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"Forty-Seven Days with Jesus" Pg. 24

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## NEW RESIDENT churchguide

East Side Baptist Church



See inside back cover!

## Topeka synagogue gets vandalized



The only synagogue in Topeka has been vandalized with antisemitic graffiti.

The Topeka Police Department and the FBI are investigating the vandalism at Temple Beth Shalom where congregants discovered "Save Gaza" and "Free Palestine" spray painted on the driveway.

Rabbi Samuel Stern, the temple's leader who recently visited Israel, told JNS that outside of Students for Justice in Palestine events at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kan., "there has not been a rise in antisemitic incidents."

Generally, we feel very safe in

■ Please see SYNAGOGUE page 3



## What is Real Love?

What is love? An Internet search engine indicated over 12 billion results for that question. Billboard's top love song of all time is Endless Love, which held the number one position on the charts for nine weeks. Lionel Richie and Diana Ross closed their hit song with the words, "You'll be the only one, 'cause no one can deny, this love I have inside, and I'll give it all to you, my love...my endless love."

No matter if we are single, married, young or old - we want to know love. We want to find that special someone we can experience an endless love with.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines love as "a feeling of a strong or constant affection for a person." I know this is a respected dictionary's definition, but is this definition accurate? What if the feeling slips away over time? What

if the feeling is for more than one person, especially after we are married? Is love really just a feeling?

Love has a feeling nature to it. The Scriptures use beautiful imagery to describe this, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, he would be utterly de-

■ Please see LOVE page 2

## Westbound I-470 bridge closed until December



The Kansas Department of Transportation has closed an I-470 bridge in west Topeka for a bridge replacement project.

On Tuesday, Feb. 27, the northbound I-470 bridge to westbound I-70 will be closed for reconstruction. It is expected to remain closed until early December, conditions permitting.

Motorists can follow the marked detour to eastbound I-70 and Wanamaker Road, or use alternate routes.

Demolition of the existing I-470 bridge deck will require I-70 in the project area to fully close for one weekend in the coming

■ Please see BRIDGE page 3

## EasterFest returns to Great Overland Station for Annual Event

Topeka EasterFest – the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair – returns to Great Overland Station for 2024, with more fun than ever! The annual event began in Gage Park in 2014, then moved to Garfield Park in North Topeka in 2017. This year, the 9th Annual EasterFest will be held Saturday, March 30 (the day before Easter), with a parade on North Kansas Avenue that runs from Garfield Park to the NOTO Arts District, fol-

lowed by the Big Egg Hunt and Fun Fair at Great Overland Station.

Two to three thousand people have attended the event in the past to watch the parade, visit the Fun Fair, listen to live music, visit over 100 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 organiza-

■ Please see EASTERFEST page 2



## EASTERFEST

continued from page 1

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

"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.

This year there will also be a 5K

Run/Walk held before the parade along the same route, beginning at 9am in Garfield Park.

From 10am to 3pm, live music, vendor booths, food trucks and kid's activities will be happening all over the grounds and inside Great Overland 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, inflatables, 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 Ernest-Spencer Metals, Stormont Vail Health, Emerald City Cosmopolitan Clun, Kaw Valley Bank, Hutton Monuments, Health & Wellness Magazine, Big Phil's Auto, SoulFire Nutrition, College HUNKS Movers, Kansas Fencing, Davidson's Funeral Home, The Pad restaurant and more. Media partners and sponsors include TV25, WIBW, WREN Digital Media, Majic 107.7,



Apha Media, KFGB 97.7 FM, Metro Voice and more.

For more information or to volunteer, visit Topeka EasterFest 2024 on Facebook, email info@C5Alive.org or call 785-640-6399.



## LOVE

continued from page 1

spised." (Song of Solomon 8:7) This God-given romantic love between a man and woman has a mystical attraction that draws them toward one another. It is an attraction that cannot be quenched, drowned or purchased with all the riches in the world.

Love has a moral nature to it. The Scriptures speak eloquently about this, saying "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

When words like patience, kind-

ness, not envying, boasting, nor being arrogant or rude are used, it reflects the moral nature of love.

When a woman uses sharp words to tear down her husband, children or boyfriend, that is immoral and no demonstration of real love. But when she shows restraint by being patient and not rude, that is love.

Love has a deliberate nature to it. When a man is focused and determined in his work, he has a choice in how he will respond to that internal drive. Will he yield himself fully to his career and neglect his family, reflecting nothing of real love? Or will he not insist on his own way by deliberately loving his family, through focusing on them as well?

How can we find this God-given romantic love, with high moral standards that puts others above

ourselves? Is it beyond our reach? Is it possible for us to obtain it?

It starts with the author of love Himself - God. For the Bible says, "God is love," (1 John 4:8) and true love can only be found in Him. Nowhere else.

To obtain this divine love, you must turn from your selfish ways and believe, or commit yourself fully to His Only Son - Jesus. The Bible says in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

In Jesus, God demonstrated real love when Christ suffered, died and rose again for you. He did that so the greatest barrier to real love can be removed from your heart - your self-centeredness. And it can be replaced with a new nature, one that is God and others centered. A na-

ture that is filled with His supernatural love and divine power, to enable you to live out that love, even in the most difficult situations.

A prayer for you - Lord God, we confess how we have hurt those whom we have loved, because it has been all about ourselves. We desperately want real love, but we need your help. Change our hearts,

O God. Remove our hearts of stone and fill them with your divine love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

-Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings. Please share your comment at [cdecker@greatawakenings.org](mailto:cdecker@greatawakenings.org) and follow his blog at [clint-decker.blogspot.com](http://clint-decker.blogspot.com). Join Clint on a journey to Israel in November 2024. Go to [greatawakenings.org](http://greatawakenings.org) for information.

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# The Church Loves Kansas City: Christians continue rallying around shooting victims

Dozens of churches and ministries across the Kansas City metropolitan continue coming together to support victims of the deadly shooting during the Super Bowl celebration at Union Station. Donations to The Church Loves Kansas City fund will be held by the National Christian Foundation until they are distributed.

Abundant Life Church, the Church of the Resurrection and Bott Radio Network are among some of the more prominent participating churches and organizations.

The fund balance has grown to over \$130,000.

Churches involved in the fund said the donations paid for funeral expenses for Lisa Lopez, the woman killed in the shooting. Organizers are now focused on paying medical expenses for all victims injured in the shooting. After medical bills are paid, the group hopes to create a fund to pay for counseling costs for anyone who needs assistance processing



the trauma and tragedy.

“On the ongoing counseling a person has to make a decision: ‘Do I have the money and time for this?’ Gary Kendall, executive director of LoveKC, told KCTV-5. “We want the answer to be ‘yes, I have the money and the time. And we’re going to make that happen as much as we possibly can.”

“The reality is the two alleged perpetrators probably were traumatized at some point in their lives as well. And trauma has a way of repeating if we don’t find healing.”

Any additional money donated will be used to create the Crisis KC Fund. The involved churches said funds also will be held by the National Christian Foundation and be used to assist during any future crisis that affects Kansas City.

“We believe the church has a unique role to fulfill,” Kendall said. “Let’s commit for the long haul. The church can embrace the city with the love of Jesus.”

For more information, visit [www.thechurchloveskansascity.org](http://www.thechurchloveskansascity.org).

## SYNAGOGUE

continued from page 1

Kansas,” Stern added. “It helps that we have great relationships with our law enforcement partners at every level, and we are working with them to keep Temple Beth Shalom operating for all our congregants.”

On Feb. 22, the synagogue posted on its Facebook page that it had discovered “graffiti at the entrance of our property, featuring a pro-Palestinian message.”

“Obviously, targeting American Jews for the actions of the Israeli government is antisemitism. They have targeted other areas in Topeka, and all these incidents are under investigation by the Topeka Police Department and FBI,” per

the post. “It was immediately reported to the relevant authorities, and we have received reassurance from our law enforcement partners that there are no relevant threats to our congregation at this time.”

The Topeka Public Works department removed the graffiti from the synagogue which was founded in 1920 when two congregations formed decades earlier, joined together. The congregation consists of more than 110 families. “It is still my intention to hold our service, and for the life of the congregation to proceed as usual,” Stern wrote in the post, which was also signed by Frayna Scrinopskie, president of the synagogue board.

“Our synagogue has been here since the late 19th century,” the rabbi told the

Capital-Journal. “We’ve been in Topeka basically as long as anybody has been in Topeka. We believe that this is a place where people are open-minded and generous in spirit. We believe that our neighbors don’t agree with this sort of thing.”

Ty Masterson, president of the state Senate, and Dan Hawkins, speaker of the House—both Republicans—stated that it is “deeply troubling to see the hate and intolerance of the antisemitic vandalism that occurred at a place of worship in our state’s capital,” per the Capital-Journal.

“The rot of antisemitism has no place in Kansas and we proudly stand with the Jewish community against this hateful act,” they added.

—JNS.org / reprinted with permission

## BRIDGE

continued from page 1

weeks. Information will be provided in advance.

Temporary lane reductions on I-70

are also likely to occur at times during construction.

Work will take place during daytime hours Monday through Friday, and Saturdays as needed.

A.M. Cohron & Son, Inc., of Atlantic, Iowa, is the \$7.7 million project’s prime

contractor.

KDOT urges all motorists to be alert and obey the warning signs when approaching and driving through a highway work zone. To stay aware of highway construction projects across Kansas, go to [www.KanDrive.gov](http://www.KanDrive.gov) or call 5-1-1.

# C5Alive Plans Power Luncheon and EasterFest Parade and Fair in March

The March C5Alive POWER Luncheon will be held on the 14th and will feature an Easter-themed group discussion.

The cost is \$15 for C5 members and first-time guests who RSVP, and \$17 at the door. Repeat guests pay \$20. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org).

“POWER” luncheons are held on the second Thursday of each month and are open to the public. C5Alive is dedicated to creating Christian culture in the Capital City, by developing and uniting Christian Leadership in community businesses, non-profits and churches.

Upcoming luncheon dates are Apr. 11 and May 9th.

C5 also hosts other periodic events, including **EASTERFEST**, the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair,

held on N. Kansas Avenue and at **Great Overland Station** on the day before Easter. The 2024 date for EasterFest is March 30.

Check out Topeka EasterFest 2024 for more details.

C5 members may also sponsor luncheons and other events as a way to promote their organizations. C5 is currently holding a membership drive with special incentives for new members.

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



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## Letters from 'Daisy' - No. 9

Below is another article from someone I have been working with, who is going by the name, "Daisy". As I saw how writing was so healing for Daisy, I believe God has prompted me to help facilitate her being able to share her journey with you. I believe it will not only be healing for her, but also for many of those who read what she has to say. If you would want to write to Daisy, you can send your email to, [shane@shanemjones.com](mailto:shane@shanemjones.com), and I will forward it to her.

Shane M. Jones, LSCSW

Shane M. Jones & Associates, P.A.

#9... My story continues.

Well, unfortunately, I'm still unemployed. So many applications, yet still no job. I must say I have mixed emotions about the situation. Yes, I wanted not only independence and to be self-sufficient, yet am still not quite sure whether I am not only able to work but whether I can even get to the job.

Allow me to elaborate. I had an appointment, and my anxiety was so extreme I didn't sleep the night before. I was so beside myself that I literally drove myself crazy all night catastrophizing everything that could possibly go wrong. Went through all that and never left the apartment. How disappointing!

I thought I was ready to show up, impress them, and get the call the next morning telling me "I was hired." I couldn't even show up.

This scenario was the same that had gotten me fired before. How can you work when you can't even show up? Thus, no job, no independence, not self-sufficient and of course, absolutely no control over anything in my life.

I thought I was ready. I had worked with my therapist and thought I had addressed all that could possibly go wrong. I was wrong! I question if I'll ever be truly ready. Is that an adequate excuse though? Should I have to suck it up and be forced in some way to go to work? Don't get me wrong, I desperately want to be able to hold a job, but I must get it before I can hold it thus being able to keep it.

I am deeply disappointed but not near as much as I disappointed my mother. I wanted to show her; I wanted to prove both to myself and to her that I could be successful. Show her how far I had come and to pay for at least something. Now, it's back to the drawing board. Why should someone have to take care of me, pay my way and hold my hand the remainder of my somewhat pathetic life.

Am I somehow able to conquer this debilitating anxiety or am I bound to be an invalid the rest of my life? My psychiatrist is in the process of reevaluating what medications I'm on, can they be

tweaked, and even if they can, will my life change at all? Or am I a lost cause. It's definitely a hit to my self-esteem.

I have some serious soul searching to do, but am unsure where to start. Fifteen years ago, I had a good paying job and I kept it for many years. I still had some struggles but was able to work with them and in

turn I was successful.

I held another job for almost four years. However, it was the beginning of the end of my work history. I was self-medicating in several ways, and I was self-harming in my car on breaks and when working overnights. I was able to cut, take care of the wound and be back to work in five minutes. By the end the anxiety had taken total control. It was so strong one day I turned in my keys and never went back. In fact, that was the last job I held.

In the years since I have basically been treading water. I wasn't taking my medications as prescribed. The few I was taking I was abusing, and I have continued to struggle with my crippling anxiety. So, as in the aforementioned, my anxiety has continued to worsen, and everyday life has continued to become very hard. I'm in the beginning stages of changing my medication and hopefully stabilizing myself. I am aware that I may not necessarily rid myself of the anxiety but hope I could rein it in to contain and control it.

I haven't and am not giving up. I must do whatever it takes to conquer this anxiety. Sometimes I get very frustrated and talk down to myself. I know there's a lesson here somewhere. I must believe that this is in God's hands, and He will put me in the right place and right time to find that perfect job. That job I'll want to get, look forward to going to and find the success I've been searching for all these years.

More to come...

-Daisy



## Lake Shawnee receives spring trout stocking



Lake Shawnee was stocked with 7,000 pounds of rainbow trout in late February.

The stocking is done in partnership with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks as part of the Communities Fisheries Assistance Program. Trout season runs through March 31 2024. During this time, anglers must have a \$14.50 trout permit. Trout permits

may be purchased at most locations where fishing licenses are sold or online. More information on trout fishing in Kansas can be found at <https://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing/Special-Fishing-Programs-for-You/Trout-Fishing-Program>. CFAP funds offset the cost of fishing programs at Lake Shawnee including the stocking of the lake with trout



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# Attacks on U.S. churches is up 800% since 2020

Attacks against U.S. churches are up 800% since 2020 and more than doubled last year, according to the latest Hostility Against Churches report from the Family Research Council. It has revealed an exponential and shocking trend.

In one horrific act, a January 4, 2024 arson fire destroyed Providence Baptist Church and the parsonage, located in Northeast Missouri.

On Feb. 18, an arsonist set fire to several Topeka churches. A 15-year-old male was arrested in the incidents.

