



EVENTS

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NEW RESIDENT churchguide

East Side Baptist Church



See inside back cover!

New Rasmussen Topeka Campus to Hold Grand Opening Apr. 19



Rasmussen University is approaching the 10-year anniversary of its Topeka campus. With this milestone comes the move to a brand new, state-of-the-art facility 3722 SW Burlingame Rd. A grand opening will be held April 19 at noon at which time the public will have the opportunity to meet with Rasmussen University staff and tour the new campus. To register, go to RasmussenTopeka-GrandOpening.eventbrite.com by April 7.

Understanding Easter



Understanding Easter: From Eden to End Times

By Calvin Smith

On Easter Sunday, many Christians around the world will commemorate the resurrection of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Why is this important? Because Christians understand that this is the event in history where atonement for sin was made possible because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross of

Calvary.

Jesus (the "last Adam") paid the penalty of sin and death for those who put their faith and trust in him. This penalty was brought into the world by the first Adam. As Romans 5:12 records,

"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death

spread to all men because all sinned."

And we are reminded of this again in the book of Corinthians, where Paul (inspired by the Holy Spirit) says,

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For

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Vail Events Center Concessions to Go Cashless



The Stormont Vail Events Center concessions stands in Landon Arena, Exhibition Hall and Domer Arena will be going fully cashless starting Tuesday, April 4. Patrons can use their debit card, credit card, or mobile device to make purchases at the concessions and enjoy faster transactions, enhanced speed of service, shorter wait times and get right back to the entertainment.

The first large-scale public events in which the Cashless Concessions will be implemented will be the MAC Gun Show April 15-16, and the

■ Please see CASHLESS page 3

Topeka EasterFest to be at Great Overland Station on Apr. 8

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 8th 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, businesses and non-profit organizations take part in the parade, and set up vendor booths and kids' games as part of

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Old Prairie Town/Ward Meade Park will feature Tulips at Twilight

Old Prairie Town/Ward-Meade Botanical Garden, located at 1st & Clay, will feature Tulips at Twilight nightly from April 7th to the 23rd from 7 to 10 pm.

The event is the winner of Kansas Recreation and Park Association Branch Award in February 2023 and the Winner of Best Event in NE Kansas in the Best of Topeka 2021 awards. Visitors will see 20,000 tulips, 2,000 Daffodils and 4,000 Spring Annuals illuminated, and more than 100 lighted displays including larger-than-life hand crafted flowers as they stroll along the lighted garden pathways. Enjoy several lighted water features including pools, a stream, bridge, gazebo, and



waterfalls that surround the Asian Garden. The garden is open daily for a more tranquil experience.

There will also be live music to

enjoy, and Old Prairie Town buildings will be open for touring. There will also be a face painter and balloon twister on Friday and Saturday

evenings.

Old Fashion Ice Cream will be available every night at the Drug Store. The Meal Deal #1 – a beef hot dog, chips and a drink – will be available for \$5.00 at the Concession Stand. Also at the Concession Stand will be two raffle items this year: A

hand crafted Dragon Fly & a Gnome Fairy Garden. Each Friday & Saturday evening from 7-8:00, there will be a giveaway of free zinnia potted plants (one per child) while they last.

All Ages are welcome at this family event. Admission fee is \$5. Children 5 & under are free.

Tulips at Twilight Entertainment

Live Entertainment on weekends!

Friday - 7:30 - 9:00 - April 7 - **Sunflower String Trio** (Old Time Fiddle Music)
 Saturday - 7:30 - 8:30 - April 8 - **Topeka Suzuki Strings** (Age 3 to Adult Students)
 Friday - 7:00 - 8:30 - April 14 - **Olathe Dance Center** (Ages 10 to 18)
 Saturday - 7:30 - 9:00 - April 15 - **Jeff & Deb with Bill** (Bluegrass & Folk)
 Sunday - 7:30 - 8:30 - April 16 - **Chardonnay** (Barbershop Quartet)
 Friday - 7:30 - 9:00 - April 21 - **The Church Ladies** (Americana with a Twist)
 Saturday - 7:30 - 9:00 - April 22 - **Good Ol' Boys & A Gal** (Country/Classic Rock)

EASTER

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as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:20-22).

Jesus died and physically rose from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion:

“And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent” (Colossians 1:18).

The Apostle Paul (who saw the risen Christ) stated why this truth (Christ’s physical resurrection) is so important when he said, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile . . . we are of all people most to be pitied” (1 Corinthians 15:17, 19).

After Jesus rose from the dead, he met with his disciples and commanded them to tell others about the Creator who came to save the world from the curse of sin in Matthew 28:19-20,

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

He then returned to heaven to prepare a place for those who believe in him, as explained in John 13.

Resurrection Deniers

Of course, many have denied that Jesus actually rose again by saying per-

haps he simply fainted on the cross and revived later on in the tomb where he was laid. Some say Jesus died, but that the disciples stole his body from the tomb and lied about his resurrection. Others say that perhaps some other faction, such as the Romans or Jewish leaders, stole the body. And of course, Christian apologists have presented many comprehensive, logical, and robust refutations of all these scenarios.

For example, if Jesus just fainted on the cross and later revived, how did he manage to unwrap himself from the grave clothes, push aside the stone blocking the tomb, and manage to get past the soldiers posted outside? How could a man that had been beaten beyond recognition (as Matthew 27:28-30 records and Isaiah 52:14 prophetically states), crucified, and pierced with a spear, do this?

Similarly, how could the disciples have stolen Jesus’ body out from under the nose of a trained regiment of hardened, well-armed professional soldiers who’d been assigned to guard the tomb under penalty of death? And why would the disciples have continued to lie about an event they knew to be untrue even when it meant their own deaths?

What possible benefit could either the Roman or the Jewish leaders have gained by stealing Jesus’ body, furthering the belief in his resurrection and triggering the greatest movement in rebellion against their power? This scenario is especially unbelievable, since producing his body would have definitively disproven all the Christians claiming him as the

risen Savior once and for all!

By What Authority Do We Know for Certain?

But how can we be sure about our risen Lord? Why can Christians be so confident that what we are celebrating is true? Well, first and foremost, it’s because we take God at his Word. As the Psalmist says,

“The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever” (Psalm 119:160 NKJV).

We know that the resurrection is true because “God is not a man, that he should lie” (Numbers 23:19). God is all-knowing; he’s the most reliable eyewitness of all because he’s been there from the beginning, is omnipresent, and is the Creator of all things. And God’s Word says,

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Another Authority?

I am always astonished that I continue to meet Christians who do not hold to a consistent view of the Genesis account of origins—for example, doubting that the days in Genesis were real days, and buying into evolutionary ideas over the plain reading of Scripture.

Just as we accept that Christ rose bodily from the dead after three literal days because of the clear words of

Scripture, why not understand that God created the earth in six normal-length days? The truth is nestled not only in the clear words of Scripture in Genesis, but within a passage at the height of Old Testament historical readings as well:

“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day” (Exodus 20:11).

Almost always, Christians who do not view Genesis 1-11 as a literal, historical account will tout “science” as the reason why, but “science” can’t prove that Jesus rose from the dead, either. And it also cannot disprove that God created everything in six days.

The fact is, “science” can’t prove any event from history because it’s extremely limited when dealing with past events, which are not observed and non-repeatable. Historical events are known to be true because of reliable eyewitness accounts, just like the reliable eyewitness accounts that Jesus’ tomb was empty after three days. So, what is the disconnect?

A Disconnected View of Scripture

To most secular people in the world today, the word Easter invokes thoughts of bunnies, chocolate eggs, and family fun, rather than thinking of the arrest, crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ.

And that is because (especially in the de-Christianized west) many people don’t believe in the historical nature of the entire Bible, thinking the accounts within it are untrustworthy.

Why? Because of the same reason many Christians don’t take Genesis as history—because of “science.”

The state-run school systems in the western world have taught that science has disproven the accounts in the Bible relating to the physical universe, such as geology, biology, astronomy, and anthropology.

Scientists have supposedly shown there was no global flood, creatures evolved over millions of years, the big bang formed the universe, and humans are simply evolved animals—the descendants of apelike ancestors—not created in the image of God.

However, it wasn’t observational science that conflicted with Scripture; it was the fictional historical narrative pushed by naturalistic thinkers that disagreed with the Bible—the story of evolution. And so, facts that we observe (dinosaur bones, rock layers, supposed “missing links,” etc.) that have been interpreted as supporting that imagined history are now touted as scientific proof that corroborates their story.

People have become more consistent over time, thinking if someone can’t trust the Bible where it touches on “tangible” subjects dealing with geology, biology, astronomy, etc., then why trust its message of morality and salvation based on the real history in the Bible?

And it seems many Christians have bought into this way of thinking to some degree, allowing secular scientific interpretations to guide how they view Scripture. It’s like a sliding scale

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Comedy Cafe is a Fun Night Out For a Good Cause

When was the last time you laughed so hard it hurt? Michael Joiner has been performing his own style of observational stand-up comedy for over 25 years, becoming one of the best known and respected clean comics working today. He connects with people of all ages and will make this an unforgettable evening, for a great cause!

In its seventh year, Youth for Christ's Comedy Café is a fundraising event that helps fund the ongoing ministries of Topeka Youth For Christ. The Comedy Café treats participants to coffee and delicious desserts, as well as a creative program



that highlights young people and tells the YFC story.

The 2023 Comedy Café will be held April 28 at Topeka Bible Church, 1135 SW College Ave., be-

ginning at 6:30 pm. Seating is limited and reservations are required. Go to www.topekayfc.org/event/comedy_cafe or call 785-232-8296 for reservations or to sponsor a table.

EASTERFEST

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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 happening 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 Kaw valley Bank, Hutton Monuments, SERVPRO, Capital City Flooring, Patton & Patton, Davidson's Funeral Home, SoulFire Nutrition, Rasmussen University and more.



For more information or to volunteer, visit www.TopekaEasterParade.com, email info@C5Alive.org or call 785-640-6399. You can also find updates at Topeka EasterFest 2023 on Facebook.



EasterFest vendors will offer wares such as balloon animals, food items, crafts and gift items



CASHLESS

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Topeka Tropics Arena Football game on April 22.

General Manager, Kellen Seitz, explains, "In an effort to enhance customer experience, going cashless will reduce wait times and increase the speed of service allowing patrons more time to enjoy the

events."

At this time, the Box Office will still accept cash as a form of payment for ticket purchases, as well as debit, credit and mobile payment.

C5Alive Power Luncheon to Feature Speed Networking

The April C5Alive POWER Luncheon will be held April 13, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Fairlawn Plaza Mall, and will feature Speed Networking. Amanda's Rolls & Bakery will cater.

The cost to attend a C5 luncheon is \$15 for C5 members and first-time guests who RSVP, and \$17 at the door. Non-members and repeat guests pay \$20. C5 luncheons are open to the public. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to info@C5Alive.org.

"POWER" luncheons are held on the second Thursday of each month.

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 EasterFest 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, C5Alive.org, or call 785-640-6399.



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MOD shared ride service will now accept debit and credit cards from riders

Topeka Metro's shared ride service MOD (Metro On-Demand) will begin accepting debit and credit cards for fare payment Monday, March 27, 2023. Card payment can only be entered on the MOD Topeka mobile app or when booking a ride online at www.mod-topeka.app.

Bus operators and customer service personnel cannot process credit cards. Passengers can still book a ride on the MOD mobile app or the website, but if not using a card to pay for fare, then \$2.00 exact cash will need to be given to the bus operator when boarding.



Bus operators do not carry change and the farebox does not make change.

Topeka Metro General Manager Bob Nugent said, "We received our first successful card payment this

morning. We know that many people have a debit or credit card, so this is a convenient way to submit payment while also scheduling a ride. It's a one-stop shop that saves time."

Nugent also said that since January 30th when MOD began operating, the service has received positive reviews. "One passenger mentioned that they loved using the mobile app and instead of having to walk to the stores, his trips were much faster by using MOD."

MOD operates Monday through Friday from 5:35 a.m. to 6:40 p.m. and on Saturday from 8:15 a.m. to 6:40

p.m. Customers have the ability to schedule a ride via the MOD app for mobile phones using the Apple app store or Google Play. Booking a ride is also available on the MOD Topeka website at www.modtopeka.app. Another option is to call customer service at 785-783-7000, then pressing Option #5.

MOD trip updates can be found in the MOD Topeka app and text message notifications are provided in real-time, including when the vehicle is arriving. For questions, passengers can call Customer Service at 785-783-7000 or email modinfo@topekametro.org.

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of "biblical believability" that many hold to—almost as if it's a matter of just how much belief one must maintain to be still considered a Christian.

But again, science denies virgin births, water turning into wine, and lepers being supernaturally cured. Science also says ax-heads don't float, and donkeys don't talk. So why do many Christians believe certain parts of the Bible, but not others? Why do many believe Jesus walked on water and came back to life, but not that God created the earth in six literal days, or the truth of a global flood?

Jesus emphasized belief in both the tangible and the spiritual when he said, "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" (John 3:12)

Much of what's discussed in the history in Genesis (such as a single man and woman being the mother and father of all people, and a worldwide flood devastating the earth) had a huge impact on the "earthly things" we can examine and study (such as human DNA containing mutations, and sedimentary rock layers with fossils [dead things] inside of them).

And the revelation in Scripture regarding "heavenly things," such as the origin of sin and death (Romans 5:12) being linked to "earthly things" like fossils (dead things), is also clearly seen.

The fossil record could not have been laid down before Adam sinned (during the six days of creation) because Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death..."

Death entered the world because of sin—so there would be no dead bodies or bones of animals or people before sin. Not only does Noah's flood make for a far better explanation of the fossil record because of the physical evidence that corroborates it (the earthly things), but because it means death occurred after the Fall—not before—which confirms the biblical understanding of why and when death happened and why Jesus came to pay for it (the heavenly things).

So, the message of salvation and morality can't be separated from the history in Scripture concerning geology, biology, astronomy, etc. And neither can the message of the future be separated from the history.

Past, Present, and Future

God's Word says he created a "very good" world with no death and suffering in the beginning, and that sin and death were the results of the fall. It also says that at the consummation of all things, the restored heavens and earth will reflect that very good creation. As Revelation 21:4 says,

"Death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

The "big picture" of Scripture is clear. God created a very good world with no death and suffering. That world was marred by sin when the first man, Adam, rebelled against God and was punished for his transgression. Jesus came to pay the penalty for sin for those who put their faith and trust in him. And God will one day restore the world with a sinless new heaven and new earth where death (the last

enemy) will be no more.

"The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26).

Understanding Easter

Unfortunately, much of the church has adopted a history of millions of years and/or an evolutionary understanding of Genesis that undermines the gospel message concerning the purpose of Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Easter has been disconnected from the history in the Bible like so many other events (especially those surrounding the "earthly things"). In many people's minds, the Easter message has been relegated to the position of an interesting "story" with no real meaning.

We need to remind people of why they are sinners: because they're descendants of Adam. And without God, we would all be separated from him for eternity.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

However, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

We must remember that the Son of God stepped into the real history communicated in the Bible, beginning in Genesis, to become one of us

and pay the penalty for sin:

"Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

This is the message of Easter: Because of what Christ did on the cross, there is now a way back to our Creator against whom we rebelled. The message that man can be redeemed is a message with real meaning based on real history that connects to this real world.

For if many died through one man's trespass [Adam], much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses

brought justification.

For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:15-21)

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Capper Foundation acquiring Dialogue Coffee Shop

Dialogue Coffee House, a local coffee house located at 4009 S.W. 29th Street in Topeka, will be joining Capper Foundation's job training and employment program for adults with disabilities on April 3, 2023.

This local favorite breakfast and lunch stop aligns with Capper's mission and will allow the organization to support more individuals in the community with career training and opportunities to be valued, enjoy access and independence to advance their hopes and dreams. The acquisition of Dialogue will not interrupt its existing model or staffing, and is expected to enhance both Dialogue and Capper's programming to support individuals with disabilities working in community settings.

Caitlyn Halsey, founder of Dialogue Coffee House on April 18, 2019, will join Capper Foundation's staff serving as the organization's first Employment Services Director, continuing to provide leadership and oversight of Dialogue. Halsey's other responsibility will be to oversee Capper Foundation's employment services program through developing relationships and effectively planning, organizing and directing all aspects of the program to help provide employment readiness for adults with disabilities. The current Dialogue staff will remain working at Dialogue serving the public with welcoming smiles.

Zach Ahrens, President & CEO of Capper Foundation shared, "Coffee, Capper and friends make a perfect blend! Caitlyn's passion for creating employment opportunities, mentoring and friendship to individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability is in perfect alignment with Capper's vision that every person is valued and enjoys access, independence and opportunities to advance their hopes and dreams. Dialogue's staff is incredible! They serve excellent coffee and baked goods with a smile that blesses your entire day."

The inspiration for the name Dialogue references the way we communicate with one another. While for some people that is by verbal exchanges, for others it may be sign language or even body language cues. Dialogue Coffee House has an employee base of 15 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, giving everyone a place to be part of the conversation, without the

definition of one's abilities – a culture where we are all equal.

"I am beyond excited for my team to join the Capper Foundation," Caitlyn Halsey, owner of Dialogue, stated. "We can assure you that we will continue to serve you the same coffee, cookies and other many treats with the same team you have come to know and love! We see great value in this partnership to create even greater

opportunities for the adults in our community living with disabilities. Together we will advance both of our missions further."

Capper Foundation's Mission is to build abilities and empower people of all ages living with disabilities. Dialogue Coffee House's Mission is to create change in everyday pace of life in a diverse culture, celebrating individuals of ALL abilities.



