



BIG DADDY WEAVE

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back cover!

Kansas Prayer  
Breakfast coming  
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Bible Church



The Kansas Prayer Breakfast is back with an in-person event featuring Statewide leaders in government, business, education and industry on hand. Now held at Fellowship Bible Church, 6800 SW 10th Avenue, on Tuesday, March 7, this will be for the 601st celebration of the annual event. Doors open for breakfast at 6:30 a.m., and the program begins at 7 a.m.

This year's featured speakers will be Herbie Newell, President/Executive Director of Lifeline Children's Services. Its

■ Please see PRAYER page 3



Pro-lifers gather at Capitol for March for Life

Several hundred people from all over the state took part in the March and Rally for Life rally at the State Capitol on January 24.

The event was held just days after the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court Roe v. Wade decision, which was overturned last year by the U.S. Supreme Court. The pro-life march began

in front of the Topeka Performing Arts Center before ending on the steps of the Capitol building.

Many marchers carried signs reading "We will never abandon moms and babies."

Several Kansas schools sent students to attend the event.

"I want them to see that every preborn life is valuable, and that

life scientifically begins at conception and it deserves protection under the law," said pro-life supporter Cheyenne Vandeventer.

Kansans for Life sponsored the event and unveiled its legislative agenda for this year's session: Crisis pregnancy centers would be the beneficiaries of taxpayer funding

■ Please see LIFE page 2

EasterFest moves to  
Great Overland Station



Topeka EasterFest – the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair – is back for 2023, and bigger than ever at a new location! The annual event began in Gage Park in 2014, then moved to Garfield Park in North Topeka in 2017. For 2023, the 9th Annual EasterFest will be held Saturday, April 8 (the day before Easter), with a parade on North Kansas Avenue that runs from Garfield Park to the NOTO Arts District, followed by the Big Egg Hunt and fun fair at Great Overland Station.

Over three thousand people have attended the event in the past to watch the parade, visit the Fun Fair, listen to live music, visit over 80 vendor & exhibit booths, attend the Health Fair and take part in the egg hunt or other activities.

Every year, dozens of churches, busi-

■ Please see EASTERFEST page 3

Region's largest Christian college fair is March 4 in Kansas City

Christian colleges from across the nation will visit Kansas City March 4 for the largest Christian College Expo in the Midwest.

The 25th annual Christian College Expo will feature over 50 Christian colleges and universities from 17 states for this 2-hour event that runs 10 a.m. to Noon, Saturday, March 4. The college fair is free to the public and is held at Colonial Presbyterian Church, located at 9500 Wornall Rd. in South Kansas

City, Mo. The large suburban church has served as the location for 24 of the 25 years because of its convenience to both Kansas and Missouri families.

It's sponsored by the KC Metro Voice, Kansas City's Christian news and community website now in its fourth decade. Metro Voice has become the most reliable Christian news source in the Midwest and has grown into a national audience. It also organizes and

■ Please see COLLEGE page 2



# City of Topeka flag rated one of top 25

The City of Topeka flag was recently named one of the top 25 highest-rated city flags by the North American Vexillogical Association (NAVA). In late 2022, almost 3,000 people rated a group of 312 city flags in a NAVA national survey on a scale from zero to 10. The ratings were then averaged and converted to a letter grade. Topeka's flag was one of 46 flags to receive an A-grade rating, ranking 17th overall. The current Topeka flag was unveiled in 2019 after a community vote.



## Citizens Academy taking applications

The Topeka Police Department (TPD) is accepting applications for its 47th Citizens Academy. This is the 27th year the department has offered this popular bi-annual program. Classes will be held Thursday evenings from 6-9 p.m. beginning March 2 through May 11.

Citizens attending will be exposed to the challenges faced by law enforcement and learn how their police department

meets those challenges. Participants will learn about various aspects of the TPD including field operations, criminal investigations, community outreach, crisis negotiations, bomb disposal, crime scene investigation and much more.

Additionally, there are two optional sessions that include a tour of the Shawnee County Department of Corrections, demonstrations from the K-9 Unit, as well as the opportunity to par-

ticipate in various hands-on training scenarios. Upon completion of the course, participants will graduate with a certificate of attendance.

If you are over 18 years of age and interested in attending, an application may be filled out and submitted at this link: <https://www.topeka.org/tpd/opportunities-for-citizens/citizens-academy/> or contact Sergeant Michael Burns at 785-368-9201.



## Washington, DC, Life March is different this year

Thousands of jubilant pro-life activists joined the first March for Life since the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, pledging to take their fight against abortion to federal and state legislatures. Protesters at the 50th annual rally and march, which is held around the Jan. 22, 1973, anniversary of the Roe decision that legalized abortion nationwide, walked to Congress instead of the Supreme Court for the first time to show support for federal laws restricting abortion.

## COLLEGE

continued from page 1

leads tours to the Holy Land for young adult believers.

College admissions staff will be on hand to answer questions and distribute information. The fair has become an annual tradition for students curious about the academics, sports, and cultural life of

private schools, plus the growing number of scholarships available. It is expected that 2022 will see a record amount of financial aid scholarships offered by Christian colleges across the nation.

All students and parents receive a complimentary edition of the 2022 College Guide and Directory.

The expo is organized by the KC Metro Voice and media sponsors includ-

ing Life 88.5 and Bott Radio Network, plus corporate sponsor Precision Printing. For more call 816-524-4522 or check out Midwest Christian College Expo on Facebook.

## LIFE

continued from page 1

and income tax credits to incentivize private donations. The group will also pursue legislation to protect babies born alive and to allow abor-

tion pill reversal treatments.

"Regardless of the challenges ahead, in the fight for precious innocent life we have no choice but to redouble our efforts against the radical pro-abortion forces," KFL spokesperson Danielle Underwood

said. "One of our legislative priorities this year is going to be to get as many funds into pregnancy resource centers as possible. We're not just pro-birth, we are pro-life."

At the rally, Pastor Brad Johnston, of Topeka Reformed Presbyterian Church, prayed that God

"would cause this state to be known for high quality health care for women and their children, where the rights of women are respected, both mothers and their girls in the womb, is a place where the overwhelming responsibilities of motherhood might be should-



ered by faithful women surrounded by advocates committed to their flourishing in every way."

Wichita physician Scott Stringfield, medical director for Choices Medical Clinic, said crisis pregnancy centers are sometimes criticized that "we only care about the baby." He pointed to rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness in the Constitution, and said "there's never a reason to slaughter a baby."

"It'll be a cold day in you know what before we stop fighting to protect women and children, including unborn children," said Senate President Ty Masterson.

Masterson also wants to get another case before the Kansas Supreme Court.

"We need them to tell us when does that young woman in utero get her autonomy," he said. "When does that person get their recognition?"

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# Bleeding Kansas program returns

Historic Lecompton is gearing up for six weeks of programs, getting you in touch with the territorial war and Civil War-era history of the area.

Tim Rues, site administrator for Constitution Hall State Historic Site, visited Eye on NE Kansas to preview the 2023 Bleeding Kansas program series. The series features six weeks of talks and dramatic interpretations focusing on the area's history from 1854-1865. Watch the interview to hear Tim describe why what happened in Kansas during this time-frame was critical to the nation's history.

The programs begin at 2 p.m. each Sunday, starting Jan. 29 through



March 5. They're held at Constitution Hall State Historic Site, 319 Elmore St., Lecompton. A suggested donation of \$3 is requested.

You can find the list of program topics at [www.lecomptonkansas.com](http://www.lecomptonkansas.com) or the "Historic Lecompton" page on Facebook.

## EASTERFEST

continued from page 1

nesses and non-profit organizations take part in the parade, and dozens more set up vendor booths and kids' games as part of the family fun fair. There have been lots of floats with a variety of themes, and all shapes and sizes of other vehicles, as well as walking entries such as schools, military groups, marching bands and more. The event is coordinated by C5Alive (C5).

"We've had a great response and new entries each year at EasterFest," said Kevin Doel, one of the organizers. "I expect it to just keep growing every year."

Again this year the Easter Parade will be on North Kansas Avenue, from Garfield Park to NOTO Arts District, followed by the Big Egg Hunt and Fun Fair at the Great Overland Station. From 10am to 3pm, vendor booths, food trucks and kid's activities will be hap-



pening all over the grounds and inside the Station. This year, even more churches, non-profit organizations, schools and local businesses are expected to enter floats and marching bands, etc., in the parade, as well as set up activity booths at the fun fair.

The Family Fun Fair will consist of

activities geared toward children and families, as well as health & wellness vendor booths, vendor exhibits, and more. Live performers will be on hand all day, such as live music acts, dance troupes, street entertainers, health & fitness demonstrators and more.

Back are the ever-popular cupcake walks, along with face painting, petting zoo and food trucks.

There is still room for more EasterFest sponsors and participants for the Vendor Market, Entertainment Stage, Food Court and Health Fair. Volunteers are also needed to help with the entire event.

Major sponsors for EasterFest 2022 include Integrity Insurance, SERVPRO, Capital City Flooring, Patton & Patton, Davidson's Funeral Home and more.

## PRAYER

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ministry arms include (un)adopted, Crossings, Families Count and Lifeline Village. Newell holds a Master's Degree in Business/Accounting from Samford University. He joined the Lifeline team in 2003 as Executive Director. Under his leadership, Lifeline has increased the international outreach to 25 countries, grown into 17 states, attained membership with ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability), begun an extensive foster care ministry, achieved accreditation Internationally under The

Hague Treaty, and started its (un)adopted strategic orphan care ministries in over 10 countries. Newell speaks nationally at conferences and events, and regularly p r e a c h e s

throughout the world on Gospel-driven justice. Newell is the author of the book "Image Bearers." He and his wife, Ashley, live in Birmingham, Alabama and are parents to a son, Caleb, and daughters Adelynn and Emily.



The Kansas Prayer Breakfast is held in March each year, and is patterned after the National Prayer Breakfast, which began in 1953 in Washington, D.C., under the leadership of Kansas Senator Frank Carlson and President Dwight Eisenhower. The Kansas version began in 1962 with the aid and encouragement of Governor John Anderson. Carlson was the first keynote speaker.

Tickets for the breakfast are \$20.00 per person. For reservations or more information go to [www.kansasprayer-breakfast.org](http://www.kansasprayer-breakfast.org). Virtual attendance via zoom is also available at no cost. The event is sponsored by Topeka Fellowship, Inc.

# Joe Patton to address C5Alive on What Would Jesus Do?

The February C5Alive POWER Luncheon will be held February 9, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at The Peak, 1930 SW Gage Blvd. The featured speaker will be Joe Patton, who will speak about marketing from the standpoint of What Would Jesus Do?

The cost to attend a C5 luncheon is \$10 for C5 members and first-time guests who RSVP, and \$12 at the door. Non-members and repeat guests pay \$15. C5 luncheons are open to the public. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org).

"POWER" luncheons are held on the second Thursday of each month. The next one will be held on Mar. 9.

C5Alive is an organization dedicated to creating Christian culture in the Capital City, by developing and uniting Christian Leadership in the

community: businesses, non-profits and churches. C5 also hosts other periodic events, including **EASTERFEST**, the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Family Fun Fair, held on N. Kansas Avenue and at **Great Overland Station** on April 8, the day before Easter. Find details at Topeka Easter Parade on facebook.

The annual **Topeka Fall Fest** will be on October 7, 2023 at **The Vinewood**.

C5 members may also sponsor luncheons and other events as a way to promote their organizations.

C5 is currently holding a membership drive with special incentives for new members.

For more information about C5, go to [www.facebook.com/C5Alive](http://www.facebook.com/C5Alive), [C5Alive.org](http://C5Alive.org), or call 785-640-6399.



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# The new Miss Universe knows God and karate

The new Miss Universe knows God and karate

R'Bonney Gabriel, who recently was crowned the 71st Miss Universe, is an alumna of Chuck Norris's non-profit Kickstart Kids program that teaches character through karate in middle schools across Texas.

Whatever you feel about beauty contests or even the controversy around the Miss Universe international pageant, the more you know about R'Bonney Gabriel, the more you will be impressed by her.

Ms. Gabriel was born in San Antonio, Texas, on March 20, 1994, to American mother Dana Walker and Filipino father Remigio Bonzon R. Bon Gabriel, who relocated to the United States at the age of 25 in order to complete his psychology degree at the University of Southern California. After graduating, the family relocated to the Houston area, where Ms. Gabriel was raised as the eldest of four siblings, with three younger brothers. That's where she attended Lake Olympia Middle School, where she was trained in karate in our KSK program.

Ms. Gabriel would go on to obtain a bachelor's degree in fashion and apparel design with a minor in fibers from the University of North Texas. She then became a professional model and eco-friendly fashion designer. As such, she affiliated herself with the Houston-based Magpies & Peacocks, the nation's only 501(c)3 nonprofit design house dedi-



cated to the collection and sustainable reuse (recycle) of post-consumer clothing, scrap textiles and accessories diverted from landfill.

Her design that took the cake and the crown was called "Woman on the Moon," a costume piece she worked on with a Filipino artist – which quickly went viral online.

About its edgy and some would say outrageous design, Ms. Gabriel explained: "Honestly, I'm not somebody that takes myself too seriously. I love seeing the memes about them. They make me laugh. I was laughing at myself when I got on stage." (Gabriel said the costume was so heavy she could only have it on for 30 minutes)

Ms. Gabriel entered pageantry only

back in 2020, winning the Miss Texas USA competition in 2021. In fact, after becoming the first Miss USA of Filipino heritage, she followed it up by becoming the first Filipino-American to win Miss Universe. She's also the first Miss USA to win the Miss Universe pageant in 10 years. She beat out 73 other gifted and talented international contestants.

In the last-stage Q&A of the competition with the three finalists, R'Bonney was asked how she would use her Miss Universe title to better our country.

"I would use it to be a transformational leader," she responded, and further explained how she has used recycled eco-materials in her fashion design and teaching sewing to survivors of human trafficking and domestic violence.

"It is so important to invest in others, invest in our community and use your unique talent to make a difference," Gabriel added. "We all have something special, and when we plant those seeds to other people in our life, we transform them, and we use that as a vehicle for change."

Speaking of transformation, Ms. Gabriel is a product of Texas charm, faith in God and perseverance through tough times, as she wrote on her Facebook page on New Year's Day: "My life really changed this year and I have to thank God for all the ups and downs I went through. I witnessed the power of focusing on my purpose and living with intention. I'm thankful for the opportunities and for never giving up when times got rough. I move forward into 2023 with hope and a grateful heart."

As far as what keeps her steady, stable and a servant of society, it's her Christian faith. You can see her gratitude to God come out in the moment she was crowned and walked before a cheering

crowd of thousands and millions on television. Pointing her finger up to Heaven and looking up as she did, she explained that moment on her Facebook page: "What once seemed impossible ... all glory to God!"

est age to compete," she said at one point during the competition. "And I think that's a beautiful thing."

"My favorite quote is, 'If not now, then when?' " Gabriel continued. "Because as a woman, I believe age



Gabriel also said during the competition that she hopes Miss Universe would allow women past the age of 28 to compete in the pageant.

"I am 28 years old, and that is the old-

does not define us."

She added: "It's not tomorrow. It's not yesterday. But it's now. The time is now that you can go after what you want."

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# Abortion was leading cause of death in 2022

Abortion again was the leading cause of death worldwide in 2022, with the number of abortion deaths nearly four times those from infectious diseases.

More than 44 million abortions were performed last year, according to the Worldometer database. The second-leading cause of death in 2022 was communicable diseases, causing nearly 13 million casualties. The deaths attributed to infectious diseases, as well as the more than eight million deaths caused by cancer, the approximately five million fatalities triggered by smoking, the roughly 2.5 million alcohol-related deaths and the nearly two million deaths caused by AIDS combined add up to less than the number of lives lost to abortion in 2022.

Additional leading causes of death include road traffic accident fatalities, which claimed more than one million lives last year, and suicides, numbering slightly more than one million. More than 800,000 people lost their lives because of water-related diseases last year, half a million people died because of the seasonal flu, nearly 400,000 people died of malaria and around 300,000 women died during childbirth.

The number of abortions performed in 2022 increased slightly from the approximately 44 million measured in 2021. Nearly 44 million abortions were performed in 2020 and 42.4 million were performed in 2019. In all of those years, abortions were the leading cause of death around the world.

Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America, a pro-life advocacy group, has analyzed the impact of pro-life laws that went into effect following last June's Dobbs decision. Before the Dobbs ruling, the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision establishing a right to abortion prevented states from restricting abortions early in a pregnancy. In 14 states that have implemented total or near-total abortion bans since

the Dobbs ruling, Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America estimates that 125,082 fewer abortions had occurred as of early December. A 15-week abortion ban in Florida has resulted in 3,805 fewer abortions.

Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America has listed the estimated impact of total or near-total

abortion bans currently on hold in seven states because of ongoing litigation at 44,495 and the estimated effect of an Iowa law banning abortions after six weeks gestation at 1,914. Overall, the pro-life advocacy group estimates that the pro-life laws enacted by states following the Dobbs ruling have affected 175,296 abortions.



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# FINANCIAL PLANNING



## DAVE RAMSEY

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

### davesays

#### SHOULD WE USE OUR SAVINGS TO PAY OFF OUR MORTGAGE?

Dear Dave,

My husband and I are retired. I receive a small pension, and we are both on Medicare and Social Security. We have about \$25,000 left to pay on our mortgage, along with a second mortgage of \$18,000. These are our only debts. We also have a nest egg of \$30,000 set aside, and a small annuity that's worth about \$20,000. Would you recommend paying off our mortgages with our savings?

Jane

Dear Jane,

Being broke, even in a house that's paid for, isn't a good idea. Believe me, I understand. The idea of paying off the house and everything is awfully tempting. But if you two did that, you'd be left with very little. To me, that's a scary thought when your small pension—along with Social Insecurity and Medicare—are all you have coming in.

No offense, but your nest egg is kind

of small to begin with, so I don't think I'd be raiding it right now. On the other hand, if you'd told me you had \$400,000 or \$500,000 saved up, I'd tell you pay off the house and second mortgage today.

If you're not doing this already, I'd advise you two to start making and living on a regular monthly budget. Give every dollar a name on paper before the month begins, because if you don't, your money will control you instead of you controlling it. Make sure you're living on less than what's coming in, and hopefully you can devise a plan to have the house and other debt paid off in a few years.

