about your retirement turned out not to be true, when would you want to know about?' Now when it's easy to fix any potential problems or later after it might be too late?"

Shumaker said The Retirement Team is honored to be recognized as a Best of Topeka business by the community.

"We were very happy to hear that. We feel that we really go above and beyond for our clients, and seeing that they voted us #1 in all of those Best of Topeka categories yet again that means all of that hard work is really being appreciated."

For more information on The Retirement Team or to read recent articles they've written, visit RetireTopeka.com.

## Does my mom need long-term care insurance?

Dear Dave,

My dad passed away about a year ago, but he left my mom in really good shape financially. They never had any consumer debt, the house is paid for, and they had about \$1 million in assets. Dad also left her a \$500,000 trust. Mom is going to be 60 next year. She is in good health, but considering her age and financial situation, do you think she needs long-term care insurance?

Darby

Dear Darby,

I'm so sorry to hear about your dad. Losing a spouse, or a father, is tough at any age. The good news is your dad did a great job of planning to take care of your mom. He left her in fine shape money-wise, but yes, she needs long term care insurance and a good estate planner. You need to help your mom do everything possible to handle her situation wisely.

I usually suggest folks wait until age 60 to buy long-term care insurance,

because the likelihood of filing a claim before then is very slim. In fact, about 95% of long-term care claims are filed for people over 70. That's why, in most cases, it doesn't make sense to get long-term care insurance earlier than age 60. Insurance isn't a one-size-fits-all kind of thing, though. If someone has a family history of illness or other health issues at a younger age, they may need to get long-term care insurance earlier. But you shouldn't buy long-term care coverage at a young age just because you're paranoid of what might happen, or because you think you'll save money. That's just not true.

In the event your mom becomes unable to take care of herself at some point, long-term care insurance would be an absolute necessity. The cost of nursing home care these days is astronomical. Again, your mom is in a great place financially, but a prolonged stay in a nursing home somewhere down the road could eat up her nest egg in a hurry. Long-term care insurance is a wise part of any good asset management plan.

—Dave

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## How to be Financially Savvy When You're Changing Jobs

By Jim Hanna

The tight labor market is enticing many people to evaluate options to start a new career. If you're among those who plan to quit your current role in search of a better opportunity, it's important to consider how doing so



Hanna

could affect your finances. Here are some things to think about before you hand in your two-week notice.

Compare the complete package. Many factors contribute to work satisfaction. Weigh these factors when evaluating whether to stay in your current job or take the leap into a new opportunity.

• **Pay** – Better pay is often the main motive for changing jobs. However, pay comparisons are not always as clear as they seem, particularly when moving from an hourly to a salaried position or a position reliant on commission. With a salary, you may be expected to work extra hours without the benefit of overtime, but bonuses can potentially boost your earnings.

• **Benefits** – Benefit packages vary from employer to employer. How much paid time off is your employer offering? Will you have quality options for health, dental and life insurance? Will they cost more? Does the company match 401(k) contributions? There is value in other perks as well, such as an on-site workout facility, dry cleaning or daycare facility that can save you time and money.

• **Culture** – Pay attention to the culture of your prospective workplace. How do you see yourself fitting in? Does the workplace seem to be collaborative or hyper-competitive? Where do you thrive? Is there flexibility to work from home? All of these things can make or break a new job.

• **Commute** – Is the new job closer or further from home? If the new job is further away, you will spend more time commuting. You will also incur extra expenses either in bus fees or gas, oil and wear and tear on your vehicle. These costs may offset potential salary gains.

• **Opportunity** – Think through where a new job can take you. A prospective employer should be able

to outline your expected career path along with a timeline for advancement. Consider whether you could be walking away from a bright future at your current workplace. Is there a chance your employer would sweeten your terms to keep you on board?

If you decide to take the leap and have a new job offer in hand, here's what else to consider.

**Negotiate while you can.** Most prospective employers expect some give-and-take during salary and benefit discussions. Think of ways to quantify the value you would bring to the business and be prepared to counter if an offer does not meet your expectations.

**Transition your benefits.** Use your paid time off before leaving your current position. Ensure continuity of health care coverage by enrolling in COBRA until your new benefits kick in. You will have decisions to make about your 401(k) savings. You can keep them where they are, transfer them to your new employer's plan, or roll savings into your own account. You can also cash out your savings, but this will incur a tax penalty and detract from your retirement goals.

**Leave on good terms.** Ideally, you want to maintain good relations with former employers. Provide ample notice to help them find a replacement. Ask for a letter of referral. Participate in an exit interview if one is offered.

**Talk to your financial advisor.** Job changes are life events that impact your financial future. Lean on your advisor's expertise to adjust your financial plan as you transition in your career.

–Jim Hanna, CFP®, MBA, CKA®, is a Private Wealth Advisor and a Certified Kingdom Advisor with Heart Financial Partners a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. in Topeka, KS. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 27 years. To contact him, [ameripriseadvisors.com/james.c.hanna](mailto:ameripriseadvisors.com/james.c.hanna), 785.357.6278 x19, 601 S Kansas Ave., Topeka, KS 66603.

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## Tax refund delays are so bad not even the taxpayer advocates can keep up

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

You know things are dire when even your tax helpers are overtaxed.

In a rare display of transparency this week, the Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) outlined various logistical problems that have caused substantial delays for its team of advocates, who are tasked with helping taxpayers resolve issues with the Internal Revenue Service. Just as the IRS has been buried under an extreme backlog of unprocessed tax returns—leaving millions of Americans without their refunds and no word on when they'll receive them—the TAS has been suffocating under the flood of taxpayers who have turned to the service for help.

"Our advocates have been handling unusually high levels of inventory for the last year," writes Erin Collins, the national taxpayer advocate, in a blog post. "The past two filing seasons have been particularly difficult. On top of dealing with personal, medical, and financial challenges brought on by COVID-19, taxpayers have struggled to get advice and answers from the IRS, and millions of refunds are still pending."

The office of the National Taxpayer Advocate serves as a kind of ombudsman, operating independently within the IRS and advocating for solutions to specific problems. In addition to fielding complaints about delayed refunds, the service also helps with identity verification, processing amended returns, or any number of issues that taxpayers may face.

But the TAS can't actually "fix" problems itself, Collins writes. Rather, it can only work with IRS business units to advocate for certain solutions. In other words, the TAS can't do its job if the IRS doesn't do its job. And right now, both entities are too understaffed and overworked to do their jobs efficiently. According to Collins, taxpayers wait an average of 80 minutes when they call the TAS for help, and many encounter what she described as "courtesy disconnects," meaning they get hung up on.

"Due to the high volume of calls and cases we have been receiving, we have struggled to meet our own deadlines and expectations," Collins writes. "Our 79 local office telephone lines are receiving over 20,000 calls each week."



the TAS has fallen by 10% since 2017, the post estimates. As a result, staff levels have dropped by about the same amount, despite the increased workload.

• **IRS logjams:** Put simply, because the IRS is taking longer to fix things, TAS advocates are having to spend more time on each case. Multiply that by 253,000, and you see the

problem.

Not surprisingly, Collins recommends that Congress provide better funding to the IRS, which would both improve the agency's efficiency and allow for adequate staffing levels at the TAS, all for the sake of helping taxpayers who "face immediate financial hardship or fall through the cracks of IRS bureaucracy."



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The post goes on to list three main sources of the TAS's problems:

- Increased workload: The office is expecting 253,000 cases this year, up from only 167,000 in 2017.
- Not enough money: Adjusted for inflation, the budget to operate

# opinion

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## Why Defend Freedom for Everyone, Everywhere, All the Time?

The greatest enemy of freedom can be freedom. One of the most important observations that I gleaned from one of Os Guinness's books is that celebrating the acquisition of liberty and freedom (what we celebrate this weekend is our acquisition of freedom) is typical in the world's history. But what is really unusual is sustaining freedom.

When freedom becomes not a freedom for good, truth, or justice but a freedom from — freedom from restraint, from consequences, from any rules or responsibilities — then freedom devolves into license, and license can actually put us in slavery to our own passions and desires. This misguided definition of freedom presents a challenge to one of the core freedoms of the American experience and one built into human beings by God as our Creator: the freedom of religion.

Recently, I spoke with former Senator and former Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, Sam Brownback, about the issue of religious freedom. He has been at the forefront of advocating for religious freedom not only in the United States, but especially around the world. As Islamic radicals in Nigeria clamp down on Christians' freedom there, and so many scenarios like this around the world, here is Ambassador Sam



Brownback in his own words about religious freedom. An edited audio transcription of our interview follows:

*Most of the world's population lives in a country of significant religious persecution. It actually gets worse than that. The Chinese government now is standing up and saying it has an ideology that should legitimately compete with U.S. democracy, Western democracy, and capitalism on the world stage. China says that theirs is an equally viable system that people can adopt. They put forward an authoritarian, mercantilist type of system yet they say it's equal to democracy and free market capitalism. There is now a competing globalized system that goes right at the heart of religious freedom. It says the State controls this space and we say no, God controls this space because it's a human right; it's the dignity of the individual.*

I think the Ambassador is dead right

here. We don't oppose foreign governments like China because of their progress, or their economic power, or their rising military might. We oppose their system of governance because it is frankly dehumanizing. What's happening right now to the Uyghur population is nothing short of genocide. We are responsible to defend not only religious freedom in America, but to defend it around the world — anywhere that our influence stretches. In fact, we have a responsibility to defend religious freedom in America because America is one of the few nations in world history with both the core beliefs and the capacity to expand religious freedom around the world. We believe as Christians that religious freedom is an image-of-God issue. It's not a political one. In fact, Ambassador Brownback believes that, too:

*I see religious freedom as God's freedom to us. He gave us the right to do with our own soul whatever we choose. And He knew ahead of time that if we did do that, He would have to send His Son to clean up the mess. And He still did it. He did it knowing how much it would cost Him. So, there must be something extraordinarily precious about this particular liberty given to humanity, such that we should not allow any government to*

*interfere with it, and everyone should be allowed to freely exercise it. It's about a common human right and one that I believe was given to us by God. The American founders in particular saw its preciousness, and the need for it, and went so far as to protect it at the first order. We must protect this right first.*

Freedom is not just a governmental endeavor; it is an image-of-God reality. One that we citizens have a responsibility to defend, retain, to advance, and support. Not only here in America but also around the world. Ambassador Brownback is doing incredible work in this field.

Listen to my full conversation with Ambassador Brownback on the Breakpoint podcast. The conversation will also be posted on Breakpoint's Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram pages, as well as on breakpoint.org.

Incidentally, on July 13th through 15th in Washington, D.C., Ambassador Brownback will join with 70 different organizations, including the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, to host the International Religious Freedom Summit 2021 (IRF). IRF is the most comprehensive event to date on the status of religious freedom around the world. For more information visit irfsummit.com.

—John Stonestreet and Roberto Rivera

## The Wrath and Love of God



CLINT  
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hopefortoday

About Jesus it is written, "... whoever does not obey the Son [Jesus] shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (John 3:36). Wrath of God? The phrase is uncomfortable. Jesus was the most compassionate, kind and loving person the world has ever known. Wrath? It just does not fit the idea most people have of who Jesus was and is. We talk about the love of Jesus and the love of God, but the wrath of God?

Sometimes we might think this idea was just in the Old Testament, but when Jesus came, somehow it ended the era of the wrath of God. Not true. There are hundreds of verses from the Bible that speak about the wrath of God in both the Old and New Testaments, including after Jesus' resurrection and the establishment of the church.

What is the wrath of God? Theological scholar, Dr. Leon Morris, wrote about this, stating it is the "active opposition of God's holy nature to everything that is evil."

Mankind naturally goes against the ways of God. To speak evil of others, engage sexually with others outside of marriage and put our interests above our neighbor is all very normal for us. This is who we are as a human race. We are inwardly corrupt, even the most religious and moral among us. We all inherently walk in disobedience to God.

How does God respond to that? By being just. When man persists in going His own way, God must be impartial and act. His wrath is an expression of that, where He comes against every thought, word or deed that violates His glory, honor and holiness.

How we feel about something is not as important as how God feels about it. He is opposed to our blatant disobedience. Therefore, when we understand this and His wrath, it ought to make us tremble in reverent fear before Him. He is invisible, is everywhere, reads our thoughts, can control the weather, dispatches unseen forces, can alter the course of daily events and possess the power over life and death. When we do not care what God says or foolishly presume things about His kindness, we are living dangerously. Hear this Word from the writer of Hebrews in the Bible, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (10:31).

