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CHRISTMAS TREE DISPLAY

Page 13

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House
of
David

Page 10



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Back Cover!

Kansas among nine
states to swap voter rolls
with Texas in effort to
find duplicates, fraud



Nine states are swapping voter rolls with Texas, and officials say the agreement will "improve the accuracy of voter registration records."

Kansas Secretary of State Scott Schwab's office announced the partnership Thursday, describing it as a way to identify duplicate registrations. Schwab, who is running for governor, said the agreement with Texas helps Kansas to maintain accurate voter rolls, which bolsters election integrity and administration.

The basis of Texas Secretary of State

■ Please see **VOTERS** page 3



You Need to Read This Book!

By **Clint Decker**

George Washington, the first President of the United States, said about God's Word, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without the Bible." The legendary General Douglas MacArthur commented regarding the Scriptures, "Believe me, sir, never a night goes by, be I

ever so tired, but I read the Word of God before I go to bed." Famous author H. G. Wells observed, "The Bible has been the Book that held together the fabric of Western civilization... The civilization we possess could not come into existence and could not have been sustained without it."

The first book printed on the

Gutenberg press in 1455 was the Bible. Since then, it has become history's best-selling book. Over 100 million are printed each year with over 6 billion currently in print around the world. It also is the world's most widely translated and distributed book. Out of 7,394 languages spoken across all seven con-

■ Please see **FORGIVENESS** page 2

Kansas, Missouri Score High in Faith and Freedom Rankings



Both Missouri and Kansas scored high marks in the 2025 Faith and Freedom Index from the Napa Legal Institute.

"Out of 51 U.S. jurisdictions, Kansas ranks No. 2 overall for its friendliness toward faith-based nonprofit organizations, making it one of the best states to operate a faith-based nonprofit in the United States," the report said. "Kansas has several laws that facilitate the contributions of faith-based nonprofits, including an automatic exemption from state corporate income tax for religious organizations that have 501(c)(3) status and a broad, automatic exemption from charitable registration requirements for religious organizations. Kansas, however, has some policies that are burdensome to faith-

■ Please see **RANKINGS** page 2

IRS Reverses Hated Biden Tax Reporting Requirement

The IRS is changing a Biden-era policy that critics pointed out forced banks and online money apps to report deposits from Marketplace and Ebay sales, plus other gig income. In a major decision benefiting taxpayers, the IRS issued a fact sheet on Oct. 23, announcing changes made to the FAQ section in Form 1099-K based on amendments made under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, the agency said in a statement released on Thursday.

Form 1099-K is applicable to individuals who engage in gig work or casually sell goods online. Third-party settlement organizations (TPSOs), including online marketplaces such as Amazon and eBay, and payment apps like PayPal and Venmo, are required to prepare the form and send copies to the IRS and the taxpayer. The form details the payment amounts received by the taxpayer from the sale of goods and

■ Please see **IRS** page 2



US Bible Sales Surge After Charlie Kirk Assassination

Bible sales have surged in the United States since the assassination of Charlie Kirk, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association reports. September saw a 36 percent increase in Bible copy sales compared to September 2024. Some 2.4 million Bibles were sold in September 2025, up from 1.5 million in August. Through August, each month in 2025 had ranged between 1.2

million to 1.6 million sold, book tracker Circana BookScan found. It marked the biggest month of Bible sales so far this year, according to the Wall Street Journal.



IRS

continued from page 1

services.

For tax years 2023 and prior, a TPSO had to issue Form 1099-K if payments totaled more than \$20,000, and there were at least 200 transactions. However, the Biden American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act, passed in 2021 by the Biden administration, brought down the threshold to \$600.

The decision triggered protests from TPSOs and taxpayers. Subsequently, the IRS gradually lowered the threshold, setting it at \$5,000 for 2024 and \$2,500 for 2025. Now under the Trump administration it will be just \$600 from 2026 onwards.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act, signed into law by President Donald Trump on July 4, reversed the Biden-era changes made to the payment thresholds.

As such, TPSOs are now “not required to file a Form 1099-K unless the gross amount of reportable payment transactions to a payee exceeds \$20,000 and the number of transactions exceeds 200,” according to the fact sheet.

Generally, only taxpayers who meet these thresholds will receive a Form 1099-K from a TPSO. However, certain states may have a lower reporting threshold, it said.

In a May 13 statement, the Coalition for 1099-K Fairness had called on including the threshold reversal in the One Big Beautiful Bill.

The Biden American Rescue Plan

Act’s \$600 threshold “threatened to overwhelm small businesses and individuals utilizing payment apps with confusing tax forms and expose millions of transactions to unnecessary scrutiny,” the coalition said.

“Reinstating the previous standard brings clarity and consistency back to hardworking Americans and reduces administrative waste for both taxpayers and the IRS.”

The latest change results in less paperwork and fewer surprises for Americans who engage in casual sales or make modest income online, the coalition said on its website.

By Naveen Athrappully | Epoch Times News Service

Lecompton has Midwest’s largest Christmas trees & ornaments display



Experience the holiday magic of Christmas when visiting Historic Lecompton. Visitors can see an indoor display of over 240 trees decorated in antique, Victorian, vintage and theme decor - including turn of the century and WW II era decorations. Among the many trees is a barb-wire tree, a feather tree, a Victorian Costume tree and many more unique decorations.

At the same time, visitors can also tour Constitution Hall, a National Landmark. Lecompton is known as the "Birthplace of the Civil War, Where Slavery Began to Die."

Lecompton was recently named one of the "Best Small Towns in Kansas" by Kansas Magazine readers.

The Christmas display will be offered from November 1 to January 1. The display and museum is open 10 am to 4 pm Wednesday through Saturday and 1 to 5 pm Sunday.

Many interesting historical sites in the area can be seen on a walking tour, starting from the Territorial Capital. There are also unique shops and eateries in this quaint little town.

For more information, go to lecomptonkansas.com.

FORGIVENESS

continued from page 1

tinents, 3,658 have either a full Bible or some portion of it.

It is without debate. The Bible has been and continues to be, the world’s most influential book by every measure. And that is against all odds. There is some level of restriction on Bible use in 33 nations, like North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan. Historically and even presently, people have been jailed or killed for translating, printing, distributing, reading or even owning a Bible.

Why all this about the Bible? Be-

cause you need to read it! It is urgent. It will change your life, like it has millions of people down through the course of history. Here are seven reasons you need to start reading the Bible today.

1. The Bible reveals who your Creator is. “I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens...” (Isaiah 45:12) You did not come from a tadpole or a big bang. You were hand crafted by Almighty God. The Bible helps you to know who you are and who God and His only Son is.

2. The Bible answers your greatest questions. “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole

duty of man.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13) The Bible answers questions like, “What is my purpose in life?”, “Is there life after death?”, “Why is there so much suffering and evil in the world?” and many more.

3. The Bible uncovers your supreme struggle. “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person.” (Matthew 15:19-20) The Bible teaches how you have a heart problem, and it shows how you can get a new heart through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

4. The Bible teaches you how to live. “Look carefully then how you

walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:15-16) The Bible teaches about marriage, family, relationships, conflicts, justice, finances, government, confronting evil, doing good to our neighbors and a wide range of other subjects.

5. The Bible is reliable. “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...” (2 Timothy 3:16) When you open the Bible, you can trust it. It does not lie.

6. The Bible is your source of truth. “The sum of your word is truth...” (Psalm 119:160) God’s Word tells us

what is right and wrong and good and evil. There are no guessing games when it comes to morals. God’s Word lays it out straight.

7. The Bible is your source of hope. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” (Romans 15:13) When you read the Bible and discover your Creator, find answers to big questions, receive forgiveness for your sins, learn how to live in difficult circumstances and encounter what is true and good – it inspires hope.

RANKINGS

continued from page 1

based nonprofits operating in the state, such as a Blaine Amendment and no meaningful exemptions from state sales tax on religious organization’s sales.”

“Missouri has several laws that facilitate the contributions of faith-based nonprofits, including an automatic exemption from state corporate income

tax for religious organizations that have 501(c)(3) status,” according to the report. “Additionally, Missouri has broad exemptions from state sales taxes upon application and no audit requirements. Missouri, however, has some policies that are burdensome to faith-based nonprofits operating in the state, such as a broad Blaine Amendment and a lack of protections for religious exercise during a state of emergency.”

A state’s religious freedom score is de-

termined by several factors, such as the presence or absence of state constitutional protection of free exercise; whether the state has passed a Religious Freedom Restoration Act; religious freedom conditions for nonprofits with public programming; religious freedom conditions for faith-based employers; protections for religious exercise during a state emergency and state Blaine Amendments.

The report singled out Michigan and

Washington as states that “overburden and are even hostile toward faith-based nonprofits.” Alabama topped the freedom rankings, followed by Kansas, Mississippi, Georgia and Florida.

Michigan scored 22%, according to Napa. It was closely followed by Delaware at 25%, Washington at 26%, Maryland at 27%, and Nevada and Hawaii at 29%.

“The many religious freedom attacks over the past few years are chilling re-

mindings that without staunch state-level protections for religious freedom, ordinary Americans will suffer, regardless of how supportive the current Administration may be,” said Frank DeVito, the institute’s senior counsel. “Too many Americans have been forced to spend precious time and money litigating issues that should never have gone to court in the first place.”

Kansas ranks as 10th most religious state, while ‘nones’ continue to increase

The number of Kansans who are not affiliated with any religion, sometimes called “nones,” has doubled since 2007, in keeping with a national trend of a less religious but more spiritual America.

However, despite a nearly 15 percentage point decrease in the number of religiously affiliated Kansans in the past 16 years, a September report from the Pew Research Center ranked Kansas as the 10th most religious state in the country.

Christianity remains the dominant religion in Kansas, led by Protestants and Catholics, according to Pew’s religious landscape study that surveyed nearly 37,000 American adults. The national study showed that Christians in particular have stabilized their numbers since 2020, showing they make up anywhere from 60-64% of U.S. adults.



Kansas sits above the national average with 70% of adults identifying with Christianity. But more and more Kansans have rejected religion, favoring spirituality instead.

Atheists, agnostics and “nones” in Kansas have grown from 14% of adults in 2007 to 20% in 2014 and 28% in the most recent survey.

In 2023 and 2024, 60% of Kansans surveyed considered themselves at least somewhat religious, compared to 72% who considered themselves somewhat or very spiritual. Around 30% of adults in Kansas said in the most recent survey that religion is not too or not at all important, and 43% said it was very important. That’s a marked increase from 2007, when 13% said religion was not important and 61% said it was very important.

In 2014, 76% of Kansans said they were religious, and in 2007, 84% of Kansans claimed a religion. Most Kansas Christians in the most recent survey said they were evangelical or mainline Protestant. Catholics now make up about 18% of Kansas’ Christian population, while less than 1% of Kansans practice other religions.

The percentage of Kansans who attend religious services weekly has declined from 48% in 2007 to 34% in 2023 and 2024. Those who seldom or never attend services grew from 21% to 40%.

Pew cautioned trend comparisons with its most recent data because the two previous surveys were conducted by phone, while the 2023-2024 survey was conducted mostly online and on paper.

—Anna Kaminski | Kansas Reflector
Photo: Erica Shires/Getty Images

VOTERS

continued from page 1

Jane Nelson’s agreements with Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia is outlined in memoranda that allow the states to exchange voter registration data with Texas while “adhering to strict confidentiality and cybersecurity protocols.”

“This is a common sense step toward cleaner rolls and better election administration,” Schwab said. “We look forward to establishing agreements with other states in the future.”

Schwab said the agreement is part of a growing trend among states. Any duplicate registrations or instances of potential voter fraud identified through the data swapping would be referred to the appropriate authorities for further investigation, Nelson’s office said.

The agreement comes as some Republican secretaries of state, Schwab included, are resisting turning over sensitive voter information to the U.S. Department of Justice. A spokesperson for the Kansas Secretary of State’s office, Whitney Tempel, said Texas can’t share other states’ data with the federal government. A provision in the agreement prohibits states from sharing data with any third party.

“Secretary Schwab has been steadily adding new tools throughout his tenure to improve voter list maintenance, and this agreement is another step in that ongoing effort,” Tempel said.

—Anna Kaminski | Kansas Reflector

C5 Luncheon will focus on gratitude and the holidays

The November C5Alive POWER Luncheon will be held on the 13th at 11:30am in the private room at The Celtic Fox, 8th & Jackson.

The program will feature a focus on gratitude and the holiday season.

Admission is free, and lunch can be ordered from the menu on site if desired. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to info@C5Alive.org.



“POWER” luncheons are held the 2nd Thursday 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 December 11 (Christmas at the Mall), and January 8, 2026.

C5 also hosts other events, including EASTERFEST, the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair, held on N. Kansas Avenue on the day before Easter.

C5 members 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 may join for \$20. A list of current members and more information is available on the website at www.C5Alive.org, at www.facebook.com/C5Alive, or by calling Lee Hartman at 785-640-6399.