Researchers documented 436 acts of hostility against churches from January through November 2023, compared to 195 in 2022. But the increase is even more

“Although the motivations for many of these incidents remain unknown, the rise in crimes against churches is taking place in a context in which American culture appears increasingly hostile to Christianity,” the report said. “Criminal acts of vandalism and destruction of church property may be symptomatic of a collapse in societal reverence and respect for houses of worship and religion — in this case, churches and Christianity.”

“Americans appear increasingly comfortable lashing out against church buildings, pointing to a larger societal problem of marginalizing core Christian beliefs, including those that touch on hot-button political issues related to human dignity

Vandalism breaking into Greater Tabernacle Worship Center in Winston-Salem, N.C., and causing \$15,000 worth of damage.

A July 12, 2023 arson fire destroyed Abundant Life Church in Warrenton, Mo.

The spray painting of a monument to unborn children at St. Rosalia Church in Pittsburgh.

Looters spray painting “abortion is our human right” on the property at Second Baptist Church in Palermo, Maine.

A 2021 fire gutted Harlem Baptist Church in Kansas City.

Arielle Del Turco, director of the Center for Religious Liberty at the council and author of the report, said the motivations for many of the acts may be unknown, but the “effect is unmistakable: religious intimidation.”

“They send the message that churches are not wanted in the community or respected in general,” he said. “Our culture is demonstrating a growing disdain for Christianity and core Christian beliefs, and acts of hostility against churches could be a physical manifestation of that. Regardless of the motivations of

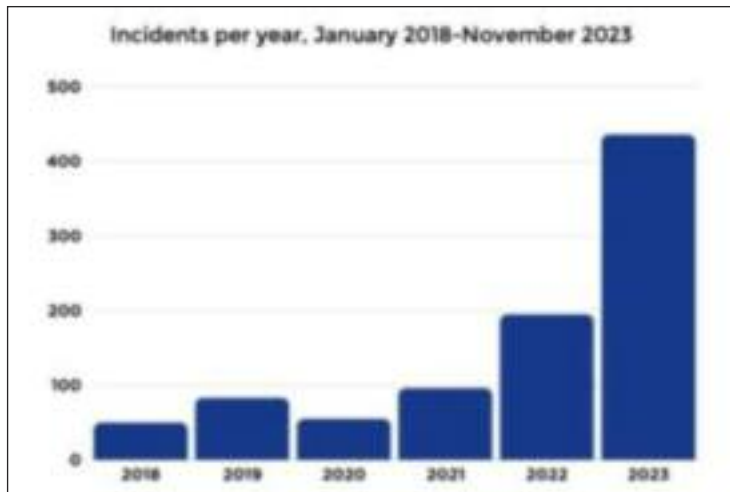


these crimes, everyone should treat churches and all houses of worship with respect and affirm the importance of religious freedom for all Americans.”

The Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, passed by Congress and signed into law in 1994, is supposed to protect churches, pro-life pregnancy centers, and abortion clinics. While the Biden Department of Justice is using the law to charge dozens of pro-lifers pray-

ing outside of abortion clinics, not a single charge has been brought against an individual who has vandalized or set a church ablaze.

As for the arson fire at Providence Baptist, it remains under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Missouri State Fire Marshal's Office and Lewis County Sheriff's Office. A \$5,000 reward is being offered for information.



shocking compared to 2021. Attacks on churches have been on the rise for years, with 96 in 2021, 55 in 2020, 83 in 2019 and 50 in 2018.

and sexuality. Attacks on houses of worship may also signal a discomfort with religion in general.”

Examples of attacks on churches in 2023 include:

## Kansas Autism Conference to be held in April

The Kansas Autism Conference will be held April 17, 2024, from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM at the

Kansas Association of School Boards, 1420 SW Arrowhead Road in Topeka.

The CDC estimates the rate of autism diagnoses has nearly tripled over the past two decades, meaning more people than ever before are looking for insights, connection, and help. The Kansas Autism Conference on April 17 is an opportunity for professionals within the disability

field, teachers, caregivers, or anyone looking to learn more about autism.

Conference sessions will focus on the following:

- Common Co-Occurring Medical and Psychiatric Conditions in Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Sensory Friendly Spaces for Home, School, and Community
- Common Solutions to Barriers to Learning
- Social and Communication Skills

for Teens and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Workplace

Cost for individuals is \$89; Groups of four or more people are \$75 each. For questions about the conference, contact Casey Melancon at [casey.melancon@esmw.org](mailto:casey.melancon@esmw.org) or 816-891-2930.

To register, visit <https://www.easterseals.com/midwest/get-involved/events/kansas-autism-conference-1.html>



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### davesays

#### INCREASE EXPECTATIONS GRADUALLY

Dear Dave,

I'm getting married this summer and about to become a stepmom. To be honest, I'm a little worried about the family dynamic.

My fiancé's daughter from an earlier marriage seems a bit irresponsible. She's 23, has trouble holding a job and still lives at home. She seems to expect her dad to step in when she doesn't have money for her car payment. We both agree he has been too lenient with her in the past. He wants to change things, but neither of us believe suddenly pulling the rug out from under her is a good idea. Do you have any advice for handling this situation?

— Susie

**Dear Susie:** If you and her dad really want to show her you love her, you'll make sure she starts learning some character and discipline. It'll take a little time at this point, and it's very important that both of you are in agreement every step of the way.

Marriage counselors say you have a

good chance of a successful marriage if you're in agreement on four things—religion, money, children and in-laws. I know you and your fiancé love each other, but I'd strongly suggest you two go through pre-marital counseling to make sure you're on the same page when it comes to handling these issues. After that, I'd recommend letting her dad present any changes to her initially. Neither of you wants to create a scenario where you're viewed as a villain. Let her dad start the process by explaining that he feels he made a few mistakes in terms of teaching her personal responsibility when she was younger. Then, he can begin to lay out the first few expectations.

In my opinion, there's nothing wrong with requiring her to get a job within 30 days, if she doesn't already have one. If she needs to go job hunting, the process should be an everyday thing, because if she's unemployed, finding work needs to be her job—her full-time job. It would also be a good time to start teaching her about budgeting, saving and handling money responsibly.

Phase two might consist of requiring her to help around the house, phase three might be where she is introduced to the practice of paying a very small amount in rent each month.

By stepping up expectations gradually, you're building a foundation so she'll have the tools and knowledge so she's able to move out and live like a fully-functioning adult should.

— Dave

## Finding Money That is Falling Through the Cracks

By Roger Shumaker  
Smartvestor Pro at  
The Retirement Team



For many people there is a huge disconnect between their tax professional and their Investment Advisor, which can oftentimes result in them paying more tax than what is legally required. When was the last time that your Tax Professional and Investment Advisor got together to review your tax situation? One challenge is that many tax professionals are historians; they report what has already happened. They may not look for tax planning opportunities, and they typically do not know what your investments look like. On the other hand, Investment Advisors know about your investments, but may not know the details of your tax returns. Tax planning recommendations may be vague, such as "You should convert some of your Traditional IRA to a Roth IRA," and lack specifics about how much to convert and any potential income tax ramifications. Many firms do not allow their advisors to perform any sort of tax planning. While both of these professionals may be very good at their respective crafts, they may fail to work as a team to marry your tax plan with your investment plan. At The Retirement Team, we can coordinate with our own in-house tax professional in order to potentially keep money from needlessly falling through the cracks.

Traditional IRA to Roth IRA conversions can be a powerful planning tool. Prior to implementing a conversion, it is wise to know of any tax consequences versus doing a conversion blindly and hoping that it does not come back to haunt you on tax filing day. For example, your Social Security is currently not taxable income to the State of Kansas if your Federal Adjusted Gross Income is under \$75,000. So, it is very possible that one dollar of income could cost several thousand in Kansas income tax. We have seen this happen many times when we reviewed past years of tax returns for our new clients. There are other threshold income numbers that you need to be conscious of:

1. The central pillar of Social Security (SS) taxation is income. If you are single and ½ of your SS plus other income is less than \$25,000, (and \$32,000 for married filing jointly), then your SS is not taxable on your federal tax return. If your income is over these amounts,

then up to 85% of your SS could be included as income and taxed.

2. As discussed above, you also should be conscious of the \$75,000 adjusted gross income number regarding how it pertains to the taxation of your SS to Kansas.

3. If your income is above a certain threshold, you will also be subject to IRMAA, which is a surcharge to increase your Part B and D Medicare premium amounts. Below is a chart of these charges:

In conclusion, having a Financial Plan that does not include a Tax Plan is like having a screen door on a submarine. Call The Retirement Team today to discuss the advantages of having a plan that looks to minimize taxes in your own Financial Plan. Roger can be contacted at 785-228-0222.

*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*

#### IRMAA for 2024

\*Source Kiplinger.com

Single	Married filing jointly	Part B Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount	Part D Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount
Less than or equal to \$103,000	Less than or equal to \$206,000	\$0.00	\$0.00
Greater than \$103,000 and less than or equal to \$129,000	Greater than \$206,000 and less than or equal to \$258,000	\$69.90	\$12.90
Greater than \$129,000 and less than or equal to \$161,000	Greater than \$258,000 and less than or equal to \$322,000	\$174.70	\$33.30
Greater than \$161,000 and less than or equal to \$193,000	Greater than \$322,000 and less than or equal to \$386,000	\$279.50	\$53.80
Greater than \$193,000 and less than or equal to \$500,000	Greater than \$386,000 and less than or equal to \$750,000	\$384.30	\$74.20
Greater than or equal to \$500,000	Greater than or equal to \$750,000	\$419.30	\$81.00

4. Changes have been made to the Residential Energy Tax Credits for 2023. Be sure to consult your tax advisor to see if you qualify for any of these credits.

5. Many people are unaware that you have the option to itemize your deductions on your Kansas tax return, while taking the large standard deduction on your Federal tax return.

\*This is not intended to provide tax advice, please consult your tax professional, IRS.gov and/or KsRevenue.gov for details.

to meet your particular needs. Portions of this material from IRS.gov and Kiplinger.com.

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## Protecting Your Financial Stability After a Divorce

By Jim Hanna



Hanna

Like many aspects of divorce, managing your finances after splitting up with your spouse can feel complicated and overwhelming. This is true whether the separation is amicable or acrimonious. Because every divorce is different, it's wise to consult with your attorney and financial advisor for guidance, but here is a basic primer to help you navigate your finances independently from your ex-spouse.

Adjust your budget to match your current lifestyle. Start by calculating your new monthly income, including spousal or child support if applicable, and estimate what you expect to earn over the next year. If you are a stay-at-home parent or spouse, you may decide to re-enter the workforce to bolster your income. Or the time may be right to switch careers or seek a side hustle.

Next, look at your spending to see if you need to adjust your patterns. Whether you've decided to remain in your home or seek new living arrangements, crunch the numbers to see how much house you can realistically afford. Also, evaluate your lifestyle spending, including entertainment, dining out, and vacations, to see if it's necessary to trim your expenses. If possible, avoid making any major purchases until you feel comfortable with your updated budget.

Consider your children's future. If you have children, they will understandably take center stage in your planning. It's important to start thinking about how you'll handle future financial milestones. Milestones may include paying for private grade school, college tuition, the down payment on a home, or a wedding. If you'd like to help your children with such expenses, consider these questions: Will you receive financial support from your former spouse? Do you expect your kids

to contribute? As each event approaches, be up front with your kids about what you can afford so they can set realistic expectations.

Prioritize saving for retirement. No matter how close—or far—you are to retirement, make it a priority to update your retirement goals and continue building your nest egg. You are responsible for your own savings. In fact, the biggest challenge most Americans face financially is having enough money to cover what could be several decades of expenses in retirement. While retirement saving can feel overwhelming as you balance competing financial priorities, having a plan can help you feel more in control.

Ensure you're protected. An important step following divorce is to maintain, replace or establish insurance that will help secure your financial future. All forms of insurance should be reviewed and considered, and your beneficiaries should be updated if needed. Make sure you understand the specific benefits that you and your former spouse are entitled to through your employers, as well as applicable life, health and disability insurance policies. If you have children, whose health insurance plan will be used to cover them? Work quickly to establish an insurance plan to avoid the financial risk of being uninsured.

Consider the tax implications of your new marital status. Review your situation with a tax professional to see if you need to revise your tax strategy. Divorce can affect your tax situation in several ways. Impacts may include entering a different income tax bracket, providing or receiving child or spousal support, and changes to your investment strategy and your process for handling future tax returns.

Dream and plan for the future. Once you have a handle on your new day-to-day finances and retirement goals, allow yourself to dream and plan for other milestones that are important to you. Do you wish to visit every continent? Pay off your mortgage before retirement? Open

a small business? Whatever your dreams, determine the cost of each one so you know how much you'll need to save. Save what you can each month, and keep in mind that even small amounts will add up over time. If you're tempted to spend the money elsewhere, consider establishing a separate savings account.

Don't go it alone. Professional guidance from an attorney, tax professional, estate planner and financial advisor can help you make empowered choices that match your new priorities. Financial advisors like myself routinely advise clients on how to navigate with the complex decisions that arise during a divorce and offer strategies designed to help you meet new financial goals.

\*\*\*\*\*

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# opinion

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## Asbury Revival's Surprise for America

We've prayed for revival in America for decades. But do we know what to do when it happens? It's been one year since the revival at Asbury University in central Kentucky began on February 8, 2023. The widely publicized revival brought 50,000-70,000 people to Wilmore, Kentucky, population 6,000, overwhelming the infrastructure of a small community.

Sadly, school authorities were obligated to shut it down after nearly continuous worship, night and day, across over two weeks.

It began in the university auditorium after a routine chapel service when students declined to leave, gaining national attention, and attracting visitors from around the world.

Asbury Theological Seminary across the street, a separate institution with common Methodist Holiness roots, opened its own chapel, auditorium, and gymnasium to accommodate the crowds. At one point, the main road into crowded Wilmore was closed to traffic.

The worship was Methodist in spirit, which means simple, earnest, and non-flamboyant. Students and other worshipers sang hymns, prayed, shared testimonies, and confessed sins.

One Asbury Seminary professor recounted his brief visit to the university auditorium, citing a great sense of serenity. He could have stayed for hours, he said. But like the woman healed by the mere touch of Jesus's garment, as he described it, he felt whole and left contentedly after 90 minutes.

I was in Wilmore not long after the revival, attending the Wesleyan Theological Society. The revival's embers were still warmly felt, and everyone spoke of it glowingly. The seminary president recounted that a Malaysian seminary student at Asbury had prayed years for revival. Back in Malaysia he sensed he should return to Wilmore, and in the Singapore air-

port he first learned of the revival. He surprised many when he entered the Asbury auditorium.

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Wilmore is about 60 miles from Cane Ridge, a highpoint of the Second Great Awakening, originally hosted by Presbyterian clergy but attracting Methodists and Baptists, spawning the Restoration Movement now known as the Churches of Christ and Disciples of Christ.

For a week, thousands worshiped amid shouts, groans, and falling to the ground in ecstasy over salvation or mortification over sin.