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SHOULD WE MOVE IN WITH OUR IN-LAWS?

Dear Dave,

My wife and I are in our late twenties, and we have two kids. Our combined income is about \$110,000 a year, but we have \$70,000 in loans on two cars, plus about \$15,000 in credit card debt. My in-laws have offered to let us move in with them to make things easier while we pay down debt. Is this a good idea?

Adam

Dear Adam,

In my mind, there are only two scenarios where you should even consider taking the in-laws up on their offer. One, is where they're absolutely wonderful folks and you both have great, healthy relationships with them. By this, I mean there's a mutual sense of love, respect and everyone knows their boundaries. Even if this is the case, I'd still only consider it for an agreed-upon and very small amount of time.

The second scenario is if taking them up on their offer is the only way you two

can accomplish your financial goals. That's not the case here.

You and your wife can get rid of most of your debt, and take a big step toward gaining control of your income, if you'll do one thing — get rid of those stupid cars! That's an insane amount of money wrapped up in cars for you two. If you had a couple of decent, paid-for used cars your lives would be so much different. You'd be in a situation where you could even start putting a little money aside while you paid off the credit card debt. Then, you'd have some cash freed up to find better cars.

—Dave

Is it even worth it to buy a house these days?

Dear Dave,

Is it even worth it to buy a house these days? I've always been told buying a house is the adult thing to do and that it's a great investment, but I can't find anything decent and livable in my area for less than \$350,000. My wife and I are debt-free, and we're expecting our first baby in January. I was hoping to get your advice.

Craig

Dear Craig,

I can understand how things might feel a little hopeless in your current situation. You're probably feeling the weight of the responsibility a new life brings to the picture.

The truth is you may not be ready to buy a house today. And that's okay. Having a new baby on the horizon doesn't mean you have to run out and buy a

home. That little boy or girl isn't going to know the difference between a house and an apartment for a long time. Right now, giving your child a safe, loving environment is the most important thing.

Now, looking down the road, is owning a house worth it? Yes. But it's not worth doing it at the wrong time or in a

How to Get Cheap (or Free) Health Insurance if You Retire Early

By Ryan Shumaker
Smartvestor Pro at
The Retirement Team



I often hear when I first meet with someone that the only reason they are still working is to pay for health insurance until they can get on Medicare at age 65. No doubt health insurance when you are in your late 50s and early 60s is quite expensive. A private insurance plan through the marketplace (HealthCare.Gov) for a 62 year old couple living in Topeka runs from a whopping \$21,420 a year to an astronomical \$37,788 a year, depending on the plan chosen. That's even the cheaper non smoker rates. If you smoke or are older than 62, the rates will be even higher. What might be even more outrageous than the price of the cheapest insurance possible is the deductible on it, which is a staggering \$16,000! Seeing this kind of sticker shock it is no wonder that so many believe they can't afford to retire early solely because of the exorbitant cost for private health insurance.

The thing is, though, that health insurance can actually be cheaper if you retire early if you do proper planning and it's been that way now for over a decade. The key to cheap, or free, healthcare if you retire early is knowing how the tax credit subsidies work for health insurance and how to be strategic on where you get your income from before turning 65. With good planning, a 62 year old married couple could receive a massive \$27,228 a year in free tax credit money to pay for their health insurance. That's more than what many of the plans even cost in the health insurance marketplace, effectively making the health insurance completely free.

In order to be eligible for the full amount you need to have the amount of income that shows up on your tax return (but not necessarily the income

stupid way. You first need to make sure the income is there. Then, you need an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses in place along with a strong down payment. So, what if you don't buy a home for another two or three years? Home buying should always be done with patience and wisdom.

There are two or three things that make buying a home a great long-term investment versus renting your whole life:

1. Rents go up every year. If you lock in a good, fixed-rate mortgage, that pay-

ment will stay the same.

2. The value of your home will increase. When you rent, you don't own your residence, and you won't benefit from the value of it going up.

3. Our study of 10,000 millionaires showed that most say two things were integral parts of their ability to build wealth: Good retirement investments and a paid-off home.

A house is a great wealth-building tool, and it can also stabilize your budget — Dave

you pay tax on or actually have) to be around \$18,000. The higher your income goes up, the more this tax credit shrinks. In the past if your income got too high you would go from getting a large tax credit to nothing at all if your income was just \$1 too high and over the threshold. One of the few good things (in our opinion) for retirees that came from the stimulus bill number 3 (called the American Rescue Plan) signed into law in March 2021 is the elimination of this threshold cliff. Instead of the subsidy suddenly ending it instead slowly decreases as income goes up. Even if you have a six figure income, you'll still get a subsidy of some sort now. The lower the income that shows up on your tax return, though, the larger the subsidy will be as long as it is not too low. If it is too low you get nothing at all.

Here is where smart tax planning ahead of time comes into play. If you were to take money from a pension buyout, IRA, 401k (or other company retirement plan like a TSP, 457 or 403b) and switch that money over to a Roth ahead of time you can still have a high actual income while having a low amount show up on your tax return. This will then allow you to get a larger health insurance tax credit subsidy that could fully pay for your insurance. The reason behind this is that any money that comes out of a Roth does NOT show up anywhere on your tax return. From the government's perspective, it is as if the money no longer exists once it goes to a Roth. A person can take enough out of their investments that have taxes on them (like 401ks, IRAs, and pension buyouts) to get the maximum tax credit for insurance and take the rest of the income they want and need from the Roth. This is something we have been helping people do to allow them to retire earlier for years.

Great retirement planning is much more than just picking investments.

There are many moving parts when it comes to income planning, tax reduction planning, tax credit planning, when to start Social Security, etc. that all interrelate and change when you go from working and earning paychecks to retiring and wanting paychecks. Far too many people end up paying more than their fair share in taxes (and/or miss out on tax credits) and work for longer than they actually need to just because they either don't know about how best to navigate all of these complex topics or aren't well informed. If you're putting off retiring just because of potential health insurance costs you likely don't have to. Schedule a time to talk with us at The Retirement Team at 785-228-0222 if you're in this situation, if you'd like to save on taxes in retirement, and/or need help with figuring out how to get the most out of Social Security. We strive to help people do the best they can in all financial aspects of retirement including, but not just, investments.

Other great articles about retirement, investing, and tax reduction can be seen at RetireTopeka.com/blog.

Ryan can be contacted at 785-228-0222 or RetireTopeka.com.

Material discussed is meant for general/informational purposes and is not intended to be used as the sole basis for any financial decisions, nor be construed as advice to meet your particular needs. Please consult a financial professional for further information. Investing in securities involves risk and profit cannot be guaranteed.

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What Will You Do with Your Tax Refund?

By Jim Hanna



Hanna

The average refund in 2022 was \$3,176 for individual income taxpayers, according to the IRS. If you expect to receive a refund in 2023 after filing your 2022 tax return, will you save or spend it? While you may be tempted to indulge, consider using the money to solidify your long-term financial position.

No matter your stage in life or the size of your refund, there are ways you can use it to help reach your current and future financial goals. Here are a few:

For people starting out in their careers:

- Add to your emergency fund. Consider saving enough to have at least three-to-six months' worth of income in an emergency fund. This could come in handy if you experience a sudden interruption to your income or a major unexpected expense.

- Pay off student loans. If you are carrying college debt or other loans, applying your refund to the balance can help reduce the total interest you pay or eliminate the debt entirely. Once you pay off your loans, allocate the amount you spent each month on student loans to another financial goal to keep building your financial foundation.

- Invest in an IRA. Think about starting a habit of investing your tax refund each year into an IRA, where any earnings can accumulate on a tax-deferred basis. While you are limited to contributing \$6,500 annually, the savings can add up. For example, investing a \$3,000 refund each year from age 26 to 65 earning seven percent annually would build to more than \$640,000.

For those starting families:

- Save for a down payment on a home. A tax refund can make a meaningful impact as you accumulate enough to purchase your first home. Consider saving enough to cover at least 20 percent of the home's value. Doing so will eliminate the need for private mortgage insurance.

- Start or add to a college fund for your children. With the cost of higher education continuing to rise, starting early and saving often can help you make funding tuition a reality. Certain options may provide tax advantages, so work with your financial and tax professionals to find the best strategy for you.

- Invest your refund. Consider adding your refund to your portfolio, using it to accelerate progress toward your long-term goals. Your refund

could be used to purchase stocks, bonds, mutual funds, or other investments that are aligned with your goals and risk tolerance.

- Create or update your legacy plan. Developing a will, trust, or other estate documents is important so that your wishes are clear in the event of your death. If you need to create or update legal matters, use your refund as a reason to take the next step.

For those who have a solid financial foundation:

- Apply to home improvements. If you are planning to remodel, you may want to use the money to fund upgrades.

- Save for starting a new business. If you want to start your own business now or in retirement, the refund can provide a cash buffer to help you get started.

For those approaching retirement:

- Increase your retirement savings. As your retirement date and goals get clearer, maximizing your retirement savings should take priority. Your refund can help you make an additional investment towards your financial future. If you are 50 or older and have earned income, current tax laws allow you to invest extra dollars in your IRA and workplace retirement plan. Work with your tax professional to learn about the opportunities and limitations that apply to your situation.

- Pay down your mortgage. Consider making an additional principal payment to your mortgage. Erasing debt prior to retirement can minimize a major financial burden.

For retirees:

- Spend it on your retirement dream. If you plan to travel or pursue a hobby in retirement, use the refund to make it happen.

- Invest in a Roth IRA. If you have any earned income that allows you to make retirement contributions, your tax refund can likely be placed into a Roth IRA. This vehicle provides potential tax-free growth of any earnings.

- Pay health care expenses. Today's rising health care costs are often one of the biggest expenses for retirees. Consider applying the funds to Medicare or long-term care policy premiums. If your health care expenses are manageable, save the refund to pay for future expenses.

Dirty Dozen: Watch out for scammers

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

The Dirty Dozen is an annual IRS list of 12 scams and schemes that put taxpayers at risk of losing money, personal data and more.



- Phishing is an email sent by fraudsters claiming to come from the IRS or another legitimate organization, including state tax organizations or a financial firm. The email lures the victims into the scam by a variety of ruses such as enticing victims with a phony tax refund or frightening them with false legal/criminal charges for tax fraud.

- Smishing is a text or smartphone SMS message that uses the same technique as phishing. Scammers often use alarming language like, "Your account has now been put on hold," or "Unusual Activity Report" with a bogus "Solutions" link to restore the recipient's account. Unexpected tax refunds are another potential target for scam artists.

The IRS initiates most contacts through regular mail and will never initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text or social media regarding a bill or tax refund.

Never click on any unsolicited communication claiming to be the IRS as it may surreptitiously load malware. It may also be a way for malicious hackers to load ransomware that keeps the legitimate user from accessing their system and files.

Individuals should never respond to tax-related phishing or smishing or click on the URL link. Instead, the scams should be reported by sending the email or a copy of the text/SMS as an attachment to phishing@irs.gov. The report should include the caller ID (email or phone number), date, time and time zone, and the number that received the message.



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Hutton Monuments celebrates 150 years; fascinating history

Chris Hutton is the third generation of his family to own and operate Hutton Monuments, located at 201 SW Topeka Boulevard in Topeka.

He has been the sole owner of the business for over 30 years, and is celebrating the 150th anniversary of the business. It's expected that his son, Tyler, will carry on the business as the 4th generation.

The company offers gravestone monuments and other memorials, as well as monument cleaning services. Other offerings include metal and porcelain photos, pet markers, vases, etching, limestone yard art, benches, bronze markers, school projects and fundraisers, sandblasting, and brick/paver projects, as well as repairs.

Turning memories into memorials

"Almost everything you want to be remembered can be harmonized into the design of a memorial," Hutton said.



"Selecting a memorial is something you may do only once in your lifetime, and because it will last forever, your decision should be informed and made with great care and counsel."

The staff will assist you as you decide upon the shape, the size, the color of granite and its ornamentation. Your memorial is then sent direct from the quarries to Hutton Monuments, where the engraving and etchings are done by local craftsmen and skilled artisans.

"We'll produce a computer proof of your design to help you visualize the final product," Hutton said. "That way, you are able to check for any spelling errors or incorrect dates before work on the stone is begun."



A part of Topeka history

The company was started in 1873 by German immigrant Henry Schroeder at Third and Jefferson streets (where the Hallmark building is now). A short time later, it moved to the west side of N. Kansas Avenue, across the river.

Hutton's grandfather, Arthur Hutton, started working at the shop at age eight, and by age 10 was able to cut granite. In those days, the monuments had to be carved by hand. Young Arthur became

very skilled at carving, and some of his hand tools are on display in the office at Hutton Monuments to this day.

Arthur Hutton helped construct the crypts on Mausoleum Row in Topeka Cemetery at 10th & California, which were built between 1897 and 1903.

The flood of 1903 caused major damage to the company's building, and it then moved to 124 SW Harrison.

In 1921 Arthur Hutton purchased the company with his friend Frank Van Nice, and Hutton bought his partner



out in 1935.

After the war, Arthur's sons Clint and Bill (Chris' father) gradually took over the business. Both had seen action in the war – Bill in Europe and Clint in the Asian theatre.

One of Chris' jobs as a youth was sweeping out the old shop on Harrison. As the company expanded and the interstate was being built, Hutton Monuments moved to its current location.

The Topeka tornado

On the morning of June 8, 1966, Chris went with his dad and older brother Craig to pick up Craig's car at the Washburn campus. As they arrived, it was raining rather hard and they debated getting out of the car. Suddenly



Craig yelled "The ROTC building just blew up!"

His father said "That's a tornado!" and the three of them made a dash for Morgan Hall, just as the glass doors blew out.

The blast knocked them down, and they then huddled together and covered their heads. A 40-foot tree was uprooted a few feet away, and carried away by the storm.

Although none of the three was seriously injured, they were taken to Stormont Vail, where Chris received over 40 stitches due to injuries from flying glass and debris.

Chris went on to graduate from Washburn, and began working full-time at the family business in 1971.

The Hutton Monuments home office is in Topeka at 201 SW Topeka Blvd., where Sara Levitt is the office manager. The company operates 13 other locations in Kansas and western Missouri, as well as seven funeral homes under the name of Chapel Oaks.

For more information contact the staff at 785.354.7005 or huttonmonuments@sbcglobal.net. The website is www.huttonmonuments.com.

New Ms. Wheelchair Kansas and Little Miss crowned



The 2023 Ms. Wheelchair Kansas (MWKS) was recently crowned during a weekend ceremony held March 19, 2023, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Lawrence, Kan. Daija Coleman of Atchison received her crown after participating in four judging sessions, as well as many other activities, throughout the three-day event held March 17-19. The weekend concluded with a formal crowning, where Daija was chosen as the new titleholder and fellow contestant Magda Carlos-Trevino, of Olathe, was chosen as the runner-up. The eighth Little Miss Wheelchair Kansas was announced at the ceremony as well. Olivia Woodard of Goddard will work alongside Daija in the coming year to empower Kansans with her title.

The crowning ceremony was attended by more than 90 family, friends, and community members. The event consisted of platform speeches by the two contestants, as well as two on-stage questions. The audience enjoyed a slide show of memories from the weekend; a keynote speech from City Attorney for Topeka, Amanda Stanley; and a farewell from the 2022 MWKS titleholder, Marci Clare of Abilene, and Little Miss, Leslie Lane of Wichita.

Daija, the new titleholder, has been educating others about disability, perseverance, and advocacy from the day that she was born! Today, Daija is a real-life teacher who lives in Topeka and has Cerebral Palsy. Daija holds a Bachelor of Science Education degree from Washburn University that she obtained in 2022. She

currently works as a first-grade teacher at Jardine Elementary in Topeka. Daija, who is originally from Atchison, has been breaking barriers and dispelling stereotypes for a long time. While at Washburn, she was involved in the LinC Bonner Scholars Program and received the LinC Bonner Scholar Community Service Medal. Daija has also been a part of Zeta Tau Alpha and Washburn Next Generation Educators. She has also been a substitute teacher, was a Peer Educator, was involved in the National Honor Society, was a Communities in Schools volunteer, is a graduate of the Kansas Youth Leadership Forum, and has had various leadership positions within 4-H over the years. Daija believes that nothing is impossible. She wants to educate others that they have the power and skills to change the world through advocacy!

Olivia, the new Little Miss, is a 12-year-old from Goddard who has a contagious and social personality. She is currently a 6th grader at Discovery Intermediate. Olivia was born

with Spina Bifida, but that hasn't stopped her from living life to the fullest. Olivia enjoys arts and crafts, tennis, track, baking, and spending time with her family. She is a member of Wichita Adaptive Sports and participates in Catholic Youth Ministry. Olivia wants to change the world to make it more accessible so that she can participate in all activities right alongside her friends.

Daija will serve as a role model and spokesperson for people with disabilities in Kansas in the coming year. She will strive to educate, advocate, and empower all people in our state. Daija will have the opportunity to travel throughout Kansas educating various groups of all ages about the issues of importance to people with disabilities. She will share her platform of "Why Not Us? Why Not Now? Be an Advocate in Your Community," which emphasizes the importance of speaking up and advocating for equal access. Daija will ultimately represent Kansas in the Ms. Wheelchair America competition, held in Grand Rapids, MI in August, where she will compete for the national title alongside 25 other women from varying states. Olivia will work alongside Daija to show the capabilities of people with disabilities. She will empower people of all ages, especially young people in our state.

To schedule an appearance or presentation by the new Ms. Wheelchair Kansas or Little Miss Wheelchair Kansas, contact Carrie Greenwood, President/CEO, at (785) 633-7255 or via email at mswheelchairkansaskansas@yahoo.com. More information can also be found on the Ms. Wheelchair Kansas web site at www.mswheelchairkansaskansas.org.