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49 Years of The Nutcracker: Ballet Midwest's Christmas Tradition

Every December, Ballet Midwest brings to life a holiday tradition in Topeka that spans generations: The Nutcracker. For 49 years, audiences young and old have gathered at the Topeka Performing Arts Center (White Concert Hall before that) to be transported into Clara's magical world — a world of toy soldiers, snow-kissed forests, and the Land of the Sweets.

What makes this production so special is not only its timeless story and Tchaikovsky's sweeping score, but how it becomes a bridge across age groups: grandparents, parents, siblings, toddlers, and teenagers can all find joy in it together.

A Tradition Passed Down

For many families in Topeka, the Ballet Midwest Nutcracker is a yearly ritual. Parents who once sat wide-eyed in the audience now bring their own children, pointing out favorite scenes — the Nutcracker's battle with the Mouse King, the swirling snow, the Sugar Plum Fairy — with the same delight they remember from their first viewing. It becomes a kind of cultural inheritance: "Remember when you were that little mouse?" one generation might tease another.

Ballet Midwest underscores that family connection with ticketing options catered to intergenerational attendance. Adults 55+ and youth (under 18) enjoy a reduced ticket price (\$17 when purchased via certain channels) while family-pack options help make attendance easier for households, \$60 for 2 adults and 2 children.



Involving Young Dancers and Community Outreach

One of the most tangible ways Ballet Midwest draws in younger generations is via participation. The company includes local auxiliary dancers in the production — students, novices, and community dancers who get to share the stage. Third generation dancers grace the stage as their families watch in the audience with pride. As these young dancers rehearse and perform alongside seasoned company members, they build confidence, skill, and a real sense of ownership in a community art form.

Beyond the stage, Ballet Midwest hosts outreach efforts such as offering a free Nutcracker performance for area 4th-grade students along with going out in the community to perform small sections of different dances. This means children who might never otherwise see

ballet in person get to experience the magic firsthand — sometimes becoming part of the tradition themselves.

Shared Moments That Echo Across Ages

Certain moments in the performance tend to evoke collective gasps or delighted murmurs from every age group. The transformation of the Christmas tree, giant snowflakes drifting in the forest, the dramatic battle with mice and soldiers — all are theatrical treats that don't require ballet knowledge to enjoy. (To younger attendees, these moments can be dazzling "magic tricks.")

Moreover, many longtime audience members relish subtle changes in each annual staging: new choreography flourishes, fresh costuming, maybe a twist in set design. Comparing year to year becomes a game for returning patrons — "Did you catch the new flower costumes?" — and gives even the oldest attendee a renewed interest.

A Community Standard

Because it's local, the Ballet Midwest Nutcracker feels like "our" production. It's not a touring company passing through. Neighbors and schoolmates often appear in the cast, making the show a community effort. That helps cement a feeling of shared ownership across generations: "I know someone up there!" adds extra excitement even for casual attendees.

Furthermore, the Topeka tradition has stood for so long — first staged in 1977 and continuing year after year — that many multigenerational families have grown up with it. That continuity is powerful: grandparents might say, "I saw this when I was your age," and children respond, "One day I'll bring my kids too."



Ballet Midwest's The Nutcracker is more than a ballet; it's a seasonal ritual combining imagination, music, spectacle, and community. The production succeeds at weaving all these threads together so that grandparents hold hands with tiny toddlers, teenagers cheer for the mouse king, adults reflect on traditions, and new dancers step bravely into the spotlight. In doing so, it reminds us that art is timeless — and that some performances truly belong to every generation.





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Holiday Budgeting 101: Financial Advisors Share Their Top Tips

Holiday season expenses are a given, but with a bit of planning and effort, you can easily include them in your budget. However, amid inflation, you may have concerns about balancing a merry holiday season with good money management.

Certified Financial Planner® professionals are sharing their top tips for keeping finances intact throughout the season.

Prioritize expenses: Examine your winter budget and see how much extra you have left for holiday-specific spending (e.g., gifts, decorations, hosting and travel). A financial advisor can help you adjust for these additional expenses, as well as fit a holiday budget into your long-term plans.

Remember, it's important to keep your expectations flexible so that if you



overspend in one area, you can reduce spending elsewhere. For example, if seeing family is a priority but visiting involves pricey airfare, consider suggesting a Secret Santa so that everyone is responsible for buying just one gift. Or, if you want to bring loved ones together to cel-

ebate but need to trim expenses, consider hosting a potluck. Your guests might love a chance to contribute their favorite dish.

Find deals: Leverage technology tools to find deals when online shopping. Consider using a browser extension to

automatically test coupon codes and ensure you have the lowest price possible or to learn when the price of an item has dropped.

Practice self-care: Give yourself the gift of a stress-free season by setting spending boundaries. This means being guided by your intentions, not peer pressure, when it comes to gift-giving, charitable giving and other areas where spending can become competitive.

Plan for next year: Get a head start on next year's festivities by setting aside a little money from each paycheck into a

high-yield savings account, starting now. Make this an annual habit to help ensure each holiday season can be enjoyed comfortably and to the fullest.

For help examining income and expenses during the holiday season, visit [LetsMakeAPlan.org](https://www.LetsMakeAPlan.org) to find a CFP® professional near you.

It takes planning and care to have a financially healthy holiday season, but entering 2026 without additional debt will make it well worth the effort.

— StatePoint

OCC Drop-Off Sites to Open for Operation Christmas Child

More than 4,500 locations will open to collect Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts for the Samaritan's Purse project. Volunteers are preparing to collect shoebox gifts during National Collection Week, Nov. 17 – 25.

Operation Christmas Child has been collecting and delivering shoebox gifts—filled with school supplies, hygiene items and fun toys—to children worldwide since 1993. Anyone can pack a shoebox! In 2025, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoeboxes to



reach another 11 million children.

Individuals, families, and groups still have time to transform empty shoeboxes into fun gifts. The project partners with local churches across the globe to deliver

these tangible expressions of God's love to children in need. Find a step-by-step guide on the How to Pack a Shoebox webpage.

"Now more than ever, children around the world need to know that God loves them and there is hope," said Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan's Purse. "A simple shoebox gift opens the door to share about the true hope that can only be found in Jesus Christ."

Participants can find the nearest drop-off location and hours of operation as they make plans to drop off their shoebox gifts. The online lookup tool is searchable by City or ZIP code. Signs at each location will identify the drop-off.

Those interested in more information on how Operation Christmas Child is making adjustments during its National Collection Week can visit the organization's webpage for the latest information and answers to Frequently Asked Questions: www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child

Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, seeks to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world and, together with the local church worldwide, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 188 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 160 countries and territories.

For drop-off locations visit www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child.

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LOOKING BACK...

Dear Dave,

I started listening to your show, and following the Baby Steps, three months ago. I'm already seeing great results with my money. Over the weekend, I spent time looking at part-time jobs to help me pay off debt faster and keep moving forward with my finances. I found a few work-from-home ideas that were intriguing. But how can I tell the difference between real opportunities and all the scams featured online and on television?
Bonna

Dear Bonna,

Congratulations on making the decision to gain control of your money! You sound motivated, and I believe it will translate into some really good things. Truth be told, the vast majority of things you see online and in late-night infomercial presentations are scams. I'm not talking about ads for legitimate job hunter sites, I'm talking about the business-in-a-box kind of thing. I know you've probably seen the advertisements that go something like, "My sister-in-law makes \$500 an hour working from home, and you can, too!" These clowns are the worst of the worst. Please, don't waste a second of your time on that kind of stuff. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

There's no shame in picking up a normal, part-time gig a couple of nights a week after work and on weekends. You'd be surprised at how much extra cash you can earn just delivering pizzas,

or working at a local retail store. If that doesn't sound like something you'd enjoy for a little while, you might try thinking of something you love doing, and find a creative way to make some extra money doing that. Your idea might even be something that would allow you

to work from home. I've known lots of folks who make wonderful second incomes by turning a hobby or hidden talent into extra cash.

But the big thing is to just find a real and honest idea to help you make extra money. Remember, short-term sacrifice

for long-term gain. You won't be doing this side gig forever. But whether you're looking for a little help in building your emergency fund or paying off debt, creativity, determination and hard work go a long, long way.

—Dave

By Susan Shumaker
Tax Professional at
The Retirement Team



2025 Year-End Tax Tips

As we approach the end of the year, it's a crucial time to reflect on your financial strategies and make moves that can optimize tax savings for the upcoming year. Proper year-end tax planning can provide significant benefits, ensuring that you are taking full advantage of available deductions, credits, and strategies that can lower your tax burden.

1. Review Your Financial Situation

Before making any decisions, take time to assess your current financial situation. Look at your income, expenses, debts, investments, and retirement contributions. This review will provide clarity on the tax strategies that best suit your needs. Some important questions to consider:

- Are there any significant life changes this year (marriage, divorce, home purchase)?
- Do you expect a large increase or decrease in income next year?
- Have you had any major capital gains or losses this year?

Having this snapshot of your financial health will help you determine which actions will make the most sense for your situation.

2. Maximize Retirement Contributions

One of the easiest ways to reduce taxable income is by maximizing your contributions to retirement accounts. Contributions to traditional IRAs, 401(k)s, and other retirement plans can lower your taxable income for the current year. Contributions are also subject to phase-outs due to income limits, filing status and other factors. Here are some key points to remember:

- 401(k), 403(b), 457 & TSP Contributions: The contribution limit for 2025 is \$23,500 for individuals under 50, and higher for those 50 and older (catch-up contributions). If you haven't reached the limits yet, consider contributing more before the year-end deadline.
- Traditional IRA: The maximum contribution for 2025 is \$7,000 (or

\$8,000 if 50 or older). These contributions are tax-deductible if you meet certain income limits.

- Roth IRA: While Roth IRA contributions do not reduce your taxable income, they can provide tax-free growth in the future. However, you need to meet income eligibility requirements to contribute.

- SEP IRA: If you're self-employed, these accounts allow for larger contributions, potentially up to \$70,000.

3. Tax-Loss Harvesting for Investments

If you've experienced losses in your investment portfolio, year-end is an excellent time to engage in tax-loss harvesting. This strategy involves selling investments that have decreased in value to offset any gains you've realized throughout the year. The IRS allows you to offset capital gains with capital losses, reducing your taxable income.

For example, if you have \$10,000 in capital gains, you can sell investments that have lost value to offset those gains. If your losses exceed your gains, you can deduct up to \$3,000 (\$1,500 if married, filing separately) from your taxable income. Any remaining losses can be carried forward to future years.

4. Review Your Deductions

Many tax deductions are available to reduce your taxable income, but they need to be reviewed and planned for throughout the year. Some common deductions to keep in mind:

- Standard vs. Itemized Deductions: For the 2025 tax year, the standard deduction for single filers is \$15,750 and \$31,500 for married couples filing jointly, and \$23,625 for head of household. Compare this to your total itemized deductions (mortgage interest, medical expenses, charitable donations, etc.) to decide which is more beneficial.

- Additionally, a new temporary bonus deduction of \$6,000 for qualifying seniors (age 65+) is available, but is subject to income phase-outs.

- Charitable Contributions: Donations to qualifying charities can be de-

ducted from your taxable income if you itemize your deductions. If you are near the standard deduction threshold, consider making larger charitable contributions before year-end to push your itemized deductions higher.

- Medical Expenses: If your unreimbursed medical expenses exceed 7.5% of your adjusted gross income (AGI), you may be able to deduct them. Review any out-of-pocket medical costs and receipts to see if you qualify.

- New Higher State & Local Tax Deduction (SALT): This deduction limit has temporarily increased to \$40,000, up from the previous \$10,000 cap, and is subject to income phase-outs and filing status.

- Itemizing Deductions on Your Kansas Tax Return: The State of Kansas has a much lower Standard Deduction compared to the Federal standard deduction. Many people do not realize that you may be able to itemize your deductions on your Kansas tax return, while still claiming the large standard deduction on your Federal return.

5. Plan for Capital Gains Taxes

If you're considering selling an asset such as real estate or stocks, keep in mind the capital gains tax implications. Long-term capital gains (on assets held for over a year) are typically taxed at a lower rate than short-term gains (on assets held for one year or less). Depending on your income level, long-term capital gains could be taxed at 0%, 15%, or 20%, while short-term gains are taxed at ordinary income tax rates.

To reduce your capital gains tax liability, consider holding onto investments for at least a year, particularly if you anticipate being in a lower tax bracket next year.

6. Use Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) and Health Savings Accounts (HSAs)

If you have access to an FSA or HSA, you should consider contributing to these accounts before the year-end deadline to take full advantage of the

■ See RETIREMENT TEAM on page 11



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4 Money Moves to Make Before You Turn 30

By Jim Hanna

For most young adults, your 20s are all about learning — who you are, who you want to be and where you want life to take you. Maybe you just landed your first “real” job, are moving out of your childhood home or working on a degree to consider a new vocation. It’s an exciting era filled with growth and exploration.