God's wrath is certain and it will come against all who refuse to humble



themselves and obey Him. Hell will be their home for eternity, which is the unbridled, full manifestation of the wrath of God for forever.

What can save us from this definite and unbearable wrath? The cross of Jesus.

Have you heard of the statement "Jesus saves"? What does He save from? It is written in the Scriptures that we "shall be saved by him from the wrath of God" (Romans 5:9). When Jesus hung on His cross, He bore upon Himself the sin of all humanity. The very thing He hated; He chose to take. And when He did, the wrath of His Father was poured out upon Him. Jesus received our punishment. Why? Because of love. He bore the wrath of God so we would not have to. Only Jesus can save us from the wrath that is to come.

God is kind and patient with us. He waits with arms stretched open wide as

He sends messengers back and forth across the world, and directly to you, carrying His message of good news. People, no matter who they are, can be saved from the wrath to come and find forgiveness and peace in Jesus today.

A prayer for you - "Lord God, I praise you for Your justice and mercy. You are a God without partiality and a wise judge. Help us to understand and not dismiss Your wrath. Let us walk in reverent fear before you because of your mighty power. May we call upon you to save us from our sins and spare us from Your wrath. In Jesus' name. Amen."

Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings. Hope for Today is a nationally syndicated column.

If God used one of Clint's columns to impact your life, share your story at cdecker@greatawakenings.org.

# No Time for Passivity

By Dr. Michael Brown

It is 11:45 PM Tuesday night as I sit here in front of my computer, having just responded to some emails and after finishing some editorial work on an academic project. But I'm a late night person, and there's still plenty of time to work. So, as I often do, I take a moment to pray, asking the Lord, "Is there anything You want me to write?" Immediately I hear the words (in my thoughts, not audibly), "No time for passivity."

Now, to be perfectly clear, I am not claiming special inspiration for this article. I'm simply saying that, as often happens when I pray about what to write, a thought comes strongly to mind.

If you find the theme of this article relevant or helpful, great.

The simple truth is that we are in a war. An ideological war. A spiritual war. A moral and cultural war. A war that, in many ways, is even more real than a physical war.

The soul of our nation is at stake. The future of our children and grandchildren is on the line. The fate of tens of millions of people hangs in the balance. This is certainly no time for passivity!

Instead, it is a time for action. For resolve. For courage. For tenacity. For faith. For determination.

It is time for the weak to become strong and for the strong to become stronger.

It is time for the weary to be renewed

and for the warriors to be reinvigorated.

It is time to stop making excuses and to stop feeling sorry for ourselves.

Yes, we're tired. Yes, things are messed up. Yes, life seems out of control. Yes, the odds against us at times seem overwhelming.

But that is what this world says. That is what our circumstances proclaim. That is the perspective of this earth.

What does God's Word say? What do His promises proclaim? What is the perspective from heaven?

Remember that, during times of great crisis when God's purposes came under great attack, the Bible says this: "He who sits in the heavens laughs! He holds His enemies in derision!" (See Psalm 2.)

When Hezekiah and the people of Judah were about to be destroyed by the mighty and brutal Assyrians, the prophet Isaiah sent the king a simple message: "The king of Assyrian is not fighting against you but against Me! You will shake your head at him and his armies as they flee." (See Isaiah 37-38.)

It is the same with us now. We may feel outnumbered. (For a reality check, just imagine what it feels like to be a Christian in Afghanistan. Or North Korea. Just saying.) We may feel like throwing in the towel (or, at the least, taking a break from the front lines). We may even feel paralyzed by so many battles on so many fronts, starting with the battle for our own lives. And for our families and friends.

And for our churches and cities. And for our nation. And for the world.

Where do we even start? And what about our own personal failures over the years? What about all the prayers we prayed that were never answered? What about all our shattered expectations? Why get our hopes up again?

But what else can we do? Put another way, how can we not get our hopes up again? How can we not stand and fight for what is right? How can we sit idly by while a generation is destroyed? How can we afford to lose any more ground?

Does not the Spirit of God living inside us call us to action? Does not His Word remind us that, if He is for us, no one can be against us? And didn't Jesus assure that He will be with us always, even to the end of the age? And didn't He guarantee us times of tribulation and testing – they are as much a part of this world as sunrise and sunset – but with it all, victory in Him?

This reminds me of the story of John and Betty Stam, graduates of Moody Bible Institute who sailed for China as missionaries during a difficult time for foreign religious workers. (They were actually married in China, Betty preceding John to the mission field by one year.) They knew the risks involved, as the China Inland Mission was specifically recruiting laborers to work in dangerous, Communist-infested areas.

But both of them had been inspired by a poem written after Southern Presbyterian missionary Jack Vinson was martyred in 1931. Vinson had showed no fear of death to his Chinese captors, telling them, "Kill me, if you wish. I will go straight to God."

The calmness he showed inspired his colleague E. H. Hamilton to write this poem.

Afraid? Of What?

To feel the spirit's glad release?

To pass from pain to perfect peace

The strife and strain of life to cease?

Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of What?

To hear His welcome, and to trace

The glory gleam from wounds of grace

Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of What?

A flash, a crash, a pierced heart;

Darkness, light, O Heaven's art!

A wound of His a counterpart!

Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of What?

To do by death what life could not—

Baptize with blood a stony plot,

Till souls shall blossom from the spot?

Afraid—of that?

With courage and faith, John had challenged the graduating class at Moody in 1932: "Shall we beat a retreat, and turn back from our high calling in Christ Jesus; or dare we advance at God's command in face of the impossible? Let us remind ourselves that the Great Commission was never qualified by clauses calling for advance only if funds were plentiful and no hardship or self-denial involved. On the contrary, we are told to expect tribulation and even persecution, but with it victory in Christ."

The day of reckoning came for John and Betty Stam in 1934, just one year after their marriage in China. They were captured by Communists (their little baby, Priscilla, was miraculously spared), then

painfully bound, stripped down to their underwear, and kept under guard for the night. The next morning, they were paraded down the street while being mocked and ridiculed, after which they were beheaded—baptizing with blood a stony plot, till souls have blossomed from that spot. They were not afraid of that!

As word got out about their martyrdom, the impact was dramatic, both in terms of new missionary volunteers, new student prayer meetings, and large monetary donations to the work in China. A missionary with the China Inland Mission wrote to Betty's parents: "A life which had the longest span of years might not have been able to accomplish one-hundredth of the work for Christ which they have done in a day."

As Jesus taught, "Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24). One short act of obedience to death gave many others eternal life, and what Satan meant for evil, God turned for good.

So, say goodbye to passivity and inaction, and quit making excuses. The battle is the Lord's (and, once again, I am talking about a spiritual, moral, and ideological battle, not a battle fought with guns and bombs). And we belong to Him.

In the words of the Letter to the Hebrews, "So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong" (Hebrews 12:12-13).

It's time for holy action.

## DOES IT ADD UP? What are the facts about mask wearing?

By George Ismael Feliu

Does 1+2=3? The answer is yes or no. Depending on what you answer will show if you believe masks actually prevent the spread of viruses or not.

For the fact checkers, the CDC after a century of saying masks do not prevent the spread of viruses (science initially based on the study of the Spanish Flu and the science since has gotten more complicated and still stands with this study for the most part) did a 180 and now states that masks do prevent the spread of viruses due to a new study which took them almost four months to publish while they erased all the other studies previously accessible on the internet including one published in early 2020. We were told that they lied earlier because they thought Americans could not produce enough masks for everyone. That's lie 1 either way.

The World Health Organization produced a study in May that said asymptomatic people very rarely spread the virus. That's 80% of any infected with the virus as studies have shown. All asymptomatic means is the infected never gets ill. The following day WHO took the study down because it detrimental to them as well as the CDC. Lockdowns and mask mandates appeared too totalitarian in light of that study. You must understand that no one wants to look that bad.

When they finally produced the study of why masks worked which they tested multiple times, they revealed it was done by using a particle gun. Several in the scientific community actually questioned the validity of a particle gun as particles are far larger

than viruses. They were quickly silenced. Again the science of the CDC must never be questioned as all true science is. That why we know the earth is the center of the universe (sarcasm) because the guardians of true science destroyed the man who questioned it, Galileo.

So with all the scientific data that contradicted the CDC erased by Big Tech or locked away, we can honestly say that the science is settled. Of course, the CDC ever vigilant and desirous of our safety published a study a little over a month later that cloth masks do not prevent smoke particles from entering the mouth and nose. Why is this important?

Mathematics is the language of science. A smoke particle is the size of .7 microns while the virus so many fear is at .012. Can the sizes vary? Yes but not by much. A micron is one thousandth of a millimeter. The difference between a smoke particle is the smoke particle is over 50 times bigger.

In January 2021 (that's this year), the CDC published a report that the blue masks (paper masks) are ineffective against all viruses just like the box said initially. Other less politically motivated studies since 2020 have published in 2021 that cloth masks are completely useless against viruses and the N95 the best mask you can purchase is only 50% effective. They used the aerosol method. I use the N95 (which is easier to breathe from that a cloth mask) when I spray pesticides. From my experience, I feel like coughing up a lung after a few seconds. Ask yourself this, "When you sneeze, is it like an aerosol can or like a particle gun? The answer by intelligent person



is the former not the latter. The spread of a virus is more like an aerosol spray.

To summarize, the CDC says that cloth masks prevent the spread of viruses. They say the science backs them. The CDC also says that cloth masks due stop you from inhaling smoke particles. Particles are large than viruses. The CDC math does not add up. Once again, the CDC is lying about something. So does 1+2=3? If yes, then mask do not keep you safe.

So where is the harm in wearing masks?

All those studies prior to 2020 all came to the same conclusion, "Masks do more harm than good." The wearing of masks lower immune systems. The wearing of masks give a false sense of security. The wearing of masks causes psychological damage.

The fact checkers are quick to say that the CDC says the science says it safe even though history tells a different story. Slavery, though morally wrong, is one of the oldest trades in the world. To this day, the Arab world has been the dominant force in this trade for many millennia. Over two thousand years ago, the Arabs discovered that by masking (covering their

mouths and nose) their captives, future slaves, they stripped them of their individuality and will as well as depersonalized (to make someone feel no longer human) them. Masking made people submissive therefore creating perfect slaves. Muslims did this to their woman to break them and keep them in abusive bondage. The slave owners of the South learned this from the Arabs and often used this method to break uppity slaves.

Psychology, the scientific study of the human mind, teaches that a child learns he is an individual by the age of two or three by looking at themselves in a mirror. A lesson a masked child of that age will never learn. History and Psychology teaches that masking someone begins the process of deleting the individual. Without individuality, there is

only the will of the master and mind of the collective.

As someone who strives to be a Christian, I see how dangerous this is. Jesus wants a personal relationship with each individual. Without individuality, there can be no salvation for the lost for they can never see themselves outside of the collective. Jesus told of the shepherd who left the 99 to save the one. America was built on Christian rugged individualism not a socialist collective.

In America, we are supposed to be free to make our own choices. If you want to wear a mask, go ahead. I refuse to force you not too. But like Paul said to the Romans in Romans 1: 13 "Now, I would not have you ignorant, brethren." I want people to know the truth. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." –John 8:32

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## Three reasons why Christians should consider fostering children

As Christians we should be committed to taking the love of Christ to some of the most broken areas of our community. One of those areas is orphan care, and we should want to see a culture that cares for the fatherless.

An enormous—but often forgotten—step in caring for orphans is foster care. I asked a local Christian social worker why Christians should care about fostering. This was her response:

I've been a foster-care worker for some time. This has given me the incredible opportunity to be a witness of what it looks like when families step out of their comfort zone and step into a child and their family's lives. I've seen foster parents who lose sleep for weeks to wake children up and take them to the rest room because trauma sometimes makes children wet the bed every night. I've seen foster parents worry, cry, and fight for help for these children only to lose battle after battle with schools, DSS, or that child's parents. I've seen foster parents break down in tears and tell me they don't know how to help and they don't know if they can take any more.

And when that happens I don't know what to tell them. Because there is no earthly reason why someone would want to be a foster parent.

In fact, I think it takes an incredible measure of God's love, grace, and wisdom being poured into you and out of you to be a foster parent, which is the very reason Christians

are called to do it.

**1** By choosing to be foster parents, Christians are choosing to live a life that demonstrates the love and humility of the Gospel.