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Graham home now pastor's retreat

A former home of Billy and Ruth Graham is now a retreat for pastors, thanks to the efforts of actor Kirk Cameron, a North Carolina businessman and one of the Grahams' daughters.

It "offers several experiences designed to rejuvenate pastors and help believers discover God's will through diving deep into God's word," according to the website Billy's Home Place. "If you serve as a vocational missionary or pastor with 20 or more years, take a few moments and fill out the pastoral rest and sabbatical form. There is no charge for pastors or missionaries who stay at Billy's Home Place."

About two years ago, the original family home of Billy and Ruth Graham in Montreat was put up for sale, listed at \$599,000, as their daughter sought to raise funds for her own daughter's medical treatment. The property sold for \$750,000 in 2021. Ruth Graham, whose daughter was suffering from a multisystem disorder, stated at the time that her

parents purchased the home in the late 1940s. Photos inside the home can be viewed here.

"It was selected because it was right across the street from my grandparents," she said. "I was born during the time my family lived in the house. The Los Angeles crusades and tour of England happened during those years. It's where it all began."

The Grahams moved from the house in 1957 but remained in Montreat. The home had been used as a vacation rental in recent years. Guests of the home were given access to experience the Grahams' young family life through the cottage's original furnishings, books, photos and mementos. The two-story home is still in pristine condition and surrounded by several picturesque walking trails and streams.

"Rich in Christian history and gospel legacy, this humble estate now serves as a retreat for weary pastors and missionaries; a solace to seek the face of God."

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Kansas City's iconic cathedral undergoing \$14 million renovation

The landmark golden dome in downtown Kansas City is getting a facelift. The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception is working on a \$14 million campaign to build a new parish hall and several amenities for patrons and the homeless community.

The church is Kansas City's highest-profile place of worship, perhaps because of the gold dome that lights up the downtown sky at night. The brick cathedral at 11th and Broadway traces its roots to a frontier log church built in 1835. The cathedral was built in the 1880s. Other buildings were added in the 1950s.

The new facilities will continue the church's mission serving the growing downtown population. The church will continue to provide a full breakfast to more than 100 homeless people six days a week and provide emergency assistance through its Morning Glory Ministries. That service will move to a renovated space at the Catholic Center on West Ninth Street.

The renovation, called the "Building Glory" campaign, includes demolition of the old rectory and school buildings by building a new 19,000-square-foot, two-story parish center.

"I say old buildings, but you and I are standing in a building that went up in the 1880s, and it's holding up better than the ones that went up in the 1950s, but it's a historic place," Father Paul Turner said. "We want to be sure and accent it, complete our mission and add to the beauty of downtown Kansas City."

Construction is starting now after three years of planning and campaigning. The church officially broke ground on the project in December. The renovation will feature upgraded parking and handicapped access featuring the new Father Donnelly Hall Evangelization Center. There will be 300 to 400 seats in the multipurpose event space at 11th Street and Broadway, connecting to the cathedral through a welcome center. Upgrades include parish offices, meeting rooms, a reception area, a bridal room, kitchen and additional space.

"We hope that people take an interest in who we are and join into the mission of the cathedral," Turner said. "People are always welcome here. Many people see the gold dome in the skyline; not so many have been inside, but this is a place where we hope everybody will find a home."

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Racquel Welch found peace at church

The statuesque film legend didn't call attention to herself as she shared a pew with other conservative Presbyterians in their small church not far from Hollywood.

She was articulate when discussing theology and church matters and, from time to time, would offer advice on finances. She had learned a lot in the film business.

Racquel Welch wasn't trying to hide during the later decades of her life when she faithfully attended Calvary Presbyterian Church in Glendale, California. She was simply looking for people she could trust.

"She was careful. ... She wasn't going to one of those 2,000-member churches where everyone would look at her. That wasn't her style," said the Rev. Christopher Neiswonger, who grew up in that congregation and attended nearby Fuller Theological Seminary. He now leads Graceview Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southaven, Mississippi.

"She also wasn't trying to stick her thumb in the eye of a Hollywood culture that she knew would denigrate this kind of faith commitment. ... She was Racquel Welch, but she just wanted to be part of our church family."

Welch died on Feb. 15 at the age of 82, inspiring waves of tributes focusing on her iconic beauty in "Fantastic Voyage," "100 Rifles," "The Three Musketeers" and dozens of other movies and television programs. The legendary poster from "One Million Years B.C." framed her as a bombshell babe for the ages.

In a Facebook tribute shared with other believers, Neiswonger called Welch a "wonderful lady and a fine Christian" whose "faith grew more powerful and practical with age. It's often true that the most important things become the most important to us as we've matured personally."

At the end of her 2010 memoir, "Raquel: Beyond the Cleavage," Welch described the hard questions she asked after the death of her mother, a faithful Presbyterian, and a sister's struggle with cancer. After decades away from church, Welch offered an "awkward inept prayer" to the "God of my childhood and, lo and behold, he was still there."



One Sunday, she drove away from Beverly Hills and found a "beautiful little church," wrote Welch. The members "weren't Hollywood types. They were modest, unassuming, cheerful and friendly. ... Maybe I didn't belong among these people who actually practiced their faith." But soon, she embraced a fellowship in which "I can affirm my beliefs and worship. ... I'm just Racquel, not anybody special."

The memoir ended there. It began with witty insights into painful paradoxes surrounding her rise to stardom. "Contrary to popular myth, I didn't just hatch out of an eagle's nest, circa 'One Million Years B.C.,' clad in a doeskin bikini. ... It felt like I'd stumbled into a booby trap — pun intended. I am living proof that a picture speaks a thousand words."

The reality, she stressed, was that she was a single mother who had escaped a troubled marriage. "Can you picture the girl in the poster with a baby in one arm and pushing a stroller with the other? Kind of destroys the fantasy, doesn't it?"

Nevertheless, Tinseltown players "niched her into that image and did everything they could to keep her there," said screenwriter Barbara Nicolosi Harrington, a former Catholic nun who spent a decade helping build a network of Christian professionals working in Hollywood. She now directs the screenwriting programs at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Vir-

ginia.

Studio leaders "are so afraid that audiences will not accept actors, writers or directors if they try to break outside the image that the studio and the system have created for them," said Harrington. "Raquel Welch was a sex object and they had a vested interest in keeping her inside that box."

The fact that Welch's memoir says she found peace in a church pew — "after yoga, after menopause, after her divorces, after dating, after the whole nine yards" — was a Hollywood plot twist few could have predicted, said Steve Beard, who covers faith and popular culture at Thunderstruck, his website.

—Terry Mattingly writes the nationally syndicated "On Religion" column for the Universal Syndicate and leads GetReligion.org. He lives in Oak Ridge, Tennessee and is a senior fellow at the Overby Center at the University of Mississippi.

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United Methodists lose 1,800 churches over sexuality debate

Diverging views on sexuality led the United Methodist Church to approve an exit plan four years ago for churches that wanted to leave. Since then, 6.1 percent of United Methodist churches in the United States – 1,831 congregations out of 30,000 nationwide – have been granted permission to disaffiliate, “Christianity Today” is reporting.

The denomination’s disaffiliation plan gives churches until December 31 to cut ties, and many already have made known their desire to leave. Those churches can take their properties with them after paying apportionments and pension liabilities. Others are forcing the issue through civil courts.

But whatever the final tally may be, the analysis suggests the country’s second-largest Protestant denomination — numbering 6.4 million U.S. members and 13 million worldwide — may weaken but is unlikely to break.

“You think of a schism as 50 percent



or even 35 percent (split),” said Scott Thumma, director of the Hartford Institute for Religion Research and a lead researcher for the 2020 U.S. Religion Census. “This is not a real schism.”

The 1,831 church departures come as United Methodist bishops claim they’re battling misinformation from groups

that encourage churches to leave the denomination for the newly formed Global Methodist Church, which has declared it will never ordain or marry LGBTQ people, which is the crux of the conflict. In turn, the Global Methodist Church and groups such as the Wesleyan Covenant Association, a network of theologically

conservative churches, argue that the denomination’s regional conferences are making it prohibitively hard for churches to leave.

The high-stakes duel has hit some regions of the country harder than others. But four years into what has been depicted as a breakup of the denomination, the picture is less climactic than anticipated.

“Some are leaving, but the number of churches and members moving forward is far larger,” said Hope Morgan Ward, retired bishop of the North Carolina conference. “It is important to focus on who is staying and moving forward in the continuing United Methodist Church.”

In March 2022, the United Methodist Church announced a third delay for the 2020 meeting of its global decision-making body, the General Conference. Delegates were expected to consider a proposal to split the church in 2020. Then

came the COVID-19 pandemic.

The final delay prompted some Methodists to go ahead in May and launch the Global Methodist Church rather than wait for the outcome of a General Conference meeting. In the meantime, the denomination’s 54 U.S.-based regional bodies called conferences have been approving disaffiliations at their regular meetings and at a flurry of special sessions.

While fewer Americans are attending church overall, mainline denominations like the UMC have been hemorrhaging members. The denomination lost 1.3 million between 2010 to 2020. In 2021 it lost another 180,000 and that was before churches began leaving in large numbers.

According to the Wesleyan Covenant Association, the denomination will fall to 5.2 million by 2025 just through attrition and not counting the disaffiliation move.

WHO reverses guidance on Covid booster

The World Health Organization (WHO) updated its vaccination guidance March 28, saying most people do not need a booster. The move comes as countries like Britain abandon their booster programs.

WHO is not recommending additional boosters for most people, including the young “given the comparatively low public health returns,” the organization said. That group includes younger,

healthier adults who don’t have comorbidities,

Now, only those designated as high priority, including older adults and people with significant comorbidities such as diabetes or immunocompromising conditions such as having received an organ transplant are being advised by the United Nations organization to get an additional booster six to 12 months after their last dose. The group includes adults

over the age of 60.

The updated guidance now aligns with the CDC which changed its guidance in the fall, saying that additional boosters are not needed. It also reverses the WHO’s previous guidance which recommended boosters for the medium priority group, which includes adolescents with comorbidities. WHO is now urging countries to take into consideration factors such as cost-effectiveness when vaccinating them.

“The public health impact of vaccinating healthy children and adolescents is comparatively much lower than the established benefits of traditional essential vaccines for children—such as the rotavirus, measles, and pneumococcal conjugate vaccines—and of COVID-19 vaccines for high and medium priority groups,” the WHO said.

The updated guidance reflects how many people have either been vaccinated, have survived COVID-19, or both, Dr. Hanna Nohynek, a WHO official, said in a statement.

“Countries should consider their specific context in deciding whether to continue vaccinating low risk groups, like healthy children and adolescents, while not compromising the routine vaccines that are so crucial for the health and well-being of this age group,” she said.

COVID-19 poses less risk to many people since the Omicron variant and its subvariants displaced Delta in late 2021.



Newer subvariants have increasingly evaded the protection from the vaccines and, to a lesser extent, that from COVID-19 recovery, also known as natural immunity. That has prompted some countries to initiate aggressive booster campaigns to try to recapture the previous protection. Others have narrowed or stopped their campaigns.

England, for example, recently ended its booster campaign for people under 50, citing the high levels of population immunity from vaccination and/or natural immunity. Danish authorities have for some time not commended COVID-19 vaccination to healthy people younger than 50.

Christine Stabell Benn, a vaccine expert in Denmark, notes that there is limited information about the risks of the COVID-19 vaccines since they’ve only been used for a few years, and that the list of confirmed and potential side effects has been growing, to include heart in-

flammation, tinnitus, and menstrual irregularities.

“With little if anything to gain, no societal benefit, and potential risks, COVID-19 vaccines should not be used in healthy children, in my opinion,” said Benn, professor and chair at the Bandim Health Project and Danish Institute for Advanced Study.

The CDC said this week also reversed course recommending against more than one of the new boosters, which come from Moderna and Pfizer.

“Can I get more than one updated COVID-19 booster? No,” the CDC says on its website.

As of March 22, 73.4 percent of the U.S. population aged 5 and older have received a primary series, according to federal data. Just 17.5 percent have received an updated booster.

President Biden is scheduled to end the National Covid Emergency order in May.

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Death rates among children spike almost 20% in last two years

American Children are dying at an alarming rate – the highest rate in 50 years. Mortality rose by almost 20 percent in just two years, with non-COVID injuries being a top reason for increased deaths. The deaths have wiped out all gains made to protect children through seat belts, safer toys and childhood illness mitigation, suicide prevention, poverty programs and cancer research.

The total mortality rate in the two years between 2019 and 2021 was 19 percent—the biggest increase in at least 50 years. “These increases, the largest in decades, followed a period of great progress in reducing pediatric mortality rates,” the editorial stated.

Between 2019 and 2020, all-cause mortality rates for Americans in the age group of 1 to 19 years jumped by 10.7 percent, according to data collected and published by JAMA Network from the American Medical Association. This was followed by an 8.3 percent spike between 2020 and 2021.

“This reversal in the pediatric mortality trajectory was caused not by COVID-19, but by injuries,” the editorial stated. “In 2020, the COVID-19 mortality rate at ages 1 to 19 years was 0.24 deaths per 100 000, but the absolute increase in in-



jury deaths alone was nearly 12 times higher (2.80 deaths per 100 000).”

Between 2019 and 2020, injury mortality rose by 22.6 percent among those between the ages of 10 and 19, with homicides rising by 39.1 percent and drug overdose deaths jumping by 113.5 percent. Among children aged 1 to 9 years, injuries accounted for 63.7 percent of the increase in all-cause mortality in 2021.

“We’ve now reached a tipping point where the number of injury-related deaths is so high that it is offsetting many of the gains we’ve made in treating other diseases,” said Elizabeth Wolf, an author of the editorial and an assistant professor in the department of pediatrics at the

Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Medicine.

Non-COVID Death Causes

The editorial points out that the increase in injury deaths predates the pandemic. For instance, suicides among individuals between 10 and 19 years of age began to rise in 2007, with homicide rates starting to increase in 2013.

Between 2007 and 2019, mortality rates for suicide rose by 69.5 percent. Between 2013 and 2019, homicide rates increased by 32.7 percent. The editorial blamed the increase in suicide and homicide rates on a “deepening” mental health crisis and access to firearms.

Despite the fear created by the pan-

dem, the share of COVID-19 in deaths among children and young people (CYP) was lower when compared to other causes, according to a Jan. 30 study published in JAMA Network.

The study identified 821 deaths among CYP aged 0 to 19 years between August 1, 2021, and July 31, 2022, in the United States and compared it with other causes of death in 2019 prior to the pandemic. COVID-19 was ranked eighth among all causes of death within this demographic, accounting for 2 percent of all causes of death.

According to data from the National Center for Health Statistics, unintentional injuries were the leading cause of death among children in 2020, accounting for 12.5 percent of deaths below the age of 12 and 31.4 percent of deaths among adolescents aged 12-17.

COVID-19 accounted for 0.3 percent of deaths in children under the age of 12 and 0.8 percent of deaths among those aged 12-17.

Mental Stress Among Children

Mental health among children and adolescents worsened during the pandemic per a paper published in The Lancet Psychiatry that analyzed emer-

gency department visits. The analysis found a 22 percent jump in youth visits for suicide attempts when comparing the period prior to the pandemic to the pandemic period until July 2021.

This surge in suicide visits happened even though there was a 32 percent reduction in pediatric emergency department visits for health-related reasons during the pandemic. In addition, there was also an 8 percent increase in visits for suicidal ideation—referring to individuals who entertain suicidal thoughts.

A study on the National Poison Data System found that suspected suicide attempts through self-poisoning among children rose by 26.7 percent between 2015 and 2020.

“We need to be vigilant for the warning signs associated with suicide risk in our children,” said Dr. Christopher Holstege, chief of the division of medical toxicology at the University of Virginia School of Medicine.

“Our study is one of a number that demonstrates that we are experiencing an unprecedented mental health crisis in younger age groups. As a society, we must commit more resources to the mental health needs of our children.”

Hawley wants Nashville school shooting investigated as hate crime against Christians



Missouri Sen. Josh Hawley wants the deadly shooting at Christian school in Nashville to be investigated as a hate crime.

“The nation witnessed the vicious murder of small schoolchildren in Nashville, Tenn.,” he wrote in a letter to senior Biden administration officials. “It is commonplace to call such horrors ‘senseless violence.’ But properly speaking, that is false. Police report that the attack here was ‘targeted’ — targeted, that is, against Christians.”

Police said a 28-year-old Nashville

woman who identified as a transgender man killed three 9-year-old children and three adults at The Covenant School, which is associated with the conservative evangelical Covenant Presbyterian Church. Authorities revealed that the shooter executed a “targeted attack” and left behind a “manifesto.” Hawley contended that the nature of the fatal shooting might indicate a specific desire to harm Christians.

“I urge you to immediately open an investigation into this shooting as a federal hate crime,” he wrote. “The full re-

sources of the federal government must be brought to bear to determine how this crime occurred and who may have influenced the deranged shooter to carry out these horrific crimes. Hate that leads to violence must be condemned. And hate crimes must be prosecuted.”

The suspected shooter executed her attack the same week the Trans Radical Activist Network called for a “day of vengeance.”

The students killed in the shooting were identified as Evelyn Dieckhaus, Hallie Scruggs and William Kinney, all 9 years old. Katherine Koonce, the school’s 60-year-old principal, also was killed, as were 61-year-old staffers Cynthia Peak and Mike Hill. Hallie was the daughter of Chad Scruggs, the senior minister at Covenant Presbyterian Church.