—Dave

#### Is a will or a trust best?

How do you know if a will or a trust is best for you?

Monica

Dear Monica,

The first thing you should do is take a serious look at your needs, your wishes and your overall life and financial circumstances.

If you're like the average person with a couple of kids, a home and some savings, a will is all you need. There's no reason to bring lawyers into the mix, unless there's something complicated about your situation. In cases like this, you can even set one up online that's perfectly legal in just a few minutes.

If you're older, your kids are grown and your estate is worth \$1 million or more, a trust is the way to go. By doing this, you can avoid probate in a way that

willn't allow. Now, if you have a large estate and dependents, having both a will and a trust is a good idea. And you don't

## How to Save a Boatload in Tax if You Work(ed) for the Federal Government or a University

By Ryan Shumaker  
Smartvestor Pro at  
The Retirement Team



Retirees are one of the highest and most unfairly taxed groups.

Every dollar that needlessly goes to taxes is one additional dollar you must make up for elsewhere, whether that be by taking on extra investment risk, spending less, or not having as much to pass on as a legacy.

One of the core things we assist clients with at The Retirement Team is tax reduction, since we feel that most people should be free to spend their hard-earned money as they see fit. If you're someone who feels they don't pay enough in taxes, I have great news. At [www.treasury.gov](http://www.treasury.gov) you can anonymously donate to either help pay off the nation's \$31.5+ trillion dollar debt or pay extra into the general revenue fund where the government decides the best use of your money. Believe it or not, every year there are people that do one or both. One individual recently gave over \$1.5 million!

If you're like most of our clients and would prefer to decide where your money goes and currently or previously worked for either the federal government or one of the major universities in Kansas, there are several tax exemptions that can save you an incredible amount of money. How much money? Well, in the case of taxes paid to Kansas, the answer is all of it! You see, about 10 years ago there was a challenge to K.S.A. 79-32,117(vii) which, in a nutshell, states if you have retirement income from the federal government (like a pension) you are exempt from having to pay state income tax on any of that money. The challenge was whether money that was in a TSP (Thrift Savings Plan, which is like the 401(k) equivalent for federal workers) falls under the same exemption. After a bill failed to pass that would have added language to clarify this, the Department of Revenue decided their interpretation moving forward would be that any money that

have to worry about the two bumping into each other. They're separate legal instruments, and there's generally no conflict between them. If there is a legitimate, legal conflict between them, the trust usually overrides the will.

Simply put, everyone needs a will. But

not everyone needs a trust. Trusts can be more than you need, but they can also be a great tool if you have a larger estate. So, if you're in the vast majority of folks who don't need a trust, just get yourself a will.

—Dave

was in, or subsequently rolled over from, a TSP plan would qualify for the state tax exemption. We've seen many cases where retired federal employees (and/or their tax preparers) are unaware of this and have needlessly paid income tax on their retirement money. Given that the highest income tax bracket in Kansas is 5.7%, this can add up quickly. If, for example, you withdrew one million dollars over time that is \$57,000 in tax that could be saved!

A very similar provisional also applies to any benefits eligible individual that has worked for any of the Board of Regents Universities like KU, KSU, Emporia State, Wichita State, etc. in K.S.A. 74-4923(b) and to Washburn employees in K.S.A. 79-32,117(xix). These differ from federal workers in that in order to get the tax exemption, the money must come directly out of a university retirement plan, like a 403(b). For federal workers you can roll your money over and out of the TSP and to another account and still get the tax exemption, but that isn't the case with the university plans. Does that mean you need to always keep all of your money in one of these plans? No, because you can actually put money back into these plans right before you complete a withdrawal and still receive the tax exemption! This is something we help people with regularly, as we are one of the few advisors in the state that can open retirement accounts on this plan. We can also help a client transfer money they might have from a different 401k, IRA, or other retirement account into one of these retirement plans and get them this tax break on all of their retirement money—not just what they contributed while working for a university! We recently did this for a client that hadn't worked for KU since the 1980's, which resulted in tens of thousands in tax savings across all of their retirement account balances.

Another place we frequently see people paying taxes on retirement money when they shouldn't is a KPERS pension buyout. KPERS pen-

sions, much like federal pensions, are exempt from Kansas tax. If you elect to take a buyout of your KPERS pension and roll that money over to a retirement account that money still maintains that exemption. Unfortunately, many don't know that and end up unnecessarily paying state tax when they make a withdrawal. We often see situations where advisors unaware of this tax provision combine pension buyout money with other money they're managing and give incorrect tax reporting. This causes account holders to pay Kansas tax when they shouldn't. The good news is this can all be corrected by working with a team that understands the tax code.

If you currently or previously have worked for a major university in Kansas or for the federal government, or have taken a KPERS pension buyout, and want to ensure you're taking all the appropriate steps to maximum this tax break I suggest scheduling a 3 Step Review with The Retirement Team either through [www.RetireTopeka.com](http://www.RetireTopeka.com) or by calling 785-228-0222.

**Other great articles about retirement, investing, and tax reduction can be seen at [RetireTopeka.com/blog](http://RetireTopeka.com/blog).**

Ryan can be contacted at 785-228-0222 or [RetireTopeka.com](http://RetireTopeka.com).

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## Smart Strategies for Managing a Windfall

By Jim Hanna

If a financial windfall is in your future, when the day comes, you'll have decisions to make. A large infusion of cash is generally welcome news, but it can come with challenges and complexity.

Here are some things to consider when your financial circumstances change for the better overnight.

Don't make any sudden decisions. Whether you've been enriched by an inheritance, a boom in business, the lottery, or something else, take your time before making big decisions you may later regret. For example, don't quit your job or make large purchases without thinking through the consequences and looking at the big picture. Instead, study your options so you can feel confident about your next steps.

Build your emergency fund. Your windfall is an opportunity to shore up financial security. For that reason, a portion of your new-found wealth belongs in an emergency fund, particularly if yours has been underfunded. Experts recommend setting aside six months to one year of expenses to prepare for a downturn in financial circumstances. Hold this money in an account that's liquid so you can readily access it. And, keep emergency funds separate from your regular checking account to avoid the temptation to dip into them.

Tackle debt. Debt is often the greatest threat to financial stability. If you've racked up unpaid balances, your windfall represents a great opportunity to reduce or eliminate them. The first order of business is to pay down your credit card or other high-interest debt. Doing so can drastically reduce your monthly expenses and improve your credit score in the process. Paying down low-interest mortgage debt may not be as high a priority, especially if you can offset mortgage interest with investment gains.

Invest in your future. Put your windfall to work to create financial stability now and in the future. Fund your retirement plan with a balanced portfolio aligned to your risk tolerance and time horizon. Diversify your holdings with a range of stocks and bonds. You



Hanna

might also consider alternative tangible assets such as property.

Plan your estate. A sudden windfall is a reminder that life can change in a heartbeat. Take this opportunity to create or update your will. Assign beneficiaries to your assets, including your life insurance policy. Consider creating a trust to pass your wealth to the next generation.

Spend wisely. Don't let your good fortune cloud your judgment. Be discerning in your expenditures. A large infusion of cash may permit you to make long-desired purchases, change careers, or help family and friends, but perhaps not all at once. Ideally you will continue to maintain a household budget to prevent overspending.

Share your good fortune. If your changed financial status allows it, be generous with the people and organizations you care about. Philanthropy and charitable deeds contribute to health and well-being while also strengthening communities.

Talk to a tax professional. Unexpected cash can affect your tax bill. There may be strategies you can employ to lessen your tax liability. For example, you may be able to fund an individual retirement account (IRA) or a health savings account (HSA) to reduce taxable income for the year. Make sure you're taking advantage of available deductions and credits that lower your tax bill.

Get guidance from a financial advisor. An experienced financial professional can help you in the happy circumstance of a financial windfall. Consult an advisor for advice on how to manage your good fortune for optimal results.

*Jim Hanna, CFP®, MBA, CKA®, is a Private Wealth Advisor and Certified Kingdom Advisor® with Heart Financial Partners a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies.*

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## Save for retirement now, get a tax credit later

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

Low- and moderate-income workers can save for retirement now and possibly earn a special tax credit in 2022 and years ahead.



The Retirement Savings Contributions Credit, also known as the Saver's Credit, helps offset part of the first \$2,000 workers voluntarily contribute to Individual Retirement Arrangements, 401(k) plans and similar workplace retirement programs. The credit also helps any eligible person with a disability who is the designated beneficiary of an Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account, contribute to that account. For more information about ABLE accounts, see Publication 907, available on IRS.gov. The Saver's Credit is available in addition to any other tax savings that apply.

Eligible workers have until April 18, 2023, to make qualifying retirement contributions and get the Saver's Credit on their 2022 tax return. Both Roth and traditional IRAs qualify. Contributions to certain other workplace retirement plans also qualify.

Income limits, based on a taxpayer's adjusted gross income and marital or filing status, apply to the Saver's Credit. But due to inflation, the limits will increase markedly in 2023. As a result, the Saver's Credit can be claimed by married couples filing jointly with incomes up to \$68,000 in 2022 or \$73,000 in 2023; heads of household with incomes up to \$51,000 in 2022 or \$54,750 in 2023; married individuals filing separately and singles with incomes up to \$34,000 in 2022 or \$36,500 in 2023.



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## A special day for your Sweetheart

Are you ready to make your love's heart leap on Valentine's Day? Our guide to a great Valentine's Day will provide you with ideas and tips that will make your Valentine's Day a success.

### Tips for a smooth Valentine's Day:

- Tell your special someone how much you care about them
- Be thankful – it's always appreciated
- Plan ahead – babysitters, reservations, and other things that need done
- Turn off your cell phones – enjoy this time together

### Gift Ideas:

#### *Candy and Flowers and Jewelry:*

- Visit Hazel Hill Chocolate for a unique chocolate treat, or contact a local bakery and order their favorite cookies or other treat.
- Surprise your special someone with a bouquet of favorite flowers or balloons
- Dazzle him/her with a piece of jewelry from Donaldson's Jewelers or other local jeweler
- Make a list of all the things you love about him/her

#### *Gift basket for her:*

- Get a gift certificate for a massage or trip to a salon or spa.
- Pick up a candle for a candle-lit bath.
- Find her favorite book at one of Topeka's bookshops for her to enjoy during her quiet time
- Buy her a personalized gift from a local shop, or Personally Yours.

#### *Gift basket for him:*

- Buy his favorite candy bars and personalize it with "Udaman" wrappers
- Include miniature bottles or cans of his favorite drink and personalize them with valentine's day labels
- Create a ticket book with tickets for him to use at his leisure
- Include a new favorite movie, C.D., or video game he's been wanting

### Dinner:

- Avoid the Valentine's Day rush - create a romantic meal at home



- Go to a restaurant where you share special memories
- Get dinner and a room, and enjoy the indoor pool or other activities

### Dates:

- Laugh together at a comedy show.
- Enjoy a romantic movie at home from Netflix, RedBox, or one you already own. While watching share your favorite treat and glass of wine or sparkling cider. Include a massage.
- Enjoy a night of music and dancing before or after dinner at one of Topeka's nightspots.



- Spend uninterrupted time together with a romantic getaway at a local retreat spot.

## Heart-Healthy Valentine's Day Tips

Your sweetheart may have the key to your heart, but eating healthy and being physically active can be the key to a healthier heart. This Valentine's Day, indulge your sweetheart with a heart-healthy gift or date.

Rather than going overboard with sweets, also consider a gift that has more permanence. Search for a poem that describes your feelings and write it on beautiful paper for a handmade Valentine. Or visit [www.ShopHeart.org](http://www.ShopHeart.org) for gift ideas that benefit the American Heart Association.

Quality time is one of the most meaningful gifts. Bundle up and plan an active outing such as sledding, ice skating, gathering wood for a fire, or if you're feeling adventurous, visit an indoor rock wall.

If your kids are having a Valentine's Day party at their school or day care, instead of sending candies, consider raisins, grapes, whole-grain pretzels, colored pencils or stickers as tokens of their friendly affection.

Cooking at home is an excellent way to control what and how much you eat. Take a date to a local cooking class to practice your skills or learn a new technique.

Prepare a romantic candlelit dinner at home using a heart-healthy recipes.

Give to one another by giving back. Ask a date to volunteer with you at a local organization. Giving back is a healthy habit that can boost your mood and help beat stress.

Use this day as an opportunity to tell your loved one how important they are to you, and share ways that you can support each other's health and wellness. Get started by taking the My Life Check Assessment.

Craving something sweet? Gift a beautiful fresh fruit basket to your loved one or consider more healthy sweets such as dark chocolate. Did you know that daily consumption of dark chocolate

is linked with a lower risk of heart disease and stroke in high-risk individuals? It seems that cocoa, a primary ingredient in chocolate, contains antioxidant compounds called flavanoids. Flavanoids have antihypertensive and anti-inflammatory effects, which can reduce the heart's stress and result in lower blood pressure. So indulge your inner chocoholic with a moderate piece of dark chocolate each day.

Sharing is caring – if you go out for a romantic dinner date, order one entrée to share. Many restaurant servings are enough for two – splitting will keep you from overdoing it.

Don't forget to love Fido, too! Give your pet a Valentine and remember to walk or exercise them daily – getting active with your pet will benefit your health and your bond with your pets.

Take it slow – if you receive a luxurious box of chocolates from your sweetie, stick it in the freezer and enjoy in moderation over the next several weeks.

Take a long, romantic walk with your beloved – and try to make it a regular habit. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderately intense physical activity each week to help keep your heart healthy. You can reach this goal by walking briskly for at least 30 minutes five days each week.

Check out some

tips online for healthier preparation methods for cooking.

Rekindle an old flame – try preparing one of your sweetie's favorite recipes in a healthier way. These healthy substitutions can help you cut down on saturated fats, trans fats, salt, and added sugars, while noticing little, if any, difference in taste.

Working out together can be fun. Strength training increases blood flow, builds lean muscle, and lowers blood pressure and cholesterol. Choose a weight-training routine that is appropriate for your body, consulting a doctor or personal trainer if needed. If your strength is at a low ebb, even lifting a two-pound weight can be helpful. Increase the amount you lift as you gain strength.



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# Valentine's Day brings back that lovin' feeling



By Rusty Wright

February is known for cold weather, presidents' birthdays and Cupid's delight. As Valentine's Day approaches, hearts flutter, lovers sigh and Charlie Brown hopes that little red-haired girl will like the card he's been gathering up the courage to give her.

Not every culture is as comfortable as ours with public displays of affection. In one Malaysian state, laws ban total darkness in movie theaters "to prevent immoral acts like kissing, cuddling and other activities," as one official explained it. Public kissing there usually rates a \$70 fine.

## Smooch Cops

In Venezuela, extended public kiss-

ing and embracing can get you arrested. "If you kiss for more than five seconds, the police will grab you," complained one young woman whose friends were jailed. "It's ridiculous," groused a 24-year-old man. "Whoever invented this law must not have a girlfriend."

Defining immoral kisses can be difficult admitted one policeman, but "when you see it, you should know it."

## Kids on Love, Dating and Marriage

Kids often have unique insights into adults' urge to merge. A friend passed along from the Internet children's answers to questions about love. What do people do on a date? Lynnette (age 8): "Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know

each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough."

Martin (age 10) sees the bottom line: "On the first date, they just tell each other lies, and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date."

When is it OK to kiss someone? Pam (7): "When they're rich!" Curt (7): "The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that." Howard (8): "The rule goes like this: If you kiss someone, then you should marry them and have kids with them....It's the right thing to do."

How does one decide whom to marry? Allan (10): "You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dips coming." Allan may find it prudent to slightly revise that theory in a few years.

## Do You Love Me?

This season pundits ponder, "What is genuine love?" Popular speaker Josh McDowell delineates three kinds of love that can inform kids' (and adults') attitudes: love if, love because of, and love period. Love if and because of are based on personality or performance: "I love you if you go out with me, if you have a good sense of humor, if you sleep with me. I love you because you're attractive, intelligent or athletic."

But the best kind of love says, "I love you period: even with your weaknesses, even if you change, even if someone better looking comes along. Even if you have zoo-breath in the morning. I want to give myself to you."

## Real Love

Paul, an early Christian writer, eloquently described this unconditional love: "Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ...Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. ... [Love] will last forever..."

Committed unconditional love

could probably heal many romantic rifts. Solid spiritual roots that help produce it can help undergird stable relationships. And the children have noticed that families and adult relationships can use some strengthening.

How can a stranger tell if two people are married? Derrick (8): By "whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids." And how would the world be different if people didn't get married? Kelvin (8): "There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there?"

*Rusty Wright is an author and lecturer who has spoken on six continents. He holds Bachelor of Science (psychology) and Master of Theology degrees from Duke and Oxford universities, respectively. www.Rusty-Wright.com*



## Serenade your Sweetheart

Want to do something out of the ordinary for someone in your life?

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# Kirk Cameron will travel nation sharing children's book at libraries



Actor and author Kirk Cameron says that he will travel to a string of public libraries to take his messages of faith, freedom, family and love of country to millions of Americans in major cities — people who are “crying out,” he said, “for someone to push back” against today’s woke culture.

He plans to visit some of the public libraries that either denied his earlier requests to hold story hours at their facilities or never responded to his book publisher’s requests to hold book-based events there. Cameron’s new book, “As You Grow,” is an illustrated children’s book that shares the story of an oak tree throughout its seasons of life. The story encourages children to develop and share the virtues of patience, joy, kindness, compassion, self-control and other biblical values.

At his recent appearances at the Indianapolis Public Library in Indianapolis and at the Scarsdale Public Library in Scarsdale, N.Y., scores of people came up to him and thanked him for sharing his Christian values and beliefs.

“So now I’m going to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Denver, Chicago, Detroit, Atlanta” and other cities, Cameron said, “where people are crying out for someone to push back and stand up and bring the kinds of values that made this country free and led to its blessings. When those 50 woke libraries initially denied us the ability to come and do a story hour and said that their communities weren’t interested in this kind of messaging, I didn’t believe them.”

Cameron said his tour of public libraries likely will take several

months and that his family, including his parents and his sister, actress Candace Cameron Bure, stand behind him in his efforts to share a belief in traditional values across the country.

“We’re jumping on this right away, because people are saying they want to be part of something that is letting others know,” he said. “We don’t want this woke garbage. We want the right kinds of values that lead to our children, our families and our communities flourishing.”