Since I started my job, I've been challenged to face head-on some of the things I would like to most ignore, such as the presence of sexual abuse, violence, death, and fear. And in the midst of that, God has taught me some incredible lessons about what it means to be forgiven and to accept his grace and mercy. Instead of painting those who abuse or neglect their children as monsters, I've learned to look at them and see the effects of a fallen world and sin from which I've only been removed because of some mixture of privilege and God's grace.

It's really easy for me to look at the families I work with and to say they are there because they deserve to be there, because they've made bad choices and are reaping what they sowed.

There's a measure of truth to that, of course. But only a measure. Because what the Gospel teaches us is that their sin is no worse than ours. Most of us don't act like we believe that. We don't really think that we deserve no better than the worst of their consequences. And when we do that, we are cheapening God's grace.

Most of the people that I live my life with have food. We have safety,



We have the ability to seek friendships. We have family to call on when we need them. Who are we to keep this grace to ourselves? Jesus didn't. He came down to us and sacrificed himself entirely for our flourishing, despite the ugliness and the neediness of our sin. And that's what foster care requires. It requires reaching out and making yourself available for sacrifice despite what you might think about the families you are serving.

In return, we learn an even greater depth of the love that Jesus has for us. And we get the privilege to show that love to the world.

**2** By choosing to be foster parents, Christians are choosing to live a life of faith.

Foster care is a voluntary act of service to a government organization that retains control over every major decision affecting that child's life. You are the caretakers of a child that is very literally not yours. That means you get some (but not all) of the say in where they go to the doctor, where they get therapy, if they are on medication, who they have contact with, and most importantly, where they spend their future. In fact, you may have very little say about their haircut, the clothes they wear, or the language they use.

One of the hardest parts of my job is giving foster parents bad news. I once had a foster child who needed to be moved to a different state. Every week the foster father called me, weeping and begging for a different decision. It broke my heart when I had to answer, "My hands are tied. This has to happen."

After watching this foster father attend therapy twice a week with that child, work on discipline every day to establish a routine with them, teach an almost-teenager about teeth-brushing, and advocate at

school to get the help the child needed to learn, he was forced to say goodbye. That child had grown, healed, and learned to love at this home. But the child left, and now all this man can do is pray.

He can pray that this child remembers the lessons learned, that the love poured out would take root and keep growing, and that this kid would be safe and supported in the new home.

Like the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11, this foster parent may never see the results of his faith. That can be painful. But it can also be incredibly rewarding. The rewards that I have seen in the lives of foster parents have been a deep prayer life and an incredible outpouring of wisdom.

**3** By choosing to be foster parents, Christians are choosing to take a stand against injustice and to care for the poor.

James 1:27 says, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: To visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world." Christ's heart is for the vulnerable, and we who call ourselves by his name share in his heart. It's our duty as Christians to stand up for the citizens in our community who lack the power to do so for themselves. It is hard to think of a population that is more vulnerable than foster children—young, poor, from minority populations, from broken families.

There is no earthly reason why someone would want to be a foster parent. But there is every heavenly reason why they would. Those of us who have been touched by the gospel become like the gospel—full of grace. And as we love those the world finds unlovely, we join with a God who will one day "wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore."

—J.D. Greear is the pastor of The Summit Church, in Raleigh-Durham, NC and author of *Gaining by Losing: Why the Future Belongs to Churches That Send* (2015), *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary* (2011), and others.

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# Here are my top five reasons for adopting a child



**CARRIE CRAFT**  
Adoption/Foster Care Expert

## viewpoint

Looking back on conversations with other adoptive parents and my own experiences with adoption and foster parenting, I feel that there are truly five solid reasons to want to adopt a child.

While everyone may have their own motivation to explore adoption, the core of the desire for a family to adopt and what propels that family forward to completing an adoption, should be based on something deeper.

1 The desire to give a child a family. The prospective adoptive family wants to provide a child with a loving home and family. This includes everything that makes a home a loving place to be and a family that is an accepting group.

This desire includes the exchange of family traditions, the sharing of faith, and of memory making moments. It also means accepting the child for who they are - even their faults. Understanding that the child has a history and heritage that also needs to be respected and embraced.

2 The desire to help a child move on in life. The adoptive parents have an interest in helping a child heal from past grief and pain, whether this comes from abuse, neglect, being abandoned, or orphaned. The adoptive family wants to help the child start a new life and knows that there will be ups and downs with adoptive

parenting and is prepared for these challenges.

3 The ability to provide for another child in all ways. The prospective adoptive parent wants to share their home with a child and have the physical space for another child. They also have the time and the

emotional space in their heart for a new family member. The adoptive family is also financially secure enough to adopt comfortably.

4 The entire adoptive family agrees to the adoption. Everyone in the family agrees that adding to the home through adoption is the right thing to do. All children in the home are also excited about adopting. Going through with an adoption

when children in the home are not on board with the plan is not a good idea.

5 The adoptive family knows a child in need of a family. The prospective adoptive family is aware of a child who needs an adoptive home. The child may be a family friend, a relative, or a child they met at church or within the neighborhood.

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## Kansas News Briefs from around the state

### Kansas Priest and Korean War Hero Considered for Sainthood Laid to Rest in Wichita

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — Thousands of people filled an arena in Wichita to honor a Kansas priest who died in 1951 as a prisoner of war during the Korean War. Services for Rev. Emil Kapaun were held Wednesday, decades after the priest from Pilsen, Kansas, died while ministering to fellow prisoners of war. After the service, hundreds more lined streets to watch a horse-drawn caisson take Kapaun's body from Veterans Memorial Park to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, where he was interred. Kapaun's remains were identified in March and returned to his Kansas family last week. The Roman Catholic Church is considering Kapaun for sainthood. (Read more.)

### Kansas Senator's Bid to Stop President Biden's Vaccine Mandate Fails

WASHINGTON, DC (KPR) - The U.S. Senate has rejected Kansas GOP Senator Roger Marshall's effort to block Democratic President Joe Biden's COVID-19 vaccine mandate. Marshall's amendment to prohibit the use of federal funds to enforce the vaccine mandate failed on a straight party-line vote. The U.S. Department of Labor is currently working to implement the mandate announced earlier this month. It will cover most federal employees plus businesses that employ more than 100 people. Republican Kansas Congressman Jake LaTurner is also co-sponsoring a bill to block the mandate, but it stands little chance of passing in the Democratically-controlled U.S. House. Meanwhile, a new Associated Press poll shows that a narrow majority of Americans, 51%, support Biden's vaccine mandate while 34% oppose it.

### More than 1,000 Arrested in Wichita Area During Crackdown on Violent Crime

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — The U.S. Marshals Service says a 60-day effort to reduce violent crime in the Wichita area led to more than 1,000 arrests and numerous drug and weapons seizures. The Marshals Service said in a news release Wednesday that Operation Triple

Beam-Wichita, which ended September 5, involved numerous federal, state, county and Wichita law enforcement agencies. Operation Triple Beam is a national effort developed by the Marshal's Service to reduce gang violence by arresting violent fugitives, gang members and those who have committed violent crimes. The 1,072 arrests in the Wichita area involved 808 felonies and 264 misdemeanors, including 141 gang members.

### Kansas Man Sentenced for Attacking Federal Undercover Agent

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (AP) — A 20-year-old Kansas City, Kansas, man has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for attacking a federal undercover agent during a weapons transaction. The U.S. Attorney's Office said Wednesday that Nicholas Newman was sentenced this month after pleading guilty in May to one count of forcible assault on a federal officer and using a firearm in a violent crime. Court documents say two agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives met Newman in February 2020 after he contacted them to say he had a weapon for sale. Prosecutors say Newman attacked one of the agents, who suffered serious injuries, before he was subdued.

### Sex Offender Who Escaped from Kansas Mental Institution Arrested in Utah

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — Federal officials say a convicted sex offender who escaped from a state hospital in Kansas in June has been captured in Utah. The U.S. Marshal's office says 42-year-old John Freeman Colt was arrested in Wayne County, Utah, this week, after a citizen reported seeing him camping on federal land. In June, Colt escaped Larned State Hospital in central Kansas by creating a staff identification badge and pretending to be a doctor. Prosecutors say he walked through five secure doors on his way out of the hospital. The U.S. Marshal's Service said Colt apparently had help and had been able to buy a motorcycle while on the run.

### Authorities: Staff Struggled with Wichita Teen Who Died in Custody

BELLE PLAINE, Kan. (AP) — Authorities in Kansas say multiple staff members at a juvenile facility engaged in a physical struggle with a 17-year-old youth who was restrained and died two days later at a hospital. Details of the events leading up to Sunday's in-custody death of Cedric "CJ" Lofton emerged late Tuesday in a news release from the Kansas Bureau of Investigation that also identified the Wichita teen for the first time.

### KU Native American Art Exhibit Targeted by Vandals Partially Recovered

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP) — Police have recovered a stolen panel from a Native American art exhibit at the University of Kansas, weeks after other panels in the exhibit were vandalized. One panel from the art installation outside the Spencer Museum of Art was reported stolen on Wednesday. University police Deputy Chief James Druen said the panel was found on Thursday and police are speaking to a person of interest in the case. Four other panels were vandalized on September 4 and were taken down to be repaired. Museum and university officials said they are determined to reinstall the exhibit, called "Native Host."

### 5 Missouri Boarding School Employees Charged with Abuse

STOCKTON, Mo. (AP) — A southwest Missouri prosecutor is charging five employees of a private Christian boarding school with abusing students. Cedar County Prosecuting Attorney Ty Gaither announced Tuesday that the five Agape Boarding School employees will be charged with a total of 13 third-degree felony assault counts. The Missouri Attorney General's Office had recommended prosecuting 22 staffers of the school near Stockton with 65 counts on behalf of 36 victims. Attorney General Eric Schmitt asked Governor Mike Parson to take his office off the case last week, saying Gaither didn't plan to seek justice for all the students who say they were abused.

### Researchers at Pittsburg State Take a Swing at Developing New Golf Balls Made from... Soybeans?

PITTSBURG, Kan. (HPM) — University researchers in southeast Kansas are exploring a new use for soybeans. The result could benefit farmers, environmentalists, and... golfers. Researchers at Pittsburg State University are investigating the possibility of replacing the oil-based plastics used to manufacture golf balls with materials made from soybean oil. Dr. Ram Gupta is leading the effort. He says his team is searching for new ways to use the ubiquitous soybean plant and reduce the need for oil-based products. The research team has already developed a polymer for the outer shell of the golf ball and is now working on materials for the inside using soybean byproducts. The researchers will then test the balls with the hope that they will perform as well off the tee as the balls they are looking to replace. Gupta says the soybean golf balls will be less expensive to produce than plastic balls but to be marketable, the balls will have to fly as far and as straight as conventional golf balls.

### Blood Donations Urgently Needed; American Red Cross Reports Worst Blood Shortage Since 2015

LAWRENCE, Kan. (KPR) - The American Red Cross is experiencing an emergency blood shortage, the worst in

six years. A sharp drop in blood donor turnout has contributed to the lowest post-summer blood inventory level since 2015. In some areas, the blood inventory is less than a day's supply. Officials say they must collect 10,000 additional blood products each week over the next month for the blood supply to recover and meet hospital and patient needs. Donors of all blood types are needed, but especially those with type O blood. The blood shortage is now so severe that the Red Cross is giving away prizes to those who donate. Those who give blood soon could get a limited-edition, football-inspired Red Cross T-shirt, free haircut coupons from Sport Clips and a coupon for a free Zaxby's® chicken Sandwich or other freebies.

### No. 6 Oklahoma Visits K-State for First Big 12 Road Game

MANHATTAN, Kan. (AP) — Oklahoma hasn't played a true road game in nearly two years thanks to the pandemic, which forced those schools that did allow fans last year to limit capacity, and four consecutive home games to start this season. The sixth-ranked Sooners figure to be in for a rude welcome on Saturday. Not only are they finally venturing out of Norman, they are playing their first Big 12 road game since they announced plans to bolt the conference along with Texas shortly before the season. The decision to head for the SEC was hardly appreciated by longtime cohorts such as Kansas State, who were left on shaky footing. "We really tried to prepare for that all the way through spring," Sooners coach Lincoln Riley said. "You can't know that just about half our roster — maybe close to

half — hasn't played a full college road game. We've tried to prepare guys for it." Maybe it will help the Sooners (4-0, 1-0) focus knowing Kansas State (3-1, 0-1) will be on the opposite sideline. For all their dominance of the Big 12 the past few years, the Sooners have struggled to deal with the Wildcats, who are trying to win their third straight in the series for the first time since the early 1990s. Kansas State dealt Riley's bunch their only regular-season loss in 2019 before turning the trick again in the second week of the season a year ago.