There was no equivalent drama at the Asbury Revival. The singing, prayers and testimonies were measured. The worship remained student led, but professors were often on the sidelines to assist, at times discouraging older people and visitors from taking center stage. There was no giant screen, pyrotechnics, or choreography. Other than electricity, heat and indoor plumbing, the technology for the Asbury Seminary was not much more advanced than at Cane Ridge 223 years ago.

But the tone at Asbury was decidedly less emotive, which makes a Wall Street Journal critique a little odd.

D.G. Hart recalled Mercersburg Seminary's John Williamson Nevin, whose 1843 "The Anxious Bench" critiqued Charles Finney's revivalism. Amid public hoopla, conversions could be faked, Nevin's fretted. "What you see in a revival, he suggested, isn't necessarily what you get," Hart noted, asking: "Revivalism may produce some good, too, but can it be a mass vehicle for spiritual exhibitionism? Probably."

Hart also asked if the "emotional highs of revivals" can "endure the disappointments of life?" Perhaps, echoing Nevins, "slow, steady growth



in faith...is a more reliable path to Christian maturity." Hart lamented: "The most fervent proponents of revivalism won't appreciate these queries."

Few if any at Asbury would resent these questions. Asbury Revival participants typically report encouragement and peace, not "emotional highs." Students from many Christian backgrounds attend Asbury University and Asbury Seminary. But both emerged from the Wesleyan Holiness movement, which emphasized the primacy of sanctification and perfection in Methodist spirituality.

For Wesleyan Holiness people, conversion, with or without "emotional highs," is only the start of a Holy Spirit-led journey to greater closeness with God. John Wesley had his celebrated "conversion" at a Moravian meeting on Aldersgate Street in London, listening to Martin Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. Wesley's heart was "strangely warmed," as he recalled: "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

For Wesley and his theology, God worked through heart and head. Wesleyan spirituality is not so much about emotional highs but steady,

methodical perseverance through divine grace. Any spirituality, even if practiced alone, can be faked. But Methodism, like all major Christians traditions, knows God sees the heart.

Hart, in his mild critique, accurately noted the Asbury Revival pleased many evangelicals for attracting favorable publicity, even from The New York Times. It also offered a counternarrative to supposedly relentless secularization. Anecdotal, the spirit of the Asbury Revival over the last year has spread globally through its many international participants, besides throughout the U.S. Hopefully a social scientist someday will try to quantify. Likely decades from now we will learn of new churches, and perhaps even new denominations or communities, that arose from the revival.

The Asbury Revival was a needed reminder that God often has surprises, and His redemptive work continues. Most of God's redemptive work doesn't occur dramatically at large public events. Mostly it unfolds quietly in the lives of believers. But occasional large, public outpourings are helpful reminders of the Gospel's power.

*From a partnership with Ministry-Watch.org. This article was originally published by Juicy Ecumenism, the blog of The Institute on Religion & Democracy.*



# Are we asking the right questions about the ‘He Gets Us’ ad?

The He Gets Us Super Bowl ad has generated significant discussion. It seems to be a repeat of the discussion of the 2023 ad. This year, the ad continues to be attacked by secularists but it has also raised eyebrows in parts of the Christian community.

From the cost of the ad (\$7 million) to the motivation behind it, people are asking questions. But are they the right ones?

Shawn Gray, who pastors Echo Church in Pleasant Hill, Missouri, recently took to Twitter to pose his own questions to the Christian community.

Here's what Pastor Gray stated:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, I implore you to engage in a thorough examination of the recent HeGetsUs advertisement aired during the Super Bowl.

It is of paramount importance that we, as members of the church, scrutinize the potential repercussions of embracing

what appears to be virtuous but may, in fact, lead individuals astray from the immutable truths of Scripture.

On the HeGetsUs website, they express their aspiration to “reintroduce people to the Jesus of the Bible.” Yet, I must pose the question: which Jesus are they truly presenting, for it appears to be divergent from the Jesus revealed in Scripture.

Permit me to pose several inquiries, not as assertions, but as avenues for contemplation:

Whose feet did our Lord Jesus Christ stoop to wash?

What was the significance underlying His act of foot washing?

What spiritual truths were conveyed through this tangible demonstration? (Please note, personal opinions hold no weight; rather, let us delve into Scripture to uncover genuine truth.)

When Christ exhibited compassion

towards those ensnared in sin, did He condone their transgressions or call them to repentance?

Is it consistent with the teachings of Scripture for us to persist habitually in sin? Does such behavior align with the love exemplified by Christ and delineated in the Holy Scriptures?

If indeed HeGetsUs, how do we reconcile this with Christ's discourse in Matthew 25:31-46?

Does it bear significance that their marketing efforts seem to disparage the broader Christian community?

In what manner do these advertisements inadvertently sanction destructive lifestyles rather than beckoning individuals to freedom in Christ?

Is there a genuine necessity to reintroduce individuals to Jesus, or is it conceivable that they are promoting a culturally palatable rendition of Christ for their own satisfaction?



If salvation is conferred through the proclamation of God's Word, why do the scriptures employed by HeGetsUs appear to be egregiously misappropriated?

Are there seasoned theologians guiding this organization, or is it primarily composed, as their website suggests, of marketing experts, media personnel, and

creatives?

While the inquiries posed herein merely scratch the surface, they serve as catalysts for critical reflection upon HeGetsUs and their underlying agenda.

—Pastor Shawn Gray, Echo Church, Pleasant Hill, Mo.

## The Church's Finest Hour



**CLINT DECKER**

President and Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.

### Speaking Truth

America is rotting from within. Lethal illegal drugs are being trafficked into our nation. Criminals are running our cities. Teaching children unthinkable immoral acts is championed. Justice is dependent on your political party and personal views. The family has been redefined. Gender is a personal choice. Killing babies before birth is a convenience. Lies are declared as truth to sway the masses, and truth is based on feelings. Why is all this happening? Because of America's insatiable desire to satisfy her own lusts, and the consequences of that perilous pursuit.

As result, our nation is becoming weaker and more vulnerable to our enemies with the passing of each new day. And the nature of this rot is a moral one,

where the hearts of millions are controlled by a darkness that seeks their own personal ambitions above the needs of their neighbor.

Who can save us from this systemic evil that lives in the hearts of the masses? Who has the answer for this generational evil that has a hold on vital American institutions and on crucial areas of our culture?

Can the American military, with all its power, save us? Can Congress, the courts, or the President of the United States? What about our education system? I argue that there is only one institution that has the answers? Only one entity has the message for our times.

**THE CHURCH.** It was built for moments just like these.

It was created to flourish in periods of war, chaos, moral upheaval, widespread injustice, and in seasons of division and danger. These times have always become the church's hardest, yet finest hours.

The church was born in the mind of God, established through the death and resurrection of Christ and is the embod-

iment of Christ Himself. For He is the church working through all His followers by His message, His works, His Spirit and His power. This all communicates a divine charge for the church - to be the presence of Christ to the world around us, and fulfill Jesus' mission to them. And the central part of Jesus' mission, was His unique message. It was nothing like what any other religious leader taught.

At the beginning of His public ministry, Jesus laid down what the theme of all His teaching and preaching would be when He declared, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 3:2)

What does repent mean? It refers to a change of mind, leading to a change of life. It is where one turns from their destructive sinful self, and to God by faith through Christ. And when they do, they are instantaneously transformed. About others who have experienced this, the Bible says, “For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.



But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy...through Jesus Christ our Savior...” (Titus 3:3-6)

This was the message the Apostles taught and preached in the first, and what the church was founded upon in its early years.

Sin was destroying people's lives and the civilization they lived in, and it was only this message that could deliver them. It is the original message of the true church, and the message our nation so desperately needs today. To the enemies of the true Jesus, they frame it as words of hate, racism and bigotry. However, in the eyes of our Lord and Savior it is a message of truth, and one that is filled with love

and compassion for a world on fire.

Rise up, O church. We need a remnant men and women who are filled with the boldness and courage of the Holy Spirit, to go forth and declare this timely message. The time is now!

A prayer for you – Lord God, stir the hearts of pastors and all believers. Remind them of your original message. Raise them up to call their neighborhoods and cities to turn from their evil ways and to faith in Christ. Bless their words as they speak forth your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings. Share your comment at [cdecker@greatawakenings.org](mailto:cdecker@greatawakenings.org) and follow his blog at [clintdecker.blogspot.com](http://clintdecker.blogspot.com). Join Clint on a journey to Israel in November 2024. Go to [greatawakenings.org](http://greatawakenings.org) for information.

# Are Taylor Swift fans and the Chiefs racist? BLM leader thinks so



As Kansas City fans were enjoying watching the Chiefs defeat the San Francisco 49ers in the Super Bowl, a California professor worried about the deeper meaning of seeing Taylor Swift at the game.

“Why do I feel like it’s slightly racist to be a Taylor Swift fan?” Melina Abdullah posted on X about the Super Bowl.

Abdullah, a co-founder of Los Angeles Black Lives Matter and professor of Pan-African Studies at Cal State University, is listed as cofounder of the Black Lives Matter’s Los Angeles chapter and codirector of the activist wing of the national advocacy organization Black Lives Matter Grassroots, according to the New York Post.

When one user asked her to elaborate on her opinion she replied: “I said FEEL, not think. Kind of like that feeling I get when there are too many American flags.” In the same post, someone commented “Literally everything is racist.” Abdullah responded “Indeed!”

A few hours later, she followed up in another post on X after the Chiefs had won the game: “Why do I feel like this was some right-wing, white-supremacist conspiracy?!?! Boooooo!!!! #SuperBowl.”

Abdullah previously shared controversial opinions on Twitter. “Attention white people... Please don’t ask if you can come to the cookout... #Juneteenth is freedom day for Black folks,” she posted to Twitter in June 2022. “It should be #Reparations day

for white folks.”

In December 2021, two days before Jussie Smollett was found

Jussie Smollett, a Black man who has been courageously present, visible and vocal in the struggle

guilty of staging a fake hate crime in which he falsely blamed it on white Trump supporters, she argued for his innocence.

“In our commitment to abolition, we can never believe police, especially the Chicago Police Department over

for Black freedom. While policing at-large is an irredeemable institution, CPD is notorious for its long and deep history of corruption,” she wrote on the Black Lives Matter website.

In 2017, at a conference on intersectionality and discrimina-

tion, Abdullah said today’s police officers are the “slave catchers” of yesteryear: “You literally have a target on your back,” she said “That is what policing was founded on and that is what it evolved out of.”

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## Southern Baptists move to disfellowship churches

Four more churches have been disfellowshipped by the Southern Baptist Convention. One was removed for having a female senior pastor, another for allowing women in church leadership and two for issues related to sexual abuse.

Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah, Ky., which hired the Rev. Katie McKown as its senior pastor in 2023, was deemed to have a "faith and practice that does not closely identify with the convention's adopted statement of faith, as demonstrated by the church having a female lead pastor functioning in the office of pastor."

New Hope Baptist Church in Gastonia, N.C., was formally disfellowshipped over a "lack of reported financial participation for at least the last five years and its lack of intent to cooperate to resolve a question of faith and practice." Although the

church doesn't list any females as part of its pastoral staff, New Hope's website states, "We believe in equality in ministry and we do not discriminate between genders."

Grove Road Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C., and West Hendersonville Baptist Church in Hendersonville, N.C., both were disfellowshipped in connection with concerns related to sexual abuse.

Since the revamping of the SBC Credentials Committee in June 2019, a total of 18 churches have been disfellowshipped. A year ago, the denomination expelled Saddleback Church, one of America's largest churches that previously was led by popular Pastor Rick Warren, and four others. Saddleback had hired Stacie Wood to serve as the congregation's teaching pastor.

After Saddleback Church ordained



three women pastors in 2021, Chuck Kelley, Al Mohler and Richard Land, theologians who wrote the study guide for the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message Confession, published a statement clarifying the definition of the word "pastor," which they said means "one who fulfills the pastoral office and carries out the pastor's functions." They wrote that Article VI

of The Baptist Faith and Message 2000 states that offices of pastors and deacons are "limited to men as qualified by scripture."

Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, believes hiring women as pastors violates scripture.

"This is no longer a point of tension and debate," he said. "These

moves represent an attempt to redefine and reformulate the convictional foundation of Southern Baptist faith and cooperative ministry. The theological issues have not changed since the year 2000 when Southern Baptists spoke clearly and precisely in the Baptist Faith & Message. More importantly, the Holy Scriptures have not changed and cannot change."

## Cosmo Club to sponsor Health Fair and 5K Run/Walk to Fight Diabetes

The Emerald City Cosmopolitan club in Topeka will be participating in the 9th Annual Topeka

EasterFest on March 30, 2024. Through a grant by Stormont-Vail Health Center, Emerald City

Cosmopolitan will be hosting a Health Fair and a family fun 5K Walk/Run this year.

The event starts at 9:00 AM beginning and ending at Garfield Park, via Shunga Trail and Kansas Avenue, with the Easter Parade directly following the run at 10 AM.

The EasterFest Fun Fair continues at Great Overland Statino until 3:00 PM.

Cash and other prizes will be awarded through a drawing from all 5K participants at the Health Fair at 1:00 pm in the Great Overland Station. Participants must be present to win.

To register, go to <https://runsignup.com/Race/KS/Topeka/cosmos5k>.

Cosmopolitan International was founded in 1918 and now has 60 clubs in the USA and



Canada. Emerald City Cosmopolitan was chartered in 2009 here in Topeka.

The club's effort is to raise awareness and funding in the fight against diabetes. Cosmopolitan also supports community service projects and charity causes that affect the health and wellbeing of the community they serve.

Donations, local business in-

volvement and new members are always welcome, Emerald City officials say.

For more information about Emerald City Cosmopolitan, visit [www.facebook.com/emeraldcity-cosmos](http://www.facebook.com/emeraldcity-cosmos) or email [EmeraldCityCosmos@gmail.com](mailto:EmeraldCityCosmos@gmail.com).

For details about EasterFest and the 5K Run/Walk, search for Topeka EasterFest 2024 on Facebook.



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# Missouri Baptists raise over \$900,000 to fund Great Commission

Missouri Baptists donated more than \$900,000 to state missions through the Rheubin L. South Missouri Missions Offering (MMO) for the second consecutive year. MMO receipts in 2023, which are disbursed in 2024, totaled \$926,010, far outpacing the goal of \$750,000, “The Pathway” reported.

“In a year of lingering inflation, high interest rates and a roller-coaster stock market ride, Missouri Baptists kept the Great Commission in focus, giving steadfastly, trusting in the providence of God and sacrificially supporting the Lord’s work across our state,” said Wes Fowler, executive director and treasurer of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

MMO supports statewide missions projects that help fulfill the Great Com-

mission. The annual offering in 2023 focused on five areas of ministry that define the convention’s mission:

Making disciples — sports evangelism; VBS ministry training and resource development; youth evangelism and missions; and the state fair ministry of the Missouri DOM Fellowship.

