WORLD

EARNING YOUR TRUST, EVERY DAY / OCTOBER 8, 2022

Molecular marvels

Advanced tech reveals new evidence of intelligent design

by MICHAEL BEHE

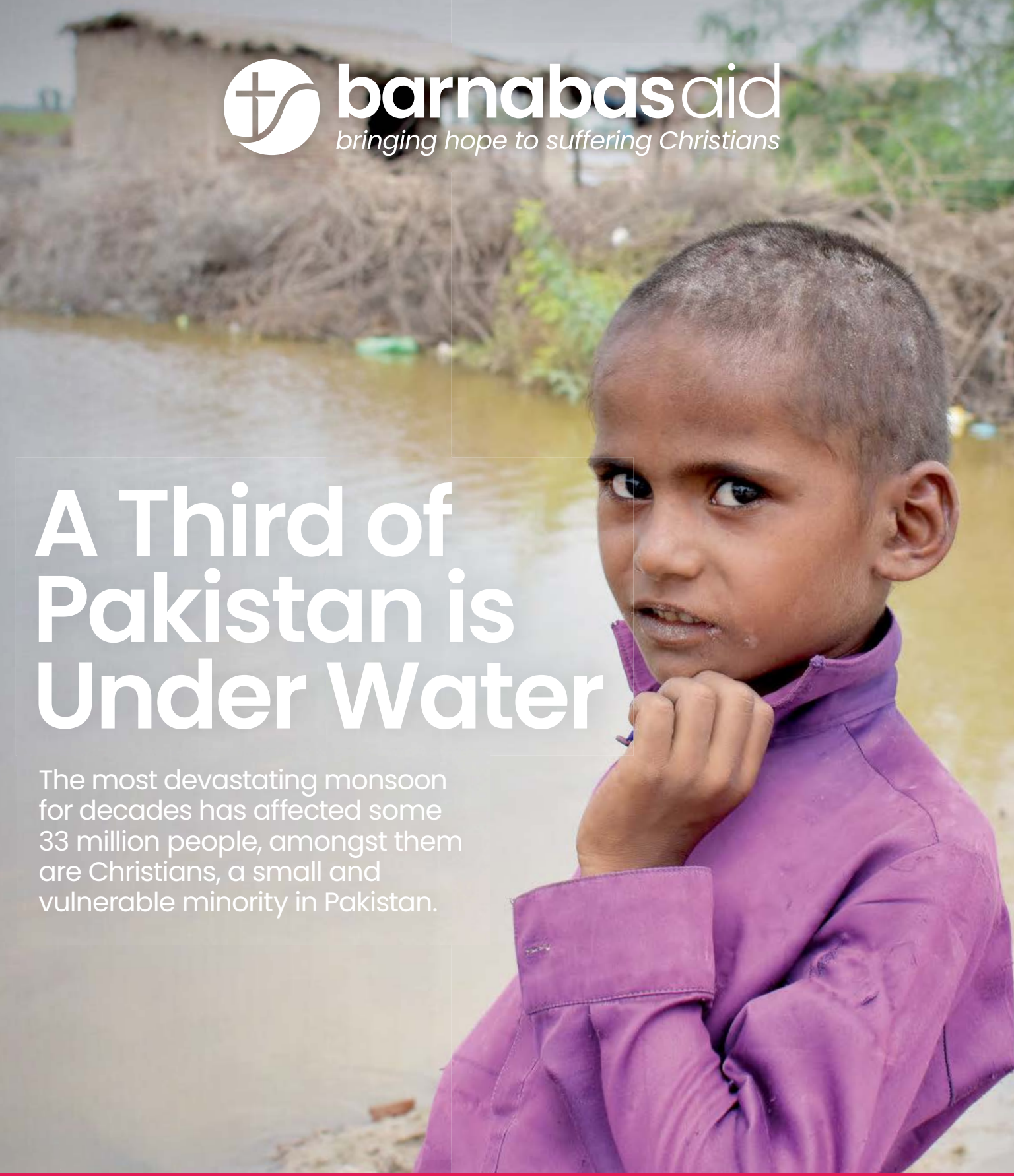


HUNGER HITS THE HORN OF AFRICA *by Onize Ohikere*

THE DEATH OF A QUEEN AND A COUNTRY'S FAITH *by Collin Garbarino*

THE BIRTH OF A MODERN HYMN *by Kim Henderson*


A Biblical solution to health care
A community of Christians sharing health care costs with one another.
Samaritan™ MINISTRIES
SamaritanMinistries.org/WORLD · 877.578.6787
Cameron and Roanna, members since 2017



barnabas aid

bringing hope to suffering Christians

A Third of Pakistan is Under Water

The most devastating monsoon for decades has affected some 33 million people, amongst them are Christians, a small and vulnerable minority in Pakistan.

Give Now to Help Desperate Christian Families in Need

Donate at: **barnabasaid.org/world6**
or call **703-288-1681**
toll free **866-936-2525**
Email **usa@barnabasaid.org**

ECFA ACCREDITED

CONTENTS

OCTOBER 8, 2022 / VOLUME 37, NUMBER 19



12


26


42


56

CEO Notes 6
Mailbag 8
Backstory 72

Voices

Joel Belz 10
Lynn Vincent 24
Janie B. Cheaney 40
Andrée Seu Peterson 70

Dispatches

In the News 12
By the Numbers 15
Departures 15
Global Briefs 16
U.S. Briefs 18
Backgrounder 20
Quotables 21
Quick Takes 22

Culture

Trending 26
Books 30
Film & TV 34
Music 38

Notebook

Lifestyle 64
Law 67
Science 68
Technology 69

42

FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

Elegant molecular machines at the center of life belie Darwin's theory

50

FAMINE THREAT

As unprecedented hunger grips the Horn of Africa, impoverished families are running out of time

56

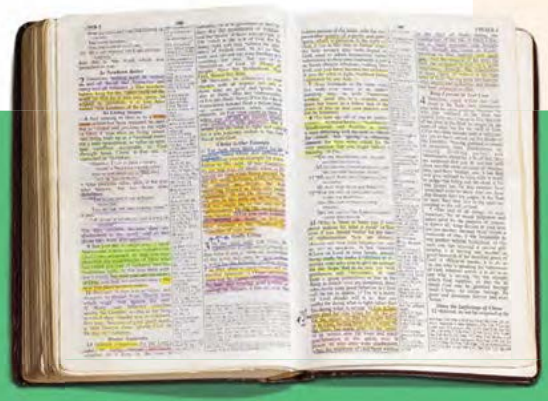
ENGLAND ADRIFT

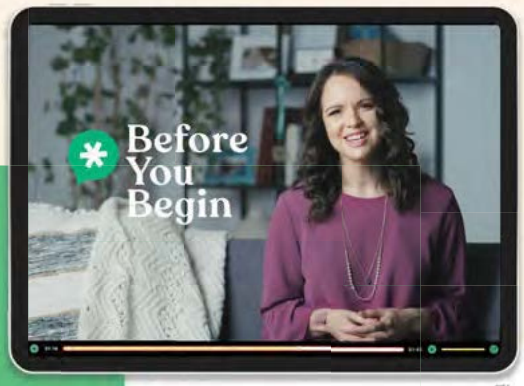
Christian Britain has lost its most prominent defender of the faith

ON THE COVER: *illustration by Dr_Microbe/iStock*

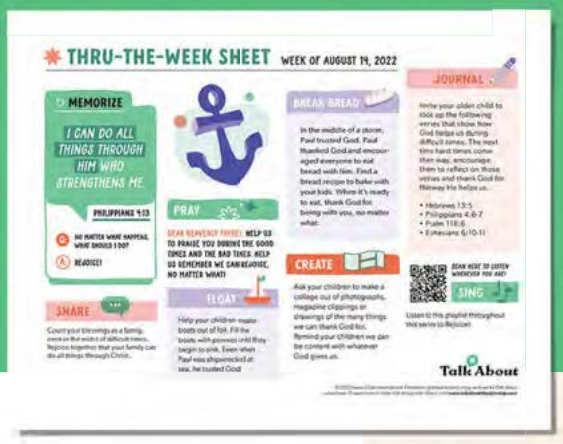
Family Discipleship Subscription

Talk About





Delivered Weekly





TalkAboutDiscipleship.com

Free Month with Code: WORLD

Awana

WORLD

BIBLICALLY OBJECTIVE JOURNALISM THAT INFORMS, EDUCATES, AND INSPIRES

"The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." —Psalm 24:1

WORLD MAGAZINE
Executive Editor Lynn Vincent
Editor Daniel James Devine
Art Director David Freeland
Assistant Art Director Rachel Beatty
Illustrator Krieg Barrie
Editorial Assistants Kristin Chapman, Mary Ruth Murdoch
Intern Todd Vician

WORLD DIGITAL
Executive Editor Mickey McLean
Editorial Assistant Charissa Garcia
Production Assistant Dan Perkins

WORLD RADIO
Executive Producer Paul Butler
Features Editor Anna Johansen Brown
Producers Kristen Flavin, Johnny Franklin, Lillian Hamman, Carl Peetz
Correspondents Caleb Bailey, Katie Gaultney, Jill Nelson, Bonnie Pritchett, Jenny Rough, Whitney Williams
Hosts Myrna Brown, Nick Eicher, Mary Reichard

NEWS
Executive Editor Lynde Langdon
Editors John Carpenter, Stephen Kloosterman
News Anchor Kent Covington
Reporters Leo Briceno, Lauren Dunn, Carolina Lumetta, Mary Muncy, Addie Offereins, Onize Ohikere, Leah Savas, Josh Schumacher, Steve West
Contributors Julie Borg, John Dawson, Juliana Chan Erikson, Heather Frank, Christina Grube, Ray Hacke, Gary Perilloux, Anna Timmis, Joyce Wu
Editorial Assistant Arla Eicher

FEATURES
Executive Editor Lynn Vincent
Editor Leigh Jones
Senior Writers Sharon Dierberger, Kim Henderson, Mary Jackson
Contributors Amy Lewis, Jenny Lind Schmitt, Les Sillars
Editorial Assistant Elizabeth Russell
Intern Bekah McCallum

COMMENTARY
Executive Editor Tim Lamer
Opinions Editor R. Albert Mohler Jr.
Opinions Managing Editor Andrew T. Walker
Arts and Culture Editor Collin Garbarino
Contributors Sandy Barwick, Bob Brown, Maryrose Delahunty, George Grant, Jim Hill, Jeff Koch, Arsenio Orteza, Anna Sylvestre, Cal Thomas, Marty VanDriel, Emily Whitten
Senior Writers Janie B. Cheaney, Emma Freire, Andrée Seu Peterson

WORLD EDITORIAL COUNCIL
Paul Butler, Nick Eicher, Tim Lamer, Lynde Langdon, Kevin Martin, Mickey McLean, Lynn Vincent

GOD'S WORLD NEWS
Managing Editor Rebecca Cochrane
Design Director Rob Patete
News Coach Kelsey Reed

WORLD WATCH
Producer Rich Bishop
Director Brian Basham

WORLD JOURNALISM INSTITUTE
Executive Director Edward Lee Pitts
Assistant Director Naomi Balk

WORLD NEWS GROUP
Founder Joel Belz
Chief Executive Officer Kevin Martin
Chief Content Officer Nick Eicher

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Chairman John Ward Weiss
Vice Chairman Bill Newton
Mariam Bell, John Burke, Kevin Cusack, Peter Lillback, Edna Lopez, Howard Miller, Charles Pepin, Russ Pulliam, David Strassner

Member of the Associated Press

HOW TO REACH US
Phone 828.435.2981 or 800.951.6397 outside the U.S.
Website wng.org
Member Services memberservices@wng.org
Letters to the editor editor@wng.org
Donor relations Debra Meissner: dmeissner@wng.org
Advertising inquiries John Almaguer: jalmaguer@wng.org, Kyle Crimi: kcrimi@wng.org
Mail PO Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802
Facebook facebook.com/WNGdotorg
Twitter @WNGdotorg
Instagram instagram.com/WNGdotorg

WORLD (ISSN 0888-157X) (USPS 763-010) is published biweekly (24 issues) for $69.99 per year by God's World Publications, (no mail) 12 All Souls Crescent, Asheville, NC 28803; 828.253.8063. Periodical postage paid at Asheville, NC, and additional mailing offices. Printed in the USA.

Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. © 2022 WORLD News Group. All rights reserved.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to WORLD News Group, PO Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802-9998.