### K-State Basketball Team Loses Forward Seryee Lewis for Season Due to ACL Surgery

MANHATTAN, Kan. (AP) — Kansas State men's basketball forward Seryee Lewis will miss the upcoming season after surgery last week to repair a torn ACL that he sustained in pre-season workouts, Wildcats coach Bruce Weber said Thursday. The 6-foot-9 sophomore came off the bench to appear in 18 games as a freshman. He was expected to compete for minutes alongside Davion Bradford, Kaosi Ezeagu and Ismael Massoud in a revamped front court for the Wildcats. Carlton Linguard and Logan Landers also will take on extra minutes this season. Kansas State, which opens practice this week, is coming off back-to-back losing seasons that have Weber's future in limbo. But the Wildcats return four of their top five scorers and brought in Massoud from Wake Forest, Mark Smith from Missouri and Markquis Nowell from Arkansas-Little Rock to provide some immediate help.

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# Abilene, Kansas a finalist for 'Best Historic Small Town' in America



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Abilene, Kansas is currently #1 on the leaderboard as voting is underway for "Best Historic Small Town" sponsored by USA Today. The reader poll allows anyone to participate. The western Kansas community shot to the top as online voting began Monday, September 27 at 11 am. It ends Monday, October 25 at 10:59 am. To vote, visit USA Today HERE.

It is the only community in either Kansas or Missouri to make the list.

"Thank you to the tourism attractions, businesses, residents, employees, volunteers, and leaders who help make Abilene the best historic small town," said Julie Roller Weeks, director, Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau

Director. "Receiving this recognition three years in a row is extra special and recognizes our efforts to market Abilene as a destination."

In 2019, Abilene ranked #8 in the final standings and advanced to #2 in the 2020 nationwide contest.

Nominees for all categories are chosen by a panel of relevant experts which include a combination of editors from USA TODAY; editors from 10Best.com; relevant expert contributors; and sources for both these media and other Gannett properties. The nomination panel for each award category is displayed on its associated contest page. All voting is digital and the 10Best Readers' Choice Award

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 "Please encourage your friends, family, employees, customers, and

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Have you seen the newest mural on the side of NOTO Escapes? This beauty was created by Sara at Matryoshka Tattoo. She also did the peacock interactive mural on the side of The Glass Station. When she isn't painting or tattooing, Sara is working on community projects such as the Brown v. Board mural, supporting small businesses, and showing her love for Topeka. Get out and #explorenoto the next time you get a chance -- you never know what you are going to find!

icipating businesses and view the newest exhibit at the Morris Gallery.

Also, a N O T O S a t u r d a y Vendor Market is now open on 1st & 3rd Saturdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Redbud Park from now through October.

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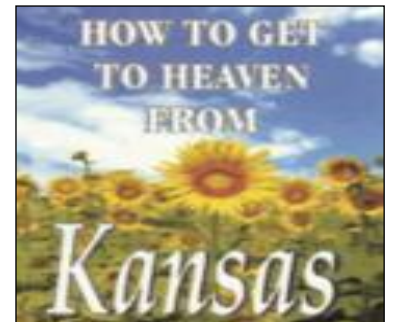
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More important than living in KANSAS is where you will live forever. Just as you would look at a map of KANSAS to find your way, so you must look at the Bible to find your way to heaven. The Bible says, "Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, 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.

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](mailto:Voice@cox.net); mail to Metro Voice, P.O. 5724, Topeka, KS 66605; fax to 785-235-3340 or enter online at [metrovoicenews.com](http://metrovoicenews.com) Get your event Highlighted in Blue in print, our online calendar and promoted in social media for only \$29!

## CONCERTS

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

**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](mailto: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. Tickets are \$10 and only at the door. Ph. 785-214-0013, email [grandopry@gmail.com](mailto:grandopry@gmail.com).

**LIVE @ LUNCH** – Wednesdays; 11am-1pm, Every Plaza downtown. Live music, food trucks, yard games & more.

**EATS & BEATS** – Every Thursday through August, 6:30pm-9pm, Every Plaza. Bring your lawn chairs. Food trucks & beer gardens.

**CASTING CROWNS** – Oct. 3, 7pm, Stormont Vail Event Center. Special guest will be Matthew West. For info: [castingcrowns.com](mailto:castingcrowns.com)

**THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY** – Oct. 22, 7:30pm, TPAC  
**MUSIC OF BILLY JOEL & ELTON JOHN** – Oct. 23, 7:30pm, TPAC

**TOPEKA JAZZ CONCERT SERIES** – Oct. 24, 3pm, TPAC  
**MERCY ME IN CONCERT** – Oct. 30, 7pm, Cable Dahmer Arena, Independence, Mo. Get Your tickets with 10% Discount! Use promo T4C10 during checkout: <https://zhetix.fun/cities/Independence>

**BOOTH BROTHERS CONCERT** – Nov. 5, 7pm, Wanamaker Woods Nazarene Church, 3501 SW Wanamaker. Free will offering. Doors open at 6pm. (785) 273-2248. [wvnaz.org](mailto:wvnaz.org) E-mail [wvnaz@wvnaz.org](mailto:wvnaz@wvnaz.org)

## 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

**SENIOR SOLO'S** – Every 3rd Tuesday from 3 to 6 p.m. at First Assembly Church, 500 SW 27th St, downstairs Fellowship Hall. Games & Fellowship, lots of Laughter & Fun. 785-817-3071.

**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 – 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-up.html](http://www.swumc.org/wesley-cafe-sign-up.html)

**FIRST SATURDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET** – 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM, Shawnee Heights UMC, 6020 SE 44th

**INSIDE OUT FELLOWSHIP** – Every Saturday, 6:30pm. Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln. For info: 785-380-7031 or [rhaggertyjr@hotmail.com](mailto:rhaggertyjr@hotmail.com)

**OKTOBERFEST** – Oct. 9, 11-3, Prince of Peace Church on Wanamaker. Food trucks, vendor booths, flea market, Crafts, free kids' games, bounce houses, Drawings worth up to \$250. And ball drop worth \$300.00, cake walks and more. [margaretc@princeofpeacetopeka.org](mailto:margaretc@princeofpeacetopeka.org). 785-271-0808.

**DRIVE-THRU TRUNK OR TREAT** – Oct. 30, 1-3pm, Christ Lutheran Church.

**TRUNK OR TREAT** – Oct. 31, 3-5pm, Topeka Baptist Church.

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

**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.

**TOPEKA TWILIGHT LIONS BRANCH CLUB** – 4th Mondays at 5:30pm, Norsemen Brewing Co., Visitors welcome.

**MEDICARE MONDAYS** – First Mon. ea. month, 1-3pm. Topeka/Sh. Co. Public Library, 1515 SW 10th. Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging offers Senior health insurance counseling. For info: 580-4545 or [nhonl@tsapl.org](mailto:nhonl@tsapl.org)

**MARKET MONDAYS** - Monday 3-7pm through October, Every Plaza. A farmers market and artisan market helping to increase access to fresh, locally produced foods and other products.

**MONDAY FARMERS MARKET** – Mondays 7:30-11:30am, May 10 to Oct. 4, Topeka & Sh. Co. Library, 10th & Washburn. (closed Memorial Day & Labor Day)

**SILVER LAKE FARMERS MARKET** – Tuesdays 6-8pm, June 1-Sep. 7, Silver Lake Library

**LAWRENCE TUESDAY MARKET** – Tuesdays, May 4-Oct. 26, 4-6pm, South Park, 1141 Massachusetts

**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.

**TOPEKA SWING DANCE** – Tuesdays, 7-8pm, Swing Dance Lessons, no partner required, Jayhawk Theatre, 720 SW Jackson. [www.topekasingdance.com](http://www.topekasingdance.com).

**CARBONDALE FARMERS MARKET** – every Wed. 4-6pm in Carbondale City Park. Vendor-grown or vendor-produced. For vendor information, call Mary at 836-7887.

**SAFE STREETS COALITION MEETING** – First Wed. of the month, 11:45am-1pm. Great Overland Station. For info: 266-4606 or [jlwilson@safeststreets.org](mailto:jlwilson@safeststreets.org)

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

**SHEPHERDS CENTER LINE DANCING GROUP** - meets 2nd & 4th Thur, 2-4 at First UMC, 6th & Topeka. Park on the west side & use west door. Immediately inside, turn left & walk the ramp to the library, then left to elevator. Push [B] for fellowship hall 785-249-3258 .

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

**MOVIES AT EVERY PLAZA** – Second Fridays til fall

**DOWNTOWN TOPEKA FARMERS MARKET** - Saturday's April 3 to Nov. 7, 7:30am-noon, 12th & Harrison. The open-air market is full of fresh fruits and vegetables, herbs, arts & crafts, flower, home-baked goods

**MOTHER TERESA'S FARMERS MARKET** – Saturdays, July 3 – Sep. 11, 8:30-11:30am, 2014 NW 46th St.

**LAWRENCE FARMERS MARKET** – Sat. 7:30-11:30, 824 New Hampshire St. Open April 10-Nov. 20

**TOPEKA ACAPPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS** – Topeka Acapella Unlimited is looking for female singers who would like to sing four part acapella harmonies. Come be our guest via Zoom at our guest nights to meet the

Director and learn more about our chorus. Topeka Acapella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines International. Call Cindy Patton at 785-640-7403 for information on how to receive a Zoom invitation

**SQUARE DANCING** - Shawnee Swingers has monthly dances and sponsors lessons in the Fall. Call or text 785-845-2357; [shawneeswingers@gmail.com](mailto:shawneeswingers@gmail.com). On Facebook: Shawnee Swingers Square Dance Club. [wesquardance.com](http://wesquardance.com)

**HARVESTERS MOBILE FOOD PANTRY**, 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 2-3pm, Shawnee Heights UMC parking lot.

**TERRITORIAL CAPITAL MUSEUM** – Now Open, 640 E Woodson, LeCompton. (785) 887-6148 [www.lecomptonkansascapitolmuseum.com](http://www.lecomptonkansascapitolmuseum.com) [historiccompton@gmail.com](mailto:historiccompton@gmail.com)

**FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** – Fourth Tuesday through November, 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will be conducting its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served. Distributing several tons of fresh produce and other items to families in need. (785) 234-1111 [www.RandelMinistries.com](http://www.RandelMinistries.com)

**KANSAS CITY RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL** – Sep. 4 - Oct. 17, 10am-7pm: Weekends only plus Labor Day and Monday Oct. 11. 628 N 126th St., Bonner Springs, KS. [www.KCReNFest.com](http://www.KCReNFest.com). 913-721-2110 (email [voice@cox.net](mailto:voice@cox.net) to see how to get free tickets from Metro Voice!)

**GARY'S PUMPKIN PATCH & FALL FESTIVAL** – Sept. 18-Oct. 30, Fri. – Sat. – Sun., 5991 17th St. Grantville, KS. 8 Acre Corn Maize, Pig Races, Corn Pit, 2 Jumping Pillows, Giant Slides, Animals, and more. Home Made Curly Fries, Hamburgers, Brats, Turkey Legs, Apple Cider Slushy and new attractions this year!. [garysberries.com](http://garysberries.com), [garysfarmfest.com](http://garysfarmfest.com)

**AXETOBERFEST** – Oct. 2, 7pm, Axe & Ale 115 SE 6th. Food Trucks, Music, Axe throwing. \$10 cover.

**4TH ANNUAL NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR WALK/5K FUN RUN** – Oct. 3, 2pm, Lake Shawnee Shelter House 1 & 2, West Edge Rd. Go to [www.DoorstepTopeka.org](http://www.DoorstepTopeka.org) (under the Events Tab) to register online or for registration/sponsor forms.