Collegiate ministries — a summer missions mentoring initiative; and ministry to international students studying on Missouri campuses.

Multiplying churches — next-step requests for church multipliers; partnership missions in Mexico, Italy, Minnesota/Wisconsin, and Montana; strategic missionary development; and Missouri WMU.

Developing leaders — disaster relief

readiness, including collegiate DR internships; Resound Network training and development; the Leader Care Network; a conference for new pastors; hunger relief; Baptist Builders; and a journalism retreat.

Synergy (MBC-affiliated institutions) — moral injury training, a workshop for senior citizens, recreational discipleship for seniors, and a Certified Nursing Assistants Program (Baptist Homes); a four-year biblical studies degree for inmates; the Center for Global Connections, and church-and-state pastoral reading groups; and the Center for Global Engagement (MBU).

In addition, 17 percent of MMO receipts go to the Missouri Baptist Children’s Home, which provides spiritual



guidance, counseling and a safe haven from abuse and neglect at five state campuses. Ten percent of gifts go back to the

associations of contributing churches, where the funds support regional mission projects.

## Two cicada broods will emerge together for the first time in 200 years



Billions of cicadas will buzz this spring as two broods emerge at the same time. These broods last emerged together in 1803 and won’t appear together again for 221 years.

That means that your grandchildren’s great-great-grandchildren likely will be the next group to experience the dual emergence of these cicada broods that appear in 13- and 17-year life cycles, says University of Missouri Extension specialist Tamra Reall.

“It will be crazy,” she says, and she can’t wait. Reall is a horticulturist in the Kansas City area and an entomologist known as “Dr. Bug.”

Periodical cicadas have the longest known life cycle of any insect. Broods are groups of cicadas that share the same

emergence years. Broods receive a number listed as a Roman numeral. Brood XIII only emerges every 17 years while Brood XIX emerges every 13 years.

The last time these two particular broods emerged together was when Thomas Jefferson was president, decades before Missouri statehood. The next event will be in the year 2245.

Periodical cicadas belong to the genus *Magicicada*. “No surprise that it’s called the ‘Magicicada,’ because it’s magical,” says Reall.

Emergence will occur in 18 Midwestern states. For the most part, most Missourians will only experience Brood XIX, the Great Southern Brood, which last appeared in Missouri in 2011. Expect them to emerge in late April to early

May, says Reall.

Those in northeastern Missouri near the Illinois border might see — and hear — both broods.

**Cicada nymphs stay in the soil for 13 or 17 years, depending on their brood. They emerge when the soil warms to 64 degrees and dig their way out of the ground. They subscribe to the “safety in numbers” approach and emerge all at once. They climb trees, fence posts or anything vertical before shedding their hard skins. Then they head to treetops to mate, lay their eggs and die within four to six weeks.**

Expect to see cicadas after a spring rain, and expect to see a lot of them — as many as 1.5 million per acre, says Reall. This creates a feeding frenzy for predators and litter so heavy that the sidewalks and highways may need shoveling.

Brood XIX, a 13-year brood, has four species. Other states that will see Brood XIX include Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. These will emerge late April through the second week of May.

Brood XIII, the Northern Illinois Brood, is a 17-year cicada with three species. It will appear in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and possibly Michigan in 2024. Some stragglers may make their way into southern Illinois and the St. Louis area. Expect emergence mid-May through June.

The loud sound you hear is from male cicadas as they send out their mating call, which can be as loud as a lawn-

mower and is unique to its species, Reall says. The synchronized male singing can be louder than a jet engine.

With five eyes each, they truly are on the lookout for a mate. They have only four to six weeks from the time they emerge from the soil to ensure the next generation of offspring. Once they mate, the males soon die.

After the female lays her eggs in the tree’s branches, her work is done as well, and she also dies. Her nymphs fall to the ground, burrow into the soil and begin

the process all over again.

Cicadas are drawn to the vibrating sounds of power tools and lawn mowers.

Cicadas, while loud and messy, are harmless to humans and their pets, says Reall. They don’t sting or bite. She warns against using pesticides that will harm birds and beneficial insects such as butterflies, bees and moths. If there is concern about new trees or bushes, protect them with a loose cover of cheesecloth.

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# Prolife activist Randall Terry announces presidential candidacy

Political firebrand Randall Terry has announced that he is running for president as an independent.

Terry, 65, announced his candidacy on Thursday at events in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. He cited two reasons for why he is running:

To show millions of Americans the grisly truth about abortion. Terry's presidential ads show graphic images of aborted babies.

To call on Roman Catholics, evangelicals and black Americans who voted for Biden in 2020 to repent and not vote for him in 2024, in the hope of causing Biden to lose key swing states



Terry's running mate is Stephen Broden, a Black pro-life leader and pastor, "I've never seen a community so exploited and bamboozled by slick advertising as the black community," he said. "If you are

black and you vote for Biden, you're an accessory to black genocide and the murder of innocent babies.

"President Joe Biden and the Democrats have proven they are

baby killers," he said. "We will expose their slaughter of babies and call on Christians to refuse to vote for them. Human life is precious; ending the slaughter of babies is America's No. 1 ethical and political battle."

The campaign is producing more than 20 graphic pro-life ads. "These ads are designed to challenge viewers to confront the reality of abortion and inspire them not to vote for Biden the Baby Killer or any Democrat," according to a campaign news release.

Terry founded the anti-abortion organization Operation Rescue. Beginning in 1987, the group became particularly prominent for blockading the entrances to abortion clinics; Terry led the group until 1991. He has been ar-

rested more than 40 times, including for violating a no-trespass order from the University of Notre Dame to protest against a visit by President Barack Obama.

In 2003, Terry founded the Society for Truth and Justice and conducted a program that he called Operation Witness. In 1998, he ran for Congress in upstate New York, and in 2006, he ran for a seat in the Florida State Senate, losing both times in the Republican primary.

He previously ran for president as a Democrat against Barack Obama in 2012 in which he was prevented from airing a graphic commercial during the Super Bowl. He appeared on the ballots in Oklahoma, Alaska, Missouri and New Hampshire. He won 18% of the Democrat primary vote in Oklahoma.

## News coverage of Alexei Navalny's death overlooks dissident's strong Christian faith

Alexei Navalny, who died under suspicious circumstances in a Russian gulag last weekend, was a man of faith. "We don't realize how strong we actually are," he once said. "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil

is for good people to do nothing."

Navalny was serving 19 years imprisonment on charges of extremism, which were widely considered to be politically motivated for his vocal criticism

of Vladimir Putin's regime. He was imprisoned in the IK-3 penal colony in the Arctic Circle, where temperatures drop as low as minus-20 degrees and where the prison discipline is known to be brutal. In 2022, he spent nearly 300 days in solitary confinement.

He chose to return to Russia from Germany after an attempt on his life with the deadly Novichok nerve agent, later used in the Salisbury poisonings on another Russian dissident. He returned to Russia in the full knowledge that he would be arrested upon landing, separated from his family and imprisoned with no guarantee for his safety.

In later life, Navalny stated publicly that he was a Christian. In his public statement during his 2021 trial, he is reported to have gone into some detail, ex-



plaining his Christian faith.

"But now I am a believer, and it helps me a lot in my activities because everything becomes much, much easier, because there is a book in which, in general, it is clearly written what action to take in every situation," he said. "It's not always easy to follow, but I am actually trying."

His letters from prison to the former Soviet prisoner of conscience Natan Sharansky included biblical, religious and spiritual allusions. "Where else to spend Holy Week if not in soli-

tary confinement," he wrote.

He cited Ecclesiastes at one point and signed off another letter to the Jewish Sharansky, "L'Shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim," "Next year in Jerusalem," which is a traditional Passover greeting

Navalny cited the Sermon on the Mount — "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied" — and said, "I've always thought that this commandment is more or less an instruction to activity."

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# Britain debates asylum policy as Muslims claim conversion to Christianity

(ANALYSIS) The United Kingdom is facing a crisis of illegal immigration parallel to that of the U.S., with very high numbers of people coming over the border, reaching a record net high of 745,000 in 2022. Many arrive in small boats, usually from France. This difficult situation is now further complicated by allegations that many coming from Muslim-majority countries are falsely claiming to be converts to Christianity for asylum.

Many in the church cite the Bible to stress that Christians should welcome the needy and the stranger. The Bible wasn't outlining a government policy for the 21st century, say others. Still, others agree with that overall stance but ask whether those arriving are truly the neediest, especially compared to those left behind, and whether simple proof texting is a sufficient basis for public policy.

As in the U.S., popular opinion rejects mass illegal immigration, perhaps sensing that you can have open borders or a serious welfare state — not both. President Biden is soon expected to issue an executive order on illegal immigration, perhaps in response to growing concern within his own party. Since he took office in 2021, 7 million immigrants have crossed the border illegally — more than the population of 36 states.

As for the U.K., many are coming not directly from poor or war-torn countries, but from France. Since the U.K. has left the European Union, it can no longer return migrants to the E.U. country they first entered, something it had done

legally and effectively in the recent past prior to Brexit.

In response to its immigration crisis, the British government plans to transfer to Rwanda those arriving in the U.K. illegally with no solid claim to remain, which policy has the agreement of Rwanda's government. This proposal has produced criticism and may contravene the European Convention on Human Rights, to which the U.K. is still a party. In response, the government, led by the highly successful child of Indian immigrants Rishi Sunak, has said that the situation is sufficiently severe that, if necessary, it will depart from European jurisdiction as it departed from the EU.

In the midst of these dueling imperatives came the case of Abdul Shokoor Ezedi, a 2016 immigrant from Afghanistan. On Jan. 31, 2024, he met with a woman he knew in London and allegedly threw a corrosive alkali liquid on her and her daughters, ages eight and three. Later, he is believed to have jumped into the River Thames and has most likely drowned.

The attack is horrific enough, but Ezedi's previous history compounded the outrage. He had twice been denied asylum and then in January 2018 was given a nine-week jail term suspended for two years for a charge of sexual assault. He was also given a suspended 36 weeks behind bars to be served consecutively for a charge of indecent exposure.

Subsequent to this, Ezedi then made a third attempt to gain asylum and was successful based on his claim that he had converted to



Christianity and his life would be in danger if he was returned to Afghanistan. There are reports that he was aided in this effort by support from clergy. In contrast, in the words of a friend of his, Ezedi had remained a “good Muslim” all along and was recently spotted buying halal meat.

Further compounding fears about false conversions were reports the following week that of the 300 migrants being housed on a barge off the Dorset coast, some 40 had converted to Christianity. This was met with worries that these were further attempts to game the asylum system.

However, local clergy — including a Farsi-speaking minister — insisted that the conversions were genuine, that several of those on the barge had already been Christians in their home country and that others had completed a 10-week Alpha course, a very widespread evangelistic outreach.

Dave Rees, an elder at Weymouth Baptist Church, told the BBC: “Obviously we need to make sure that they believe in Jesus, they believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, they repent of their sins and also they want to start a new life in the church. ... And they have to give a public testimony at their baptism, which they did.”

These events and other reports of miscreant migrant converts, including one who had attempted to

bomb a women's hospital in Liverpool, have created skepticism about conversions and to accusations that churches are too gullible or too political in their work with asylum-seekers.

Certainly, not all claimed conversions are genuine, and there are very different rates between those and those not facing deportation. But there are three grounds not to be too skeptical.

First, rates of conversions such as the 40 out of 300 on the Dorset barge, are not unusual, especially in close circumstances.

Also, there is a danger that genuine claimants may be rejected because U.K. asylum officers are often ill-equipped to deal with religious issues. In cases in which I have been involved, some officers have engaged in a Bible and theology quiz, which obviously has some validity, but 90% of the Christians in England, including some clergy and maybe a few bishops, could not answer their questions on Christology and soteriology.

In one case, an Egyptian Christian was asked (in Arabic translation) about the views of the Egyptian Coptic church. He replied haltingly and vaguely about Jesus' one nature. The interviewer concluded that the claimant had little knowledge of Christianity but, in this case, the interviewer's unfamiliarity with church history led to the confusion. As I read the transcript,

it seemed that the applicant was alluding to the distinctive Christology of the Egyptian church (often mistakenly called “Monophysitism”) rejected by in the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451.

And we must always remember the danger to which genuine converts, and those held to be blasphemers or heretics, are subject. Among the usual suspects, this year Iran has intensified its arrests of converts, as has Mauritania, as does Sudan. In Afghanistan, the Taliban hunts down converts as reported in Metro Voice. In perhaps unexpected countries there is also great danger, such as Libya and Uganda.

No doubt there are those who falsely claim conversion from Islam to claim asylum, and some churches may be too credulous. But such conversions are occurring and such genuine converts face violence, imprisonment and even death if returned back to many countries.

— Paul Marshall is Wilson Distinguished Professor of Religious Freedom at the Institute for Studies of Religion, Baylor University, director of the Religious Freedom Institute's South and Southeast Asia Action Team, senior fellow at the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom, and author of over 20 books on religion and politics. Reprinted from ReligionUnplugged with permission.

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## Spring activities coming to NOTO

The SEASONS Annual Fiber Juried Show is March 3-April 29 at NOTO Arts Center in the Morris Art Gallery. Hours are Wed 11-5, Thur & Fri 11-7 (First Fridays until 8pm), Sat 10-4

Orlando Oz Zuniga will perform at Artismo on March 1. Artismo will also hold a Paint /n Sip event on March 16.

EasterFest comes up on Mar. 30 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 2024 on facebook.

NOTO in Bloom is April 20, 6 to 8:30 pm throughout the district 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. Tickets already are on sale at [noto.betterworld.org](http://noto.betterworld.org).

NOTO in Bloom is the highlight for

the district's Redbud Festival, which will include special activities throughout the month of April.

First Friday Art Walk continue. Hours are 10 am to 9 pm. 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.

You can also visit 3rd Friday's NOTO Night Out! Many Merchants are also



open longer hours on Second Saturdays.

For more event information visit [explorenoto.org/](http://explorenoto.org/).

More North Topeka events:

**WOODSHED FLEA MARKET** – Sundays, 10-3, Woodshed, 1901 N. Kansas Ave. Indoor vendors.

**SPEED DATING EVENT** – Mar. 29, 7-12pm, Woodshed, 1901 N. Kansas Ave. Fantastic speeding dating event with food, refreshments, full bar open and soda drinks!

**9th ANNUAL EASTERFEST: TOPEKA EASTER PARADE & FUN FAIR** – Mar. 30, 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 Cosmo's Health Fair will be 10-3, inside and outside Great Overland Station, including vendor booths, children's games, food, facepainting, inflatables, 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](mailto:info@C5Alive.org) or 640-6399.

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

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

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

**VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS** – Every Wed., 10:45 bible Study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd.

1 mile north of Dillon's North). FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 785-224-8803.