URGENT PRAYER NEED

The government cannot force Americans to promote views they disagree with. But that's exactly what is happening to graphic artist and web designer Lorie Smith, owner of 303 Creative near Denver, CO. Colorado passed a law that requires her to create messages that violate her core beliefs. And a lower federal court upheld this coercion, jeopardizing the freedom of all Americans. That's why Lorie and Alliance Defending Freedom took her case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Will you please commit to praying for Lorie and for the freedom of speech of all Americans to prevail in this pivotal, potentially landmark case?

PLEASE VISIT

ADFLEGAL.ORG/PRAYFORLORIE

or cut out and mail in your pledge to let Lorie know you are committed to praying for her and for the freedom of speech of all Americans!

Cut and Send Today!

"LORIE, THANK YOU FOR STANDING UP FOR FREE SPEECH! I AM COMMITTED TO PRAYING FOR YOU."

- ☐ Yes, I commit to pray for Lorie!
- ☐ Yes, I commit to pray for Lorie and am including a tax deductible donation towards her defense of $_____ in my reply!
- ☐ I would like to receive regular email updates from Alliance Defending Freedom.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE _____

Mail your pledge to pray to:

Alliance Defending Freedom
15100 N 90th Street
Scottsdale, AZ 85260

ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM

10024350

© 2022 Alliance Defending Freedom is a registered 501(C)(3) Charity. All rights reserved.

CEO NOTES



WHAT WE LEARN producing news for students: *Never assume knowledge*. That's the rule our *WORLD Watch* editorial team is careful to follow.

In other words, because we're producing these stories for students, we're sure to include as much background information as possible. When *place* is important in a story, we include a map. When reporting a story with historical roots, we allocate time to provide context, details from the past that shape the present. When it's necessary to use big or technical terms, we make sure to define them.

We're careful to do this for the students, but I find myself in almost every *WORLD Watch* episode learning something new that maybe I should already have known. Where exactly is the Gaza Strip? What's the conflict between Taiwan and China? What's the relationship between the United Kingdom's monarch and its prime minister? How does budget reconciliation work in Washington?

I was relieved to learn I'm not alone in this knowledge deficit. Last year, we surveyed WNG members about a range of issues. One of the prevailing themes in the feedback: Parents—and other adults—told us they often don't feel equipped to discuss current events with kids.

That was a real eye-opener, and we spent a lot of time thinking about it: Why did so many of us feel that way? And equally as important, how could we help?

Part of this sense of inadequacy may go back to the first lesson: We adults don't always have the contextual knowledge we need to understand current events ourselves, much less guide the students in our lives. Another reason we may feel ill-equipped: So much of today's news comes loaded with an agenda or a bunch of faulty presuppositions. We worry about the worldview behind a story. We worry about how our "take" on the story may affect our kids' worldview development. We worry about a lot of things, so we tend to avoid engaging.

That's a mistake. Students will watch, read, and discuss current events whether we participate or not. If we don't join in, we miss out on a valuable opportunity for imparting wisdom.

This is an area where we think our news coach, Kelsey Reed, can help. Through a newsletter, a podcast, and probably a whole lot of personal interaction, Kelsey hopes to give adults the tools (and maybe also the nudge) they need to discuss current events with the students in their lives. Over the next several months, look for more from Kelsey about how WNG resources can help you take advantage of opportunities to engage young minds.



KEVIN MARTIN
kevin@wng.org

Available to all WORLD members:

DAILY NEWS



wng.org/sift

WEEKLY EMAILS



wng.org/newsletters

COMMENTARY



wng.org/opinions

PODCASTS



wng.org/podcasts

LUKE society

Touching lives in Jesus' name

committed to HEALTH committed to CHRIST

The Luke Society is an international medical ministry which provides resources and support to Christian doctors and nurses called to care for the health needs of their own people. Through prayer, encouragement and financial support, we empower these indigenous visionaries to use their gifts in medicine as a means to share the Good News of Jesus Christ to underserved areas in nearly 30 countries around the world.







OUR MEDICAL PROVIDERS ARE EQUIPPED WITH

HEARTS FOR **SERVICE**

KNOWLEDGE FOR **HEALTH**

LOVE FOR **CHRIST**

To learn more
and to follow Jesus' calling to make disciples of all nations:

Visit us online

(605) 373-9686

office@lukesociety.org
www.lukesociety.org

3409 S. Gateway Blvd.
Sioux Falls, SD 57106

MAILBAG

Editor's note: WORLD's Aug. 27 issue generated more than double the number of letters we usually receive, prompting us to publish an extra page of reader feedback.



AUGUST 27, 2022

Cover reflections

The cover for the Aug. 27 issue was too provocative for a magazine any age member of my family could see. Please consider this when you choose artwork for your covers.

ANN HEMME
Strongsville, Ohio

Please tell us you had second thoughts about the Aug. 27 cover. We trust you to appear in our homes, where our children dwell. You've set a base thing before their young eyes and ours. Trust betrayed is hard regained.

LAWRENCE LUCAS
Moscow, Idaho

Congratulations on the stunning cover, which draws one in even though the content of the article is distressing.

DAVID CONSTANCE
Deland, Fla.

The eyes have it

Wow! Thank you for the new look. I was not a fan of the last makeover and even considered not renewing. It was not an easy read for my 50-something eyes.

MICHELE HARN
Williston, Tenn.

The latest redesign has produced the best-ever WORLD for my aged 87-year-old eyes. I've not been able to breeze through WORLD as I do now!

PETER KUSHKOWSKI
Portland, Conn.

I complained about the previous redesign and am delighted to see the new WORLD—all of the readability problems are gone! I want to say "thanks" and "great job" after my previous complaints.

REBEKAH MATT
St. Louis, Mo.

For those of us who read your magazine for "dessert" at the end of the day, it's a more relaxing experience—easier on the eyes than the former format!

KAREN DAVIS
Exton, Pa.

Kudos to you all on a much more readable layout! We like maps here in our classical homeschooling household, so we welcome the map header in Global Briefs as well as the informative sidebars.

LAUREN NICHOLS
Fort Wayne, Ind.

A year ago, my subscription lapsed. Upon seeing the return to an easier-on-the-eyes font and layout, I am sending in payment immediately. Thanks for a publication that challenges our thinking.

ANN BAILES
Anderson, S.C.

The twisted self *p44*

Thank you, Carl Trueman, for explaining how our society got to this point regarding sexuality—I think I finally understand! I pray the Lord will return men and women to clarity in thinking, especially those who influence the most vulnerable.

BEVERLY LAMBERT
Westminster, Md.

Your cover story, while interesting, was void of much Scripture. WORLD's apparent drift toward a "Scripture-light" publication causes me to pause.

KIM REED
Rapid City, S.D.

Trueman's cover story was the most complete, informative, but concise article I've read regarding the cultural deviation away from Biblical and logical truth. I'm going to attempt to get all of my children to seriously read it.

SCOTT KELLER
Snellville, Ga.

Living with a legacy *p52*

Kim Henderson conveyed well the heart of Valerie Elliot Shepard and her commitment to making her parents' legacy known. She lives the calling with grace, love, and faithfulness to their memories and God's glory.

CHRIS LIPSCOMBE
Gulfport, Miss.

I see the legacy of Jim and Elisabeth Elliot continuing, and I pray my grandchildren's grandchildren will know of their faith in the gentle and lowly Jesus they loved and served.

JOHN & EVA HERBERICH
Chattanooga, Tenn.

Special interest *p64*

I was moved by the article

on Christian schools and special needs. I have a daughter with Down syndrome, and I have been asking our church's school to address this issue for years.

CHRISTY KEYTON
Dothan, Ala.

Yes, many Christian schools do not provide a robust special needs program, but it isn't because they don't "value" such students. Schools simply don't have the money, and that problem will not be solved by a "creative mix of tuition, government funding, and fundraising."

ALAN PUE
Castle Pines, Colo.

There is a great need for Christians to support special needs education for those who choose not to plug into the public school system.

MELISSA HODGES
Aledo, Ill.

Crossing the Rubicon? *p12*

I don't believe the FBI crossed the Rubicon. I believe Donald Trump did. The FBI has never done anything like this before because we have never had a president like Donald Trump before.

JAMES A. AVERY
Charlottesville, Va.

Unprecedented? One reaps what one sows. I remember when a presidential candidate entered political rallies to the cries of "Lock her up." What goes around, comes around.

GLENN PALMER
Norfolk, Va.

Our former president's behavior and comments crossed multiple Rubicons from which our nation may never recover. It is not surprising if one or more of those crossings have brought him into legal difficulties.

PHIL McLAIN
Newberg, Ore.

How transgender activists define *man* and *woman* *p20*

Regarding your Backgrounder article: I say, "The emperor has no clothes!"

REBECCA BLAIR
Albany, Ore.

The circular definitions of female as "opposite of male" and male as "opposite of female," while true, define *nothing*. Ironically, and likely unintentionally, these definitions at least assert the binary-ness of gender.

RAY DOBELSTEIN
Ponte Vedra, Fla.

Quotables *p21*

Astronomer Allison Kirkpatrick finds herself "lying awake at 3 in the morning wondering if everything I've done is wrong." It's time to interpret the uncovering of historical evidence in light of the Book written by God, who created all galaxies.

JORGE A. VELEZ
Long Beach, Calif.

Truth spoken here *p24*

Although I agree with Lynn Vincent's point in her column, there's a certain tone of crassness that disturbed me. Can we not choose words that reflect a speech and tone that is always with grace according to Colossians 4:6?

JEANNINE RAMER
Uniontown, Ohio

I could literally feel my smile grow as I read Vincent's inaugural column as executive editor. As a longtime reader, I found great relief and great joy to read more Machen and less Keller between her lines—and all with a twinkle in her eye!

NOEL ADAMS
Cedar Park, Texas

Thrillers on trains *p39*

Two train movies you could have included on your list: *Silver Streak* with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor and the best train movie ever, *The Train* with Burt Lancaster and Paul Scofield.

GERALD BONSALL
St. Albans, Vt.

Mysterious reads with female leads *p33*

It seems almost all good books feature "strong females." I would love a list of books with admirable male leads. Children should read about positive characters of both sexes as they strive to become the men and women God created them to be.

GAIL MACDONALD
Sewickley, Pa.

As an educator, I was thrilled to find books that held the attention of students who weren't fond of reading. I had a waiting list for the Jennie McGrady series by Patricia Rushford, with students keeping each other reading faithfully so that they could have the next book.

GINNY SHAFFER
Newville, Pa.

Evil exposed *p34*

Thank you for featuring *Serial Killer: A True Crime Podcast*. It's tough listening, but the intrepid Ann McElhinney and Phelim McAleer do not shy away from the truth.

HENNY BULTEN
Montgomery, Texas

Kermit Gosnell's arrogance and defensiveness about his evil deeds were chilling. Hopefully, the Lord will bring him to see his evil deeds and seek forgiveness and renewal in his life.

JIM BATES
Marshall, Texas

Correction

The Cedar Hill (Texas) Police Department investigated the incident of alleged abuse against the daughter of Matt and Christi Bragg ("The list," Sept. 24, p. 56).

Send your letters and comments to:

- editor@wng.org
- WORLD Mailbag, PO Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802

Please include full name and address. Letters may be edited to yield brevity and clarity.



VOICES **JOEL BELZ**

Audacious arguments

Big institutions and the rejection of God

The following is the third in a series of classic columns by Joel Belz. In this column from June 11, 2005, Joel reported on a trend that has become more explicit and even routine.

I HAVEN'T SETTLED in my own mind yet which is more dangerous for a society: the explicit rejection of the God of the universe, or the much more common implicit rejection of that same God.

I have argued in this space before, for example, that big government, just because of its bigness, tends to become a false god. When people start to be enamored of all its largesse, they never give a thought to the possibility that this new god is taking the place of the one they should be reverencing. The transfer of their loyalty is subtle and quiet.

By such a standard, Christians would oppose big government even if it performed its functions very well. While secular political conservatives oppose big government because they believe it is inefficient, bureaucratic, and therefore wasteful of the citizens' resources—or simply because they don't want any government to gain too much power—Christians would be concerned that big government might become a godlike figure.

In similar fashion, of course, those same people should be just as skeptical of other big systems that tend to become false gods. The free enterprise system, the remarkable complex of higher education, modern science and technology, and the accomplishments of contemporary medicine all tend to shift our trust from Jehovah to other vendors of miracles. And that, Christians properly affirm, is dangerous.

Yet in all these cases, things aren't yet as bad as they could be. For the threat, up to this point, has been largely implicit. Big government isn't saying explicitly that God doesn't exist; big government just acts as if God doesn't exist. What gets scary, and what is increasingly different about our current age, is that the argument is turning so explicit. What for several decades has been left unsaid is more and more being proposed.