As you navigate these big life changes, it’s important to use this time to also consider your financial future. You’re never too young to get your finances in order, and the decisions you make now can help you develop positive habits to build wealth down the road. Whether you’re new to establishing money goals or simply looking to refine your spending and investing habits, making these four key moves in your 20s can help set you up for financial success before you reach your 30th birthday.

1. Set a Monthly Budget: If you’ve just started a new job, you might feel like you’re rolling in cash when those first few paychecks come in! Don’t let your finances get away from you just as you start bringing in an income. Document your essential monthly expenses — such as rent, utilities, groceries, etc. — and add in other expenses important to your lifestyle — such as entertainment, a trip with friends, or a fitness membership. You may have to make tradeoff decisions between priorities month-to-month to be realistic

with your monthly income. Budgeting may sound archaic — yet it can be dynamic and powerful. Knowing where each dollar is going is the first step to prioritizing the items most important to you.

2. Build a Strong Foundation: Once you have a handle on your monthly expenses, you can begin saving for the “what ifs”. Open a high-yield savings account with your bank and pad it until you have 3-6 months’ worth of monthly expenses set aside as a safety net in case of emergencies. You can make this even easier by setting up automatic transfers to regularly move funds from your checking account into this high-yield savings account. At the very least, aim to save a little of each paycheck.

3. Invest Early: Yes, you can start investing in your 20s! An easy place to begin is by maximizing your 401(k) contributions. A 401(k) is a type of retirement savings plan that invests part of your paycheck before taxes are taken out. Maximizing these contributions is especially important if your employer offers any amount of matching funds. It’s so-called “free money” that can snowball into significant wealth over time.

4. Plan Ahead with What’s Left: Your 20s are a good time to consider larger life goals and, once you have that emergency fund in place, begin setting money aside to make them a reality. Do you dream of owning a home someday? Is a destination wedding on your vision board? How about kids? You don’t

have to have all the answers right now, but putting money aside today means you’ll be better prepared and have more flexibility financially when those big moments arrive.

Preparing for the future doesn’t have to be overwhelming. Working with a financial advisor can help you come up with a roadmap that keeps you focused on what’s ahead while allowing you room to explore and grow in the present.

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Beware of This Silent Thief

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



Spend?”

In order to maintain the same lifestyle throughout the average length retirement, you need to be prepared to spend 2.5 times more at the end than what you did at the beginning. That’s just assuming we have average inflation. If inflation is higher, like it has been in recent years, or you enjoy a longer than average retirement you’ll need to spend even more.

While Social Security does increase with inflation each year, the government unfortunately uses what is called CPI-U, which measures what the average

■ See RYAN SHUMAKER on page 11



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Peace is More Than an Absence of Conflict – It's Shalom

By Dwight Widaman

I'm still celebrating in my heart the release of the hostages from Hamas captivity. While I'm so appreciative to President Trump for his tireless work to make that happen, I'm also cautious.

I heard him and many other speakers use the word "peace." If I could whisper in their ears, I would remind them that peace is not just an absence of conflict.

Through my more than two decades of traveling across Israel, Jordan and other countries in the Middle East, my friendships with both Israeli Jews and Christian Gazans and pro-

fessional acquaintances with Muslim Arabs, I can speak with confidence and hands-on experience. While the absence of conflict is a beginning, it cannot be the end.

The Hebrew word for peace is shalom (שלום) and comes from a root word meaning to be whole, to complete, and to be restored. When my Jewish friends say shalom, they're not wishing me to have a calm or quiet day; rather, they're wishing for me a wholeness of body, relationships, and most importantly, of soul – to be in harmony with God. So we see in



Numbers 6:24-26 "The Lord bless you and keep you...and give you peace (shalom)."

In John 14 Jesus references the difference between only an absence of conflict and the deeper meaning of "peace." He says, "Shalom I leave with you; my shalom I give you. I do not

give to you as the world gives." In John 20 Jesus says "Shalom aleichem" – Peace be with you. This is more than a greeting. It is a bold declaration of restored relationship and that divine wholeness. Jesus wants us to experience the REAL shalom, the shalom that brings us into harmony with the creator of the universe.

The peace the world offers is only a counterfeit. So while world leaders speak of peace today (and we can wholeheartedly celebrate that and what it means for the region), true "shalom" is something only God can provide.

The Alarming Decline of Christianity in the U.S.



**CLINT
DECKER**

President and
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Speaking Truth

Since the 1940s and 50s America has been on a slow, but steady decline of Christianity. When one looks at all the metrics it is troubling. Stats on those who believe in God, identify as Christians, pray regularly, read their Bible, church membership, church attendance, a Christian worldview and on and on. Every year we hit new historical lows. All this despite amazing movements of God that have taken place. And even though we have massive mega churches, incredible Christian ministries, highly organized Christian political activism, anointed and powerful pastors and evangelists. Nothing has been able to reverse the decline.

Are you familiar with Isaac Newton's 3rd law of motion? It states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Since Christianity has been on the decline, what has been the equal and opposite reaction? Nearly every data point surrounding morality, crime and mental health is concern-

ingly high. Divorce, suicide, alcoholism, drug abuse, abortion, depression, sexual immorality and more. There has also been a steady rise of the "nones." Alan Cooperman, the director of religion research at the Pew Research Center commented, "We've had rising shares of people who don't identify with any religion — so-called 'nones' — and declining shares who identify as Christian, in all parts of the country, in all parts of the population, by ethnicity and race, among both men and women, and among people at all levels of the educational spectrum." And deeply troubling is the surge of interest in the occult. Pew research found there are historical levels of Americans identifying as Wiccan or Pagan, additionally, 30% of adults consult astrology, tarot cards or fortune tellers.

The slow decline of Christianity for the last 60+ years is alarming. The deadly slide continues the expanding moral decay of America with each passing year. The problems we face are not from the broader culture alone, but also from the American church. Here are four things I am calling the church toward...

1. Call out sin and evil. "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them." (Eph-

esians 5:11) Rather than the church condoning poisonous immorality and injustice through silence or outright approval, the church must boldly expose it and call people to repentance.

2. Call for more than a profession. "Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning..." (Exodus 2:23-24) The church must go beyond leading people to agree to a set of gospel truths. Rather, we must guide



precious souls to humble themselves before Christ the King in sorrowful repentance and urgent faith, while earnestly leading them to cry out to Almighty God for the salvation of their soul.

One biblical encyclopedia put it this way, "The concept of crying out for salvation is deeply rooted...the human recognition of sin, the need for divine intervention, and the hope for deliverance. Throughout Scripture, the act of crying out to God is portrayed as a sincere plea for help, often arising from a

place of desperation, repentance, or faith."

3. Call for change. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17) Instead of the church living like the world, it must live a life of spiritual and moral transformation, that is distinct from the world.

4. Call for a life of holiness. "...you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God." (Numbers 15:40) To be holy is to be separate. The church must walk in complete surrender and holy obedience to our Lord's commands, because of love for Him. Then consequently, the church will walk in holiness of heart and life, while being a shining light in a culture of darkness.

A prayer for you – Lord God, I pray for our nation, that we would turn from our sinful ways. Not just those outside the church, but inside too. For collectively, we have allowed such great evil to grip our land. Forgive us O God, and come save us. Save our country, O Lord! In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings. Share your comment at cdecker@greatawakenings.org and follow his blog at clintdecker.blogspot.com.

Do Palestinian Lives Matter?

By Dr. Michael Brown

Does the world really care about the plight of the Palestinians? Or is their suffering simply a convenient weapon with which to batter the Jewish state?

Regardless of how and why roughly 700,000 Arabs living in Palestine left their homes as a result of the 1947–1948 war against the founding of Israel, there is no debate as to the fact that they were largely left without a homeland. **That's because they were not absorbed as refugees by the surrounding Arab countries.** This is in stark contrast with the roughly 850,000 Jews who were expelled from the Arab and Muslim countries in which they had lived and were largely absorbed by the fledgling state of Israel.

Rather, quite intentionally, the Palestinian refugee crisis—which is virtually the only multi-generational refugee crisis in the world today—was seen as a potent publicity tool against Israel.

As stated in 1952 by Sir Alexander Galloway, former head of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, in an address to the Foreign Relations Committee of Congress:

“The Arab States do not want to solve the refugee problem. They want to keep it as an open sore, as an affront to the United Nations and as a weapon against Israel. Arab leaders don't care whether the refugees live or die.”

Similarly, on March 31, 1977, in the

Dutch newspaper *Trouw*, PLO leader Zuheir Mohsen said:

“The Palestinian people does not exist. The creation of a Palestinian state is only a means for continuing our struggle against the state of Israel for our Arab unity. In reality today there is no difference between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. Only for political and tactical reasons do we speak today about the existence of a Palestinian people, since Arab national interest demand that we posit the existence of a distinct 'Palestinian people' to oppose Zionism.”

Lest you think that is a stray, non-representative quote, it was the former Syrian Prime Minister, Khaled al-Azm, who wrote in his posthumously published *Memoirs of the Syrian Prime Minister (Arabic: Mudhakkirat Khaled al-Azm)*:

“Since 1948, it is we who demanded that the refugees return to their homes... while it is we who made them leave. We brought disaster upon these refugees, by inviting them and bringing pressure on them to leave... We have rendered them dispossessed... We have accustomed them to begging... We have participated in lowering their moral and social level... Then we exploited them in executing crimes of murder, arson, and throwing bombs upon... men, women and children—all this in the service of political purposes.”

Even current Palestinian Authority

President Mahmoud Abbas stated in 1976 in the official PLO journal *Falastin al-Thawra*:

“The Arab armies entered Palestine to protect the Palestinians from the Zionist tyranny, but instead they abandoned them, forced them to emigrate and to leave their homeland, imposed upon them a political and ideological blockade and threw them into prisons similar to the ghettos in which the Jews used to live in Eastern Europe. The Arab states succeeded in scattering the Palestinian people and in destroying their unity.” (I encourage all readers to verify the accuracy of these quotes. They are easily confirmed.)

Not only so, but to this moment, there are hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in refugee camps in countries like Lebanon and Syria. In other words, rather than becoming citizens of these neighboring countries—countries that speak the same language, share the same culture, and largely practice the same religion—these people have been denied citizenship and equality.

Where is the world outrage over *this*? Where are the protests?

Worse still, this systemic oppression of the Palestinian people by the larger Arab and Muslim world was part of an intentional strategy outlined in Resolution 462 of the Arab League Political Committee on September 23, 1952.

The resolution stated, in direct oppo-



sition to UNRWA's early efforts at refugee resettlement and integration,

“The political committee advised Arab governments to postpone efforts to settle Palestinian refugees and called on the United Nations to implement resolutions concerning the return of Palestinian refugees to Palestine and to compensate them for damage and property losses.” (This was largely reinforced in the Casablanca Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States, issued on September 11, 1965.)

Sadly, to this moment, this crisis is exacerbated by the false hope of a so-called right of return in which all descendants of the original Arab refugees of the 1947–1948 war against Israel are deemed refugees. How utterly misleading and how mercilessly cruel. (For a detailed study of this issue by two formerly leftist Israeli authors, see *The War of Return: How Western Indulgence of the Palestinian Dream Has Obstructed the Path to Peace*. For the record, the number of so-called refugees is now nearly 6

million.)

That's why it's no surprise that, when Hamas terrorists execute unarmed Gazan civilians in broad daylight in the aftermath of the Trump-initiated ceasefire, the same world that cried for months “Genocide!” has been largely silent.

This raises the question: “*Do Palestinian lives really matter?*” (More broadly, in light of the terrible suffering of Arab peoples in countries like Syria and Yemen as the result of brutal civil wars, some would ask, “Do Arab lives really matter?”)

Of course, saying this does not make Israel exempt from criticism, nor does it lessen the very real suffering of the people of Gaza.

But it does raise the question of whether the world really cares about the suffering of the Palestinians or whether they are merely a convenient tool with which to bash the State of Israel—as has been the case now for more than 70 years.

Kansas City's stadium fumble: Denver shows how to play by free-market rules

Jackson County residents voted overwhelmingly to recall County Executive Frank White Jr. in a historic election—the first successful recall in county history. The message was loud and clear: voters are tired of politicians wasting their money.

For months, Kansas City leaders have fought over who should pay for new stadiums for the Kansas City Royals and Kansas City Chiefs. Taxpayers were supposed to pick up the tab through higher taxes or state-backed financing schemes. That's what triggered the backlash—and it's exactly what's wrong with economic development in both Kansas and Missouri. Frank White also had to deal with the years-long fallout of property tax spikes.

The government shouldn't be in the stadium business.

Jackson County voters rejected a new sales-tax increase in the Spring of 2024 to fund the stadium projects. That vote

should have ended the conversation, but politicians on both sides of the state line keep trying to bring the issue back. State of Missouri officials threw their proposal into the ring, hoping it would prompt Kansas City, MO, or Jackson County officials to do likewise. While Kansas lawmakers are eyeing STAR bonds to lure the Chiefs or Royals westward, they extended the deadline earlier this summer.