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# the events calendar

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

## CONCERTS

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

**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 [grandotopr@gmail.com](mailto:grandotopr@gmail.com). [GrandOttawaOpry.com](http://GrandOttawaOpry.com)

**PICKIN' ON THE PRAIRIE BLUEGRASS JAM**, every Sunday 1-3:00, Potwin Drug Store, Old Prairie Town, 785-215-6997 for info. Milkshake for the month of August is GIMME'S MORE

**LEFEVRE QUARTET** – Mar. 1, 7pm, Wanamaker Woods Nazarene Church, 3501 SW Wanamaker. Free will offering. Doors open at 6pm. (785) 273-2248. [wwood-snaz@wnnaz.org](mailto:wwood-snaz@wnnaz.org)

**SPOKEN 4 QUARTET** – Mar. 10, 6pm, First Baptist Church, 3033 SW Macvicar

## SPECIAL CHURCH EVENTS

**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: 2409 NE Division St.. For info: 785-380-7031 or [io@insideoutinc.net](mailto:io@insideoutinc.net) or [www.insideoutinc.net](http://www.insideoutinc.net)

**KIDS for JESUS!** - Wednesday's 7 - 8pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends, family, neighbors, enemies! For info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: [Lakenaz@aol.com](mailto:Lakenaz@aol.com)

**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

**LOL "LADIES OF LAKEVIEW"** - Lakeview Church of the Nazarene,

2835 SE Croco Rd. Monthly Women's Ministry Events! (Cooking, Crafts, Outreach, Bible Study, Fellowship!) Call the church office for info: (785) 266-3247, Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene Email: [LakeNaz@aol.com](mailto:LakeNaz@aol.com)

**ROOTED CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL CO-OP**; Colossians 2:6-7. Monday's 12-4pm. Cooking class for 4th graders & older at noon. Call the Church Office for more information. Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Church: (785) 266-3247. Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene. [LakeNaz@aol.com](mailto:LakeNaz@aol.com)

**CHURCH COUPLES SEMINAR** – March 2, 10am-noon and 1-3pm, Harvest Family Fellowship, 522 SW Polk St. "For Better or Worse: It's Your Choice." With Pastor Steve Highlander.

**FREE MOVIE NIGHT** – Mar. 15, 6pm, Oakland Church of the Nazarene, 939 NE Oakland Ave. "The Passion of Christ." Free Snacks and beverages. Open to everyone.

**FREE MONTHLY HYGIENE GIVEAWAY- HANDS FULL OF PURPOSE** on March 23 & April 27, 3-4pm, Faith Temple, 1162 SW Lincoln, inside north door

**LAKEVIEW'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT** – Mar 23, 10am, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Hop on over for some fun! We'll look for eggs until we're done! (785) 266-3247, Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene Email: [LakeNaz@aol.com](mailto:LakeNaz@aol.com)

**OAKLAND CHURCHES GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE** - March 29, 7pm. Join the community of Oakland Churches as they gather for Good Friday Service at Oakland Nazarene Church, 939 NE Oakland Ave. Pie and Fellowship to follow.

**EASTER SERVICES** - Sunday, March 31, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Easter

Breakfast - 9:30am - 10:15am; Easter Celebration - 10:45am - noon. Celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus!

**EASTER SERVICES** – Saturday Mar. 30, 5pm & Sunday, Mar. 31 at 8, 9:30 & 11am, First Southern Baptist Church, 19th & Gage.

**90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION** - April 21, 10:45am, Oakland Church of the Nazarene, 939 NE Oakland Ave. Come celebrate with us the legacy of this great church (1934-2024)! Celebration service at 10:45am. Potluck to follow.

## 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 [rhonl@tsclp.org](mailto:rhonl@tsclp.org)

**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.

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**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 .

**CYCLING EVENTS** – Various cycle rides are offered by Kansas Cyclist. [www.kansascyclist.com/](http://www.kansascyclist.com/)

**OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES** – Outdoor events and activities. [www.getoutdoorskansas.org/calendar](http://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/calendar)

**BLEEDING KANSAS** - Sundays from Jan. 28-Mar. 3, 2pm, Constitution Hall Historic Site, 319 Elmore, LeCompton. A series of talks and dramatic interpretations on the violent territorial and civil war history of Kansas 1854-1865. Actors will portray Kansans from this turbulent era. Adm: \$5 adults.



**CAPITAL CITY CARNAGE DEMOLITION DERBY** – Mar. 1-2, Stormont Vail Events Ctr. [stormontvailventscenr.com](http://stormontvailventscenr.com) or 785-251-5552

**SPRINGTIME POP-UP CRAFT SHOW** – Mar. 2, 8:30-3, Philip Billard Airport. Check out many displays of homemade crafts and baked goods along with specialty products... something for everyone.

**SAY IT LOUD! EXHIBITION OPENING** – Mar. 2, 5:30-8:30, ArtsConnect Topeka, 909 N. Kansas Ave. An art exhibit that unapologetically magnifies the magnificence of Black People, Black Culture, Black Stories and Black Expression. A showcase of local black artists from the Topeka, Lawrence and Kansas City

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**SPIRIT MIND BODY FAIR** – Mar. 2-3, 10-5, Stormont Vail Events Center.

**WOODSHED OUTDOOR FLEA MARKET** – Mar. 3, 10-3, 1901 N. Kansas Ave. Indoor and outdoor vendors.

**BREAD BASKET FARMERS MARKET** – Saturday Mar. 9, 10:00am-3:00pm, now inside West Ridge Mall. The Market will return to the parking lot again April 6 and every Sat. thereafter.

**SUNNY DAYS EASTER MARKET** – Mar. 9, 10-4, Stout Elementary School, 2303 SW college. A live performance from Colin Nichols, an Easter Egg Hunt hosted by Sunflower Community Inc at 11AM, and many vendors!

**C5Alive “POWER” LUNCHEON** – Mar. 14, 11:30-1, featuring an Easter-themed program.

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](mailto:info@C5Alive.org), so we know how much food is needed!

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**SAVE THE DATE: C5 POWER Luncheon**, Apr. 11, 11:30-1.

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10th Ave

**TOPEKA IRISHFEST** – Mar. 16, 10am-5pm, Every Plaza. IrishFest 5k Fun Run, followed by a day of Irish music, food, dancing and a lot of laughter. Parade starts at noon.

**HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS** – Mar 20, 7pm, Stormont Vail Event Center. [www.stormontvaileventscenter.com](http://www.stormontvaileventscenter.com).

**BABY SHARK BIG BROADWAY TOUR** – Mar. 27, TPAC

**9th ANNUAL EASTERFEST: TOPEKA EASTER PARADE & FUN FAIR** – Mar. 30, 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 Cosmo’s Health Fair will be 10-3, inside and outside Great Overland Station, including vendor booths, children’s games, food, facepainting, inflatables, 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](mailto:info@C5Alive.org) or 640-6399.

**TOPEKA YOUTH FOR CHRIST COMEDY CAFÉ** – Apr.

5, 6:30pm, Topeka Bible Church, 1101 SW Mulvane Ave. A Night of Laughter featuring comedian David Graham. Underwritten by table sponsors. Seating is limited. Make reservations at [www.topekayfc.org/event/comedy\\_cafe](http://www.topekayfc.org/event/comedy_cafe) or call the YFC office at 785-232-8296

**SMOKE IN THE SPRING** – Apr. 5-6, Osage City Community Building. Taste of Osage City BBQ and fun

**DOWNTOWN TOPEKA FARMERS MARKET** – Saturday’s April 13 to Oct. 26, 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.

**KANSAS AUTISM CONFERENCE** – Apr. 17, 8:30 AM – 3 PM, Kansas Association of School Boards, 1420 SW Arrowhead Rd. Questions about the conference? Please contact Casey Melancon at [casey.melancon@esmw.org](mailto:casey.melancon@esmw.org) or 816-891-2930. EVENT LINK:

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- May 9: **POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1**

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The Comedy Cafe is underwritten by individual table sponsors: seating is limited



## Larry Boy returns in Veggie Tales movie

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Christian parents who grew up watching Veggie Tales now are sharing the popular shows with their own kids. The producers, Big Idea Content Group and Kingstone Studios, have announced that a new feature film about Larry Boy will be released in theaters in 2026.

“Veggie Tales is the absolute gold standard for faith-based children’s animation,” said Art Ayris, CEO of Kingstone Studios. “We couldn’t imagine a better brand in providing a big- screen treatment for kids than to bring Larry Boy and the cast of memorable Veggie Tales characters back

into theaters.”

The Veggie Tales franchise remains the most successful faith-based children’s series of all time, generating more than \$1.7 billion in retail sales. Big Idea has successfully released two theatrical films to date: “Jonah: A Veggie Tales Movie” (2002) and “The Pirates Who Don’t Do Anything” (2008), which earned more than \$39 million combined at the box office. The Larry Boy feature film will build on the legacy of the brand’s faith-friendly storytelling, zany humor and catchy silly songs that fans have come to know and love.

“Larry Boy is a fan favorite — who doesn’t love a superhero that has plungers on the side of his

head?” said Leslie Ferrell, senior vice president of Big Idea Content Group. “With Larry Boy in the lead role, we know we can deliver an entertaining movie for the whole family.”

Although the title and plot details are being kept under wraps, producer Dan Merrell has gathered a team of writers who are excited to create Larry Boy’s first theatrical adventure.

“I’m honored to partner with



Big Idea and Kingstone Studios on a new film, because I’ve loved Larry Boy for decades,” he said. “I believe both the existing fan base and new audiences are primed for a new Veggie Tales feature,

one that not only reveres its classic past but also promises some thrilling, new surprises,” said Merrell, who is leading the development efforts behind the project.



# It's time to stand up against evil, Eric Metaxas tells American Christians

Eric Metaxas, the popular author and radio host, is calling on Christians to take a stand against evil in the current culture.

"It's up to believers to speak up for what is right and good and true, and to bring our faith into the public square; not to be afraid of politics — to get involved in politics — because this is one of the ways God has given us to effect change," he says. "And I think a lot of people are more worried about being liked. They think that being a Christian means 'I don't argue with people; I'm winsome all the time.' And sometimes you have to battle."

Metaxas, who rose to national prominence for the bestselling 2011 biography "Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy," warned that as



Christian leaders in Germany largely failed to stand against the rise of the Nazi regime that unleashed worldwide horrors, many American Christians

are not sufficiently resisting the rising evil in the culture now.

He said he fears that the United States could face similar judgments if

American Christians do not stand up. That Germans suffered because they didn't listen to Dietrich Bonhoeffer and similar voices "is precisely God's message to the American Church today, to stand against the evil," he said.

Metaxas told the Christian Post believes many evangelical churches in the United States have drifted into a fundamental misunderstanding of what the scripture says regarding the duty of Christians to have an impact on their culture, which he said poses a danger in the face of rising cultural evil. Too many Christians seemingly believe that their theological beliefs are sufficient, but he noted that scripture demands that we put our faith into action.

"The point is, if you believe those things — if you actually do believe those things — you will behave differently," he said. "It's impossible not to behave differently."

He pinpointed some of the issues that are tearing the nation apart as consequences of such a worldview.

"Open borders, transgender madness, rampant crime, a two-tiered justice system, parents being divided from their kids, insane trans ideology being forced, drag queen story hour," Metaxas said. "No matter where you look, you see this kind of madness. If the church does not rise against it to bring God's eyes into the cultural sphere, then evil wins. And evil does win when the church steps back. It happened in Germany."

## Leading actors discuss role of spirituality in movies and television



A long-awaited spiritual awakening in Hollywood may be on the horizon. Several leading actors shared their insights last week at the Variety Spirituality in Entertainment Breakfast, presented by Faith & Media Initiative.

Rainn Wilson discussed his latest projects, including writing his "New York Times" bestseller "Soul Boom: Why We Need a Spiritual Revolution" and SoulPancake, the digital media company he cofounded in hopes of creating content that sparks conversations about spirituality.

"My journey tiptoeing into the world of spirituality in media really came from some mental health crises that I had undergone as a youth and some issues that I'd had where I found great solace and peace and meaning through spirituality," he said. "I felt like culturally we weren't exploring them, and SoulPancake was really the first of its kind. It was a positive, uplifting media company for young

people that explored the human condition

"There is a deeper truth and wisdom and applicability to spiritual ideas than just the 'How does this benefit me personally?' People are starting to understand that as systems continue to fall apart even more and unravel, people are more and more open to other paths."

Roma Downey is known for starring in several faith-based projects including "Touched by an Angel," "The Bible," "Son of God" and "A.D.: The Bible Continues." Up next, she is starring and executive producing the Prime Video series "The Baxters," based on the novels by Karen Kingsbury.

"The stories unfold in such elaborate ways," she said. "It plays out a little bit like a soap opera, but we think it serves it better to call it a 'hope opera.' Not since 'Touched By an Angel' and 'Seventh Heaven' have we seen a drama like this

come back to TV."

Downey's co-star and on-screen husband Ted McGinley added, "A lot of the faith-based shows round off the edges too much. This one will smack you right in the face. And you will tune in again because it's so shocking sometimes. It is so not like what you have seen up to this point. And this young cast is so good."

DeVon Franklin, producer of "Miracles from Heaven" and "Flamin' Hot," offered his perspective on portrayals of faith in film. "I've worked on everything from 'Pursuit of Happyness' all the way to 'Flamin' Hot,'" he said. "When you look at the power of faith, people only look at it sometimes through a religious lens. To me, the biggest faith-based movie of all time is 'Star Wars.' The force is faith."

Two-time Oscar winner Hilary Swank discussed her latest role as Sharon Stevens in the upcoming drama film "Ordinary Angels," which is based on a true story. In the film, Swank stars as a Louisville woman experiencing personal hardships who steps up to help the family of a widowed father.

"I love Sharon," she said. "She's just a true tour de force human being who's imperfect," "She's flawed, she struggles with loss, she struggles with keeping her faith during that loss."

Swank said of her job as an actress, "I feel personally as a storyteller that that's my act of service, that I get this blessing to walk in different people's shoes and see through their eyes. And it blows the

blinders open of how I walk in the world and how I see the world. Because we see the world through our experiences, so I get to enrich mine through walking in

Sharon's shoes or Brandon Teena's shoes or Maggie Fitzgerald's or Erin Gruwell's in 'Freedom Writers.' That act of service is how I'm evolving as a human."



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# John Piper cautions against “political flag waving” in election year

As the election season heats up, author and pastor John Piper cautions Christians against what he calls “political flag waving.”

In a recent episode of the “Ask Pastor John” podcast, Piper, who currently serves as chancellor of Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minneapolis, responded to a question from a listener regarding the distinction between speaking truth into political flag-waving.

Piper outlined six characteristics of what he termed “bad political flag waving”, including party allegiance over moral principles, merging moral stances with political affiliations, placing undue hope in political solutions for societal issues and taking biblical teachings out of context to justify partisan agendas.

“Bad political flag waving means

foregrounding partisan politics in settings where they do not belong – for example, in Christian worship,” he said. “Making the case for a party’s political platform belongs, for example, at the national convention of the party. That’s where you can wave your flag properly, but not in Christian worship.”