The suspected shooter sent messages to a former middle school basketball teammate moments before the attack, saying she was “planning to die today” and that the friend would “probably hear” about her on the news. “My fam-

ily doesn’t know what I’m about to do,” she added. “One day this will make

more sense. I’ve left more than enough evidence behind.”

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Asbury Awakening revival spreading on campuses across nation

The Asbury Awakening revival has not ended but is spreading across the nation.

What some have referred to as a potential new Great Awakening within Christian history started as a spark on the campus of Kentucky's Asbury University in February when thousands of Christians gathered for two weeks of Spirit-led worship, prayer and repentance. Since that time, the outpouring has spread around the United States, especially opening the hearts and minds of young people.

One place where the Holy Spirit has been felt is Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. The Inspire Broadcasting Network posted several new photos on Facebook of students worshipping together at a recent outdoor service -- singing,

praying and answering the gospel call by being baptized. "The Lord is not slowing down," Inspire wrote.

Meanwhile, the outpouring continues 679 miles away at Highlands College in Birmingham, Ala. Malachi O'Brien, pastor of The Church at Pleasant Ridge in Harrisonville, shared a video clip on Twitter of students being baptized at Highland College. He said the video had been sent to him by Kevin Bussey, a professor of biblical studies at the college.

"TESTIMONY. SPONTANEOUS BAPTISMS. God at work @HCollege," O'Brien wrote. "It's stories like this that increase our faith to believe God for MORE! He is NOT done with Gen Z. He has only begun. Our sons & daughters belong to JESUS. Even if you have

a 'prodigal' and it looks like there is no hope. TRUST ME. There is."

Grace Christian Academy, a middle school in Knoxville, Tenn., reported the results of the school's annual Discipleship Days as the school welcomed back its alumni.

"WHAT A WEEK!," it posted on Facebook. "The Holy Spirit has filled rooms and lives on campus this week as we welcomed alumni back on campus to lead #discipleshipdays. Incredible messages, intense worship, and nearly 30 lives eternally changed! Please join us in prayer that the spirit will continue to move in the lives of



our students in the weeks and months to come. We thank the master, we thank the savior, we thank God."

"The Office" actor calls out anti-Christian bias in HBO series

Actor Rainn Wilson from "The Office" last weekend pointed out another example of Hollywood's bias against Christians. He criticized on Twitter the HBO series "The Last of Us," which feature a villainous character using Bible verses in what he suggested was a predictable formula.

"I do think there is an anti-Christian bias in Hollywood," he

tweeted. "As soon as the David character in 'The Last of Us' started reading from the Bible, I knew that he was going to be a horrific villain. Could there be a Bible-reading preacher on a show who is actually loving and kind?"

"The Last of Us," a post-apocalyptic show based on the video game of the same name, featured a group of cannibals led by what

appeared to be a Christian preacher. The group justified their actions by quoting Bible verses, and a later scene featured the preacher attempting to rape the series protagonist Ellie, a young girl.

Others agreed with Wilson's criticism and pointed out how this was hardly the first example of Hollywood's anti-Christian bias.

"Defamation of Christianity has become the most unoriginal and tired cliches in movie/TV series storylines," LIBRE Initiative president Daniel Garza said. "It's prevalence is much more than a bias against an entire people, it is meant to undermine faith and position the secular minded as only ones with altruistic intentions."

Evie Magazine founder Brittany Martinez wrote, "As SOON as the pastor started reading from the Bible, I knew he was going to be awful. I was like, 'watch that guy be David the creepy cannibal from the video game.' And then it was David. Shocked. Surprised. Never seen it before. He wasn't a pastor in the

video game."

"We've all known this for a

long, long time, Rainn," recording artist Sean Feucht wrote.



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When Banks — And Other Institutions — Try to Change the World

By Dennis Prager

The primary concern of the people who ran the Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) — the bank that just went bust — was not banking. Nor was it making money for the bank's shareholders or safeguarding the funds of its depositors.

Their primary concern was social activism — LGBTQIA+, DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion), ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), and climate change.

In fact, for nine months — from April 2022 until only eight weeks ago — SVB in America didn't even have a chief risk officer (CRO). It did have a CRO for Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, but the woman entrusted with that role, Jay Ersapah, was apparently considerably more interested in left-wing activism than in risk assessment.

The Daily Mail reported that Ersapah — who identifies herself as a “queer person of color” — “organized a host of LGBTQ initiatives including a month-long Pride campaign and implemented ‘safe space’ catch-ups for staff. In a corporate video published just nine months ago, she said she ‘could not be prouder’ to work for SVB serving ‘underrepresented minorities.’”

“Professional network Outstanding listed Ersapah as a top 100 LGBTQ Future Leader.

“Jay is a leading figure for the bank's awareness activities, including being a panelist at the SVB's Global Pride townhall to share her experiences as a lesbian of color, moderating SVB's EMEA (Europe, Middle East, Africa) Pride townhall and was instrumental in ... supporting employees in sharing their experiences of coming out,” her bio on the Outstanding website states.

“It adds that she ... had authored numerous articles to promote LGBTQ awareness. These included ‘Lesbian Visibility Day’

and ‘Trans Awareness Week.’”

How is one to explain SVB's — and for that matter, virtually every major bank's — woke activism?

There are a number of possible reasons, but here is one that explains the left-wing activism of almost every profession.

Beginning in the second half of the 20th century, people in nearly every white-collar profession ceased finding their work inherently meaningful. So, they sought to use their profession to change the world.

Take journalism. For most of American history, reporters understood that their primary job was to report news. And for the most part, reporters believed that was important work. In the second half of the 20th century, more and more of them found reporting the news unexciting and meaningless. So, they sought to use journalism to change the world.

Sports writers are one such example. There is no group more woke, or more sheeplike in its behavior than sports writers. They decided that merely writing about sports was not particularly significant work. So, they decided to use their profession to change the world. It was sports writers who led the idiotic campaign to drop the name “Redskins” from the Washington NFL team — even though the name was adopted as an honorific (no one names their team for an insult) and even though the vast majority of Native Americans, according to the Washington Post itself, could not care less about the issue.

But the hysteria they whipped up over the name “Redskins” gave the lives of these sports writers much more meaning than merely reporting on football games. They were now making the world a better place.

The same holds true for actors.



Until about the mid-20th century, few actors spoke out on political issues, let alone devoted their off-screen lives to social activism. Most actors actually found meaning in their profession — as indeed they should. Bringing plays and films to life, making people laugh and cry, distracting people from their troubles for a couple of hours — these things render acting a very meaningful profession. But, again, beginning in the second half of the 20th century, Hollywood stars thought they had to “make a difference” by changing the world. One obvious result has been the decimation of the Academy Awards, which have morphed into joyless celebrations not of acting, but of left-wing anger.

The same holds true for academia. If you're an English professor, why merely teach English literature when you can change the world? Doesn't that make you feel much more important? And, if that's true for a college professor, how much more so is it true for an elementary school teacher? What makes you feel more important — teaching third graders how to read and write or fighting racism?

There are two related reasons for these developments.

One is the ascent of leftism, an ideology that regards literally every aspect of life as political. For the

left, there are no non-political spheres. Whether you are a kindergarten teacher, a sports writer or an oboist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, you are to bring political activism into your work.

The other reason is the loss of meaning in our secular society. Whereas in the past people derived meaning in life from their religion — their religious community, their house of worship, from Bible study — religious sources of meaning have begun to disappear from our secular society. And secularism is rapidly leading to the collapse of the other great source of meaning in people's lives: marriage and family, as we witness the lowest number of marriages and children in American history.

Therefore, one has had to look elsewhere for meaning.

And where do people look? To career and political activism — and ideally, the merger of the two. Whereas in the past, one's work was primarily regarded as a means to an end — namely, a way to provide for one's family — today, work is an end in itself.

That's why the people running the Silicon Valley Bank were more interested in LGBTQ activism than in making money for its investors and protecting the money of its depositors. The former is way more meaningful.

Like Pontius Pilate, We All Have to Make a Decision About Christ

Easter exists because Jesus died for our sins and conquered the grave. We celebrate life at Easter, because death lost its sting with Christ's triumphant resurrection.

Sadly, many have never experienced the true meaning of Easter. They may know of Jesus and what He accomplished on the cross, but they can't or won't make a decision about Him as their Savior.

In the Bible, we see a man who will forever be linked to what we call Easter. He talked to Jesus directly, he evaluated Him, and yet he, too, couldn't bring himself to make a decision about what to do with Christ.

His name was Pontius Pilate, and Matthew 27:11-25 tells us a lot about this Roman governor who oversaw the trial of Jesus.

First, Pilate rejected Jesus' own confession of who He was: the Christ, the Savior. Pilate asked the question and heard the truth (straight from the mouth of the Son of God), but he took it no further.



Second, Pilate rejected clear evidence. Pilate investigated Jesus and came to the conclusion that He was innocent, finding that He had committed no crime. Pilate realized that the only reason Jesus was on trial was the envy and hatred of the religious leaders, but he rejected that truth.

Third, Pilate gave in to pressure. Though he heard the claims of Christ and knew He had done

nothing wrong, Pilate was compelled to sentence an innocent man to death because of the influence of the crowd.

Finally, Pilate tried to cleanse himself from the death of Jesus. He knew that he had just condemned an innocent man to die, and he was responsible. In a symbolic gesture, he washed his hands and proclaimed the guilt for Christ's death on the crowd instead.

My friends, Pilate had a decision to make. He knew the truth, but he couldn't take a stand one way or the other. Instead, he asked a question: "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" (Matthew 27:22, NKJV).

That's the question that so many today, perhaps even you, have a hard time answering. In far too many situations, people know the truth but—like Pilate—they give in to the pressures of others and walk away from Jesus, putting the decision off for another day.

However, indecision is a decision. Making no decision for Christ, is making a decision about Christ. And it's one that has eternal consequences.

If you have been putting off the decision to follow Christ and make Him the Lord of your life, now is the perfect time. Jesus' death and resurrection, which we celebrate as Easter, paved the way for you. I encourage you to receive that hope and accept Him as your Savior today!

Ready to commit or recommit your life to Christ? Pray now.

Scripture Reference: Matthew 27:22-24

22 Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!"

23 And he said, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

24 So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves."

Have you surrendered your life to Jesus as Savior? Visit PeaceWith-God.net to learn more.

-Will Graham is the Vice President and Associate Evangelist at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. For more information on the BGEA, visit <https://billy-graham.org>. This article was reprinted with permission.

Freedom Through Sacrifice



CLINT DECKER

President and Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.

Speaking Truth

Freedom. It is a gift available to every person in the world regardless of race, income, education, culture, or what type of government they live under. It is not a freedom of religion or speech. It is something better than all those? A prisoner once remarked, "I am freer in here, than I ever was out there." What is he talking about? A freedom of the soul.

How can one obtain this for themselves? Through the blood of Jesus. Read what Matthew, one of His disciples wrote, "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the

forgiveness of sins.'" (Matthew 26:27-28)

Perhaps you have participated in a solemn act of worship in the church that goes by different names. The Lord's Supper, The Eucharist, Communion, The Lord's Table. It contains a significant feature: the cup. Jesus gave the meaning of it when He said, "for this is my blood of the covenant..."

Why is the blood of Jesus necessary in order to receive divine forgiveness? Because of the severity of sin. The Lord God is the Creator and Judge of all humanity and has a moral law, of which all are held to account. Have you entertained a selfish thought? Have you used God's name as a curse word? Have you bore a grudge against someone? God tells us that if we violate just one of His many laws we are condemned to eternal death. Since all of us have, from the first man and woman until now, then all of us are under this sentence.

There is only one way humanity can be saved from this everlasting punishment. It is not by religion, trying to be morally upright or through

service to others. God has declared it must come through a sacrifice. There is no other way. And not just any sacrifice. It must be a perfect one. In other words, we ourselves, are not good enough. It must be someone more holy, virtuous and honorable than you. This leaves only one man standing – Jesus.

When He left heaven and came to earth, He was on a mission. One to sacrifice Himself and pour out His blood for you and me. And His blood was not that of a mere man. Human sacrifice God forbids. Instead, as strange as it may sound, it was the blood of the Son of God. And it was not a forced sacrifice. No! It was a willing one, where He chose to lay His life down, and it came from a heart filled with love and mercy for the whole world.

Every drop of Jesus' blood that came from the crown of thorns, the whips on His back, the blows to His head, the nails in His hands and feet and a spear in His side – every drop was a sacrifice for you. It was to spare you from the wrath of Almighty God against your disobedience. It was to



cleanse you from the stain of your sin, and remove its divine penalty.

When the cup is taken in honor of the blood He shed, it is a symbolic and worshipful remembrance of His sacrifice. And the benefits of this holy work are available to all. It is both free and costly. Free, meaning you can do nothing to earn or deserve it, but it will cost something that is most valuable to you – your life.

Remember, God requires life for life. Jesus shed His blood for you, so you must lay down your life for Him. How do you do that? By turning from your sin and to Christ by faith, with

all your heart. Not 10% or 50%, but 100% of your heart. Are you ready? Freedom is moments away!

A prayer for you. "Holy and Glorious God! We praise you for your most precious sacrifice – your only begotten Son. Thank you for His blood that was shed for the whole world. Today, bring people to cry out to you, to be cleansed and set free by its power. In Jesus' name. Amen."

—Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings and Speaking Truth is a nationally syndicated column. Please share your comment with Clint at



Spring activities coming to NOTO

Activities continue in NOTO as we enter the spring months.

Redbud Festival kicks off April 1 and goes through April 29. On April 1, 11-3 you can experience Youth Art Exhibition, Redbud Park Pavilion, and Otto's Scavenger Hunt. From 12-3 there is music in the park from Kyler Carpenter & Josh Hoover. From 1-3 is the Redbud Sprig Giveaway & Planting Tips.

EasterFest comes up on April 8 with an Easter Parade on N. Kansas Avenue and a Fun Fair at Great Overland Station. A Big Egg Hunt, Food Trucks, Craft Fair, inflatables and kids games, a Health Fair and more will be on hand. For details see Topeka EasterFest on facebook.

NOTO in Bloom is April 22 and is a benefit for the NOTO Arts and Entertainment District endowment. This



unique event celebrates the best of NOTO – the art, the food, the experience – and its impact on the community

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. April First Friday will feature music by Colin Nichols Acoustic at 6pm

DAMARIS IN CONCERT – Apr. 7, 6-11pm, Compass Point, 800 N. Kansas Ave

Needle Felted 3D Bunny-In-A-Box Class April 8, 12pm - Want to learn how to make an adorable felted bunny in a box? Call the business office to reserve your spot, 785-408-8996; NOTO Arts Center, 935 N Kansas Ave.

Third Saturday Market is Apr. 15, 10-3, Music in the park 1-3.

The SEASONS Annual Fiber Juried Show continues through April 29 at NOTO Arts Center in the Morris Art Gallery. Hours at Wed 11-5, Thur & Fri 11-7 (First Fridays until 8pm), Sat 10-4

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

The Story of NOTO in Art is a project that is in the works for the Kansas Avenue bridge and the grassy area east of Veteran's Park. These areas will tell the NOTO 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/>

Other North Topeka events:

EASTER DINNER & SERVICE – Apr. 9, 4pm, Garfield Park Shelter House. Barry Feaker will share an Easter message of hope. Dinner will be available to the first 100 to arrive. A food box and hygiene kit will also be provided to each family. Hosted by Topeka North Outreach. Volunteers needed for this event, and to help set up at 3pm. 785-286-1370

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

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the events calendar

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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 your snacks!

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 grandopry@gmail.com. GrandOttawaOpry.com

GREATER VISION CONCERT – Mar. 31, 7pm, Wana-maker Woods Nazarene Church, 3501 SW Wana-maker. Freewill offering. Doors open at 6pm. (785) 273-2248. woodsnaz@wwnaz.org

LIVE AT LUNCH – Apr. 5, 11-1, Every Plaza. Blacktop Thunder

FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK: Colin Nichols Acoustic – Apr. 7, 6pm, Redbud Park. Part of the First Friday events.

DAMARIS IN CONCERT – Apr. 7, 6-11pm, Compass Point, 800 N. Kansas Ave.

SWITCH IN TIME IN CONCERT – April 7, 7:30 pm, TPAC

WOOD VALLEY PICKERS – Apr. 21, 7pm, Classic Bean, Fairlawn Plaza. Bluegrass, folk & country. Free admission.

JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED – Apr. 30, 3pm, First United Methodist, 6th & Topeka Blvd. Featuring the musical talents of Grace Morrison, MD, Scott Teeter, MD, Steve Crouch, MD, Mary Franz, MD, more.

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@rhctopeka.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 or 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

CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL CO-OP – Monday's, 1-4pm, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

SENIOR ADULT EXERCISE CLASS – Tuesday's 10am, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. All exercises will be done from a chair, will help you get up out of a chair, & climb stairs safely! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

MID-WEEK PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY – Wednesday's, 7-8pm, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. You are invited! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

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, Lakenaz@aol.com

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE – Apr. 6, 5pm, Oakland United Methodist Church, 801 N.E. Chester Ave.

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE – Apr. 6, 6pm, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE – Apr. 7, 3pm, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave.

EASTER VIGIL OUTDOOR SERVICE – Apr. 8, 7:30pm, Oakland United Methodist Church parking lot, N.E. Sardou and Green streets.

EASTER "SONRISE" OUTDOOR SERVICE – Apr. 9, 6:45am, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave. Easter brunch to follow.

