

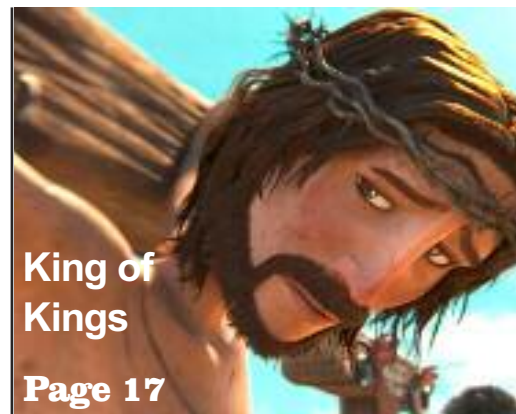
# JESUS FEST TOPEKA

JESUS FEST

Page 13

# metro VOICE

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King of Kings

Page 17

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## NEW RESIDENT churchguide



Harvest Family Fellowship

See Inside Back Cover!

## Coffee drinkers have grounds to believe in its health benefits



Churches that serve coffee on Sunday mornings may be doing more than just helping members stay alert during the sermon. They also may be extending their lifespan.

In a study of more than 40,000 people in a national health survey, researchers found that morning coffee drinkers had a lower risk of dying prematurely than non-coffee drinkers. The biggest beneficiaries might be those who drank coffee only in the morning rather than throughout the

■ Please see COFFEE page 2



## Shroud of Turin Exhibit Brings Ancient Crucifixion Mystery to KC

By Dwight Widaman

The body lies still, arms crossed, bearing the marks of crucifixion. Though it's only a cast, its presence inside Fellowship Church stops visitors in their tracks.

The Shroud of Turin, a 14-foot-long linen cloth bearing the mysterious image of a crucified man,

has captivated believers and scientists since its first documented appearance in medieval France. For centuries, many have believed it to be the actual burial cloth of Jesus Christ.

This authorized reproduction is part of the "Who is the Man of the Shroud?" exhibit about the Shroud and the science delving into its se-

crets. The free event at Fellowship Church Greenwood, located in Greenwood, Mo., runs every day through May 4 with opening times in the afternoon running through 8 p.m. (See below for more details). Lead researcher and Bible scholar Dr. Jeremiah Johnston packed out all the Sunday services.

■ Please see SHROUD page 3

## Tour Topeka Offers BINGO Adventure Challenge, Prizes



Shawnee County Parks + Recreation invites the community to explore, play, and win during Tour Topeka, a fun and interactive BINGO-style adventure running May 1 through June 7.

Participants can register for just \$5 to receive an official Tour Topeka BINGO card, full of local destinations and activities to check off as they explore the community. Cards are available at:

- Hillcrest Community Center
- Oakland Community Center
- Garfield Community Center

■ Please see BINGO page 2

## Religious Faith Surges: US Christian Belief Hits 10-Year High in 2025

Religious faith among Americans has reached a remarkable milestone as new research reveals belief in Jesus has surged to its highest level since 2013, according to the latest State of the Church research from Barna Group.

"The trends we explore this month are not only encouraging, but instructive," said Brad Hill, chief solutions officer for Gloom. "It's heartening to see that more people are finding and maintaining a personal relationship with Jesus, especially among younger

generations. The other trends in this report really speak to the question, 'How can we, as parents, friends, neighbors and church leaders, show up well for others?' This research helps us better understand where we might start."

Among the key findings:

- Belief is on the rise. Since 2021, belief in Jesus among U.S. adults has increased by 12 percent, from 54 percent

■ Please see FAITH SURGE page 2



# Ancient Garden Discovery Confirms Biblical Account of Crucifixion

Ancient Garden Discovery Confirms Biblical Account at Holy Sepulchre

As Good Friday approaches, Christians remember the words of John 19:41; “Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.”

Evidence of such an ancient garden have been uncovered by archaeologists excavating beneath the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Biblical ar-

chaeologists and historians believe the church sits on the site where Jesus crucified and was buried and it continues to be a major pilgrimage site. The discovery of 2,000-year-old olive trees are believed to reflect biblical accounts.

Francesca Stasolla, an archaeology professor at the Sapienza University of Rome, confirmed the findings with Fox News. She said the proof of the ancient garden came in the form of seeds and pollen.

“The archaeobotanical findings have been especially interesting for us in light of what is mentioned in the gospel of John, whose information is considered written or collected by someone familiar with Jerusalem at the time,” she said. “These cultivated fields” were identified between Calvary and the tomb.

Although the precise age of the organic material has yet to be determined, Stasolla said the pollen and seeds date back “in between the use of the quarry and the Roman age, when the area had a funerary use.”

“Agricultural areas and tombs” replaced the quarry as it was gradually abandoned, she said. “This must have been what it looked like in the first century A.D.”

Some artifacts that have been found at the site so far date all the way back to



the Iron Age. Ancient pilgrimage location describes the area's status since the fourth century.

“Ceramics, metals, glass... [all] document both the occupation of the area and the presence of believers and pilgrims,” Stasolla said. “A strategic excava-

tion” is how she described this significant research.

The excavation, first reported by the Times of Israel, is the first major restoration project at the church in nearly two centuries.

## FAITH SURGE

continued from page 1

to 66 percent. Among Gen Z men, commitment to Jesus jumped 15 percentage points between 2019 and 2025. Millennial men saw a similar spike of 19 percentage points.

Recent studies indicate that this growth trend represents a significant shift from previous decades of decline. The latest data shows the surge is particularly pronounced among younger generations, defying earlier predictions about religious decline.

• Spiritual openness has Christian roots. Nearly two in five spiritually open non-Christians in the United States were raised Christian, and more than half say they have identified as Christian at some point in their lives. Of those with Christian roots, more than half left Christianity behind to distance themselves from the “politics of the church.”

Research demonstrates that authen-

tic faith communities, rather than institutional support, drive sustainable religious growth. This finding aligns with current trends showing increased interest in personal spirituality over traditional religious structures.

• Faith sharing. Although 61 percent of today's U.S. Christians believe they have a personal responsibility to share their faith, only 28 percent feel strongly about it.

• Inviting others to church. Nearly three in four non-churchgoing U.S. adults haven't personally been invited to church in the past year.

“These findings point to the spiritually open moment we're in,” said David Kinnaman, CEO of Barna Group. “Belief is on the rise from what has been a consistently downward trend since 2009. Spiritual openness continues to climb. This data give us a window into how culture is changing and an incredible opportunity to share our faith in Jesus and increase our confidence that the decline of Christianity is not inevitable.”

## COFFEE

continued from page 1

day.

Of course, these findings are from a single study, so further research is needed on the timing of coffee drinking. At the same time, this new study adds to a large and growing amount of research showing that coffee drinking overall can have many health benefits. Coffee has more than 1,000 compounds that could aid health. Among other possible benefits, these compounds could help improve the gut microbiome, ease inflammation, help with DNA repair and help control blood sugar.

Studies have linked moderate coffee drinking with a lower risk of stroke,

heart disease, diabetes, gallstones, Parkinson's disease and some cancers. It may even help with longevity. Many of these possible benefits seem to include decaf as well as regular, caffeinated coffee.

Coffee drinkers in the United States average around two cups a day, within the range of up to two to four eight-ounce cups (or up to 400 milligrams of total daily caffeine) that's likely safe for most adults, according to the federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Depending on the type of coffee and how it's made, an eight-ounce cup of brewed coffee can have around 95 to 180 milligrams of caffeine.

For women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, general recommendations are lower — often under 200 mil-

ligrams of caffeine a day. Women who are pregnant, wanting to become pregnant or breastfeeding should talk to a health-care provider about how much coffee or caffeine is safe for them.

“Keeping it simple is usually the best approach when it comes to coffee drinks,” said Dr. Graham A. Colditz, associate director of prevention and control at Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. “Choose black, unsweetened coffee, or with just a little sugar and splash of milk. Try to limit specialty coffee drinks that have a lot of added sugar, unhealthy fats and calories, which can offset some of the benefits we may be getting from our coffee.”

## BINGO

continued from page 1

- Central Park Community Center
- Crestview Community Center
- Shawnee North Community Center
- Lake Shawnee Administration Office
- Great Overland Station

BONUS: A downloadable version of the BINGO card will also be available free online, so anyone can play along—but only registered participants are eligible for raffle entries and the blackout prize.

Registration can be completed at any time through June 7 at Skyline Park. Upon registering, participants are automatically entered into a raffle drawing to be held at the closing event on June 7. Each completed BINGO line earns an

additional raffle entry. A special prize will be awarded to any participant who blacks out their entire card.

The BINGO card includes activities and partnerships with some of Topeka's most engaging organizations and outdoor groups, including:

- Topeka ER & Hospital
- Topeka Trail Runners
- Heartland BMX
- Topeka Rowing Association
- Forge Young Talent
- Fleet Feet Topeka
- Top City Trails Alliance
- Topeka Pickleball Association
- Topeka Community Cycle Project
- Shawnee County Master Gardeners
- Shawnee Yacht Club
- Dawn to Dusk Disc Golf Club
- NOTO Arts & Entertainment District
- Kaw Valley Bicycle Club

• Sunflower Striders Running Club  
The grand finale event will be held June 7 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Skyline Park, featuring:

- The Rec & Roll Van
- Food trucks
- A 5K run (tentative)
- A Mountain Bike Time Trial Race
- Mini skills contests and fun activities

Raffle prizes will be announced as they are confirmed, and participants do not need to be present to win.

Whether you are discovering a new trail, trying a new sport, or supporting local groups, Tour Topeka is your passport to explore the best of Shawnee County this spring.

Visit [parks.snco.us](http://parks.snco.us) for more information and to download your BINGO card.

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## SHROUD

continued from page 1

The exhibit is part of a traveling program by Christian Thinkers Society, an esteemed academic organization that Johnston founded, digging into both history and modern science, which reveal more and more each day.

It includes an anatomical cast of the image of the body and a life-size high-definition image of the Shroud of Turin, plus historical artifacts related to ancient crucifixion practices. The experience offers visitors a rare glimpse into one of history's most studied and debated religious artifacts and the opportunity to see them up close and even touch them.

Chris Williams, lead pastor at Fellowship Church (which has a second campus in Raymore), says there's been a lot of confusion and emotionalism tied to the authenticity of the Shroud. "As a pastor and our church, we are walking into this exhibit with our eyes open, thinking critically and applying scripture and the best research," he told Metro Voice.

Williams has done his own research ahead of the exhibit opening, sharing that there have been 102 academic disciplines that have spent over 500,000 hours on scientific studies. All of these have been published in peer-reviewed journals to either support or disprove its authenticity. "The Shroud of Turin is one of the most scientifically studied archaeological artifacts in the world," he says. "Yet, modern science cannot explain how the mysterious image on the Shroud was formed."

For me, the most startling feature of the exhibit is not real flesh and blood but a cast figure that stops you in your tracks. The figure is on his back, knees bent upward, his head dropped forward toward the chest, hands crossed and showing visible signs of nail holes, with feet almost crossed – frozen in the position of someone who died by the horrendous practice of Roman crucifixion, according to forensic experts. They say the image is of a man for whom rigor mortis had set in while he was in an upright position. Each wound matches marks seen on the famous Shroud of Turin.

### The Shroud

Alongside that body cast is the exhibit's centerpiece: a 14-foot-long



image of the Shroud itself. You can get up close to both and even touch the face of the cast, but the Shroud is best studied by visitors who are shown how to use their phones to zoom in on details that have baffled scientists for decades.

And science has plenty to say. Fresh research keeps turning up surprises. Recent X-ray tests suggest first-century dating. Tiny grains of pollen trapped in the fibers came from plants native to ancient Israel. Blood analysis reveals trauma matching Gospel accounts.

The cloth itself has quite a history. Middle Eastern flax created these ancient threads. DNA traces reveal paths

through ancient Israel, Jordan, and Turkey, like breadcrumbs marking the shroud's path through time.

What really makes researchers scratch their heads is the face on the cloth. Researchers have yet to fully determine how the image was created in the first place. But

they are sure about one fact: it was not dyed, painted, drawn, or burned into the fabric. It's as if a "burst of radiant energy," a millisecond in length, "seared a photographic negative into the fibers – something far beyond medieval forgeries." That flash was so brief, in fact, that it only appears on the topmost fibers in the individual strands of thread. A high-energy flash any longer, and the image would have gone deeper into the threads. Any shorter and it would not have been visible at all. A flash like that is not visible to the naked eye. The biblical words "in an instant" come to mind.

While viewing the shroud, body cast, and artifacts on Tuesday, I talked with individuals from across the Kansas City area. Families with their children studied the "empty tomb" portion, teens and grandmothers used their phones to zoom in on the Shroud image, men still in their dusty work clothes touched the head of the body cast. One person told me she always

thought the Shroud of Turin was a "Catholic thing," but now, having reviewed the science and scripture made available in the exhibit, stated, "It's for all of us. I had no idea."

The exhibit lands in the Kansas City area as interest in the shroud builds toward St. Louis conference next year exploring the latest scientific findings. Experts will gather there to share discoveries about what many call archaeology's greatest mystery. The conference will feature Shroud artifacts and multimedia presentations exploring the historical and scientific aspects of this ancient cloth.

At Fellowship Church in Greenwood, visitors find themselves face-to-face with that mystery. Between the cast figure, the large high-def image of the Shroud, and displays of ancient artifacts, it's hard not to feel pulled back in time and drawn into the story of the Shroud.

The exhibit runs daily through May 4, one stop on a nationwide tour bringing new science and old questions to American audiences, ultimately ending in a Gospel message. In Greenwood, at least, those questions feel a lot more personal when you're standing eye-level with what many call the actual image of Christ.