No one could have put it more bluntly than did syndicated columnist Michael Kinsley a few days ago while arguing that there's no place for religious ethics in the debate over embryonic stem-cell research. "We know all that we're going to know about the moral issues," says Mr. Kinsley with frightening arrogance. "There are three issues: First, do the embryos used for stem cell research and therapy have rights? They are clumps of a few dozen cells, biologically more primitive than a mosquito. They have no consciousness, are not aware that they exist, and never have been. Nature itself creates and destroys millions of these every year. No one objects. No one mourns. In most cases no one even knows."

Then Mr. Kinsley gets very bold: "If my life is worth no more than the survival of one of these clumps, then it is terribly unfair that I can plead my case on the op-ed page and they can't. But I have no trouble feeling that the government should value my life more than the lives of these clumps. God may disagree. But the government reports to me and to other adult Americans, not to God."

Yet startling as Mr. Kinsley's audacious words might be, we shouldn't pretend any longer that he doesn't speak for those who dominate government, academia, business, medicine, science, and, of course, the media. Most may be more polite in expressing what they think God's place is—but, practically speaking, they think like Mr. Kinsley.

So God has now moved from being explicitly referred to as "Creator" in our founding documents, to being politely ignored, to being explicitly excluded. So I ask which is better—to be shut out of discourse while folks pretend otherwise, or to make it official?

Not that it's our decision to make. No one should pretend that He who sits in the heavens is ignoring all this. It's true that He has remarkable patience. It's also true that sometimes it's most quiet just before a storm. ■

Email *jbelz@wng.org*



EXPERIENCE UNION.

PLAN A CAMPUS VISIT.

When you visit Union University, you'll discover what sets us apart and why Union is one of the premier institutions and best values in Christian higher education. Join one of our preview day experiences, come for a personal on-campus visit, or visit virtually without leaving your home.

FALL 2022 AND SPRING 2023 DAY AT THE U

Nov. 11
Feb. 20
Mar. 31

SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY AT
uu.edu/campusvisit

UNION UNIVERSITY
RELIGIO ET ERUDITIO

DISPATCHES



WILL WALDRON/THE ALBANY TIMES UNION VIA AP

IN THE NEWS
BY THE NUMBERS
DEPARTURES
GLOBAL BRIEFS
U.S. BRIEFS
BACKGROUNDER
QUOTABLES
QUICK TAKES



Members of the ultra-Orthodox and Hasidic Jewish communities hold a protest before a Board of Regents meeting on Sept. 12 outside the New York State Education Department Building in Albany.

IN THE NEWS

No shalom for the yeshivas

New York ramps up private school oversight

by SHARON DIERBERGER

ON SEPT. 13, the New York Board of Regents voted unanimously to enforce and expand a century-old requirement that private schools provide an education that's "substantially equivalent" to public schools. The sweeping rules—which introduce state-mandated oversight of certain private schools that have operated autonomously for years—are raising concerns among parental rights advocates.

The Board of Regents vote came in response to media reports that students at yeshivas—Hasidic Jewish schools—were failing standardized tests. The directives, though, apply to all private schools, and regardless of whether they receive public funding.

Schools will have to show they teach classes substantially equivalent to what the state teaches in math, science, English language arts, social studies, history, citizenship, physical and health education (though not sex ed), the Constitution, and other topics. Classes must be taught in English by a teacher who demonstrates "the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to provide substantially equivalent instruction."

The board announced its decision days after a *New York Times* article criticized Hasidic education in New York, saying such schools deny students basic instruction needed to prepare them for the outside world. The article pointed to failing test scores for thousands of Hasidic students.

Prior to the enactment of the new regulations, the public submitted 350,000 comments, a record high, mostly opposing them.

Parochial school organizations told WORLD the new regulations are better than previous proposals from several years ago. But Heritage Foundation senior research fellow Jay Greene said they should be concerned.

"The regents' goal," Greene said, "is to assert the role of the state in controlling the content of private religious education ... hassling families and communities that choose to raise their children in ways that aren't broadly embraced by public authorities in New York."

Greene said yeshivas' educational traditions date back millennia and seek to produce virtuous human beings. Some yeshivas purposefully deemphasize test scores, earnings, and status, though in 2018 *The Jewish Press* reported yeshiva students greatly →

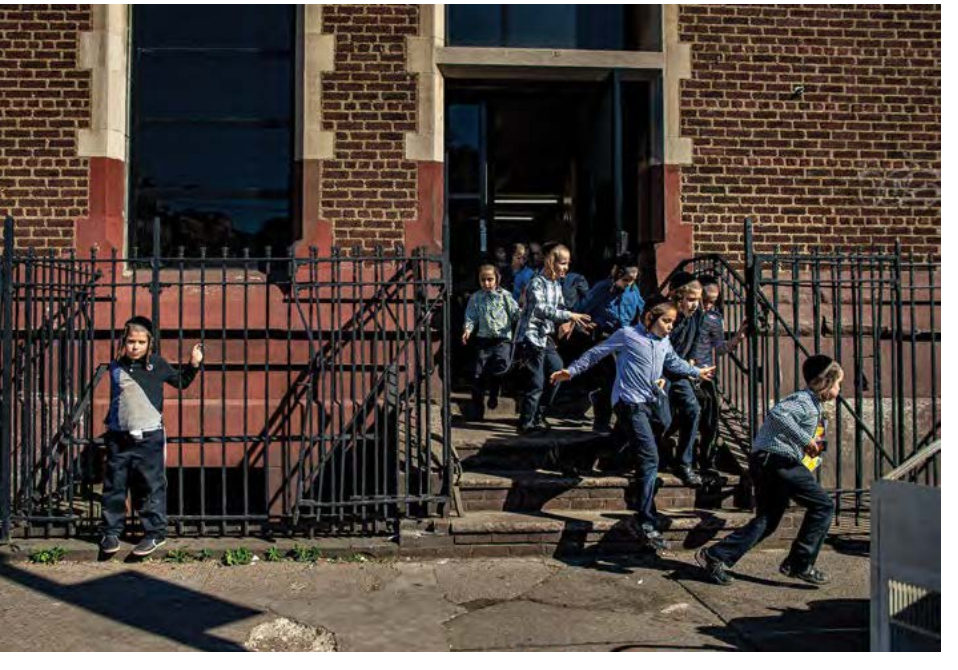
outperformed local public school students on standardized tests. Greene said most boys learn Yiddish, Hebrew, and Aramaic, in addition to English, and study a robust curriculum agreed upon by the community. He blasted the *Times* article as a hit piece that focuses on a small subset of yeshivas and relies on selective anecdotes and data to skew the facts.

Yeshiva University professor Moshe Krakowski conducts research on elementary yeshivas. He described yeshiva schools and communities as happy, well-functioning, family-centered, and characterized by low rates of crime and drug abuse and high levels of life satisfaction: "They are one of the last places in America where you have real community life."

The state has warned that schools may lose funding if they don't comply with the regulations. But Krakowski notes that New York gives yeshivas only about $1,000-$2,000 per student annually for things like school lunches, security, and after-school care–compared with $30,000 spent per public school student.

"Education has to be understood as an extension of child rearing. This is really a dispute about who's going to raise children."

Students pour out of a Brooklyn yeshiva on June 8.



JONAH MARKOWITZ/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

The New York Association of Christian Schools and New York State Council of Catholic School Superintendents said their members already meet or surpass state requirements. The groups are pleased the new plan provides multiple pathways to demonstrate substantial equivalency. Those pathways include proving compliance by accreditation from an approved organization or by showing that students are progressing on state tests.

School districts will be required to visit the state's 1,700 private schools by the end of the 2024-25 school year to ensure schools are teaching mandated subjects or following one of the equivalency pathways. Some critics fear the burdensome monitoring will divert public school funds.

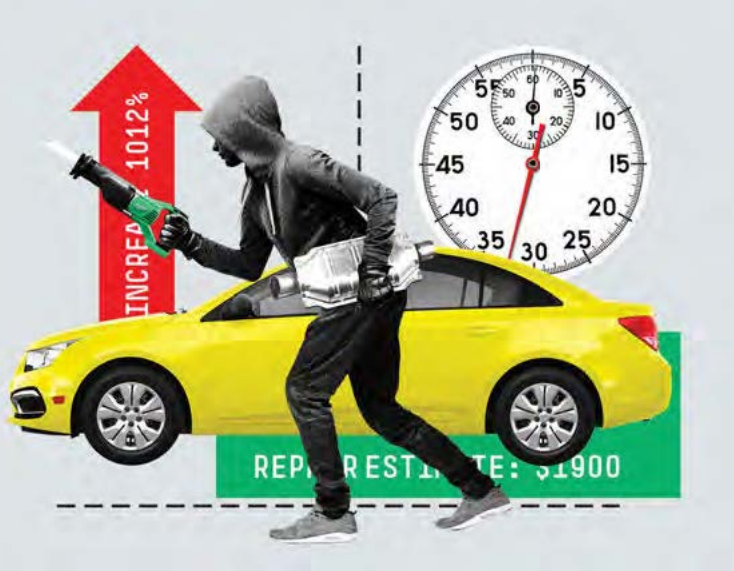
The board's mandates won't directly affect homeschoolers, who are already required to meet substantial-equivalence requirements, according to Home School Legal Defense Association attorney T.J. Schmidt. HSLDA has tried for years to get New York to reduce onerous homeschool regulations, but Schmidt said the board's new requirements move in the opposite direction: "They've got homeschoolers pretty well controlled already, so it's, 'Let's move on to another group [yeshivas].'"

Krakowski expects to see a lawsuit against the board's decision that could reach the U.S. Supreme Court. In *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972), the court ruled in favor of an Amish practice allowing students to end formal education at 14.

Greene and Krakowski say parents should be concerned any time education regulations increase, because the state may eventually mandate curriculum contrary to private school values.

"Education has to be understood as an extension of child rearing," said Greene. "This is really a dispute about who's going to raise children." ■

—with additional reporting by Elizabeth Russell



BY THE NUMBERS

Costly crime

by JOHN DAWSON

1,012%

The increase in catalytic converter thefts in the United States between 2018 and 2020 according to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. The valuable precious metals inside catalytic converters have made the auto part a hot target for thieves.

$159.57

The average scrap value of a catalytic converter in early September according to New Jersey–based junk dealer Rockaway Recycling.

$1,900

The rough estimate offered by RepairPal for the cost of replacing a catalytic converter, though prices vary by model.

10

The number of states that enacted new legislation in 2021 aimed at quelling the surge of catalytic converter thefts.

30 seconds

The time needed for a thief to cut away a catalytic converter with a reciprocating saw, according to the National Insurance Crime Bureau's David Glawe.