EASTER BREAKFAST – Apr. 9, 8:30am, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. We will celebrate our Risen Lord & Savior Easter morning, by enjoying Breakfast together, before we Worship together! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

'KEEPER OF THE KINGDOM' VBS – June 12 to Family Fun Night, June 16, 6 - 8pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends, family, neighbors, & enemies! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: 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. Reservations/cancellations required 24 hours in advance by calling Meals on Wheels of Jefferson & Shawnee Co. at 295-3980. Each meal includes 1% milk & sugar-free items for diabetics. 215-0064.

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 nhnl@tscl.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. topekawingdance@gmail.com.

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 ACAPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS – Topeka Acappella Unlimited is looking for female singers who 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; wesquaredance.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.

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.



APR. CYCLING EVENTS – Various cycle rides are offered by Kansas Cyclist. www.kansascyclist.com/

APR. OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES – Outdoor events and activities. www.getoutdoorskansas.org/calendar

BREAD BASKET FARMERS MARKET – Saturday's, 7:30am-1pm, Apr. 1 through Nov. 18, south end of West Ridge Mall parking lot.

HISTORIC LECOMPTON TERRITORIAL CAPITAL OF KANSAS 1855-1861

CIVIL WAR HISTORY

- National Landmarks
- Constitution Hall
- Territorial Capital Museum

9 - 5 p.m. Wed-Sat. • 1-5 p.m. Sun.

TOURS 785-887-6148

WWW.LECOMPTONKANSAS.COM

Lecompton Turnpike Exit
10 miles East of Topeka on U.S. 40 & 24



**Developing and Uniting
Christian Leadership**

• Business • Non-profits • Churches

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

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

Apr. 13, 11:30-1: "POWER" Luncheon

Featuring: Speed Networking at Fairlawn
Plaza Mall -
Amanda's Bakery

Open to the public.
RSVP to info@C5Alive.org



- Apr. 8: **EASTERFEST** at Great Overland Station!
- May 11: **POWER** Luncheon, 11:30-1
- June 8: **POWER** Luncheon, 11:30-1



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

LAWRENCE FARMERS MARKET - Sat. 7:30-11:30, 824 New Hampshire Street. Opens April 8

LAWRENCE TUESDAY MARKET - Tuesdays, 4-6pm, South Park, 1141 Massachusetts. Opens May 9

MONDAY FARMERS MARKET - Mondays 7:30-11:30am, May 8 to Oct. 2, Topeka & Sh. Co. Library, 10th & Washburn. (closed Memorial Day & Labor Day)

DOWNTOWN TOPEKA FARMERS MARKET - Saturday's April 8 to Oct. 28, 7:30am-noon, 6th & Harrison. The open-air market is full of fresh fruits and vegetables, herbs, arts & crafts, flower, home-baked goods and more.

YOUTH ART EXHIBIT - Apr. 1, 11-3pm, Redbud Park Pavilion. Live music, scavenger hunt, Redbud sprig giveaway

FOOD TRUCK NIGHT - Apr. 1, 4-8pm, HHHS, 5720 SW 29. Featuring music and food trucks. Helps homeless animals.

CHAINSAW CARVING BY SHEILA - Apr. 1, 9am, Tarwaters, 4107 NW Topeka Blvd.

COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT - Apr. 1, 10:30am, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Join the fun at our Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

DAZED AND CONFUSED - Apr. 2, 11am, Jayhawk Theatre. Popcorn and drinks will be available for purchase. Doors open 30 minutes prior to showtime. jayhawktheatre.org

AWE WOMEN IN BUSINESS SOCIAL - Apr. 6, 4-7pm, TEC Event Center, 3416 SW 6th. Visit with women business owners.

JEROLD BINKLEY TULIP TIME - Apr. 7-23, 6am-11pm, Ted Enslay Gardens, 3650 SE West Edge Rd; also at Old Prairie Town/Ward-Meade Botanical Garden and Doran Rock Garden/Gage Park. Stroll the gardens to see 60,000 multi-colored tulips & other spring flowering bulbs. Certain days will include

vendors, live music, food trucks. 785-251-6800

TULIPS AT TWILIGHT - Every evening April 7-23, 7-10pm. Family fun! A luminary walk & electric light show. Experience the Ward-Meade botanical garden and Old Prairie Town's historic buildings at night with hand-crafted electric light displays. Enjoy the evening with live music on Friday and Saturday nights, ice cream and a corn hole game. Admission for adults is \$5.00 with children 5 and under free. No pets allowed. Located at Old Prairie Town & Ward-Meade Park, 1st & Clay St., Topeka, KS.

SMOKE IN THE SPRING - Apr. 7-8, Osage City. Taste of Osage City BBQ and fun

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, info@C5Alive.org or 640-6399

EASTER DINNER & SERVICE - Apr. 9, 4pm, Garfield Park Shelter House. Barry Feaker will share an Easter message of hope. Dinner will be available to the first 100 to arrive. A food box and hygiene kit will also be provided to each family. Hosted by Topeka North Outreach. Volunteers needed for this event, and to help set up at 3pm. 785-286-1370

C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON - Apr. 13, 11:30-1 at Fairlawn Plaza Mall, featuring speed networking. Catered by Amanda's Rolls & Bakery.

Cost: \$15 for C5 members & first-time guests who

RSVP, \$17 at the door

- \$20 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, May 11, 11:30-1.

TOPEKA WOMEN'S CONNECTION LUNCHEON - Apr. 13, 11:30 to 1pm, Aldersgate Village, 7220 SW Asbury Dr. **MUSIC/FEATURE:** Marti Ford, a talented lady with the harmonica, has a surprising and interesting selection of music. **SPEAKER:** Marti Ford will share her life story of "Moving from a Life of Fear to One of Trust and Peace, Expressing Hope and Encouragement." Prepaid reservations of \$16 due by Apr. 6. Contact Kim at 785-224-5268 for payment. Seating is limited

FRIDAY FLICKS: PUSS n BOOTS - Apr. 14, 8pm, Every Plaza

SPRINGTIME VENDOR SHOW - Apr. 14-16 9am-6pm, West Ridge Mall. Small and local businesses, artists, crafters, and more. For vendor inquiries: mseventsmidwest@gmail.com

WAMEGO TULIP FESTIVAL - Apr. 15-16, 9am-4pm, Wamego.

TULIP FESTIVAL AT THE LAKE - Apr. 15, 10am-3pm, Ted Enslay Gardens at Lake Shawnee. Enjoy live music, visit craft vendors, enjoy fun for the kids and stroll the gardens to view more than 50,000 multi-colored tulips. \$5 admission

NEW RASMUSSEN CAMPUS GRAND OPENING - Apr. 19, 12:15pm, 3722 SW Burlingame Rd. Tour the brand new, state-of-the-art facility, meet with Rasmussen University faculty & staff, experience the official ribbon-cutting, partake in refreshments, and see demonstrations of new simulation equipment. Register by April 7 at RasmussenTopekaGrandOpening.eventbrite.com

TEC ENTREPRENEURIAL SOCIAL - Apr. 20, 4-7pm, Topeka Entrepreneur Community (TEC) Event Center, 3416 SW 6th. Visit with other entrepreneurs and networking groups.

NOTO IN BLOOM - Apr. 22, 6-9:30pm. This unique event celebrates the best of NOTO - the art, the food, the experience - and its impact on the community. Register <https://noto.betterworld.org/events/noto-bloom>



APR 8

TOPEKA EASTER PARADE ON N. KANSAS AVE. & FUN FAIR AT GREAT OVERLAND STATION

stroll-noto-experiencetickets

KINGDOM TO THE CAPITOL - Apr. 23, 5pm, South Steps of the Capitol. Part of a 50 state Capitol tour to rally and pray for revival, presented by TPUSA and Let Us Worship. Pastors Gathering at 4 pm near South Steps. Register at <https://k2c.tpfaith.com/>

COMEDY CAFE - Apr. 28, 6:30pm, Topeka Bible Church, 1135 SW College Ave. An evening of fun, food (delectable desserts) and fellowship while learning more about the Youth for Christ ministry outreach and its impact in Topeka. Featuring the comedy of Michael Joiner. Go to www.topekayfc.org/event/comedycafe or call 785-232-8296 for reservations or to sponsor a table.

THE MORAL IS - Apr. 28 & 29, 7pm; (dinner at 5:30pm) The Moral Is is an original one-act play featuring an assortment of Aesop's fables. The whole evening is free of charge, with donations accepted. Performances will be held in the facilities of Grace Community Church, 310 E. 8th Street, Overbrook. Contact info: ccs.kansas@gmail.com

TOPEKA SHAREFEST - Apr. 29, 8am-12pm. Fellowship Bible Church annual event to help Topeka schools, by landscaping, painting, constructing, and cleaning up the grounds of area schools and buildings. You can register at sharefesttopeka.com

PAWS IN THE PARK - Apr. 29, 10am-2pm, Topeka West High School. Info: gracec@hhstopeka.org

CELEBRITY PANCAKE FEED - Apr. 29, 7am-12pm, Combat Air Museum at Forbes Field. All you can eat Perkins pancakes for \$7 donation, plus sausage, juice & coffee. Free tour of museum is included. 785-862-3303.

LAST SUNDAY FREE BREAKFAST BUFFET - Apr. 30, 8am - 12pm, Philip Billard Post 1650, 3110 SW Huntoon. Free pancakes & sausage, eggs, coffee, juice, and sometimes biscuits & gravy. Donations accepted and will go to helping vets in the Topeka area.

FOCUS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING - May 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 engagement, increase awareness and understanding, and empower the community to be informed and vocal on challenges faced in Topeka. RSVP - <https://tinyurl.com/2p4yse37>

CAPITOL NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER - May 4, 12pm, Capitol Rotunda. Info: (316) 516-0777 www.nationaldayofprayer.org; donna@cultureshield.com

BERNIE TOURNEY - May 6, 12:30pm, Lake Shawnee Golf Course. Combat Veteran annual Bernie Deghand memorial tourney. Lunch at 11:30. Registration: lsg-berniertourney2023.golfgenius.com. 785-217-1662. Sponsors needed!

SOLE REASON GOLF TOURNAMENT - June 24, Cypress Ridge Golf Course. 8-8:30 AM registration, 9 AM shotgun. Solereason@yahoo.com or 785-338-2965 or register at solereason.net. Benefits children that need sneakers. Lots of prizes and silent auction items.

TEE-PAC GOLF TOURNAMENT - July 21, Shawnee Country Club. A fundraiser for mainstage program-

FRIENDS OF WARD-MEADE
Presents
TULIPS AT TWILIGHT
Luminary Walk & Electric Light Show

Experience the Ward-Meade Botanical Garden and Old Prairie Town's historic buildings at night with hand-crafted electric light displays.

April 7 - 23, 2023
7 - 10 p.m.

Admission: \$5
Children 5 and under free
No pets allowed

OLD PRAIRIE TOWN
Westside ACE Hardware
Parks for All Foundation
parks recreation

785-251-6800

YOUTH FOR CHRIST
COMEDY CAFE
A Night of Laughter
Featuring
The Comedy of
Actor & Comedian
MICHAEL JOINER

Friday Evening April 28th
TOPEKA BIBLE CHURCH
1135 SW College Avenue
Topeka, KS 66604
6:30 pm

Seating is limited & Reservations are required
To make your reservation or sponsor a table go to:
www.topekayfc.org/event/comedy_cafe
or call the YFC office at 785-232-8296
The Comedy Cafe is underwritten by
Individual table sponsors: seating is limited

ming and capital improvements at the Topeka Performing Arts Center. The early bird registration price for a team of 4 is \$375, available until April 30th. Online registration deadline is July 7th. Registration will include lunch, 18-hole course and golf cart. Individual person registration is \$100. Lunch sponsor Iron Rail Brewing. Also silent auction and 50/50 raffle. <https://www.topekaperformingarts.org/events/2023/teepac-golf-tournament>

MEETINGS & CLASSES

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

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

TOPEKA LIONS CLUB - 1st Mondays at Noon at Wings, Etc. Come at 11:30 to order from the menu. Guests welcome.

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

TOPEKA NEEDLEWORK GUILD - Every Mon. (except holidays) 9a-11a in the Menninger Room of the Topeka Public Library. Bring a project to work on as we share our needleworking skills and ideas. All are welcome to drop in.

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

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

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

NARVE (Nat'l Assn of Railroad Veteran Employee) - 2nd Tuesday each month at Grace Episcopal Church, 701 SW 8th Ave - 9:30AM. Enter on NW corner.

MENNINGER BIBLE CLASSES - Tuesdays 11am-12:30. Amerus Room, YWCA, 225 West 12th. A new

study group for Year One of Flo Menninger's course on Four Years through the Bible. Read and discuss Genesis through First Kings. Nominal charge for materials. For info call the YWCA at 233-1750 or Clara Gamache at 785-408-5433. (The Bible study is also taught on Sat. mornings on 101.5 FM radio.)

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

DUPLICATE BRIDGE - Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:30PM at The Woman's Club of Topeka, 5221 SW West Dr. Bill Gates and Warren Buffett play duplicate bridge! It is great for your brain health. For additional information email janescola@hotmail.com.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SAFE STREETS MEETING - 1st Wed., 11:45am, Great Overland Station 266-4606. (no meeting in July)

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

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

college students.

TOPEKA TWILIGHT LIONS BRANCH CLUB - 3rd Thursdays at 7pm at Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco. Social gathering, guests welcome. Topekalions.org

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

OPERATION BACKPACK - 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary School, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers gather to assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. No assembly in August. Sponsored by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 286-1370.

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

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

TOPEKA (Downtown) OPTIMIST CLUB - Every Fri., noon. Serving the youth of Topeka. Anyone welcome. For info: 272-1099 or fostrern60@yahoo.com.

A GOOD YARN CLUB - 2nd & 4th Sat., 9-11am, Wanamaker Rd Baptist Church, 2700 SW Wanamaker. Doing Good for Others: Knitting & Crocheting for Local Charities, free yarn, needles, hooks & patterns. All are welcome. Info: Anne, 785-272-9249 or kittens812@sbcglobal.net

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

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

TOPEKA GREAT LIGHT AGLOW - For meeting info contact Vickie Lynch at greatlighttopeka@gmail.com.

SUPPORT GROUPS

HOPE AND HEALING ACADEMY harnesses the power of horses to transform the human spirit. They are expanding services to address the needs and experiences of first responders and members of the armed forces. For info, call 785-224-4232 or go to www.hopeandhealingacademy.com.

OVERCOMER'S OUTREACH ANONYMOUS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP - Mondays 6:30-7:30pm, at Be Filled Of South Topeka, 200 Airport Rd, Bldg. 818 Suite 1. Led by Pastor Bill Ritchey. 785-817-2802

BINDING UP THE BROKEN HEARTED - Sessions offered for women who suffer from the after-effects of abortion. All the women who lead these sessions have had an abortion and have received healing from God's Word. For info, contact local Healing Hearts representative Shelly Brush, First Southern Baptist Church at shelly.b@healinghearts.org. All communication is confidential and secure.

MIDLAND CARE GRIEF SUPPORT Groups: Building A, 200 SW Frazier Circle; Every Mon., 4-5pm: 12 Week Adult Group for Recent Loss 1st and 3rd Thu., 10:30am & 5:30pm—Ongoing Adult Group 1st and 3rd Thu., 5:30pm: Ongoing Young Adult Group (4-18 years of age) For All Groups: Call for start dates and info packet. Group and individual grief support available upon request. Info: 785-232-2044 ext.341

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

Topeka

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

AL-ANON is a support group for families and friends of alcoholics. For information on meetings in the Topeka area email ais-topeka@kansas-al-anon.org or call 785-215-1045. All correspondence is confidential

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

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

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

Caregiver Support Group via Google Hangouts, 4:30pm every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at hdyoung@alz.org or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

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

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS/BEREAVED PARENTS GROUP - 4th Mon. in Formation classroom at Most Pure Heart of Mary, 17th & Stone. Discussion starts 7pm; fellowship & refreshments 8:30. 785-272-4895

CAREGIVERS GROUP - Caring Hearts of Hope meet 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30pm at Highland Heights Christian Church. This group will root its encouragement in God's word and prayer as well as conversation and sharing and is open to all those who care for others with illnesses such as Alzheimers, dementia, cancer or other debilitating illnesses or injuries. For dates and info, go to "Weekly Class List" at www.highlandheightssc.com or call 785-379-5642.

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

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

GRANDPARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP - 3rd Tue., 6:30-8pm, 2nd floor meeting room, St. Francis Hosp, 1700 SW 7th. For info: Sharla, 286-2329; Jennie (English/Spanish) 231-0763.

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

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

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

"HEALING AFTER THE SUICIDE OF A LOVED ONE" ("HEAL") - or Survivors of Suicide" (SOS). 1st & 3rd

Tue., 6:30-8pm, Zoom meeting 1st Tue, and in-person meetings 3rd Tue. at First Congregational Church, 1701 SW Collins. No cost to attend. Informal meetings. Contact: topeka.heals@gmail.com or Sandy at 785-249-3792

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP - First Thursday, 3pm, St. Francis Hospital, Room 300 on 2nd floor. For info: Jim 785 806 3266

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

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

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

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

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How the Pandemic Has Affected Attendance at U.S. Religious Services

Pew Research Center has conducted five surveys since the summer of 2020 in which we asked U.S. adults whether they attended religious services in person in the prior month and, separately, whether they took part virtually (by streaming online or watching on TV). Our analysis of these surveys finds that there are some indications that in-person engagement in religious services has declined slightly since 2019, before the COVID-19 outbreak. The share of all U.S. adults who say they typically attend religious services at least once a month is down modestly but measurably (by 3 percentage points, from 33% to 30%) over that span, and one-in-five Americans say they now attend in person less often than they did before the pandemic.