Pastor Williams shared that it's not about an intriguing archaeological find—as fascinating as it is. "It's about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Archaeology has always been the Bible's best friend," he said. "We believe this experience will encourage every believer, and we pray it will open the eyes of those who have yet to believe in the good news announcement that God came in the flesh, died, and rose again to give us life. Eternal life and access to the abundant life."

In the end that's the question everyone must answer: "What if Jesus really rose from the dead?"

Fellowship Church is located on 150 Highway at 1601 W. Main St., Greenwood, MO. Opening times of the exhibit are: Friday, May 2 | 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Saturday & Sunday, May 3 & 4 | 2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

## C5 "POWER" Luncheon to be held at Blue Moose

The May C5Alive POWER Luncheon will be held on the 8th at 11:30am at the Blue Moose, 3030 SW Wanamaker.

The program will feature a group discussion and interactive devotional.

Admission is free, and lunch can be ordered from the menu on site. 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 leaders in community businesses, non-profits and churches.

Upcoming luncheon dates are June 12 and July 10, 2025.

C5 also hosts other events, including EASTERFEST, the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair, held on N. Kansas Avenue and at Great Overland Station.

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.

Lower-priced memberships for small and home-based businesses are now available. Individuals without a business to promote may join for \$20. A list of current members and more information is available on the website at [www.C5Alive.org](http://www.C5Alive.org), [www.facebook.com/C5Alive](http://www.facebook.com/C5Alive), or call 785-640-6399.



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# Step Back in Time: Topeka Renaissance Festival Promises Adventure, Enchantment

The air in Topeka is set to crackle with the thrill of jousting knights, the swagger of pirates, and the might of Vikings this June. Local visionary Angela Kearney is orchestrating the inaugural Topeka Renaissance Festival, transforming a 13-acre expanse in North Topeka into a captivating medieval and fantastical realm.

Imagine stepping into a vast outdoor tented festival boasting 15,000 square feet of indoor space as well, a true portal to days of yore. This isn't just about entertainment - Kearney's vision includes giving back, with partnerships forged with



four local charities.

Prepare to be enthralled by the thunder of real live jousting matches and the raw power of the Highland Games, Saturday only (proceeds benefit SENT Topeka). There is also Team Tug of War on Sunday (proceeds to benefit the Helping hands humane society), plus the Viking Shield Art Contest (proceeds to benefit NOTO art district Youth Art program) and last but not least... A build-your-own Gnome Home Contest, with proceeds to benefit Habitat for Humanity Restore in NOTO.

Entertainers and vendors hailing from five states will populate the festival grounds, their talents showcased on two main stages (one indoor, one outdoor) and at charming smaller performance spots nestled along the festival pathways.

The Woodshed Event Center at 1901 North Kansas Avenue will be the epicenter of this enchantment. Behind its castle-like facade, the main ballroom will morph into Valhalla Hall, a haven for vendors, art, a welcoming bar, and spaces to rest weary travelers' feet. Venture through the mystical forest to discover the adults-only "under the deck" Pirate



Angela Kearney (on the left) is lead organizer for Topeka Renaissance Festival. She and other organizers and participants have been appearing around town at various events to promote the festival.

bar, complete with its own stage and an adjacent outdoor smoker's lounge.

Beyond the indoor wonders, the 13-acre Woodshed property will teem with life. Picture this: live jousting tournaments unfolding alongside whimsical gnome homes and a dedicated Children's area, the enchanting Pixie Hollow brought to life by Once Upon a Party KS. Majestic Fresian horses will grace the grounds, alongside Juniper the War Cow and the mesmerizing Mermaids from OKC. For the adventurous at heart, archery and axe-throwing await, while unique treasures can be found among specialty vendors nestled within an enchanted festival.

A petting zoo and face painting will also delight the younger visitors.

For Kearney, the dream of a Topeka RenFest has been brewing for years. "It's always been in the back of my mind," she shared, "But you know how life is - sometimes all the things take a while to come to fruition. Over the past year or so, things have just been falling into place."

Woodshed event man-

ager Jeanice Brown, whose motto is "If you can dream it, we can create it," wholeheartedly embraced Kearney's vision.

Mark your calendars for Saturday and Sunday, June 21st and 22nd, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day. An afford-

able entry fee of \$16 per day (or \$30 for a two-day pass) awaits, with children aged 5-13 entering for just \$5 per day. Savvy time travelers can snag discounted tickets by visiting [www.geminivibeskansas.com](http://www.geminivibeskansas.com) before June 1st. This promises to be an incredible family-friendly event, with a dedicated space for adults to revel in the fun as well!

witness the King and Queen holding court at the Royal Dance in the enchanted ballroom.

Kearney and the other organizers are brimming with confidence that the festival will blossom into a cherished bi-annual tradition for Topeka and its surrounding communities. "It's a chance for all Topekans to have something to be



Adding to the magic, a Royal Ball will be held on Friday, June 20th, from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. This masquerade ball for adults 21 and over offers a sneak peek of the festival, complete with characters, vendors, and food trucks. Limited tickets are available at \$35, offering a chance to

proud of," Kearney affirmed.

For more information on the Topeka Renaissance Festival, or if you would like to become a sponsor of this epic event, please visit them on Facebook, Instagram or Tiktok - Topeka Renaissance Festival.



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# The Woodshed Event Center is whatever you want it to be

"If you can dream it, we can create it."

This is the business motto of Jeanice Brown, event manager of The Woodshed, an event center located just north of Garfield Park in north Topeka.

The building at 1901 N. Kansas Avenue is a north Topeka landmark, once serving as home to the Moose Lodge.

At 20,000 square feet, the building

says she is enjoying this business venture. "It's been a learning experience."

Clearly, one of Brown's strengths as an entrepreneur is her people skills.

"I've been in customer service my whole life," said Brown, who previously worked for Dillon's and Goodyear. "I enjoy meeting people and being involved in their events and festivities. We can get you what you need to make things happen."



has a large ballroom with a bar, a stage and large dance floor, with a seating capacity of 400. It also houses a lounge with its own bar, stage and dance floor, with an additional seating capacity of 200 people.

Now transformed into The Woodshed Events Center, which opened in 2018.

Now in its seventh year, Brown

## A variety of events are possible

The versatility of the Woodshed offers the perfect venue for events of all kinds, such as birthday parties, weddings, business meetings, networking events, dances, formal balls, local bands, fundraisers, vendor events and more.



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Currently, The Woodshed Market is held outdoors in the parking lot from 10 am to 2 pm every Sunday, converting to indoors in the colder months. The market offers such items as baked goods, arts and crafts, garage sale and vintage items, to name a few. Food trucks are also on hand.

"Anything you can think of, you can possibly find it here," Brown said. The market attracts people each week from all parts of Topeka and surrounding communities, including Manhattan and Kansas City. "We probably get a thousand people through," said Brown.

Brown also said one of The Woodshed's most popular bookings are for Celebrations of Life, or as Brown affectionately refers to them: "The After-Party." The Woodshed can create a positive, comfortable atmosphere where friends and family can gather to remember a loved one. "You tell stories and talk about the good times," Brown said.

The Woodshed has also hosted Quinceañeras, which are celebrations of a young lady's 15th birthday, common in Mexican and other Latin American cultures.

Brown believes The Woodshed offers the versatility and affordability for any occasion, including private parties, live music and dancing, birthdays, wedding receptions, graduations, milestone anniversaries, and corporate events.

## Outdoor events are also an option

Another big outdoor event is the Backyard Music Fest, to be held on the grounds on May 30 & 31. This event will have 3 stages and feature 15 bands, plus DJs and other enter-

tainment, with a variety of music styles. The Woodshed sits on a 13-acre plot, partially wooded, which offers



lots of parking as well as options for large outdoor events. One such event coming up is the Topeka Renaissance

Festival on June 21-22, which will transform the entire property into a medieval world of entertainment, shopping and games, with adventure and fun both inside and out.

Another big outdoor event is the Backyard Music Fest, to be held on the grounds on May 30 & 31. This event will have 3 stages and feature 15 bands, plus DJs and other entertainment, with a variety of music styles.

For booking information, Brown can be reached at 785-213-3561.

"We'll work with people to make their experience a positive one," she said.

More information can be found on their Facebook page at

[www.facebook.com/notowoodshed](http://www.facebook.com/notowoodshed), or by visiting their website at [www.thewoodshedtopeka.com](http://www.thewoodshedtopeka.com).

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

# FINANCIAL PLANNING



## DAVE RAMSEY

Financial author,  
radio host, television  
personality, speaker

**davesays**

### SMALL BUSINESS STRUGGLING

Dear Dave,

My wife has run her own small business for the last three years. I try to be positive, and help whenever I can, but the truth is things aren't going very well. In fact, the business has never really shown signs of getting off the ground. Over the last several months, we've been putting part of what I make at my job into the business to help keep it open. We've also taken money out of savings to bolster things, and now our savings account is pretty

low. I want to support her, because she loves what she's doing. But we have three kids, and I make about \$60,000 a year. Things have been pretty tight financially for a while. What do you think we should do?

—Isaac

Dear Isaac,

I'm an entrepreneur and business owner. So, trust me, I totally understand the excitement and allure that goes along with having your own business. But your own household and its immediate financial responsibilities should come first.

Here's the thing. If you're putting other money into a business account, that's a decent sign you're not making money in the business. The only money that should go into the business account is income the business creates. So, at this point, I think you and your wife need to sit down together, and

have a serious, but gentle, talk about things.

Set aside time—together—and complete a written profit and loss statement on her business. While you're at it, you also need to make a written household budget. The numbers won't lie, and it's going to be your job to be

loving and understanding during all this. But the main thing you folks need is to get on the same page financially before the situation gets any worse.

Again, when it comes to the business, put all her expenses on the profit and loss statement in detail. Then, write out what it would take for her to break

even each month. I hate that things have turned out this way, Isaac. But with everything that's been going on in your finances, if she's not, at a bare minimum, breaking even at this point, then I'm afraid it's time for her to do something else.

—Dave

## The Benefits of Qualified Charitable Distributions

By Susan Shumaker  
Tax Professional at  
The Retirement Team



As individuals approach retirement age, managing tax obligations becomes an increasingly important part of financial planning. One powerful — yet often underused — strategy for charitable individuals over 70½ years old is the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). This tax-smart approach allows donors to support their favorite causes while enjoying significant tax benefits. Here's a closer look at why QCD charitable giving can be a win-win for both taxpayers and charities.

### What Is a QCD?

A Qualified Charitable Distribution allows individuals aged 70½ or older to donate up to \$108,000 per year (and indexed yearly for inflation) directly from their traditional IRA to a qualified charity. The donated amount can be counted toward the individual's Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for the year — but critically, it is excluded from taxable income.

Unlike a regular charitable deduction that requires itemizing on a tax return, QCDs offer a direct reduction in adjusted gross income (AGI), which can have broader financial advantages beyond the donation itself.

### The Major Benefits of QCD Charitable Giving

1. Direct Reduction of Taxable Income

The most immediate benefit of a QCD is the reduction in taxable income. Normally, withdrawals from traditional IRAs are taxed as ordinary income. With a QCD, however, the donated amount is excluded from taxable income altogether. This is particularly valuable because:

- Lower taxable income can reduce your overall tax bill.
- It may prevent certain taxes from kicking in, such as taxes on Social Security benefits.
- It can help avoid the 3.8% Net Investment Income Tax applied to higher-income individuals.

2. Satisfying Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)

Starting at age 73 (as of 2023 rules), retirees must take annual RMDs from their retirement accounts, whether they need the money or not. QCDs can count toward meeting these RMD requirements. This allows individuals to satisfy the IRS withdrawal mandate without inflating their taxable income, which can otherwise have ripple effects on taxes and benefits.

3. No Need to Itemize Deductions

After the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, far fewer taxpayers itemize deductions because the standard deduction nearly doubled. Under typical charitable giving, donors only get a tax break if they itemize. However, QCDs bypass this limitation — you receive the tax benefit even if you take the standard deduction.

This means you can simplify your tax filing while still enjoying the full advantage of your charitable giving.

4. Mitigating Medicare Premiums and Other Costs

Because Medicare premiums are based on modified adjusted gross income (MAGI), reducing income via a QCD can lower income-related monthly adjustment amounts (IRMAA) for Medicare Parts B and D. In other words, strategic QCD giving could save money not just on taxes, but also on healthcare premiums.

5. Flexible Giving Options

QCDs offer donors flexibility in directing their funds to meaningful causes. Most qualified public charities are eligible recipients. However, it is important to note that certain organizations, such as donor-advised funds and private foundations, do not qualify for QCDs.

6. Enhancing Estate Planning

Making QCDs can also serve an estate planning function. Reducing the balance of an IRA during life means less taxable income will eventually pass to heirs, particularly important given that inherited IRAs must generally be distributed within 10 years under the SECURE Act.

By proactively using QCDs, individuals can support charities they care

about while reducing future tax burdens on their estates.

### Important Rules and Considerations

While the benefits are numerous, it's important to follow the IRS guidelines to ensure your distribution qualifies:

- The donor must be at least 70½ years old at the time of the distribution.
- Funds must be transferred directly from the IRA to the charity.
- The maximum amount that can qualify for a QCD is \$108,000 per year for 2025, (adjusted for inflation after 2024).
- Only Traditional IRAs (and in some cases inherited IRAs) qualify; 401(k)s and other retirement plans do not unless rolled over into an IRA first.
- Proper documentation and reporting are essential for tax purposes.

### Conclusion

Qualified Charitable Distributions offer a powerful way to merge tax efficiency with philanthropy. By using QCDs, retirees can meet their required minimum distributions, reduce their taxable income, potentially lower their Medicare premiums, and support causes close to their hearts — all without the need to itemize deductions.

As with any tax strategy, it's wise to consult with a financial advisor or tax professional to ensure QCDs are executed properly and aligned with broader financial goals. But for many charitably minded retirees, QCDs represent a smart and impactful giving strategy.