That idea has been tried before—and it fails almost every time. Kansas has already poured more than a billion dollars into STAR bond projects, yet the state's own audits show that most have failed to meet revenue or job expectations. STAR bonds aren't “self-financing.” They simply divert future tax revenue that would've gone to schools, roads, and public safety. It's debt dressed up as development. When the government picks winners and losers, taxpayers always lose.

If lawmakers want proof that there's a better way, they only need to look west—to Denver.

The Denver Broncos recently announced plans for a privately funded retractable-roof stadium and mixed-use district at the historic Burnham Yard, just south of downtown. The Walton-Penner ownership group—one of the wealthiest in professional sports—is financing the project with private investment, not taxpayer money. The new facility will include retail, entertainment, and community spaces designed to expand Denver's economy through entrepreneurship and voluntary exchange, not government subsidies.

This isn't theory. It's happening. And it completely undercuts the argument that public financing is “necessary” to keep or upgrade sports teams. The Broncos ownership group has shown that private capital can fund world-class facilities, create jobs, and drive growth without forcing residents to pay higher taxes or sacrifice public services.

The Kansas City region could have followed the same path—but politicians,

from both parties and both states, couldn't resist meddling. Instead of trusting markets to work, they tried to use other people's money to buy economic development. The results are familiar: angry voters, wasted resources, and little to show for it.

Proponents of stadium subsidies like to claim that these projects create jobs and boost tourism, but decades of research from the Brookings Institution, Cato Institute, and George Mason University's Mercatus Center show the opposite. Stadiums don't increase regional income or employment; they just shift spending from one area to another. A family that spends \$200 at the ballpark isn't spending that \$200 at a local restaurant, theater, or store. The pie doesn't get bigger—just rearranged.

If a stadium project truly makes financial sense, private investors will line up to fund it. If it doesn't, politicians shouldn't gamble taxpayer money trying to make it work. The best way to grow

Kansas's economy is to reduce spending, cut taxes, and remove regulations so entrepreneurs—not politicians—drive development. Every dollar that stays in private hands does more for growth than a government-backed bond ever will.

Frank White's recall wasn't just a local political shake-up. It's a warning to every policymaker in Topeka and Jefferson City...and Overland Park and Kansas City: voters are done paying for stadiums that don't pay off. Instead of fighting over who can offer the biggest subsidy, Kansas and Missouri should focus on what really works—responsible budgeting, lower taxes, and a stable business climate that rewards innovation and hard work.

Denver shows that when private enterprise takes the field, everyone wins. Kansas City shows what happens when the government calls the plays. The lesson is clear: it's time to get the government out of the stadium business.

—Vance Ginn, *Kansas Policy Institute*



Advice for Adoptive Parents

People often ask me what they need to know to successfully adopt and parent older children. Well, I don't have a magic answer (sorry, but I really don't think there is one), but I do have some suggestions to make it easier.

Be Prepared to Change

When an older child joins the family, we need to learn what her needs are and how to meet them. I don't mean simply reading about the child's history or diagnoses, I mean finding out what the child needs from us, the parents. We should ask, "What does this child need for me to be her mom in a way that's going to make her life better and help her become part of the family?"

Too often, we go to conferences and therapists hoping to discover how to change our child's behavior. I'm the first to admit that the behaviors can be challenging (all right, they can be downright awful) and hard to live with. So, when I go to workshops to learn about how to manage a certain disorder, I reframe offered strategies to look at what I can do differently. I ask, "How can I change myself to make it easier for him to comply? What am I doing to make it easier for my child to live in this family?" I have to change myself to become the mom my child needs me to be (and I mean needs, not wants).

The wonderful part of this is that my kids don't need me to be perfect or right all the time. They just need me to be trying really hard, and they need me to be malleable, and they need me to have realistic expectations about what they can do at this point in time.

I'm not suggesting you have to change your values or core being; that all stays the same and is the foundation for everything you offer your child. But your skills and your approach will have to be tweaked for each child, because what each needs from you will be different from what the others need or from what you expect him to need. It's a constantly changing process. The payoff is that we can end up being more grounded, capable, loving, and (for some) more spiritual people than we ever dreamed we could be. That's partly why I have so many children; I keep trying to be a better person. But as my children remind me, "You're not there yet, Mom."

Develop Patience

An important change for many parents is the need to develop more patience. That has been hard for me (I really was made to run an army or a maximum security prison, or maybe rule some planet—anything where people would give me total and immediate obedience), but I make myself remember that my children need me to wait while they learn to behave and to belong. After all, my children waited years before they got the permanence and stability of their own family, so it's only fair that I wait for them to learn how to live with us. Parents have told me, "It's been six months, and we're still having these problems." If the child is five or ten years old when he is adopted, six months is a drop in the bucket. The truth is our children are likely to have difficulties throughout the time we're raising them.

Patience also means developing a broader view. Although that's hard when we're in crisis, we still need to work on it. We need to say, "I can wait until you feel some kind of love for me. I'm not going to go anywhere. I can wait the rest of your life." It's not so much patience on a day-to-day basis, but rather a lifetime of patience. For us—as it was for our children—waiting is just part of the adoption package.

Love Kids for Who They Are Now

I have heard so many people say, "I love who my son is going to be in five years. I can see so much potential." Can you imagine what that feels like to the son? It sounds like you love another child—a future son who may never exist.

Not long ago, friends of mine adopted a brother and sister, ages six and nine. They were experienced adoptive parents with 17 other children. Still, these new

children had challenges my friends hadn't dealt with before and the initial months were rocky while their new daughter fought against connecting with them.

One morning, my friend Paula called me to report, "Angela spent all night long carving 'Mom is a _____' and 'F_____ Mom' and other things about me all over the house." (They have a wood beam house with lots of space for deep carving—they should have known better.)

I sympathized with my friend and asked how she was going to address this problem. She responded, "There's no problem. She spelled every word right!"

Clearly she missed the point, so I asked her if there was something else going on here. After thinking for a moment, Paula added, "You're right. She must not have attention deficit disorder—that took her all night! I'm so proud of her."

I wasn't done trying to get to the bottom of this episode, so I asked her to look again at what had happened. After a few silent moments of deep thought, Paula answered excitedly, "You're right again. She carved 'Mom,' not 'Paula.' She's bonding! How could I have missed something so important!" I finally realized that it was me, not Paula, who had missed what was important here.

Loving our children for who they are now also means knowing and valuing their strengths. They have so many labels and diagnoses that it can be easy to forget that they are so much more than that. At a NACAC workshop I went to recently, the speakers talked about the gifts—like creativity and spontaneity—that go with attention deficit disorder. My oldest son, who has severe fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), has gifts of spirituality and forgiveness that are deeper and more sincere than I have ever witnessed before. I sometimes think that FAS—even though it took a lot away from him—gave him a

level of kindness and generosity of spirit that is awe inspiring.

Focus on Commitment

In the early years of an older child adoption, we need to shift our focus from love and trust to commitment. Many of our children have no reason to trust anyone and they don't know what parental love feels like. Their experience tells them that the minute they let down their guard, everything is going to fall apart. Adoptive parents need to prove this is the end of the road. We have to be there for them again and again. What sometimes feels like your child's inability to learn from her mistakes is really her need to be shown that you are rock steady. Even when we don't like our children and they don't love us, we must remain committed to their place in our family.

We also have to earn the attachment we expect of them. If you have a newborn, you earn attachment and love in the first year. Your baby squeals and fusses, is an awfully demanding little nuisance, but you take care of him and nurture him despite sleep deprivation and

frustration and the total destruction of your social life.

Older children need to feel the same level of commitment. They may not always recognize love, and they aren't always ready to offer it, and in the early stages of an older child adoption, the child may mistake your commitment for stubbornness or he may think you're just plain weird. But it's commitment, not love or trust, that will get us through the days when nothing else is working for anyone.

Embrace Adoption for Life

Adoption is forever. Where I live, many adoption professionals are going through a phase of telling children that they are going to be placed with their "growing up family" rather than with their "forever" family. The professionals fear that the adoptions won't last. I still call adoptive families "forever families" because that's what it's about. Children may come and go from our lives for different reasons, but it doesn't mean the end of an adoption.

At 15, my oldest son, Jason, was a plague on humanity; he set fires, stole cars (and crashed them because he didn't

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know how to drive), pulled break and enters, and was very aggressive with his much younger brother. The aggression made him too dangerous to live in our home, and we weren't sure what to do. Fortunately, his behaviors caused the law to intervene and the courts kindly offered him an alternative place to live, but only for a short time. After he was released from the detention center, I had to decide if he could safely come home. I was really fearful for my younger son, so I arranged for Jason to stay with his birth grandmother. That was the best thing I ever did.

However, not everyone agreed, and they were quick to tell me so. Professionals and friends accused us of throwing our son out and "dissolving" the adoption. I pointed out that we hadn't broken up the family at all. We paid child support to his grandmother, my son phoned home nightly, and visited often. We never thought he was out of our family; he was just out of the house. And it never occurred to him that he wasn't ours. After he moved through this difficult stage, he bounced in and out of the house until he was finally successful with his independent adulthood. I never worried about losing Jason, and he never worried about



losing us. He is always and forever my son, but that was the process we needed to go through with him to keep everyone safe.

When these situations come up in your family, remember that your commitment is forever. Your adoption, your family, isn't going to end just because you have a crisis or because your child needs more help than you can give her at home. You are going to be the grandparents of your children's children. You are there for the good and bad—forever. Maybe our kids can't always live with us, but it doesn't mean we have to leave them.

Treasure Other Adoptive Parents

I have deep respect for adoptive families because most of us cope very well with the transformation from a typical family to a family that daily has to deal with challenges that our friends and fam-

ilies only read about. Adoptive parents start out as pretty normal people, and then we adopt older children who dramatically change our lives. We have to give up being like other families, and we have to grieve that loss and focus on what we have gained.

And what have we gained? Well, how about a universe full of colors and richness and beauty. Learning to see the world through the eyes of a child with FAS means learning to see beyond the limits, learning to see the possible in all things. And learning to see the world through the eyes of a child who has been hurt beyond measure means learning to value all that is good and right and decent about ourselves and our lives. We all need to honor each other and value the knowledge and skills and joy and success that we have to offer.

To honor and value our families, we should do things like go to the NACAC conference. After all, adoption isn't our hobby, it's our lives. We need to share time with others traveling the same road. When we do, we go home to our children as stronger and more committed parents. For me, time with members of my adoption culture (as at NACAC), where we can share and strengthen one another, is no luxury; it's essential.

ment accounts are taxable, so it's essential to manage the timing and amount of your withdrawals to minimize your tax exposure.

One key strategy is to draw down taxable accounts first to allow your tax-deferred accounts (like IRAs and 401(k)s) to continue growing tax-free for as long as possible. You may also want to spread out your withdrawals to avoid pushing yourself into a higher tax bracket.

8. Consider Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs):

You can donate up to \$108,000 from your IRA directly to a qualified charity. You must be 70 ½ or older, and the QCD can be used to satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). The IRA custodian must send the funds directly to the charity, and you do not pay tax on the distribution. Please consult with a knowledgeable tax or financial advisor to see if you can take advantage of this tax saving strategy.

9. Roth IRA Conversions: Converting a Traditional IRA to a Roth IRA can have many tax benefits, but also potential tax consequences. You should always consult with a qualified

professional to assist you.

Year-end tax and financial planning is an essential part of maintaining a healthy financial situation. By reviewing your financial health, maximizing retirement contributions, engaging in tax-loss harvesting, and making strategic decisions regarding deductions, you can possibly reduce your tax burden for the year. It's important to be proactive and make the most of the opportunities available before the year closes out. Taking time to plan now can set you up for a successful and financially efficient year ahead. While many of these strategies can be implemented independently, it's always wise to consult with a knowledgeable tax or financial advisor to help you navigate the ever-changing tax laws.

Call The Retirement Team at 785-478-7808 to schedule a complimentary, no obligation consultation.

The Retirement Team is a team of financial professionals 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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RYAN SHUMAKER

continued from page 7

price increases are for a general basket of goods and services of all urban consumers. The government also tracks CPI-E, which measures what the inflation those 62+ are experiencing on the general basket of goods and services they buy. CPI-E has been much higher than CPI-U and that means that Social Security payments haven't increased as much as what prices have for those that are receiving them.

The government could easily fix this problem and use CPI-E, but thus far have chosen not to likely because it would mean higher payouts from a Social Security system that is already facing financial issues. Even if this change was made, many would still lament that oftentimes most of their Social Security pay increases are eaten away by Medicare cost increases.

While some pensions do have COLAs or cost of living adjustments, they typically have the same issue as Social Security does in using the wrong measure of inflation that doesn't keep up with the price increases retirees face. Most pensions don't have this feature, though, and that means that every single day the amount you receive buys less and less.

Inflation is the silent thief of retirement. Nearly half of retirees in a recent study done by Kiplinger reported their expenses are higher than expected. Having a plan to have ever increasing in-

come to defeat ever increasing prices is critical if you don't want to experience an ever decreasing lifestyle. Something that costs \$100 today will cost \$250 at the end of your retirement. To put it another way, \$100 at the end of your retirement will only buy the same as what \$40 does today. It is probably scary to think about having to cut your spending by 60% over the course of retirement. That is what you'll have to do, though, if you maintain the exact same income throughout.