Piper also addressed separation of church and state, explaining that although Christians should partake in societal discourse, they must avoid using governmental power to impose religious beliefs.

“No human government should ever use its biblical right to wield the sword to enforce a religion or to oppose a religion as such,” he said. “And



the reason I used the phrase as such is to distinguish that bad action of forceful establishment or forceful maintenance of religion from the good action of creating laws that might fit the morality of a religion

but not at all be part of prescribing or proscribing a religion as such.”

Piper spoke on political matters during past election seasons, including in 2020 when he explained why he could not support either Donald Trump or Joe Biden. Although he did not mention them by name, he compared both Biden’s support of “baby-killing” policies, “sex-switching” and “socialistic overreach,” and Trump’s “unrepentant sexual immorality” and “unrepentant

boastfulness.” “I will not develop some calculus to determine which path of destruction I will support,” he wrote at the time. “That is not my duty. My call-

ing is to lead people to see Jesus Christ, trust his forgiveness for sins, treasure Him above everything in this world, live in a way that shows His all-satisfying value, and help them make it to Heaven with love and holiness. That calling is contradicted by supporting either pathway to cultural corruption and eternal ruin.”

Critics, though, have complained that warnings against the eager participation of Christians in politics seem only directed toward white Christians. Those critics point to Democrats, including President Joe Biden, who regularly appear from the pulpit of Black churches with stridently partisan campaign speeches aimed in services that appear more like political rallies.

## Worldview of preteens threatens future of the church in America: study

The Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University has a sober warning for the American church. “We are on the precipice of Christian invisibility in this nation” as new research shows that preteens are rejecting beliefs associated with a biblical worldview, it said in a report.

The report contrasted the views of preteens with those of parents of children younger than 13, pastors of Chris-

tian churches and teenagers. Among the key findings:

When asked if they believed that “Jesus Christ is the only way to experience eternal salvation, based on confessing your sins and relying only upon his forgiveness of your sins,” just 36 percent of preteens answered in the affirmative. Thirty-four percent of parents and 54 percent of children’s pastors said the same.

Twenty-five percent of preteens agreed that “the Bible is the true word of God that should be a guide to knowing right from wrong, and living a good life.” Significantly higher shares of parents (44 percent) and children’s pastors (62 percent) expressed agreement with the statement stressing the value of the Bible.

Less than half of preteens (21 percent), parents (28 percent) and children’s pastors (36 percent) believed that “there are absolute truths — things that are right and things that are wrong, that do not depend on feelings, preferences or circumstances — those truths are unchanging and knowable.”

Although similarly small percentages of preteens (27 percent) and parents (33 percent) agreed that “the main reason to live is to know, love and serve God, with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength,” a majority of children’s pastors (56 percent) identified knowing, loving and serving God as the purpose of life.

Only 17 percent of preteens defined “real success in life” as “consistently obeying God,” along with 19 percent of parents and 42 percent of children’s ministers. Additional findings about the views and spiritual lives of preteens included in the report state that 26 percent of children between the ages of 8 and 12 “consistently consult the Bible when trying to determine right from wrong” and that 21 percent of preteens surveyed “believe turning to the Bible is the best way to distinguish right from wrong.”

“The worldview development of children is the existential challenge facing the



American church today,” said George Barna, the director of the research center. “Because of the strong correlation between biblical worldview and genuine Christian discipleship, we are on the precipice of Christian invisibility in this nation unless we get serious about this crisis and invest heavily in fixing what’s broken.”

Amazingly, children begin forming their worldview between 15 and 18 months of age and by the age of 13, it’s almost entirely formed, according to Barna. Research shows it is unlikely to change much, if at all, over the remainder of their lives.

Studies have already shown other, older generations, have already drifted away from biblical truth.

He does offer hope suggesting parents consult the strategies and tactics outlined in Raising Spiritual Champions: Nurture-


ing Your Child’s Heart, Mind and Soul.


Having written extensively on worldview over the past three decades, Barna says any parent who so desires can be a part of the solution, which simply begins with a commitment to raise a spiritual champion. This, he says, requires a solid plan that is consistently executed by the adult.

“The plan calls for a steady diet of teaching, discussing and modeling biblical principles, as well as evaluating how well the child is doing at understanding and applying those principles.”

Barna says, “We’re now aware of the most effective practices for fostering the spiritual growth of young disciples. The only factor missing is a large number of parents, grandparents, pastors, teachers, coaches, and other influential individuals who are willing to make it their top priority in life.

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# War in Ukraine enters third year: 3 issues will decide outcome

In retrospect, there was perhaps nothing surprising about Russia's decision to invade Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. The outcome is up for grabs.

Vladimir Putin's intentions were, after all, hiding in plain sight and signaled in the months running up to the incursion.

What could not be foreseen, however, is where the conflict finds itself now. Heading into its third year, the war has become bogged down: Neither is it a stalemate, nor does it look like either side could make dramatic advances any time soon.

Russia appears to be on the ascendency, having secured the latest major battlefield victory, but Ukrainian fighters have exceeded military expectations with their doggedness in the past, and may do so again.

But as a foreign policy expert and former journalist who spent many years covering Russia, I share the view of those who argue that the conflict is potentially at a pivotal point: If Washington does not continue to fully support President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his military, then Ukraine's very survival could be at risk. I believe it would also jeopardize America's leadership in the world and global security.

How the conflict develops during the rest of 2024 will depend on many factors, but three may be key: supplies, information and political will.

## The supplies race

Russia and Ukraine are locked in a race to resupply its war resources – not just in terms of soldiers, but also ammunition and missiles. Both sides are desperately trying to shore up the number of soldiers it can deploy.

In December 2023, Putin ordered his generals to increase troop numbers by nearly 170,000, taking the total number of soldiers to 1.32 million. Meanwhile, Ukraine is said to be looking at plans to increase its military by 500,000 troops.

Of course, here, Russia has the advantage of being able to draw on a population more than three times that of Ukraine. Also, whereas Putin can simply order up more troops, Zelenskyy must get measures approved through parliament.

Aside from personnel, there is also the need for a steady supply of weapons and ammunition – and there have been reports that both sides are struggling to maintain sufficient levels.

Russia appears particularly eager to boost its number of ballistic missiles, as



they are better equipped for countering Ukraine air defense systems despite being slower than cruise missiles.

Increasingly, Moscow appears to be looking to North Korea and Iran as suppliers. After Kim Jong Un, the North Korean leader, visited Russia in 2023, the U.S. accused Pyongyang of supplying Russia with ballistic missiles. Iran, meanwhile, has delivered to Russia a large number of powerful surface-to-surface ballistic missiles and drones.

Ukraine, meanwhile, is dependent on foreign military equipment.

Supplies were stronger at the beginning of the war, but since then, Ukraine's military has suffered from the slow, bureaucratic nature of NATO and U.S. deliveries. It wasn't, for example, until the summer of 2023 that the U.S. approved Europe's request to provide F-16s to Ukraine.

Ukraine needs more of everything, including air defense munitions, artillery shells, tanks and missile systems. It is also running short of medical supplies and has seen hospital shortages of drugs at a time when rampant infections are proving resistant to antibiotics.

Perhaps the biggest factor that remains in Russia's favor when it comes to supplies is the onerous restrictions placed on Ukraine from the West, limiting its ability to attack Russian territory with U.S. or NATO equipment to avoid a wider war. For example, the Ukrainian military had a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System with a 50-mile range that could hit targets inside Russia, but it modified the range to keep the U.S. military satisfied that it would not cross a Russian red line.

If this policy could be relaxed, that might be a game changer for Ukraine, although it would raise the stakes for the

U.S.

## The information war

The Ukraine conflict is also a war of messaging.

To this end, Putin uses propaganda to bolster support for the campaign at

home, while undermining support for Ukraine elsewhere – for example, by planting stories in Europe that cause disenchantment with the war. One outrageous claim in the early weeks of the war was that Zelenskyy had taken his own life. The rumor came from pro-Russia online operatives as part of an aggressive effort to harm Ukrainian morale, ac-



ording to cybersecurity firm Mandiant.

More recently, in France, stories appeared that questioned the value of assistance to Ukraine and reminded the public of the negative impact of Russian sanctions on the French. Stirring dissent in this way is a classic Putin play to raise doubts.

And investigative reporting points toward a disinformation network being run out of the Kremlin, which includes social media bots deployed on Ukrainian sites spreading stories of Zelenskyy's team being corrupt and warning that the war would go badly.

Given that Putin controls the Russian media and is quick to crack down on dissent, it is hard to really know what Russians think. But one reputable polling agency recently reported strong

support in Russia for both Putin and the war in Ukraine.

Ukrainians, too, still support the fight against Russia, polling shows. But some war fatigue has no doubt lowered morale.

There are other signs of domestic strain in Ukraine. At the end of 2023, tensions grew between Zelenskyy and

his top military commander, General Valery Zaluzhny who had complained about weaponry. Zelenskyy ended up firing the military chief, risking political backlash and underscoring that not all is well in the top chain of command.

Should disunity and war fatigue continue into the war's third year, it could seriously impair Ukraine's ability to fight back against a resurgent Russian offensive.

## The politics of conflict

But it isn't just domestic politics in Ukraine and Russia that will decide the outcome of the war.

U.S. politics and European unity could be a factor in 2024 in determining the future of this conflict.

In the U.S., Ukraine aid has become politicized – with aid to Ukraine becoming an increasingly partisan issue.

In early February, the Senate finally passed an emergency aid bill for Ukraine and Israel that would see US\$60.1 billion go to Kyiv. But the bill's fate in the House is unknown.

And the looming 2024 presidential elections could complicate matters further. Former president Donald Trump has made no secret of his aversion to aid packages over loans, calling them “stupid,” and has long argued that Americans shouldn't be footing the bill for the conflict. Recently, he has made bombastic statements about NATO and threatened not to adhere to the alliance's commitment to protect members if they were attacked by Russia.

And uncertainty about American assistance could leave Europe carrying more of the financial load.

European Union members have had to absorb the majority of the 6.3 million Ukrainians who have fled the country since the beginning of the conflict. And that puts a strain on resources. European oil needs also suffer from the sanctions against Russian companies.

Whether these potential war determinants – supplies, information and politics – mean that the Ukraine war will not be entering a fourth year in 12 months time, however, is far from certain. In fact, one thing that does appear clear is that the war that some predicted would be over in weeks looks set to continue for some time still.

–Tara Sonenshine / Edward R. Murrow Professor of Practice in Public Diplomacy, Tufts University / TheConversation / used with permission



## How to Improve the Functionality and Charm of Your Home

New windows can increase curb appeal, providing the finishing touch on an exterior home improvement project. They can also reduce energy bills, provide ventilation and impact your view, making it important to choose your products and placement carefully. Here's what to know:

### Performance

As we head into the coolest months of the year, it's important to remember that windows are a point of heat transfer. For optimal energy efficiency this winter and beyond, work with a manufacturer that offers ENERGY STAR-certified windows and insulated glass options. Likewise, investigate ratings for weatherability, durability and color retention. That's where materials can come into play. Products made from vinyl have these common qualities: strength, durability, and abrasion-, moisture-, rust- and corrosion-resis-

tance. They are also electrically non-conductive and have excellent fire performance properties.

### Style

Double hung and sliding windows are some of the most common window types nationwide. If you're looking for a change, here are some other types to consider:

- Architectural windows: Custom window shapes, typically called architectural windows, come in a variety of profiles and sizes. Whether you're partial to arch windows, octagonal windows or something else, custom window shapes can be used alone as a single focal point or in combination with other windows to create a show-stopping view. Online resources, such as ProVia's window shape guide, found at [provia.com/windows/shapes](http://provia.com/windows/shapes), can help you select shapes to complement your home's architecture.



- Bay and bow windows: Most often seen on Victorian and classic/colonial style homes, bay and bow windows are a beautiful way to draw attention to your home's exterior, while inside, providing a cozy place to sit and read or just enjoy the view. Constructed of double hung, casement or picture windows set side-by-side at varying angles, bay and bow windows can be customized to include stained glass, tinted glass and other decorative options to further amp up curb appeal.

- Hopper windows: Do you have spaces that could use a bit of sunlight and ventilation, but are areas where you don't necessarily need people looking back in? Such rooms – think basements and bathrooms – are great places to install hopper windows, which are single-sash windows that open inward from the top. Doing so can improve home value by adding light to rooms that otherwise might be very dark. And in the laundry room, a hopper window can be used as the exterior outlet for dryer vents when mulled to a small, insulated picture window or other window type.

- Garden windows: While most often associated with Victorian-style architecture, garden windows can be added to any style home. The three-dimensional design helps open up a room while providing an eye-catching boost of curb appeal. A long-standing favorite in kitchens behind the sink, garden windows are ideal for bringing in extra light and providing a space to grow small plants or herbs. They can also be used in a bathroom or den as an alcove for decorative accents. When adding garden windows, consider turning to a manufacturer that provides the option to include adjustable shelves. This will help you maximize the space best.

Need some inspiration? Use ProVia's Window Configurator tool in its online design center, found at [provia.com/design-center/envision](http://provia.com/design-center/envision), to try different window styles, grid options, colors and glass designs to create the perfect look for your home.

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# entertainment

## “Forty-Seven Days with Jesus” in theaters mid-March

“Forty-Seven Days with Jesus,” a movie starring several cast members from “The Chosen,” will arrive in theaters in time for the Easter season. More than 800 theaters nationwide are scheduled to present it on March 11, 12 and 14.

The film is an Easter story centered around the Burdon family, led by Joseph and Juliana. As the family gathers at Poppa and Nonna’s ranch for a reunion, they come to realize the disconnect that has crept into their lives. Faced with marital challenges, teenage turmoil and Poppa’s health struggles, the adults decide to share Poppa’s captivating ‘Forty-Seven Days’ story with the children, transporting them back in time to witness the miracles of Jesus’ final days on earth. As Joseph faces an unexpected business opportunity that places him at a crossroads, his commitment to his family is put to the test.

“Can the Burdons pull together in the face of uncertainty?” the movie description asks. “With Poppa’s tale as their guide, they embark on a journey toward unity and rediscover the true



essence of walking in faith.”

“Forty-Seven Days with Jesus” marks the latest offering in a recent surge in TV series and movies that draw inspiration from biblical stories. “The Chosen,” a series about the life of Jesus and his followers, is now in its fourth season, with 110 million viewers across 175 countries.

Dallas Jenkins, creator of “The Chosen,” says that the popularity of Bible-based shows like his reflects a growing appetite for authentic and relatable storytelling.

“I think so many people see Jesus, and even the followers of Jesus, as stained-glass windows, statues, something on a page, something on a painting,” he said. “Even when they read the scriptures, they sometimes have difficulty connecting. I think by making the show, making Jesus and the disciples, reminding people that they were human beings and saying, ‘Wow, their struggles are our struggles. Their questions were ours, therefore, the answer can be the same.’ That seems to be what’s resonating with people.”