**You may contact Susan Shumaker at The Retirement Team today at 785-478-7808 for a complimentary consultation on your specific tax situation.**

*The Retirement Team is a team of Financial professionals, which includes a Dave Ramsey SmartVestor Pro, that specialize in helping retirees keep more of their hard earned dollars. They are located at 5909 SW 28th St, Ste 100, Topeka, KS. The phone number is 785-478-7808.*

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# How to Deal with Market Volatility

By Jim Hanna



Hanna

Recent headlines have been dominated by economic policy and market fluctuations, sending shockwaves through the stock market. For investors, each new update seems to bring another round of volatility. While tariffs are the latest trigger for market volatility, the reality is that markets are always responding to something – from geopolitical events to inflation data to interest rate shifts – and the feeling these changes evoke are timeless: uncertainty.

Whether you're decades from retirement, approaching it in the near term, or already drawing down your portfolio, now is a good time to revisit your plan – and remind yourself what you can control when the markets feel unpredictable.

## For those decades from retirement:

**Revisit your views on risk.** There's nothing like a significant market downturn to remind you that investing involves risk. Market swings provide an opportunity to reassess the level of risk in your portfolio and determine whether you still think the amount is appropriate for your circumstances. The level of comfort (or discomfort) you feel when the market moves up or down substantially is a good starting point on whether your portfolio fits your risk profile.

## Remember that time is on your side.

In theory, the longer you have to let your money work for you, the less concerned you should be about short-term market moves. Fluctuations in stocks are nothing new. And historically, markets have recovered from losses incurred during corrections or bear markets. By the time you're ready to retire, it's likely that a market downturn in hindsight will only look like a bump in the road.

**Put volatility to work for you.** Market volatility can work to your benefit by tapping into the power of a strategy called dollar-cost averaging. Here's an example

of how it works: Say you invest a fixed amount of money at regular intervals, regardless of market conditions. When the market dips, you can purchase more shares. And when the market rises, you can purchase fewer. The goal is to end up with more shares, often purchased at an overall lower cost per share than if you had invested all the money at once. Then the shares have the potential to increase in value over time. (Dollar-cost averaging does not assure a profit or protect against a loss in declining markets.)

This strategy is one example of how volatility may work in your favor if your investments move up or down in the short-term, while eventually recovering lost ground in the long-term. If you make regular contributions to a workplace retirement plan, IRA or other investments, you are likely already using this strategy. If not, consider this example as motivation to explore whether you can make consistent investing a goal for this year.

## For those nearing retirement:

**Ensure your investments are diversified.** Various parts of the market react to headlines and economic drivers differently. For those nearing retirement, the recent spike in volatility is a reminder of how having a broadly diversified portfolio can help reduce your investment risk.

How do you know if you're properly diversified? The simplest answer is to check to see that your portfolio contains a mix of stocks, bonds, mutual funds, short-term cash investments, savings and other investing vehicles that consider your goals and comfort-level with risk. Going a step further, ensure you understand how each asset or investment in your portfolio is helping you reach your financial goals. If you're unsure or want a second opinion, consider consulting a financial advisor for guidance.

**Balance your need for protection with growth.** Protecting your portfolio from current or future market downturns becomes more important as you approach the day when you start living off your

savings. Consider investing the money you plan to use for income in the first few years of retirement more conservatively in liquid vehicles that are easy to access. This can help you feel that you are prepared to handle upcoming expenses should the markets swing.

It's also important to remember that your retirement could last 20, 30 or even 40 years. Balance your need for protection with continuing to grow your nest egg. Assets you won't need for some time could be more aggressively positioned. At a minimum, ensure your assets can keep on pace with rising inflation.

## For those in retirement:

**Review your withdrawal strategy.** Depending on how much money you have invested in stocks, your portfolio may lose value when the market dips. If market swings and the potential for a greater downturn make you nervous, revisit the amount of money you withdraw monthly to meet your expenses. As you review, the goal is to be assured that the amount you withdraw to meet the next year or two of expenses does not put your long-term financial security in jeopardy. If your base of assets is reduced, you may have to trim your withdrawal amount to assure you have a sustainable long-term income strategy.

**Don't take unnecessary chances in your stock exposure.** For the long-term investor – which includes you as a retiree – volatility in equities can work in your favor. It's possible that you will spend one to three decades in retirement, giving you time to withstand some market moves. At the same time, it's important to preserve your base of savings and not be overexposed to stock risk. Review your exposure in the context of your full financial plan to evaluate if you are taking the right amount of risk.

Regardless of where you are in your financial journey, market movement provides an opportunity to compare your investment strategy to your goals. Are you on track? No matter the answer, there are steps you can take to feel more confident about your ability to retire when and how you want to. For additional help talk to a financial advisor who is willing to discuss your personal circumstances and provide guidance on how to manage your money for today's market.

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

By Ryan Shumaker  
*Smartvestor Pro*



Ryan hosts a radio show Saturdays at 7:30am & Sundays at 8am on FM93.5/AM1440. Listen anytime at [RetireLawrence.com/Radio](http://RetireLawrence.com/Radio)

I often hear when I first meet with someone that the only reason they are still working is to pay for health insurance until they can get on Medicare at age 65. No doubt health insurance when you are in your late 50s and early 60s is quite expensive. A private insurance plan through the marketplace (HealthCare.gov) for a 62 year old couple living in Topeka runs from a whopping \$21,728 a year to an astronomical \$43,080 a year, depending on the plan chosen. That's even the cheaper non smoker rates. A household of 2 smokers see that top number climb to a ridiculous \$57,234! These numbers go even higher at ages 63 and 64. What might be even more outrageous than the price of the cheapest insurance possible is the deductible on it, which is a staggering \$15,000! Seeing this kind of sticker shock it is no wonder that so many believe they can't afford to retire early solely because of the exorbitant cost for private health insurance.

The thing is, though, that health insurance can actually be cheaper if you retire early if you do proper planning

and it's been that way now for over a decade. The key to cheap, or free, healthcare if you retire early is knowing how the tax credit subsidies work for health insurance and how to be strategic on where you get your income from before turning 65. With good planning, a 62 year old married couple could receive a massive \$28,780 a year in free tax credit money to pay for their health insurance. That's more than what many of the plans even cost in the health insurance marketplace, effectively making the health insurance completely free.

In order to be eligible for the full amount you need to have the amount of income that shows up on your tax return (but not necessarily the income you pay tax on or actually have) to be around \$21,000 if married, \$16,000 if single. The higher your income goes up, the more this tax credit shrinks. In the past if your income got too high you would go from getting a large tax credit to nothing at all if your income was just \$1 too high and over the threshold. One of the few good things (in our opinion) for retirees that came from the stimulus bill number 3 (called the American Rescue Plan) as part of all of the COVID legislation was the elimination of this threshold cliff. Instead of the subsidy suddenly ending, it slowly decreases as income goes up. Even if you have a six figure income, you'll still

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# opinion

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## Oprah's 'Christianity' exposed: A spiritual virus deceiving millions

By Melissa Dougherty

Depending on who you ask, Oprah Winfrey is either a beacon of wisdom or the most persuasive snake oil salesman of our time.

When you hear the name "Oprah," different versions of her might come to mind. Are you picturing Oprah, the author and philanthropist, the inspiring woman who overcame hardship and has helped countless people? Or perhaps the talk show host who captivated audiences for decades?

This blasphemy is not new. This is the oldest deception of mankind.

Maybe you think of Oprah, the actress or the savvy businesswoman. Maybe all these aspects blend together in your mind, forming a deep sense of admiration for

her. For others, despite her "good works," it might be the opposite. Maybe you see a political activist, who has compromised her principles in the pursuit of social justice and identity politics. However you perceive her, that perspective shapes how you interpret her overall character.

But I believe one defining aspect of her stands out above the rest and ultimately shapes them all: Oprah, the spiritual guru.

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Oprah says, "I'm a Christian, too." Millions of people, including many Christians, look up to her as a spiritual authority. She quotes scripture, talks about a God of love, and says she believes



in and follows Jesus and the gospel. But Christians all around the world scratch their heads in deep confusion because Oprah also fundamentally denies core Christian doctrines.

This is comparable to people who call

themselves vegan yet go to town on extra greasy BLTs with sides of beef stew for dinner every night. How is this possible?

Because in Oprah's spirituality, the identity of Jesus, the role of the Bible, the gospel — and even truth — have been re-defined.

Jesus?

Oprah says she believes in Jesus, but her "Jesus" didn't come to die on the cross for the sins of humanity.

She says, "I thought Jesus came, died on the cross, that Jesus' being here was about his death and dying on the cross. [But] it really was about him coming to show us how to do it, how to be. To show us the Christ Consciousness." Oprah's Jesus really came to show us our divine potential in the Christ Consciousness —

■ Continued on next page

## The Man Who Changed the World



**CLINT DECKER**

President and  
Evangelist  
with Great  
Awakenings, Inc.

### Speaking Truth

Johannes Gutenberg, a German inventor, built a printing press in the mid-1400s that historians say brought about an "information age." In 1455 he printed Europe's first-ever book, a Bible. The printing press changed the world.

The United States Constitution was adopted on September 17, 1787, and provided a unique system of government unknown to any nation on earth. The opening lines of the constitution state, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." The founding of the United States

changed the world.

Though these are consequential events in world history, neither has impacted humankind like the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. He did not just change the world, He altered history, has caused the rise and fall of nations and effected the eternal existence of billions of souls.

The incarnation of Jesus occurred in Israel between 6 and 4 B.C. According to Webster's dictionary, incarnation is a word that describes "the embodiment of a deity or spirit in some earthy form." In particular, it refers to the birth of Christ, when the Lord God took on human form and became one of us. This is called the Doctrine of the Incarnation. It is said of Jesus "... the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) The incarnation is the moment in history when the God who made the heavens and the earth, made Himself a simple and normal looking man who came to live among us, in order to reveal who He is and deliver the world's most important message directly to us.

The resurrection of Jesus took place outside of Jerusalem about 33 A.D. Before this miracle, day's earlier Jesus was

arrested and tried by authorities on false charges of blasphemy. The high priest demanded of Him saying, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you



are the Christ, the Son of God." (Matthew 26:63) When Jesus told them the truth, they responded with rage, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy." (Matt. 26:64), Subsequently they immediately ordered the sentence of death upon Him. The day of Jesus' crucifixion, history records as Good Friday, where He died a sacrificial death for the sins of all humanity; past, present and future. Then for three days He lay in a borrowed tomb. But early on Sunday morning, history's most renowned miracle took place. Jesus had risen Himself from the dead and walked out of His tomb. He is alive and still is today!

Why is Jesus' incarnation and resurrection the most monumental

events in world history? Why is Jesus the most significant person to ever walk the earth? Jesus own words confidently and boldly state why, because "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (Jn 14:6).

Jesus declared He is the way. All mankind is searching for meaning, purpose and direction. Jesus says to the whole world, "Come, follow me."

Jesus declared He is the truth. Everyone longs to know what is right and wrong and how to live a life free from guilt and shame. Jesus is the standard for truth, balancing the scales of justice and raising up high the banner for holiness in an unholy and evil world.

Jesus declared He is the life. Every man and woman hungers for the intangible things that money, power and success can never buy — life, real life. Jesus proved He is the source and giver of real and lasting life.

A prayer for you — Lord God, help us to see Jesus as more than a good man. More than a moral teacher. Let us see Him as the Son of the living God who died and rose again that we might have new life. 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).

# Losing the trade war isn't new — we've been losing for 50 years

By Earl Watt

Agriculture is the lifeblood of Southwest Kansas and the Oklahoma panhandle. One way or another, we all pay our bills because of a tie to the land.

It's really not that hard to determine. Our largest employer is National Beef. You can't get more agricultural than raising cattle and crops for cattle, and then processing the beef to be shipped around the nation as well as abroad.

We grow other grains as well, and we have formed a service economy around agriculture and energy production.

Seward County is currently in discussion with those interested in wind farming. It's a double edged sword, and while the leadership weighs the benefits vs. the liabilities, it is a sign of the ongoing connection between our natural resources and the people who call this place home.

Like many other products, our ag exports are in the cross hairs of the ongoing tariff war that America has been losing for more than 50 years.

And yes, we have been losing the war. Data shows the United States has re-

duced tariffs charged on goods coming in to the country as well as the decrease in manufacturing jobs.

Some say correlation does not mean causation, but it is crystal clear that as we have reduced tariffs on foreign goods sold in the United States, we have lost manufacturing jobs.

Manufacturing in 1948 equated in to one of every three jobs in the country. Today it is less than one in 10 jobs.

As those jobs left the United States and headed to other nations of industry, the trade deficit also rose to match it.

Since 1990, our annual trade deficit has skyrocketed from less than \$200 billion to more than \$1.4 trillion today.

How is it that the world wanted and needed American goods around the world and today less than 10 percent of our workforce is engaged in manufacturing a product of any kind?

Tariffs.

Let's go further back to the founding of America.

Most nations wanted the raw materials the eastern seashore had to offer. From timber to tobacco, Americans shipped



logs and leaves around the world.

America also sent the raw materials needed to make clothing, and British textile mills had the machinery to produce clothing at surprisingly cheap rates.

In America, clothing was made by hand, and the excessive labor made it impossible for the local clothiers to compete.

To solve this disparity, the United States placed a tariff on foreign clothing sold in the United States. While that made clothing more expensive for a time, it also allowed the textile industry to invest in itself, create the machinery, and compete on the global market.

Fast forward that same concept to the world today.

While America industrialized and dominated the global markets throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, other nations could not compete with the American worker.

So, many of them introduced tariffs.

At the same time, the United States was lowering foreign tariffs, making it easier and cheaper for foreign goods to glut the American marketplace.