Trent Talbot, CEO of Brave Books in Houston, said, “Kirk Cameron and Brave Books are fighting to ensure that America will have a generation that is grounded in truth and strong morals, so that they are prepared for the fight that is ahead of them.”

*“Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”*

*Mark 6:31*



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# Faith and mental health: A study of Gen Z

You've seen the headlines: Members of Generation Z are "shying away from religion" and "losing their religion." One prominent religious demographer wrote that with Gen Z, "we have a picture of a rapidly secularizing America that will significantly alter the culture and politics of the United States for generations to come."

At the same time, Gen Z is in the midst of a mental health crisis. U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy recently warned, "Even before the pandemic, an alarming number of young people struggled with feelings of helplessness, depression, and thoughts of suicide," adding, "The COVID-19 pandemic further altered their experiences at home, school, and in the community, and the effect on their mental health has been devastating."

A new study from Springtide Research Institute not only suggests that popular narratives about Gen Z's abandonment of religion aren't the full story but also that religion and spirituality can contribute to flourishing mental health among this generation.

## Keeping the faith

Of the nearly 10,000 young Americans ages 13-25 Springtide surveyed for "The State of Religion 2022: Mental Health—What Faith Leaders Need to Know," large majorities consider themselves to be religious (68%) or spiritual (77%). These numbers have changed



little over the last three years, even coming out of a global pandemic. In fact, more young people told Springtide their faith became stronger during the pandemic (30%) than weaker (18%) or lost completely (8%).

To be sure, young people today have a different understanding of what it means to be religious or spiritual. While previous generations were more enthusiastic about religious institutions and attending services, only 30% of our survey respondents told Springtide they are currently connected to a spiritual or religious community. Even those who are highly religious or spiritual don't necessarily identify with a particular tradition or institution. Increasingly, they feel they can fit in with, or appreciate, several.

Among the 100 interviews Springtide conducted for the study, a number of

young people articulated the benefits religion affords them. Mark, age 22, said, "I think religion is a place to find belonging. It's a place to connect with a higher purpose, which is a calling from God in my understanding. It's a place to connect to creativity." Misty, 17, explained, "If I'm really sad, sometimes I'll just sit and pray, and then it almost makes me feel better 'cause I know if I'm not ready to talk to a person in real life about my problems, I can just explain them to God for me personally. And that's almost, like, a weight off my shoulders."

## Mentally (and spiritually) healthy

For decades, sociological research has found that religion and spirituality promote mental health. Springtide's study probed whether the same can be said for

a generation systemically defying traditional religious norms. Still, Springtide found that there is something inherently mental-health friendly about religion and spirituality for Gen Z.

Religious young people say they are flourishing more than their nonreligious counterparts in every category of life we asked about, including mental health. Here are a few examples:

- Of those who are very religious, 40% said, "I am flourishing a lot in my emotional and mental well-being," compared to 17% of those who are not religious.

- Of those who said, "I know a higher power exists, and I have no doubts about it," 61% said they are in good physical and emotional condition, compared to just 46% of those who "don't believe in a higher power."

- Of people who pray daily, 74% said they are flourishing, compared to just 57% of those who said they never pray. Of those who attend religious services weekly, 79% said they are flourishing, compared to 57% of those who never attend religious services.

Young people appear to see the positive connection, with 66% of religious young people agreeing that their religious or spiritual life matters for their mental health, while 73% of religious young people agree that their religious and spiritual practices positively impact their mental health.

"Just being grounded in my faith and

attending church services — just sitting there for an hour, not looking at my phone, just listening to nice things and being reminded that there's more to this than my immediate suffering — was very valuable to me," explained Lana, age 22. "And I think that's kind of the reason I haven't left my church."

"I think (my faith) makes me feel less isolated and less alone," said Jade, 22. "And I think that when I feel less alone, less isolated, I have better mental health."

Our team at Springtide is constantly fielding questions about Gen Z's spirituality. Yet, the most common one we hear isn't directly about young people's faith. What adults are most concerned about is their mental health. And their concern is warranted. Mental health, it turns out, is the biggest issue to address in order to do ministry that matters for young people.

If the findings from Springtide's new study show anything, it's that the pursuit of mental health is not separate from the development of a vibrant and flourishing faith and spiritual life. Trusted adults in the lives of young people, but especially faith leaders, must be equipped to address both.

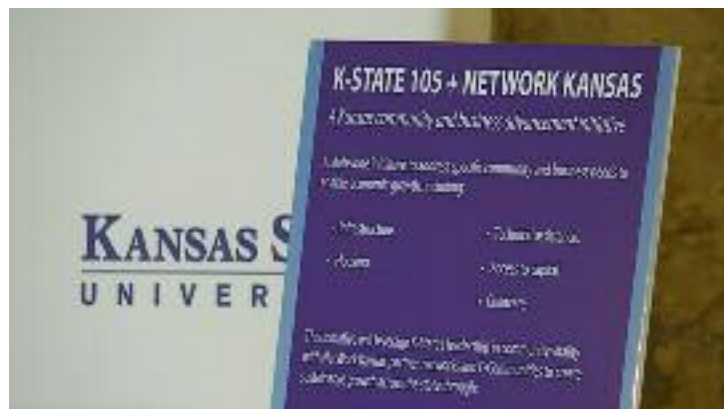
—Kevin Singer (@kevinsinger0) is head of media and public relations at Springtide Research Institute and writes frequently on young people, religion and mental health.

## K-State initiative to bring business support to all 105 Kansas counties

Kansas State University is launching a 105 county partnership plan aimed at economic growth with a goal of creating 3,000 new jobs and \$3 billion in investment by the year 2029.

Partners include NetWork Kansas and the Greater Topeka Partnership. The hope is to foster new business and to expand existing business. They are also hoping to attract new outside investment to the state.

"We're responsible for being in all 105 communities through our extension network throughout the state," said Linton. "So, actually it's very easy for us to adapt and to get connected. We already have those relationships, those business relationships in these communities. We have people employed all over



the state with the partnership we have with Network Kansas, K-State and K-State extension, it's very achievable."

Linton will be coming back to Topeka Monday, January 23 to discuss the next steps of the partner-

ship with GTP. He is hopeful that the partnership will be a good move to keep Kansans in Kansas.

"If we can create a better network of business opportunities and connect students to opportunities, we've got a better opportu-

nity and a better chance to keep them in Kansas," said Linton.

NetWork Kansas is an organization devoted to growing small business and entrepreneurship in the state. They announced that they are looking forward to providing their agents with the additional resources from Kansas State University.

"We've been working with Kansas State in various departments like technology development institute," said Steve Radley, CEO of NetWork Kansas, "research and extension and the rural grocery initiative for years. What the K-State 105 initiative does is that it would allow for those organizations to do even more in those communities with specific entrepreneurs that they maybe couldn't

do without some additional funds."

The Greater Topeka Partnership has also partnered with the 105 initiative and is excited about the potential within the 105 partnership. Dr. Laurie Pieper is Vice President of Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses for Go Topeka.

"There's a lot of opportunity for our entrepreneurs, our startups and existing businesses to take advantage of the resources through Kansas State University," said Pieper, "for science vetting, for technology transfer opportunities, for manufacturing consulting and for getting the faculty and students at K-State engaged in our communities so that we can help attract talent to Topeka."

# Persecution of Christians around the world will surge in 2023

The 2022 report from the Open Doors organization says “persecution of Christians has reached the highest levels” since it began accumulating data for its annual “World Watch List” three decades ago. Hostile incidents have increased by 20% since just 2014, and some 360 million Christians, or 14% of the worldwide total, are said to have faced persecution, harassment or discrimination.

Open Doors reports that, in areas it serves, it has documented the murders in one year’s time of 5,898 Christians for their faith, up 24% from the prior year; attacks on 5,110 local churches, up 14%; 3,829 abductions, a new high, up 124%; 6,175 victims held without trial; 24,678 subjected to beatings, death threats and other abuse; 6,449 with homes or businesses attacked; and 3,147 women targeted for rape or sexual harassment.

Since that report was issued, the Nigeria-based civil rights group Intersociety reports that in just that one nation, 4,020 additional killings and 2,315 abductions occurred from January through October 2022.

The memo therefore proclaims this international upsurge the Buried Story of the Year, a major, newsworthy global scourge widely featured by religious media — yet all but ignored by way too much of the mainstream media.

Journalists will have another peg for remedying this sin of omission when Open Doors issues its 2023 report early in the new year.

While Christian media like Metro



Voice has reported extensively on the subject, one noteworthy secular media exception, timed for Christmas a year ago, was a thorough New York Times survey of widespread harassment of Christians in India. Also, Reuters this month produced a massive investigation of 10,000 forced abortions conducted by the military in chaotic Nigeria, indicating rape is a widespread tactic used to terrorize Christian women.

On a broader time frame, the Center for the Study of Global Christianity estimates that 1 million Christian martyrs were killed in the first 10 years of the 21st century. That’s a number that many observers and human rights organizations say is more accurate.

Specialists say terror by militant Islamists is the No. 1 factor. Other causes are different types of religious nationalism, paranoid dictatorships, atheistic hostility where communists wield power and, in several countries, the impact of

organized crime or government corruption.

Open Doors is confident Christianity is the world’s most-persecuted faith, though admitting no Muslim organizations are collecting comparable persecution data. Inaction by Muslim groups charting the suppression and incarceration of ethnic believers in China is particularly remarkable. Conditions are also dire in India and Myanmar.

For Christians, Nigeria saw the year’s single worst atrocity — when rampaging militants murdered 40 worshippers and seriously injured dozens more during a Catholic Mass on Pentecost Sunday last June in Owo, Ondo State. Local Priest Adeniyi Abayomi said mournfully that “the world has turned away from Nigeria. Genocide is taking place, but no one cares.”

Those words can be found in a 2020-2022 survey from Aid to the Church in Need, a U.S.-based Catholic charity. It

decries “a sharp increase in genocidal violence from militant nonstate actors, including jihadists,” the prospect that some of the world’s oldest Christian communities (in Iraq, Palestine, Syria) will virtually disappear, and growing government oppression in Myanmar and Vietnam added to communist regimes’ long-running persecution in China and North Korea.

Last year, a Pew Research Center survey on conditions as of 2019 said that though overall intergroup hostility in societies improved somewhat, 57 countries had important and systematic government restrictions on religions, the highest total since 2012. There was at least one incident of repression in 180 countries.

Many consider this an important news story: Persecution monitors are vexed that a year ago the Biden Administration’s State Department removed Nigeria from its listing of countries “of particular concern” over severe violations of religious freedom.

The independent U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, which wanted that listing to continue, denounced the decision and pleaded for reconsideration without success. See this recent update.

The commission’s own 2022 “countries of particular concern” listing includes Nigeria along with Afghanistan, China, Eritrea, India, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan

and Vietnam. The Open Doors list of worst nations adds Somalia, Libya and Yemen, while Catholic sources are alarmed by the growing Islamist threat in Nigeria’s neighbors of Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Mali and Niger.

Year by year, Open Doors has ranked — not Nigeria — but North Korea as the worst place on earth to be a Christian. The group now considers Afghanistan No. 1. Open Doors claims that, even before the militantly Muslim Taliban reclaimed power last year, converts to Christianity either fled their homeland or faced death, but now matters are “even more dangerous. . . . It is impossible to live openly as a Christian in Afghanistan.”

Resources for more information:  
\* “World Watch List 2022” from Open Doors.

\* Report covering 2020-2022 from Aid to the Church in Need.

\* Latest “Report on International Religious Freedom” from the U.S. Department of State.

\* The 2022 annual report from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

\* Pew Research Center’s 2021 survey on governments’ anti-religion policies and social hostility.

\* Specific cases are depicted by International Christian Concern (click here) and Voice of the Martyrs.

— Richard Ostling is a former religion reporter for *The Associated Press*.

## Atheists become allies of Christians, pro-life movement

Pro-life Christians have an unlikely ally in the fight for the sanctity of life. Pro-life atheists are pushing back against lawsuits alleging that state abortion bans and restrictions violate religious freedom and promote a Christian definition of life, saying that the right to practice one’s faith does not justify abortion that they describe as “human rights violations.”

As several states have moved to ban or restrict abortion following the U.S. Supreme Court’s overturning of *Roe v. Wade* last summer, some lawsuits contend those laws promote a sectarian view of when life begins.

Monica Snyder, executive director of Secular Pro-Life, an organization of atheists and agnostics says that the belief that a zygote is the first stage of life for human organisms is not a religious belief.

You don’t need to be religious to recognize biological facts, and you don’t need to

be religious to believe all humans are morally valuable.

“It’s a biological fact,” she said. “You don’t need to be religious to recognize biological facts, and you don’t need to be religious to believe all humans are morally valuable.”

In Indiana, five women and the organization Hoosier Jews for Choice argue that the state’s ban passed in August outlawing nearly all abortion violates the 2015 Indiana Religious Freedom Restoration Act signed by former Vice President Mike Pence when he was the state’s governor. In December, a judge issued a preliminary injunction against the law finding that it “substantially burdens” religious exercise.

In another lawsuit in Kentucky, three Jewish women claim that the state’s abortion ban violates their religious freedom and alleges that the legislature “imposed sectarian theology.” The complaint has

been removed in federal court as the Kentucky Supreme Court considers other lawsuits challenging the ban. According to the Brennan Center for Center Justice, 34 lawsuits have been filed against abortion bans in 19 states, with 31 pending at trial or appellate levels.

Presenting a hypothetical, the pro-life atheist Snyder questioned whether society would have to allow elective third-trimester abortions in the name of religious freedom if someone’s faith claimed that life doesn’t begin until the first breath.

“Historically, some societies believed neonates aren’t ‘children’ until they’re named, or fed, or baptized,” she said. “Would we have to allow infanticide prior to those rituals in the name of religious freedom? No, of course not. Freedom of religion is important, but it doesn’t justify human rights violations. Abortion violates human rights by killing human beings.



Freedom of religion doesn’t justify it.”

The group points out that “pro-choice people argue that it doesn’t matter whether the fetus is morally valuable ‘person,’ because no person can use another’s body against her will.” The secular organization then points out that they find that the bodily rights argument “is not enough to justify elective abortion.”

The group’s website also states: “In our experience, people may have different ideas about why it’s generally immoral to kill humans, but few if any people sincerely debate

whether it’s generally immoral to kill humans. As a matter of policy, we at Secular Pro-Life do not take a stance on the metaphysical questions regarding where morality comes from or why we should care about one another. We simply ask that all people who believe, as a baseline premise, that it’s wrong to kill each other apply that stance consistently and recognize preborn children as part of the human family.”

They then encourage visitors to the website to read *The Imago Dei*, or “Why should secularists care about human life?”

# News Briefs From Around the Nation and Around the World

## Biden to Send Abrams Tanks to Ukraine

The White House formally announced that it is sending 31 M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine, part of a coordinated move in which Germany and other European nations will also send their own tanks to the fight.

## Florida Supreme Court Upholds 15-Week Abortion Ban During Ongoing Lawsuit

The Florida Supreme Court has ruled that the 15-week abortion ban Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law last year can continue saving babies from abortions while the pro-abortion lawsuit against it continues. The ruling is a good sign about the long-term prospects for upholding the pro-life law and using it as a springboard to pass stronger legislation protecting more babies from abortion.

## Iran Irate with New Western Sanctions, Promises Retaliation

Iran on Tuesday strongly condemned new sanctions imposed by the European Union and Britain and said it would retaliate, after the West stepped up pressure on Iran over its crackdown on protests. The European Union imposed sanctions on more than 30 Iranian officials and organizations, including units of the powerful Revolutionary Guards, blaming them for a “brutal” crackdown on unrest and other human rights abuses. This is the ninth round of U.S. sanctions put into effect because of the regime’s oppression of protesters. Unfortunately, the regime is resilient. The clerics have survived decades of Western sanctions.

## Walmart Increases Hourly Wage to \$14

Walmart Inc. said it is raising wages for its U.S. hourly workers as the retailer continues to fight to attract staff in a tight labor market for front-line workers. Starting next month, Walmart’s U.S. workers in stores and warehouses will earn a starting wage of at least \$14 an hour, up from \$12, the country’s largest private employer said in a memo to staff Tuesday. Rivals, including Amazon and Target, have a \$15-an-hour minimum wage,



while Costco Wholesale Corp.’s minimum is even higher.

## DOJ Sues Google, Says Google Should be Forced to Sell Ad Services

The U.S. Justice Department sued Alphabet’s Google on Tuesday, accusing the company of abusing its dominance of the digital advertising business and said Google should be forced to sell its ad manager suite, in the government’s latest jab at thwarting Big Tech’s market power. The lawsuit tackles a business at Google that is responsible for 80 percent of its revenue. The Justice Department asked the court to compel Google to break up its ad technology business.

## California Introduces Wealth Tax Forcing People to Pay Years After They Leave State

California lawmakers are pushing legislation that would impose a new tax on the state’s wealthiest residents — even if they’ve already moved to another part of the country. The tax will apply to every resident, regardless of whether they are in the state part-time or temporarily. It will also allow the state to pursue wealth taxes from former residents who built their wealth in California but moved.

## Speaker McCarthy Officially Rejects Top Democrats Committee Assignments

Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy rejected Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries’ demands to reappoint Reps. Eric Swalwell and Adam Schiff, both Democrats from California, to the

Committee on Intelligence. “I have rejected the appointments of Adam Schiff and Eric Swalwell for the House Intelligence Committee. I am committed to returning the @HouseIntel Committee to one of genuine honesty and credibility that regains the trust of the American people,” McCarthy said on Twitter. McCarthy made it clear that due to Schiff’s and Swalwell’s past behavior, they are not qualified to sit on such a high-ranking committee.

## DOJ Announces First Indictments of Vandalism, Intimidation for Acts of Terrorism Against Pregnancy Centers

The U.S. Department of Justice announced two indictments by a federal grand jury on Tuesday in case where pregnancy resource centers were targeted with vandalism, intimidation, and interference — months after pro-abortion vandals targeted pro-life organizations across the country after a draft of the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision leaked. According to DOJ, each defendant would face a maximum of 12 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and fines up to \$350,000 if convicted.