Don't let inflation steal your retirement. Schedule a complimentary meeting with our team at Retirement Portfolios by visiting RetireFromTaxes.com or calling 785-330-9292 and together we'll create a plan to help you overcome inflation and maintain the lifestyle you've worked so hard to achieve throughout retirement.

Other great articles about retirement, investing, and tax reduction can be seen at RetireFromTaxes.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. Please consult a financial professional for further information. Investment advisory services offered through Retirement Portfolios, LLC.

Call Ryan at 785-330-9292.

RETIREMENT TEAM

continued from page 7

tax savings.

- **FSA:** Flexible Spending Accounts allow you to set aside pre-tax dollars for healthcare expenses. However, many FSAs operate on a "use-it-or-lose-it" basis, so it's important to use the funds before the year ends. Check your balance and make sure you've planned for any remaining eligible expenses.

- **HSA:** Health Savings Accounts offer tax deductions, tax-free growth, and tax-free withdrawals for qualified medical expenses. For 2025, the contribution limits are \$4,300 for individuals and \$8,550 for family coverage. If you're 55 or older, and not enrolled in Medicare, you can contribute an additional \$1,000 as a catch-up contribution. Unused funds in an HSA roll over year after year, making this a valuable tool for long-term savings.

7. Tax-Efficient Withdrawal Strategies

If you are retired or nearing retirement, consider your strategy for drawing down retirement funds. Withdrawals from traditional retire-

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Day of the Dead Festival, Featured Artists, other events on tap in Nov.

First Friday Nov. 7th will start in the morning and end around 9pm with music in Redbud Park. This month's theme is the **Day of the Dead festival**. Enjoy live music, low rider car show, authentic food, face painting, art activities and more! New this year at the NOTO Arts Center Courtyard, EL Mercado/Munch Market- enjoy vendors with a variety of ethnic food available to enjoy!

November featured Artist at Amused is **Lois VanLiew** with a collection of Monoprints.

The Monoprints in the Nuance series were originated either on a litho press or using a hand-held Baron tool. Layers of printing ink colors and textures were applied onto heavy Rives BFK print paper. Sometimes cutout images were also transferred to the imagery on the paper. Then drawings were added as needed to

the layering, with Prismacolor pencil. Using repeatable images designates the work "Monoprint" whereas creating a one of a kind only, designates the work as a "Monotype."

A Night of R&B – The Fedora Edition takes place at Tonix & Tunes Lounge, 820 N. Kansas Avenue on Friday, November 8th. Live DJs all night long: DJ Candy & DJ3, plus a special live performance from rising R&B artist Meant2B you won't want to miss! Dress to impress — fedoras highly encouraged.

Other Upcoming Events include:
ROG & THE RAM JETS LIVE – Nov. 1, 6pm, Doughboyz Pizza, 1312 N. Kansa Ave. Roger Randel and his



squad will be performing. Come enjoy a family friendly jam session inside at Doughboyz! Roger is the Pastor at Family of God Church and can be found on 97.7 FM Radio in Topeka, KS

HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA – Nov. 1, 10-3, Woodshed Event Ctr. 1901 N. Kansa Ave. An eclectic collection of unique vendors & food vendors & trucks, a full bar, several holiday decor & gifting options, & more, for a festive day of merry fun

WOODSHED HOLIDAY MARKET – Nov. 9, 16 & Dec. 14, 10-3, The Woodshed Event Ctr. Food trucks, Market Bingo, free prizes

GOBBLE WOBBLE KAM III – Nov. 26, 6pm, The Woodshed Event Center. Two rooms of music.

TOPEKA SPIRIT FAIR – Dec. 6-7, 10-5, The Woodshed Event Center. A two-day indoor symposium, with optional outdoor activities (weather permitting), dedicated to holistic wellness and personal development. This event will feature workshops led by recognized local practitioners, designed to engage participants in practices promoting mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. All are welcome. Vendors and Food Trucks. \$3 admission. www.geminivibeskansas.com

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FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

GARY'S FARM FEST — Sep. 26-Nov. 1, Fri. - Sat. - Sun., 5991 17th St. Grantville, KS. 8 Acre Corn Maize, Pig Races, Corn Pit, 2 Jumping Pillows, Giant Slides, Animals, and more. Home Made Curly Fries, Hamburgers, Brats, Turkey Legs, Apple Cider Slushy and Fireworks every Friday at 9pm!. garysberries.com, garysfarmfest.com; 785-246-0800

WEST RIDGE LIVE — Every Thursday from 6:30-8:30, food court at Westridge Mall. Oct. 9: Urban Safari; 16th: Villains Dance; 30th: Switch in Time; Nov. 6: The Mix; 13th: Alter Ego; 20th: Undercover. While you listen, grab food and drinks from Iron Rail Brewing, Ta Co, and more, serving from 6:30-8:30 PM.

HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA — Nov. 1, 10-3, Woodshed Event Ctr. 1901 N. Kansas Ave. An eclectic collection of unique vendors & food vendors & trucks, a full bar, several holiday decor & gifting options, & more, for a festive day of merry fun

CHRISTIAN TEEN RALLY - Nov. 1, 6-8pm, Grace Community Church in Overbrook, 310 E. 8th Street, Overbrook, KS. A Christian youth rally called "Over-Time, Praise, Worship & Prayer!" is a free event open to all students in 6th through 12th grades. Their theme is "Let's Start a Revival After Hours!"

ROG & THE RAM JETS LIVE — Nov. 1, 6pm, Doughboyz Pizza, 1312 N. Kansas Ave. Roger Randel and his squad will be performing. Come enjoy a family friendly jam session inside at Doughboyz! Roger is the Pastor at Family of God Church and can be found on 97.7 FM Radio in Topeka, KS!

CHILI & CINNAMON ROLL FUNDRAISER — Nov. 1, 11:30am-1:30pm, 4101 Sw 15th. Enjoy a delicious meal and take part in exciting activities, including live music and a silent auction. • Chili and Cinnamon Roll: \$12 • Cinnamon Rolls: \$5. Meal Orders: Walk-ins are welcome, but you can pre-order online at www.shepherdscentertopeka.org. Come out to support the Shepherd's Center of Topeka, the city's senior non-profit organization!

240 CHRISTMAS TREES & ORNAMENT DISPLAY — Nov. 1-Jan. 1, 10am-4pm Mon-Sat., & 1-5pm Sun. at Territorial Capital Museum, 640 E. Woodson, Leocompton. Over 240 Christmas Trees decorated in antique, Victorian, vintage and theme décor — including turn of the century and WW II era decorations, a barbwire tree and feather trees. Also tour Constitution Hall, a National Landmark 785-887-6148. lecomptonkansas.com

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS - Nov. 2, 2am. Don't forget to set your clocks back!

ELECTION DAY — Nov. 4. Don't forget to vote!

TOPEKA JOB FAIR — Nov. 4, 12:30-3pm, Crestview Comm. Ctr, 4801 SW Shunga Dr. JOB SEEKERS — Get ready by watching short + fun videos by a former recruiter at: <https://www.stepupjobfairs.com/job-seekers>. EMPLOYERS — Reserve a booth at <https://www.stepupjobfairs.com/employers>

ING NETWORKING GROUP — Nov. 5, 11:30am at Big Biscuit. All are welcome, free to attend, order from menu if desired.

TOPEKA BUSINESS FAIR — Nov. 6, 5-7pm, Happy Basset Barrel House, 510 SW 49th St. Meet small business people from the Topeka area and visit their booths. Food and drinks available. A portion of

food sales will be donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities. <http://topeka-business-network.com>

HOLIDAY OPEN BARN - Nov. 7-9, Historic Taylor Barn, 1827 E 1150 Rd, Lawrence. Listen to holiday music, and shop from 30+ local artists.

BREWSTER PLACE HOLIDAY BAZAAR — Nov. 7, 10-4, Cultural Arts Center, 901-B Sw 31st St.

CAR SEAT CHECKUP EVENT — Nov. 8, 9am-12pm, Shawnee Heights Fire Station #5, 53rd & California. Allow 20-30 minutes for each seat.

AD ASTRA MODELING CLUB FIFTH ANNUAL SHOW — Nov. 8, Fairlawn Plaza Mall. Adult Entry Fee \$10.00 for up to two entries \$1.00 for each additional entry. Juniors Free. Contest categories: Aircraft, Automotive, Armor & AFVs, Juniors, Figures, Dioramas, Spacecraft & Sci-Fi, Naval, Humor, Legos. Contact Paul Shafer at pshafetrinity@yahoo.com Contest Chair: Byron Black bwade.black@gmail.com

SUNFLOWER SALUTE TOPEKA VETERANS PARADE & COURAGE CELEBRATION — Nov. 8, 11am, Downtown Topeka & Kansas State Capitol. Military vehicles, inflatables, live music, free meals for veterans.

COMMUNITY VETERANS DAY DINNER — Nov. 9, 12pm, Mt Calvary Lutheran Church, Wamego, intersection of Highways 99 and 24. You are also invited to attend worship services at 8:00 or 10:30. Special guests will be all the veterans, and those serving in the Honor Flight trips to the National WWII Memorial in Washington, DC. Dr. Ron Highland is the guest speaker. He served in Korea as a platoon leader during the US Pueblo Naval Ship capture. During this conflict he was shot and after his recovery helped write the plans for the release of the captives.

WOODSHED HOLIDAY MARKET — Nov. 9, 16 & Dec. 14, 10-3, The Woodshed Event Ctr. Food trucks, Market Bingo, free prizes

MELVERN RIVERFRONT PARKS & TRAILS RIBBON CUTTING — Nov. 10, North Pine Street, Melvern, KS. New Outdoor Nature Education center. Sign up for hundreds of dollars in give aways! Raffle tickets to purchase for BEEF, Pelican COOLER, canvas lawn chair BACKPACK. Be sure to walk the trails; for walking impaired there will be rides provided on this day.

C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON — Nov. 13, 11:30-1, Celtic Fox, 8th & Jackson. Focus will be on gratitude and the holidays. Free admission. Meals available from 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, Dec. 11, 11:30-1, at Westridge Mall. Featuring a Christmas devotional and fun games!

CHRISTIAN SINGLES' FALL PARTY - Nov. 15, 6-9pm, Overbrook Bible Church, 719 Western Heights Drive, Overbrook, KS. This event is free and is for men and women ages 18-118 who are single, divorced, or widowed. RSVP is appreciated, but not required. To RSVP, or for more info, please email: ChristianSinglesKS@gmail.com. There is a strict no alcohol, no tobacco, and no recreational drugs policy.

FULL CIRCLE FIX-IT CLINIC — Nov. 15, 10-1, 2303 SW College Ave. Bring your broken or damaged lamps, fans, electronics, clothing, and other small items for repair help from handy volunteers! Or sign up to be a volunteer and share your skills while keeping items out of the landfill. Repairs are free, with donations ac-

cepted to support Full Circle Sustainability

CHILI FEED — Nov. 15, 3-6pm, First Baptist, 3033 SW MacVicar. \$5 each, kids under 3 eat free.

ING NETWORKING GROUP — Nov. 19, 11:30am at Skinny's. All welcome, free to attend, order from menu

KAW VALLEY WOODCARVERS ART SHOW AND SALE — Nov. 22, 9-5, IBEW Building, 1620 NW Gage. Adm. \$5; children under 12 free. Learn to Carve every 2nd Sat. 9-3 every month. Call 785-383-8497 or 785-438-7331

CHOCOLATE NUTCRACKER — Nov. 22, 3pm & 7:30pm, TPAC. Tickets at TPAC box office

KANSAS MUSEUM OF HISTORY GRAND REOPENING — Nov. 22, 9-5, 6425 SW 6th Ave. Featuring musical performances, roaming entertainers, food trucks, and plenty of photo opportunities. kshs.education@ks.gov

KIWANIS CLUB PANCAKE FEED & AUCTION — Nov. 22, 7-11am, Lowman UMC, 4101 SW 15th St. Also Bread braid sales for Christmas delivery. \$8 at the door.

SLI FESTIVAL OF TREES — Nov. 25- Dec. 6, 10am-6pm, Fairlawn Plaza Mall. Wonderfully decorated trees and a silent auction.

TOPEKA BIG BAND'S HOLIDAY SHOW — Nov. 25, 5:30pm, 1011 SW Cottonwood Ct. An evening of festive tunes, big band favorites, and plenty of holiday cheer

GOBBLE WOBBLE KAM III — Nov. 26, 6pm, The Woodshed Event Center. Two rooms of music.