It didn't happen overnight, but steadily manufacturing started to decline in the United States, and the largest transfer of wealth from the United States to China and other parts of the world began. We were literally funding the industrialization of third world nations like China.

Where the United States took generations to move from a pre-industrial economy to a heavy manufacturing nation, China did it basically overnight, with American dollars fueling the advancement.

Other nations profited from tariffs on American products that also helped their industries catch up.

The concept of free trade, where nations are free to openly trade with one an-

other, is obscured by tariffs.

American producers and investors simply relocated their industrial plants to other nations to avoid paying tariffs but also to benefit from cheaper foreign labor, displacing American workers and driving manufacturing out of the United States.

The goal was to create a service economy, and after 50 years it has been a complete and utter failure. America cannot survive on simply servicing one another and not producing goods.

This process took half a century to create and it won't be reversed overnight.

But if we do not start the process by increasing our tariff rates, the United States will not be able to sustain its current quality of life as it reverses industrialization and heads back to third world status, dependent on other nations for the products needed to survive.

Hopefully other nations will reduce their rates, and we can get back to balance. Until then we will have to bear the burden of saving our country by supporting American workers.

- Earl Watt / KansasInformer.com

## Continued from previous page

the inner divine spark within us all.

To Oprah, Jesus is the divine Son of God, but this is not a unique title that applies just to him. You are just as much the Christ, the I AM, as Jesus was. The key is to see how powerful and good you are, not a sinner who needs forgiveness from a holy God.

In biblical historic Christianity, Jesus is both fully God and fully human, the unique Christ and Son of God (John 1:1-14; John 3:16). He came to earth to die for our sins and offer us salvation through his death and resurrection, which is the foundation of the Christian faith (1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

The Bible? Truth?

Oprah says she believes in and reads the Bible, but to her, the Bible is not the exclusive word of God.

She'd agree that "the biblical God is a 'starter kit' God." To her, the more spiritually evolved Christian position is that the Bible is up for interpretation depending on your heart's belief. You rely on the "internal voice of God." The Bible has some truth in it, but it isn't the only source of spiritual truth. God speaks to us individually from within. She openly demonstrates this by her numerous endorsements of progressive and New Age leaders.

For Oprah, anything read in scripture is read through a lens filled with feelings of love — with "love" defined subjectively,

of course. She sums this up in an interview with Marianne Williamson when she says that "we are either walking in the direction of love or fear."

Historic biblical Christians see the Bible as God's inspired, authoritative, and inerrant word (2 Timothy 3:16). It's the source that contains the most reliable documents about who Jesus is, what he taught, and what he did. Understanding God's will and purpose for humanity is central to this. We test claims about Jesus and God against scripture to see what claims align with how God chose to reveal himself (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 John 4:1). Furthermore, Jesus calls himself the "truth" and Satan the "father of lies" (John 14:6; John 8:44).

When lies look like "love" and truth looks like "hate," chances are Satan is behind it.

The gospel?

Oprah says she follows the gospel, but Oprah's gospel is a mixture of self-empowerment, inner divinity, and the idea that thoughts shape reality.

To Oprah, Jesus is not the only way to salvation. She promotes living your best life, believing there are many paths to God, and emphasizing service, gratitude, and personal growth. Basically, it's a works-based gospel preached with fluffy language.

In Oprah's view of God and the gospel, we are not separated from God. The core of Oprah's gospel is recognizing that we've

never been separate from God and that he (or "it") is within the heart of each person.

In historic biblical Christianity, the gospel is the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. All humans have sinned and fall short of God's perfect standard, with sin leading to death and separation from God (Romans 3:23). The Old Testament law showed that sin required atonement through sacrifice, pointing to the ultimate sacrifice — Jesus' death on the cross.

Jesus fulfilled the law by offering himself as the perfect sacrifice, taking the punishment for sin, and rising from the dead to conquer death (Romans 4:25). His resurrection proves his victory and offers eternal life to all who believe in him. The gospel is received by faith, not by works, and guarantees salvation, reconciliation with God, and an eternal home in heaven (Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:16).

Rejecting the gospel means remaining under condemnation, but through Christ, there is no condemnation for those who believe (Romans 8:1).

The stealthy 'Oprah' belief ruining the gospel

It's clear. Oprah can call herself a Christian and say she believes in and follows Jesus and spreads the gospel, but it's a different Jesus and a different gospel.

But I believe there's a deeper issue here: What is shaping Oprah's spirituality? Where did her views come from? Many Christians understand that she sounds

like a Christian and claims to be one, but her beliefs are anything but. Some might assume this is because Oprah is actually a New Ager.

She's not.

Even she firmly denies being in the New Age. And I agree with her.

This is because she's actually a follower of a belief system with far more influence than recognition: New Thought. In fact, her most foundational spiritual formation happened from reading New Thought material.

New Thought is much more deceptive than the New Age because it looks and sounds Christian. It's metaphysical Christianity, a more enlightened, "better" version of Christianity. But it's actually a stealthy spiritual virus. As you've briefly seen demonstrated above in some of Oprah's beliefs, New Thought redefines core Christian doctrines but uses the same terms. Scripture has a deeper, more esoteric meaning, which explains the redefinition of these Christian terms.

This is precisely why Oprah identifies herself as a "Christian" who "follows Jesus" and "spreads the gospel." But it's a different Jesus she's following and a different gospel that she's spreading.

And this is how her New Thought beliefs are ruining the gospel. Her influence has led millions to embrace and spread this New Thought version of Jesus, turning it into a widespread spiritual deception.

Though there is no denying that Oprah has done many admirable things, and many might see her as a "good person," her "goodness" isn't the standard to be made right with God. Your good works are not enough to save you. Only the work of Jesus is. Nobody is "good." Only God is good. The standard is perfection, not just "your best." Perfection is an unattainable standard that nobody can reach, which is why we need Jesus.

But Oprah's New Thought gospel tells you that you're already whole, perfect, complete, and made right with God. You just need to realize it as God.

This blasphemy is not new. This is the oldest deception of mankind, that humanity could be like God.

Oprah's distorted New Thought gospel elevates mankind and demotes God. It creates the illusion that you are good and don't need a savior. But this is the mindset of the Pharisees, who thought their good works were enough to be made right with God. Jesus rebuked them for their self-righteousness, hypocrisy, and pride. This is why Jesus saved his harshest words for them — not because they were religious but because they refused to come to him for salvation.

The true gospel humbles us before a holy God, while Oprah's gospel exalts humanity in place of him — offering not salvation but a deception as old as Eden.

# Why Vacation Bible School Is as Important Now as Ever



He's older now. Retired, but not done. He doesn't move quickly, and his hearing is not great. For thirty years, he shepherded our church. We call him "Brother Bob." All of Bradenton calls him that. He's a passionate evangelist

for evangelism. Give him a minute of your time, and you'll hear him share the gospel. Boldly. Without apology.

A couple of years ago, he brought three children to Vacation Bible School. Two of them

accepted Christ. In fact, dozens of children, even a few parents, have accepted Christ in the last few years at our VBS. Countless gospel seeds were planted.

What other program or event bears this kind of fruit in a one-week timeframe? VBS is a local mission trip that just about any church can do. Here is why it's important to my church, West Bradenton.

Multiple generations come together. For one intense week, a multi-generational army unites around the good news of Jesus. It's one of the most beautiful scenes in ministry.

People from the neighborhood show up. The Holy Spirit guides families from their front yards to our front door. VBS is an opportunity for us to be good neighbors.

The gospel is the central focus. The reason we do VBS is to share the gospel. Undoubtedly, the games, activities, and skits are a lot of fun. But the focal point is telling children about Jesus. Everything else is periphery to the grand purpose of sharing with a child, "Here is how Jesus saves you."

Men get to be kids. Our VBS happens at night, from 6:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. There are several reasons for this timeslot, but one of the biggest is that a later time gives many men in our church the opportunity to serve. The women at West Bradenton always step up in incredible ways, but there's something special about seeing a middle-aged man in a colorful wig doing kid song motions.

Unity in the church is strengthened. VBS is one of the least controversial ministries a church can offer. The collective effort strengthens bonds between generations. We all share the same mo-

ment together, and the memories made build bridges among people who would otherwise not interact with each other.

We carry with us the legacy of Brother Bob and his generation. Some in our church are in their fifth or sixth decade of VBS. When I'm older and retired, when my hearing is gone and I don't move as quickly, I hope to bring children to VBS just like Brother Bob. VBS is as important now as ever. I believe it will be just as vital

in the future. Every year, we all get VBS-tired, but it's worth it. Every bit of it.

- By Sam Rainer  
President & Senior Consultant  
ChurchAnswers.com  
As President of Church Answers, Sam Rainer wears many hats. From podcast co-host to full-time Pastor at West Bradenton Baptist Church, Sam's heart for ministry and revitalization are evident in all he does.

Every Sunday night in June: 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, & 29th from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at East Side Baptist Church, 4425 SE 29th St. Register at [esbcks.org/vbs](http://esbcks.org/vbs) or use QR code.

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## Supreme Court expected to side with parents challenging public schools over LGBTQ curriculum

During oral arguments last week, the U.S. Supreme Court seemed inclined to side with parents seeking to opt their children out of objectionable LGBTQ-themed curriculum in public schools. The central question in the Maryland case *Mahmoud v. Taylor* is whether public schools burden parents' religious exercise when they compel elementary school children into instruction on gender and sexuality against their parents' religious convictions and without notice or opportunity to opt out.

"Children do not become wards of the state by merely attending public schools," said Mat Staver, founder and chair of Liberty Counsel. "Parents have the right to direct the education and provide for the welfare of their children. The First Amendment does not allow government schools to require families to sacrifice their religious beliefs for their children to attend school. It is unconstitutional to coerce parents into subjecting their children to propaganda that is antithetical



to their beliefs. Parents must be given adequate opportunity to review any instructional material and must be given the ability to opt their children out of instruction that violates their faith."

A coalition of parents from various religious faiths, including Christian and Muslim, challenged a policy change from the Montgomery County Board of Education that no longer requires parents to be informed when the themed instruction will occur, nor allows them to opt their children out. The LGBT instruction

includes more than "22 LGBTQ+-inclusive" storybooks infused with radical gender ideology.

The books are used for instruction in pre-K through eighth grade classrooms, where some are taught to children as young as 3 years old. The parents seek to block the cancellation of the opt-out policy by arguing that this instruction interferes with their religious beliefs on gender and sexuality, as well as their constitutional right to direct the upbringing and education of their children.

Liberty Counsel filed an amicus brief in the case, arguing that teaching this curriculum without any ability to opt out compels affirmation of repugnant beliefs, degrades the purity of children, and imposes a penalty on religion by making public education contingent upon lessons that burden parents' faith. The Supreme Court is expected to rule no later than the end of June.

## RYAN SHUMAKER

continued from page 7

get a subsidy of some sort now. The lower the income that shows up on your tax return, though, the larger the subsidy will be as long as it is not too low. If it is too low you get nothing at all.

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

Great retirement planning is much more than just picking investments. There are many moving parts when it comes to income planning, tax reduction planning, tax credit planning, when to start Social Security, etc. that

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

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

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

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## May brings new art, music, chalk walk

**Coming to NOTO on First Friday,** May 2: Music in Redbud Park Featuring "Youth Talent Showcase." Young entrepreneurs (18 and younger) will share their talent/skills in our NOTO Youth Expo at Redbud Park. Also, an Interactive Chalk Art Masterpiece in Redbud Park Learn how to create chalk art from a skilled chalk artist

**The annual NOTO Chalk Walk** event May 3 is one for all ages! You can decorate the sidewalks with your own masterpieces and put your skills to the test! Chalk is provided but you can bring your own. The Chalk Art Competition Fundraiser is 9am-4pm. Watch local artist create chalk art masterpieces and support NOTO's public art initiatives.

Also check out **Saturday Market** in Redbud Park from 10am-4pm. Shop local and support local artisans. Food trucks will be on hand also.

Did you know that NOTO Arts & Entertainment District has been named

Urban Arts Community of the Year at the 2025 Kansas Governor's Arts Awards? This recognition belongs to every artist, small business, and supporter who pours their heart into making NOTO a vibrant, welcoming, and creative space.

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

**More North Topeka events:**

**WOODSHED MARKET** – Sun-  
days

10-3, 1901 N. Kansas Ave.

**FIRST FRIDAYS AT THE MUSEUM**  
– Every First Friday, 6-10pm, Great Overland Station, 701 N. Kansas Ave. Karaoke, board games, card games, including the digital card game Magic: The Gathering Arena, Dungeons and Dragons, crafts and activities, food and refreshments, and more. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for teens. Children 12 and under free.

**FIRST FRIDAY FARM & ART MAR-**



**KET** – Every First Friday through Sep., 4-10pm, Great Overland Station. For info: [communityevents@sncogov.org](mailto:communityevents@sncogov.org) or 785-251-6945

**WOODSHED MARKET: NOTO EDITION 2ND SATURDAYS** – 10-4, in NOTO.

**WOODSHED MARKET CAR SHOW** – May 18, 10-3

**TOPEKA'S BACKYARD MUSICFEST** – May 30 – 31, doors open at noon, shows start at 3pm. Music, arts, crafts, wrestling. 15 Bands + MCs & DJs on 3 stages. [www.topekasbackyardmusicfest.com](http://www.topekasbackyardmusicfest.com)

**FAMILY DAY OUT** – May 31, 10-3, Woodshed Event Center. Celebrating kids, Dads, granddads, stepdads and bonus dads. Food, crafts, bounce house, photo booth, kids activities and more.

**JESUS FEST** – June 7, 1-4pm, Family of God Church, 1231 NW Eugene St. Josh Anderson, JQ Guest, DVVID, Dominick Totta, Rev Rog & Rhythm Review. Food & drinks provided while supplies last. Bring a lawn chair. Prizes, too!