## Abraham Accords Victory: UAE Breaks Ground for Jewish School in Coordination with Israel

The United Arab Emirates is rapidly becoming a friend of Israel and to Jews, thanks to the Abraham Accords. The Accords, negotiated by the Trump Administration along with Bibi Netanyahu, normalized relations between Israel, Bahrain, the UAE. Sudan normalized relations soon after, as did

Morocco. In what should be seen as momentous events, the UAE is both integrating the Holocaust into its school curriculum, and ground has been broken on a new Jewish school in Abu Dhabi.

## Arkansas Senate Passes Measure Classifying Drag Shows as “Adult” Shows

The Arkansas Senate on Tuesday approved legislation restricting the locations of drag shows by classifying them the same way as strip clubs and adult theaters, despite criticism that the move was overly broad and discriminates against the LGBTQ community. The measure, which also bans drag shows from taking place on public property, now heads to the majority-Republican House.

## Mayor Eric Adams Complains About Influx of Illegal Immigrants

New York City Mayor Eric Adams (D) once again took to the airwaves to say Democratic cities

who declared themselves to be a sanctuary for illegal immigrants are being stretched thin due to the large number of people crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. Adams says “it’s unfair” for big cities “to carry the weight” of illegal immigration and Biden’s open borders — something border communities have dealt with every single day since Biden took office.

## Meta to Restore Donald Trump’s Social Media Accounts

Former President Donald Trump’s Facebook and Instagram accounts are being reinstated “in the coming weeks” and come with “new guardrails in place to deter repeat offenses.” Those guardrails will include “heightened penalties for repeat offenses — penalties which will apply to other public figures whose accounts are reinstated from suspensions related to civil unrest under our updated protocol.



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# opinion

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## Rethinking the question, ‘Are you for the rich or poor?’

By Lawrence W. Reed

Are you for the poor?  
Most people are conditioned to respond “Yes” to that question. It makes you feel good, doesn’t it?

Are you for the rich?  
Most people are conditioned to respond “No” to that one. Does that make you feel good too?

If you replied “Yes” or “No” to either question, your answers are grossly ill-considered. They betray bias or ignorance, or both. The very best answer to each question is the same, and it’s also a single word: “Depends.”

Allow me to provide a little more detail so we can all give better-informed answers.

What if the first question is rephrased this way: Are you for the poor who are destitute because they repeatedly made bad decisions that rendered them unemployable—such as embracing destructive habits or disrespecting other people?

And what if the second question is reworded thusly: Are you for the rich who earned their wealth honestly by serving happy customers?

Even if you responded “Yes” and “No” to the first questions at the start of this article, you might well have answered “No” and “Yes” when I added the additional information.

What’s the difference? The questions in the first set were too broad, too abstract, too prone to knee-jerk, emotion-based, fact-free answers. It’s virtually meaningless, and thoughtless as well, to be “for” or “against” millions of people for no more reason than their possessions. The second set of questions brought the matter down from the clouds to something closer to reality and experience.

Likewise, suppose I asked you this: Are you for the poor who are destitute through no fault of their own? You probably would say “Yes.” Or if I asked, Are you for the rich who get their wealth from deception, theft, political connections or unfair advantage? You probably would say “No.”

If you despise the rich as a category, I ask you this: Would you make an exception if your father or daughter be-



came wealthy because he or she made some good decisions, created new wealth and bettered the lives of others? If you venerate the poor as a category, I ask you this: Would you make an exception for someone who can work but won’t, or who squanders what others give him?

Or, how about this one: What if you became rich because, say, a million fans who love your music bought tickets to your concerts? Would you feel morally obligated to give them all a refund so you would no longer be rich?

My apologies for all these questions but as Socrates would advise, sometimes a few inquiries prompt us to think more clearly. All I did here was to introduce some real-world facts that are present all around us, every day. The bottom line is this: As convenient as it may be, it is almost always superficial and misleading to pigeon-hole people by group instead of judging each individual by his own decisions, actions and circumstances.

The poor are not an amorphous, collectivist blob. Nor are the rich, or any group in between. We are distinct individuals, all of us. This is the essence of what Dr. Martin Luther King meant when he urged us to judge people not by the color of their skin (essentially, a racial group) but rather, by the content of their (individual) character. Character is, by its very nature, a very personal matter. There are poor people who are good and poor people who are bad. Same with the rich.

When someone negatively stereotypes all people within an ethnic, religious or national grouping, we

properly condemn their thinking as bigotry. Are you an income bigot? You absolutely are if you apply the same generalist absurdity to either “the rich” or “the poor.”

Some ideologues who invent “facts” to fit their narrative claim the rich get rich by making the poor poorer as a general rule. That’s lazy thinking, if it’s thinking at all, because experience proves otherwise. See John Stossel’s video in “The Myth that the Poor Get Poorer When the Rich Get Richer” or check out the treasure of myth-busting statistics on wealth and poverty here.

Some of my friends in the Christian community may protest, citing the first of the Beatitudes in Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the poor.” Advocates of Marxist-leaning “liberation theology” cite this as justifying a “preferential option for the poor” and even compulsory welfare state programs.

But that passage (Matthew 5:3) is one of the most misquoted and misinterpreted in Scripture. It actually reads, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Jesus was not referring to material possessions, but rather, to a state of mind. To be “poor in spirit” is to be humble, open-minded, reverent, eager to learn and grow. It’s the opposite of an arrogant, condescending, hubristic or know-it-all attitude.

In Luke 6:20, Jesus does say, “Blessed are the poor.” In that instance, as the verse clearly denotes, he was speaking directly to his disciples, not a mass audience. It was his way of saying, “Blessed are the poor among my disciples. Though you may lack physical wealth, you are rich in heavenly bless-

ings.”

If one person can be called the Father of Liberation Theology, it would be Peruvian philosopher Gustavo Gutierrez. His 1971 book, *A Theology of Liberation*, is a mix of good intentions, bad theology and lousy economics. Even he, however, cautioned against canonizing a social class by a misreading of “Blessed are the poor.” (Michael Novak’s classic *Will It Liberate: Questions About Liberation Theology* is a must-read refutation of Gutierrez and his philosophy.)

In one sense, namely our charitable giving, we all practice a kind of “preferential option for the poor.” We send our voluntary donations of food, money and clothing to charities, not to Jeff Bezos or the federal government.

That’s common sense, and it’s in keeping with Jesus’s teachings. He encouraged private, voluntary support for the needy and never endorsed compulsory, government-provided welfare. The Good Samaritan in his famous parable did not petition the government to help a poor man; he was “good” because he chose to help of his own free will and with his own resources. (See the links to additional information, below).

The “preferential option for the poor” for which Jesus sympathetic never included an endorsement of bad character or poverty-causing behavior. And it never called for robbing Peter to pay Paul. In his Parable of the Talents, he applauded the creation of wealth. He defended private property in his Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard. He warned against prioritizing material wealth over matters of spirit and character, but he never suggested compulsory redistribution as a remedy. Jesus did not judge people according to their racial, gender, political or income grouping. Admission to Heaven is not based upon your ethnic background or the size of your bank account.

If you are ever asked if you are “for the poor” or “for the rich,” don’t go for the bait. Life is complex. Individuals are unique. Generalities are a trap. Reject the childish thinking of collectivists.

—LawrenceWReed / Foundation for Economic Education

# Jesus, the NFL and the “He Gets Us” campaign

If you’ve watched any football lately, or any television for that matter, you’ve likely seen the ads – black-and-white or color images, some video, juxtaposed with music and narration. They’re story-driven, relatable, personal, emotional, and they all end with the same tagline: He gets us. All of us. Jesus.

The \$100 million ad campaign, originally launched in the spring, is the brainchild of “The Servant Foundation” – a 501(c)(3) organization that’s managed by The Signatry, a Kansas-based foundation that focuses on “discipleship and outreach efforts, Bible translations, cultural care, church plants, anti-human-trafficking missions, student ministries, poverty alleviation, clean water initiatives, and so much more.”

According to campaign officials, the “He Gets Us” ads during the NFL playoffs have made 166 million impressions as of January 20th. But since the overall project began in the spring, the outreach, including billboards and videos

on YouTube, have made 6.5 billion impressions around the world.

Given our increasingly secular culture, what’s especially extraordinary about the effort is how little controversy the ads and billboards have elicited, at least to date. After all, the name of Jesus is being projected on massive Times Square signs in New York City – and on TVs in bars and restaurants all around the country – and yet there is far more intrigue than outrage.

The Servant Foundation has purchased two ads for the Super Bowl – a broadcast that traditionally attracts well over 100 million viewers. Focus on the Family purchased a Super Bowl ad in 2010, generating strong opposition from abortion activists who assumed the spot was offensive. It wasn’t. The warm commercial featured Pam Tebow, mother of the then-Heisman-



winning quarterback Tim Tebow, telling her story about ignoring her doctor’s advice to terminate her pregnancy.

A few days after the ad ran, we received a note from an abortion-minded woman who said the spot caused her to change her mind. Her daughter just turned twelve.

“Our hope is that you see how Jesus experienced challenges and emotions just like we have,” states the mission on the “He Gets Us” website. “Ultimately, we want people to know His teachings and how He lived while here on Earth.”

Some, on both the right and the left, may have some reservations about the unorthodox campaign. For those on the left, the mere mention of Jesus can be offensive – but our Savior saw that charge coming and unapologetically pled guilty. “And you will be hated by all for my name’s sake,” Jesus said in Matthew’s gospel. “But the one who endures to the end will be saved” (10:22).

Some Christians may be concerned the presentation of Jesus is incomplete – but it seems the sponsoring group addressed that matter in their initial presentation. “This will be a starting point to understanding Him and His message” we read on their website.

Evangelizing a lost and broken world isn’t a neat and tidy effort. It’s also a highly personal matter. God calls all of us to share His Good News, but not all the same way. Street corner preaching may not be my gift or calling, but that

conviction may fall on my neighbor’s heart, and I’m thankful for his faithfulness and pray for his effectiveness.

As believers, we should pray for the continued reach of this campaign and even use it to engage our own unsaved family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers in conversation about what matters most of all in life. Ask some questions like, “What did you think of what you just saw?” Or: “Do you think Jesus understands you?”

We cannot underestimate the mere mention of Christ’s name in mass media. It was the apostle Paul, writing to the believers at Philippi, who noted:

Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Amen!

–Paul Batura | Focus on the Family

## The World’s Most Polarizing Figure



**CLINT DECKER**

President and Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.

### Speaking Truth

Polarizing people. There is no neutral ground. You either love ‘em or hate ‘em. It is a combination of their personality, public presence and things they say and do all rolled into one. For some they know what they are doing and purposefully push the limits for their own gain. For others though, they do not want to divide. It is the opposite. They want to be helpful and do good, but as they go about doing their work, they are resisted at every corner and division surfaces.

When we think of the kinds of people that are polarizing, politicians, actors, musical artists, athletes and activists come to mind. You typically would not think of pastors or other kinds of religious figures as polarizing. For most of them stay away from

controversial issues, and seek to bring people together through sharing messages of hope, love and forgiveness. Yet, the most polarizing person today, which has been for centuries, is not a political figure, but a religious one – Jesus. And He was well aware of this and explained to His followers, “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before . . . you.” (John 15:18)

Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, provided food to the hungry and loved the unlovable. His personality was one of kindness and graciousness, always putting others above Himself. Why was Jesus so polarizing then? It was a combination of His message, claims and how He presented those. He was humble, but also bold and confident. He served the outcasts of society, which the religious leaders condemned. He knowingly defied their religious traditions. He courageously addressed their sins publicly before the people and to them personally. He made claims about Himself, aware the leaders would twist and say He was uttering words of blasphemy. On many occasions, when they came to confront Him in front of the crowds, He stood

His ground and wisely responded to their deceptive tactics.

Jesus was fully aware of the impact His message of truth was having when He said, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household.” (Matthew 10:34-36) What was so offensive about Him?

It was His constant effort at pointing out sin in the hearts of the religious leaders, political leaders, the audiences that came to hear Him and even His own disciples. Many times, this frustrated and flat out enraged His opponents. Yet, Jesus stood firm, never wavering and was ultimately the reason He was arrested and sentenced to death through crucifixion.

Why is Jesus still so polarizing today? The very mention of His name in some places can instantly bring tension. Why? For the same reasons. We are born with the instinct to put ourselves first and do life our way. At the same time, we may ac-



knowledge Jesus and recognize Him as a good teacher. But this is where the offense is; we stop short of turning from the sin He points out in us, and following Him by faith. And if the issue is pressed, we will become firmer in our resistance, rationalizing a way to remain in our sin.

One day, whether you have accepted or resisted Him, He will bring the world to its knees. The Scripture says, “God has highly exalted him . . . so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord . . .” (Philippians 2:9,10,11) Instead of resisting Jesus’ to your own demise in this life and the next, turn from your

sin and follow Him. Receive Him today.

A prayer for you – “Lord Jesus, bring your light and expose the darkness in our hearts. Help us not to be offended, but welcome it. For you want us to have new life and be free. Help us to receive that new life by faith. Amen.”

–Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings and Speaking Truth is a nationally syndicated column. Please share your comment with Clint at [cdecker@greatawakenings.org](mailto:cdecker@greatawakenings.org) and follow his blog at [clintdecker.blogspot.com](http://clintdecker.blogspot.com).



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## Activities continue in NOTO during winter

Activities continue in NOTO during the winter months.

Showing Feb. 3-25 at the Morris Art Gallery in NOTO Arts Center: **"Chocolate it is."** The NOTO Arts Center invites you to join us inside the Morris gallery for an exhibit that is sure to make your mouth water! Immerse yourself in a sweet experience and reveal facets of chocolate you may have never considered before.

**Make plans now to attend the NOTO Arts and Antiques Festival** in March, featuring an array of workshops offered by local experts. Deadlines for applications to exhibit are in February.

The SEASONS Annual Fiber Juried Show is also coming up March 3-April 29 at NOTO Arts Center in the Morris Art Gallery

The Story of NOTO in Art is a project that is in the works for the Kansas Av-

enue bridge and the grassy area east of Veteran's Park. These areas will tell the N O T O Story with bridge murals and

sculptures. You can help support this project with a donation to the Heidi Trejo Memorial Fund:

<https://explorenoto.org/support/heidi-lynn-norris-trejo-art-fund/>

**First Friday Art Walk & Market** is the first Friday of every month. The North Topeka Arts District has become an attraction to Art Lovers and History Buffs alike with beautiful scenes of art and history. Entertainment can also be found



on First Fridays, at various venues during the artwalk up and down N. Kansas Avenue, as well as streetside vendors. The restaurants, locally owned shops, art galleries antiques and studios have become a favorite art walk destination.

Art Walk Hours are 10 am to 9 pm. True North band will play at Compass Point Feb. 3 from 6-9:15 p.m.

You can also visit 3rd Friday's NOTO Night Out! Many Merchants are also open longer hours on Second Saturdays.

For more information visit <https://exploreNOTO.org>

### Other North Topeka events:

**SENIORS PITCH CLUB** - Every Tuesday 1 pm at Garfield Community Center. First visit free then a dollar per visit for coffee and replacement cards

For more information visit <https://exploreNOTO.org>.

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

**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. For info: 785-224-8803.

**OPERATION BACKPACK** - 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary, 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.

**FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** - 4th Tue. through Nov., 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served. Distributing fresh produce and other items to families in need. 785-234-1111 [www.RandelMinistries.com](http://www.RandelMinistries.com)

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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 [metrovoiceneews.com](http://metrovoiceneews.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

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

**GRAND OTTAWA OPRY** – 2nd & 4th Saturday, 5:30PM-pre-show, 6PM showtime, Ottawa Memorial Auditorium, 301 S Hickory, Ottawa. Tickets are \$15 and only at the door. Ph. 785-241-6762, email [grandootpry@gmail.com](mailto:grandootpry@gmail.com). [GrandOttawaOpry.com](http://GrandOttawaOpry.com)

**LECRAE** – Feb. 22, 8pm, The Granada, 1020 Massachusetts, Lawrence.

**BIG DADDY WEAVE** – Mar 15, 7pm, Fellowship Bible Church. [transparentproductions.com](http://transparentproductions.com)

## SPECIAL CHURCH EVENTS

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

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

**HOPE HOUSE FREE COMMUNITY CLOTHING BANK** – Wed. 6-8pm and Sat. 12-3pm, Oakland Church of the Nazarene, 939 NE Oakland

**HARVESTER FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** – 2nd Saturday each month, 1:30-3pm, Oakland

Church of the Nazarene, 939 NE Oakland

**FREE WEEKLY COMMUNITY PANCAKE BREAKFAST** – Sundays 8:10 to 10:30am, at Oakland Church of the Nazarene, 939 NE Oakland, followed by church services at 10:45am with Pastor Jeanette Cook.

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

**INSIDE OUT FELLOWSHIP CHURCH** – Every Sunday 12pm service; Every Tuesday 7:30pm service. Location: 2020 SE 21st. For info: 785-380-7031 or [io@insideoutinc.net](mailto:io@insideoutinc.net) or [www.insideoutinc.net](http://www.insideoutinc.net)

**KIDS FOR JESUS!** – Wednesday's 6:30 – 8pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends, family, neighbors, enemies! For info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: [Lakenaz@aol.com](mailto:Lakenaz@aol.com)

**CLOTHING CLOSET** – Feb. 4 & 11, 9am-12pm, First Free Methodist Church, 3460 SE Indiana. Free clothing & small household items.

**"THE CHOSEN"** – Feb. 5 and following, 9:30am, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave. Episodes from Season 3 will be shown beginning Feb. 5.

**LOL 'LADIES OF LAKEVIEW' MEAL PREP NIGHT FOR JESUS!** – Feb. 7, 6pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends! Info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: [Lakenaz@aol.com](mailto:Lakenaz@aol.com)

**ANNUAL SUPER BOWL PARTY!** – Feb. 12, 5pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends & family to watch the Super Bowl with us! There will also be interactive football themed games! Bring chili, sliders, appetizers, taco

bar items (meat provided), or dessert. Contact info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: [Lakenaz@aol.com](mailto:Lakenaz@aol.com)

**THE MOVIE "MAYBERRY MAN"** - Feb. 17, 7pm, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave. Free admission. (Come early for the Chili & Soup Supper 4:30pm-6:30pm and then stay for the

movie!)

**CHILI & SOUP SUPPER** – Feb. 17, 4:30 – 6:30pm, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave. \$9 Adults, \$4 Kids 10 & under. Chili or Vegetable Beef Soup (all you can eat), plus Cornbread, Crackers, Relishes, Dessert & Drink. Dine in or Carry Out. Hot Dogs & Chili Dogs also available for \$1.50/\$2.00. Community Invited!