## Toby Keith said faith was his rock during cancer journey

Country music star Toby Keith leaned on his faith to battle cancer before his death on February 5.

He discussed his ordeal last month in an interview with an Oklahoma City television station. When asked how he maneuvers through those “dark hallways,” he answered: “Faith. You take it for granted on the days that things are good, and you lean on it when days are bad. It has taught me to lean on a little more every day.”

Keith, 62, first was diagnosed with cancer in October 2021. As he was enduring chemotherapy, radiation and surgery, he said he “got to the point where I was comfortable with whatever happened. I had my brain wrapped around it, and I was in a good spot either way. Cancer is a roller coaster. ‘You just sit here and wait on it to go away. It might never go away.’”

Keith’s music career spanned three decades. Before he rose to fame in the 1990s, he worked in the oilfields of Oklahoma and also played semipro



football as a defensive end for the Oklahoma City Drillers. After going to Nashville, Keith signed a recording deal with Mercury Records and released his debut album in 1993, which went platinum and skyrocketed him to fame.

“Should’ve Been a Cowboy” from his first album became the most-played country song of the decade, according to the Associated Press. He would release other hits such as “How Do You Like Me Now?,” “Beer for My Horses” and “Courtesy of the Red, White and

Blue.” Keith was outspoken about his patriotism, getting into a tussle with the Dixie Chicks in 2003 after they publicly criticized then-President George W. Bush and the Iraq War. He played music for the troops during 11 USO tours.

“I lean on my faith, and I just pray and lean into it,” he told Fox News last fall. “You got to do what you got to do, and I don’t know how people do it without faith. That’s what I did, it was my rock.”



## “The President and the Freedom Fighter” explores friendship between Lincoln, Douglass

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A new book looks at the friendship between Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass as they sought to end slavery.

Brian Kilmeade, cohost of “Fox and Friends,” is the author of “The President and the Freedom Fighter: Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass and Their Battle to Save America’s Soul.” Both men had to overcome huge adversity, especially Douglass, who was born a slave.

“Born a slave and literally sold, and then after one failed escape, Douglass finally gets out and was able to live his life and, remarkably, within seven years is writing a biography and becomes one of the most respected intellects and speakers in the world,” Kilmeade said.

Lincoln was born Feb. 12, 1809 into abject poverty. His parents were illiterate.

“And then you have Lincoln who was basically a self-taught guy,” he said. “They had a lot of similarities. They had a thirst for education. They were going to find a way out somehow, some way. They were going to barter,

do work for a book, just a chance to read and learn about a story. They were buried in the Bible and great thinkers their entire lives.”

Despite their similarities though, there also were deep differences, most notably, how to approach the most pressing issue of the day — slavery. Through time, the men came to respect one another and even form a friendship.

“It was timing and people would be pushing Lincoln to do it,” Kilmeade said. “He’s like, ‘I’m not ready.’ Then he realized, ‘We need a big win. After that big win, I’m not only going to come out with the Emancipation Proclamation, I’m going to allow African Americans to fight for their freedom.’”

Is there a lesson in this story for Americans today?

“They wanted to make America better,” he said. “So they studied the Founding Fathers, they studied where we came from and they said, ‘OK, my country is imperfect, so let’s make it better, right? Let’s not disparage it. Let’s do it in a way, you know, call it out but make it better.’”

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# Inside the Christian concert and child sponsorship relationship

Go to a contemporary Christian music (CCM) concert and often you'll be greeted by materials about a child sponsorship ministry or other charitable group the band asks you to support. During the concert, a heart-wrenching video about suffering children implores concertgoers to sign up as a monthly sponsor.

But do concertgoers know that, behind the scenes, money is being exchanged between the charity and musical artists? What percentage of dollars raised during the concert actually reach the children in need? Is there a reason these relationships are not transparent?

According to a survey of Christian ministry executives, 82% of respondents are not working with CCM artists to help raise funds, 13% are considering it for the future, and 4% have utilized the arrangement in the past. None of the respondents are currently working with musicians for fundraising.

However, plenty of large Christian ministries do work with Christian musicians to help raise awareness and funds.

Professor Leah Payne, author of the recently-released "God Gave Rock and Roll to You" about CCM, told MinistryWatch these financial arrangements between Christian charities and musical artists are "a longstanding practice that goes back to the early days of [contemporary Christian music]."

While research for her book did not get into specifics about the arrangements, her understanding is that "a variety of funding models have been used over the years," including both flat fees and commission, and without such arrangements, some bands might not be able to tour.

"It was (and still is) a mutually beneficial financial relationship for the artists and for the org[anizations]," she wrote.

While Payne didn't opine about the ethics of the arrangements, she offered knowledge of artists who chose to opt out or decline this kind of arrangement for "ethical, theological, and sometimes artistic reasons."

CCM industry insider and best-selling author Brant Hansen, an advocate for CURE International, told MinistryWatch he believes disclosure and transparency are important.



"I do wish artists would disclose the arrangement. Usually, if there's a 'but we can't say that out loud' sense, it's an indicator that something's amiss," he said.

"I certainly don't blame Compassion, for instance. I'm a longtime sponsor and love them. They have to compete in this weird environment. But I do think fans should know if a sizable amount of their first year of sponsorship actually goes to the artist," Hansen said.

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Steve Camp, a well-known contemporary Christian musician in the 1980s and '90s, was part of arrangements with Compassion International and Food for the Hungry. Back then, groups paid a nominal fee to work with him and make presentations during his concerts.

He believes if musical artists are receiving tour support, the arrangements can be a net positive.

He cautioned that musical artists should choose carefully the ministries they partner with, exercising due diligence to find out how the money raised is being spent.

He suggested musicians be transparent with concertgoers about the charity and why they support it. Artists should also explain how the tour is being supported, and take that into account when setting ticket prices.

"It is good to function above reproach," Camp told MinistryWatch. "If you can't be transparent as to the nature of the organization or relationship, then there may be something that is being masked and could be a cause for concern."

## Ministries Who Have Artist Ambassadors

Compassion International was among the first ministries to develop a program with Christian musical artists who agreed to help promote the cause. According to spokesperson Tim Glenn, Compassion pioneered the artist ambassador concept in the late 1970s with groups like The Imperials.

Compassion currently works with nearly 100 artists and bands "who are passionate about our mission of releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name," including Casting Crowns and Matthew West.

The partnerships have helped connect sponsors to over 400,000 children.

When asked about Compassion's financial arrangements with these musical artists, Glenn called them more than a "financial transaction."

He acknowledged there is an "up-front investment," but did not elaborate on whether the transaction is based on the number of child packets picked up at an event.

Glenn claimed the artist ambassador program is among the "most cost-effective, financially efficient ways we've found to reach Christian audiences and connect them to children in poverty through sponsorship," adding that Compassion ensures over 80% of donations directly benefit the children.

Compassion International does not release its Form 990s to the public, so MinistryWatch could not review them for more information about payments made to musical artists.

Shaun Groves, a contemporary Christian musician who partnered with Compassion, addressed concerns about

"kickbacks" for child sponsorships. In a 2008 blog post, Groves said his arrangement with Compassion was not a kickback scheme, but that it would pay him "enough to cover my road manager/booking agent and pay myself" while the concert would be free to attendees.

MinistryWatch asked if that accurately described the arrangements Compassion has with artists 16 years later, but Glenn did not reply.

World Vision is a Christian relief group behemoth that works with "celebrity ambassadors" to promote its work. Its annual revenue is over \$1.4 billion.

On its 2021 Form 990 Schedule G, World Vision lists several Christian bands it paid for fundraising, including Finding Favour Music, 33 Miles, RVRB, and Building 429. The bands were paid between \$50,000 and \$140,000.

MinistryWatch sent an inquiry to World Vision about its partnerships with musical artists, their effectiveness, and their structure. World Vision's spokesperson Ann Lauricello asked for an extension of a deadline in order to consult with "several key stakeholders." When the extension was reached, Lauricello claimed they had "attempted" to answer the questions, but pressing situations would prevent them from sending a reply.

OneChild, which has annual revenue of nearly \$21 million, has a radio and artist engagement program that claims to "work with artists and influencers around the U.S. in mutually beneficial partnerships to minister to your audience in a powerful way and help find caring sponsors for children."

The program's director, Faron Dice, declined to be interviewed by MinistryWatch about what a "mutually beneficial partnership" means. "I am happy to tell you that we love finding people and partnerships who champion the cause of children to their audiences. For us, it's all about authentic relationships and heart-level commitment," Dice wrote in reply.

An examination of the OneChild Form 990s does not include a Schedule G where fundraising activities are normally listed.

ChildFund's annual revenue approaches \$200 million. It engages with Christian music artists to promote its work among poverty stricken children around the world.

It lists a few dozen artists as part of its program. "ChildFund International's artists' program has proven to be a powerful and inspiring way to support our mission," spokesperson Cheri Dahl told MinistryWatch via email.

"The program fosters connections between compassionate individuals and children in need, providing essential support for children, helping them overcome challenges and grow up healthy, educated, skilled and safe."

Thriving Children Advocates (TCA) is a professional fundraising organization incorporated in Tennessee that acts as an intermediary to partner charities and musical artists together for fundraising.

From its Form 990s, it appears ChildFund and TCA have been fundraising together for several years to the tune of millions of dollars.

On the 2019 Form 990 Schedule G, ChildFund reported that TCA raised \$11.3 million for ChildFund, with \$9.28 million going to TCA and only \$2.06 million going to ChildFund.

The next year, ChildFund reported TCA raising \$16.5 million, with \$3.2 million going to TCA and \$13.3 million retained by ChildFund. It also listed TCA as an independent contractor receiving nearly \$8 million in compensation.

On the Form 990 for 2021, ChildFund did not include TCA on its Schedule G for fundraising activities, but included it as an independent contractor who was compensated with \$2,114,985.

Most recently, ChildFund paid TCA \$2,360,570 as an independent fundraising contractor, according to its 2022 Form 990. On its Schedule G, ChildFund reported that TCA raised \$9.8 million with \$3.3 million paid to TCA and the remaining \$6.5 million retained by ChildFund.

ChildFund's Code of Business and Ethics says it values, "Demonstrating integrity, openness and honesty, including stewardship of all resources by: being accountable to our stakeholders for actions and results, practicing good business ethics, [and] being transparent in our relationships."

However, when MinistryWatch asked ChildFund about its arrangements with TCA, Dahl declined to provide any specific answers, only replying with the same general statement about the benefits of their artist program.

Additionally, TCA did not respond to email inquiries about the artist partnership services it provides.

—Kim Roberts / Ministry Watch used

# 50+ Lifestyles

## A Guide to Enjoying Life in the Best Years

### Spring Cleaning: Don't Toss That 'Junk,' It May Be Valuable!

From baseball cards and sports equipment to postcards and photographs, is that “junk” in your attic or basement dusty treasure or just dusty? We've all heard of families getting rich from the sale of rare memorabilia they found when spring cleaning.

A little time spent determining if items are valuable and where to sell them can pay off in the long run.

“The sale of older sports cards, postcards and photographs can yield thousands of dollars, even tens of thousands or more for the right ones,” says Al Crisafulli, Auction Director at Love of the Game Auctions, an internet sports auction house that helps families identify and sell valuable sports cards and memorabilia.

Crisafulli has assisted people in selling tens of millions of dollars of baseball card collections, autographs, sports equipment and more. Such sales can be life changing. In one instance, he researched

a family's old baseball bat and proved it was game used by Hall of Famer Lou Gehrig. His Love of the Game Auctions sold it for almost half a million dollars, a figure which would top a million dollars today.

Here are some of his tips to determine if your sports collectibles are valuable:

#### The Older, the Better with Cards

Vintage sports cards from the early periods of sports are collectible, especially Hall of Famers. Do you have stars from the 1960s, 1950s or earlier? Look for names like Mickey Mantle, Jackie Robinson, Babe Ruth, Honus Wagner or Ty Cobb. Even non-star cards can be valuable, especially in nice condition with sharp corners and no creases.

Really early cards from the 1880s through the 1930s are particularly desirable, such as those by tobacco, gum and candy brands, such as Old

Judge, Piedmont, Sweet Caporal, American Caramel, Goudey or Diamond Stars.

When determining where to sell cards and memorabilia, focus on a specialty auction house, such as Love of the Game, which employs trained experts in researching sports ephemera, and maintains bidder lists of sports collectors. More information is available at [loveofthegameauctions.com](http://loveofthegameauctions.com).

#### Don't Overlook Memorabilia and Equipment

Cards aren't the only potentially valuable things. Look for older promotional and advertising ephemera spotlighting sports stars, especially items that promote sporting goods, food or tobacco brands. Ads from magazines aren't valuable, but store displays, signs and premiums can be pricey.

Old sporting goods and equipment, such as balls, bats, gloves and uniforms, can also be valuable, especially if you had a family member who played minor or major league sports. Note that items from before the 1960s are highly collected. Also look for equipment endorsed by star players. Condition matters, but game-used equipment from professionals can be valuable in almost any condition.

#### Save Postcards and Photographs

If you have old photographs, cabinet cards or postcards of sports stars or ballparks, they should be evaluated. Those from pre-1960 can be expensive. Look for early “real photo” postcards from the 1900s through the 1940s, which are photographs printed on postcard backs.

Popular stars are key, meaning original images like Babe Ruth or early ballparks can be valuable, as opposed to images of your family



members playing sports or of popular vacation destinations. When examining photographs, look for markings on the back, such as photographer, publication and date stamps. Also set aside cabinet cards, which are photographs from the 1880s through the 1930s adhered to cardboard stock.

“A good rule of thumb is that the older a sports item is, the more valuable it might be, especially from before the 1950s going back to the 1880s,” says Crisafulli.

This spring cleaning season, don't rush to haul “junk” to the curb. Examine it first.

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# 4 Tips to Get High Cholesterol Under Control

Heart disease is the nation's leading cause of death for men and women, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but many people aren't aware they may be at elevated risk. More than 71 million adults in the United States have high low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and nearly 50 million don't have it under control, which puts them at higher risk for cardiovascular events, such as heart attack and stroke.

What's more, nearly one-third (31%) of U.S. adults are not

controlled cholesterol. Fully 3 in 10 (30%) of those taking statins believe statins are the only LDL lowering treatment available for those with high LDL cholesterol.

"In auto racing, the red flag means danger on the track, stopping the race immediately," said Dr. JoAnne Foody, chief medical officer at Esperion. "We are launching a patient education program, 'Wave the Red Flag,' to encourage people with uncontrolled high cholesterol to have their levels checked right away

vascular events.

Consider these tips to get high cholesterol under control.

**Talk with your doctor.** Speaking with your physician is an important first step to managing any health condition. Your doctor can help you understand the severity of your condition and whether a treatment plan should be moderate or aggressive.