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

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

**VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS** – Every Wed., 10:45 bible Study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd. 1 mile north of Dillon's North). FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 785-224-8803.

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

**FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** – 4th Tue. through Nov., 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income

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

**WOOD VALLEY PICKERS** – Last Sat of each month, 7pm, Classic Bean, Fairlawn Plaza. Folk & Country, Free admission. 785-271-5005

**"PICKIN' ON THE PRAIRIE"**, a FREE Acoustic Jam at Great Overland Station every Sunday from 1-3pm. For info: 785-251-6944

**LIVE AT LUNCH** – Wednesdays, 11-1, Every Plaza. [www.evergyplaza.com](http://www.evergyplaza.com)

**CINCO DE MAYO – VIVE DOWNTOWN TOPEKA** – May 3, 2-10:30pm, Every Plaza. Free event. Bring your Lawn Chairs. Kids show, Food Trucks, Live Music: 2pm: DJ Ban – Estaban Tetuan; 2:30pm: Festejando KC – Kids Show; 3:30pm: Ballet Folklorico De Topeka; 4:30pm: Daniela Valdez; 5pm: Grupo Folklorico Izcalli; 6pm Instinto Elevado; 7pm: GRITO CONTEST; 7:30pm: Banda Agujon De Durango; 8:30pm: El Plebe Aldana;

9pm: Conjunto Presidio

**U.S. AIR FORCE, AIRMEN OF NOTE BIG BAND** – May 5, 7:30pm, TPAC. Free concert. Go to [www.topekajazz.com](http://www.topekajazz.com) to register for your free tickets.

**EATS AND BEATS** – May 8, 6-9pm, Every Plaza. Ronnie Ward Band, Matthew Mulinix

**SADE SHINE QUEENS OF SOUL** – May 10, 7:30pm, Cosmos Court, 909 S Kansas. Tickets at [www.cosmoscourt.com](http://www.cosmoscourt.com)

**EATS AND BEATS** – May 15, 6-9pm, Every Plaza. Big Rick Soul Band with Megan Luttrell

**EATS AND BEATS** – May 22, 6-9pm, Every Plaza. The Bash with Colin Nichols

**EATS AND BEATS** – May 29, 6-9pm, Every Plaza. Departure wwith The R & J Playerz

**JESUS FEST – June 7, 1-4pm, Family of God Church, 1231 NW Eugene St. Josh Anderson, JQ Guest, DVID, Dominick Totta, Rev Rog & Rhythm Review. Food & drinks provided while supplies last. Bring a lawn chair. Prizes, too!**

**CONCERT FOR A CHILD** – June 13, 7pm, Every Plaza. featuring the Logan Mize 3-piece Acoustic Show. Also included: food

trucks, line dancing lessons, raffles, a Capper Foundation presentation including a video featuring a child receiving therapy services, Dallas Pryor and the Lazy Wayne Band. Visit [www.capper.org](http://www.capper.org) or call 785-272-4060 or [abilities@capper.org](mailto:abilities@capper.org)

Church of the Nazarene: 939 NE Oakland

**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: [Lake-naz@aol.com](mailto:Lake-naz@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

## 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

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**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

**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

**CELEBRATE THE SAVIOR VBS** — June 9-13, Christ Lutheran Church, 3509 SW Burlingame. Register at www.christlms.org. 785-266-6263

**WONDER JUNCTION VBS** — June 9-13, 9-noon, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. For info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Lakenaz@aol.com

**MAGNIFIED VBS - every Sunday night in June; 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th from 5-7PM at East Side Baptist Church, 4425 SE 29th St. Discovering the big-ness of God in the smallest of things. Register online at esbcks.org/vbs**

## 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 nhoni@tscpl.org

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

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

**TOPEKA ACAPPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS** — Topeka Acappella Unlimited is looking for female singers who would like to sing four-part acappella harmonies. Topeka Acappella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines, International. Cindy Patton: 785-640-7403

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

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

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

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

**WOODSHED MARKET** — Sun. 10-3, 1901 N. Kansas Ave.

**FAMILY NIGHT AT COSMOS COURT** — Tuesdays, 5pm. Cosmos Court, 909 S. Kansas Ave. Pizza, salads, hot dogs, nachos, soup and more! Get a 16" Pizza, 2 side salads, and 4 cups of ice cream for only \$30! Also table games!

**FIRST FRIDAYS AT THE MUSEUM** — April 4, 6-10pm, Great Overland Station, 701 N. Kansas Ave. Karaoke, board games, card games, including the digital card game Magic: The Gathering Arena, Dungeons and Dragons, crafts and activities, food and refreshments, and more. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for teens. Children 12 and under free.

**FRIDAY NIGHT FUNNIES** — Every Friday at Cosmos Court, 909 S. Kansas. Weekly comedy show is only

\$15, or two for \$25.

**SATURDAY CRUISE NIGHTS** — 5-9pm: 1st Sat: Spangles, 29th & Topeka Blvd (Cruise the Blvd!); 2nd Sat: Fairlawn Plaza; 3rd Sat: The Dugout, 17th & Fairlawn; 4th Sat: The Pad; 5th Sat: The Dugout.

**CARS AND COFFEE** — 10-Noon, every Saturday starting April 5 at Classic Bean; alternate Saturdays at Fellowship Bible Church, 10th & Urish. All models

**CORNER MARKET** — 2nd Saturdays. 29th & Adams. 50+ Vendors, food trucks, music, kids activities,

**FIRST FRIDAY FARM & ART MARKET** — Every First Friday through Sep., 4-10pm, Great Overland Station. Info: communityevents@snco.gov or 785-251-6945

**BREAD BASKET FARMERS MARKET** — Saturdays 7:30am-1pm, West Ridge Mall south parking lot

**DOWNTOWN TOPEKA FARMERS MARKET** - Saturday's April 12 thru Oct., 7:30am-noon, 6th & Harrison. The open-air market is full of fresh fruits and vegetables, herbs, arts & crafts, flower,baked goods

**LAWRENCE FARMERS MARKET** - Sat. 7:30-11:30, 824 New Hampshire Street. Starting Apr. 12.

**MONDAY FARMERS MARKET** — Mondays 7:30-11:30am, thru Sep. 29, Topeka & Sh. Co. Library, 10th & Washburn. Closed Memorial Day & Labor Day

**OVERBROOK FARMER'S MARKET** - every Monday now to Labor Day, 4-6 pm at Overbrook Fair Grounds.

**SPLASH PAD FOUNTAINS** — Everyg Plaza, Sun. 12-6, and 11-1 & 4-8 on most weekdays.

**WOODSHED MARKET: NOTO EDITION 2ND SATURDAYS** — 10-4, in NOTO.

**FOOD TRUCK NIGHT** — May 2, 4-8pm, HHHS, 5720 SW 29. Featuring music by Delta Hazel! Food trucks. Bring a lawn chair. Helps homeless animals.

**SAFE KIDS DAY AT THE ZOO** — May 3, 9-3, Topeka Zoo. Annual event at the Topeka Zoo focused on childhood safety and wellness. Find out more at www.safekidskanssas.org.

**FAIRLAWN FIESTA CAR SHOW & CONCERT** — May 3, 4-9pm, Fairlawn Plaza. Car show 4-6, free concert 7-9. Food Trucks, family fun.

**WASHBURN TECH CAR SHOW** — May 2, 7:30am-2:30pm, 5724 SW Huntoon. Biscuits & gravy until 9:30am, Bake Sale 8-1, Silent Auction, food trucks & vendor booths 10-1, music 8-1

**MARKET DAYS & KID CARNIVAL** — May 3-4, Maner Conference Center, 1700 SW Western. Over 100 vendors, live music, food trucks. www.marketdays.com

**SHAWNEE CHORAL SOCIETY PRESENTS BRAHMS REQUIEM** - May, 3, 7pm, White Center Hall. Free Admissions, Donations Appreciated; Debbie Stanton 319-333-9309 joinscs@shawneechoral.com

**ING NETWORKING LUNCH** - May 7, 11:30-12:30, Big Biscuit. Come network with other small business people. Order from menu if desired.

**C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON** — May 8, 11:30-1 at the blue Moose, 3030 SW Wanamaker. Featuring a group discussion and interactive devotional. Free admission. Meals available from the menu if desired. Please RSVP to info@C5Alive.org so we know how many to expect. Open to the public - bring a friend!

**SAVE THE DATE: C5 Power Luncheon, Jun. 12, 11:30-1.**

**MIDLAND CARE CELEBRATION WALK** — May 9, 6pm, 200 SW Frazier Circle. Music by ParadiZe Band, Flamingoes, Sante Fe Band. Stroll the campus through over 2000 luminaries to be lit at dusk. \$10 to buy a luminary to remember a loved one. Food Trucks, childrens entertainment, face painting. Butterfly release, salute to veterans at 7pm.

**FRIDAY FLICKS** — May 9, 8pm, Everyg Plaza. "Black Panther." Vendors open at 7pm.

**CAR SEAT CHECK LANE** — May 10, 9-12. Childrens Discovery Center. Get your car seat installation checked by a certified technician is quick, free.

**FREE, FIT & FUN COMMUNITY WORKOUT** — May 10, 9:15-10:30am, Happy Place Nutrition, 2109 SW Belle. Workout led by 785Fitness. Suitable for all fitness levels. Family-Friendly: Children 10 & above are welcome to participate. Nutrition Bar Open 7am - 3pm

**SPRING VENDOR EVENT** — May 10, 10-3, HyVee. Featuring local vendors who make art, macrame wall

hangings, natural herbs and products, permanent jewelry, and more!

**BURLINGAME RODEO DAYS & RUSTIC TREASURES MARKET** — May 17, 9-4, Burlingame Main Street.

Shopping, food, music, car show, weiner dog races, foam party, carriage rides, food trucks. Rodeo 7pm

**HHHS GARAGE SALE** — May 17, 9-noon, at HHHS

**NIGHTTIME FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL** — May 17, 5-10pm, Everyg Plaza.

**SUNRISE JAZZEXERCISE** — Everyg Plaza, May 17. 9-10am

**MONTHLY FARMERS /FLEA MARKET** — May 17, 8-2, Meriden Antique Threshers, 8275 K4 Hiway.

**WOODSHED MARKET CAR SHOW** — May 18, 10-3

**TENDER LOVING CARE PET HOSPITAL ANNIVERSARY** — May 18, 12-3, 2500 SW 17th St Open House, tours, door prizes, treats for all

**ING NETWORKING LUNCH** - May 21, 11:30-12:30, Skinny's. Come network with other small business people. Order from menu if desired.

**4TH ANNUAL KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD MUSEUM CAR SHOW** — May 24, 10am, 125 SE Airport Drive. 785-633-9216

**TOPEKA'S BACKYARD MUSICFEST** — May 30 — 31, doors open at noon, shows start at 3pm. Music, arts, crafts, wrestling. 15 Bands + MCs & DJs on 3 stages. www.topekasbackyardmusicfest.com

**FAMILY DAY OUT** — May 31, 10-3, Woodshed Event Center. Celebrating kids, Dads, granddads, stepdads and bonus dads. Food, crafts, bounce house, photo booth, kids activities and more.

**GERMANFEST** — June 7 & 8, 312 NE Freeman, Sacred Heart-St. Joseph Parish

**MULVANE ART FAIR** — June 7-8, 10am, Mulvane Art Museum, Washburn University Fine Art, food trucks, music, childrens activities

## MEETINGS & CLASSES

**CHRISTIAN WRITERS GROUP OF TOPEKA - 1st & 3rd Mondays, 7pm at the Hughes Room 205 of the Topeka Library. Workshop for aspiring writers.**

**Each participant is asked to bring five copies of a two page type written sample of a work in progress. After reading the pages aloud each participant is allowed an equal number of positive and negative comments offered in a spirit of helpfulness. If you would like to read something email Charles at jcccw@gmail.com**

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

**CRAFTY, SKILLED OR CREATIVE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** to develop outdoor lighted displays at Ward Meade Park events. Contact Elsie, 785-256-2920.

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

**THE HEAT** — FREE fitness classes for the community. Located at Florence Crittenton Services Center for Integrative Health, 5423 SW 7th. www.flocritkanssas.org

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

**TAI CHI FOR HEALTH** — Mon. 10-11 at Lowman United Methodist Church and Thu. 9:30-10:30 at Topeka Zoo. No training needed, just watch & follow. Contact Madon Daily at 505-424-8989 or madondaily@gmail.com. To Join from Home via Zoom, contact Madon for the Zoom link

**PICKLEBALL** — Mon. & Wed., 1-3pm, First Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar Ave. Park on West Side, where the gym is located. Contact Dave Mathias, davemathias@sbcglobal.net, or Betsy Thompson, bethythompson@gmail.com.

**SHEPHERD'S CENTER BOOK CLUB** - 1st & 3rd Mon. 2-4pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1275 SW Boswell Ave. Call: 785-249-3258 or email shepherdstopeka@yahoo.com for the book of study.

**SMS - STRENGTH, MOBILITY, STABILITY EXERCISE GROUP (SMS)** Mon. 9-9:30am, Arbor Court, 4200 SW

Drury Lane. Tue. & Thu. 9-9:30am, Rosehill Place, 3600 SW Gage Blvd # 97. Tue & Thu, 10-10:45, Grace UMC, 2627 SW Western Ave. Call Anne Crawford at 785-273-4527 or email anne.crawford@cox.net.

**SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM** - Every Mon., Wed., and Fri at 1:30 at Pleasant Hills United Methodist Church, 4525 NW Button Rd. 785-246-1737.

**TOPEKA LIONS CLUB** — 1st Mondays at Noon - 1 pm at The Capper Foundation, 3500 SW 10th Ave. Park on the North side. RSVP by Fri. for lunch/pay at the meeting. Visitors welcome. TopekaLions.org/contact-us to make reservations. WE SERVE!