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE** – Feb. 22, 5pm, Oakland United Methodist Church, 801 N.E. Chester Ave..

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE** – Feb. 22, 6pm, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE** – Feb. 22, 7pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends & your Bible! Contact info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: [Lakenaz@aol.com](mailto:Lakenaz@aol.com)

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

**SENIORS NUTRITIONAL LUNCH** – Weekdays, except holidays, at noon at Auburn Civic Center, 1020 N. Washington Street. Minimal cost per person. Reserva-

tions/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.

**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@tsctl.org](mailto:nhonl@tsctl.org)

**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.

**TOPEKA SWING DANCE LESSONS** – Tuesdays, 7-8:45pm, no partner required, Jayhawk Theatre, 720 SW Jackson. <http://jayhawktheatre.org/events>

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

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

**TOPEKA ACAPPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS** – Topeka Acapella Unlimited is looking for female singers who

## BLEEDING KANSAS

### PROGRAM SERIES 2023

CONSTITUTION HALL STATE HISTORIC SITE | HISTORIC LECOMPTON  
2 p.m. Sundays • Suggested donation \$3 adults

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

- JANUARY 29** "Kansas Day" ("I Went West, I Think I Would Go to Kansas": Abraham Lincoln, the Sunflower State, and the Election of 1860")  
by Jonathan Earle, Ph.D., Dean, Roger Hadfield Ogden Honors College Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.  
*Special introduction by Suzanne Walker, District Attorney, Douglas County, Kansas.*
- FEBRUARY 5** "The U.S. Army's Response to the Unrest in Kansas - 1855-1861"  
by Robert J. Smith, Ph.D., Director, Fort Riley Museum, Ft. Riley, Kansas.
- FEBRUARY 12** "John Brown, a lit match in a tinderbox"  
by Grady Arwater, Site Administrator, John Brown Museum and State Historic Site, Osawatomie, Kansas.
- FEBRUARY 19** "John H. Matthew and 'The Lecompton Swindle'"  
by T. Kevin Griffin, Major (Retired) & MA
- FEBRUARY 26** "Steamboats on the Kansas River"  
by Kendall C. Gutz, Major (Retired) author; retired senior professor, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. (Books signing following talk)
- MARCH 5** "An 1869 Conversation with General Robert E. Lee"  
by Lane Smith, costumed historical interpreter.  
*Special introduction by Dr. Herschel P. Stovall, costumed Civil War Union officer historical interpreter*



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

**Feb. 9, 11:30-1: "POWER" Luncheon**  
Featuring Joe Patton on Marketing: What  
Would Jesus Do?  
at The Peak, 1930 SW Gage

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

Save the Dates!  
• Mar. 9: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1  
• Apr. 8: EASTERFEST at Great Overland Station!  
• Apr. 13: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1

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

would like to sing four-part acappella harmonies. Topeka Acappella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines, International. Call Cindy Patton at 785-640-7403 for info

**SQUARE DANCING** - Shawnee Swingers has monthly dances and sponsors lessons in the Fall. Call or text 785-845-2357; wesquareadance.com shawneeswingers@gmail.com. On Facebook: Shawnee Swingers Square Dance Club.

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

**TERRITORIAL CAPITAL MUSEUM** - Now Open, 640 E Woodson, LeCompton. (785) 887-6148 www.lecomptonkansascity.com historiclecompton@gmail.com

**FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** - 4th Tue. through Nov., 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served. Distributing fresh produce and other items to families in need. 785-234-1111 www.RandelMinistries.com

**TOPEKA PUBLIC LIBRARY PLAY BUS** - 9:30am-noon, Lakeview Nazarene Church, 2835 Croco. Every Tuesday, enjoy story time, play opportunities, books for check-out & take & make art. 785-266-3247.

**OPEN INDOOR COURT PICKLEBALL** - Sundays at 4pm, Berryton United Methodist Church (7010 SE Berryton Rd. All ages and abilities welcome.

**SENIORS PITCH CLUB** - Every Tuesday 1 pm at Garfield Community Center. First visit free then a dollar per visit for coffee and replacement cards.

**FEB. CYCLING EVENTS** - Various cycle rides are of-

fered by Kansas Cyclist. www.kansascyclist.com/

**FEB. OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES** - Outdoor events and activities. www.getoutdoorskansascity.org/calendar

**MONSTER BUCK CLASSIC** - Jan. 27-29, Stormont Vail Events Center.

**TROOP 59 ANNUAL PANCAKE FEED** - Jan. 28, 7am-12pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 1716 SW Gage. \$7 each, all you want pancakes, includes sausage & juice. Proceeds help get Scouts to summer camp.

**ON YOUR FEET** - Jan 29, 6pm, TPAC. The smash hit Broadway Musical!

**BLEEDING KANSAS** - Sundays from Jan. 29-Mar. 5, 2pm, Constitution Hall Historic Site, 319 Elmore, LeCompton. A series of talks and dramatic interpretations on the violent territorial and civil war history of Kansas 1854-1865. Actors will portray Kansans from this turbulent era. Adm: \$3 adults.

**LAST SUNDAY FREE BREAKFAST BUFFET** - Jan. 29, 8am - 12pm, Philip Billard Post 1650, 3110 SW Huntton. Free pancakes & sausage, eggs, coffee, juice, and sometimes biscuits & gravy. Donations accepted and will go to helping vets in the Topeka area.

**BLOOD DRIVE** - Feb. 1, 1-6pm, Fairlawn Plaza Mall. A combined project by Topeka service clubs: Lions, Rotary, Optimists, Kiwanis, Civitan & Sertoma. To schedule, contact Guy at 816-210-6801 or gniederhauser@cbcks.org. Mention "Celebrate Community" blood drive when you call or email.

**FOCUS ON FENTANYL** - Feb. 2, 9:30-10:30am, Sunflower Foundation on the former Menninger Campus, 5820 SW 6th. Prevention and Resiliency Services (PARS) and Safe Streets present a community education event, designed to spark engage-

ment, increase awareness and understanding, and empower the community to be informed and vocal on challenges faced in Topeka. Cheryl Wah and Kimberly Piña-Brugman from the Drug Enforcement Administration will discuss the fentanyl crisis in Shawnee County. RSVP - https://tinyurl.com/2p4yse37

**FIRST FRIDAY FLICKS: "COURAGEOUS"** - Feb. 3, 7pm, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave. Refreshments served.

**NO BOUNDARIES DANCE CO. SHOWCASE** - Feb. 4, 6pm, Jayhawk Theatre. Explore the creativity of movement, music, and emotion that connects each of us with the real possibility of transformation. carlymalso@gmail.com

**C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON** - Feb. 9, 11:30-1 at The Peak. Featured Speaker: Joe Patton on Marketing - What Would Jesus Do?

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

\$15 for non-members & repeat guests.

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

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

• SAVE THE DATE: C5 POWER Luncheon, Mar. 9, 11:30-1 at NOTO Arts Center.

**TOPEKA HOME SHOW** - Feb. 10-12, Stormont Vail Events Ctr. stormontvaileventscenter.com or 785-251-5552

**SHOW ME REPTILES/SHOW ME SNAKES** - Feb. 11, Stormont Vail Events Ctr. stormontvaileventscenter.com or 785-251-5552

**FREE MOVIE: "LIFEMARK"** - Feb. 11, 6:30pm, Highland Heights Christian Church, 2930 SE Tecumseh Rd. David's comfortable world is turned upside down when his birthmother unexpectedly reaches out to him, longing to meet the 18-year-old son she's only held once. Free movie snacks provided. Childcare available.

**HUGS & KICKOFFS VENDOR FAIR** - Feb. 12, 11am-3pm, YWCA, 3635 SW Chelsea. 20+ small business vendors. Valentines photos & gifts, chair massage & more.

**CHILI, SOUP AND HOT DOGS!** - Feb. 18, 3-6pm, Seaman Community Church, 2036 NW Taylor. Fundraiser for Topeka North Outreach Operation Backpack. For info or to donate, call 785-213-1061

**BLACK HISTORY TALK SHOW: WHAT DOES GOD HAVE TO SAY?** - Feb. 19, 4pm, New Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 2801 SE Indiana. Four Sr. Black Pastors Discussing The Black Family, The Black Church, The Racial Divide and Politics, Party's, Policies, and Politicians. For info: 316-737-1813

**ARAB SHRINE CIRCUS** - Feb. 24-26, Stormont Vail Events Center.

**COMIC CONVENTION** - Feb. 25-26, Great Overland Station. Special guests, cosplay, geek boutiques, video games, board games, comics, books, tv & film.

**CAPITAL CITY CARNAGE DEMOLITION DERBY** - Mar. 3-4, Stormont Vail Events Ctr. stormontvaileventscenter.com or 785-251-5552

**MENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR** - Mar. 4, 8:30 am-4 pm, SENT Topeka, 455 SE Golf Park Blvd. Understanding and Helping Youth with Problematic Sexual Behaviors. REGISTER: https://senttopeka.com/.../mental-health-

seminar.../ (785) 783-2535

**25 ANNUAL MIDWEST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE EXPO** - Mar. 4, 10am - 12pm, Colonial Presbyterian Church, 9500 Wornall, Kansas City, MO. 60 colleges from 17 states; free seminars. Special mini-seminar at 9am: "Navigating Through Faith and Science in College." Organized and sponsored by Metro Voice, Precision Print KC, area radio stations and more. 816-524-4522. MetroVoiceNews.com

**61ST ANNUAL KANSAS PRAYER BREAKFAST** - Mar. 7, 6:30-8am, Fellowship Bible Church, 6800 SW 10th. Doors open at 6:30 for breakfast, program at 7. Featured Speaker: Herbie Newell, Ex. Dir. of Lifeline Childrens Services. \$20/ticket. Sponsorships available. www.kansasprayerbreakfast.org

**BLARNEY BREAKFAST** - Mar. 18, 7 - 10am, Blind Tiger. All-you-can-eat breakfast buffet, entertainment, raffles, and more. Celebrity servers! All proceeds help your friends with disabilities served at Capper Foundation build their abilities. Info: Lacey Kinder, Communication Specialist, 795-272-4060 x1165

**8th ANNUAL EASTERFEST: TOPEKA EASTER PARADE & FUN FAIR** - Apr. 8, 10am-3pm, at Great Overland Station and on North Kansas Avenue. Topeka's annual Easter Parade will begin at 10am at Garfield Park and proceed south on Kansas Avenue to the tracks in NOTO. Egg Hunt begins right after the parade at the Great Overland Station. Food Trucks will be on hand and the Family Fun Fair, Vendor Market, and Health Fair will be 10-3, inside and outside Great Overland Station, including vendor booths, children's games, food, facepainting, pony rides, cake walk and more. Live music, gymnastics, ballet and other entertainment will be on hand. For info: Topeka Easter Parade on facebook,

# 61ST ANNUAL KANSAS PRAYER BREAKFAST

With Leaders in Government, Business, Education, and Industry in Kansas

March 7, 2023 - 7:00 AM CST  
Doors Open At 6:30 AM For Breakfast

**Tuesday, March 7**  
**Fellowship Bible Church**  
**6800 SW 10th Avenue**

Doors open 6:30 a.m. for Breakfast  
Program begins at 7:00 a.m.

Register for \$20 in-person  
or  
Virtual attendance at no cost  
at

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

Sponsored by Topeka Fellowship, Inc.

## Guest Speaker: Herbie Newell

Herbie Newell is the President/Executive Director of Lifeline Children's Services and its ministry arms including (un)adopted, Crossings, Families Count and Lifeline Village. Herbie holds a Master's degree in Business/Accounting from Samford University.

He joined the Lifeline team in 2003 as Executive Director. Under Herbie's leadership, Lifeline has increased the international outreach to 25 countries, grown into 17 states, attained membership with ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability), begun an extensive foster care ministry, achieved accreditation internationally under The Hague Treaty, and started its (un)adopted strategic orphan care ministries in over 10 countries.

Herbie speaks nationally at conferences and events, and regularly preaches throughout the world on Gospel-driven justice.

Herbie is the author of the book "Image Bearers." He and his wife, Ashley, live in Birmingham, Alabama and are parents to a son, Caleb, and daughters Adelynn and Emily.





## Awaking from 12 years in a “vegetative state,” man says “I was aware of everything”

Trapped in a body and unable to respond, Martin Pistorius awoke to tell shocked doctors and family he was aware of every minute, including unspeakable abuse while in his “vegetative state.”

In the 1980’s, 12-year-old Martin Pistorius became seriously ill with what doctor’s believed was Cryptococci Meningitis. His health started deteriorating and Martin lost his ability to move, make eye contact and even speak to others. His doctors told his parents, Rodney and Joan Pistorious, to bring him home and let him die. They told them he was as good as a vegetable.

However, he didn’t die.

Joan said, “Martin just kept going, just kept going.”

According to NPR news, his father would get up at 5 o’clock in the morning, get him dressed, load him in the car, take him to the special care center where he’d leave him. Rodney said, “Eight hours later, I’d pick him up, bathe him, feed him, put him in bed, set my alarm for two hours so that I’d wake up to turn him so that he



didn’t get bedsores.”

For twelve years, Martin’s family cared for him without any sign that he was improving. Joan started to despair and even told her son, “I hope you die.”

Today she acknowledges that was a horrible thing to say but says she just wanted some sort of relief. Remarkably, now Martin is 39-years-old and says he was totally aware of everything going on around him.

He said, “Yes, I was there, not

from the very beginning, but about two years into my vegetative state, I began to wake up. I was aware of everything, just like any normal person. Everyone was so used to me not being there that they didn’t notice when I began to be present again. The stark reality hit me that I was going to spend the rest of my life like that — totally alone.”

Unfortunately, Martin was even aware of his mother’s harsh words and began believing that no one would ever love him. He said, “You

don’t really think about anything. You simply exist. It’s a very dark place to find yourself because, in a sense, you are allowing yourself to vanish.”

Martin spent most of those days at a care center where his caregivers played Barney reruns over and over again. They did this because they believed he was a vegetable too. He said, “I cannot even express to you how much I hated Barney.”

He shares how, for 10 years as a minor and into adulthood, with the caregivers and the others at the facilities thinking he was unresponsive and unaware, he was sexually abused.

Eventually, Martin became frustrated with being trapped in his own body and started to try and take control of his life. He learned to tell time by the rising and setting of the sun and would reframe even the ugliest of thoughts that haunted him like his mother’s wish for him to die. “As time passed, I gradually learned to understand my mother’s desperation. Every time she looked at me, she could

see only a cruel parody of the once-healthy child she had loved so much,” said Martin.

Now Martin is married and has penned a memoir about his life. He has gained control of his body and in his book *Ghost Boy*, he writes, “My mind was trapped inside a useless body, my arms and legs weren’t mine to control and my voice was mute. I couldn’t make a sign or sounds to let anyone know I’d become aware again. I was invisible—the ghost boy.”

He shared his story in Kansas City during a TEDx Talk several years ago.

Martin’s survival is a testament to how little we actually know about the human brain and a good reminder that we should value all life— even when we hear the terrifying words “your loved one is a vegetable” or in a “vegetative state” from a medical professional.

To hear how Martin returned to life, watch his TEDx Talk below or listen to the podcast at NPR.org and on iTunes.

—Sarah Zagorski | LifeSiteNews / Used in partnership

## Democrats vote to deny medical treatment to babies who survive abortion

The Republican House passed a bill that would require health providers to protect infants born alive after an attempted abortion. The vote tally saw 210 of 212 Democrats vote against it while all voting Republicans supported it.

Rep. Ann Wagner of Missouri, who introduced the bill, celebrated its passing following a yearslong effort. She touted how the legislation will “ensure that every single baby born in the United States receives lifesaving medical care at their most vulnerable moment,” “The Daily Wire” reported.

The bill, called the “Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act,” establishes that health-care practitioners who do not reasonably act to “preserve the life and health of the child” after an attempted abortion as they would any newborn face fines or up to five years imprisonment. The bill also outlines civil remedies for the

mother of an abortion survivor.

While federal law does provide protections for babies born after botched abortions, the measure would specifically require health-care practitioners to treat such babies like “any newborn, or for any person who comes to a hospital, clinic, or other facility for screening and treatment or otherwise becomes a patient within its care.”

Republicans and their supporters championed the legislation as instrumental in guaranteeing lifesaving care to newborns while Democrats and pro-abortion groups generally cast the bill as an attack on women’s reproductive rights and unnecessary because it is already illegal to kill infants who are born alive.

One Democrat, Rep. Henry Cuellar of Texas, joined all voting GOP lawmakers to support the legislation. Despite the victory for Republicans in the House, however,

the legislation likely won’t get far in the Democratic-led Senate.

Senior Democratic lawmakers took to Twitter to criticize the Republicans who supported the “extreme” bill. Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and Vice President Kamala Harris were among those who responded.

“Today, instead of joining Democrats to condemn all political violence, [House Republicans] chose to push their extreme anti-choice agenda,” Pelosi tweeted. “Democrats believe everyone deserves the freedom to access reproductive health services — without fear of violence, intimidation or harassment.”

Democrat House Minority



Leader Hakeem Jeffries, who replaced Nancy Pelosi after she stepped down from the role last year, complained the bill to protect babies born alive after failed abortions was part of “a march towards criminalizing abortion care, a nationwide ban.”

However, pro-life leaders celebrated the news.

“This reasonable legislation would protect a baby born alive following an abortion,” said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life. “This bill isn’t about interfering with a so-called right to abortion. It is about stopping infanticide. Congress must act now to pass this legislation and protect these vulnerable babies.”

# 'Friends' Star Matthew Perry's Powerful, Healing Encounter with God

"Friends" star Matthew Perry shocked the world recently when he opened up about his years-long battle with heavy drugs and alcohol, but now new details about his road to recovery reveal that it was a heartfelt prayer to God that played a key role in finally freeing him from his addictions.

Perry is famously known for playing Chandler Bing on the hit NBC show. Bing was sarcastic, charming, and always up for a good time, and while Perry was able to deliver on-camera, behind the scenes he lived a torturous battle of heavy addiction.

"By the time I was 18, I was drinking every day. At that time I was drinking out with friends, a lot, and then at 1:45 I would say 'I'm going to go home' and I would race across town to a liquor store, buy a bottle of vodka, and drink as much as I had with the other guys that night," he told Diane Sawyer in a Nightline interview.