ILLUSTRATION BY KRIEG BARRIE; STARR: MICHAEL BROCHSTEIN/SIPA USA/AP; MARTIN: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE/FACEBOOK

Ken Starr



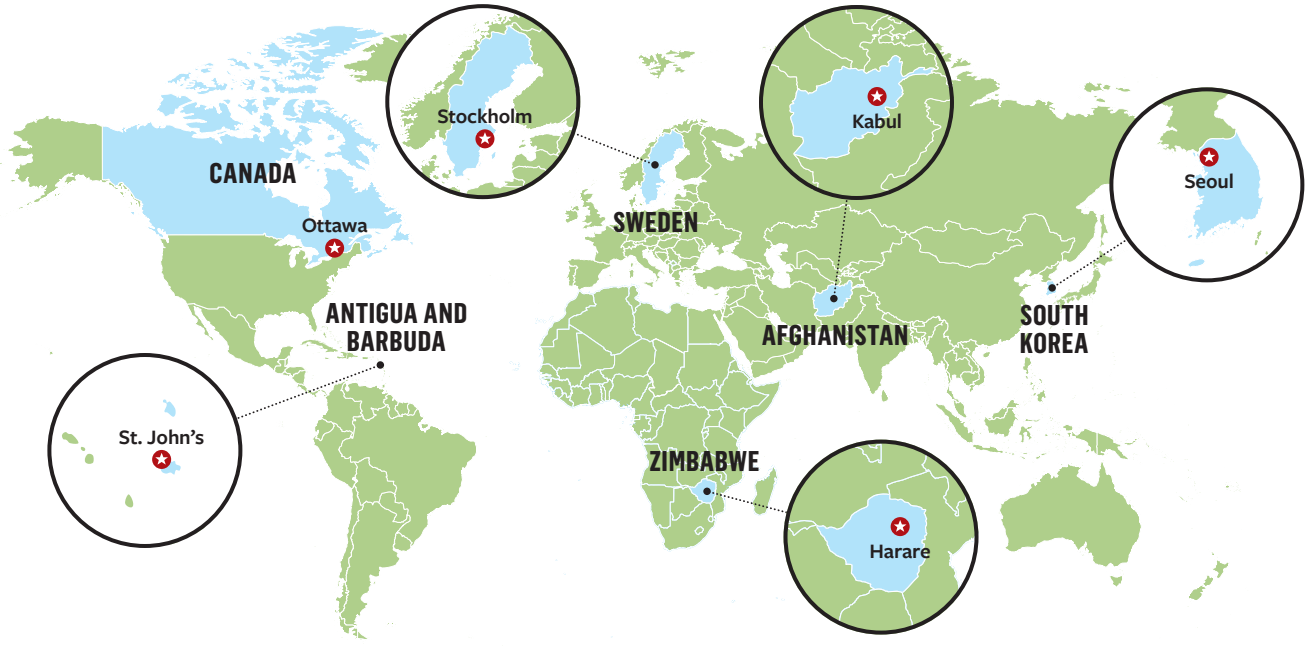
Kenneth Starr, the lawyer and judge best known for investigating the misdeeds of President Bill Clinton as an independent counsel, died Sept. 13. He was 76. Appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in 1983 by President Ronald Reagan, Starr later became the U.S. solicitor general under George H.W. Bush. In the '90s, a federal court appointed him to take over a Clinton-linked real estate probe dubbed Whitewater. Clinton lied to Starr during a deposition in 1998, setting the stage for an impeachment showdown later that year. WORLD named Starr its Daniel of the Year in 1998. After leaving Washington, he became the president of Baylor University in 2010, but was ousted in 2016 amid a scandal over the school's mishandling of claims of sexual assault among students.

Jim Martin



Jim Martin, a World War II veteran whose military unit's exploits in the European theater were featured in the HBO miniseries *Band of Brothers*, died on Sept. 11 at the age of 101. Martin volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1942 shortly after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and trained as a paratrooper. Nicknamed "Pee Wee" by fellow soldiers because of his diminutive stature, Martin parachuted into combat on D-Day over Normandy and subsequently participated in the liberation of Europe. He earned a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star among other commendations.

Canada: New hope for Conservatives?





Canada The Conservative Party of Canada has a new leader. Pierre Poilievre, 43, won the party vote in September with 70 percent support. He campaigned on a promise to reduce taxes and tackle the rising food and gas prices that are driving inflation. He also vowed to expand Canadians' individual liberty, a hot-button issue after the country's severe pandemic lockdowns. The Conservatives have struggled to challenge Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government since it came to power in 2015. But analysts say Poilievre may have a fighting chance. *—Leigh Jones*



POPULATION
38.2 million

LANGUAGE
59% English, 22% French

RELIGION
Christian (39% Catholic, 20% Protestant), 3% Muslim

GOVERNANCE
Federal parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy

GDP
$1.74 trillion

MAJOR EXPORTS
petroleum, cars and vehicle parts, gold, natural gas

Antigua and Barbuda With the announcement of King Charles III's ascendancy, the Caribbean island nation of Antigua and Barbuda joined several other countries considering a declaration of independence from the British crown. Australia, New Zealand, and Jamaica announced plans to hold nationwide referendums by 2025 to discuss becoming republics. The move to self-rule is not necessarily an act of disrespect toward the new monarch. At the beginning of her reign, Queen Elizabeth II ruled 32 countries in her role as head of the Commonwealth. Last year, the number totaled 15 after Barbados left Britain's orbit. *—Bekah McCallum*


St. John's, Antigua

POILIEVRE: JAMES PARK/BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES; ANTIGUA: SEAN PAVONE/ALAMY



Afghanistan On Sept. 14, the Biden administration announced the creation of a foundation that will use $3.5 billion in frozen Afghan central bank assets to help stabilize Afghanistan amid a worsening economic and humanitarian crisis. The Taliban will not have access to the Afghan Fund, based in Switzerland and governed by a board of trustees that includes two Afghan economists and representatives from the U.S. and Swiss governments. "Robust safeguards have been put in place to prevent the funds from being used for illicit activity," the U.S. Treasury and State departments said in a joint statement. *—Mary Jackson*

Zimbabwe Cohabiting couples and others in unregistered customary unions can now receive protections under Zimbabwe's amended marriage law. The new law provides couples in unregistered unions with property rights in the case of death or divorce. "Most women in Zimbabwe have not had their lobola, or bride price, paid. Yet they have built homes and acquired properties with their husbands, and often the wives and even children sired out of these unions are left out of the inheritance," legal analyst Zoro Nkomo told Anadolu Agency. But Abigail Matsvayi, director of the Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association, told local media the changes to civil partnerships could result in "eroding the monogamous nature of civil marriages." *—Onize Ohikere*



POPULATION
15.1 million

LANGUAGE
Shona, Ndebele, English, 13 others

RELIGION
Christian (75% Protestant, 7% Catholic)

GOVERNANCE
Presidential republic

GDP
$40.79 billion

MAJOR EXPORTS
Gold, tobacco, iron alloys

South Korea More than 280 South Korean-born adoptees in Europe and the United States claim their adoptions were based on falsified documents. They allege the papers contained doctored birth names, incorrect family background information, and other inconsistencies that raise questions about whether they were really orphans. On Sept. 13, Peter Møller, co-founder of the Danish Korean Rights Group, submitted investigation requests from at least 163 adoptees in Denmark and 36 in the U.S. to Seoul's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He's urging the commission to probe cases involving Holt Children's Services and Korea Social Service. Adoptees in Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, and Germany are also challenging their adoptions. *—Joyce Wu*



POPULATION
51.8 million

LANGUAGE
Korean, English

RELIGION
Christian (20% Protestant, 8% Catholic), 16% Buddhist,

GOVERNANCE
Presidential republic

GDP
$2.19 trillion

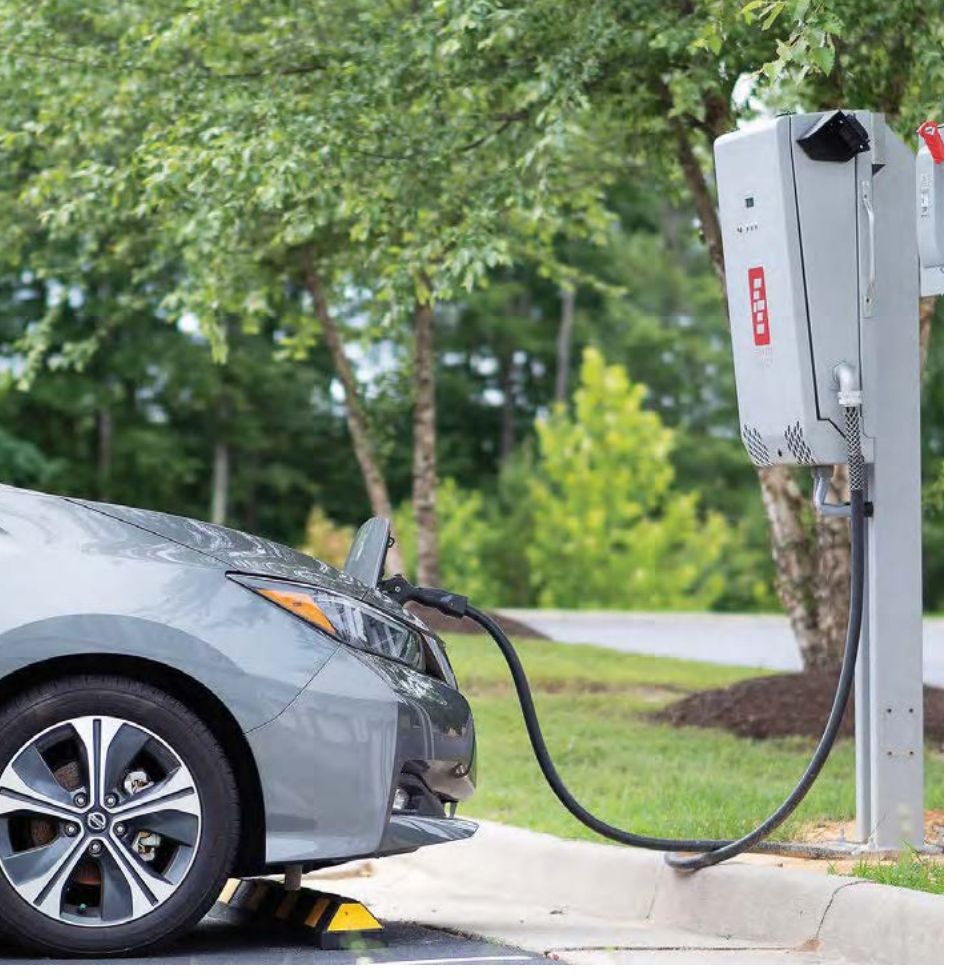
MAJOR EXPORTS
Integrated circuits, cars, ships, oil

Sweden Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson resigned in September after her Social Democrats lost national parliamentary elections to a conservative bloc coalition that includes the far-right Swedish Democrats. The Swedish Democrats arose out of the neo-Nazi movement of the 1980s and is now the nation's second largest. Analysts cite voter concerns over crime, migration, and the economy for the coalition's slim majority win. Ulf Kristersson, leader of the conservative Moderates party and head of the new coalition, will become the new prime minister. The advance of the Swedish Democrats echoes similar gains made recently by far-right parties in France and Italy. *—Jenny Lind Schmitt*



Kristersson (left) and Andersson

AFGHANISTAN: EBRAHIM NOROOZI/AP; SWEDEN: HENRIK MONTGOMERY/TT NEWS AGENCY VIA AP



U.S. BRIEFS

Give some power, take some power

New Hampshire The state's largest electric power distributor is experimenting with a new "transactive energy rate" it plans to roll out to members in a few months. The New Hampshire Electric Co-op plans to send daily messages to customers detailing the price of power during each hour of the next day. Customers can then choose to limit energy use during peak times—or use bidirectional charging technology to send power back to the grid and get a credit on their energy bills. Only a few electric vehicles, like the Nissan Leaf and Ford F-150 Lightning, come with bidirectional charging capabilities, but use of the technology is on the rise. The co-op believes the new rates could help prevent grid overload. "We recognize that members can provide the resources that we need through their distributed energy resources," said Brian Callnan, vice president of power resources and access. *—Elizabeth Russell*



POPULATION
1.4 million

GOVERNOR
Chris Sununu*

U.S. SENATORS
Jeanne Shaheen*, Margaret Wood Hassan*

INDUSTRY
Manufacturing, tourism, healthcare

New Jersey Starting next year, Princeton University will grant free tuition, room, and board to students whose families earn less than $100,000 a year. The new financial aid policy will take effect in fall 2023. Qualifying students—about a quarter of the current student body—will also get an additional $4,050 a year to cover the cost of books and other school-related expenses. And the school plans to scrap a $3,500 activity fee for all students. Donations will fund most of the aid, school President Christopher L. Eisgruber said. Princeton's Annual Giving campaign brought in $81.8 million last year. The policy is designed to attract students of varying backgrounds and show that "a Princeton education is an affordable education." *—Elizabeth Russell*

Georgia Incidents involving handguns at Georgia schools have tripled in the last few years, prompting administrators to enforce extra security measures. Cobb County, a district with over 100,000 students, now allows certain school staff members to carry guns. To limit dangerous items being brought into classrooms, Clayton County ordered 52,000 clear backpacks. Any opaque bags will be searched. And Atlanta's school board approved spending $2.6 million to install advanced screening systems. Police have responded to at least 10 reports of gunfire resulting in four injuries on Georgia campuses this year. During the last school year, Atlanta's largest districts reported nearly 200 total disciplinary cases for bringing a firearm to campus. *—Beckah McCallum*



California A state-funded website launched Sept. 13 tells women how to get "reproductive healthcare" and abortions in California, even if they live across the country. The same week, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that his campaign paid for 18 pro-abortion billboards in states with pro-life laws. The signs say things like "Texas doesn't own your body" and point to the new website. They're appearing in Indiana, Mississippi, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Texas. California's budget now includes $200 million for promoting abortion in the state, and Newsom told any woman seeking an abortion to "come to California." State pro-life groups argue public funds shouldn't promote abortion and insist other, more pressing issues need that funding. In November, California voters will consider an amendment that bars the state from denying or interfering with "reproductive freedom." *—Mary Muncy*