**NATIONAL LIFE CHAIN** – Oct. 3, 2-3:30pm, 21st & Wanamaker (in front of Target, Pier One, Fidelity Bank and Chili's and also 29th & California (SE corner). Signs available at both locations. Water, lawn chairs, umbrellas & strollers are welcome. For info: Bibi @ 785.969.2706 for Wanamaker or Sue @ 785-640-5185 for California. Take a stand for our preborn citizens. More info at [lifechain.net](http://lifechain.net)

**GIRLS IN AVIATION DAY** – Oct. 9, 11am. Combat Air Museum, 7016 SE Forbes Ave. Forbes Field.

**HAUNTED WOODS** – Oct. 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29 & 30, 8-11pm. Forest Park, 3158 SE 10th St. Annual guided Half-Mile Trail of Terror populated with Monsters; Zombie

Laser Tag!! 234-8024 TopekaHauntedWoods.com

**TOPEKA FALL FEST** – Oct. 9, 10am-3pm, at the Vinewood, 2848 SE 29th St. Come out and enjoy the live music, a craft & vendor fair, food trucks, and a health & fitness fair, plus games and activities for kids. Fun for the whole family, and admission is free! Dozens of local businesses, non-profits & churches will operate games & activities such as Face Painting, Craft Stations, Photo Booth, Inflatables, Petting Zoo, Pony Rides, Ball Toss, Cake Walk, Trunk or Treat and more! We'll have a Health & Fitness Fair sponsored by Topeka Health & Wellness Magazine, featuring Health Screenings & Fitness Demonstrations, Information & Educational Booths, Health & Safety Products and more. For more information, email [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org).

**HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR** – Oct. 9, 10am-3pm, at the Vinewood, 2848 SE 29th St. Hosted by the Emerald City Cosmopolitan Club. Free screenings, demonstrations, vendors and speakers. Get the information you need about diabetes and other health topics For questions: Lindsay Ransom-Engelken at 785-438-0552 or [lindsayengelken@yahoo.com](mailto:lindsayengelken@yahoo.com).

**TOPEKA GEM AND MINERAL SHOW** – Oct. 9-10, Ag Hall at Expoentre. Featuring dealers from around the world, demonstrations, kid's activities, jewelry, cut & polished stones and more.

**FALL FESTIVAL** – Oct. 9, 11am – 1:30pm, Highland Heights Christian Church, 29th & Tecumseh. Games Food & Fun! 785-379-5642. Free event.

**RIBBON CUTTING** – Oct. 13, 9-11am. Open house at Amanda's Bakery Creations, on the corner inside Fairlawn Plaza Mall.

**C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON** – Oct. 14, 11:30-1. State Senator Kristen O'Shea will be the featured speaker.

• 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](mailto: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:** C5 POWER Luncheon, Nov. 11, 11:30-1, C5Alive POWER Luncheon, celebrating Veterans Day at National Guard Museum at Forbes Field.

**BONE APPETIT** – Oct. 16, 5-9pm. Prairie Band Casino. Hosted by Helping Hands Humane Society. Live, silent, and wine auctions, as well as the opportunity to meet adoptable pets. Lots of fun. Tickets: [www.hhhstopeka.org/events/bone-appetit](http://www.hhhstopeka.org/events/bone-appetit)

**FALL IN LOVE WITH OVERBROOK - FALL FESTIVAL** – Oct. 23, 10-4, Overbrook. A pumpkin patch, food and craft, vendors, a petting zoo, food trucks, fun activities

**BOO AT THE ZOO** – Oct. 23, 9-3pm, Topeka Zoo. Adults: \$7.75 Seniors 65+: \$6.75 Children 3 to 12: \$6.25 Children 2 & under: Free

**TRUNK OR TREAT** – Oct. 27, 5-7pm, 419 SW 29th. KVC Community event with candy, kids activities. 785-207-3403

**TRUNK OR TREAT** – Oct. 29, 6-9pm, Stormont Vail Event Ctr.

**FREE BREAKFAST LAST SUNDAY EACH MONTH** – Oct. 31, 8am-12pm, VFW Philip Billard Post 1650, 3110 SW Huntoon. Free breakfast to all that come through the door. Pancakes, sausage, eggs, coffee, juice and some times biscuits & gravy. Donations are accepted and will go to helping vets in the Topeka area. [vfw1650seniorvice@gmail.com](mailto:vfw1650seniorvice@gmail.com); 785-383-2997

**THE MASK-ERADE BALL** – Oct. 30, 7pm, TPAC. Chilling stories, food & drinks, dance moves, bid on pumpkin décor and more.

*Developing and Uniting  
Christian Leadership*

**• Business • Non-profits • Churches**

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Membership open to all Christian businesses, non-profits, churches & individuals!  
Luncheons & Tradeshows & other events open to the general public!

**C5Alive POWER Luncheons are held 2nd Thur. each mo.**

Oct. 14, 11:30-1: "POWER"

Luncheon at The Peak, 1930 SW Gage, featuring Kristen O'Shea



RSVP to [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org).

Open to the public.

Save the Date!

• Oct. 9: FALL FEST at Vinewood! 10am - 3pm

• Nov. 11: POWER Luncheon at National Guard Museum

• Dec. 9: CHRISTMAS Luncheon at Fairlawn Plaza

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



Ballet MIDWEST

The Nutcracker

balletmidwest.net



December 10-12

Topeka Performing Arts Center

**MEETINGS & CLASSES**

**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 Crittendon: 785-233-0516 www.flocritkans.org

**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 fxthelawn@gmail.com.

**BOY'S TRAIL LIFE & AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS TROUPE** - 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** - 1st Tues., 6:30pm Mass followed by Dinner, Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church. A Catholic group for those in their

20-30s. 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

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

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

**AWANA** - Every Wed., 6-8pm, First Southern Baptist Church, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-18. For info: 272-0443.

**AWANA** - Every Wed., 6:30pm, Bethel Baptist Church, 4011 N. Kansas Ave. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-18. For info: 286-0467.

**AWANA** - Every Wed., 6:30-8pm, Auburn Christian Church. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-18. 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

**VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS** - Every Wed., 10:45 Bible Study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd. (1 mile north of Dillon's North). FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. Free will donations accepted. For info: 785-224-8803 or vip@topekanorthoutreach.org

**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, Great Overland Station 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.

**OPERATION BACKPACK** - 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary School, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers gather to assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. No assembly in August. 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 tgstogroup.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. kingdomadvisors.org or Jim Hanna, 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

**A GOOD YARN CLUB** - 2nd & 4th Sat., 9-11am, Wana-maker Rd Baptist Church, 2700 SW Wana-maker. 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 GREAT LIGHT AGLOW** - For meeting info contact Vickie Lynch at greatlighttopeka@gmail.com.

**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. Info: 785-232-2044 ext.341

**CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS** - Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging provides an opportunity for caregivers to get together and share their ideas and feelings. 2nd Monday of the month, 3:30pm, Topeka public library, Anton Rm. 3rd Friday of the month, 12 noon, Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, 2910 SW Topeka

**ABORTION RECOVERY SUPPORT** - Providing services for women & men who suffer from Post-Abortion Syndrome. Kay Lyn at KLCarlson20@cox.net.

**AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS** - for friends & families of alcoholics. 785-409-3072 or topekaanon.org

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

**ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUPS** - Monthly support group meetings for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. All of our programs have moved from in-person to virtual.

Caregiver support group via Skype 9:30am every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at hdyoung@alz.org or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

Caregiver Support Group via Google Hangouts, 4:30pm every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at

hdyoung@alz.org or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

**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.

**CELEBRATE RECOVERY** - Every Mon. 7-9pm at Topeka First Church, 500 SW 27th, Bldg 'B'. Healing our hurts, habits, and hangups. Learning to grow in a Christ-like maturity.

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

**GRIEF SUPPORT** - Sponsored by Heartland Hospice for those dealing with death or major loss:

1st Mon., 5:30-7:30pm, Individual appointments; other times are available. Call Terry at (785)230-6730.

3rd Thurs., 11am, Lunch After Loss, Paisano's Ristorante, Fleming Place, SW 10th & Gage Blvd. For reservations or info: 785-271-6500.

**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

**FIBROMYALGIA & CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP** - 2nd Tue., 7-9pm. First Congregational Church, 17th and Collins. For info: Randy at 785-969-4038 or TopekaCFS@outlook.com.

**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.

**"HEALING AFTER THE SUICIDE OF A LOVED ONE" ("HEAL")** - or Survivors of Suicide" (SOS). 1st & 3rd Tue., 7-8:30pm, Pozee 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,

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**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](http://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](http://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](mailto:walnutviewcc@att.net).

WED. – 6:30pm, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. No Cost. 286-1204, [www.northland.cc](http://www.northland.cc)

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

**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](http://dysfunctionalbehaviors.crtopekaks.org).

**NICOTINE ANONYMOUS** – Every Fri., 6:30pm, Town & Country 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](mailto:Laboomaha@att.net)

**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](http://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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## Parents, civil rights groups try to stop Aztec prayers in schools

California civil rights groups and parents have asked a court to stop Aztec prayers in public classrooms.

The prayers are part of an Education's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum that includes a section on "Affirmation, Chants and Energizers." Among these is the "In Lak Ech Affirmation," which invokes five Aztec deities –Tezkatlipoka, Quetzalcoat, Huitzilopochtli, Xipe Totek and Hunab Ku. The pagan prayers address the deities both by name and tra-

ditional titles, recognize them as sources of power and knowledge, invoke their assistance, and give them thanks.

"Our clients are not opposed to having students learn about different cultures and religions, including the practices of the Aztecs," said Paul Jonna, partner at LiMandri & Jonna LLP and special counsel for the Thomas More Society, a national public interest law firm. "But the California State Board of Education's approved Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum goes far beyond that by directing students to pray to Aztec deities."

According to the legal complaint, the State Board of Education appointed R. Tolteka Cuauhtin, co-author of the 2019 book "Rethinking Ethnic Studies," to chair a committee tasked with developing an "ethnic studies model curriculum. In his book, Cuauhtin demonstrates an animus toward Christianity and Catholics, claiming that Christians committed 'theocide' (i.e., killing gods) against indigenous tribes."

The Aztec warrior civilization was one of the most violent, according to anthropologists. The Science journal ScienceSource states that human sacrifice was a regular religious practice of the Aztec civilization. "The Aztecs had 18 months in one cycle, and for each of the 18 months there was ritual sacrifice. The victim would be painted as a part of the



ritual, they would be placed on a slab where their heart would be removed and held up to the sun. The body would be thrown down the stairs of the temple, the limbs were removed and later cooked. It's estimated that 20,000 humans were sacrificed by the Aztecs every year." Many of the victims were children or women.

The board of education approved the curriculum in March. It also includes the "Ashe Affirmation," which "invokes the divine forces of the Yoruba religion four times — honoring this divine force and seeking assistance for the school day," the complaint states. Yoruba is "an ancient philosophical concept that is the root of many pagan religions, including santeria and Haitian vodou or voodoo," according to the Thomas More Society. It reportedly has 100 million believers worldwide in West Africa, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guyana and in Caribbean nations.

The U.S Supreme Court has ruled that teacher-led Christian or other religious prayers are unconstitutional.

–Alan Goforth / Metro Voice

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# entertainment

## ‘Show Me the Father’ movie explores good, and bad, parenting

How do you think of your father? With love, happiness and respect? With fear, misery and anger? Your relationship with your dad can influence your self-image and success. The Show Me the Father film uses gripping stories of good parenting and bad to motivate viewers to promote healthy fatherhood.

Produced by Kendrick Brothers, this inspiring, faith-based Sony/Affirm documentary joins the Kendricks’ Overcomer, War Room, and Courageous in seeking to stimulate positive personal and societal change.

It’s no secret that fatherless homes correlate with a host of social plagues including teen pregnancy, homelessness, runaways, youth suicide, poverty, drug abuse, and rape.

What’s your fatherhood story?

Producer Stephen Kendrick notes, “All of us have a fatherhood story... about how much we loved him...or how deeply he hurt us.” Popular speaker Tony Evans comments, “We see father wounds all around us: hurt...bitterness...anger...unforgiveness.”

Sherman Smith played football for Miami University and the NFL’s Seattle Seahawks, also coaching during Seattle’s Super Bowl championship. His father taught him to reject assumptions that as a young Black man, his future was dim. “My dad was my hero growing up,” he recalls. “I want to make a difference in the lives of young people the way my father made a difference in my life.”

### Coping with disappointments

A teammate’s response to a career-



ending injury prompted Sherman to consider faith’s role in navigating life. Linebacker Ken

Hutcherson told Smith, “Nothing happens in my life that’s not filtered through God’s hands first.” Hutcherson helped Smith begin a relationship with God.

Smith recruited high schooler Deland McCullough to play for Miami University. Raised without a father by his adoptive mom, McCullough became fast friends with Smith, whom he still considers a mentor and father figure. McCullough later played and coached in the NFL.