Perry tried to hide his spiraling addiction from friends, family, and coworkers, for many years. Then, one day, he was confronted by co-star Jennifer Aniston.

"Imagine how scary that was," he said. "And I said, 'How? I thought I was hiding it so well.' And she said, 'We can smell it on you.' But I wasn't in a position to stop because that is what addiction is, but she was the one to reach out the most."

"I'm really grateful to her for that," he added.

In his memoir, Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing, Perry believes he blacked out a few times because he doesn't remember filming some scenes.

He recounts that at one point he was taking as many as 55 Vicodin pills a day.

"I was in a dark room, meeting with nothing but drug dealers and completely alone, for months," he shared. "Addiction is an obsession of your mind [that says] now give me everything you gave me before and more."

Addiction took his health—rotting the top row of his teeth.

It took his money—nearly \$9 million in rehab and recovery programs.

And it nearly took his life.

An opioid overdose led to a burst colon and an extended hospital stay, the Daily Citizen reports.

"I was given a 2 percent chance to survive the night," Perry told HBO's Bill Maher. "They didn't tell me that,



obviously, because I wasn't really there, but they told my family. And I was put on a thing called an ECMO [Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation] machine. ... They call that a hail Mary. ... Five people were on ECMO that night, and the other four died, and I somehow made it."

According to Perry's memoir, his addiction added up to 14 stints in rehab, 15 stomach surgeries, and more than 60 attempts at detox.

But nothing changed for Perry until he had a powerful encounter with God.

"God, please help me," I whispered. 'Show me that you are here. God, please help me,'" he recounts in his memoir.

He continued, "As I kneeled, the light slowly began to get bigger, and bigger until it was so big that it en-

compassed the entire room...What was happening? And why was I starting to feel better?"

"I started to cry," he explained. "I mean, I really started to cry – that shoulder-shaking kind of uncontrollable weeping. I wasn't crying because I was sad. I was crying because, for the first time in my life, I felt OK. I felt safe, taken care of. Decades of struggling with God, and wrestling with life, and sadness, all was being washed away, like a river of pain gone into oblivion."

"I had been in the presence of God. I was certain of it. And this time I had prayed for the right thing: help," Perry said.

Perry credits that encounter with God as the reason he stayed sober for the next two years.

"God had shown me a sliver of

what life could be. He had saved me that day, and for all days, no matter what. He had turned me into a seeker, not only of sobriety, and truth but also of him," Perry wrote.

Christian Prophet Shawn Bolz, the founder of Bolz Ministries, often covers connections between faith and the entertainment industry.

Bolz shared in a recent podcast that he is excited to see what God is going to do in Perry's life.

"Wow, what a story," he said. "You think of a person like Matthew Perry, who has gone through so much publicly...and now God is operating in Him."

He added, "Once you realize you are saved...once you realize what God did for you, you spend your life in that give-back (giving back to charities, ministries, and organizations)...which is so beautiful."

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# Drink up in 2023: Coffee and tea can be part of healthy diet

Many people are making resolutions to live healthier lifestyles in 2023. The good news is that giving up coffee or tea doesn't need to be one of them. "They're actually both incredibly good for you," Dr. Steven Gundry says.

The biggest reason is that both coffee and tea are loaded with plant compounds called polyphenols.

"Those polyphenols are eaten by our gut bacteria; they're pre-biotics," Gundry said. "Polyphenols may be one of the keys to having a great gut microbiome. And Hippocrates, 2,500 years ago, the father of medicine, said, 'All disease begins in the gut.' And quite frankly, I believe that all disease begins and ends in the gut."

Research shows polyphenols



help prevent cancer and feed mitochondria, the energy-producing organelles in cells. Coffee generally contains more polyphenols than tea, but the polyphenol content in

coffee varies according to the way it's roasted.

"The light roast or the medium roast have the most benefits in terms of polyphenols," he said.

"The darker roasts, like French roast, that darkening process, that dark roasting process, virtually eliminates most of the beneficial polyphenols. In fact, one very large national brand, because of their dark roasting, virtually has no polyphenols in their coffee.

After coffee, for the most part, the highest polyphenol concentration is found in green tea, followed by black tea. It's generally healthier if nothing is added to these drinks. "If you put any milk-based product like half-and-half, like plain old milk, it completely binds with the polyphenols in both tea and coffee and makes them pretty worthless for you."

When it comes to sweetening beverages, Gundry advises avoiding

pretty much every sweetener. "Well sugar, as most folks are beginning to realize, is one of the biggest health hazards there is, and that includes even fake sugars," he said.

Natural ones, such as organic honey and sugar, can raise insulin levels and lead to weight gain. Artificial sweeteners, such as aspartame and sucralose, can contribute to an unhealthy gut microbiome and increase sugar cravings.

Too much caffeine can interfere with a good night's sleep. So depending on the time of day, sometimes tea is the better choice. Black tea has more caffeine than green. "I have three cups of coffee in the morning," Gundry said "And then I switch over to tea and I have about five cups of tea."

## Sexual orientation challenge to Christian schools dismissed by judge



A federal judge recently dismissed a case that could have forced a coalition of Christian schools to abandon their biblical beliefs on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The high-profile lawsuit was filed in 2021 by a group of LGBT students and asked the court to overturn a government religious exemption received by such schools. Under current federal rules, religious institutions can be exempt from Title IX, a 1972 law that prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities. The Biden ad-

ministration interprets Title IX as also banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The lawsuit asked the federal court to declare the Title IX religious exemption clause unconstitutional, which would have forced faith-based institutions to choose between their biblical beliefs and federal tuition assistance for students.

The Biden Department of Education split with LGBT allies in asking the court to dismiss the case. A faith-based coalition — Corban University, William Jessup

University, Phoenix Seminary and the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities — made a similar request.

U.S. District Judge Ann Aiken sided with the Christian schools in dismissing the suit.

"The establishment clause prohibits the government from compelling an individual to participate in religion or its exercise, or otherwise from taking action that has the purpose or effect of promoting religion or a particular religious faith," she wrote. "While this clause forbids the government from advancing religion, the Supreme Court has interpreted it to allow, and sometimes require, the accommodation of religious practices."

The Christian schools had argued in a 2021 court filing that a victory by the LGBT students would harm students who rely on federal funding to attend.

"If religious schools were no longer eligible for a religious exemption under Title IX, the loss of enrollment and federal funding would severely threaten their insti-

tutions and limit their students' ability to attend the school of their choice," the motion said.

Alliance Defending Freedom, which represented the Christian schools, applauded the judge's ruling.

"Title IX, which applies to schools receiving federal financial assistance, explicitly protects the freedom of religious schools to live

out their deeply and sincerely held convictions," senior counsel David Cortman said. "A group of activists asked the court to strip that protection away from schools that educate the next generation and advance the common good. The court correctly concluded that Title IX's religious liberty exemption doesn't violate any of the plaintiffs' claimed rights."



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# 5 Healthy Habits for Your Home

If you're like most Americans, health is an important aspect of your resolutions when each new year rolls around. While factors like diet and exercise are keys to healthy living, so are the ways you care for your home and belongings.

Your home living environment plays a major role in your health and comfort, so incorporating some new habits like these from the cleaning experts at Swash Laundry Detergent can help you establish a healthier lifestyle.

## Control Air Quality

Especially during the winter months when your home tends to be closed tight, air can grow stale. Do your best to keep air quality strong by opening windows on mild days to circulate fresh air, using an air purifier to remove irritants and pollutants, frequently vacuuming and sweeping to keep floor dust and debris under control and regularly cleaning textiles that can trap allergens and other particles.

## Scale Back Detergent Use

Using too much laundry detergent isn't just risking buildup and unnecessary wear on your washer and dryer; it can also increase the residue and buildup in your clothes, which can lead to skin irritation and damage fabric faster. Using only what you need

helps protect your belongings and your skin. An option like Swash Laundry Detergent, which features a Precision Pour Cap, dispenses the detergent for you, so you only pour what you need to effectively clean each load and fight stains. A single bottle of the ultra-concentrated formula – available in Simply Sunrise, Free & Clear and Pure Linen scents – washes up to 83 loads while taking up less space than traditional, bulky detergent bottles.

## Make Use of Natural Light

When winter brings day after day of dark, dreary weather, it can take a toll on your mood. Brightening your living space with natural light can positively influence your emotional state while helping with your electric bill. If you're concerned about privacy, utilize



window treatments at night, but let the sunlight bring good cheer to your living spaces during the day.

## Switch Bedding on Schedule

While you sleep, your body sheds oils, cells and elements you carry into your home like pollen. Sheets should be washed once a week on the hottest water setting your fabric will tolerate (check tags for laundering directions on your sheets before washing). If your schedule makes weekly washing, drying and remaking the bed unrealistic, consider having a couple sets you can rotate so you always have fresh, clean sheets waiting to remake your bed on laundry day.

## Work Up (and Wash Out) a Sweat

The materials that keep you feeling cool and fresh by wicking away sweat can quickly get stinky, but over-washing can make them lose their shape and fade. Even so, washing after every use is a must. Washing workout clothes inside out exposes the surfaces that have absorbed sweat and body oil to detergent and agitation. Be sure to close zippers, buttons, clasps and other fasteners to prevent snags. Pre-soaking with equal parts vinegar and cold water can also help eliminate odors, and washing in a gentle, cold-water cycle and drying on low heat can help protect the fabric's elasticity and wicking properties.

Start your year off right with more advice for healthy habits around the home at Swash.com.

– Family Features

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# entertainment

## The 10 Best Christian Movies of 2022

By Michael Foust

For fans of faith-based films, 2022 was one of the best years in recent memory.

The veteran duo of Alex and Stephen Kendrick released their first original drama since 2019. Kingdom Story, the company behind I Can Only Imagine, released a documentary about a country music legend.

We got faith-based movies from Sight & Sound, Great American Family and Pure Flix. We got one from Hollywood star Mark Wahlberg. Of course, we got a film from the makers of The Chosen, too.

Following are the 10 best Christian movies of 2022, listed in alphabetical order:

### 1. The Case for Heaven

Journalist Lee Strobel travels the world to investigate near-death experiences and the afterlife. The film includes interviews with Francis Chan, Andrew Palau, John Burke and researcher Sharon Dirckx. We also hear one of the last interviews with the late evangelist Luis Palau. Strobel, a former skeptic of near-death experiences, now says he believes in them. "Even as a Christian," he told Crosswalk, "I was skeptical about near-death experiences initially until I did the research."

### 2. A Christmas ... Present

A woman reaches out to her brother following the tragic death of his wife, only to learn he is doing better than expected. The film stars Candace Cameron Bure as a real estate agent, Maggie, who organizes a Christmas get-together at the home of her brother, Paul, and his daughter. Though grieving, Paul is finding peace in his Christian faith and in the knowledge he will see his wife again. The film was one of 18 original Christmas films that debuted on Hallmark-rival Great American Family this season.

### 3. The Chosen: Season 3 (episodes 1 and 2)

Jesus sends out the disciples two-by-two and encourages them to preach the gospel boldly even though danger is lurking. ("Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.") It includes the first two episodes of Season 3 of The Chosen and explores multiple scenes from Scripture, including the Beatitudes sermon. The film soars in its portrayal of the love and grace practiced within the early church. It was the best faith-based movie of 2022.

### 4. Family Camp

Two polar-opposite families are forced to bond – and to share a yurt – during a

church summer camp. The faith-based comedy stars the comedic duo known as the Skit Guys (Tommy Woodard and Eddie James), who portray the movie's fathers – one who is a workaholic dad and the other who is over-the-top spiritual. It includes lessons about family, forgiveness, reconciliation and work-life balance.

### 5. Father Stu: Reborn

A young boxer who is searching for meaning in life opts to become a priest. The film stars Mark Wahlberg in the lead role and tells the true story of Stuart Long, who won the 1985 Golden Gloves boxing heavyweight title in Montana before dabbling in the entertainment industry and then turning to the priesthood. A motorcycle accident – he was nearly killed – changed the direction of his life. Later, Long developed a rare autoimmune muscle disorder and died at the age of 50. It's a powerful tale of second chances, perseverance and finding purpose amidst trials. Two versions of this film were released: one rated R and the other rated PG-13. (Father Stu: Reborn is the PG-13 version.) Both contain coarse language. Wahlberg said he prayed over the movie "a lot." The movie, he said, "was my calling."

### 6. 5000 Blankets

A wife is inspired to collect blankets for the homeless after her husband, who suffers from mental illness, goes missing on the streets. The film is based on the true story of Cyndi Bunch and her young son Phillip, who launched a homeless ministry (Phillip's Wish) in Fort Worth, Texas after the subject was personalized and they saw a need. It stars Anna Camp (The Help, Pitch Perfect) and Carson Minniear (Palmer), both of whom are excellent and believable. 5000 Blankets includes solid messages about love, compassion and overcoming tragedy.

### 7. I Heard the Bells

A father writes one of the most famous Christmas carols in American history in the wake of a personal tragedy. The film tells the story of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who penned I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day (and also Paul Revere's Ride). Though grieving, Longfellow found strength in his Christian faith. It is the first movie by Sight & Sound Films, a company launched by Sight & Sound Theatres. The goal of Sight & Sound films, director Josh Enck told Crosswalk, is to "portray the stories of figures and events from history that changed the world because Christ first changed them."

The movie includes a powerful message about finding hope and purpose in the midst of loss.

### 8. Johnny Cash: The Redemption of an American Icon

The Christian faith of the "Man in Black" is explored in this documentary, which includes interviews with family members such as son John Carter Cash and sister Joanne Cash Yates. It also includes interviews with Marty Stuart, Wynonna Judd, Jimmie Allen, Alice Cooper, Greg Laurie, Sheryl Crow and Tim McGraw. For Cash, faith "was just what was most important to him," his son John Carter Cash said. It's the best faith-based documentary of the year.

### 9. Lifemark

The world of a high school teenager gets rocked when his birth mom contacts him, wanting to meet. It's based on a true story and was produced by the same faith-based filmmakers – Alex and Stephen Kendrick – who made War Room, Courageous and Overcomer. The film stars Kirk Cameron, Dawn Long, Rebecca Rogers and Marisa Lynae Hampton. Newcomer Raphael Ruggero is excellent in the lead role. It's one of the best life-affirming films ever made. "We're hoping it will not only save a lot of lives, but we're hoping that it will inspire a lot of believers to support adoption in their local communities," producer Stephen Kendrick said.

### 10. Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters

A business-focused father faces a crisis when his future business partner – his adult daughter – declares she's getting married and moving away. The movie is based on the book of the same name by Meg Meeker and includes echoes of the classic film Father of the Bride (1991). This hilarious comedy includes solid messages about fatherhood, family and love. It includes Hallmark-like "feels" and debuted on Pure Flix, the faith-based streaming platform that has seen its library grow since being purchased by Sony (which owns the faith-centric Affirm Films). It stars Bart Johnson (JAG, High School Musical), Robyn Lively (9-1-1: Lone Star) and Maria Canals-Barrera (Wizards of Waverly Place).

**Also worth watching:** The Mulligan, It's Christmas Again, Why The Nativity? and Patterns of Evidence: Journey to Mount Sinai.

## 3 Things to Know about Dog Gone, Netflix's New Family Movie



By Michael Foust

Fielding is a recent college graduate who is searching for direction in life.

His best friend has a job. His other friends do, too. Fielding, though, doesn't yet know what career he wants to pursue. To make matters worse, his girlfriend just dumped him.

Sad and lonely, Fielding gets a dog, naming it "Gonker."

They instantly bond. He sleeps with Gonker. He exercises with Gonker. As he later says, Gonker is the best friend he has ever had.

But then Gonker goes missing on the Appalachian Trail, running away as the two hike near the home of Fielding's parents.

"I promise you we will find that dog," Fielding's dad says, knowing its importance in his son's life.

The father-son team set out on a quest down the Appalachian Trail to search for Gonker.

It's part of the new Netflix family-centric film Dog Gone (TV-PG), which stars Rob Lowe as Fielding's father, Kimberly Williams-Paisley as his mother and Johnny Berchtold as Fielding.

Here are three things you should know:

### 1. It's Based on a True Story

The film is based on a book of the same name by author Pauls Toutonghi, who recounted the real-life story of a young man named Fielding Marshall who, in 1991, was battling an "oceanic wave of sadness" – his young daughter had died, and his girlfriend had left him – by getting a dog he named "Gonker." Each morning, the dog helped brighten his day.

Although the film changes a few less-important parts of the plot, the core of the story is true. Gonker suffered from Addison's disease, an adrenal imbalance that requires monthly injections. (In the film, Fielding is racing against the clock to find his dog.) Like the film, Gonker

went missing on the Appalachian Trail during a hike with Fielding. Another major part of the story also is true: Fielding hiked the trail with his father in search of Gonker, with his mother running a "command center" back home. By the time they found him, Gonker had walked 111 miles in 15 days, according to The New York Post.

### 2. It Spotlights Family, Love and Reconciliation

The film follows two tracks: Fielding's search for Gonker and Fielding's search for direction in life. At the beginning of the movie, Fielding graduates from college with little idea of what career to pursue and with little interest in rushing out into the world. (He even oversleeps and misses his graduation.) His place in life contrasts with that of his friends and his father, a career-driven man.

"He hasn't found his path yet," his mother says.

Fielding's father is frustrated with and embarrassed by his son but nevertheless agrees to walk the Appalachian Trail, fully believing the two will be successful in their venture. Fielding, for his part, wants his dad to love him the same way Gonker does.

It is only by watching Fielding interact with strangers on the trail – he is always kind – and by watching Fielding's devotion to Gonker that the dad learns better to appreciate his son.

### 3. It Reminds Us of the Wonders of Pets

Dogs, and pets in general, are one of God's great blessings. When we lovingly care for our canines – or, if you prefer, our cats – we are following God's will in caring for and tending to His creation. (Psalm 147:9 reminds us that God "provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.")

Dog Gone isn't a faith-based film, but

■ Continued on next page





## Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" sequel to begin filming

Actor Mel Gibson is expected to begin filming the sequel to his 2004 film "The Passion of the Christ" this year. "A late spring production is currently being eyed, with Jim Caviezel set to return in the role of Jesus," film journalist Jordan Ruimy wrote on his WorldofReel.com blog. "It's been a long time coming."