TARC's WINTER WONDERLAND — Nov. 26-Dec. 31, Sun-Thu: 6-9pm; Fri-Sat 6-10. Lake Shawnee, 3435 SE East Edge Rd. View dazzling holiday light displays, featuring one million lights, while winding through a 2-mile scenic drive. Advanced Tickets are available: TARC, 2701 SW Randolph. 785.506-8720. winterwonderlandtopeka.com. Closed to public Dec. 1, 8 & 15

KNIGHTS OF LIGHTS HOLIDAY FESTIVAL — Nov. 28 — Dec. 31, Fridays & Saturdays — 5:30pm — 10pm; Sundays — 5:30pm — 9pm; PLUS December 23 & 24, 26-31st; AND New Year's Eve Party 10:00pm — 1:00am. Stroll through a Renaissance wonderland with lights, shopping, food, entertainment, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and more! Glow in the dark putt putt, train rides, & snowball fights! (Free tickets available from Metro Voice for advertisers & donors: email voice@cox.net)

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY VENDORS MARKET — Nov. 29, 10am-3pm, Happy Basset Barrel House. Start your holiday shopping the local way!

SEASON OF LIGHTS SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY — Nov. 29, 4-7pm, Downtown Wamego. Carriage rides and hot chocolate too.

ING NETWORKING GROUP — Dec. 3, 11:30am at Dough Boy's Pizza, 1312 N. Kansas Ave.. All welcome, free to attend, order from menu if desired.

BREAKFAST IN BETHLEHEM — Dec. 6, 9-11am, Christ Lutheran Church, 3509 SW Burlingame. A free Christmas event for all ages! Sit back and enjoy food and time in fellowship, or participate in our interactive Christmas story stations. Pancake Breakfast, Coffee & Cocoa, All-New Activities, Giveaways.

MIRACLE ON KANSAS AVENUE PARADE — Dec. 6, 6-9pm, Downtown Topeka. Lighted parade on Kansas Avenue. www.topekapartnership.com/gtp-events

LAWRENCE OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS PARADE — Dec. 6, 11am, Downtown Lawrence. Authentic horse-drawn carriages parading down Massachusetts Street is the perfect way to kick off the holiday season. Cozy

up with hot cocoa and blankets. Feel the true holiday spirit while watching dozens of beautiful horses and wagons adorned in garland and bells

TOPEKA SPIRIT FAIR — Dec. 6-7, 10-5, The Woodshed Event Center. A two-day indoor symposium, with optional outdoor activities (weather permitting), dedicated to holistic wellness and personal development. This event will feature workshops led by recognized local practitioners, designed to engage participants in practices promoting mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. All are welcome. Vendors and Food Trucks. \$3 admission. www.geminivibeskansas.com

COOKIES WITH CLAUS — Dec. 6, 10-1, Big Gage Shelter House. Cookie decorating & hot cocoa, A festive holiday craft, Giraffe feeding, Storytime & music, A photo opportunity with Santa, A candy cane hunt

NUTCRACKER BALLET — Dec. 12-14 at TPAC. Ballet Midwest's holiday staple. Tickets at TPAC box office, and Barbara's Conservatory of Dance. www.ballet-midwest.net. Join Clara at the Christmas Eve party where she receives a gift that will soon take her on a fantastic journey. Feel the joy of a Christmas Eve party, marvel at the special effects and excitement as the Nutcracker battles the Mouse King, watch as the snow falls gently in the forest and marvel as the dancers entertain you in the Kingdom of Enchantment. Don't miss this Topeka holiday tradition!

ONGOING EVENTS

SK8AWAY LEARNERS SESSIONS - Every Saturday morning 11-1, Sk8away, 815 Fairlawn Family fun environment and the best deal in town, \$8 per person but an adult skates for free with paid child! sk8away.net; 785-272-0303; manager@sk8away.net

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. 580-4545 or nhnl@tsclpl.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 ACAPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS —Topeka

Acappella Unlimited is looking for female singers who would like to sing four-part acappella harmonies. Topeka Acappella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Aedines, 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. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served. Distributing fresh produce and other items to families in need. 785-234-1111. RandelMinistries.com

TOPEKA PUBLIC LIBRARY PLAY BUS — Every Tuesday, 9:30am-noon, Lakeview Nazarene Church, 2835 Croco; Then 1-3pm at Auburn Community Center. Enjoy story time, play opportunities, books for check-out & take & make art. 785-266-3247.

OPEN INDOOR COURT PICKLEBALL — Sundays at 4pm, Berrytton United Methodist Church (7010 SE Berrytton 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!

FRIDAY NIGHT FUNNIES — Every Friday at Cosmos Court, 909 S. Kansas. Weekly comedy show is only \$15, or two for \$25.

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

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 grandopry@gmail.com. GrandOttawaOpry.com

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

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

HARVESTER FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION - 2nd Saturday each month, 1:30-3pm, Oakland Church of the Nazarene. 939 NE Oakland

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



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

Nov. 13, 11:30-1: "POWER" Luncheon
at Celtic Fox, 8th & Jackson. **The focus will be on gratitude and the holiday season.**
Free Admission; Order lunch from menu if desired.
Open to the public. RSVP to info@C5Alive.org

Save the Dates!

- Dec. 11: **CHRISTMAS** Luncheon, 11:30-1 at the Mall
- Jan. 8: **POWER** Luncheon, 11:30-1
- Feb. 12: **POWER** Luncheon, 11:30-1
- Mar. 12: **POWER** Luncheon, 11:30-1

For info: www.C5Alive.org or Facebook.com/C5Alive



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

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

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

ROOTED CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL CO-OP; Colosians 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

MEETINGS & CLASSES

CHRISTIAN WRITERS GROUP OF TOPEKA -1st & third 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 jccccw@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.flccritkansas.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 madondailey@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, betsyjthompson@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 shepherd-stopeka@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

MAP 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 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 Wana-maker. 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 biblequizzier.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 Round-table 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

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP meets 1st Thursday every month at 5:30 pm, Midland Hospice House, 200 SW Frazier. Jean Barton 785-478-9045.

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

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS - Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging provides an opportunity for caregivers to get together and share their ideas and feelings. 2nd Monday, 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 info 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.

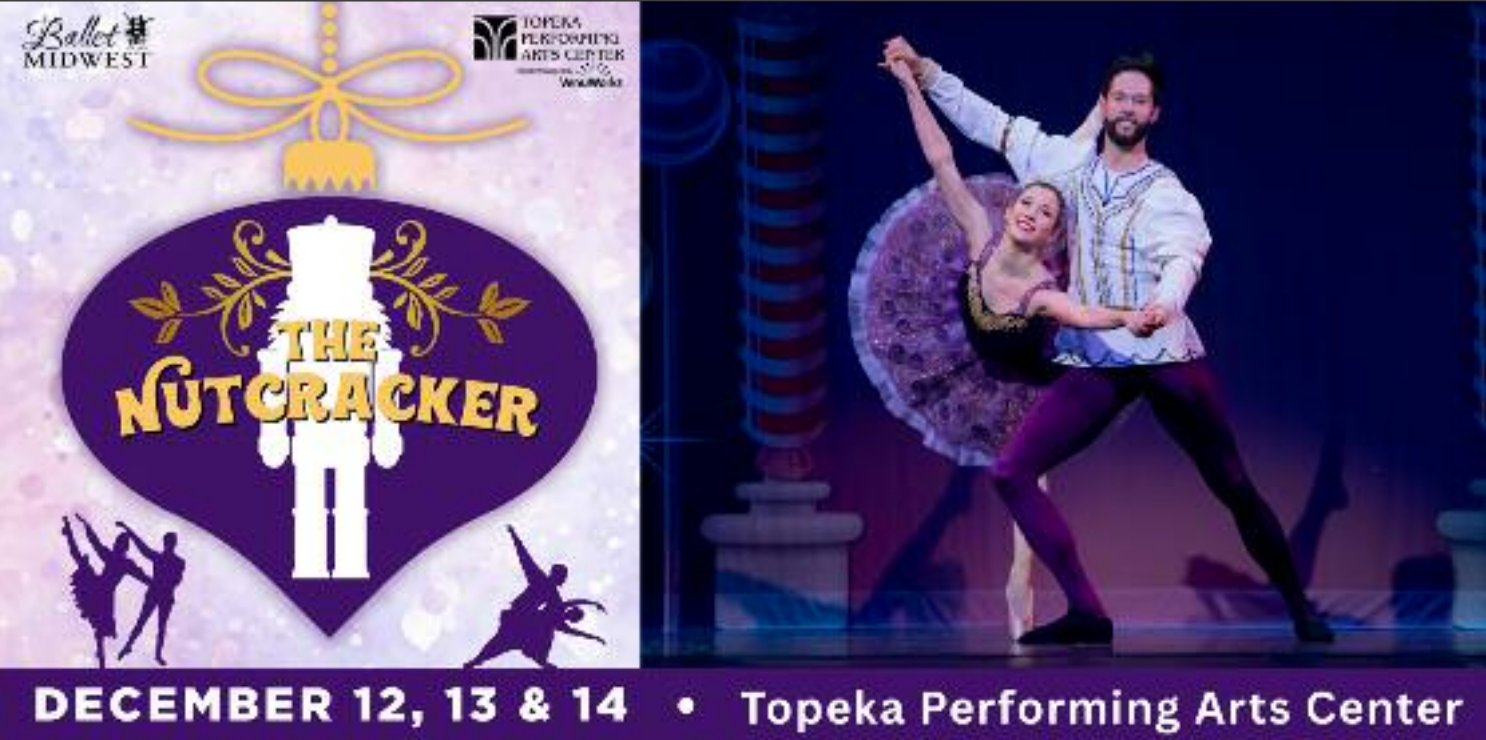
Caregiver Support Group via Google Hangouts, 4:30pm every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at hdyoung@alz.org or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

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

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.

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Survey shows candidates not well known

A new survey reveals that few people recognize the name of any candidate for governor in next year's election.

About one-third said they knew of former Gov. Jeff Colyer, making him the most recognized candidate for governor.

The survey, conducted by the Docking Institute of Public Affairs at Fort Hays State University, questioned 525 Kansas adults about their feelings on a wide range of public policy and political issues. The online survey was conducted between Sept. 26 and Oct. 14.

The survey asked about name recognition and positive or negative views on eight Republican and three Democratic candidates for governor.

Gov. Laura Kelly is term limited and can't seek reelection.

Colyer was the best-known candidate with 35.1% recognition, followed by Secretary of State Scott Schwab at 29.1%, Senate President Ty Masterson at 25.3% and Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt at 24.4%. All are Republicans.

"Most people have never heard of any of these candidates," Michael Smith, a political science professor at Emporia State University, said.

Masterson had the highest negative rating of any candidate at 19.5%, followed by Colyer at 17.9%.

Middlewood attributed the negative view of Colyer to his connection to former Gov. Sam Brownback. Colyer served as lieutenant governor under Brownback, then became governor in 2018 when Brownback joined the Trump administration.



ministration.

For Masterson, Smith said, "the hardest thing he's going to have to overcome is just the abysmal satisfaction rates with the Kansas Legislature." The survey showed just 34% are satisfied with the Legislature while 31.2% are dissatisfied.

Smith said Schmidt's best option was to let the other candidates fight over conservative voters while she secures moderates.

"There are so many vying to be the most conservative, if they cancel each other's votes out, she might have a shot," Smith said.

Republican Joy Eakins, a former Wichita school board member, recorded the highest positive rating at 53.9%, followed by Schmidt at 46.2% and Colyer at 44.8%.

Among Democrats, just 16.6% recognized Sen. Ethan Corson, 16.2% recognized Marty Tuley, a personal trainer from Lawrence, and 15.7% recognized Sen. Cindy Holscher.

—Sherman Smith | Kansas Reflector

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entertainment

Oracles Of God: The Story of the New Testament

ORACLES OF GOD: THE STORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT is a documentary, opening in multiple theaters starting November 2, 2025, exploring how Christians got the New Testament documents, including the criteria for deciding what to include and what not to include. ORACLES OF GOD is a good introductory movie about the creation and dissemination of the New Testament documents, with re-enactments of parts of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles.

ORACLES OF GOD starts by examining the four gospels describing the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Two of the gospel writers, Matthew and John, traveled with Jesus during His ministry. Also, one gospel writer, Mark, knew Peter, a close companion of Jesus, and the fourth, Luke, traveled with Paul and knew the other apostles and many early disciples, including family members of Jesus.

Scholars also discuss Luke's record of the early church in Acts, including the ministries of Peter and Paul. The remaining documents are the formal epistles or essays and informal letters of the apostles, and the Book of Revelation, a prophetic vision written by John, one of the closest disciples of Jesus.

The scholars interviewed in the movie assert that the first Christian leaders only accepted documents written by the apostles themselves, because they actually knew Jesus personally and met the resurrected



Jesus. Paul, of course, met the resurrected Jesus at least twice according to the Book of Acts, and Paul implies in his writings that he also received direct instruction from Jesus. The gospels of Luke and Mark also were accepted because they received teaching from two apostles, Paul and Peter, respectively. Luke and Mark also knew the other apostles, and Mark traveled for a time with Paul.

The rest of the New Testament documents were accepted because the early church accepted a Scripture the writings of the apostles and the two epistles written by James and Jude. James and Jude were in the room with the apostles and their mother, Mary, when Jesus physically appeared to them after leaving the Empty Tomb. James was the Bishop of Jerusalem until he was martyred in 62 or 69 A.D.