### Father figures’ impact

Heisman Trophy winner Eddie George encountered Smith with the Tennessee Titans. “Sherman felt more like a father than he did a coach,” recalls George. When his girlfriend became pregnant, Eddie feared fatherhood. Sherman encouraged him to assume that responsibility. “He was the father figure that I needed at that point in time,” says George.

Young Jim Daly’s alcoholic dad threatened to kill his mom. His step-father later abandoned the kids when Jim’s mother died. But his high school football coach got Jim to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes camp. There an NFL player asked the boys, “Has your father let you down? Has your stepfather let you down? ...I’m going to introduce you to somebody who will never let you down. That’s Jesus....” Jim chose to begin “a relationship with the father [he’d] never had.”

Grateful for his fatherly coach, Daly today heads the extensive media outreach, Focus on the Family, pointing hurting people toward a heavenly Father.

### Loving father

Focus on the Family President Jim Daly.

The Kendricks cite biblical affirmation for divine fatherhood: “I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” Says the Lord Almighty.” “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God.”

I’m grateful that my late father demonstrated love, encouragement and forgiveness that facilitated my willingness to trust God. Eager to praise accomplishments, he also stuck by me in difficult times. When as a teen I made poor choices and lied about them – nearly getting expelled from secondary school – he held my hand. Thirty years later, when my wife left me and my longtime employer fired me, he gently helped me to land on my feet.

Show Me the Father likely will prompt you to reflect on your own situation. The film includes an especially astonishing true story that I shall not spoil for you here. I suspect you’ll chew on that segment for a good while after this motivating film ends.

Rated PG (USA) “for thematic material.”

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

## ‘The Devil is Afraid of Me’: Exorcist describes his battle

In 2020, the book *The Devil is Afraid of Me: The Life and Works of the World’s Most Famous Exorcist* (See below) hit our virtual bookshelves. While most people think of the Hollywood version of good versus evil as portrayed in the 1973 movie *The Exorcist* (which would end up spawning a series of less-than-spectacular squeals), this book assures us that the fight against Satan should not be trivialized as part of an afternoon watching a Halloween movie marathon.

The book (originally in Italian and now available in English through Sophia Institute Press) goes into great detail into the life and times of

Father Gabriele Amorth, a Catholic priest who performed scores of exorcisms over his lifetime. The book, edited by a fellow Italian priest named Marcello Stanzione, delves into great detail regarding

Amorth’s biggest cases of demonic possession over the years. While the English translation from the original is, at times, a little stilted, this is a book that forces the reader to explore the supernatural and try to grasp how the fight against evil can take on many forms.

The *Devil is Afraid of Me* is now available on Amazon and other online booksellers.

Amorth claimed to have conducted some 100,000 exorcisms over a 30-year span before his death in 2016 at the age of 91, according to the book. Beloved in Italy, Amorth may be the world’s most famous exorcist, but he isn’t alone. Some 200 priests around the world are tasked with taking on demons following the consent of a local bishop. Amorth was just one of the most famous since he worked in Rome and gained a high-profile thanks to his books and many TV and radio appearances.

Amorth led a group called the International Association of Exorcists, which was founded in 1990 by a group of priests. The group gained the blessings of the Vatican in 2014. Amorth, as the book highlights, spent his life battling the occult and the supernatural and how the church is equipped to combat these forces. The Vatican, in turn, has been skittish about exorcisms. In 2000, the Vatican refused to call an encounter between then-Pope John Paul II and a disturbed teenage girl as an exorcism — something Amorth did in various interviews with the Italian press.

What exactly is an exorcism? In the Catholic tradition, exorcisms are the spiritual practice of driving demons from a person or place believed to be possessed. Ordained priests who specialize in this area, such as Amorth, perform elaborate rituals that challenge the evil spirit to depart in the name of God. As part of the ceremony, a priest recites Saint Michael’s Prayer against Satan and the Rebellious Angels — attributed to Pope Leo X who

ruled the church during the early part of the 16th century — in addition to reciting the rosary. There has been a rise over the last few years of people around the world seeking the Rite of Exorcism.

All this may sound like something straight out of a horror movie because of *The Exorcism* films of the 1970s and ‘80s that made the subject part of our pop culture. The original film, adapted from the 1971 novel by William Peter Blatty, details the demonic possession of an 11-year-old girl named Regan MacNeil and the two priests who attempt to exorcise a demon.

The tome, which is also worth a read,

was inspired by a case of demonic possession and exorcism from 1949 in Maryland that Blatty had heard about while a student at Georgetown University. For those who have seen the movie, Georgetown, a Jesuit university

located in Washington, D.C., is featured prominently as part of the storyline.

The scientific community doesn’t recognize demonic possession as a thing and has described such cases as people suffering from an array of mental or physical disorders such as hysteria, Tourette’s syndrome, epilepsy or even schizophrenia.

In a 2018 documentary called *The Devil and Father Amorth* (you can watch it below on Youtube), *Exorcist* director William Friedkin filmed Amorth while he conducted a real exorcism on a woman named Cristina. The film is chilling as is this new book. In one particularly scary encounter from 1997, Amorth believed he had come into contact with Satan himself. The man, identified as a peasant living outside Rome, began hurling insults at Amorth in English even though he only spoke Italian.

When Amorth began reciting prayers in Latin, the man became eerily quiet. “But then, screaming and howling, the demon burst forth and looked straight at him, drooling saliva from the young man’s mouth,” Stanzione writes.

“Whoever you are and all your companions who possess this servant of God ... I command you: Tell me your name, the day and the hour of your damnation,” Amorth asked the demon.

His response: “I am Lucifer.”

Stanzione writes that Amorth was incredulous and “did not expect to receive such a terrifying response.” As Amorth continued to pray aloud, Stanzione writes that the man “resumed his shrieks, making the possessed turn his head back and his eyes roll. He remained like this with his back arched for a quarter of an hour.”

The devil eventually admitted defeat and left the man’s body. For Amorth, it was another successful exorcism. For the rest of us, it’s a tale of good versus evil that can sound unbelievable — but should also make us aware of this never-ending battle in our lives that can often transcend comprehension.





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## ‘Jesus Music’ traces the history of Contemporary Christian music

By Michael Foust

Contemporary Christian music is so ubiquitous in today's church that it's often sung in Sunday morning worship - with few people in the congregation even knowing the source.

Sixty years ago, though, the American church was in a different place, largely opposing this new style of music, which mixed elements of rock, folk, country and gospel to form a new sound with a Bible-centric flare.

Back then, hymnals were the music of choice.

Simply put: Many people in the church in the 1960s and 1970s didn't approve of "long-haired hippie" music -- even if lyrics about Jesus were at the core.

But then men like Chuck Smith, Greg Laurie and Billy Graham stepped forward to embrace Contemporary Christian music. Soon, other church leaders followed. And soon after that, it was playing on radio stations nationwide.

The new documentary *Jesus Music* follows the birth and growth of contemporary Christian music, beginning in the 1960s and continuing during its growth in the 1980, 1990s and through today.

It was directed by Jon and Andrew Erwin -- the same filmmakers behind *I Can Only Imagine*, *I Still Believe* and *Woodlawn* -- and includes interviews with dozens of music artists, including Bill Gaither, Steven Curtis Chapman, Eddie DeGarmo, Michael Tait, LeCrae, Amy Grant, Mandisa, Michael W. Smith, TobyMac, Kirk Franklin and Lauren Daigle.

It opens in theaters Oct. 1.

Andrew Erwin calls the film a "love letter to the music that shaped our careers." Before they made films, he and his brother were music video directors for multiple artists, including Casting Crowns.

It is one of the best documentaries you'll ever watch -- especially if your spiritual walk has been boosted by these and other CCM artists. It's a fascinating and inspiring film that reveals key behind-the-scenes moments in CCM history but

also raises important questions about racial diversity and the church's tendency to "eat their own."

The film is a "defense of the humanity of these artists," Erwin said.

It's rated Rated PG-13 for some drug material and thematic elements, but, honestly, I thought it should be rated PG.

Also worth watching this month:

*God's Not Dead: We the People* (Theaters) -- It's the fourth film in the *God's Not Dead* franchise and follows the story of several Christian homeschool families who challenge the government's interference in what their children are taught. It stars Isaiah Washington, David A.R. White, Antonio Sabato Jr. and Christian recording artist Francesca Battistelli. It will be in theaters for three nights: Oct. 4-6.

*Nothing But the Truth* (Streaming) -- It's a documentary that examines our culture's embrace of relativism and rejection of biblical truth. The film was inspired by the teachings of the late Adrian Rogers and includes interviews with Tony Evans, Albert Mohler, Lee Strobel, Mike Huckabee and Jennifer Rothschild, among others. Visit [NBTmovie.com](http://NBTmovie.com) to learn how to stream it.

*Little House on the Prairie* (Peacock TV) -- Take a voyage back to a simpler time with this award-winning series, which tells the story of the Ingalls family in their quest to survive in the American Midwest of the 1800s. The series was based on the books by Laura Ingalls Wilder. All nine seasons are on the free side of Peacock TV.

*You vs. Wild: Out Cold* (Netflix) -- It's the latest interactive Netflix special that allows the viewer -- that's you -- to decide which choices Bear Grylls makes in a survival situation. In *You vs. Wild: Out Cold*, Grylls is stranded in a cold mountainous landscape. It's both educational and entertaining. Rated TV-G.

*Michael Foust has covered the intersection of faith and entertainment more than 15 years. He is the husband of a wife, Julie, and the father of four small children.*

## ‘Cry Macho’ misses mark at being a great movie

They say that cowboys are a breed tougher than nails and as strong as steel but in Clint Eastwood's "Cry Macho," he recasts the myth.

For a huge portion of his past, Mike Milo (Eastwood) would surely have agreed with a wink and a tip of his sweat-stained hat. He was once a hard-riding rodeo man who won more trophies, awards and ribbons than most people have teeth in their mouth.

The film's cast also includes Dwight Yoakam, Daniel V. Graulau, Amber Lynn Ashley and relative newcomer Eduardo Minnett.

Those days, however, are far behind Mike. As are many shattered bones, and too many years of pills and booze that broke him just as painfully as his spills. Even his horse training days are nothing but a memory.

Some people remember, though.

Howard (Yoakam) used to manage Mike in his bronc-busting days, and then helped keep him afloat after Mike's wife and son were killed in a car accident. He remembers the man Mike used to be. He also remembers that Mike kinda owes him from those days gone by. So he doesn't have any problem asking the old cowboy for a favor.

It seems Howard's ex-wife fled to Mexico some six or seven years ago with their young son Rafa (Minnett). Howard has heard that the boy is now being abused. And he wants him back.

That's not necessarily the kind of



job you'd send a guy Mike's age off to do. But truth is, cowboys—even ancient cowboys—aren't afraid of much in this jagged old world. So Mike packs up his truck and heads off south of the border.

What he finds there isn't exactly what he expected. Howard's ex has a great deal of sway with the local Federales, for example, not to mention some dedicated thugs on her payroll. She doesn't want some ancient gringo taking anything of hers. And that includes Rafa, the now 13-year-old, who's out bouncing around in illegal cock fights on the Mexican streets.

This simple job in Mexico just turned into a much tougher ride.

And Mike's steely cowboy ways are feeling a little rusty.

Mike does what he considers to be the right thing several times in the course of his journey. He sets off to bring Rafa home because of a deep-rooted sense of responsibility to Howard, even though he doesn't really like the smarmy side of the man

much. He also steps up to protect Rafa at different points and forges a special kinship with the boy—even looking upon him with pride as the teen works hard at learning to ride and break a horse.

A Mexican woman named Marta offers kindness to Mike and Rafa when they're down and out. And eventually the two guys are welcomed in as parts of her makeshift family (she has taken on responsibility for her daughter's children after the young woman's untimely death). In spite of himself, Mike begins to feel a lost sense of happiness while in a strange place because of a stranger's kindness.

While the movie, which is also directed by Eastwood, is already mentioned as an Oscar contender, it could have been so much more. We only catch fleeting moments in *Cry Macho* of the lost opportunities at film-making. While there are hasty glimpses of wise life lessons and loving encouragements, they never fully take shape which is a great loss for viewers.

Instead, this film sports a script that's sun-bleached and flavorless; its main star-power ingredient is a bit too far past his sell-by date; and the whole plate just feels ... undercooked. Add in a heavy layer of foul language and you've got a less than palatable piece that's a little tough to chew.