The entertainment website IMBD.com lists "The Passion of the Christ: Resurrection" as scheduled for a 2024 release.

In a recent interview, Caviezel revealed work is in progress on the highly ambitious sequel. "Mel Gibson just sent me the third picture, the third draft," he said. "It's coming. It's going to be the biggest film in world history."

Caviezel also teased the project in 2020 during an interview with Breitbart when he said, "Mel Gibson just sent me the third picture, the third draft."

"It's called 'The Passion of the Christ: Resurrection.' It's going to be the biggest film in world history," Caviezel said.

The original film remains the top-grossing Christian-themed movie of all time and ranked No. 1 at the box office for four weekends in 2004. It grossed \$370 million domestically and followed the story of Jesus' final hours before his crucifixion.

"Gibson has been hard at work on the screenplay with 'Braveheart' screenwriter Randall Wallace — there have already been six drafts," Ruimy wrote. "Resurrec-

tion' would focus on the 24 hours encompassing Jesus' passion and the events that occurred three days between his crucifixion and resurrection."

"The Passion of the Christ" received Oscar nominations for cinematography, original score and makeup. It was rated R for sequences of graphic violence. Gibson said the 2004 movie was a spiritual experience for him. He felt led by God to make it, he said. It brought in more than \$600 million with a production budget of just \$30 million.

"Couple years back, I was looking out a window, wondering why I shouldn't jump," Gibson said in an earlier interview. "Life had no meaning. It was boring. Purposeless. That's when I turned to him. That's when my relationship with Christ really started growing. I was a bad guy... a really horrible guy. My sins were the first to nail him to the cross. I wanted to tell his story."

His "passion" for Passion remains as strong as ever.

Gibson told USA Today that he was trying to find a way to make a movie about the resurrection interesting, and drew upon more than just the days immediately after the tomb was discovered empty. "The Resurrection. Big subject. Oh, my God," he said. "We're trying to craft this in a way that's cinematically compelling and enlightening so that it shines new light, if possible, without creating some weird thing."

## 4 Things Parents Should Know About Avatar: The Way of Water

By Michael Foust

Jake Sully is a loving father and husband who has experienced the best of everything the universe has to offer.

He grew up on 22nd-century Earth, the home of his twin brother, Tommy, and the parents who shaped him for life.

Then he moved to Pandora, a distant moon around a distant star, where he fell in love with and married a bluish native woman, Neytiri, the mother of his children.

Life couldn't be better. Family life is so enjoyable, he says, that it seems "like a dream."

But Jake's peaceful life soon gets interrupted. It seems Earth's resources are depleted, and its population is crowded. The people of Earth need a new home, and they've sent an army to tame the natives of Pandora. Even worse: Jake is a wanted man by the army.

Will he and his family survive?

The new film *Avatar: The Way of Water* (PG-13) tells the story of Jake and his family. It stars Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Sigourney Weaver and Kate Winslet. It was written and directed by James Cameron.

Here are four things parents should know about the film:

### 1. IT'S A SEQUEL TO A 2009 BLOCKBUSTER

*Way of the Water* is a sequel to the 2009 movie *Avatar*, which also was written and directed by Cameron and became the highest-grossing film in the U.S. It supplanted *Titanic* at No. 1, yet since has been passed by several movies and sits at No. 4 on the all-time domestic charts — although *Avatar* remains the top-grossing movie in worldwide gross (at \$2.9 billion).

The 2009 version of *Avatar* told the futuristic story of a (human) Marine, Jake Sully, who is sent to the moon Pandora in the Alpha Centauri star system in order to help mine a valuable mineral, unobtainium. Sully, though, becomes torn between fulfilling his mission and protecting the blue people of Pandora (the Na'vi). Toward the end of the film, Jake ceases to be human and becomes a Na'vi. (If you're curious, the Na'vi use a magical plant called the "Tree of Souls" to accomplish this.)

*Avatar* received high praise from critics who applauded what was — for the time — groundbreaking motion capture effects and CGI animation.

The *Way of Water* begins 10 years after the 2009 film.

### 2. IT'S ALL ABOUT NATURE ... AND WORLDVIEWS

The native people of Pandora consider nature their equal. They worship nature.



They communicate with nature. They receive their energy from it.

In one scene, a Na'vi pregnant woman talks to a pregnant whale-like sea creature, exchanging stories and wishing each other well. In another scene, an underwater creature saves the life of a Na'vi teen who seemingly had died drowning. In still another scene, a Na'vi girl "controls" an underwater plant with her mind, turning it into a weapon against the enemy. We also hear a Na'vi woman pray to nature itself. ("Mother help us," she prays to the nature god, named "Eywa.") As one Na'vi native tells another one: "The way of water has no beginning and no end. The sea is around you and in you. The sea is your home before your birth and after your death. The sea gives, and the sea takes. Water connects all things — life to death and darkness to light."

We're even told that sea creatures are smarter than us, more emotional than us, and more spiritual than us. (This is partially because they have more brain neurons, a scientist says.)

The worldview of the Na'vi slams into the worldview of the invading humans, who not only want a new planet ("Earth is dying. Our task here is to tame this frontier," a general says) but also are hunting for a rare anti-aging chemical that is found only in a gland of massive underwater creatures (one jar is valued at \$80 million).

In the real world, theologians label the unbiblical worldview of *Avatar* a cross between animism (the belief that everything has a soul or spirit) and pantheism (the belief that everyone and everything is God).

By comparison, the Bible teaches that there is but one God. He created everything and is over everything. We are to worship the Creator, not the creation (Romans 1:25).

### 3. IT'S ALL ABOUT FAMILY

Family is a major theme of *The Way of Water*. In the film's opening moments, Jake Sully explains how he and his wife, Neytiri, had two biological boys (Neteyam and Lo'ak), a biological daughter (Tuk) and adopted a daughter, Kiri. We watch the kids play with each other and with their parents. Alas, he says, time with his children "goes by too fast." (It's "like a dream.") Happiness, he says, is tak-

ing a "date night" with his wife and getting away from the kids. (We see them flying on a massive winged creature at night, laughing and chatting.)

Jake's peaceful life, though, is transformed when humans again invade Pandora and the film's antagonist — an avatar clone of a dead man named Quaritch — targets Jake. For the rest of the film, Jake is on the run from Quaritch. Yet wherever he goes, his family travels with him — largely so he can protect them. (This includes a lengthy hideaway across the sea to live with a different tribe of Na'vi who reside along the reefs and are more green than blue.)

"This family is our fortress," Jake says. Jake views himself as the family's defender.

"A father protects," he says twice in the film. "It's what gives him meaning."

### 4. IT ISN'T KID-FRIENDLY

The people of Pandora may be smart, but they aren't modest. Men and women wear loincloths that leave their backsides exposed. (Na'vi, of course, also have tails.) The women drape jewelry around their necks to cover their chests, although it often falls short of its goal. *The Way of the Water* may be free of sexuality — there are no bedroom scenes — but it has plenty of (blue computerized) nudity.

It has a moderate amount of coarse language (details below) and a considerable amount of violence, with multiple explosions and gun battles (including automatic weapons). We see people killed via arrows to the head and heart. We see another man stabbed. Teens punch and fight. A whale-like female sea creature is separated from her calf and poached. A man's arm is ripped off from his body. (We see it fly through the air.) A Na'vi teenage boy dies.

Then there's the movie's length. At roughly three hours, it surpasses the bladder limit of every child I know.

No doubt, you could have cut about 30-45 minutes from the film and maintained the exact same plot. On the other hand, you would have lost many of the underwater visuals that make the film so fun.

*The Way of Water* is a visual delight, with colorful, other-worldly sea creatures often filling every inch of the screen and natives swimming along in peaceful bliss. The final 45 minutes of the film make it worth the wait.

Some people say *The Way of Water* is better than the first *Avatar*. They're probably right.

Rated PG-13 for sequences of strong violence and intense action, partial nudity and some strong language. Entertainment rating: 3.5 out of 5 stars.

### Continued from previous page

it nevertheless reflects biblical principles. Fielding takes action when he learns that an animal shelter may be abusing its pets. He displays impressive devotion when Gonker goes missing, not wanting his domesticated companion to become a victim to wolves. The film also reminds us that much "good" can come from the trials of life. (By searching for Gonker, a community comes together, and a family grows closer.)

It includes multiple lessons for parents: 1) Practice grace and patience as your teenagers enter into adulthood, 2) focus on their positive traits, not their negative ones and 3) don't let the "rat race" of life distract you from enjoying your family.

Rated TV-PG. Entertainment rating: 4 out of 5 stars. Family-friendly rating: 3.5 out of 5 stars

# 50+ Lifestyles

## A Guide to Enjoying Life in the Best Years

### What does It Mean to Be Happy?

The truth is, you don't have to be rich or famous to be happy. True happiness comes from the positive choices you make in your daily life.

Give your own happiness a boost by adopting these healthy habits:

**1. Connect with family and friends.** Keep in touch with people who make you feel valued and supported. Build connections by taking a class, joining a support group or getting in-

involved in the community.

**2. Get regular physical activity.** Being active helps reduce anger, anxiety and depression. It also enhances feelings of well-being.

**3. Pursue hobbies and fun activities.** They take your mind off problems. Plus, some give you a chance to exercise your creativity.

**4. Lend a hand to those in need.** Helping others adds a sense of purpose to your life. You might bring lunch to a sick

friend or volunteer to help at a community event.

**5. Maintain a positive attitude.** You don't have to deny the problems in your life. But try to look for a silver lining. For example, perhaps a serious illness made you stronger or brought you closer to your family.

**6. Use humor to lighten things up.** It's nearly impossible to feel cranky, worried or blue while you're laughing.

—Blue Cross and Blue Shield



### Heart Healthy Tips for Longer Life



February is American Heart Month. Although cardiovascular disease remains the number one cause of death and disability in the United States, there are a number of things you can do to keep your heart healthy and reduce your risk of heart disease.

#### Eat Right

Healthy food habits can help you reduce three of the major risk factors for heart attack: high cholesterol, high blood pressure and excess body weight. The best way to help lower your blood cholesterol level is to eat less saturated fat, avoid cholesterol and control your

weight. Here are some other nutrition tips:

- Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables and grain products, especially whole grains.
- Consume fat-free and low-fat dairy products, fish, beans, skinless poultry and lean meats.
- Limit foods high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.
- Eat less than 6 grams of salt a day.
- Have no more than one alcoholic drink (no more than 1/2 ounce of pure alcohol) per day if you're a woman and no more than two drinks if you're a man.

#### Be Active

Physical activity is good for your entire body, especially your heart. While getting into a regular exercise routine is great, there are a number of quick ways to easily add more physical activity into your days:

- Take the stairs Get in the habit of taking the stairs instead of the elevator. If you are going to a high floor, take the elevator part of the way – either walk up a few flights and then catch the elevator, or get off early and walk the rest of the way.
- Go for a walk Even a short walk around the block or through your office can help get your heart rate up and invigorate your body.
- Clean the house Vacuuming, dusting and even doing laundry gets you up and moving around.
- Garden Raking leaves, mowing the lawn and pruning plants all get you outside and active.
- Shop When running errands or going to the mall, park farther away and walk the extra distance. Wear your walking shoes and take an extra lap or two around the mall.
- Talk on the phone Stand up while talking on the phone or, bet-

ter yet, walk around when using a cordless or cellular phone.

- Play Play and recreation are important for good health. Look for opportunities to be active and have fun at the same time.
- Find a buddy For many, it is easier to be active with a partner. Make a date with a friend to enjoy your favorite physical activities and

try to get into a regular routine of being active together.

- Go dancing Both fun and physical, dancing is a great way to enjoy moving and grooving.
- These are just a handful of the many simple ways you can increase the physical activity in your daily routine. The trick is to be creative and consistent.

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# New Toolbox Aimed at Helping Dementia Caregivers



Being a caregiver to someone with dementia or Alzheimer's is often a full-time job and finding ways to connect can be challenging. Two Midwest entrepreneurs recently launched Connectivities, an innovative memory care toolbox geared at helping caregivers form more meaningful, mindful connections with their loved ones.

Each Connectivities box includes eight activities guiding participants through simple tasks using crafts, puzzles, and games. The activities are designed by a group of educators, a registered nurse, occupational and music therapists to incorporate therapeutic goals, build neuroplasticity, and boost the brain's ability to change, adapt, and make new connections.

"The activities can help start a conversation and meet loved ones where they are today," explained Mandy Shoemaker, co-founder of Connectivities. "Every box is really an invitation for fun, for laughter, and an authentic connection. They create a safe, supportive space that your loved one might need to get up from the TV and try something new."

Connectivities was founded by Mandy Shoemaker and Michala Gibson, who have successfully owned and operated Prairie Elder Care in Overland Park, Kan., a suburb of Kansas City, since 2014. Situated on five acres, the two traditional houses provide opportunities for residents to live in a home-like setting while receiving expert care. Their farmsteads are outfitted with goats, pigs, chickens, and a large garden and workshop for resi-

connect. Someone living with dementia might not remember the activity, but they will remember the feeling they got while doing it."

**National Caregivers Day is Friday, February 17, 2023.** The day honors individuals who selflessly provide personal care, and physical- and emotional support to those who need it most. Connectivities shares these three helpful tips for caregivers:

**1) Communication is Key:** One of the most important things you can do as a dementia or Alzheimer's caregiver is to communicate clearly and effectively with your loved one. Make sure to speak slowly and clearly, using short, simple sentences. Your loved one will need time to process anything you are telling them or asking them to do.

Approach is everything. Your body language and tone may tell your loved one as much as the actual words you are saying. Try to maintain eye contact and use facial expressions and gestures to help communicate your message. If

your loved one is having difficulty communicating, try to find alternate ways to communicate, such as writing down your conversations, using pictures, or even sign language. Breaks are always good too. If they aren't getting it, leave it, and return to the conversation in a few minutes.

**2) Be Patient and Understanding:** Always remember that your person isn't giving you a hard time, they are having a hard time. It is important to be patient and understand that your loved one may not be able to do things the way they used to. Your person is changing, and you are both experiencing grief and loss. Expect that things

will usually not go as planned and be prepared to go with the flow.

**3) Create a Caregiver Support System:** Sometimes, the hardest thing is asking for help. Delegate tasks among family members and friends so that no one person feels overwhelmed. Make sure to schedule regular breaks throughout the day to take a break from caregiving duties.

Needing a break doesn't make you a bad caregiver. You can't pour from an empty vessel, so do what you need to keep your cup at least a little full. Lastly, don't hesitate to reach out to professional organizations or respite care services if you need additional help or support.

dents to use.

"Like many elder care facilities during the pandemic, we were faced with staffing shortages and began searching for ways to keep residents happy and engaged," shared Gibson. "We started creating activity kits and both our staff and residents really took to them. We found it's simply about being able to



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

# sports

## NFL stars stress priorities, relationship with God



### 49ers QB Brock Purdy 'My identity is in Jesus'

NFL quarterback Brock Purdy is crediting his Christian faith for giving him confidence and a heart of gratitude after leading the San Francisco 49ers to the NFC Championship.

Purdy rose to starter in early December, after a series of injuries bumped him up from his initial position as the third-string quarterback. On Sunday, he led San Francisco to a 19-12 victory against the Dallas Cowboys and then into a championship game against the Philadelphia Eagles.

The winner of that game will go to the Super Bowl.

In August 2021, Purdy — who is being touted as a candidate for the NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year Award — told Sports Spectrum his “identity is in Jesus.” The conversation is spreading once again on social media in the wake of the athlete’s spate of victories.

Purdy, 23, shared the faithful revela-

tion after admitting he once elevated football above his relationship with the Lord — a sin for which he sought God’s forgiveness.

“It was just a great reminder of where my identity is, where it lies,” he told Sports Spectrum. “And it’s in Jesus. And I continue to lean on Him. Again, the next day I didn’t go out and throw for 500 yards and was this awesome quarterback, but it was just this peace that I had with Him knowing that, ‘Hey, no matter what, I’m going to face moving forward during college football, God and Jesus are going to be my identity. And whatever I face, I won’t be shaken from it.’ I’ve got a great foundation in Him.”

In his Instagram bio, Purdy describes himself as a “believer in Jesus.”

“The Lord is my rock and I will not be shaken,” he wrote in one Instagram post alongside a picture of himself pointing upward, revealing a white wristband with a black cross on it. “I love you boys and will go to war with y’all time and time again.”

## FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Rob Mooney

We helped my son move to Colorado Springs a few weeks ago as he is preparing to get married out there in March. I towed his small U-Haul trailer with my pickup truck and the trip went well. It was tough leaving him there when we returned home but hey, they’re supposed to leave the house eventually, right?

While we were there we had some down time and I regretted not taking my mountain bike with me because the weather was absolutely gorgeous while we were there. I did, however, contemplate a few cycling excursions that I would like to do in the future.

I have a brother that lives in Westminster and a good friend that lives in Littleton, both suburbs of Denver, so we get out there about once a year to visit. I have biked at Winter Park and Vail and I have biked a greenway trail that went

through Boulder into the foot hills of the Rockies. I have been to Valmont Bike Park in Boulder which is an incredible mountain bike park with lots of fun features.

I’ve only done a little bit of biking in the Colorado Springs area, nothing really to make note of. However, I came across a company that offers cycling trips on Pikes Peak. You’re taken to the top of the mountain, whether by van or by the cog railway and then you descend in a group ride. There are a couple of options. You can ride the road down or there is an option to ride some dirt trails down. I believe the first time I do it I’ll ride the road down. I saw some videos and it looks amazing.

I’ve been to the top of Pikes Peak before and I thought it was an incredible experience, definitely something you should do if you’ve never been. But to

Following the 49ers’ first win after he became quarterback, Purdy said he plays with a sense of “fearlessness.”

“You go out there, you prepare as best you can, you get better every single day at practice, and once you get your opportunity, it’s: What are you going to do with it?” he told reporters in early December.

“For me,” Purdy explained, “I believe in the Lord, and I trust in Him. I just go out there, and I just play.”



### Bills QB Josh Allen describes his 'spiritual awakening'

Immediately following the Buffalo Bills victory over the New England Patriots — the Bills’ first game since safety Damar Hamlin collapsed on the field, and a game that incredibly began with a 96-yard kick-return touchdown for the

Bills — quarterback Josh Allen could only describe the remarkable day as “spiritual.”