Another criteria among the early Christian churches was if the writing coincided with the other authoritative books and writings. If it contradicted a major point, it was suspect.

The scholars in ORACLES OF GOD also discuss the languages in which the New Testament documents were written and how they were delivered to churches and people in the First Century. For example, they note that the first woman chosen to be a Deacon in

the early church was a woman named Phoebe, a rich patron of Paul's. Paul chose Phoebe to deliver his letter to the Romans between 56 and 58 A.D. The movie says that, except for the Book of Revelation, the New Testament documents were written between 48 and 70 A.D. However, other scholars assert that even REVELATION was written before 70 A.D.

ORACLES OF GOD is a good introductory movie about the creation and dissemination of the New Testament documents. It includes brief re-enactments of parts of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles. There are also scenes of Jesus dying on the Cross, and two scenes of the resurrected Jesus talking to the Apostle Thomas and the Apostle John. Thus, ORACLES OF GOD features some bloody images of Jesus on the Cross and of His brother, James, after some Jewish leaders threw James off a temple parapet. Otherwise, the movie is exemplary.

It should be noted that, in looking at the authoritative nature of the 27 New Testament documents, Christian scholars examine the preponderance of the empirical evidence, including the historical evidence. Absolute 100% confidence is difficult to come by, but not necessarily impossible.

-movieguide.com

Candace Cameron Bure Leads 'America Reads the Bible' Event



Popular Christian actress Candace Cameron Bure has been named one of the national spokespersons for America Reads the Bible, a landmark event that will take place next April in Washington, D.C. National leaders, ministries and everyday Americans will lend their voices to a historic, weeklong Bible-reading event at the Museum of the Bible to commemorate the nation's 250th birthday.

"Candace has been a trusted voice for faith and family values for decades, and we're honored to have her serve as a top spokesperson for America Reads the Bible," said Bill Abbott, president and CEO of Great American Media. "Recent tragedy has reminded us how important it is to come together around faith and prayer. This historic event will allow us to share God's word in a way that will uplift and strengthen our country. We are honored to be part of such a meaningful celebration."

Her Christian faith and commitment to wholesome storytelling have made her a leading voice in family entertainment.

"Candace's deep commitment to faith and family makes her a powerful advocate for this historic initiative," said Bunni Pounds, founder of Christians Engaged, the organization spearheading America Reads the Bible. The event will be produced by Great

American Media and streamed live on Great American Pure Flix.

The event was inspired by the biblical prophet Ezra, who read scripture aloud to the Israelites. In a similar spirit, readers from diverse communities will narrate the Bible from Genesis to Revelation in a livestreamed program over seven days. "America Reads the Bible is an invitation for people across the nation to reflect on the Bible's historic role in American life and its ongoing relevance to individuals and families today," Pounds said.

Partners include Museum of the Bible, Great American Pure Flix, Time to Revive, Whitaker House Publishing, Andrew Womack Ministries, National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, CBN, Wallbuilders, NRB, Allen Jackson Ministries, Waterstone Foundation, Promise Keepers, Family Research Council, Family Policy Alliance Foundation, First Liberty Institute, Her Voice MVMT, Pray.com, and more than 83 other ministries across denominational lines. Worship leaders, including Phil King, Leeland, Meredith Andrews and Dustin Smith, will create worship moments during the event.

People are invited to join the event live at the Museum of the Bible or register to join the livestream at www.AmericaReadsTheBible.com.

7 New Family Films to Stream on Cozy Fall Nights

It's the season of crisp morning walks, family bonfires and harvest festivals. It sort of sounds like a Hall-mark movie, doesn't it? There's a reason the season often ranks among Americans' favorites: It's the season of vibrant foliage, pumpkin patches, and sweet fall favorites like caramel apples, apple cider and warm donuts. It also often delivers some of the year's best movies, and this fall is no different. This month offers a variety of great choices for parents planning a family movie night. Here are seven of the best current streaming options:

1. **Despicable Me 3** (Netflix)

A supervillain-turned-good guy, Gru, finds his new life of fighting crime upended when he learns he has a long-lost twin brother, Dru, who dreams of pulling off one last heist. Together, the siblings face off against a flashy former child star turned villain while Gru wrestles with family loyalties and his commitment to doing good. It's the third film in a four-part animated series that boasts powerful themes of family, adoption, and redemption. Rated PG for action and rude humor.

2. **E.T.** (Netflix)

A misfit young boy discovers a stranded alien in his backyard and secretly befriends him, forming an unlikely bond that transcends worlds. As government agents close in on the duo, the boy and his friends race to help the odd creature return home before it's too late. This 1982 Steven Spielberg classic won four Oscars but lost Best Picture to Gandhi. It's rated PG for language and mild thematic elements -- and likely contains more cursing than you remember. Fortunately, Clearplay offers a filter. (VidAngel's filter works for the Prime Video version.)

3. **House of David**, Season 2 (Wonder)

The next chapter in the life of this biblical legend unfolds in Season 2, which picks up with the slaying of Goliath and follows several well-known Old Testament stories, including the friendship between David and Jonathan. Season 1 of House of David soared to No. 1 on Prime Video, but Season 2's story will be even bigger, said creator Jon Erwin. "It is epic," he



told Crosswalk. "It really is much more of an action-adventure season as David becomes the warrior he's destined to be." Season 2 launched Oct. 5 exclusively on the Wonder Project add-on for Prime Video.

4. **The Chosen Adventures** (Prime Video)

A young girl named Abby and her friend Joshua embark on adventures in ancient Capernaum, where their ordinary days are transformed after meeting Jesus. This charming animated series was produced by the same company (5&2 Studios) behind The Chosen and even has some of the same cast and crew. Dallas Jenkins is an executive producer, while Ryan Swanson -- a co-writer on The Chosen -- is the showrunner. Jonathan Roumie voices Jesus.

5. **The Fantastic Four: First Steps** (Home Video)

Husband-and-wife heroes Reed Richards and Sue Storm face their greatest challenge yet when the arrival of their newborn draws the attention of a cosmic villain determined to claim the child's extraordinary potential. This Marvel film reached blockbuster status during the summer of 2025 and drew praise from the pro-life community for the film's many life-affirming themes. Rated PG-13

for action/violence and some language. Check Clearplay for filters.

6. **Sketch** (Home Video)

A 10-year-old girl named Amber, coping with loss, discovers her drawings have the terrifying ability to come alive when touched by a strange pond. As the creatures from her imagination wreak havoc on the town, she and her brother must find a way to confront both the monsters and their own fears before it's too late. This creative Angel Studios film draws you in with its thrills and leaves you with an unexpected lesson in the closing minutes. Rated PG for scary action, some violence, thematic elements, language and rude humor. Clearplay offers a filter.

7. **Great American Christmas** (Great American Family)

Great American Family's fifth-annual holiday celebration runs through Christmas, giving viewers a movie each week celebrating not only romance, but the season. The first film, A Wisconsin Christmas Pie, follows the story of a woman who travels from Chicago to her family's small town in Door County, where she sets out to save the family cherry orchard. Of course, she also encounters love. It stars Katie LeClerc and Ryan Carnes.



Guinness Book of World Records recognizes "The Chosen" series



"The Chosen" series has chalked up yet another honor. The Guinness Book of World Records has recognized it as the "most translated season for a streaming series."

Season one has been dubbed into 58 languages, meaning that viewers around the world can hear the dialogue in their own tongue. It also has been given closed captions in 86 languages. The Come and See Foundation, which funds global distribution of the series, has a goal of translating the series into 600 languages.

Dallas Jenkins, creator and director of "The Chosen," said the record highlights the power of the gospel and the dedication of the translating team. Some 200 individuals around the world are working to translate the into other languages, some of them doing it in harm's way because of the Bible-based nature of the series. "In some countries, the very act of doing this, of translating, can put their lives at risk," he said.

Rick Dempsey, senior vice president of creative and global localization for Come and See, said the organization avoids what he calls "Godzilla-style dubbing," where the audio and lip movements are noticeably mismatched, disrupting the viewer's experience. Dempsey, a former Disney executive, previously oversaw the translation of major

animated films such as "Frozen."

"It's all about matching the lips and making it look like it's really coming from that character," he said. "It's really important to us, so we're following those same practices with 'The Chosen.'"

Meanwhile, season five of the series is now available for streaming for free on its official app. Jenkins also announced that the next ChosenCon, the popular fan convention, will take place Feb. 19-21, 2026, in Charlotte. The entire franchise is now approaching \$300 million in net worth.

"It's always nice to celebrate these milestones when you're on a journey to a pretty big God-sized vision," said Mike Kennedy, vice president of marketing for The Come and See Foundation. "Our mission is to make the authentic Jesus accessible to everyone around the world through 'The Chosen.' So for us to be able to do this, this is a great milestone for us to be able to hit. We're just thrilled about this."

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Upgrade Your Home This Fall With a New HVAC System

As cooler weather sets in, households across the country face a tough question: keep repairing their old heating and cooling systems or finally replace them with new ones.

While squeezing every penny out of an old unit might seem like a way to save money, experts caution that waiting can lead to higher costs, less comfort and missed opportunities for major savings.

The Hidden Cost of ‘Just One More Repair’

Older HVAC systems often need frequent service and those repair bills can add up. Bandage-type repairs on current units could lead to more surprise bills from repair people who usually do not offer financing plans. With contractor schedules filling up during peak seasons, a breakdown at

the wrong time could mean long delays for repairs or replacements – leaving your home uncomfortable when you need it most.

Beyond the financial drain, there is the stress of dealing with an unexpected breakdown during extreme weather. Having to replace an HVAC system in the middle of a breakdown denies you the opportunity to shop around and purchase a system that best fits your home and needs. Similarly, replacing an unre-



liable system with a newer model can provide consistent comfort, improved efficiency and financial predictability.

Fall is the Ideal Time for Replacement

Fall is considered the “shoulder season” in the HVAC industry. Contractors generally have more availability than during the busy summer and winter months, which makes scheduling easier. With the more moderate weather conditions during fall, you may be more comfortable without heating or cooling while the new system is being installed. Acting in fall also avoids the risk of facing a system failure in the middle of a cold snap when demand is high and options may be limited.

Incentives Can Make Upgrading More Affordable

For a limited time, programs are available to help homeowners manage the cost of replacement. This fall, certain high-efficiency systems from Carrier qualify for rebates of up to \$2,100 and financing plans with 0% APR for 60 months, giving families the ability to spread out payments without extra interest.

In addition, federal incentives under the Inflation Reduction Act offer homeowners tax credits – such as up to \$2,000 back for installing a qualifying high-efficiency heat pump – further lowering the net cost. These IRA incentives are set to expire at the end of the year, making this fall the perfect time to upgrade.

Ensure Comfort and Efficiency During the Holidays

The holiday season is a busy time and usually includes hosting loved ones. Guarantee your celebrations go off without a hitch and your guests stay warm and comfortable by replacing your old unit during the fall months.

Modern HVAC systems do more than heat and cool; they can help maintain balanced humidity, reduce drafts, improve air quality and eliminate uneven hot or cold spots throughout your home. Plus, the energy efficiency of your new heating and cooling system may help you save

on monthly utility bills; savings you can put toward holiday shopping.

While it may be tempting to prolong the life of an old HVAC system, delaying replacement can end up being more expensive and stressful. With incentives, financing and tax credits available this fall, planning ahead can help you save money and enjoy year-round comfort.

Learn more about rebates and financing plans by contacting your local, trusted expert at carrier.com/residential/en/us/find-a-dealer.

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New York Jets' quarterback trusts God through highs and lows of challenging season

The New York Jets won their first football game Oct. 26th and moved to 1-7 on the season. Although things have not gone the way quarterback Justin Fields would have liked, he has learned to trust God in the good times as well as the bad.

"I'm going to get pretty vulnerable right here, but this week, I found myself in my closet crying on the ground, lying down, not because of the hardships, not because of the troubles," he said. "I felt like, you know, I was built to handle that and I was put in place to handle this situation."

Fields signed with the Jets during the offseason, hoping a new team and new city would give him a fresh start after up-and-down stints in Chicago and Pittsburgh.

"I've always asked God to give me an opportunity and a platform to spread his word.

he said. "And sometimes it doesn't play out the way you always plan it, I think the position I'm in right now is a great opportunity to spread that message and really kind of get the world to know how I feel about him and how great he is.

The "old me," Fields said, would not



handle the situation the same way he currently does.

"My faith is so rooted in Christ," he said. "Like I told you guys earlier this week, nothing can break me. And as far as my job goes here, I'm gonna be the same. I'm going to come to work the same. I'm going to lead the same. And again, just try to continue to spread that message of how good God is. No matter what I go through in life. I know I'm strong enough to handle it. I know He's strong enough to help me handle it.

"All that to say is, God is real. God is good," Fields says. "And everything that we go through in life is for a purpose."