—Bob Hoose / *PluggedIn*

## ‘God’s Not Dead: We the People’ will be shown in early October

"God's Not Dead: We the People," the next installment in the popular "God's Not Dead" film series, will be released in theaters as a Fathom Events showing on October 4-6. The trailer and tickets are now available at [www.GodsNotDead.com](http://www.GodsNotDead.com).

In the new film, Rev. Dave is called to defend a group of Christian homeschooling families. He finds himself taken aback by the interference of the government and believes that their right to educate their own children is a freedom worth fighting for. Rev. Dave is called to Washington to testify in a landmark congressional hearing that will determine the future of religious freedom in the country for years to come.

The original film, made on a \$1.5 million budget, earned \$65 million at the box office, according to Pinnacle Peak Pictures (formerly Pure Flix Entertainment). The inspirational drama parallels current news headlines regarding the challenge against the freedom of speech and religious liberties as the fundamental right to educate children.

"God's Not Dead: We the People" is directed by Vance Null and written by Tommy Blaze, Cary Solomon and Chuck Konzelman. Brent Ryan Green is the producer, with executive producers David A.R. White,



Michael Scott and Jim Ameduri.

The cast includes Isaiah Washington (*Grey's Anatomy*), David A.R. White (*God's Not Dead*, *Evening Shade*), William Forsythe (*Dick Tracy*), Antonio Sabato, Jr. (*General Hospital*, *The Big Hit*), Jeanine Pirro (*FOX News' Justice with Judge Jeanine*) and Grammy Award-winning CCM artist Francesca Battistelli.

Pinnacle Peak Pictures is a leading faith and family-friendly film production and distribution studio created in 2005 by Michael Scott and David A.R. White.

The studio is responsible for several breakout theatrical films. The mission of Pinnacle Peak Pictures is to establish itself as a full-service production and distribution company focusing on theatrical film and international TV and video distribution in the family and inspirational marketplace. It is their goal to tell stories that are not only entertaining and compelling but to do so

in a way that the whole family can enjoy.

—Alan Goforth / *Metro Voice*

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# 50+ Lifestyles A Guide to Enjoying Life in the Best Years

## 5 Tips for Picking the Right Medicare Plan for You

The pandemic has made it clearer than ever -- maintaining good health is critical, and it all starts with having a health plan that works for you every day, and especially in times of greater need.

If you qualify for Medicare, the Medicare Annual Election Period (AEP), which runs from October 15 through December 7, is an opportunity to ensure you have needed coverage.

“Now is the time to understand and evaluate your benefits and anticipate the care you may need in 2022,” says Gary Culp, chief growth officer for Medicare at Cigna.

If you’re signing up for Medicare Advantage for the first time or making changes, you can do so during AEP. In both cases, the new benefits will kick in on January 1, 2022. However, if you like your current plan and want to stick with it, you can do so.

To evaluate your current plan, Culp recommends writing down what you like about it, including which aspects are essential to you. Based on your needs, review other plans to see how they stack up.

The process of choosing a health plan can be overwhelming. However, you can eliminate some of the con-

fusion by seeking advice from your doctor or family and friends. By attending in-person or virtual seminars or calling independent health plan agents, you can have your questions addressed by experts. You can also visit your state health insurance assistance program for additional information.

In the meantime, keep these tips in mind as you review plans:

- Estimate total costs: Make sure you know the current premium or monthly cost of your plan. Second, check your Annual Notice of Change (ANOC). This is a letter mailed in late September that details changes to out-of-pocket costs, including co-pays and deductibles on doctor and hospital visits and prescription drugs. Finally, check to see the costs associated with visiting a specialist.

- Ensure providers are in-network: One common reason to

change your coverage is if your favorite doctors are no longer in-network. Confirm that your current providers and any specialists you expect to visit in 2022 are still in your plan and that any new doctors you’ll be visiting accept new patients. If not, you might have to change plans or switch doctors to avoid paying more out of pocket.

- Review your prescriptions: Review the drug pricing tiers to determine whether your prescription plan will cover your current medications and the costs. Keep in mind, some drug plans require prior authorization for certain brand-name drugs.

- Consider extras: Take a close look at extra benefits, such as dental, vision, health care-related transportation and virtual care visits, that go beyond what’s provided by original Medicare and may be built into a private insurer’s Medicare Advantage plan. Some plans may even include additional health and wellness benefits that help you stay healthier, like fitness programs.

- Be aware of travel restrictions: If you plan to travel or have another home out of state, consider plans with that in mind.

Get savvy by visiting Medicare’s Plan Finder at Medicare.gov or Medicare plan websites such as [www.cigna.com/medicare](http://www.cigna.com/medicare) and use the above tips to assist you in reviewing your options.

“Making sure your health plan meets your needs is up to you. After finding the right plan, be sure to take advantage of your benefits for a healthy, happy 2022,” says Culp.

–StatePoint



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## 5 Ways Technology Can Help You to Stay Active in Fall



With the days growing shorter and the weather getting cooler, it's easy to fall into a rut during the fall season. Here's how the latest technology can support your efforts to keep your mind and body active in the months ahead.

- **Create a daily routine:** Wearable tech can help motivate you to create a daily routine and get out the door every day, even if it's just for a short walk around the neighborhood. For example, when G-Shock watches are connected via Bluetooth to companion apps, you can monitor and track such data as step count logs, calories burned and exercise intensity levels. These durable watches also feature daily, weekly and monthly activity achievement graphs, which can help you monitor your progress over time and push yourself a bit further.

- **Get better sleep:** Better sleep means more energy during the day to fuel your active lifestyle. A range of apps can help you get to sleep faster, however Slumber is one that features an enormous sleep library of meditations, soothing stories, music and soundscapes, all of which are designed to quiet the mind and guide you to sleep.

- **Go on an adventure:** The right outdoor watch can be your companion on adventures big and small. Packed with technological features to help navigate any adventure, Casio's PRO TREK PRTB70-5 is great for hiking, climbing, trekking and even fishing. Quad sensor technology detects compass bearing,

barometric pressure, altitude and temperature readings, plus an accelerometer can log daily steps counts. By connecting via Bluetooth to the PRO TREK Connected app, you can obtain useful information such as route log and calories burned. Your watch can even help you catch your dinner. Its Fish-In-Time feature displays catch probability throughout the day, while the fishing timer's alarm automatically counts down to the next ideal catch period.

- **Improve mobility:** Sore muscles can sideline you from staying active, however, with new tech, you can give yourself a high-quality massage that helps you regain mobility and get back to it faster. The Bluetooth enabled Hypervolt massager, for example, syncs with an app to guide you through custom recovery programs.

- **Track nature:** New apps are inspiring people of all ages to become amateur naturalists. A joint initiative of the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society, iNaturalist helps you identify plants and animals around you, record and share your observations, and connect with others doing the same. The data collected helps scientists working to protect the environment.

By leveraging new technology, you can help keep your body and mind active engaged in the months ahead for a happy and healthy fall season.

—StatePoint

## Senior Living Made Simple

After a lifetime of hard work and responsibility, it's time to relax and enjoy yourself. And that's what life at Holiday Retirement is all about. We provide seniors with a comfortable home they don't have to maintain, a satisfying enriching life among a community of their peers, and a sense of comfort and belonging. It's the ideal setting for seniors who are ready to simplify their lives and live a better lifestyle. If that's the retirement you've envisioned, we invite you to discover all that Holiday has to offer.

When Holiday Retirement was founded in 1971, they set out to create a lifestyle unlike anything seniors had ever experienced before; cheerful communities filled with friendly accepting neighbors, a team dedicated to the happiness and well-being of each resident, innovative activities programs and opportunities for fun and personal growth, and all the chores and details of daily life taken care of.

Thornton Place is one of Holiday Retirement's many communities across the country that serves seniors. Imagine freedom from the daily stressors that life can bring. Just outside the door of your own apartment is a community forged on people and relationships. We create that extra sense of family that you can't find anywhere else.

What truly makes Thornton Place feel like home? Our people! Our associates are more than employees they are part of a family that is compassionate forward thinking and value driven. The special things we do make each resident feel at home. We dedicate ourselves to the happiness of our residents. We also offer Peace of Mind for residents, family, and friends. We foster a genuine feeling of fam-

ily, and our communities just wouldn't be the same without them.

Let us do the cooking! Perfectly balanced, chef prepared meals and an enjoyable dining experience are two of the most important factors in determining where you or your loved one will live, so we ensure our menus offer a variety of choices while still providing homestyle favorites. Each meal is carefully planned to meet the unique nutritional needs of our residents to support longer, healthier lives. Meals are served in our comfortable dining rooms where friendly wait staff serve residents and their family or friends. Our dining and hospitality team take tremendous pride in our meals, a highlight of the all-inclusive lifestyle at Holiday Retirement. From our daily menu to special chef showcase features, dining in a Holiday Retirement community makes good days even better. Our dining team goes above and beyond to create home cooked traditional holiday meals, birthday dinners, and themed events like luaus and barbecues.

We welcome your four-legged friends! Our residents make countless new friends here, but that doesn't mean they have to leave their old friends behind. We value the bonds that seniors have with their pets and are delighted to have dogs and cats as part of our community.

Expand your horizons through our life enrichment program. It is a proven fact that engaged seniors live richer, more satisfying lives. At Holiday Retirement, we've put together a comprehensive program of activities and events especially designed to stimulate the seven dimensions of wellness: physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, creative, social, and vocation. We

focus on the whole person, enriching your mind, body, and spirit and helping to make many areas of your life better.

Leave the driving to us! We have complimentary scheduled local transportation. Our residents love letting our drivers transport them to their scheduled appointments, errands, and offsite destinations for planned activities.

Our lifestyle is more affordable than you think. Considering the comfortable home we offer at Thornton Place, it's understandable that you might assume life here is costly. But many seniors discover that it is no more expensive to live here than it was in their previous home, and for some, it's even more affordable. We invite you to compare your current costs of living with our all-inclusive, monthly rent. You'll find a helpful cost-comparison calculator on our website: [holidayseniorliving.com](http://holidayseniorliving.com). We think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

Are you stubborn about keeping your independence for as long as possible? Well.... we are too! At Thornton Place, our business is to help older people live better, age more successfully and stay independent for as long as possible. We know that good food, good neighbors, good friends and good opportunities for social engagement and physical activities can make for good living. Since Holiday Retirement was founded almost 50 years ago, we've been known as a great value for the dollar and a trusted, experienced brand. As America's largest collection of independent living retirement communities, we're proud that over 30,000 older adults call our communities home and we'd love for you to join us!

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# sports

## Las Vegas QB Derek Carr after leading Raiders to 3-0 start: 'All I want to do is glorify Him'



With a wild 31-28 overtime win against the Miami Dolphins, the Las Vegas Raiders jumped out to 3-0 in 2021.

Their third game, played in Las Vegas's Allegiant Stadium, saw the Dolphins jump out to a 14-0 lead in the first quarter, but the Raiders responded with 25 straight points. The Dolphins countered with 11 fourth-quarter points, including a touchdown and two-point conversion with two seconds remaining.

The teams traded field goals in overtime before Las Vegas kicker Daniel Carlson nailed a 22-yarder with no time remaining on the clock.

The win marks the first time the Raiders have begun a season with three consecutive victories since 2002, when they reached the Super Bowl. They beat the Ravens in Week 1, 33-27 (in overtime), and the Steelers in Week 2, 26-17.

Leading the charge for the red-hot Raiders is quarterback Derek Carr. The eight-year veteran out of Fresno State is playing some of the best football of his career.

His 1,203 passing yards lead the NFL and make him just the fourth player in NFL history with at least 1,200 passing yards through his team's first three games. Only Tom Brady (1,327 in 2011), Ryan Fitzpatrick (1,230 in 2018) and Kurt Warner (1,221 in 2000) have thrown for more. And dating back to Week 16 of last year, Carr has now posted at least 325 passing yards in five straight games, also the fourth to ever do so (joining Rich Gannon, Drew Brees and Warner).

Adding six touchdowns and two interceptions so far in 2021, Carr has matched the best quarterback rating of his career (101.4). He's averaging a career-best 401.0 yards per game through the first three games, putting him on pace to finish with the highest passing yardage total of his career. His 8.8 yards per attempt is also the best of his career.

Carr — who threw for 386 yards, two touchdowns and an interception against the Dolphins — was asked

about his poise and confidence in an on-field interview with CBS after the game.