At the same time, the share of U.S. adults who take part in religious services in some way (in person, virtually or both) in a given month has remained remarkably steady since the early days of the pandemic – even though how they participate has shifted dramatically.

In July 2020 – when many churches, synagogues, mosques and other houses of worship were limiting attendance or closed to physical worshippers – 41% of adults said they had joined in religious services in one of these ways (either in person or virtually) in the past month. Most of them (27% of all U.S. adults) said they had participated only virtually. An additional 9% said they had attended in person and watched virtually. Just 4% said they had gone to church or other religious services only in person in the month prior to the July 2020 survey.

Since then, the total share of U.S. adults participating in religious services has barely budged, hovering around four-in-ten. But as the pandemic has run its course and many religious congregations have reopened their doors to worshippers, the percentage of Americans participating virtually in worship services has been dropping. Meanwhile, in-person attendance quickly rebounded and then appears to have plateaued. In the most recent survey asking these questions, in November 2022, 12% say they participated only virtually in the past month (down from 27% in the first



year of the pandemic), while 16% say they attended only in person (up from 4% in 2020). An additional 12% say they did both.

Overall, 28% of U.S. adults now say they attended religious services in person in the last month, virtually unchanged from the last time we asked this question in March 2022 (27%) and only slightly higher than in September 2021 (26%). Those surveys indicated a significant rise of in-person attendance from March 2021 (17%) and July 2020 (13%). By contrast, the share of Americans who say they watched religious services online or on TV in the last month dropped in the new survey, from 30% in March 2022 to 24% in November.

Throughout the pandemic, White evangelical Protestants consistently have been the most likely of the country's major religious groups to attend services in person. The portion of White evangelicals who report that they physically went to church in the past month has not dropped below 30% at any point since July 2020. In the most recent survey, fully half of White evangelicals (52%) say they attended in person.

Black Protestants have experienced a substantial bounce in physical attendance, from a low of 14% in July 2020 to 41% in the recent survey. But Black Americans also have suffered a disproportionately high share of COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths relative to White Americans, and Black Protestants remain the U.S. religious group most likely to be viewing services virtually. In the most recent survey, about half of Black Protestants (54%) say they participated in services online

or on TV in the last month, compared with 46% of White evangelical Protestants and smaller shares of Catholics (20%), White non-evangelical Protestants (19%) and Jews (16%). (This report cannot analyze the attendance patterns of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and other smaller non-Christian religious groups due to sample size limitations.)

When it comes to party affiliation, Republicans and Republican-leaning independents have been much more likely than Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents to attend religious services in person – as well as somewhat more likely to participate virtually – throughout the pandemic.

Older Americans tend to be more religious than young adults, and despite being at greater risk of hospitalization and death from COVID-19, Americans ages 65 and older have generally been somewhat more inclined than young adults (ages 18 to 29) to go to religious services in person. Older Americans also report participating in religious services virtually at higher rates than the youngest adults.

the most recent survey, about half of adults 65 and older say they attended services in the past month, including a third who went either only in person (18%) or both in person and virtually (15%). That compares with roughly three-in-ten adults under 30 who say they participated in religious services in any way, including about one-fifth who went either only in person (12%) or both in person and virtually (9%).

Throughout most of the pandemic,

about six-in-ten Americans have not taken part in religious services in any way. In the new survey, this includes roughly seven-in-ten adults under 30 (72%) and about nine-in-ten religiously unaffiliated adults (those who describe their religious identity as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular”).

These are among the key findings of a new analysis of Americans' religious attendance, based on a Pew Research Center survey conducted Nov. 16-27, 2022, on the nationally representative American Trends Panel, as well as several older surveys. For the November 2022 survey, a total of 11,377 panelists responded out of 12,402 who were sampled, for a response rate of 92%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 11,377 respondents is plus or minus 1.5 percentage points.

Key takeaways from the new report

To assess the impact of the pandemic on worship attendance rates, the report looks at Pew Research Center's survey data in four different ways:

Five surveys conducted since the start of the pandemic (beginning with a survey in July 2020) show that a remarkably steady share of Americans – about 40% – say they have partici-

pated in religious services in the prior month one way or the other (either in person or virtually, i.e., by streaming online or watching on TV).

- Asked directly whether they now attend religious services more or less often than they did before the pandemic, more Americans indicate that their attendance habits have declined than risen. But it's a complicated picture: As of November 2022, 20% say they are attending in person less often (while 7% say they are going in person more often). On the other hand, 15% say they are participating in services virtually more often (while 5% say they are watching services online or on TV less often).

- The share of U.S. adults who say they generally attend religious services once a month or more has dropped slightly, from 33% in 2019 to 30% in 2022.

A longitudinal analysis of the survey data – tracking the same individuals' answers on four annual surveys from 2019 to 2022 – finds that the vast majority (87%) report no change in their rates of worship attendance over that period. But among those who do indicate a change, more report attending services less often (8%) than report attending more often (4%).



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Israel bill against evangelizing sparks widespread opposition

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is rejecting a proposed law that would criminalize sharing the Gospel in Israel. The bill, supported by members of the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party, would punish Christian proselytization with up to one year in prison.

The proposal, submitted by United Torah Judaism's Moshe Gafni and Yaakov Asher, claims that "missionary groups, mainly Christians," have stepped up efforts to convert people in Israel.

The language of the bill would make soliciting an adult to change his faith punishable by one year in jail. The penalty would increase to two years if the individual being solicited was a minor.

The legislation comes at a time when protesters on the left and right march in opposition to elements of a judicial reform bill being debated in the Knesset.

After what's being called an anti-missionary bill was brought to the attention of Netanyahu, he issued a statement.

"We will not advance any law against the Christian community," Netanyahu tweeted in Hebrew and English in response to concerns.

What the bill says

Gafni, a long-serving lawmaker who has frequently proposed anti-Christian legislation over the past couple of decades was seen as going full-throttle against Christians in the bill's language.

"Recently, the attempts of missionary groups, mainly Christians, to solicit conversion of religion have increased," the bill said. "At times, these attempts do not involve monetary promises or material gains and are therefore not illegal according to the current law, but the many negative repercussions, including psychological damages, warrant the intervention of the legislature."

The proposed legislation would have even prohibited the creation of Hebrew-language online videos that preached about Jesus out of concern that Jewish minors might watch them.

There is no verifiable evidence that missionary work has increased, even after Israel approved the first Israeli-based Christian cable channel.

Bill went unnoticed until recently

The bill went largely unnoticed in Israel because of the judicial reform protests and because there was little chance of it passing. It only gained publicity when American Christian media and conservative news outlets began talking about it. One diplomat revealed



that the Foreign Ministry began receiving calls from heads of parliamentary friendship groups, diplomats, Christian Zionist leaders, and worldwide Christian and Jewish leaders.

Israeli news outlets reported that one diplomat said Israel's Foreign Ministry prepared reports on the fallout for the foreign minister.

Joel C. Rosenberg, an evangelical best-selling author who has dual Israeli citizenship, warned that the bill would create "a major new headache for Netanyahu's government by sparking a serious clash with evangelical Christians in the United States and around the world who are among the biggest supporters of the state of Israel."

Israel already has legal, and mostly unenforced, measures to curb Christians from evangelizing to minors in the nation's Jewish majority and the threat of

jail time for anyone who bribes Jews to convert to Christianity or any other religion.

Concerns rise

But the lack of prosecutions hasn't allayed concerns.

Interviewed by The Times of Israel, Glenn Plummer, bishop of the Memphis-based, 6.5 million member Church of God in Christ, stated that even if the bill failed to pass, he was concerned that it could create hostility towards Christians and lessen support for Israel.

"I am a preacher of the gospel," Plummer said emotionally. "I have been a pastor for 22 years. Not only am I a pastor, I am a bishop. If six and a half million Black Americans in my church hear that Israel is considering banning the gospel of Jesus Christ, it would be terrible," he lamented. "Frankly, I'm at a loss, because

I don't want to add on to the pile-on on Israel."

He's not alone expressing alarm by other churches, Christian Zionists in Israel and around the world, despite assurances by government officials that it would not become law.

International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, long a supporter of the State of Israel, welcomed Netanyahu's opposition.

"We appreciate the assurance from Prime Minister Netanyahu that the proposed anti-missionary bill will not go forward, and thank him for speedily putting this matter to rest," said Juergen Buehler, president of the ICEJ.

"He has done much over his long political career to strengthen and guard Israel's relations with Christians worldwide, and our embrace of this nation is warmly returned."

Previous attempts

According to the New York Times and The Times of Israel, it is not the first time the country's legislators have flirted with such legislation. "Attempts to convert Jews to Christianity touch a nerve in Israel. For centuries, hundreds of thousands of Jews in Europe were subject to forced conversions by the Catholic Church — and Orthodox churches to a lesser extent — on penalty of expulsion or death," reports The Times.

It goes on to say, "In 1998, Labor MK Nissim Zvili sponsored a bill criminalizing written proselytization material that Christians feared could be used to out-

law possession of the New Testament." That bill was withdrawn.

One Christian man living in Israel says open proselytization is not what every believer is called to do. In fact, many surveys find that most Jews have heard the Gospel message because they understand Christians believe Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah. They just don't agree with it.

He emphasized that he is not in Israel to proselytize.

To proselytize or not

"As a Christian living here in Israel, I just do what the Lord asked me to do personally," he told The Times of Israel. "And that's not necessarily to proselytize or try and convert people to my faith, to Jesus."

"I'm called to serve as a light on the earth and salt on the earth. I feel that I'm doing that through helping the Jewish people in different ways, bringing the Jews back to the land, to help Holocaust survivors here, and just basically love the Jewish people as much as I can. For me personally, it doesn't mean to share the gospel per se."

For Plummer, the proposed Israel bill will not shake his support for Israel or God's Chosen People.

"There is nothing no one can do or say that would cause my love of Israel, my support for Israel to waver. Exclamation. Point.," he says. "Because my support is biblically based. It is based on the God of Israel. Can anyone cause me to deny the God of Israel?"

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Revival is spreading Michael W. Smith says

God is on the move and revival is happening around the world, Christian musician Michael W. Smith said. “Something’s happening,” he says. “I’m so grateful that I’m alive to get to see it.”

The current movement of God extends beyond the United States. Over 14,000 Vietnamese attended the Spring Love Festival earlier this month at an outdoor field in Ho Chi Minh City, with Franklin Graham preaching and Smith and other artists leading worship in song. More than 300 local churches participated. In April, Smith will perform in Romania, Hungary, Poland, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Italy.

The event was a miracle in itself as Vietnam’s Communist regime oppresses Christians with local authorities using violence in their persecution of believers. Voice of the Martyrs says just 2.5



percent of the country’s population is Christian.

Smith posted a video on his Instagram account of tens of thousands of Vietnamese singing

the lyrics to the popular praise song “Waymaker.” Some of them sang in English while others sang in Vietnamese. It was a “bit overwhelming,” he said emotionally,

to hear the Vietnamese crowd sing, in unison to music he had recorded. “God is on the move,” he posted on social media.

A news release from Graham’s

organization said it was the first time the Vietnamese government has given permission for an evangelistic outreach with a foreign speaker to be held outside of a religious holiday.

It is edifying, Smith said, to worship with Christians in other countries. “Sometimes in western civilization in America, we think everything sort of revolves around our little world that we have,” he said. “It was just so authentic.”

Smith has been nominated for 14 Grammy Awards, winning three. In April, moviegoers can see Smith on the big screen in the documentary “The Journey,” which follows world-renowned tenor Andrea Bocelli, his wife Veronica and other musicians as they travel on horseback through the Italian countryside along the Via Francigena. It will be in theaters on April 2-6.

New book traces roots of resurging Marxism

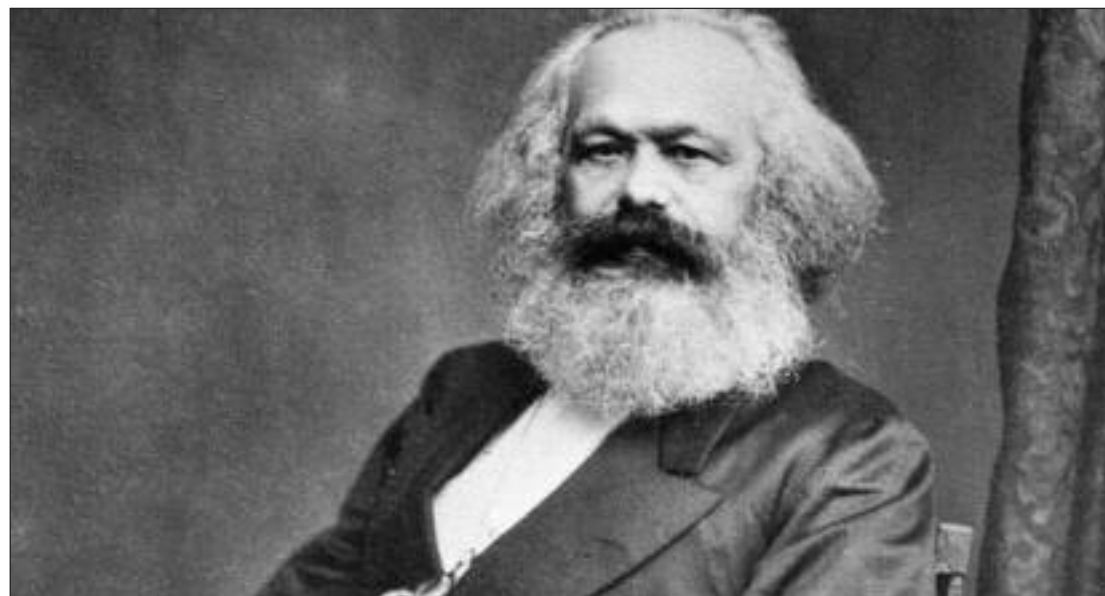
The death of Marxism often has been exaggerated. The political philosophy that resulted in the death of millions in the 20th century is alive and well in the 21st century.

“For a generation after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, most Americans and Europeans regarded Marxism as an enemy that had been defeated once and for all,”

author Yoram Hazony wrote. “But they were wrong. A mere 30 years later, Marxism is back. By the summer of 2020, even as American cities succumbed to rioting, arson and looting, the liberal custodians of many of the country’s leading institutions adopted a policy of accommodating their Marxist employees by giving in to some of their demands.”

Hazony, a U.S. native living in Jerusalem, traces the history of political philosophy in his new book “Conservatism: A New Discovery.”

“What initially looked like a temporary policy of appeasement has since become a rout,” he said. “Control of many of the most important news media, universities and schools, major corporations and philanthropic organizations and even the government bureaucracy, the military and some churches has passed into the hands



of Marxist activists.”

He cites such examples as the “New York Times” dismissing employees and Princeton University removing the name of former President Woodrow Wilson. Conservatives will have a difficult time reclaiming the culture, Hazony believes.

“We know that most of these institutions will never return to what

they were before,” he said. “Anti-Marxist liberals now find themselves in much the same situation that has characterized conservatives, nationalists and Christians for years. They are in the opposition.”

Understanding the current political and cultural environment is the first step in beginning to change it, said Rod Dreher of “The American

Conservative.”

“An unusually compelling mix of history, political science, cultural analysis, religious wisdom and personal testimony, Hazony’s instant classic is not the just the voice of a new conservatism,” he said. “It also is the voice of an old civilization whose clarion call proclaims hope and sounds the way out of the contemporary West’s dark wood.”

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Chores to Tackle to Get Your Home Ready for Spring

After months spent largely indoors while harsh elements battered your home's exterior, many homeowners are throwing open the windows and embracing spring's arrival.

Every home requires ongoing maintenance to ensure it's living up to its aesthetic and functional best. This checklist can help you create a comfortable home setting for enjoying the warmer months.

Check gutters. During the colder months, debris can accumulate in the gutters, which can be problematic when spring rains arrive. Clogged gutters prevent water from flowing efficiently away from the roof and house. When they're backed up, they can cause water damage in a short amount of time. Faulty guttering can also cause slow leaks that lead to damage you may not discover until major repair work is needed. Properly functioning gutters are clear of debris, flow freely and are securely attached to the home.

Inspect the roof. Your roof takes a real beating in all kinds of weather conditions. Making it a common practice to carefully inspect the roof with the change of seasons can help



you identify potential problems while they're still in early stages, before a big storm hits and major damage occurs. Some roof issues can be addressed with simple repairs you can do yourself while others may require a professional. A roofing expert can help you determine whether any trouble areas can be patched or if a more complete restoration is in order.

Replace the dryer vent. Upgrading your dryer vent is an opportunity to conserve energy and prevent flammable lint build-up in your dryers. One option for updating the exhaust sys-

tem is a paintable version of InoVate's Prime DryerWallVent. Engineered for both vent replacement and new construction, the vent includes features such as a gravity-assist damper, integrated magnets and a drip edge to provide extra protection from the elements as well as pests. A large, clean opening and lightweight angled damper promote exceptional airflow efficiency.

Service air conditioning units. Your heating and cooling system works hard to keep your indoor climate comfortable when extreme temperatures make the outdoors unbearable. That's why it's important to have your systems serviced by a professional, and spring is a smart time to do so before they're hard at work throughout the warmer months. Service can correct problems and ensure everything is operating efficiently, which can lead to money savings as well.

Repair window screens. Throughout the winter, your home's window screens can accumulate a layer of dirt and grime that isn't just unsightly; it blows indoors when you open the windows to welcome a fresh breeze. What's more, if your screens have rips and tears, pesky bugs and other critters can make their way into your home more easily. Cleaning and repairing your screens can make your home more secure and help protect your indoor air quality.