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

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

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

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

**TOPEKA LINCOLN CLUB** — 1st Tue. of month, 7pm, Topeka Public Library. Discussing our greatest President, Abraham Lincoln, and his times. The public is welcome. For info, Kirk Nystrom 785-235-6977.

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

**NARVE (Nat'l Assn of Railroad Veteran Employee)** - 2nd Tuesday each month at at 9:30AM @ Museum of the Kansas National Guard, 125 SE Airport Dr, Topeka

**MENNINGER BIBLE CLASSES** - Tuesdays 11am-12:30. Amerus Room, YWCA, 225 West 12th. A new study group for Year One of Flo Menninger's course on Four Years through the Bible. Read and discuss Genesis through First Kings. Nominal charge for materials. For info call the YWCA at 233-1750 or Clara Gamache at 785-408-5433. (The Bible study is also taught on Sat. mornings on 101.5 FM radio.)

**FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES** Aerie 4319: 1st & 3rd Tue. 7pm; Auxiliary: 1st & 4th Tue. 6pm, 2941 SE Fremont Street. An international non-profit organization uniting fraternally in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice, and equality, to make human life more desirable by

lessening its ills and promoting peace, prosperity, gladness and hope. www.foe.com 785-266-7307

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

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

**MAM GROUP (MEMOIRS, ANCESTRY, PHOTOS)** - VIA Zoom - 4th Wed. 10-11:30am. Contact Rich McReynolds at rlm4017@gmail.com. Via Zoom link

**FAMILY HISTORY WRITING GROUP** - 2nd Wed. 10-11:30am, Lowman United Methodist Church, room 12. Do you have great family stories to tell and want to pass them down to the next generation but don't know where to start? shepherdstopeka@yahoo.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**TOPEKA COSMOPOLITAN CLUB**: The Club that fights Diabetes — Meetings: first three Thursdays of every month, 12 noon, at the Topeka Country Club.

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

**OPERATION BACKPACK** — 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian



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

**May 8, 11:30-1: "POWER" Luncheon**  
at Blue Moose, 3030 SW Wanamaker. **Featuring**  
**an interactive discussion and devotional topic.**

**Free Admission; Order lunch from menu if desired.**

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

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Save the Dates!

- June 12: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1
- July 10: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1
- Aug. 14: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1
- Sep. 11: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1

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

**Creek Elementary School, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. No assembly in August. Sponsored by Topeka North Outreach: 286-1370.**

**LINE DANCING** - 2nd & 4th Thu. 1:30-3:30 at First Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar Ave. Contact Karen Botkin at 785-945-6785 or Jim Baer at 785-256-2432 or jimbaer73@gmail.com to register.

**BRIDGE GROUP** - 1st & 3rd Thu. 1-3:30pm, at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 2021 SW 29th St. To play, arrangements must be made by Mon. 5pm with Joan Arterburn at 408-5174.

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

**KINGDOM ADVISORS TOPEKA AREA STUDY GROUP** - 3rd Thu., 11:30am-1pm via Zoom. Christian financial professionals: financial planners, accountants, attorney's & insurance agents invited. For info: kingdomadvisors.org or Jim Hanna, james.c.hanna@ampf.com or 785.357.6278 x19.

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

**TOPEKA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY** - 4th Fridays, 7:15pm, 1st Congressional Church, 1701 SW Collins.

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

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

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

## SUPPORT GROUPS

**HOPE AND HEALING ACADEMY** harnesses the power of horses to transform the human spirit. For info: 785-224-4232 or www.hopeandhealingacademy.com.

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

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

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

able upon request. Info: 785-232-2044 ext.341

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**GRIEF SUPPORT** - Sponsored by Heartland Hospice for those dealing with death or major loss: 1st Mon., 5:30-7:30pm, Individual appointments; other times are available. Call Terry at (785)230-6730. 3rd Thurs., 11am, Lunch After Loss, Paisano's Ristorante, Fleming Place, SW 10th & Gage Blvd., For reservations or info: 785-271-6500.

**HEALING AFTER LOSS TO SUICIDE (HeALS)** - Topeka support group meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month from 6:30-8, at 1st Congregational Church, 17th and Collins. For info: Topeka.heals@gmail.com or 785-380-9309.

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

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

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

WED. - 6:30pm, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. No Cost. 785-286-1204, www.northland.cc

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

**CELEBRATE RECOVERY** - Every Fri., 6pm, 1912 Gage Blvd. A Christ-centered program, based on 8 princi-

ples found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Applying these Biblical principles, become free from addictive & dysfunctional behaviors. ctopekaks.org.

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

**TOPEKA NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUP** - For families & friends who are affected by someone else's narcotic addiction. Every Mon. 7pm; Every Sat. 10am. First

Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar, Enter Door A, Room 211. www.naranonmidwest.org

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

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

**GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS** - Every Wed, 7pm, St.

Francis Hospital, meeting room #8.

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

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

**TOPEKA RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL**

**June 21st & 22nd 2025**  
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# entertainment

## Impact of America's founders showcased in The American Miracle

By Karen Whiting

Kevin Sorbo portrays Thomas Jefferson in the upcoming film experience *The American Miracle: Our Nation is No Accident*, produced by Tim Mahoney, Heroic Films, and based on the book of the same title written by Michale Medved. Kevin's role is not large but very significant to introduce the reading of the Declaration of Independence in the movie. Jefferson as history students know, drafted the declaration. This historic document introduces new ideas about the rights of people and sovereignty of nations. Kevin calls it 'brilliant' and, as a huge fan of our countries' founders, is delighted to be part of the film.

Sorbo would like to see civics taught more in schools. He realizes few even know the preamble of the Constitution that starts with "We the People," crafted by committee members including James Wilson and Governor Morris of Pennsylvania. The drafting of the constitution is also part of the movie. Jefferson was an ambassador to France as leaders in America drafter the U. S. Constitution and other founding documents. At the end of the movie Kevin Sorbo as Jefferson, has received a letter and reflects on its importance to move forward as a new nation.

Sorbo told President Trump that he hopes *The American Miracle* will be shown on every college campus and people will recall that it's not 'we the big government' and learn more about what makes



this country great.

The film showcases many events that led to freedom and the new nation that can only be described as miracles of Providence. This includes battles won due to fog descending at the time needed and George Washington not being killed despite many attempts.

Tim Mahoney and Kevin, both natives of Minnesota, met a long time ago. Kevin narrated one of Tim's earliest Patterns of Evidence films, *The Exodus*. That was Sorbo's first time narrating a documentary and he went on to be part of about thirteen documentaries. They both desire to share true US history with young people.

Known around the world for his role as Hercules, Kevin continues to be a strong force in movies. He chose to invest his time and talents in faith-based films and in youth. He and his wife homeschooled their children. He ran the #1 after school program in Los Angeles called World Fit for Kids.

Sorbo lived in Canada for five years and realized that's much more of a socialist country. He realizes Americans are often spoiled and don't realize how lucky they are to live in this country. He often contrasted the growth of America with Canada, pointing to the American Dream as part of why America is so different. That dream began with the founders.

In addition to working with youth, Kevin speaks to other groups including his talk, "The Bear Essentials of Fatherhood," that inspires men to embrace masculinity and true strength in God. He has written two books including *True Strength* that shares his recovering from an aneurysm and three strokes while in his role as Hercules, and his healing to living God's purpose in his life. That purpose guides Sorbo's choices including his conservative political views.

He's also hosting a golf tournament starting this June in conjunction with the Rise Up Con, in late June, a faith-based convention to celebrate faith in film, music, and comics. It's not the usual comic con style event. This one brings in celebrity guests, lectures, and a wild life adventure for a family adventure where fandom becomes faith.

Find out more about *The American Miracle* film experience, watch the trailer, get tickets, read articles, and other resources at [www.americanmiraclemovie.com](http://www.americanmiraclemovie.com).

## Animated Jesus Film 'King of Kings' Breaks Box Office Records



"The King of Kings," the groundbreaking animated film from Angel Studios, has broken box office records with a \$19 million opening weekend, becoming the highest-grossing debut for a faith-based animated film. Inspired by Charles Dickens' short story, the film is created by South Korea's Mofac Animation and marks the directorial debut of Seong-ho Jang.

IndieWire praised the film's innovative approach to the Gospel narrative through Dickens' perspective. The unique storytelling and stunning animation have resonated with audiences nationwide.

"This project has been a passion project of mine for nearly a decade," Seong-ho Jang said. "I am so excited to see how audiences have embraced it, and Angel is proving to be the ideal partner to take this film to the market on a global scale."

The star-studded cast features Oscar Isaac as Jesus, Pierce Brosnan as Pontius Pilate, and Kenneth Branagh and Uma

Thurman as Charles and Catherine Dickens, alongside Mark Hamill, Forest Whitaker, Ben Kingsley, and Roman Griffin Davis. The screenplay is by Jang and Rob Edwards, with cinematography by Woo-hyung Kim. Producers include Jang and Kim, with Blue Harbor Entertainment receiving an "in association with" credit.

Emmy and Tony Award-winning actress and singer Kristin Chenoweth performs "Live Like That," an original end title song that has garnered critical acclaim. The song, written by Chenoweth, Kellys Collins, Tim Nichols, & Matt Wynn and produced by Keith Thomas, shares a story of yearning for a childlike faith.

"I am deeply honored to be part of such a significant project," Chenoweth said. "The opportunity to contribute musically to a film that explores the life of Jesus Christ is both a professional and personal milestone. I hope my song can touch the hearts of everyone who watches 'The King of Kings.'"



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## New Book Makes Compelling Case for Religious Faith

Rumors of the death of God have been greatly exaggerated, to paraphrase the famous Missourian Mark Twain. As recent studies of faith in America show belief remains resilient despite cultural changes. More atheists are rediscovering faith than ever before.

A decade or more ago, the New Atheism of authors such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Christopher Hitchens was on the ascent. Despite their best efforts, however, research indicates strong faith contributes to positive outcomes. Even Dawkins, the committed British atheist, made headlines when he called himself a cultural Christian.

"I'm not a believer, but there is a distinction between being a believing Christian and a cultural Christian," he said. "I love hymns and Christmas carols, and I sort of feel at home in the Christian ethos, and I feel that we are a Christian country in that sense."

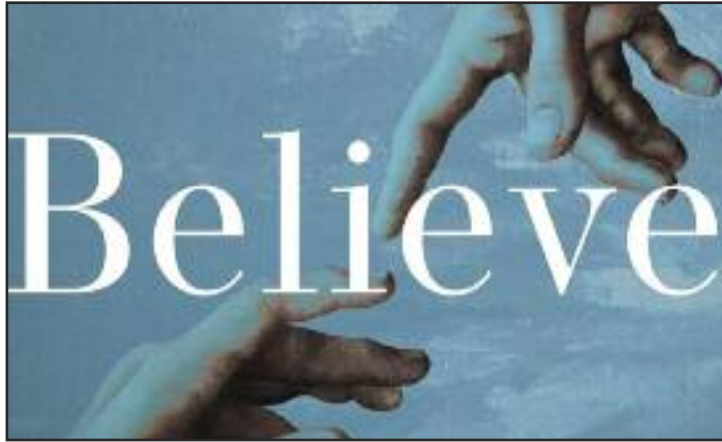
Ross Douthat, a columnist for the "New York Times" has a simple explanation for why religious belief has outlasted its critics: "The basic justifications for a religious worldview are readily accessible to a reasonable human being." His new book has garnered significant attention from religious and secular readers alike.

Douthat is the author of "Believe: Why Everyone Should Be Religious," which has climbed to number eight among hardcover nonfiction books on the New York Times bestseller list. The key word in the title is "religious." Unlike many books about apologetics, Douthat first makes the case for why it is reasonable to have a religious worldview in general before turning his attention to Christianity in particular.

"The dividing line in American religious life is no longer between Christians and non-Christians but between people who accept some kind of spiritual reality and those who don't," he said.

The first seven chapters of the book discuss why a purely materialistic view of the universe and human beings is inadequate, and why being religious is an intellectually defensible position.

"The apparent order of the universe, the ability of human consciousness to recognize and interpret this order, and the persistence of spiritual or supernatural experience are evidence for taking seriously a nonmaterial plane of existence," he said.



The nature of the material world and how it is finetuned to support human life point to a creator. "The first blow to the idea of an indifferent cosmos was the twentieth-century realization that our universe appears to have a specific beginning, a point of origin prior to which not only space but time itself did not exist," Douthat said.

Far from disproving the supernatural, an objective look at recent scientific advances makes a strictly material universe appear less likely. As new research shows, faith and science are not incompatible belief systems.

"So the long arc of science, which initially seems to bend away from religion by undermining certain specific scriptural or dogmatic claims, bends back by confirming humanity's unique position in a universe strangely suited to both our bodies and our minds," he said.

The next step is toward a religious worldview. Again, Douthat first makes the case for religion in general as the beginning of a path to the God of the Bible.

"If some kind of God exists and ordered the universe for human beings, then even a false or flawed religion will probably contain intimations of that reality, signposts for the discerning pilgrim, some kind of call to higher things — such that a sincere desire to find and know truth can fail to reach truth's fulness and still find its reward," he said.

Although not all religions are true, they nevertheless can carry elements of truth that can point seekers in the right direction.

"I think the orthodox Christian (or any believer in the specific truth of a particular religion) has to assume both that the divine meets us where we are, even using the imagery and symbol-

ism of other faiths, and also that there is a little more mystery to the supernatural realm than even a theological system founded on divine revelation can completely capture," Douthat said.

After carefully making the intellectual case for religion, in the final chapter Douthat shares his personal journey from New England Episcopalian to charismatic evangelical to Roman Catholic. Although other religions may contain certain truths, biblical Christianity is in a category of its own.