"All the self-glory, that stuff is fleeting. I've already been through that," Carr said. "God took me to a place that all I want to do is glorify Him, and wherever He's going, that's where I want to go. So if it's a win, awesome. If not, I'm still gonna glorify Him."

Carr has often spoken about his faith in Jesus since he entered the league in 2014.

Shortly before this season began, Carr told the Associated Press that his platform as an NFL quarterback is a gift from God.

"I believe God gave me talents to be in this position," he said. "Anybody could be the quarterback here, but in my belief, He's allowed me to be the quarterback here. And I'm gonna continue to give this thing everything that I have. I think that I've done that for seven years."

Of those seven years, Carr has only seen one winning season, a 12-4 campaign in 2016 in which he found

## FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Rob Mooney

On July 30th, The University of Oklahoma and the University of Texas both accepted invitations to join the Southeastern Conference (SEC), which means they'll be leaving the Big 12 Conference for the mounds of money that SEC membership will provide them. This also means that the SEC will become the first Super Conference in college athletics, becoming the first conference to have 16 teams.

Both schools told the Big 12 that they would honor their current commitment through June of 2025. Each school would have to pay a penalty of around \$75 million to the Big 12 if they leave the conference early. It would not surprise me one bit if they pay the fee and leave before 2025.

Speculation immediately began swirling about the demise of the Big 12 and what would happen to the remaining schools. Some had Kansas, Iowa State and Oklahoma State going to the Big 10. Some had Kansas State, Kansas, Oklahoma State and Texas Tech

going to the Pac 12.

Not so fast! The Big 12 presidents and chancellors got together and decided to expand rather than split up. They then extended invitations to Houston, Central



Florida, Cincinnati and BYU to join the Big 12. All four schools accepted and now the Big 12 conference will be back up to 12 teams. BYU will join the league for 2023-2024 season and the other three programs will join no later than July 1, 2024. Could this give the Big 12 conference 14 teams for a short period of time? Theoretically, yes, but I expect the Big 12 to lower the exit fees for Oklahoma and Texas around this time allowing them to leave early.

I'm tuning Oklahoma and Texas

out for the rest of the time that they're in the Big 12. I'm encouraged that the Big 12 went out and added the teams they did but they said they might not be finished yet. We'll see. Each of the schools they added will allow the Big 12 to enter new recruiting grounds.

The city of Houston is a hotbed of football talent. Sure, Big 12 teams will still be going up against the likes of Texas and Texas A&M, but I expect some Houston recruits will find their way to Big 12 rosters. Cincinnati is a huge untapped market for the Big 12 but they'll be going against the Big 10, particularly Ohio State. Central Florida has had great success and there is a lot of talent in Florida. BYU has a national following and that should help in recruiting as well.

The important thing to remember about the addition of these schools and their recruiting grounds is the fact that more eyes will be focused on the Big 12, something that I'm sure will come up when the Big 12 negotiates a new television contract within the next couple of years.

I don't know about you, but I'm pretty excited about the changes that are coming. Now the question is, how can we get ESPN's College Gameday pregame show to Lawrence?

himself in the MVP conversation. However, an injury kept him out of the Raiders' playoff loss to the Houston Texans.

Now, as Carr directs an offense loaded with weapons, the three-time Pro Bowler knows this season may be his best opportunity yet to hoist the Lombardi Trophy.

"There has been one demand and that's holding up that Lombardi Trophy — period," Carr told the AP. "That's all I care about, is holding that trophy up, and holding that trophy up [in Las Vegas]."

—Kevin Mercer / sportsspectrum.com

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## Tips for a Budget-Friendly DIY Home Upgrade

As a homeowner, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by necessary renovations and all the things you'd like to accomplish around your property. If your list of updates is long, but your time and budget are strapped, remember, even small changes can make a big impact.

Here are simple, affordable ways — inspired by FrogTape brand painter's tape's annual Paintover Challenge Room Makeover Contest — to make your space feel like new.



**Use Bright and Bold Colors.** It's common to keep interiors neutral with trendy grays and off-whites, occasionally adding in pops of color with accessories or accent walls. If you're looking to take a unique approach to rejuvenating a room, consider adding bright and bold hues to your walls. Take inspiration from the outdoors, fruity drinks or blue skies to evoke emotions of joy with vivid greens, pinks or blues.

Each year, celebrity designer Taniya Nayak teams up with FrogTape brand to share design trends. In 2021, Nayak suggests using the bright and bold colors of the "play hard" design trend, which is all about designating a place for fun and happy activities.

**Embrace Patterns in Unexpected Places.** You may think of patterns for playrooms or children's bedrooms, but have you ever considered using them to create a focal point in your kitchen, dining room or even your patio?

With just a few tools, including paint, brushes and tape, you can add striped or checkered designs to walls, tables and floors. Creating a pattern doesn't have to mean splurging on a variety of paint colors. You can create subtle variety by alternating high gloss and matte finish paints, or by adding varying amounts of white paint to create multiple shades of the same base color.

However you create the pattern, having the right tape will be critical to avoid paint bleed from stripe to stripe.

FrogTape Multi-Surface Painter's Tape is made with PaintBlock Technology, which forms a barrier that seals the edges of the tape, to ensure sharp paint lines and professional-looking results every time.

**Create Calming Spaces.** While old homes have unique character, outdated features can make the task of modernizing interiors feel like a major undertaking.

For bathrooms, it's simple and affordable to sand down what you have and refresh it with a coat of paint. Consider giving boring, outdated square tiles a contemporary look with different tones of gray. You can take it a step further by updating the vanity with deep green paint and gold accents.

When you're finished, you'll have a sanctuary from your daily stresses created efficiently and affordably.

**Add Personal Pops of Style.** Think about the spaces where you spend a lot of time doing things you may not always enjoy — like the office or laundry room. Give these spaces a little TLC. Add fresh color to the walls, organize and hang photos of your favorite places to balance energy, encourage productivity and make everyday tasks feel less like chores.

**Dedicate Areas for Happy Moments.** Do you have that one spot that you're not sure what to do with? It could be a nook or the basement. Use these areas as places to live well and embrace the calming, happy moments in life, like relaxing with family, reading a good book or playing a board game.

Add comfy, cozy textures of knit throw blankets, worn leather sofas or knobby rugs. Consider comforting, familiar shades like navy, light blues and

grays, and cognac. These colors and textures work well on fireplaces, bookshelves or walls.

<https://www.frogtape.com/paintover-challenge>.

To see more of Taniya Nayak's 2021 Design Trends for FrogTape brand and check out the 2021 Paintover Challenge projects for inspiration, visit

With creativity and the right tools, making impactful interior updates can be simple and affordable.

— StatePoint

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 Sunday Services: 8:30 and 10:00 AM  
 2930 SE Tecumseh Road  
 Tecumseh, Kansas 66542  
[www.highlandheightsccc.com](http://www.highlandheightsccc.com)  
 Jars of Clay Children's Ctr 785-379-9098

## 2. CHRISTIAN CAVALRY MINISTRIES INT.

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 785-224-5419 • [www.church4bikers.org](http://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: 9:00 & 10:30 am  
 Livestream at 9:00 am  
 Sunday School & Bible Studies:  
 9:00 & 10:30 am  
[www.discovertbc.com](http://www.discovertbc.com)

## 4. NORTHLAND CHRISTIAN CHURCH

3102 NW Topeka Blvd., Topeka  
 286-1204  
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[www.northland.cc](http://www.northland.cc)

## 5. INDIANA AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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785-266-7788, [www.Indianaavecofc.org](http://www.Indianaavecofc.org)  
 Bible University – Sunday - 9:30 a.m.  
 Classes for all ages.  
 Morning Worship – Sunday – 10:45 a.m.  
 Midweek Bible University – Wed. – 7pm

## 6. FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST

1912 SW Gage, Topeka, KS  
 272-0443 [www.fsbctopeka.org](http://www.fsbctopeka.org)  
 Sunday Services:  
 8:30 AM Traditional Worship  
 9:45 AM Bible study—all ages  
 11 AM Contemporary Worship

## 7. TOPEKA BAPTIST CHURCH

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 ~ Sunday School for all ages ~  
 4500 SW Gage Blvd., Topeka  
 785-862-0988  
[www.topekabaptist.org](http://www.topekabaptist.org)

## 8. WANAMAKER ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

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 Sunday School 9am • Wed. Prayer 7pm

## 9. GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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[www.gccinoverbrook.com](http://www.gccinoverbrook.com)  
[office@gccinoverbrook.com](mailto:office@gccinoverbrook.com)

## 11. COMMUNITY CHURCH

1819 SW 21st St., Topeka

233-3537 [www.CommunityTopeka.com](http://www.CommunityTopeka.com)  
[info@CommunityTopeka.com](mailto:info@CommunityTopeka.com)  
 Sun. 8:30am - Sunday School for all ages  
 Sun. 10:00am - Worship & Word  
 Sun. 10:00am Youth Service  
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 5 mi. east of Perry on Hwy 24, 13th & Phillips Rd.  
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 Worship Service - 9:00 a.m.  
 Contacts: Logan Barnett 785-597-5498,  
 or Scott Bond 423-0406

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 Children's Worship 9 & 11 am  
 Sunday School 10 am, all ages  
 Sun. Evening Various Children's Programs  
 6 pm Life Groups: 6:30 pm Teen Service  
 Wed. 6:30 pm Adult & Teen Life Groups  
 Wed. 6:30 pm Kids University  
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## 15. OAKLAND UNITED METHODIST

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## 17. EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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[www.esbcks.org](http://www.esbcks.org)

## 19. SEAMAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

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 354-8777 • [www.seamanchurch.com](http://www.seamanchurch.com)  
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 Sunday Worship: 10:30am  
 Children's Sunday School: 10:30am  
 Youth group 1st & 3rd Sundays 4-6pm

## 20. HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH

1937 NE Madison St,  
 Topeka, KS 66616 • 785-506-4594  
 Pastor Dale Stockburger  
 Sunday Worship: 11 am and 6pm  
 Sunday School: Sun 10am  
 Wed. Evening Worship: 7pm

## 21. HARVEST FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

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## 22. FAMILY OF GOD CHURCH

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# U.S. Christians play vital role in restoring Church of the Nativity

Christians in the United States have pitched in to help restore the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, which is thought to be the birthplace of Jesus. The United Nations had considered it an endangered



The ancient church was commissioned by Constantine the Great shortly after his mother Helena visited both Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Over the last 30 years, the ancient city has seen its Christian population drop from over 88% to

just 18%. Palestinian gangs, under the tacit approval of the Palestinian Authority (which is responsible for Bethlehem) have terrorized Christians into leaving the ancient city or to be silent. Today, the few tour groups that visit the church are met with Palestinian propaganda against Israelis and the West.

In 2019, the Greek-Orthodox Church signed a statement protesting the ongoing attempt by the Palestinian Authority (PA) to take control of the plaza in front of the Church of the Nativity. One source close to the church stated "that Christmas ceremonies are gradually turning from a religious Christian event to a national event sponsored by the PA, even though in recent years it has acted to deprive Christians of their properties."

United States have an enthusiastic love for the holy city of Bethlehem," said George Salem, president of the foundation. "We are thrilled by the outpouring of support from our American friends and their commitment to help revitalize the Church of the Nativity."

The two organizations have helped fund restoration of the external facades, a wall mosaic, basilica doors, internal plaster, the last 11 columns of the central nave, the narthex, wooden architraves and installed lighting and smoke detection systems. They have other plans to further the project, which include consolidating the church walls against seismic activity, tiling the floor with stone and marble, restoring the stone tiles in the front yard and installing firefighting and micro-climatic systems.

But the remaining Christians aren't willing to give up that easily, though it's harder and harder to preserve their history there. "The Church of the Nativity is a treasure of history and of faith," Mazen Karam, managing director and CEO of the Bethlehem Development Foundation says. "We've made great progress and look forward to completing the work to return this treasure back to the world."

Completed around 565, the church has not been majorly renovated since 1480 and was in danger of collapsing. But in recent years, the church has undergone several restoration projects to its roof, facades, mosaics and doors, thanks to contributions from donors worldwide

The foundation launched a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization called the American Friends of the Bethlehem Foundation in 2018. Together, the groups have raised approximately \$30 million in the past eight years to restore the church. Much of that funding has come from U.S. donors.

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-Alan Goforth | Metro Voice

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