“I was just going around to my teammates saying, ‘God’s real.’ You can’t draw that one up, write that one up any better,” he said in his postgame press conference.

Allen expanded on his thoughts when talking to NFL media personality Kyle Brandt.

“I said this in my press conference the other day, [there was] just kind of a spiritual awakening really for me, and I know for a lot of other people that maybe didn’t have the strongest belief, or wasn’t one of the biggest, strongest Christian followers,” Allen said. “To see what’s transpired here, it’s a crazy, crazy feeling. It’s something I’ve never felt before. It’s something I know a lot of my teammates have never felt before. You can’t really do anything but accept it and lean on your brothers and share that moment with them.”

Brandt then replayed Allen’s quote about God from the press conference, to which Allen responded, “I’ve never been struck like that before from a play, from an experience, from an emotion, it’s never hit me that way before. And look, I’ll be the first to admit, I haven’t been the most devoted Christ-follower in my life, and I’ve had my different beliefs and thoughts and ideas and stuff like that, but something got hold of me there, and

ride a bike down Pikes Peak? That is a different level of excitement and something I’m really looking forward to doing.

Another trip I’m going to do is a ride on the Katy trail across the state of Missouri. The trail is around 280 miles and will take several days to accomplish. I’m not one of those guys that can ride 100 miles in a day. We’ll break the trip down and do it over a week’s time, utilizing the local inns and hotels in the little towns that the trail goes through, enjoying every moment of the trip.

Then of course, there’s the mountain bike festival in Bentonville, AR. This year it’s over Memorial Day weekend. Huge Expo, lots of food and give a-ways and of course trails, miles and miles of trails. We’ve gone 2 years in a row now and it’s a great family trip with a little something for everyone. If you’ve ever been to Bentonville to ride, you’ll know what I mean. The self-proclaimed Mountain Bike capitol of the world never ceases to amaze me. It’s like Disneyland for bikers.

See you on the trails!!!

it was extremely powerful, [something] that I couldn’t deny.”

“It’s been so long since I’ve actually been to church. I went this last offseason one or two times, but not as much as maybe I should,” he said. “But again, I think this conversation that we’re having right now, we’ve had all these conversations in our locker room. It’s been really cool to see how guys have been moved and touched by this whole instance and situation, and to see the country come together in support for Damar and maybe having those talks.

“Again, it doesn’t matter what you think and who you think in; I’m not going to judge based on any of that. But to hear some of these stories and just feelings from our guys, to be going through this situation, it’s been really cool to see that unfold in front of us. Again, I can’t chalk it down to anything else but a Higher Power. Yeah, I’m extremely moved. I don’t really have the words to explain it.”

Allen immediately took to Twitter to ask for prayer the night Hamlin went down, and said he’s been grateful for the leadership head coach Sean McDermott has shown during this tough time.

“I think he was the perfect man in that situation and he was placed there for a reason,” Allen told Brandt. “To have a coach that’s open and willing to share how he’s feeling and not afraid to show emotion — that’s something that he’s al-

ways told us. He wants us to be ourselves, he wants us to show our character and be the men we think we are. Again, I have so much respect for him and how he handled the whole situation.”

McDermott has long been an outspoken follower of Christ, and he continued to exhibit his faith in the aftermath of Hamlin's cardiac arrest.

“I'm a Christian man to begin with, and I'm not afraid to say that,” the coach said in a press conference last week, adding, “Glory to God for His keeping Damar and his family in the palm of His hand over the last couple of days and His healing powers.”



### Jalen Hurts leads Eagles; believes 'God is everything'

The 24-year-old — whose banner image on Twitter says “Be who God called you to be” — has been able to keep the individual and team success in perspective by viewing everything through his relationship with God.

“I've just matured and realized that God is everything,” Hurts said, “and He's worthy of praise. You have to put Him at the center of everything that you do. That's what I believe. All my spiritual wisdom — all of my wisdom as a whole — comes from Him, in some way, shape or form, whether that be passed down from my father, my mother, my grandmother. I just think, in all the things that we experience in life — good, bad or indifferent — you have to keep Him in the center.”

During the interview with CBS' Cody Benjamin, Hurts also talked about the impact he wants to make through the wide variety of community outreach efforts he's involved with both in Philadelphia and his hometown of Houston. He said he sees himself in some kind of leadership role when his career ends, whether that's as a coach, in a front office or working with youth in some other capacity.

For now, though, he is the quarterback of a team with Super Bowl aspira-

tions approaching a pivotal point in his young career. The Eagles have not committed to him long term and may explore different quarterback options this offseason, but Hurts isn't going to let speculation about his future prevent him from being himself.

And he's putting everything in God's hands.

“God only made me one way,” he said. “That's to be me. That's to be Jalen Hurts. I think, being in this city, being the quarterback for the Philadelphia Eagles, and just having the opportunity to play the game I love most, in the best city of football, I just go out there every day and I am who I am, and I keep God in the center, I give Him all the praise, I lean on Him all the time, and I know that everything unfolds the way it's supposed to.”



### QB Derek Carr preaches at church, endures struggles with 'absolute peace' in God

This season did not go as Derek Carr and the Las Vegas Raiders envisioned. After a 10-7 season last year that ended in a wild-card round playoff loss to the Cincinnati Bengals, the Raiders stumbled to a 6-11 record in 2022 and missed the playoffs.

Carr was eventually benched in favor of backup Jarrett Stidham for the final two games of the regular season. Though he signed a contract extension last offseason, Carr himself indicated that this might be the end of his time with the Raiders, posting a goodbye message on Twitter.

He acknowledged that his next steps are uncertain, and recently he spoke at ChurchLV in Las Vegas, where he reflected on his time with the Raiders and the work he sees God doing in his life.

“Nine years. One place. It's been hard,” he said. “I always make this joke, I say, ‘Franchises are heavy. Franchises are heavy to carry.’ But aren't we thankful that whatever it is that God has asked you to do that He can be the one to just say, ‘Why don't you just put it in My hands? Why don't you just give it back to Me?’”



Carr, who has been vocal about his faith throughout his career, remained a leader through it all and even used it as a chance to share about forgiveness and his faith in God.

He's also dealt with some family hardship during his career, he shared on Saturday. His son, Dallas, was born with intestinal malrotation, where a baby's intestines don't form into a coil in the abdomen, according to KidsHealth.org. He said his grandfather also went through health struggles, and he wasn't sure either of them would make it through.

“I've gone through some stuff a little bit, and I've found out that nothing can get me down,” he said at ChurchLV. “Nothing can take my feet out from under me. There's nothing that can come against me where I'm not going to win in the end.”

He later added, “And I have walked through these things and these times with an absolute peace and a grace that has covered me.”

In 2022, pressure began to mount as the Raiders were unable to find success under new head coach Josh McDaniels and Carr was unable to put up the same numbers he and the Raiders had grown accustomed to; his 3,522 passing yards were his fewest since 2017. In his message to the church, Carr said it's easy to point fingers and blame others. A lot of people are trying to do that for him, he said, but that's not his message.

“Instead, I said, ‘Lord, what is it that You're trying to reveal to me in this season? Lord, what is it that You're trying to do in my heart in this season?’” he said. “Patience? Forgiveness? Do they deserve it? Doesn't matter. He didn't ask me if they deserve it. That wasn't on the agenda for me. The agenda for me was just ‘forgive.’ The agenda for me was just ‘have peace.’”

A passionate speaker, Carr reportedly almost skipped the NFL altogether to pursue a career in ministry. When his playing days are over, it's possible he could go from behind center to behind the pulpit.

That will have to wait, at least for a lit-

tle bit.

“I once said that if I'm not a Raider, I would rather be at home and I meant that,” he said in his goodbye message. “But I never envisioned it ending this way. That fire burning inside me to win a championship still rages. A fire no man can extinguish; only God. So I look forward to a new city and a new team who, no matter the circumstance, will get everything I have.”

### Patrick Mahomes: I'm Glorifying Him Every Single Time I'm Out There

When Patrick Mahomes led the Kansas City Chiefs to victory over the San Francisco 49ers for their first Super Bowl win in 50 years, he managed to stay humble and direct interviews to a topic he's even more passionate about than football—his faith.

Before departing Kansas City for the game in Miami, he told his local Fox 4 news station that “Faith has always been

big with me,” adding, “Obviously I want to win every game, but I'm glorifying Him every single time I'm out there.”

“As long as I'm doing everything the right way and the way that He would want me to do it, then I can walk off the field with my head held high and be able to be the man that I am,” he explained. “I understand that He's given me a lot of blessings in my life, and I'm trying to maximize them and glorify Him.”

He has often spoken publicly about his faith in God.

“My mom and dad both raised me in the church,” Mahomes once said in a video for Fellowship of Christian Athletes. “Just being able to come up through the church, I built a great relationship with God and I've tried to keep that as I've gotten older. Faith is huge for me.”

“Before every game, I walk the field and I do a prayer at the goalpost. I just thank God for those opportunities and I thank God for letting me be on a stage where I can glorify Him,” Mahomes said in the FCA video. “The biggest thing that I pray for is that whatever happens, win or lose, success or failure, that I'm glorifying Him.”

Mahomes is a man of faith who chose to be baptized in the seventh grade, because he wanted “to become a man in church,” his mom said.

“My faith has always been a big part of what I do,” he said. “... I've grown up in church and [faith] really helps you know why you're playing the game, and who you're doing it for.”

—sportsspectrum.com




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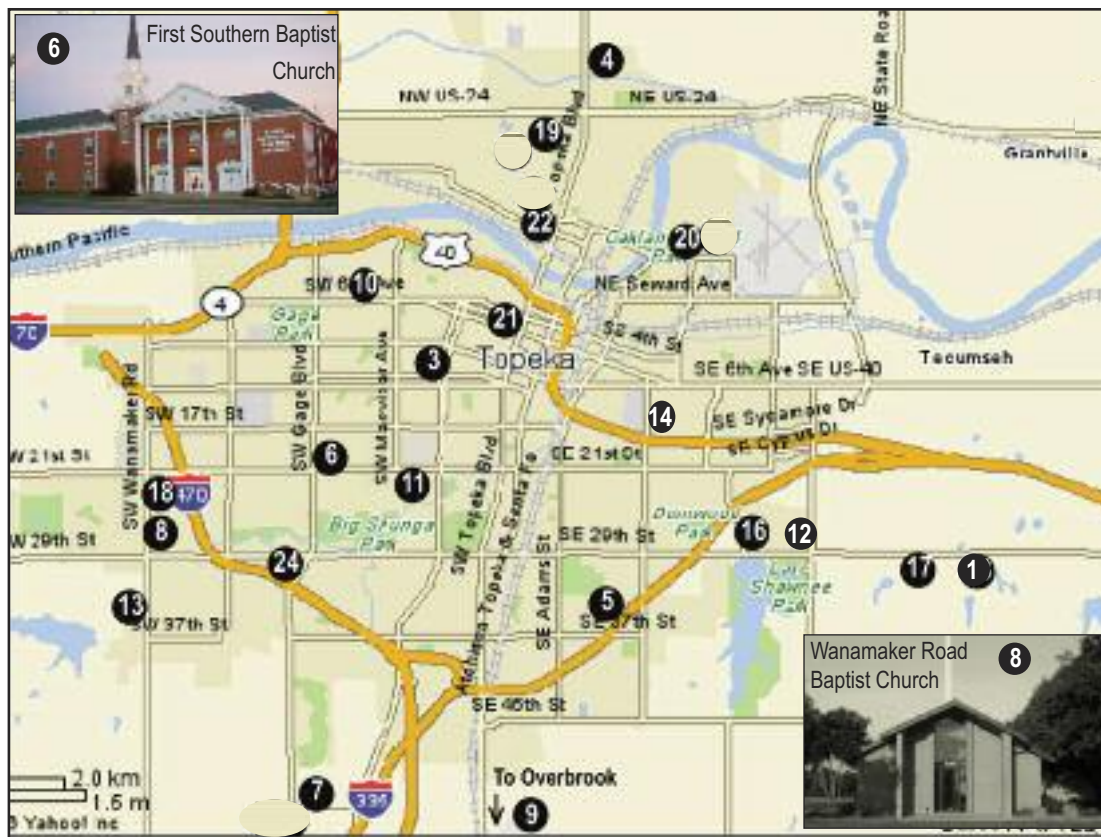
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Sun. Worship: 9am (Hymns) & 11 am  
Children's Worship 9 & 11 am  
Sunday School 10 am, all ages  
Sun. Evening Various Children's Programs  
6 pm Life Groups; 6:30 pm Teen Service  
Wed. 6:30 pm Adult & Teen Life Groups  
Wed. 6:30 pm Kids University  
~ Nursery care at all services ~
- 14. OPEN ARMS OUTREACH MINISTRIES COGIC**  
1 (785) 232-3463/+1 (785) 217-5560  
Sunday School 9:30, Worship 11:00  
In person or conference call:  
(712) 770-4749 / 583229  
Bible Study Tue & Wed conference call  
2401 SE 11th St., Topeka KS 66607  
Supt. S. C. Mitchell, Pastor
- 16. HOUSE OF THE LORD CHURCH**  
A Spirit-filled, Word-centered church  
2531 SE Wittenberg Rd., Topeka  
Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm  
Wed. Prayer & Praise 7pm  
785-266-LOVE (5683)  
J. Michael Borjon, Pastor



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- 17. EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
4425 S.E. 29th St., 379-9933.  
Sunday Worship 10:00am & 6:00pm  
AWANA Sunday at 5:45 p.m.  
See our website for info on our  
Student Ministries & Kid City  
[www.esbcks.org](http://www.esbcks.org)

- 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**  
Meets at 522 SW Polk  
785-220-5418  
Pastor Rey Rodriguez  
Sun. Worship 10:30 am  
[www.harvestfamilyfellowshiptopeka.org](http://www.harvestfamilyfellowshiptopeka.org)

- 22. FAMILY OF GOD CHURCH**  
1231 NW Eugene St.  
Topeka, KS 66608  
Pastor Roger Randel  
Sunday Worship 10:30am & 6pm  
Wednesday Bible Study 7pm  
785-234-1111  
[FOGchurch.com](http://FOGchurch.com)

- 24. TRINITY REFORMED BAPTIST**  
Holding to the authorized King James Version and the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith  
Sunday 10 a.m. Wednesday 6 p.m.  
Pastor Bob Spagnuolo 785-273-3506  
meeting in our home:  
4307 SW 30th Ter., Topeka  
[www.TrinityReformedBaptist.org](http://www.TrinityReformedBaptist.org)



**Topeka Bible Church**  
Leading People to Life in Christ

1135 SW College Avenue  
and 1101 SW Mulvane  
**785.234.5545**

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[www.global-missions.com](http://www.global-missions.com)  
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785-232-2992 or 785-231-8183



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## WANTED:

**WANTED:** File Clerk, part-time, flexible hours. Call Law Office - 785-235-6977

**ASSISTANT EDITOR** – Research articles & event info online & on phone. Some writing & editing. Some updating files, social

media posting, possibly some deliveries. Mostly work from home. Could be part-time hourly wages, or contract services basis. Call 785-640-6399

**PART-TIME ACCOUNT REP** – Work your own hours. Call on businesses, churches & non-profits about their advertisements in Metro Voice. Generous commission on all ads you place; no base. Voice@cox.net

**VOLUNTEER WRITERS** – Metro Voice needs volunteer writers or interns for church and community news around the area. Call 235-3340 or email voice@cox.net. Some perks. involved.

**FEMALE SINGERS WANTED** – Topeka Acapella Unlimited is looking for female singers who would like to sing four part acapella harmonies. Topeka Acapella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines International. Call Cindy Patton at 785-

640-7403 for more information.

**DELIVERY PERSON** – Metro Voice needs someone to help distribute papers to churches and other locations in Topeka, a couple days a month, using your own car. Call 235-3340

**Retail Sales...** Christian company looking for reliable family, couple, or two friends to sale merchandise from TLC warehouse located by Forbes Museum. You will be self-employed making 30% commission on all sales, set your own days/hours, no Sunday's. For more information TEXT your name & phone number to 785-379-5009.

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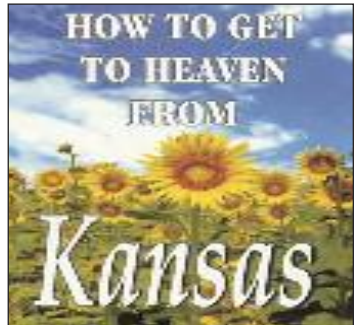


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Check Out Our Newly Redesigned, Mobile-ready Breaking-news Website.



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.

**Alpha Christian Children's Home & School**  
www.alphachristianchildrenshome.com



**WHAT WE DO:**

1. Share Christ to offer hope and healing
2. Provide a Christian family safe haven
3. Help the kids get caught up in school

**HOW YOU CAN HELP:**

1. Pray
2. Volunteer
3. Refer Children In Need To Us
4. Monetary & Food Donations

In His Hands  
Alpha Christian Children's Home

Find out more by calling  
**785-597-5235**  
Located East of Topeka  
15017 27th Street  
PO Box 727  
Perry, Kansas 66073

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**Brittany Elliott- Agent**  
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**#sleevesrolledup**

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8TH ANNUAL TOPEKA

# EASTER FEST

EASTER PARADE + FAMILY FUN FAIR!



It all takes place at Great Overland Station and on N. Kansas Avenue!

Fun Fair open 10 am - 3 pm at Great Overland Station, with Live Music 10:45 am - 3 pm!

Parade starts at 10 am at Garfield Park and goes to the tracks in NOTO. Big Egg Hunt follows parade at 11 am at Great Overland Station! Food Trucks open 9 am - 3 pm at Great Overland Station.

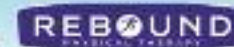
Vendor Market and Health Fair open 10 am - 3 pm at Great Overland Station, with craft stations, face painting, Easter Bunny photos, Petting Zoo, Inflatables, Carnival Games, Cup Cake Walks, Health products & demonstrations, Dance, Gymnastics, Ballet, Vision Screening and more!

**Volunteers needed! Contact:**

info@C5Alive.org or 785-640-6399

**For booth, sponsor & parade entry information:**

info@C5Alive.org or 785-640-6399



Funds raised will be shared with a local non-profit serving local kids

**SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2023 • 10 AM - 3 PM**

TopekaEasterParade.com • "Like" us on Facebook: Topeka Easter Parade & Family Fun Fair