"In the end, I think that God has acted in history through Jesus of Nazareth in a way that differs from every other traditional and experience and revelation, and the gospels should therefore exert a kind of general interpretive control over how we read all the other religious data," he said. "The triumph of the Christian message instantiates a profound revolution in the moral and spiritual order of the world, one so profound that two thousand years later, it's still taken for granted, treated as bedrock, by many people who imagine themselves to have left Christianity behind."

After establishing why it is reasonable to believe in religion in general and Christianity in particular, Douthat concludes by encouraging readers to move beyond mere belief to a saving faith.

"For the time being, we are given warning after warning to not let this moment go to waste — because our life could be demanded of us at any moment, because at the hour we least expect the Master could unexpectedly return," he said.

"Believe: Why Everyone Should Be Religious" is available from most bookstores and online retailers or from Zondervan.

## Faith-Based Performances Continue to Wow AMERICAN IDOL Judges



Canaan James Hill, a 17-year-old aspiring preacher, just gave an "unbelievable" gospel performance that earned him a spot in AMERICAN IDOL's Top 12.

"How can I 'church up' a rock song?" Hill wondered in a recent episode of the singing competition show. AMERICAN IDOL's contestants were tasked with choosing and performing a song that fit the theme of "Rock and Roll Hall of Fame."

Hill chose Aretha Franklin's "Mary, Don't You Weep," telling guest mentor James Taylor, "It's a popular song for me and my family."

After performing the song, judge Lionel Richie told Hill, "Aretha didn't sing like that. That was unbelievable."

His performance earned him a spot in AMERICAN IDOL's Top 12, and Hill has since gone on to the show's Top 10 with a performance of CeCe Winans' "Goodness of God."

The teenager has been impressing the AMERICAN IDOL judges and viewers since his audition, where he performed Earnest Pugh's "I Need Your Glory."

At the end of his performance, Richie told Hill it was "powerful," to which Hill responded, "Thank you so much. To God be the glory."

"That was something so spectacular. I just can't even describe what I heard," Richie added, while fellow judge Carrie Underwood said she was "kind of speechless."

"Where have you been the last 17 years?" Underwood continued. "You have a gift. Thank you for bringing your gift to us."

The AMERICAN IDOL judges were so impressed with Hill's audition they gave the 17-year-old the

platinum ticket, a special ticket given to just three lucky contestants that allows them to immediately move past the first round of Hollywood week.

Hill has been very vocal about his faith, writing in his YouTube bio, "I am a Christian, I sing, preach, and give encouraging words. I love to encourage people to trust God because he can do more with it than we can."

He has also shared his desire to one day become a preacher, telling AMERICAN IDOL host Ryan Seacrest he wants to "go forward with my gift and do what God has called and chosen me to do."

Hill is appreciative of the support he's gotten from AMERICAN IDOL viewers. In a recent Facebook video, he said, "To have all of you amazing people tuning in and voting and being so kind to me. People don't have to be kind. People don't have to support you. For y'all to actually be there for me, supporting me, it means so much."

AMERICAN IDOL fans are loving Hill's faith-based performances and can't wait to see if the teen ends up winning big!

—India McCarty /  
MovieGuide.org

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## Renovate your bathroom for style and function

Home renovations happen for a variety of reasons. Among the most popular upgrades homeowners tackle, bathroom renovations can be a smart and worthwhile investment.

Updating a bathroom requires careful planning to ensure both aesthetic appeal and long-term functionality. To maximize the value of your investment, focus on a design that is timeless and products that offer a blend of beauty, comfort and performance.

“As a designer and renovator, I know firsthand the impact fixtures can have on a home,” said Keith Bynum, home renovation expert. “American Standard has been my go-to for renovation projects because their products are built to last, beautiful and timeless.”

Discover these expert tips for selecting the perfect products for your bathroom upgrade from American Standard.

### Sinks

Your sink should not only enhance the visual appeal of your bathroom but also meet your practical, everyday needs. Striking the right balance between aesthetics and practicality is essential when choosing the perfect sink for your space. If you’ve never shopped for a sink before, you may not realize how many styles there are to choose from.

An undermount sink sits with its edge below the level of the countertop, creating a seamless surface that makes it easier to clean while hiding from view. A drop-in sink is placed into an opening with the rim creating a lip that forms a barrier between your sink and counter. A vessel sink resembles a standalone basin, often used as a decorative and contemporary alternative to traditional sinks in powder rooms. The sleek and clean design of a pedestal sink makes it a perfect solution for smaller spaces, although additional storage may be

needed.

Once you decide on the sink, you’ll also need to determine what furniture to pair with it. Some popular options to complete the look and enhance usability include a console, vanity top, floating vanity or washstand.

### Toilets

When considering a toilet, performance is essential. It should meet your everyday needs, operate efficiently and provide additional features that make daily maintenance easier.

You’ll find most toilets on the market fall into one of three categories: one-piece, two-piece or smart. One-piece toilets have a seamless design, with the tank and bowl fused together for a look that is sleek and easier to clean. Two-piece toilets consist of a separate tank and bowl, making them a popular choice for easy installation and maintenance. Smart toilets offer advanced features like bidet functions, automatic flushing, self-cleaning capabilities and customizable settings designed to enhance user comfort, hygiene and convenience.

Another important consideration is your toilet’s shape and height. Elongated bowls provide added comfort while round bowls are a space-saving solution for smaller bathrooms. When it comes to height, standard toilets are suitable for most people, but higher toilets allow for easier standing and sitting accessibility.

An option like American Standard’s line of Champion toilets, engineered to never clog and powerful enough to flush a bucket of golf balls in a single flush, provide cleaner, more efficient flushes so nothing disrupts your daily routine. These DIY-friendly, low-flow toilets use just 1.28 gallons per flush to conserve water. They also feature PowerWash rim technology, which scrubs the bowl with every flush, and unique EverClean An-



timicrobial Surface protection to guard against mold, mildew and odor- and stain-causing bacteria.

### Faucets

Bathroom faucets come in a variety of styles and configurations to suit any design preference. Durable finishes resist tarnishing and scratches, keeping your faucet looking new for years to come. Many models also feature ceramic disc valves for silky-smooth handle operation and water-saving technology to help conserve resources and lower water bills.

A variety of bathroom faucet configurations can meet your bathroom design needs. Designed for sinks with a single-hole or four-inch escutcheon, the monoblock faucet provides easy use with a single-handle design for controlling water volume and temperature. Sinks with three faucet holes spaced four inches apart pair well with a center-set design, providing a compact and space-efficient solution ideal for undermount bathroom sink installations.

If your sink holes are spaced 8-16 inches apart, a widespread design will coordinate well with undermount and vessel style sinks that feature a deck, offering both style and practicality. The vessel faucet is designed for above-counter or vessel sinks, delivering a sleek, contemporary aesthetic that enhances

modern bathrooms.

### Bathtubs

Whether used for daily hygiene or as a relaxing retreat, the bathtub is a focal point of bathroom design. From classic alcove and elegant freestanding tubs to convenient walk-in options, each type caters to different needs and aesthetics. The secret is determining how you’ll use the tub so you can maximize the features and functionality while complementing your overall design.

You can expect to find a range of features, including ADA compliance for enhanced accessibility, deep soak capabilities for a luxurious bathing experience and slip-resistant surfaces for added safety.

The trim and faucets also play a cru-

cial role in your tub’s overall look and performance. For families, one practical choice is the Aspirations Waterfall Tub Spout from American Standard, which is designed with rounded edges for kid-friendly safety while creating a soothing, spa-like cascade. It also conveniently doubles as a storage shelf or leg rest for shaving.

To explore product collections, find design inspiration and learn more about The American Standard 150th Down Payment Contest in honor of the 150th anniversary – where 10 deserving individuals have the chance to win \$15,000 each to help them take the next step toward home ownership – visit [americanstandard.dja.com/story](http://americanstandard.dja.com/story).

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# sports

## How the 'God Squad' paved the way for today's Christian athletes



Bob Knepper

Depending on your spiritual bent, you may have been either thrilled or turned off by University of Connecticut women's basketball star Paige Bueckers talking about her Christian faith in postgame interviews on her way to last year's Final Four.

"I'm a living testimony. I give all glory to God," she told ESPN. "He works in mysterious ways. Last year [after injury], I was praying to be back at this stage. He sent me trials and tribulations, but it was to build my character. It was to test my faith to see if I was a believer. But I just kept on believing. I did all I could, so God could do all I can't."

There are many other instances too, such as some Ohio State football players after their national championship victory in January, and some Philadelphia Eagles after winning Super Bowl LIX this year.

Some probably feel, as Beneatha Younger put it in Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun" play, "I'm just tired of hearing about God all the time. What has He got to do with anything? ... I just get so tired of Him getting the credit for things the human race achieves through its own effort. Now, there simply is no God. There's only man. And it's he who makes miracles."

The media and the public are now accustomed to hearing athletes thank God for the abilities He has given them. But that wasn't always the case. In baseball in the 1950s and 1960s, it was extremely rare to hear such pronouncements from athletes. Then in the 1970s in San Francisco, one of the great culture clashes between Christian athletes, the media and the fan base erupted over a group of born-again ballplayers on the Giants who became

known as the "God Squad."

Giants relief pitcher Gary Lavelle became a born-again Christian in the winter of 1976. When he returned to the club the next year, he gradually and quietly began to share his faith with his teammates when they showed an interest. Several, including Bob Knepper, Jack Clark, Rob Andrews and Randy Moffitt (brother of tennis great Billie Jean King) came to faith, and by the 1978 season there were eight or nine professing Christians on the team.

The Giants, who had suffered through several losing seasons, came to life that year and led the National League West for much of the season, only to fade in a September swoon and finish third. In postgame interviews, the players frequently thanked God for the ability He gave them, and the press raised no objection.

But when the Giants' fortunes faded on the field in 1979, the media was quick to blame the born-again players, claiming their newfound faith had made them passive. The press derisively referred to them as the God Squad.

The cornerstone of that accusation was a quote attributed to Knepper, the pitcher who supposedly told manager Dave Bristol it was "God's will" when he yielded a home run that lost a game. Knepper and his Christian teammates have always denied the quote, as did Bristol. But the false story continued to hound them for years.

The media was merciless at times. San Francisco Chronicle columnist Glenn Dickey wrote, "It may be that the Giants will have to trade one or two of the most obvious born-again on the club, to break up the clique. At the very least, their lockers should be separated in the clubhouse."

Another prominent Chronicle sports columnist, Lowell Cohn, told me recently



Mike Ivie

## Olympic champion wrestler joins local sports ministry

Olympic gold medalist Brandon Slay is joining Kansas City-based SportsLife Leadership as executive director of SportsLife Wrestling. The announcement comes as Slay transitions from his successful nine-year tenure as Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Regional Training Center.

Slay won a gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and was a two-time NCAA national runner-up, an All-American and a four-time All-Ivy League athlete at the University of Pennsylvania. In 2016, he was honored as a distinguished member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. His overtime victory in Sydney is still considered one of the biggest upsets in United States wrestling history.

"Brandon and I have partnered together for many years in ministry," SportsLife's Carl Perry said. "He has an incredible love for Jesus and for people. Brandon also brings extensive experience in building programs and developing individuals to help them take the next step. His addition as executive director immediately elevates SportsLife Wrestling and positions us for long-term success."

Slay spent eight years as head coach at



the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs and was the national development coach for USA Wrestling during the London and Rio Olympics. He also was head coach of the Pennsylvania Regional Training Center in Philadelphia, overseeing athletes through the Tokyo and Paris Olympics. "The wrestling community needs more than just technical training," Slay recently told Christian News Wire. "We aim to infuse Jesus into wrestling through SportsLife Wrestling, and along the way, we want to develop leaders who can expand the ministry."

"I have always been passionate about sharing the gospel through wrestling," he

said. "I cherished those 14 years and know that God accomplished great work through Carl and his staff. The prospect of reconnecting with them and engaging more directly in day-to-day ministry efforts resonated deeply with my heart."

SportsLife's unique mission is to use sport-specific ministries to disciple and mentor Christian sports leaders through training, resources and programs. For SportsLife Wrestling, training will occur primarily through Bible studies, while resources will include curriculum, wrestling-specific Bibles, YouVersion reading plans and inspirational videos featuring testimonies from influential athletes and coaches.

"We believe that working at the highest level in wrestling will create the most significant impact," President Dan Britton said. "Brandon's extensive wrestling history and experience lend immediate credibility in the wrestling community, allowing us to better serve coaches and athletes. He is truly a leader of leaders, and we are thrilled to welcome him to the team, where his talents and strengths will expand our ministry globally."

More information is available at [www.SportsLifeLeadership.com](http://www.SportsLifeLeadership.com).

that he disagrees with Dickey on that score. However, Cohn, known for his biting satire, penned one of his most provocative pieces, "Can Satan Save the Giants?" in which he recommended that one of the Giants sell his soul to the devil since God didn't seem to be helping the team too much!

Not only did the media blame the God Squad for losing, it also alleged that the Christian athletes caused division in the clubhouse and got two managers fired. These false claims spread to the national media, where prestigious columnists Peter Gammons of The Boston Globe and Dick Young of the New York Daily News repeated them. One of the more ridiculous accusations was that the Giants had two team buses to take players to the field, one for the God Squad and another for the others.

Mike Ivie, one of the God Squadders, returned to the club from a stint of mental exhaustion and sounded much like Bueckers, who had made a comeback from physical injury.

"He'll put you through trials and tribulations and He'll use every resource to help you find happiness in your heart," Ivie said. "It would have been twice as hard for me to come back if I hadn't believed in the Lord."