**Check your progress.** Keeping tabs on your cholesterol can help you and your health care team gauge whether your treatment plan is working. If you don't have heart disease, you may not need to check as frequently, but your doctor can recommend the appropriate intervals to help manage your cholesterol most effectively.

**Take medications as prescribed.** Statins are the medications most often recommended by treatment guidelines for the management of blood cholesterol, and nearly one-third (30%) of those taking statins believe they are the only cholesterol-lowering treatment available, according to the survey. However, even with maximal statin therapy, some patients with chronic disease do not meet recommended LDL cholesterol levels. Taking your medications regularly and as instructed helps your doctor determine whether additional therapies – including non-statin treatments – could be useful to help manage your blood cholesterol.

**Make lifestyle adjustments.** Your diet plays a major role in lowering LDL cholesterol. Limiting fatty foods, especially those that are high in saturated and trans fats, is key. Monitoring your overall diet and exercising can also help reduce your risk of high cholesterol. Even if you don't have high cholesterol, adopting more cholesterol-friendly habits can help prevent your levels from rising to un-



aware that having high cholesterol puts them at greater risk for heart attack and stroke, according to the findings of a recent study conducted by The Harris Poll commissioned by Esperion Therapeutics, Inc. The poll also revealed some inconsistent understanding about treatment op-

and discuss appropriate treatment options with their health care provider."

If your high cholesterol is uncontrolled, understanding how you can achieve greater control can reduce your risk for serious health conditions, including potentially life-threatening cardio-

healthy levels in the future.

To find additional information about managing your high cholesterol, talk to your health care provider and visit WaveTheRed-Flag.info.

## Fast Facts About Cholesterol

### What is cholesterol?

The liver creates a fat-like waxy substance called cholesterol. It serves useful purposes for the body, including producing hormones and helping digest food.

### How do you get high cholesterol?

The human body makes all the cholesterol it needs naturally, so any cholesterol you eat is cholesterol you don't need. However, it can be difficult to avoid because you can find dietary cholesterol in many common foods, including meat, seafood, poultry, eggs

and dairy. Other non-dietary contributing factors include health conditions like obesity and diabetes, as well as family history and advancing age.

### What is a normal cholesterol level?

An average optimal level of LDL cholesterol is about 100 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL).

An average optimal level of high-density lipoprotein, or HDL, cholesterol is at least 40 mg/dL for men and 50 mg/dL for women. HDL cholesterol can actually lower your risk of heart disease and stroke.

### Are there symptoms of high cholesterol?

Unlike many health conditions, there are rarely any symptoms that your cholesterol is high. That's what makes regular screening so important.

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# sports

## Mahomes, Clark Hunt give glory to God after Super Bowl victory



For the third time in five years, Patrick Mahomes led the Kansas City Chiefs to a Super Bowl championship and was named MVP of the game. And once again, he and his boss, Clark Hunt, gave glory to God, saying in a post-game interview on CBS that the team dealt with adversity all season as the offense struggled at times.

"It means a ton," he said. "Just the adversity we dealt with this year and to come through. The guys never falter. I give God the glory. He challenged us to make us better. I am proud of my guys. They did awesome. Legendary."

With three Super Bowl victories under his belt at age 28, Mahomes was asked if the Chiefs are a dynasty now. "It's the start of one," he said. "We are not done. We are going to celebrate tonight, but we are not done. We have a young team. We are going to keep this thing going."

Chiefs owner Clark Hunt also mentioned God in his comments after receiving the Vince Lombardi Trophy on stage.

"First of all I want to congratulate

Andy [Reid], the football team, our coaching staff on an incredible performance," he said. "It's been an amazing five-year run. I want to thank the Lord for giving us this opportunity. Watching today's game, I couldn't help but think about my parents and how proud they would be of this football team. They were the biggest Chiefs fans in the world, and they would have loved celebrating another world championship."

After beating the Baltimore Ravens in the AFC Championship Game in late January, Mahomes said in a post-game interview that "God put a lot of adversity in our way this year. And we accepted the challenge, and we're better for it. I mean, it's been a heck of a year. We're not done yet. But this is a way to get there."

Mahomes has often spoken about his faith when presented with the opportunity. "My Christian faith plays a role in everything that I do," he said in a previous interview. "I mean, I always ask God to lead me in the right direction and let me be who I am for his name."

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## FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Rob Mooney

During the Mark Mangino era at The University of Kansas, I went onto the field, along with almost everyone else in the stands, after a football game. I can't remember who they played or the significance of the moment, (probably because they won a game), but there we were, right in the middle of it all. I was with a couple of my kids and it was fun to watch the goalpost being taken to Potter's Lake where it would eventually take up residence. The kids enjoyed it and it was exciting just being there.

Court storming has been around for a long time. When a team wins a game that they probably shouldn't have, the crowd runs onto the court or field to celebrate. I'm not sure why. Is it to get close to the players? Is it because most of them are college kids and they're looking to have some fun? I don't know if anyone knows the answer to that but it happens and it happens quite frequently.

The most recent incident was the result of Wake Forest knocking off Duke in college basketball. After the Demon Deacons beat the Blue Devils 83-79, which resulted in Duke star Kyle Filipowski being bumped into several times and hurting his ankle. This is on the heels of the court storming incident at Ohio State when their women's team beat Iowa.

There have been several coaches that have called for changes over the last couple of days, but I'm not sure what can be done. Jay Bilas, an ESPN college basketball analyst had a great take. He said to let everyone storm the court and then not to let them leave. Tell them that they're all detained and issue citations to everyone or arrest them. He's pretty sure that court storming would stop the next day.

Several college basketball coaches have come out publicly against court storming over the past week, including Kansas's Bill Self. He wants to get rid of it completely. He said that that he has dealt with court storming as an opposing team for most of his career and it's very dangerous. If possible, he will have his players as close to the bench as he can during the last few seconds of a game to protect them. However, he also stated that he shouldn't have to do that.

This needs to be addressed now, not

during the off season when a committee can look at it, but as soon as possible. I'm not sure what exactly can be done about it? For starters, fines should be imposed on the school where it happens. I'm not talking about a slap on the wrist fine. Fine the school \$500,000 or more. I think it would be much cheaper

to pay security than pay a fine of that magnitude. I also agree with Bilas, issue citations to folks who storm the court. Would you get all of them, probably not, but you might get enough to make a difference.

Alabama athletics director Greg Byrne stated that the teams should have to forfeit the game if there's a prolonged rush to the court. I know that seems a little extreme, but it would definitely put a stop to it.

Whatever they are able to come up should help. Court storming is a dangerous affair for all involved!

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9TH ANNUAL TOPEKA

# EASTER FEST

EASTER PARADE + FAMILY FUN FAIR!



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

Fun Fair open 10 am - 3 pm at Great Overland Station, with Live Music 10:45 am - 3 pm!  
 Parade starts at 10 am at Garfield Park and goes to the tracks in NOTO. Big Egg Hunt follows parade at 11 am at Great Overland Station! 5K Run/Walk starts 9am at Garfield Park. 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:**  
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**For booth, sponsor & parade entry information:**  
 info@C5Alive.org or 785-640-6399

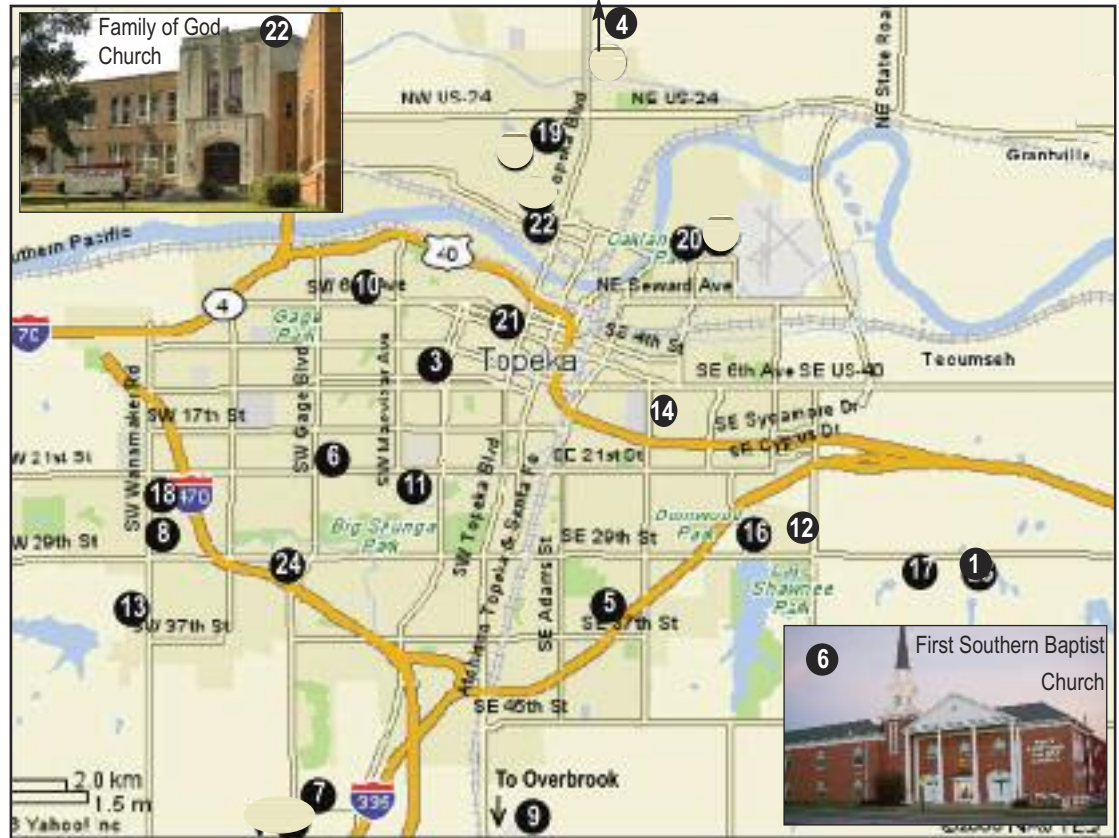
Funds raised will be shared with a local non-profit serving local families



**SATURDAY, Mar. 30, 2024 • 10 AM - 3 PM**

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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](http://www.highlandheightscc.com)  
 Jars of Clay Children's Ctr 785-379-9098

## 2. CHRISTIAN CAVALRY MINISTRIES INT.

Pastor Beaux Bryant  
 Call about new meeting location for current services.  
 785-224-5419 • [www.church4bikers.org](http://www.church4bikers.org)  
 Sun. School 9:30 am  
 Sun. Service 10:45 am  
 Wed. Prayer & Bible Study 7pm

## 3. TOPEKA BIBLE CHURCH

1101 SW Mulvane St., Topeka  
 785-234-5545  
 Worship: 9:00 & 10:30 am  
 Livestream at 9:00 am  
 Sunday School & Bible Studies:  
 9:00 & 10:30 am  
[www.discovertbc.com](http://www.discovertbc.com)

## 4. BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

4011 N. Kansas Ave, Topeka  
 785-286-0467  
 Sunday School at 9:30am  
 Worship at 10:30am  
 Livestream on Youtube at 10:30am  
[www.betheltopeka.org](http://www.betheltopeka.org)

## 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](http://www.indianaavecofc.org)  
 Bible University – Sunday - 9:30 a.m.  
 Classes for all ages.  
 Morning Worship – Sunday – 10:45 a.m.  
 Midweek Bible University – Wed. – 7pm

## 6. FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST

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

## 7. TOPEKA BAPTIST CHURCH

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

## 11. COMMUNITY CHURCH

1819 SW 21st St., Topeka  
 233-3537 [www.CommunityTopeka.com](http://www.CommunityTopeka.com)  
[info@CommunityTopeka.com](mailto:info@CommunityTopeka.com)  
 Sun. 8:30am - Sunday School for all ages  
 Sun. 10:00am - Worship & Word  
 Sun. 10:00am Youth Service  
 ~ 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. 9:45am: Sunday School all ages  
 Sunday 10:45am:  
 Nursery, Children's Church, & Worship  
 Wed.: Prayer, Bible Study, & Discussion 7-8pm  
 Kids J.A.M. 'Jesus & Me!' 7-8pm

## 13. WANAMAKER WOODS NAZARENE

3501 SW Wanamaker Rd • 273-2248  
[www.wwnaz.org](http://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

A Spirit-filled, Word-centered church  
 2531 SE Wittenberg Rd., Topeka  
 Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm  
 Wed. Prayer & Praise 7pm  
 785-266-LOVE (5683)  
 J. Michael Borjon, Pastor

## 17. EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

4425 S.E. 29th St., 785-379-9933.  
 Sunday Worship 10:00am & 5:30pm  
 Sunday Evenings at 5:30pm:  
 • AWANA  
 • Student Ministries  
 • reJengage  
[www.esbcks.org](http://www.esbcks.org)

## 20. HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

## 21. HARVEST FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

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

## 22. FAMILY OF GOD CHURCH

1231 NW Eugene St.  
 Topeka, KS 66608  
 Pastor Roger Randel  
 Sunday School 9am; Worship 10:30am  
 Wednesday Bible Study 7pm  
 785-234-1111  
[FOGchurch.com](http://FOGchurch.com)

## 24. TRINITY REFORMED BAPTIST

Holding to the authorized King James Version and the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith  
 Sunday 9:30 a.m. Wednesday 6 p.m.  
 Pastor Bob Spagnuolo 785-273-3506  
 meeting in our home:  
 4307 SW 30th Ter., Topeka  
[www.TrinityReformedBaptist.org](http://www.TrinityReformedBaptist.org)

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## SERVICE:

**ECONOMY HOUSE CLEANING** in the Topeka Area: Only \$50 for most houses. Call Marvin for appointment. Phone 785-741-1929

## WANTED:

**ASSISTANT EDITOR** – Research articles & event info online & on phone. Some writing & editing. Some updating files, social media posting, possibly some deliveries. Mostly work from home. Could be part-time hourly wages, or contract services basis. Call 785-640-6399

**PART-TIME ACCOUNT REP** – Work your own hours. Call on businesses, churches & non-profits about their advertisements in Metro Voice. Generous commission on all ads you place;

no base. Voice@cox.net

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

**FEMALE SINGERS WANTED** – Topeka Acapella Unlimited is looking for female singers who would like to sing four part acapella harmonies. Topeka Acapella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines, International. Call Cindy Patton at 785-640-7403 for more information.

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

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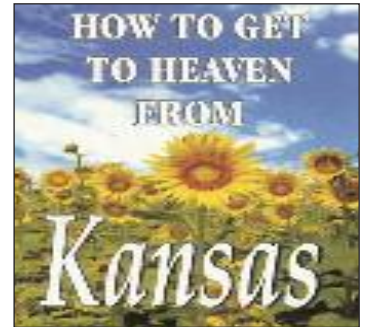
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More important than living in KANSAS is where you will live forever. Just as you would look at a map of KANSAS to find your way, so you must look at the Bible to find your way to heaven. The Bible says, "Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,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

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