Nation's Largest Christian Youth Sports Program Celebrates 30 Years

Upward Sports is celebrating three decades of partnering with churches to use sports as a bridge to engage families, strengthen communities and point people to the love of Christ. It is the largest Christian sports ministry in the nation, according to its website.

Since its founding in Spartanburg, S.C., in 1995, the organization has grown into a nationwide movement, offering programs in basketball, soccer, flag football, cheerleading, volleyball, baseball, softball and pickleball. In 2024, it expanded to include adult running programs, broadening its reach to entire families and multiple generations.

"For 30 years, Upward Sports has been committed to partnering with local churches across America," Executive Director Kevin Drake said. "Millions and millions of children, youth and adults have encountered Christ through Upward experiences. God has blessed us with robust growth. As we seek to honor him, we are grateful."

Upward Sports has become known not only for its innovative sports programming but also for its commitment to equipping



churches to reach their local communities. By combining athletic development with spiritual growth, the ministry has helped transform lives and build lasting relationships across neighborhoods and cities.

"Upward's mission has always been bigger than the scoreboard," Board Chair Tully Brewer said. "We celebrate this anniversary by honoring the millions of volunteers, coaches, churches, families and players who have invested their time and hearts into making a difference. The past 30 years remind us of what's possible when the church and community come together, and we believe the next 30 will have an even greater impact."

As the organization celebrates this milestone, it remains committed to its mission of promoting the discovery of Jesus through sports, equipping churches to reach their communities one league, one season and one life at a time.

"Our desire is to come alongside your church to advance your mission, reach families in your city and promote Jesus through the avenue of sports," the ministry website says. "Together, we will customize the best sports experience for your church, strengthening your outreach efforts."

More information is available at www.upward.org.

Travis Hunter and Noah Lyles Share Baptism Stories

Two high-profile athletes have gone public with their baptism stories.

Rookie sensation Travis Hunter of the Jacksonville Jaguars was baptized at Celebration Church in Jacksonville, Fla., before this team played later that day. The wide receiver and defensive cornerback said getting baptized wasn't a spontaneous or emotional decision but was a long time coming.

"It's Sunday. It's God's day. I've been planning to go get baptized for a minute," Hunter told ESPN. "I changed my life over to become a better man. It means a lot. I'm becoming a better man and leaving my old self and starting a new chapter."

The 22-year-old has had faith mentors throughout the course of his career, including Deion Sanders, who coached him while he was at Jackson State University and the University of Colorado. Although the Jaguars lost to the Seattle Seahawks and Hunter did not make the highlights that day, fans are applauding the Heisman trophy winner for obtaining the "greater prize." "He could get zero catches today and still win," said one user on X.

Bromfield is baptized. Image: FB

Meanwhile, Olympic gold medal sprinter Noah Lyles and his fiancée, Junelle Bromfield, were baptized together in late September. The couple, who got

engaged last October, publicly professed their faith in Christ while being baptized at Alive Church in Orlando. shared a video of their baptism in a joint post on Instagram. The caption shared Joshua 24:15: "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Lyles has become more outspoken about his faith in God over the last few years. After winning a gold medal in the 100-meter sprint at the 2024 Paris Olympics, he told Premier Christian Radio that his relationship with God became stronger as he



faced challenges in the sport.

"I had to find my own journey with God, and a lot of that came through track, because there were a lot of times where I thought I didn't know if I can do this," he said. "God, if you really want me to do this, give me a sign. He gave me a sign and I

said, 'I'll never doubt you again.'"

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How a Near-Death Experience Revealed the Secret to Lasting Happiness

What if happiness isn't about accumulating wealth, but about how you use your resources—time, money and emotional energy—to create joy for yourselves and others? Picture your next family gathering not filled with tension or superficial chatter, but genuine laughter and meaningful

connections. Imagine seeing the joy on your loved ones' faces when you share something special with them—not after you're gone, but right now, creating memories that last.

Science confirms that generosity and gratitude significantly en-

hance personal happiness. A 2020 University of Chicago study found that people who intentionally give to others experience deeper and longer-lasting joy compared to those who spend only on themselves.

Educational entrepreneur and author of "The Happiness Experiment," Carl B. Barney is sharing practical, achievable steps to experiencing more happiness today:



Express Daily Gratitude: Write down three things you're grateful for each day. Notice how quickly your outlook shifts toward joy and positivity.

Create Memorable Experiences: Plan meaningful, shared moments with loved ones rather than simply giving material gifts. The happiness derived from these shared experiences endures long after the event itself.

Give with Purpose: Offer thoughtful gestures, advice or financial help in meaningful ways. Even small acts of generosity can transform relationships and significantly boost your happiness.

This approach to happiness isn't just theory—it's a proven pathway to a richer, more fulfilling life. After a near-death experience in a plane crash profoundly shifted his worldview, Barney realized he wanted to witness the joy and impact of his generosity firsthand, rather than leaving his loved ones to benefit only after he was gone.

Discover more about this transformative approach and start enhancing your happiness today at happinessexperiment.com.

Happiness can't be bought, but

it can be cultivated. As science and real-world experiences show, generosity and gratitude are fundamental pillars to long-lasting joy.

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

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How to Honor Loved Ones' Memories During the Holidays

The holiday season can be a time of joy and connection, but it can also bring intense feelings of loss and sadness for those grieving the death of a loved one.

To help families honor memories while caring for their emotional well-being, the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) recognizes the unique challenges of this season and offers these resources and tips.

Embrace Your Feelings

Grief is unique to each person, and emotions during the holidays can vary widely – from sadness and longing to moments of joy and peace. Give yourself permission to feel whatever arises without judgment. Allow space for tears or quiet reflection and remember it's OK to experience mixed emotions. Acknowledging your feelings honestly can help you move through the sea-

son with greater self-compassion.

Create New Traditions

While old holiday traditions often hold treasured memories, creating new rituals can help you honor your loved one in a personal way.

"Keep as many traditions as you can keep, but we always encourage families to create a new tradition to remember that loved one who's been lost," said Tim Schramm, owner of Howe-Peterson Funeral Homes.

Lighting a candle in their memory, sharing stories that celebrate their life or setting up a special display of photos or keepsakes are small acts that can bring comfort. Some people find meaning in donating to a charity in their honor or volunteering together with family or friends to celebrate the spirit of giving.

Lean on Your Support System

Having trusted people around you can offer solace. Whether through family gatherings, friends, support groups or counseling, reaching out helps bridge feelings of loneliness. Being with others who understand your grief or sharing your memories can provide reassurance and companionship during times that might feel isolating.

Set Boundaries to Protect Your Well-Being

It's important to do what feels right for you, even if that means saying no to events or stepping away from overwhelming situations. Setting limits helps protect your emotional health and allows you to navigate the holidays at your own pace.

"As funeral directors, we often remind families that caring for yourself is just as important as honoring your loved one," said Dr. Camelia Clarke, owner and licensed funeral director at Paradise Memorial. "Setting boundaries isn't selfish – it's an act of compassion that allows you to truly be present in the moments that matter most."

Communicate honestly with

loved ones about your needs as they will likely appreciate your openness.

Prioritize Self-Care

Grief can be emotionally and physically tiring, especially around the holidays. Take care of yourself through adequate rest, comforting meals, finding a new hobby or buying yourself a gift. Simple mindfulness practices, such as journaling or breathing exercises, can also help manage stress and bring moments of calm.

Remember with Compassion

Honoring your loved one's memory is a personal journey. You might choose to share stories, write letters, observe moments of silence or engage in creative expressions like art or music. Embracing these acts with kindness and patience fosters healing and helps keep their spirit alive.

The holiday season often brings both challenges and opportunities for healing. By embracing your emotions, leaning on support, creating meaningful rituals, and caring for yourself, you can honor your loved ones in ways that feel right for you. Remember, you don't have to face this time alone. Resources like journey cards from RememberALife.com and other ways to keep memories alive are available to provide guidance and comfort as needed.

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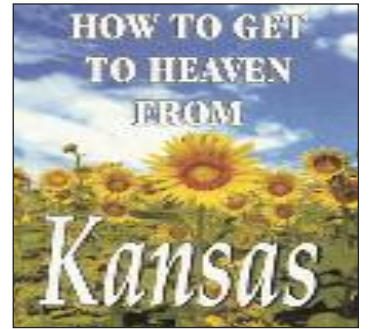
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1. Realize you are a sinner. Everyone starts the same place spiritually. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23). Sin's penalty keeps you out of Heaven and condemns you to Hell, separating you from God. Romans 6:23 says, "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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Sunday School 9:30, Worship 11:00

In person or conference call:

(712) 770-4749 / 583229

Bible Study Tue & Wed conference call

2401 SE 11th St., Topeka KS 66607

Supt. S. C. Mitchell, Pastor

16. HOUSE OF THE LORD CHURCH

A Spirit-filled, Word-centered church

2531 SE Wittenberg Rd., Topeka

Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm

Wed. Prayer & Praise 7pm

785-266-LOVE (5683)

J. Michael Borjon, Pastor

17. EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

4425 S.E. 29th St., 785-379-9933.

Sunday Worship 10:00am & 5:30pm

Sunday Evenings at 5:30pm:

• AWANA

• Student Ministries

• re|engage

www.esbcs.org

20. HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH

1937 NE Madison St,

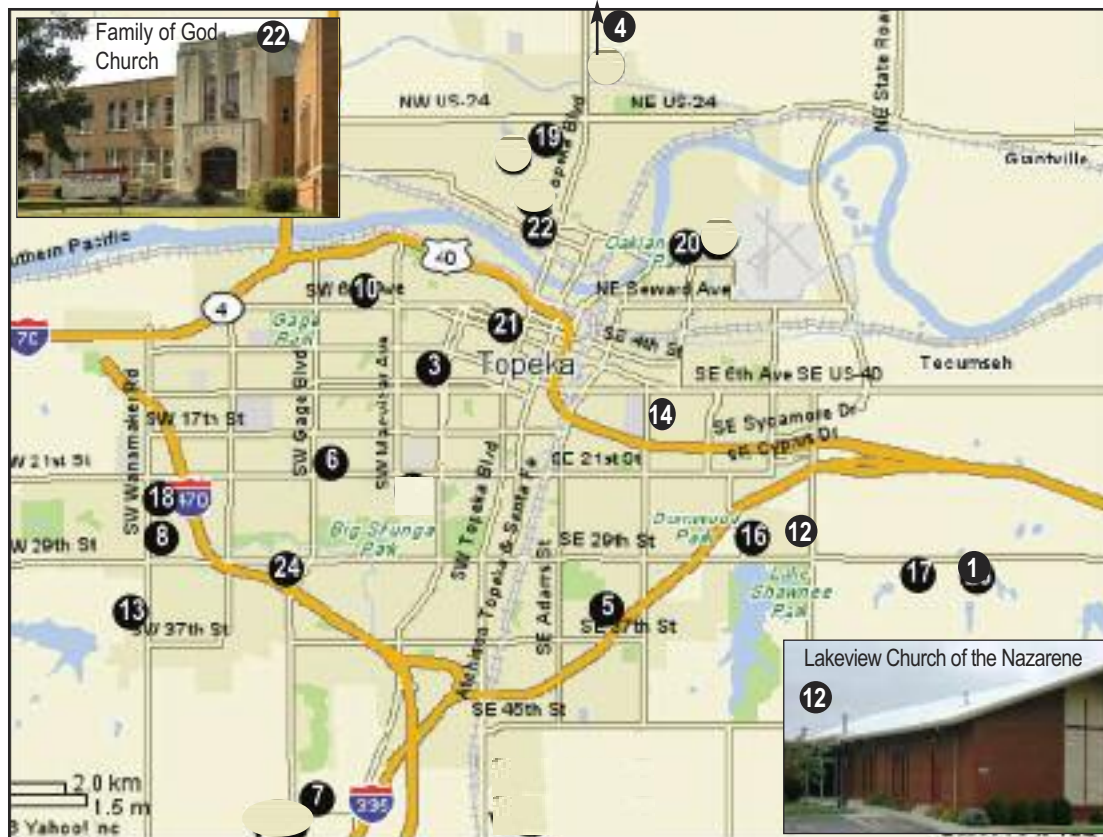
Topeka, KS 66608 • 785-506-4594

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.harvestfamilyfellowshiptoepka.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

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

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NEW Resource Directory for Kansans

KANSAS RESOURCE GUIDE

The Kansas Resource Guide (KRG) is a collaborative effort to connect consumers and service providers with resources and services for women, infants, children, youth and people with disabilities in Kansas.

What can you find?

The KRG website is an online navigational tool for Kansas consumers and service providers in Kansas. You can find links to partner's websites, topical lists and a searchable resource directory.

How does the KRG help?

The KRG can help you identify:

- Available resources
- Who to contract
- Where to go for assistance

Find information on:

- Advocacy
- Adult and Aging Services
- Disability Services
- Education
- Employment
- Health Care Services
- Independent and Community Living
- Nutrition and Wellness
- Women and Children's Services
- Youth Services



Call 1-800-332-6262 for more information.

www.kansasresourceguide.org