South Carolina "Jane Doe One" and "Jane Doe Two" have filed the first of what could be an avalanche of lawsuits against the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) following a report earlier this year that found the denomination's leaders mishandled claims of abuse. The suit alleges a youth pastor sexually abused teenagers, but Randall Hood, attorney for the plaintiffs, is seeking damages that ricochet: "The SBC, South Carolina Baptist Convention, and Northside Baptist Church did nothing to protect our client, and it resulted in even more victims." Personal injury litigators across the nation are advertising free case reviews because "thousands may be eligible to file lawsuits against the SBC." A lawyer for the SBC Executive Committee said it could not be held liable for behavior it didn't know about and a person over whom it had no authority. He also claimed the allegations of abuse related to the lawsuit did not appear in the report released by Guidepost Solutions earlier this year. *—Kim Henderson*



POPULATION
5.1 million

GOVERNOR
Henry McMaster*

U.S. SENATORS
Lindsey Graham*, Tim Scott*

INDUSTRY
Agriculture, biotechnology, automotive, aerospace



Montana The state's Department of Public Health and Human Services on Sept. 19 said it will abide by a judge's order that it allow changes to the sex listed on birth certificates. A state law passed in 2021 permitted amendments to sex on birth certificates only to correct a clerical error or follow a court order after a surgical procedure. But state District Court Judge Michael Moses temporarily blocked that law in April, saying it was too vague since it did not state the type of surgery required. Yet rather than revert to a 2017 law that allowed Montanans to "correct" their certificate by filing an affidavit of gender transition, the health department on Sept. 9 issued stricter rules that only allowed changes to correct clerical errors, arguing that previous rules were based on an incorrect premise that surgery changes a person's sex. The judge later rebuked health department officials for attempting to sidestep his April injunction. The state is considering its next steps. *—Todd Vician*

NEW HAMPSHIRE: NISSAN HANDOUT; CALIFORNIA: MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES; SOUTH CAROLINA: JAE C. HONG/AP

BACKGROUNDER

Does Ukraine have a neo-Nazi problem?

by TODD VICIAN



WHEN RUSSIAN TROOPS first invaded Ukraine in 2014, volunteers and foreign fighters ran to the sound of the guns. The Azov Battalion stood in defense of Ukraine and became famous for its fierce fighting ... and its reported neo-Nazi ties. What's the role of the battalion today, and do extremists still serve in its ranks?

Where did the Azov Battalion get its name? The unit formed in Mariupol, a strategic port city that provides access to the Sea of Azov—and an opening to Ukraine for invaders. The narrow strait that connects the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea is an important and contested sea lane.

How was the battalion formed? After Russia invaded Crimea in February 2014, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense called for volunteer defenders. Andriy Biletsky, head of the now-defunct paramilitary organization, the Patriot of Ukraine, created the Azov Battalion and welcomed Ukrainians and foreign fighters. The volunteers helped recapture Mariupol from Russian-backed separatists that June.

Is the group part of the Ukrainian military? Today it is. The Ukrainian government brought the battalion into the Ministry of Interior in December 2014 and elevated it to a special purpose regiment. According to Stanford University researchers, the unit has grown from 50 volunteers to approximately 1,500 members. The Azov Regiment defended Mariupol again this year as Russian forces attacked the city.

When did complaints of neo-Nazi ties surface? After the battalion achieved battlefield success, media showed members wearing insignia and displaying flags with apparent Nazi symbols: swastikas, a sideways "Z" with a vertical line through the center, and a circle with 12 radial lines similar to the SS insignia. Azov leaders said their symbols portray Ukrainian nationalism.

Is neo-Nazi sentiment prevalent in the unit? Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed this year his troops were "de-Nazifying" Ukraine. Russian-controlled media in 2014 published pictures of Ukrainian soldiers wearing Azov insignia alongside pictures of civilians in neo-Nazi marches without identifying where the events occurred. Azov leaders have downplayed Nazi ties, but researchers and media reports show battalion leaders expressed white supremacist views before 2014. Past social media posts, tattoos, and connections with white supremacist groups in Europe add further evidence. The scholarly consensus is that neo-Nazi elements were present from the beginning and continue today, but diminished significantly after the battalion's integration into the military.

Is the U.S. backing this group? The United States has spent more than $15.2 billion in security assistance for Ukraine since January 2021. But Congress passed laws to prevent funds, equipment, and training from going to the Azov Battalion. ■

STRINGER/NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

QUOTABLES

"I just want to die in Ukrainian Ukraine, not Putin's one."

OLEH LUTSAI, 70, explaining why he did not intend to leave his recently liberated town of Hrakove, Ukraine, where he lived with his neighbors in the basement of a bombed-out apartment complex for four months during a Russian occupation.

"It really is filling that gap that our society has not filled."

SONYA BORRERO, a pro-abortion professor of medicine at University of Pittsburgh, referring to how pro-life pregnancy resource centers assist pregnant women with practical needs.

"They want to seal off Chinese churches from the outside world."

Pastor PAN YONGGUANG, who fled China with his congregation due to increasing persecution from Communist authorities there. Now in Thailand, the church members say they and their family members have continued to experience harassment from Chinese agents.

"It felt like a 10-pound pinecone hit the back of my head."

University of Richmond biochemistry professor MICHAEL LEOPOLD, who was attacked twice on the Virginia school's campus by an owl. "My wife says to walk with an umbrella," he told WRIC-TV.











QUICK TAKES

Lazy river ride

The SS *Berta* breaks record for longest journey by pumpkin boat

by JOHN DAWSON

SOME MEN GROW PUMPKINS for pies, others for shows. Nebraska's Duane Hansen grew his 846-pound gourd to be a boat. The 60-year-old Hansen hollowed out his prized pumpkin, stashed a cooler inside it, and headed for the Missouri River. On Aug. 27, Hansen piloted the pumpkin, which he dubbed *Berta*, 38 miles downriver from Bellevue to Nebraska City using the Missouri's natural current and a kayak paddle. The 11-hour float proved good enough to smash the prior Guinness World Record for "longest journey by pumpkin boat." According to Hansen, riding through the wakes created by other boats proved to be the hardest part. "You've got to stop everything and just hold on and ride with those waves," he told News Channel Nebraska. "That was bad."

Fuel burn

Even before taking off, pilots of a United Airlines flight had to return to the gate at Newark's Liberty International Airport on Aug. 22 after burning through too much fuel. Passengers took to social media to complain about spending more than six hours delayed on the ground because of a taxiway traffic jam caused in part by inclement weather. According to *New York Times* reporter Hiroko Tabuchi, who was on the flight, pilots informed passengers after the hours-long wait that they no longer had sufficient fuel to make it to Denver.



Emergency re-moo-val

A cow in the U.K. needed some help from firefighters after getting itself wedged into a tight spot. Emergency workers received a call Aug. 31 requesting help in the village of Chilbolton in south England to rescue a cow stuck in a tree. According to firefighters, the cow had gotten its neck wedged in the fork of a willow. After cutting the tree to free the cow, officials with the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service labeled the rescue on Twitter as "udderly ridiculous."

ILLUSTRATION BY CHANELLE NIBBELINK; COW: HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Life preserving appliance

A Brazilian fisherman bobbed on Atlantic Ocean waves for 11 days in August with only a freezer to keep him afloat. Romualdo Macedo Rodrigues left a Brazilian port in early August planning to fish for three days. But leaks in the boat overwhelmed the skipper, and eventually the vessel sank. Happily, Rodrigues managed to find a floating freezer among the flotsam and climbed inside. More than a week later, other fishermen spotted and rescued the man off the Suriname coast.





Mistaken windfall

"Finders keepers" may work on the playground, but an Australian woman may have a hard time pressing that doctrine in court. Last year, an employee at the Singapore-based Crypto.com accidentally transferred $7.2 million into Thevamanogari Manivel's account rather than the $68 refund she'd requested. Officials with the company only noticed the error seven months later in December. But by then, Manivel had transferred the loot to an outside account and even purchased a lavish five-bedroom home with the proceeds. An Australian judge recently ordered Manivel to sell the home and repay the company.



The nanny did it

A sheriff's deputy in Madison County, Ala., says a goat ate his paperwork. Deputy Casey Thrower said he was serving civil papers to an address when a pair of small goats made a move on his patrol car. Thrower said he typically leaves his door open in case he has to run from a loose dog. While one of the goats hopped on top of the cruiser, the other dove through the open door and began eating paperwork Thrower had left on the passenger seat. The deputy's bodycam footage caught him pleading with the animal: "Quit eating that! Get out of here." Eventually the deputy managed to scare off the goats, but that wasn't the end of his misadventure: Higher-ups at the department released his bodycam footage to the public.

"Cool sites, great food, and a level of honesty from the city's people that some whiny babies are obviously not prepared for."

Telling it like it is

What's the rudest city in America? According to an August survey of 1,500 Americans conducted by the language-learning app Preply, Philadelphia tops the list, with Memphis, New York, Las Vegas, and Boston rounding out the Top 5. Some denizens of the City of Brotherly Love aren't taking the news well. *Philadelphia Inquirer* culture reporter and columnist Stephanie Farr retorted that residents are straightforward, not rude. "Listen, we'll tell you what to expect when visiting Philly," she wrote. "Cool sites, great food, and a level of honesty from the city's people that some whiny babies are obviously not prepared for."



GOAT ILLUSTRATION BY RACHEL BEATTY; RODRIGUES: SCREEN GRAB; CRYPTO: ISTOCK; RUDE CITY ILLUSTRATION: SHUTTERSTOCK



VOICES **LYNN VINCENT**

The dragonfly gospel

An incredible metamorphosis displays God's handiwork

OUT HERE IN THE NEW OLD WEST, we've got critters. You've met Chicken Carrot and the alpaca gang across the street. A black-and-white kingsnake named Doc patrols the area, careful to avoid the hungry gaze of red-tail hawks wheeling overhead. We also have owls and bobcats and bunnies. I even met my first tarantula the other day. (I don't know how she got into my kitchen.)

Day to day, the chaparral pours forth speech. Night to night, coyotes yip-yip-yip from the horse ranch out back. All proclaim God's creative glory, but by far the most glorious are the dragonflies.

They show up in spring and summer, fiery orange with crystal wings etched in shimmering gold. I like to hang out in a steamer chair and watch them fly oval-shaped reconnaissance patrols over the swimming pool. Despite their fairy-tale appearance, dragonflies are aggressive, and aerial dogfights are common. But a dragonfly's life is as fleeting as a dream, so they're also looking for mates.

I decided to do a little research on these fascinating creatures, and that's when I knew: A dragonfly is a grace note ... a flourish ... a wink from the Creator.

Here's why I think so:

Dragonflies begin life underwater as larvae or "nymphs." During this phase, they are wingless, bug-like, even a little ugly. They subsist on a Gollum-ish diet of crustaceans, worms, snails, tadpoles, and small fish.

Nymphs live underwater for a year or two, and then ... some type of biological timer buzzes.

The nymph climbs out of the water. It starts to breathe air. And what happens next is nothing short of a magic trick.

The nymph attaches itself to a reed, splits its larval skin, and unfolds a new thorax—twice the length of the old one—lowering it exactly the way a ship lowers its brow. Next, the nymph pushes out a dragonfly head and dragonfly legs, along with two gossamer wings, which grow so quickly that with a little patience, you could see them form before your eyes. After a 30-minute break to let its legs harden, this new creature warms up its wings and launches on its maiden flight.

The entire process takes just three hours. Incredible.

Even more incredible: Unlike the familiar butterfly metamorphosis, there is no pupal stage. No extended, secret manufacturing process. The nymph simply unzips its wetsuit and—presto!—unfurls an entirely new self.

This got me thinking. How do evolutionists say this moulting process evolved? What sequence of undirected, unintelligent, random, "beneficial" mutations could possibly explain this—even once?

Since dragonflies mate and make more nymphs, one might argue the species was propagating itself. Surviving. But nymphs live underwater for *years*. Most dragonflies live for just weeks. From a survival-of-the-fittest standpoint, that doesn't seem helpful.

I asked Lehigh University biochemist Michael Behe about all this. Behe wrote our cover story (p. 42) on how the advancing science of microscopy is revealing God's marvelous molecular designs. When I asked him how evolutionists explain the dragonfly, he dug up a 2019 state-of-the-science research paper and highlighted a sentence for me.

"We propose," dragonfly researchers had written, "that the final moult, and the consequent hemimetabolan metamorphosis, is a monophyletic innovation."

My translation: When your theory is weak, dazzle 'em with jargon.