Find more information to help get your home ready for spring at Dryer-WallVent.com.

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entertainment

'Living' tackles life and death in a poignant drama

Living is aptly titled.

It's a deceptively simple, even non-descript name, to be sure—easily forgotten and, perhaps, easily overlooked.

But as the movie tells us, so is living itself. We all, by the nature of reading this review, are alive. But how many of us know how to live?

To live a life, and live it well ... how does one do such a thing?

The film, which received two Academy Award nominations, is an adaptation of Akira Kurosawa's drama, *Ikiru*, and derived from Leo Tolstoy's 1902 novel *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*.

Mr. Williams—always Mr. Williams—has lived his life (the last few decades of it, at any rate) with absolute respectability. It's what is expected of him. Indeed, it's what he expects of himself.

He is, after all, a man of some import. As the manager of the Public Works Department in London's County Hall, he wears a black suit and bowler hat, as is expected. He's never late and works a full day, as expected. People come asking for the Public Works department to do—well, works for the public, as expected.

And as expected, Mr. Williams rarely says yes. He rarely says no, either. He is, after all, an integral part of a *bureaucracy*. Papers are shuffled upstairs or down, sent across the hall or across the road. And often, they simply sit in the stacks of papers at Public Works for a few weeks, until the matter either disappears or a new request is filed.

"There's no harm," Mr. Williams will say.

Aimee Lou Wood plays a young woman who befriends Mr. Williams.

That genteel statement about grinding government delay, too, is expected of him. He has done little else for so these many years.

But then something unexpected happens to Mr. Williams. Death is soon knocking on his door from incurable cancer. He can file it away six months, perhaps nine at the most. But then, death will come through his door and take him away, not even bothering with the requisite triplicate forms. Nothing can stop his shadowed scythe. Not even British bureaucracy.

When Mr. Williams doesn't go to work the day after he finds out, it's as if Big Ben itself skipped a toll. He instead goes to a seaside town and confesses his predicament to a free-spirited playwright he meets in a café. Mr. Williams tells the man



(Mr. Sutherland) that he came to town hoping to shed his rigid, aged "Britishness" and, for once, live a little.

But now that he's there, with a willing spirit and spending money to spare, Mr. Williams realizes something rather sad.

"I don't know how," he confesses.

To live a *life* well? To do that, given the unforgivable timetable Mr. Williams has been given, is all-but-impossible. But to live well? Perhaps there's still time for that.

Mr. Sutherland, the playwright whom Mr. Williams meets, is certainly eager to show Mr. Williams the *pleasures* that perhaps he so long ignored. But Mr. Williams isn't really interested in wiling away the days he has left on tawdry pastimes. He's after something more elusive, something with more meaning.

He sees a glint of that in Miss Harris, a young lady who worked for him briefly at Public Works. She's young and spirited, and Mr. Williams begins to spend what time he can with her—hoping, he confesses later, that she might somehow teach him to live more fully. But that, too, while helpful, is a dead end.

No, he ultimately finds meaning by going back to work, of all things. But instead of shuffling papers to other departments or letting them sit in his baskets, he takes on particular request on. He uses whatever means he has at his disposal to shepherd the project through County Hall's byzantine system and work-averse managers, showing a stunning understanding of what method of persuasion might work for each. He even begs essentially the manager of the entire bureaucracy—a titled noble to whom Mr. Williams has long literally bowed in deference—to consider his petition.

In so doing, Mr. Williams does something practically unprecedented: He gets something done. And by the time he's done, he's inspired others to do the same.

A lot of us—even many of us Christians—don't quite know what to do with our days on earth until they're almost

gone. And then we remember all the places we wanted to see and the things we hoped to do. We regret the time we spent killing it and wish we had more time to do the things we really valued. We think about how to repair relationships or somehow, in some way, get a little closer to the person that God wanted us to be this whole time.

But what sort of person does God want us to be?

For Mr. Williams, the answer is one we'd do well to at least think about (even if Mr. Williams would likely not bring God into the conversation at all): It's a person who does his best. Who makes a difference. A person who doesn't just check boxes and shuffle papers, but works to make life a little better for those around him.

I love the fact that Mr. Williams didn't punt his life for a few months of fun or frivolity. He didn't spend it trying to recapture the joy of youth. He didn't, ultimately, leave who he was and who he'd been all these years. He just became a better version of that person—making a difference as just a regular ol' bureaucrat.

And it, also like its predecessors, plays it pretty straight and pretty clean. The content is surprisingly mild for a PG-13 film: We see the interior of a rather naughty tent, and we hear one British-centric profanity. Smoking is fairly pervasive. But that's it. It's almost clean enough to be cleared for broadcast on the 1953 version of the BBC.

Of course, this film isn't for kids. But for adults who like to chew on bigger themes without gagging on content problems, and for those who like to see some very fine performances (lead Bill Nighy is rightly getting some Oscar attention), *Living* fills out the form for "good movie" and files it in triplicate.

Living is still in selected theaters, including the Glenwood Arts in Overland Park. It can also be streamed.

—Bill Asay / *PluggedIn*

The Set of The Jesus Revolution Experienced Miracles & Baptisms



The box-office sensation *Jesus Revolution* includes scenes of mass baptisms that required plenty of behind-the-scenes preparation and a multitude of extras.

Incredibly, though, the scenes sparked real-life baptisms and salvations, too.

Co-director Andy Erwin and producer Kevin Downes reveal in a new video that the cast and crew members spontaneously chose to get baptized on location. The scenes were filmed at a beach called Pirate's Cove – the same place where countless young people were baptized in the late 60s and early 70s.

"I've never felt anything like that," Erwin said.

Jesus Revolution (PG-13) tells the story of a hippie-led revival and spotlights the ministries of Greg Laurie, Chuck Smith and Lonnie Frisbee.

Erwin described Pirate's Cove as a "difficult location to film."

"You couldn't really keep the public away," he said. "You couldn't lock it down. It's hard to get into, hard to get film crews in, hard to get equipment in."

Downes said decisions for Christ were made on set during the filming of the

baptisms.

Jonathan Roumie, who portrays Frisbee, baptized people behind the scenes. Downes and Erwin saw the baptisms and wrongly assumed Roumie was practicing for his scene.

"He said, 'Man, this is real.' He's like, 'I'm baptizing just like Greg Laurie taught me,'" Erwin said.

Laurie, too, baptized people on set.

"Little did we know that the actual Greg Laurie was a few hundred feet away," Erwin said. "And a member of the cast had come to him. And he was baptizing, without anyone knowing, a real number of the cast."

Said Downes, "You could tell that something extraordinary just happened to them. And they were anticipating what their future was going to be like. It was just so precious."

God "showed up in extraordinary ways," Erwin said.

"There's always miracles – movies don't get made without miracles," Erwin added. "But I've never had anything like what happened on *Jesus Revolution*."

VenuWorks Announces New Executive Director at TPAC

Following a national search, Steve Peters, President of VenuWorks, has announced Rory Kent, Jr. as the new Executive Director of the Topeka Performing Arts Center in Topeka, Kansas.

"I am delighted to welcome Rory to the team. Rory brings a wealth of experience to his new role," said Peters. "His contagious energy is exactly what we need to amplify the arts and entertainment scene in Topeka. I am confident that he is key to future growth of TPAC."

Kent joins VenuWorks after nearly a decade in event management leadership roles in Birmingham, Alabama. Most recently, Kent served as the Program Man-

ager-Sports and Entertainment for the Birmingham Mayor's Department where he worked with City facilities to contract, market, and execute local events.

"TPAC Board of Trustees is delighted to welcome Rory as our new Executive Director at the Topeka Performing Arts Center. Rory and his family will be a great addition to the Topeka community. He brings a high level of passion and energy for the performing arts, and we look forward to supporting Rory as we raise TPAC to a new level for the City of Topeka," said Jeff Parker, TPAC Board Chair. "Buckle your seatbelts, Topeka – this is going to be fun!"



Kendrick brothers to release another faith film in August

The makers of “Fireproof,” “Courageous” and other popular faith films announced that they have another release coming in August.

The new movie is a partnership between brothers Alex and Stephen Kendrick and AFFIRM Films, a Sony Pictures Entertainment company. Although the title and plot details are being kept under wraps, the film will be defined by “humor and heart to inspire audiences everywhere,” stated.

“When we got the call the Kendrick Brothers were ready to share their next story idea, we knew it would be a powerful one, and they delivered,” said Rich Peluso, executive vice president of AFFIRM Films. “We’re honored to partner with them again on another film that will entertain, challenge and lift up families in a time when so many people need encouragement and renewed hope.”

The brothers are known for creating films that speak to society’s most pressing issues, though not without criticism for often weak plots and acting. The duo launched their filmmaking journey by founding Sherwood Pictures, an independent production company that served as a ministry for a local church in Albany, Ga Their 2015 hit, “War Room,” which was filmed on a \$3 million

budget, was released by Sony in just over 1,500 theaters. It earned \$27.9 million in just two weekends and eventually grossed \$74 million worldwide. Their most recent film, “Lifemark,” which stars Kirk Cameron, addresses abortion and adoption.

Unlike traditional films that compete in the marketplace, many of the Kendrick films partner with megachurches across the country to sell tens of thousands of tickets. The unique relationship guarantees box-office numbers on opening weekend but the films often remain “church” films rarely seen by the general public.

But the tactic means messages can be shared specifically with the church-going public and that’s what they seek to do. It’s worked well with pro-life theme or marriage themes.

“Sometimes the truth is hard to process, but we’ve got to go there,” Stephen Kendrick said. “And so we are now in a position to say that when scripture says to stand for the innocent and fight for those who cannot fight for themselves, that God knows us in the womb, and he knows us before we’re born, he knows everything about us and He values us, for us to stand for the unborn.”

Book explores why dads are ‘irreplaceable’ in critical cultural issues

Theological. Cultural. Personal. With his latest book, *Irreplaceable: Recovering God’s Heart for Dads*, Greg Austen weaves three compelling approaches into a narrative that speaks to fathers of all ages.

For Austen, *Irreplaceable* is the culmination of a unique journey that includes pastoral, social-service, and doctoral work, including eleven years at National Fatherhood Initiative, as well as being a parent of three children who are now adults.

“One of the greatest joys in my life was fathering my children,” said Austen, 57.

“Parents and especially fathers—more than any other people on the planet—are in a strategic position to introduce their children to the possibility of friendship with God!”

In *Irreplaceable*, he combines a theological foundation with a rich social understanding of the issue of father absence, along with the challenges faced in contemporary culture, notably in chapters such as “James Bond and the Trinity,” “Irreplaceable Moms and Marriage,” and “Patriarchy, The Nuclear Family, and the

LGBT Movement.”

“Fatherlessness is our most consequential and damaging social trend, linking to poverty, incarceration, school dropout rates, gun violence, substance abuse, etc.,” Austen said.

Whether expounding on the topic of “Knowing God as Father,” or teaching readers to properly understand Malachi 4:6 (He will turn the hearts of fathers to their children...), Austen drills deep to the heart of the matter: fathers are simply vital and irreplaceable.

SOUTHERN GOSPEL

“Never Surrender a Righteous Dream”

SOUTHERN GOSPEL is a Christian film based on true events in the life of Sam Allen, a 1960s rockstar. Sam is the young son of a popular preacher, who pastors an evangelical church but also encourages Sam’s budding talents as a singer and guitarist. When Sam witnesses the tragic death of a friend, the harsh blame he receives for her death drives him to leave his faith and start a life of debauchery. A tragic car accident caused by intoxicated driving gives Sam a wake-up call. Can he make a lasting change?

SOUTHERN GOSPEL is packed with strong performances and good music on both the secular and religious fronts. It has a moving script and solid direction. SOUTHERN GOSPEL also has a strong Christian, Biblical worldview, with a heartfelt message of redemption and forgiveness.

However, it does have some foul language, three intense bursts of violence and references to substance abuse. So, the movie isn’t suitable for young children. Yet, SOUTHERN GOSPEL tells a strong story of a prodigal son who begins to see the real light of Christ again.

CONTENT:

(CCC, BBB, LL, VV, S, AA, DD, MM):

Dominant Worldview and Other Worldview Content/Elements: Very strong Christian, biblical worldview about the son of a preacher who falls away from his faith but returns, only to face some other obstacles he must overcome, with help from his wife

Foul Language: Eight obscenities (Mostly ‘h’ and ‘d’ words) and four



light profanities

Violence: Some intense and light violence includes a man puts a shotgun up to his chin and fires offscreen to commit suicide (a big blood stain is shown under sheets on a gurney when the body is taken away), a teenage boy is slapped hard by a cop and has a bucket of water dumped on him, a teenage girl is slapped hard by her father and this results in a bloody lip, an angry man grabs his gun and appears out for revenge but doesn’t pull gun out during confrontation and winds up forgiving the other man, a serious car crash sends a car up in flames and severely burns one man and kills the drunk and high driver, a teenage girl drowns and her dead body is washed away by a strong river current

Sex: A man calls a prostitute to his

hotel room but decides not to go through with it because he says he’s a changed man (Christian), but pays her some money for the hassle, and a woman discusses her father sexually assaulting her as a child and the devastating impact it has had on her

Nudity: None

Alcohol Use: A few scenes showing drunkenness and drinking such as a man in multiple scenes swigs alcohol from a flask, a man drives heavily under the influence of drugs and alcohol, causing a serious car crash that kills him and burns another man who survives, and a woman drinks a glass of wine casually at dinner

Smoking and/or Drug Use and Abuse: A man says he used cocaine regularly, another man smokes a marijuana cigarette while drunk driving (resulting in a serious crash that kills him and burns another),

and a pill bottle is seen in background next to a glass of wine as a woman is shown in severe depression over being sexually assaulted as a child by her father;

Miscellaneous Immorality: A legalistic religious leader shows contempt for the main character, a reformed rock and roller turned pastor, and tries at every turn to sabotage him, the leader ultimately hires a detective to follow him and take pictures of him, but the leader ultimately changes and saves the pastor’s career, putting him in a much greater position than before, and a tragedy leaves a teenage boy to face such harsh criticism that he abandons his Christian faith and becomes a partying rock and roller, but he eventually returns to faith.



“Without question, the most important ‘pastor’ a child will ever have in their life is a parent,” he writes. “If you are a dad who loves God—you are the primary conduit for passing on His heart to your kids.”

In a section entitled “The Father Wound,” Austen writes humbly and candidly about the brokenness in the relationship with his dad.

“The father wound is a pervasive theme in many of our stories. Healing and personal growth are messy and not easily packaged. As theologian and author Henri Nouwen observed, each of us—even at our best—are still ‘wounded healers.’”

50+ Lifestyles

A Guide to Enjoying Life in the Best Years

4 Ways to Get Involved This Global Volunteer Month

Global Volunteer Month, celebrated throughout April, is a time to recognize people who actively support their communities through volunteerism and active civic engagement. It's also a time to get in on the action. However, if you're like many people, you may not know where to begin.

Research from Points of Light, a global nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring, equipping and mobilizing people to take action that changes the world, shows 73% of people believe that volunteering is more important than ever, yet 66% think they can't make a big impact in their communities. Global Volunteer Month can help point people in the right direction.

"April is an annual opportunity for companies and nonprofits to inspire individuals to action, share stories of those doing good, and create a pathway for continued engagement," said Diane Quest, interim president and CEO, Points of Light. "Over the past four years since our inaugural Global Volunteer

Month, we have seen people increase their commitments to creating a just and equitable world."

This year, Points of Light is partnering with leading sponsor Phillips 66 and supporting sponsor UPS to encourage individuals, nonprofits and corporate partners to engage in their communities. As part of the campaign, they are sharing four great ways to participate:

1. Stay Local: While volunteering with any type of mission can help to better the world, people tend to be more impacted by volunteer opportunities from which they can observe the fruits of their labor. Collaborate with local nonprofits to affect change in the place where you live, work and play. Visit Points of Light Engage, <https://engage.pointsoflight.org/>, to find an opportunity today in your city or zip code and based on your interests.

2. Volunteer With Friends and Family: Families can support their communities by volunteering together. Consider working

at a local food bank, participating in community clean-up initiatives, or organizing donation drives for local charities. Volunteering as a family not only provides a chance for quality time together but also encourages children to develop empathy and social responsibility. By volunteering, families can strengthen relationships, build community connections, and make a positive impact in their communities.

3. Recognize and Expand What You're Already Doing:

While many of us think about volunteering in a formal way with longer time commitments and structures, civic engagement comes in all forms. Informal actions like helping a neighbor and leveraging your purchase power all make up civic action. Ask yourself: how could I take three to five actions around one cause area that's important to me to make greater impact? Find out how through the Points of Light Civic Circle <https://www.pointsoflight.org/civic-circle/>.

4. Say a Simple Thank You: At its core, Global Volunteer Month is about thanking those already volunteering and making an impact. Take a minute to send a thank you to a special volunteer in your life or an organization



that is giving its time and talent to make your community stronger.

"There are many paths to living a full, civic life. Now is the

perfect time to make a plan to join the celebration, today and every day," says Quest.

— StatePoint

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Resources for Finding and Comparing Health Care Providers



Getting health care for yourself or a loved one is a big responsibility, especially if you are starting with Medicare, need services like nursing home care, have to find a new doctor or get home health care.

Using online tools like “Find Care Providers” on Medicare.gov can make it easier to make comparisons and help choose doctors, hospitals, nursing homes and more for you or the person you are helping provide care to. Consider these benefits of using the comparison tools.