Ivie and his teammates commonly

made such pronouncements in a San Francisco atmosphere and era that was not conducive to talk about faith. Cohn felt the tension and in his memoirs made this fascinating statement: "Until that day, I believed I was covering a baseball team. I was wrong. I had wandered into

the middle of a deep religious debate, one that defined the Giants at that time."

The God Squadders were spiritual pioneers who bore the brunt of attacks by the media. They paved the way for Bueckers and other Christian athletes to speak boldly about their faith.



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# 50+ Lifestyles

## A Guide to Enjoying Life in the Best Years

### Harness the Power of Walking

A walk isn't just good for your body; it's a simple, powerful way to care for your mind and soul. Physical activity, like walking, reduces stress, boosts mood and promotes overall well-being. Yet physical activity levels in the United States continue to decline, a trend threatening both mental and physical health.

Less than half of adults and fewer than 1 in 5 children in the U.S. get the

recommended amount of physical activity needed for heart health, according to the American Heart Association's 2025 Heart & Stroke Statistical Update.

National recommendations call for children to get at least one hour of physical activity each day, but the latest statistics show less than 19% of children in the U.S. achieve that target. Meanwhile, less than half of adults get

the recommended 150 minutes or more of weekly physical activity.

What's more, according to data from a National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1 in 4 U.S. adults sits for longer than eight hours each day, which can have negative consequences on physical and mental health.

For decades, the American Heart Association has championed the importance of physical activity in communities across the country. These tips and information can help you understand how a brisk walk can make a world of difference for heart health and mental clarity.

#### Benefits of Physical Activity

Staying active is one of the best ways to keep your mind and body healthy.

The physical health benefits may be obvious, but research suggests physical activity can also help bring more joy to your life. According to the 2019 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, people who get the recommended amount of physical activity are less likely to experience depression.

Regular physical activity enhances your mood, sharpens your mind, improves sleep and boosts overall well-being, all while reducing the risk of disease and depression and increasing both the quality and longevity of life.

#### How to Be More Physically Active

Exercise as simple as a brisk walk can put a major spring in your step. It can even energize you to finish other tasks at hand, whether it's cooking or running errands. Give your daily physical activity level a boost with these tips:

- Exercising outdoors is a great way to get moving. Spending time outdoors has been shown to reduce stress, promote a sense of belonging and improve mood. It's even better if you can enjoy the sunshine outside, which can improve mood, boost your immunity and help you get some vi-



tamin D.

- Invite a family member or friend along with you. It's good for them, it's good for you and it's good company all around.

- Instead of wondering if you'll move today, explore how you'll move. A walk, a dance or a stretch all count.

#### Getting Pets Involved

Pets are part of your family, and they can help you get healthy together. Pets provide a fun reason to spend more time outside and get the exercise needed to reduce the risk of disease later in life.

Getting moving along with your pet adds more exercise to your routine, which means living longer, reducing risk of dying from heart attack or stroke, reducing risk of diabetes, reducing stress and even boosting your overall happiness and well-being.

Exercising with your pet can also mean enjoying more socializing. You may find yourself meeting other dog owners in your area on a walk or at the dog park.

Learn more about how simple habits like walking can support your overall health at [heart.org/MoveMore](http://heart.org/MoveMore).

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##### Previous dental work can wear out.

Your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.<sup>2</sup>

##### Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Unexpected bills, like \$190 for a filling, or \$1,213 for a crown<sup>3</sup> can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

<sup>1</sup> "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2025. <sup>2</sup> "Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. <sup>3</sup> American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2020 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2020, American Dental Association.

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# Know These 4 Core Factors to Avoid a Heart Health Syndrome



In the U.S., 1 in 3 adults is at risk for a newly recognized syndrome that comes from a combination of heart disease, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes and excess body weight. This cluster of conditions, called cardiovascular-kidney-metabolic (CKM) syndrome, is an example of how problems in one part of your body can affect other parts.

To avoid CKM syndrome, health experts suggest paying close attention to four of the American Heart Association's Life's Essential 8—blood pressure, lipids, body weight and blood sugar level—which are core health factors that impact your metabolic health.

Good metabolic health means your body uses energy well and keeps these factors in a normal range. However, when numbers are off in one area, it can affect others, raising your risk for heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and diabetes.

Consider these tips from the American Heart Association to help keep your core health factors under control.

## Blood Pressure

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, happens when the force of your blood pushing against the walls of your blood vessels is too high. High blood pressure is a leading cause of heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.

Because high blood pressure doesn't have symptoms, the only way to know you have it is to get your blood pressure checked. Healthy blood pressure is below 120/80. If your blood pressure is 130/80 or higher, talk to your doctor about

checking your other core health factors.

Lifestyle changes can help reduce high blood pressure. One example is a Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating pattern that's low in fat and rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products. Losing 10 pounds and reducing alcohol consumption can also reduce blood pressure.

## Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy substance your liver makes then circulates in the blood where your body uses it to build cells and make vitamins and hormones. You may also get cholesterol from eating animal products. If there's too much cholesterol circulating, your risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke may increase.

For optimal CKM health, your LDL cholesterol should be below 100 and triglycerides below 150. Triglyc-

erides are the most common type of fat in the body. If your triglyceride level is 135 or higher, talk to your doctor about decreasing your risk.

Losing body weight and increasing physical activity decrease triglyceride levels. In addition, DASH and Mediterranean (plant-based, high-fiber, low-fat) eating patterns support healthy LDL and triglyceride levels.

## Body Weight

Healthy weight may be determined by body mass index (BMI), a number that represents your weight in relation to your height. Extra body fat can mean a higher risk for many health problems, including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

CKM syndrome starts when BMI is 25 or higher and waist circumference is 88 centimeters or higher for women and 102 centimeters or higher for men. Aim for a BMI between 18.5-25.

To lose weight and keep it off, start by setting realistic goals. Understand how much and why you eat, manage portion sizes, make smart snack substitutions and be physically active.

## Blood Sugar

High blood sugar can slowly damage the kidneys. In fact, diabetes is the leading cause of kidney disease, and it increases the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Blood sugar is measured in two ways: a fasting blood glucose test (short term blood sugar) and an A1C test (long term blood sugar control).

A normal fasting blood glucose level is 70-99 and a normal A1C level is below 5.7%. Fasting blood glucose above 125 and A1C of 6.5% or higher means you have diabetes.

Habits that help you avoid high blood pressure, weight gain and high cholesterol also keep your blood sugar in check. These are especially impor-

tant if you have a family history of diabetes.

Learn more about CKM syndrome and how to manage your risk at [heart.org/CKMhealth](http://heart.org/CKMhealth).

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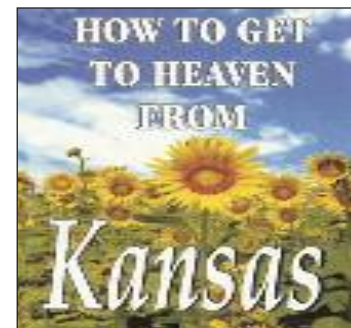
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More important than living in KANSAS is where you will live forever. Just as you would look at a map of KANSAS to find your way, so you must look at the Bible to find your way to heaven. The Bible says, "Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, 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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# 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 66542  
[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 8:30, 10 & 11:30am, 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.wrbctopeka.com](http://www.wrbctopeka.com)  
 Traditional Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm  
 Sunday School 9:30am • Wed. Prayer 7pm

## 9. GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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

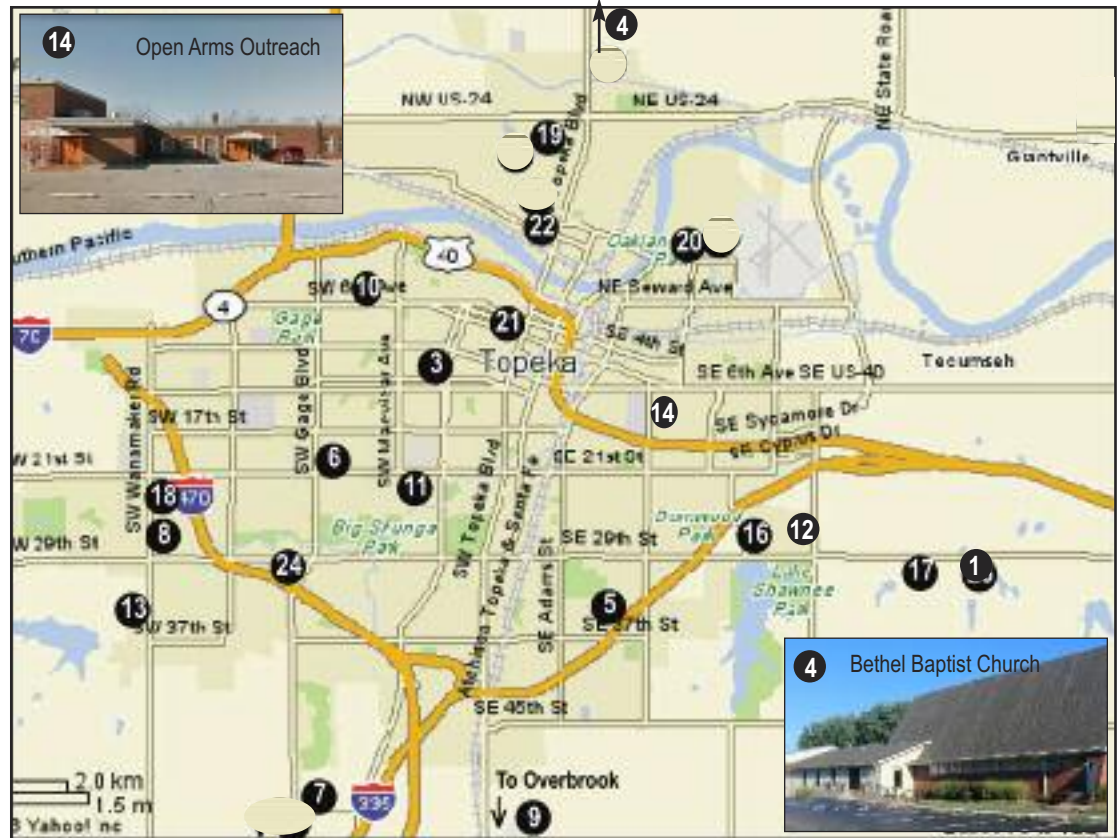
1 (785) 232-3463/+1 (785) 217-5560  
 Sunday School 9:30, Worship 11:00  
 In person or conference call:  
 (712) 770-4749 / 583229  
 Bible Study Tue & Wed conference call  
 2401 SE 11th St., Topeka KS 66607  
 Supt. S. C. Mitchell, Pastor

## 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



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## 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 66608 • 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  
 Sunday School 9:15 am  
 Bible Study Wed. 7 pm  
[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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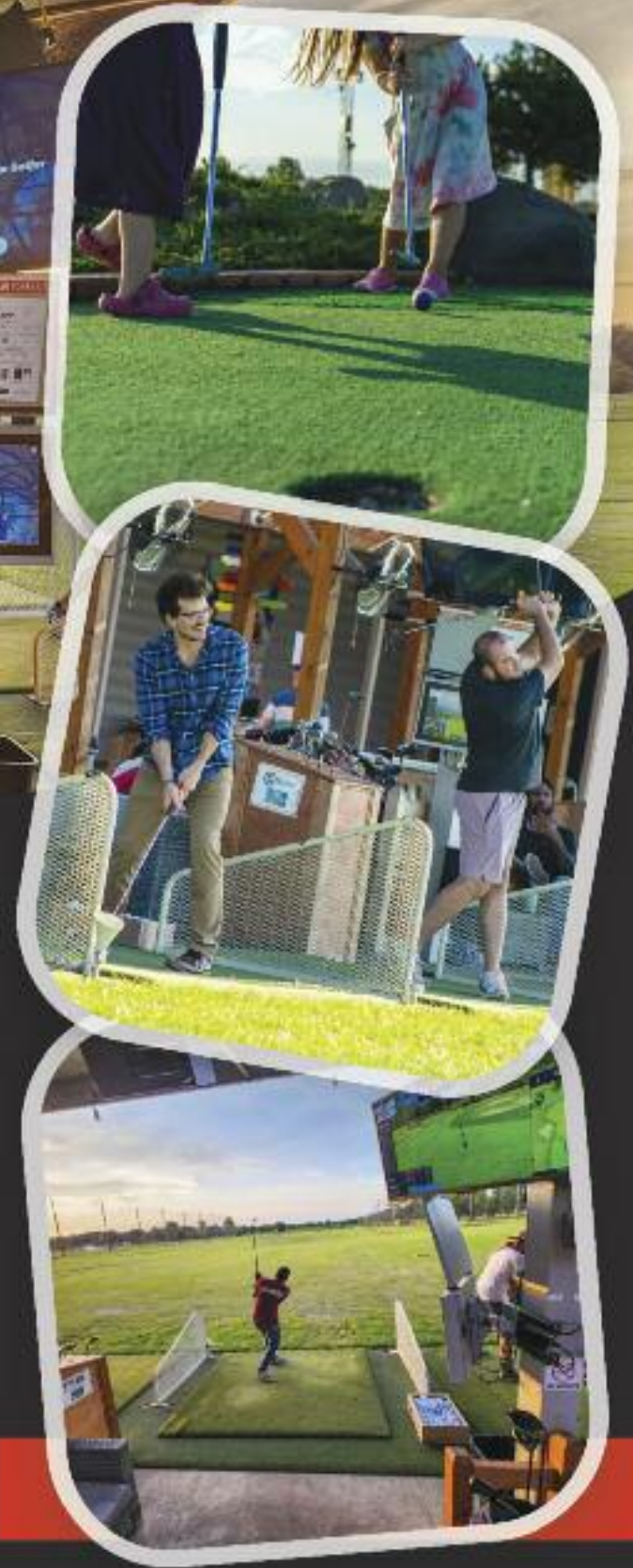
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