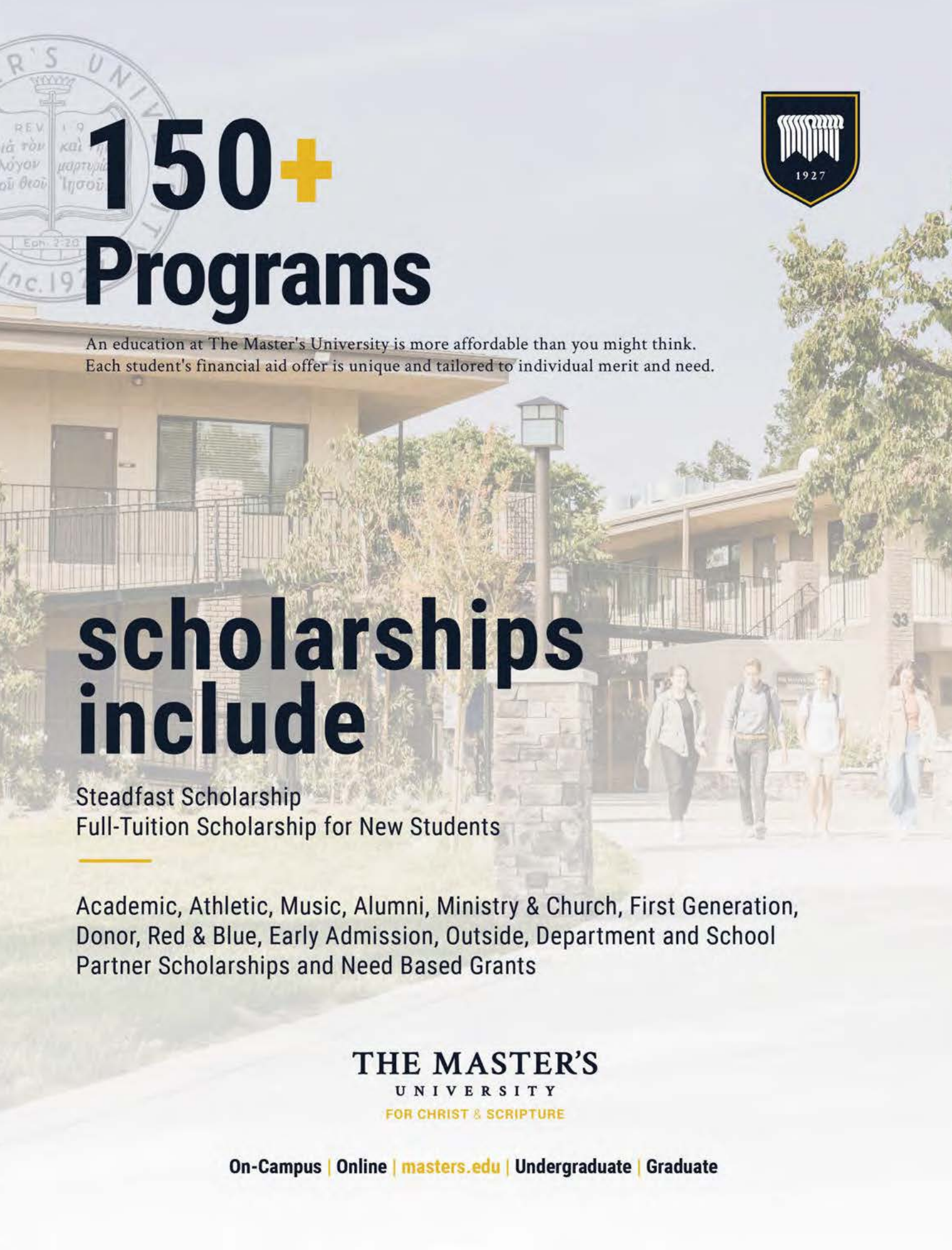
Behe has a different translation: "*Propose* means they don't know, and that nobody before them knew either."

But there is One who does. And He speaks through His handiwork. I like to think of this particular work as the "dragonfly gospel."

This is what you were, God seems to be saying: hiding, crawling around in the dark.

And this is what you are: a new creation, soaring in the light, beautiful in My sight. ■

Email *lvincent@wng.org*



150+ Programs

An education at The Master's University is more affordable than you might think.
Each student's financial aid offer is unique and tailored to individual merit and need.

scholarships include

Steadfast Scholarship
Full-Tuition Scholarship for New Students

Academic, Athletic, Music, Alumni, Ministry & Church, First Generation, Donor, Red & Blue, Early Admission, Outside, Department and School Partner Scholarships and Need Based Grants

THE MASTER'S
UNIVERSITY
FOR CHRIST & SCRIPTURE

On-Campus | Online | masters.edu | Undergraduate | Graduate

CULTURE



DAVID A. MOLINA



TRENDING

Striking a chord with a hymn for the ages

The Foto Sisters add a beautiful tune to timeless lyrics

by KIM HENDERSON in Nashville, Tenn.

AT SEPTEMBER'S Getty Music worship conference in Nashville, a blonde duo waited backstage, ready to push through the curtains to perform. The annual mega-gathering of Christian artists is a dream platform. It has the kind of DNA that can forever link songs to singers, they way "In Christ Alone" is linked to event founders Keith and Kristyn Getty. The smiling Foto Sisters, pausing for a mic check, know all this. They also know to hold their hopes loosely.

How the pair of Louisiana natives arrived at such a moment—premiering their own hymn after negotiating it into the Getty catalog—is a question Katie, 27, and Gaylyn, 25, answer humbly: God's grace. When pressed, they go into details that spark hope in any parent who's ever paid for a piano lesson.

The classically trained Fotos began their music studies with ear training, a European method of note reading that doesn't require students to know the alphabet. Violin lessons followed, as well as piano, cello, and voice. Their older sister, Addie, took lessons, too. It wasn't long before teachers pulled Jimmy and Carolyn Foto aside, whispering that there was "something special" about their daughters' musical instincts. It was enough to spur a whole-family buy-in, and treks for instruction kept roads between the Fotos' rural home and Baton Rouge and New Orleans hot.

Homeschooling allowed the sisters to spend long hours in a practice studio constructed in their backyard, but it wasn't a self-absorbed pursuit. They became regulars at hospitals and nursing homes, where delighted patients nudged them through "Great Is Thy Faithfulness."

Katie says her mom was brilliant in that regard: "Anytime we wanted to be shy, she would look us in the eye and tell us shyness is selfishness and pride. She'd insist we get out of our comfort zone and go serve the people in the audience."

It must have worked. The trio went on to perform in front of large crowds at church gatherings, NFL games, the Creation Museum, and G3 and Ligonier conferences. By the time they finished high school, the young women had to decide: attend college, where they'd study classical musical performance, or take a shot at Nashville? They chose Nashville. "Why bring it to a pause?" Gaylyn explains, referring to the opportunities coming their way. "We knew we could always do college later, but we couldn't necessarily get this back." →

BY THIS POINT in our interview, the sisters seem relaxed. The performance high heels have gone missing, Birkenstocks in their place. Still, the Fotos are careful not to speak over one another as they answer questions. They are polite, wholesome. Blessed with striking eyes and the kind of complexions that make for good publicity photos. That helped when they began their 2018 transition into commercial music. The family supported the move, buying a second home in Tennessee.

At first, the sisters' classical training made them an odd fit, but they knew secular artists such as Andrea Bocelli and Celine Dion had made it work. A Christian classical-crossover genre was emerging, and the Fotos wanted to be part of it. It didn't hurt that sought-after producers like Kent Hooper and Phillip Keveren tutored the sisters in songwriting. "We branched out into a new world," Katie acknowledges.

That world included albums and videos and tour schedules that blocked out more than half of every year. With 30-plus performances each December, they often spent Christmas Day on the road. Katie says she didn't fully unpack her suitcase for a solid three years: "It's very lonely, and when you come back you find that people have moved on without you."

Gaylyn learned a local church connection was crucial. "That refreshing, that feeding. You have to be so purposeful about it. You think you're getting away with neglecting it, that it's not really affecting you, but it catches up big time."

When Addie retired from the group in 2020, the two remaining sisters found themselves at a crossroads. "We decided to zone in on what kind of music we wanted to sing, what our message would be, even what we would wear on stage. We decided to be picky about everything," Katie remembers. They began to meditate on God's faithfulness and His perseverance of the saints, finding and writing songs that leaned into those promises. Then the pandemic hit.



"There was a beautiful skeleton of a lyric already there. It just needed to be more singable."

With all their live events canceled, the Fotos returned to their home in Louisiana to wait out the virus. It was March, and fear was running rampant. "I even sanitized the mail," Katie says as she shakes her head. In the middle of all the upheaval and uncertainty, the Fotos' pastor posted on social media some vintage lines penned by English hymn writer John Ryland. When Carolyn Foto saw them, she immediately waved her daughters over to her computer screen.

Gaylyn remembers being "hit hard" by Ryland's "Sovereign Ruler of the Skies," by the deep theology threaded through all nine verses. She knew the words were timeless, yet timely: "God keeping our hearts believing in Him for salvation, but also just keeping us in times of plagues and death and fear." The 18th-century lyrics, replete with *thees*, *thous*, and other bits of the King's English, are public domain, but the Fotos didn't know the original tune or melody. They decided to compose new music and add a chorus. "There was a beautiful



ABOVE: Katie (left) and Gaylyn perform "Sovereign Ruler of the Skies" at the Getty Music conference in Nashville. BELOW: The Fotos, including Addie (center), sing the national anthem at a Denver Broncos game.



skeleton of a lyric already there. It just needed to be more singable," Gaylyn says. Within a week, their version was finished. Well, almost finished. One blank spot had them stumped.

His decree, who formed the earth,
fixed my first and second birth ...

The Fotos texted their sister, Addie, to see if she had any ideas, but infant twins were consuming all of her creative energy. On a whim, Addie's husband, Jonathan Monk, made a foray into the songwriting world. His suggestion—"Now to him my life I owe, where He leads me I will go"—went on to finish the verse. It also earned Monk co-writer designation.

Within two months, fans could download "Sovereign Ruler of the Skies" singles and sheet music, but COVID meant in-person performances were out of the question. Still, Katie believed the piece had more potential than anything else they had written: "I knew it really flowed, but I didn't know how the Lord would use it."

It was the first time the Fotos had produced a piece that held potential as a congregational hymn. It was also the first time Katie felt compelled to approach modern hymn-writing heavyweight Keith Getty with any of their work. She emailed him the YouTube link. "Our paths had crossed before, and we have mutual friends, so I was like, 'You know, why not?' When we wrote the song, we hoped the Lord would take the lyrics farther than we could. And in the back of my head, it was the Gettys singing it."

Close to two years passed. "Sovereign Ruler of the Skies" circulated among churches, but the pandemic had changed the music industry. It had changed the Foto Sisters. They were becoming more selective about their projects. A song for a Hallmark movie? Yes. A monthlong summer tour? No. Meanwhile, Katie accepted a marriage proposal: "Music has been our life, but we've always wanted to be wives and mothers as well. Meeting my husband meant I gained that blessing, but I also had to let go of some other things."

And that's when Keith Getty called.

Katie smiles at the timing. "We took our hands off of the project, and that's when the Lord did His work."

Matt Merker is director of creative resources and training for Getty Music. He says they're excited to acquire "Sovereign Ruler of the Skies."

"We want to recover the best hymns of history. A hymn like Ryland's, with the richness of the poetry and theology, it's just unparalleled. And the fact that the Fotos knew about it, and they wrote this beautiful new tune to it, that's the sort of thing that we love."

At the recent event in Nashville, it was Merker who introduced the Foto Sisters to the crowd of some 7,000 conference-goers. With lights flashing and a camera crane roving, Katie realized even 18 years of performing experience couldn't keep her from having to talk herself out of a case of nerves. "It was like, 'OK, Katie, where's your focus? You have the opportunity to share about God's sovereignty. You're just a messenger, not the message.'"

And with that, she was steadied. The Foto Sisters entered stage right—holding it all loosely—and sang the song that could soon be coming to a worship service near us all. ■

TOP: JON SYRBE; BOTTOM: JIMMY FOTO



PAULA BRONSTEIN/AP

BOOKS

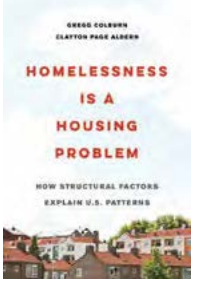
A multilayered problem

Homelessness is a crisis that more houses won't fix

by NATHAN MAYO

IMAGINE A GAME of musical chairs, with one of the contestants on crutches. As 10 people scramble for nine chairs, the player on crutches will doubtless be left standing. That vulnerability, however, isn't the "root cause" of the player's chairlessness, because if the room had 10 chairs, his crutches would be irrelevant.