A Resource for Research

The website provides a simple search and compare experience that allows you to find providers

near you. Simply put in a ZIP code and the type of provider to receive a list of providers, their contact information and a map of locations. The information even includes “star ratings” and services provided.

Using a laptop, desktop, tablet or mobile device, you can see how patients rate their care experiences at the hospitals in your area and find home health agencies that offer the services you might need, like nursing care, physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Contact information for local inpatient rehabilitation facilities or long-term care hospitals is available, as well as hospice quality care ratings and specific care details, such as which dialysis facilities

offer home dialysis training.

Finding Health Care Services

Whether you have referrals or are starting from scratch, you can compare health care providers near you using the Medicare.gov tool, pinpointing which category of services you need, whether it’s doctors and clinicians, hospitals, hospice and home health agencies, dialysis facilities, inpatient rehabilitation centers or nursing homes.

In addition to searching by your location using your address or a combination of city, state or ZIP code, you can search by provider type and keyword to generate a list of providers that could fit your needs.

Finding a Doctor Who Fits

When you’re looking for a new doctor and not sure where to start, the tool makes it quick and easy to find and compare doctors in your area. You can find contact information, practice locations, specialty and hospital affiliation as well as hospital ratings.

Selecting the “compare” button allows you to compare up to three different health care providers at once. When you’re ready to schedule a visit with a new provider, be sure to take time during your scheduling call to verify general information.

Comparing Nursing Homes

Whether you’re planning ahead or need to make an unexpected decision, there’s a lot to think about when choosing the right nursing home for you or someone else. Many family members and caregivers prioritize location so they’re able to check in and visit frequently, but there are many other important factors you may want to consider, too.

The comparison tool at Medicare.gov provides filtering options that allow you to personalize your results by sifting through the cri-

teria that matter most to you, such as inspection results, number of beds, staffing data and more.

You’ll be able to check out the nursing home’s overall “star ratings.” The information can serve as a guide of a provider’s track record to help assist you with finding a home that best suits the person’s needs.

Visit Medicare.gov/care-compare to access the tool and find health care providers and services in your area that fit your needs.

Paid for by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

– Family Features

sports

Scottie Scheffler is a man at peace



Scottie Scheffler is the 26-year-old winner of The Players Championship at Sawgrass in March, and the new #1 player in the world of golf.

His biggest fans followed him hole after hole throughout the weekend including his wife Meredith and his 88-year-old grandmother, who walked the course.

"I mean, it's pretty impressive she's walking so many holes out here," Scheffler said, "She's a trooper. I really don't know what to say. She's had a rough last year with Grandpa passing away, and we have an uncle that's pretty sick. I'm just happy that we're able to kind of enjoy all this together."

Scheffler has a lot going for him.

First, he is a man of faith. He says, "The reason why I play golf is I am trying to glorify God and all that He has done in my life, so for me, my identity is not a golf score."

"People a lot of times think if you become a Christian, God's just gonna make everything easy for you, and that's not the case, but having the God of the universe on your side just makes things easier to deal with."

Second, Scottie and his wife are quite a pair. Scheffler shared the kind words Meredith used to comfort him before his final round at last year's Masters: "Meredith told me this morning, 'If you win this golf tournament today, or if you lose this golf tournament by 10 shots, or if you never win another golf tournament

again, I'm still going to love you. You're still going to be the same person. Jesus loves you, and nothing changes that.'"

Scheffler pointed out that he and his wife "always pray for peace because that is what I want to feel on the golf course, is peace and have fun and just feel His presence. So that is our prayer and I really felt that today. I felt at peace."

"Just looks like he's calm, just doing his business, not really worrying what everyone else is doing and churning out birdies," fellow golfer Cam Davis said.

"What we talked about is that God is in control," Scheffler said, "and that the Lord is leading me; and if today is my time, it's my time. And if I shot 82 today, somehow I was going to use it for His glory."

Third, he has a Christian caddie by the name of Ted Scott. They teamed up for the first time at the RSM Classic in November, after Scott broke up with Bubba Watson, who he had worked with for nearly 15 years and won The Masters in 2012 and 2014. Scheffler and Scott met in a bible study held by professional golfers on tour, a year before they joined forces on the PGA Tour.

"He called me up and said, 'I really want to work with a Christian. That is how I try to live my life.'" recalled Scott.

FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Rob Mooney

This college basketball season has been crazy. Thanks to the transfer portal, there is so much parity in the game right now. Just look at the Final Four for proof. Connecticut, Miami of Florida, San Diego State and Florida Atlantic. Are you kidding me? The highest seed in the Final Four is UConn who came in as a 4 seed. Miami was a 5, San Diego State was a 5 seed and FAU came in as a 9 seed. Of the four, only UConn has won a National Championship, four of them to be exact. The other three have never been to the Final Four.

Since the NCAA tournament began seeding teams in 1979, there have only been four Final Fours without a #1 seed. 1980, 2006, 2011 and 2023. Quite an amazing run.

Some are saying that the time of the blue bloods is over. Teams like Duke,

North Carolina, Kansas, Indiana, UCLA, Kentucky seem to have been knocked down the ladder a bit, at least with this tournament. However, this is the first year that the impact of the transfer portal has been truly felt.



Case in point, Kansas State. We all loved watching the Wildcats this year through the Big 12 regular season and then again in the NCAA tournament.

They brought in a new coach in Jerome Tang, who had lots of success as an assistant at Baylor for several years. The roster he inherited was gutted from last year when they finished 14-17 overall and 6-12 in the Big 12, good for a 9th place finish. Kansas State then had a mass exodus of players after the season

ended and at one point, only had three players remaining on their roster. That's when Tang went to work and brought in a stellar recruiting class that included transfers Keyontae Johnson, Desi Sills, Cam Carter and David N'Guessan. They finished this year with a record of 26-10, 11-7 in the Big 12 Conference and a third place finish. We all know that they ended up in the Elite Eight before bowing out of the tournament, wrapping up an incredible season.

Tang used the transfer portal to his advantage and the Wildcats had great success with it. This is the good thing about the portal. A mediocre team can find success if they play the portal correctly, which is exactly what K-State did. There's nothing wrong with that and I'm glad to see the Wildcats having success.

With the portal and the NIL agreement in place now, teams are also a bit older than they've been. Is the day of the blue bloods over? I'm not ready to announce that yet. However, I believe that the day of so many one and done is coming to an end.

K-State Coach Tang views coaching as a ministry

Kansas State fans are celebrating their team and coach Jerome Tang after advancing to the Sweet 16 in the NCAA basketball tournament this weekend.

First-year head coach Tang, who guided the third-seeded Wildcats to a 77-65 victory over Montana State and then a 75-69 triumph over Kentucky, referenced his Christian faith during news conferences after both games.

"I'd like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for this opportunity that he's given me, the many blessings that he's placed on my life," he said. "I know my profession is coaching, but my calling and my passion is ministry. And I love being able to spend time around these young men and just help them to grow and become great husbands who are going to be great fathers and leaders in their community. It's just so much fun to do it through the game of basketball."

Media members participating in the annual preseason media poll picked Kansas State to finish last in the Big 12. The Wildcats finished third, despite returning only two players from the 2021-22 roster. Kansas State is 25-9 under Tang after finishing last season



Tang worked as an assistant for 19 seasons at Baylor, including the last few seasons as associate head coach to Baylor coach Scott Drew.

"When he felt like God led him somewhere, he went," Drew said last year. "He's been more than ready for a long time. He just didn't have the calling to go. He's going to do a great job at K-State. I know no one's going to cheer louder or harder for him than I will, except when we play."

Tang is grateful for the opportunity. "I'm so proud to represent Kansas State," he said. "I'm so proud to be a part of the community of Manhattan/ And I'm just blessed — so blessed."

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Derek Carr introduced as new Saints QB, says 'my faith is No. 1'

A free agent for the first time in his career, Derek Carr explored every possible option with an open mind and asked lots of questions. He didn't want to have any doubts whatsoever when he made his decision.

Carr eventually reached the point where the pull he was feeling toward New Orleans was too strong. The four-time Pro Bowler told his agent it was time: He wanted to be a Saint.

"They made it very clear how they felt," Carr said in his introductory press conference Saturday. "They were honest. They told us the truth about the organization. They didn't try to make anything seem like it wasn't. I think that's what meant the most to me was it was just honesty from the beginning."

Carr signed a four-year deal reportedly worth up to \$150 million.

The Saints had discussions with the Las Vegas Raiders about trading for Carr before the Raiders released him, but he had a no-trade clause and didn't want to accept a trade without being able to speak to every team that might be interested in his services.

Though the trade never material-



ized, the Saints' aggressiveness made a strong impression on Carr.

"To feel wanted like that is nice," he said. "For someone to see the value that you can possibly bring to their organization and to their city and to their locker room, that means something."

Another advantage New Orleans had in its pursuit of Carr was head coach Dennis Allen, who was the Raiders' head coach when they drafted Carr in 2014. The 31-year-old started 142 of a possible 146 games in nine seasons with the Raiders, leading them to the playoffs twice. He threw for 3,522 yards and 24 touchdowns in 15 games in 2022.

His exit from Las Vegas was a messy one as he stepped away from the team after being benched for the final two games of last season. Speaking at

ChurchLV in January, Carr said plenty of people around him wanted to point fingers and assign blame for the way things ended. He had a different idea.

"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.'"

Carr, who nearly gave up his NFL

career to become a pastor, explained in his Saints press conference how faith is the foundation of everything his family does.

"I'm not gonna sit up here and throw Bibles at everybody, but I do have faith and I do believe," he said Saturday. "That's how we raise our children, and that's what the basis of our marriage is on. I love my wife because of the way that I am loved and how I learned that love."

As Carr tries to get the Saints back into the playoffs after posting a 16-18 record over the past two seasons, he also intends to serve the community

he now represents. He had conversations with former Saints legend Drew Brees and the Manning family to get a better feel for the organization and the city of New Orleans.

When asked about community involvement, Carr talked about his desire to simply love people well.

"We just try and always be open to that and what the Lord is saying to us on how to help that community and just love the people of New Orleans," he said. "My faith is No. 1. That'll never change no matter what, good or bad. And then my family and then football. And I love all three a lot."

SOLE REASON'S 5TH ANNUAL

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New Resident Church Guide

- 1. HIGHLAND HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
785-379-5642
Sunday Services: 8:30 and 10:00 AM
2930 SE Tecumseh Road
Tecumseh, Kansas 66654
www.highlandheightscc.com
Jars of Clay Children's Ctr 785-379-9098
- 2. CHRISTIAN CAVALRY MINISTRIES INT.**
Pastor Beau Bryant
Call about new meeting location for current services.
785-224-5419 • www.church4bikers.org
Sun. School 9:30 am
Sun. Service 10:45 am
Wed. Prayer & Bible Study 7pm
- 3. TOPEKA BIBLE CHURCH**
1101 SW Mulvane St., Topeka
785-234-5545
Worship: 9:00 & 10:30 am
Livestream at 9:00 am
Sunday School & Bible Studies:
9:00 & 10:30 am
www.discovertbc.com
- 4. NORTHLAND CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
3102 NW Topeka Blvd., Topeka
286-1204
Worship Sun. 9:00 & 10:45 AM
www.northland.cc
- 5. INDIANA AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST**
"Grace has dispensed, because Grace has redeemed"
3510 SE Indiana Ave., Topeka, Ks. 66605
785-266-7788, www.Indianaavecofc.org
Bible University – Sunday - 9:30 a.m.
Classes for all ages.
Morning Worship – Sunday – 10:45 a.m.
Midweek Bible University – Wed. – 7pm
- 6. FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST**
1912 SW Gage, Topeka, KS
272-0443 www.fsbctopeka.org
Sunday Services:
8:30 AM Traditional Worship
9:45 AM Bible study—all ages
11 AM Contemporary Worship
- 7. TOPEKA BAPTIST CHURCH**
"Finding NEW LIFE in CHRIST"
Sunday Worship 9:15 & 10:45am, 6pm
~ Sunday School for all ages ~
4500 SW Gage Blvd., Topeka
785-862-0988
www.topekabaptist.org
- 8. WANAMAKER ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH**
"Being and making disciples of Jesus Christ by the power of the Gospel, to the glory of God"
2700 SW Wanamaker Rd., Topeka
(785) 272-9323 www.wrbctopeka.com
Traditional Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm
Sunday School 9:30am • Wed. Prayer 7pm

- 9. GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH**
310 E 8th St (E. US 56 Hwy)
Overbrook, KS; 785-670-6456
Elvin Dillard, Senior Pastor
Sunday School 9 am; Worship 10 am
www.gccinoverbrook.com
office@gccinoverbrook.com

- 11. COMMUNITY CHURCH**
1819 SW 21st St., Topeka
233-3537 www.CommunityTopeka.com
info@CommunityTopeka.com
Sun. 8:30am - Sunday School for all ages
Sun. 10:00am - Worship & Word
Sun. 10:00am Youth Service
~ Nursery care for all services ~

- 12. LAKEVIEW CHURCH of the NAZARENE**
2835 SE Croco Road (785)266-3247
Rob Self, Senior Pastor
Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene
Sun. 9:30am: SS all ages & Discipleship Class
Sunday 10:45am: Nursery, Children's Church, & Worship
Wednesday: Awana - 6:30pm - 8pm
Life Group/Bible Study - 7-8pm

- 13. WANAMAKER WOODS NAZARENE**
3501 SW Wanamaker Rd • 273-2248
www.wwnaz.org
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

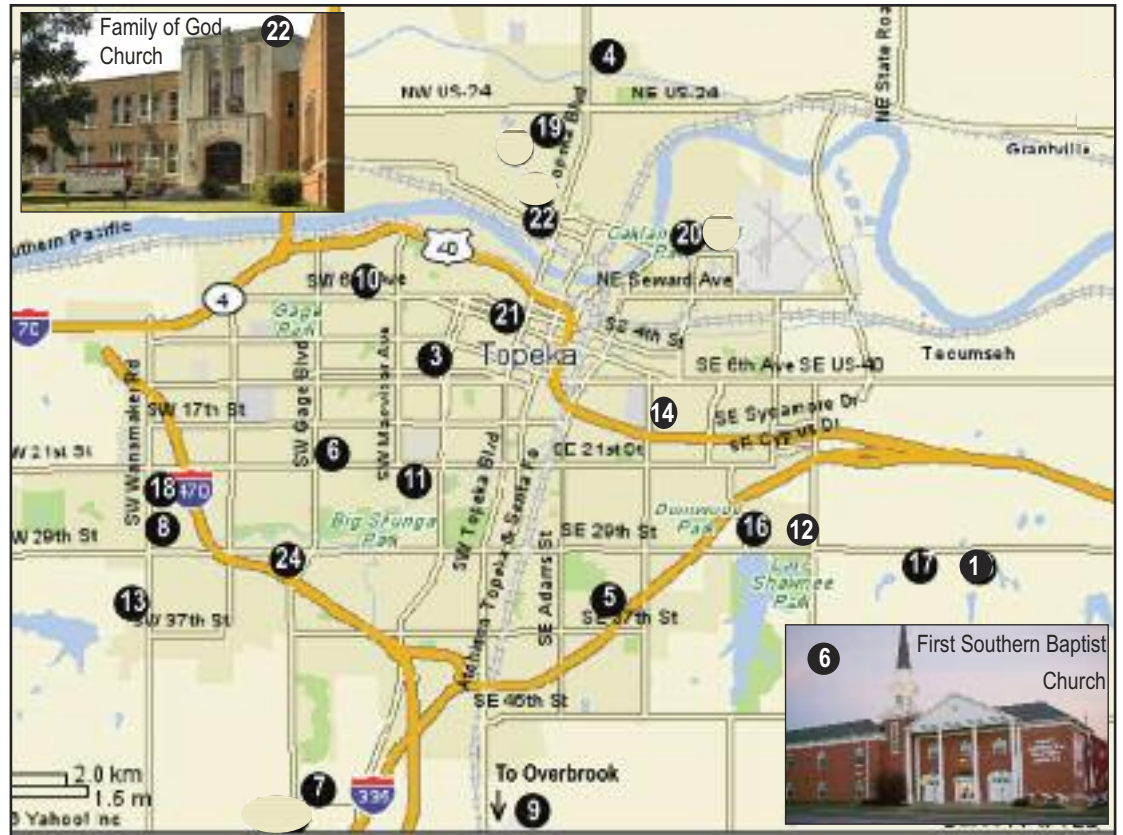
- 16. HOUSE OF THE LORD CHURCH**
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2531 SE Wittenberg Rd., Topeka
Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm
Wed. Prayer & Praise 7pm
785-266-LOVE (5683)
J. Michael Borjon, Pastor



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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

- 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

- 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

- 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



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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

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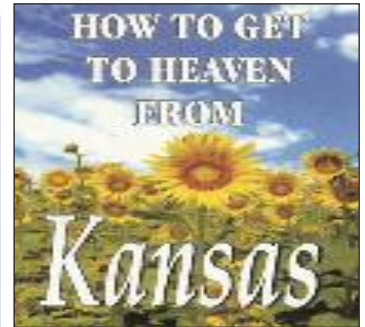
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More important than living in KANSAS is where you will live forever. Just as you would look at a map of KANSAS to find your way, so you must look at the Bible to find your way to heaven. The Bible says, "Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,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

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

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

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

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

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



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2. Provide a Christian family safe haven
3. Help the kids get caught up in school

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3. Refer Children In Need To Us
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EASTER PARADE + FAMILY FUN FAIR!



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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 11am at Great Overland Station! Food Trucks open 9 am - 3pm 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 exams, 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:
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Funds raised will be shared with a local non-profit serving local families



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

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