Housing scholar Gregg Colburn and data journalist Clayton Aldern use this metaphor in their trailblazing new book *Homelessness Is a Housing Problem* (University of California Press, 2022) to illustrate their main argument. They write that in discussions about homelessness, vulnerabilities like addiction and domestic abuse are a distraction from the fact that there simply isn't enough affordable housing to go around.



Homelessness Is a Housing Problem
GREGG COLBURN & CLAYTON PAGE ALDERN

The argument that homelessness is merely a side effect of expensive rent is alluring. Unfortunately, the authors, though good at crunching numbers, are bad at drawing conclusions.

Colburn and Aldern do not reject the idea that poverty, divorce, mental health, and substance abuse precipitate many instances of homelessness. However, they argue that regional variations in homelessness are most strongly associated with regional variations in housing prices.

For example, San Francisco and Chicago are both Democrat-governed cities with comparable rates of mental health and addiction problems. San Francisco, however, has five times the level of homelessness. The main difference is housing prices. Colburn and Aldern claim that while individual vulnerabilities matter, high housing prices are a requirement for homelessness.

While their data certainly adds to the conversation, their conclusion overreaches on two levels.

First, they conflate variation in homelessness with absolute amounts of homelessness, overlooking the fact that even places with low home prices retain significant homelessness. In my own state of Missouri, rental prices are the second lowest in the nation—44 percent less than the national average. Yet, homelessness still exists, and at the 28th-highest level by state.

Second, they define the problem in a way that is so reductionist that it becomes misleading. The word *homeless* is functionally a euphemism for a person who not only lacks a home but also has myriad other problems. This is often the case with euphemism; the label only refers to a small element of the implied concept. If a contractor gives you a bid to build a "bathroom," you will expect that he plans to install a toilet as a part of the package. If Colburn and Aldern have a solution to "homelessness," the inference is that

A magical cure-all for homelessness will continue to elude the brightest minds of our era.

they will provide the formerly homeless with an improved life.

But among the chronically homeless, 60 percent have mental health problems, 80 percent are addicted, and up to 75 percent have health problems. Colburn and Aldern sidestep these associated issues and provide no reason to believe housing will fix them.

"Jimmy," a man at my local shelter, is a typical example of a "homeless" person. Beginning at 3 years old, he was a victim of prolonged sexual abuse. He started using meth to make his nightmares go away, but it soon took away everything else as well. Jimmy was not just homeless; he was also jobless, friendless, addicted, and suicidal.

Jimmy needs more than a house. He needs a physical, psychological, social, and spiritual intervention, led by people who genuinely care about him.

Colburn and Aldern are right that Jimmy needs to live in a society where necessities like housing are within reach if he works full time. The special interest policies that prevent the building of new housing in order to elevate home prices for existing owners are repugnant, and the authors deserve credit for drawing attention to this fact.

But the authors fail to realize that homelessness is a problem with a wide variety of causes. Thus, a magical cure-all for homelessness will continue to elude the brightest minds of our era. ■

—Nathan Mayo is the network director for the True Charity Initiative

BOOKS

Pioneer preacher

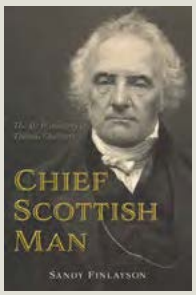
A Scottish precursor to Kuyper and Schaeffer

by RUSS PULLIAM

IF SOMEONE IS SURROUNDED by books all day, he may be able to write a good one himself.

That's at least the case with Sandy Finlayson, the librarian at Westminster Theological Seminary. He wrote a solid biography of Thomas Chalmers, the founding father of the Free Church of Scotland. Published in 2021, it slipped by our review system last year, but we didn't want you to miss it, so we're reviewing it here.

Chalmers was well known in the 19th century, and Finlayson's book, *Chief Scottish Man: The Life & Ministry of Thomas Chalmers* (Evangelical Press), captures his significance in Scottish history. (The title comes from Chalmers' contemporary, commentator Thomas Carlyle, who called Chalmers the "chief Scottish man of his time." His time was 1780-1847.)



Chief Scottish Man
SANDY FINLAYSON

Chalmers led about a third of the state church to break away from the government-established Church of Scotland in the 1843 Great Disruption. Americans take church independence for granted, but the shift in Scotland was momentous, as evangelicals launched a church free of excessive government snares.

Chalmers was a pioneer in other ways. He preached the gospel clearly and was a leading advocate of church responsibility to tackle poverty and other urban ills. He had an early evangelical vision for the gospel applied in cities, as he demonstrated in practice as a pastor in Glasgow. He called for compassion for needy children and families who had no church connection, as they moved from rural areas to cities in the Industrial Revolution.

That compassion grew out of a larger vision for the Lordship of Christ over all areas of life. He was an early Scottish advocate for what Abraham Kuyper would later seek in Dutch circles, or Francis Schaeffer would plead for in the American 20th century. One of Chalmers' sermon series was titled "The Application of Christianity to the Commercial and Ordinary Affairs of Life."

Chalmers grew up with a nominal faith from parents and church. He came to a clear commitment to Christ through two interesting influences: the writings of the French Christian mathematician Blaise Pascal and the apologetics of English abolitionist William Wilberforce.

Finlayson tells how Chalmers became a shining light for Scotland and a worthy role model for later generations.



BOOKS

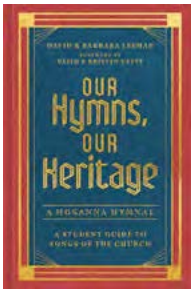
Let the children sing

For young people, a book of hymns that isn't simplistic

by JANIE B. CHEANEY

IN 2014 David and Barbara Leeman self-published *Hosanna, Loud Hosannas: Essential Hymns Every Child Should Sing*, enhanced with full-color art reproductions. Today that first edition is as much a monetary treasure as a spiritual one: Used copies sell online for $200 and up. But happily for Christian families, Moody Publishers has reprinted the Leemans' book under the title *Our Hymns, Our Heritage: A Student Guide to the Songs of the Church* (2022).

The beautiful paintings are casualties of high printing costs, but the text and hymn selection remain. A foreword by Keith and Kristyn Getty makes the point that even while children's literature grows more complex and intellectually demanding, too much of children's worship music has become simplistic and even shallow. They write, "It is refreshing to see a book of hymns selected for children to sing that tell the gospel and teach complex biblical truths in a timeless way."



Our Hymns, Our Heritage
DAVID & BARBARA LEEMAN

Older Christians who sang the words of Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts, and Clement of Alexandria before they could understand them know how their hymns have gathered weight and meaning. A child will not grasp the full meaning of "Far as the curse is found" or "God, our help in ages past." But as the years bring maturity, the words will continue to speak to deeper and deeper places. This "Student Guide" is targeted for ages 9 through 12, but as the authors note, "You should never stop being a student, especially about the truths and glory of God."

Writers from the earliest days of the Church (Aurelius Prudentius) up to the present (Stuart Townend) contribute to this collection. The hymns are divided in three major sections. The first 37 take us through the traditional church year from Advent to Pentecost. The second section, titled "God Is," explores the Trinitarian and sovereign nature of God, as well as attributes including love, hope, omnipresence, and more. "We Respond" encourages us in praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, testimony, and commitment. An additional section of spirituals reminds us that the gospel speaks to all races and times.

Hymns are printed with all verses and four-part harmony. On the facing page of each is an introduction to the lyricist and composer (or tune), followed by a meditation on the meaning of the hymn—all solid material for family devotionals. The authors include suggestions for teaching these hymns in a family setting. A spiral-bound book of piano accompaniments is available for the more musically inclined, but families who lack a pianist can sing along with music from a USB drive, ordered separately.

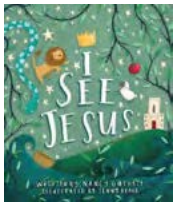
After decades of praise choruses and CCM, Christians are rediscovering the rich traditions of hymnody. *Our Hymns, Our Heritage* is a helpful resource to root those traditions in the next generation. ■

ISTOCK

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

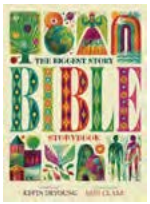
Adventures in theology

by KRISTIN CHAPMAN



I See Jesus
NANCY GUTHRIE
(10PUBLISHING 2022)

Guthrie introduces children to the concept of foreshadowing in the Bible by relating their understanding of human shadows to the shadows of Jesus found in the Old Testament: "Just like we can't see everything about ourselves in our own shadow, we don't see everything about Jesus in his shadows, but we do see some things about who he will be, what he will do, and how he will save." Each of the 20 spreads then offers an example from the Old Testament that points to Jesus. Although the format is geared with younger children in mind, the concepts will resonate with older children, so the book could be used as a springboard for deeper family discussion. ***Ages 5-10***



The Biggest Story Bible Storybook
KEVIN DEYOUNG
(CROSSWAY 2022)

In this 529-page book, DeYoung offers a carefully crafted retelling of God's redemption story from Genesis to Revelation. The 104 succinct entries each include a suggested Scripture reading and closing prayer, making them well-suited for the dinner table or bedtime reading. Children listening to a parent read this book aloud will be captivated by Don Clark's illustrations, which appear on nearly every page and feature bold colors and designs. DeYoung writes in his note to parents that some pictures depict an artistically stylized Jesus because "we thought it would seem strange, if not theologically misleading, to have a big book where Jesus never shows his face but appears only in shadows and silhouettes." ***Ages 5-12***



The Awesome Super Fantastic Forever Party
JONI EARECKSON TADA
(THE GOOD BOOK COMPANY 2022)

Getting an invitation to a party is exciting, Tada writes, but the problem with earthly parties is the fun eventually ends. Jesus, however, has offered us an invitation to a celebration that will never end. Tada then explores a Biblical understanding of heaven while unraveling worldly misconceptions (e.g., wearing a white gown while sitting on a cloud playing a harp). Catalina Echeverri's illustrations capture the excitement and joy Jesus' followers will experience when Jesus comes back and brings heaven with Him. Tada includes the gospel message as well as a reminder for children to look to the last chapter of Revelation to send their own invitation to Jesus: "Please come quickly, Jesus!" ***Ages 3-8***



The King and the Dragon
JAMES W. SHRIMPTON
(CROSSWAY 2022)

With beautiful rhyming prose, Shrimpton uses an allegory to tell the story of man's fall and God's redemption plan. When a dragon deceives the King's people into believing a lie, darkness takes root and the people find themselves poisoned "with shame and with lies." Their only hope is in the King's promise: "I'll send you a strong and most wonderful Knight to slay the foul Dragon and put all things right." The people must wait a very long time before the Knight finally arrives in an unexpected way to fulfill the King's promise and rescue the people once and for all. Shrimpton's closing pages present the gospel and remind children of the hope they have in Christ. ***Ages 3-7***



MOVIE

The Woman King

by BOB BROWN

- *Rated PG-13*
- *Theaters*
- *S3 / V7 / L2**

IN *THE WOMAN KING* director Gina Prince-Bythewood delivers an epic film about a historical group of black women warriors that is worthy of comparison to *Gladiator* and *Braveheart*. Our present cultural moment feels ripe for a cinematic black warrior princess who puts the blade to her white oppressors, but Prince-Bythewood doesn't grab the low-hanging fruit. Instead, the two female warriors at the center of *The Woman King* uphold a nobler calling: defending their homeland from enemies of any origin.

The film is set in the 1820s in the West African kingdom of Dahomey, in what is now the nation of Benin. The characters and events are fictitious, but they derive from legends about the Agojie (ah-GO-jee-ay), a real female fighting unit from that era. In the film, Viola Davis plays Nanisca, the general who leads the Agojie into battle. They must face the dominant Oyo tribe that raids Dahomey villages and sells captives to European slave traders. Who could have guessed that Davis, star of *Fences* and *The Help*, would be cast as a scimitar-slinging warrior with hair pulled up into a curly Mohawk? The most Oscar-nominated black actress in history plays the tough-minded, battle-weary career soldier to perfection. Perhaps the casting choice sends its own message about underestimating women.

Nanisca has a vulnerable side, too. A dark episode from her past haunts her and wakes her at night. She also has the ear of Dahomey's politically shifty King Ghezo (John Boyega), who profits personally from the sale of African captives the Dahomey warriors take in battle. Nanisca tries to persuade Ghezo to put a stop to the practice. Prince-Bythewood doesn't shy away from revisiting the sad record of blacks selling blacks into bondage, but her invented opposition to the practice does make the historical women complicit in enslaving others more palatable for a modern audience looking for "the good guys."

While Davis' work deservedly takes the headlines, Thuso Mbedu gives an equally powerful performance as headstrong 19-year-old Nawi. Early on, after Nawi attacks the man she's promised to as a bride, her father drags her to Ghezo's palace and abandons her there. Nawi decides to train with the Agojie simply to have a place to stay. Military discipline does little to quell her independent streak, though, and she's often at odds with Nanisca. Mbedu's entire performance is captivating. When Nawi weeps bitterly at a friend's death, many viewers will weep with her.

The film has many fine visual elements to go along with the superb acting. Filmed in South Africa, lush sets capture the horror of slave pens and the splendor of tropical palaces. Ghezo's 10 wives are painted in exquisite makeup. But Prince-Bythewood occasionally settles for cinematics tuned to

***Ratings from kids-in-mind.com, with quantity of sexual (S), violent (V), and foul-language (L) content on a 0-10 scale, with 10 high**

CTMG, INC.

"The most Oscar-nominated black actress in history plays the tough-minded, battle-weary career soldier to perfection."

modern viewers' expectations: Some of the Agojie's acrobatic fighting scenes seem out of a Marvel Comics film with choreographed spins and kicks surely foreign to crowded 19th-century African battlegrounds. Seeing the slightly built Nawi dispatch grown men two or three times her size requires suspension of disbelief. There's also a love story involving a hunky outsider who causes Nawi to reconsider her vow of celibacy.

The Woman King has little sensuality and bad language. In the fight scenes, most of the fatal blows are not shown, but the brutal violence and bloodletting lean toward an R rating. While the images of idol worship reflect that culture's practices, a superfluous scene during the closing credits, in which a woman meditates amid a cluster of small statues, defies explanation.

Many viewers will see the film as a testament to women's power and bodily autonomy. Even so, there's a striking exchange late in the film that doesn't easily fit the progressive narrative. A major character embraces her daughter who was conceived in rape, and tells her, "You are not the thing that hurt me."

She's right: Greater than a woman's power to destroy life is her ability to give it. ■

DISNEY+



MOVIE

Pinocchio

by MARTY VANDRIEL

- *Rated PG*
- *Disney+*
- *S1 / V3 / L2*

EIGHTY-TWO YEARS after releasing its animated classic *Pinocchio*, Walt Disney Pictures has produced a new live-action version of the famous tale. Many critics and audiences have given the new film poor reviews, but their ire is misplaced.

Tom Hanks stars as Geppetto the woodcarver, whose workshop draws the attention of a wandering, "ne're do well" cricket. Geppetto is lonely, having lost his dear son, whose picture inspires him to create a puppet of pine, whom he names "Pine-occhio."

Having "wished upon a star" before retiring to bed, the woodcarver sleeps right through the visit of the blue fairy (Cynthia Erivo), who brings Pinocchio to life and tells him that to become a real boy, he must learn to choose right from wrong as he passes an ordeal. The blue fairy appoints Jiminy Cricket as the puppet's conscience.

Pinocchio really does want to make the right choices, but he is so naïve that he wanders far from home, and far from the right paths, despite Jiminy Cricket's attempts to guide him. Geppetto pursues his wayward son all the way, never giving up on his dream to have a real family again.

While viewers may not like changes from the 1940 film, they might not know that the animated movie took far more significant liberties with its 1880s source material. For example, in the 19th-century tale, Pinocchio accidentally kills Jiminy Cricket after the insect tries to teach him about right and wrong!

Tom Hanks' portrayal of a grieving father is much fuller than the Geppetto of the animated version, and the live-action detail and beauty of the film is richer than that of the old classic. Some scenes, however, may be frightening for younger children.

MOVIE

See How They Run

by ANNA SYLVESTRE



▶ *Rated PG-13*
▶ *Theaters*
▶ *S3 / V5 / L5*

SEE HOW THEY RUN opens on a winter's evening in London in 1953, at a production of Agatha Christie's stage play *The Mousetrap*. Ominous jazzy tones and glittering city lights accompany a voiceover from Leo Kopernick (Adrien Brody)—an American film director who plans to adapt *The Mousetrap* for the silver screen. He summarizes the predictable formula of "whodunits": the least likable character gets knocked off quickly, and a world-weary inspector soon enters the scene to solve the grizzly crime.

It's too bad for Kopernick that he's the antagonistic and unlikable character in this story. His demise comes swiftly—murdered among the props and costumes of the theater's backstage, fulfilling his own predictions.

Kopernick's insistence that the screenplay for *The Mousetrap* must include a murder in the first few minutes is one of the many meta-jokes running throughout *See How They Run*. The self-referential film is a sort of homage to Christie's famous play. In this movie we see a murder mystery about a murder mystery and a film about a play that people want to adapt to film. As Christie aficionados know, no one's been able to adapt *The Mousetrap* to screen because they have to wait for its run in London's West End to close—and the show's been running continuously for 70 years.

The world-weary detective tasked with cracking the case is Inspector Stoppard (Sam Rockwell), and he's accompanied by the enthusiastic young Constable Stalker (Saoirse Ronan). A cast of suspects live glamorous lives, but can they be trusted? Stylish Petula Spencer owns the theater. Richard Attenborough and Sheila Sim (Harris Dickinson and Pearl Chanda) are based on the real-life stars. Attenborough endears himself to Stalker (a cinema lover) with his friendliness and a gift of tickets to see the play. But his kind gesture might be a clever diversion. Agatha Christie herself shows up as a character, mysteriously referenced but rarely seen in the film.

The ensuing investigation features classic elements of English murder mysteries. Interviews with diverse suspects, motives for murder revealed at each turn, and charming depictions of vintage English life. The film also addresses the tension between commerce and excellence and considers the ethics of depicting traumatic events for the sake of either motivation.

See How They Run is primarily upbeat and funny, but seeing the bloodied murdered victim might upset some viewers. Ronan's performance as Stalker—overzealous, with a proclivity for puns and jumping to conclusions, but also dedicated to her work— stands out especially.

Like Christie's stories, the movie is formulaic. But for lovers of the genre, *See How They Run* is an enjoyable inside joke, made richer with a little food for thought on the nature and ethics of art. ■

20TH CENTURY STUDIOS

BOX OFFICE TOP 10

For the weekend of Sept. 16-18, according to Box Office Mojo

1. ***The Woman King****
   PG-13 • S3 / V7 / L2
2. ***Barbarian***
   R • S7 / V8 / L10
3. ***Pearl***
   R • not rated
4. ***See How They Run****
   PG-13 • S3 / V5 / L5
5. ***Bullet Train****
   R • S5 / V8 / L10
6. ***Top Gun: Maverick****
   PG-13 • S3 / V4 / L5
7. ***DC League of Super-Pets****
   PG • S1 / V3 / L2
8. ***The Invitation***
   PG-13 • S5 / V7 / L5
9. ***Minions: The Rise of Gru****
   PG • S1 / V3 / L1
10. ***Moonage Daydream***
    PG-13 • not rated

**Reviewed by WORLD*



MOVIE ADAPTATIONS OF THE WORKS OF AGATHA CHRISTIE

- → ***A Night of Terror*** / 1937
- → ***And Then There Were None*** / 1945
- → ***Witness for the Prosecution*** / 1957
- → ***Murder She Said*** / 1961
- → ***Murder on the Orient Express*** / 1974
- → ***Death on the Nile*** / 1978
- → ***The Mirror Crack'd*** / 1980
- → ***Evil Under the Sun*** / 1982
- → ***Appointment With Death*** / 1988



MOVIE

Samaritan

by BOB BROWN

- ▶ *Rated PG-13*
- ▶ *Prime Video*
- ▶ *S1 / V7 / L5*

IN *SAMARITAN*, Sylvester Stallone plays a fists-first tough guy, but the character doesn't resemble the compassionate protagonist in Luke 10 to which the film's title alludes. *Samaritan* has a promising premise, but frequent profanities (particularly from a child's mouth), hammy acting, and an unambitious plot make for dreary viewing.

Samaritan opens with back-story narration: Samaritan and Nemesis, two brothers with supernatural strength, appear to die in an explosion while fighting each other. Years later, 13-year-old Sam (Javon Walton) is obsessed with the Samaritan legend. He witnesses Joe Smith (Stallone), a neighbor from his apartment complex, single-handedly fend off a gang of thugs. Could the graying garbage man be Samaritan? Fatherless Sam begins to bond with the reclusive Joe.

Meanwhile, a petty criminal named Cyrus (Pilou Asbæk) plans to subjugate Granite City. Wearing a Nemesis mask, Cyrus incites "all the people this city left behind" to revolt. "It's time to take back what's yours!" he shouts to a street mob, who begin looting and torching cars. Cyrus also tries to lure Sam into a life of crime. And so begins a slug-fest between Cyrus' crew and Joe, for the fates of the city and Sam.

At its best, *Samaritan* is about a boy torn between good and evil. But the execution is cartoonish: Characters literally growl with exertion, and clobbered bad guys tumble head over heels. And close-ups of Joe grimacing as he crushes a toaster don't arouse the intended awe. It's hard to take any of it seriously. In this case, passing *Samaritan* by on the other side of the road is the good deed.

METRO GOLDWYN MAYER PICTURES; APPOINTMENT WITH DEATH: CANNON FILMS

MUSIC

A tale of two T Bones

Similarly named artists offer vastly different albums

by ARSENIO ORTEZA



Burnett

A ROSE by any other name, reasoned Shakespeare's Juliet, would smell the same.

The same does not hold true for albums made by musicians calling themselves "T Bone."

The Invisible Light: Spells is the second installment in T Bone Burnett's trilogy-long gaze into our current dystopian abyss. *Good 'n Greasy* is the debut album by T-Bone (the cover deletes the hyphen), a New Zealand string band rooted in Cajun, bluegrass, and other old-time styles.

No two T Bones could "smell" more different.

In many respects, Burnett's album reprises his trilogy's first installment, 2019's *The Invisible Light: Acoustic Space*. Drummer Jay Bellerose and electronic noise sculptor Keefus Ciancia still earn co-billing, Burnett still recites more than he sings, and the "Itopia Chant" still functions like Satan's promise to Eve.



The Invisible Light: Spells
T BONE BURNETT



Good 'n Greasy
T-BONE

In other respects, however, *Spells* illuminates what made *Acoustic Space* seem murky and inchoate. If *Acoustic Space*'s "To Beat the Devil," for example, went over your head, *Spells*' zeitgeist-eviscerating "Realities.com" will hit you between the eyes. And if you feared that the refrain "God, rest my troubled soul, and give my poor heart ease" in *Acoustic Space*'s "The Secret in Their Eyes" was supposed to be ironic, the refrain "Padre Dios, hold us close" from *Spells*' "A Better Day" will give your poor heart ease.

Burnett hasn't abandoned irony, murk, and the inchoate altogether. He bases "Mother Cross (We Think We Think)" on the colloquial koan known as the "liar paradox." And Ciancia's and Bellerose's nightmarish sounds will give anyone absorbing them alone in the dark the creeps.

Also, Burnett still struggles with pretension. But at least the struggling is coming into focus. "It takes more courage to love than to hate," he intones throughout "You May Leave But This Will Bring You Back." You can't get much clearer than that.

T-Bone-the-band's *Good 'n Greasy* is nothing but clear. It could also give cultural appropriation a good name. Except for Michael Muggeridge's calling crawfish "crayfish" in "T-Bone Rag," you'd never guess that he and his fellow Kiwis weren't from the Acadiana region of Louisiana.

Not every *Good 'n Greasy* song sounds Cajun. Some of them don't even sound greasy. But they all sound good. "I Hope That Time Passes Me By" and "Guide Me Home" could snag T-Bone a booking on *Austin City Limits*.

But until they do, songs such as "Lucile" and "Manuka Swing/Balfa Waltz" should enable the group to get, and keep, a foot in the door of any Louisiana festival worth its name. ■

JESSICA LEHRMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

MUSIC

New and noteworthy

by ARSENIO ORTEZA



The Story of Jesus GÁBOR BENDA

Gábor Benda's liner explications notwithstanding, you'll have a hard time correctly matching these solo piano meditations on Christ's life to their titles. "The Ascension of Jesus" and "The Entry Into Jerusalem" sound more Christmassy than the selection called "The Birth of Jesus," and the glissandi in "The Transfiguration" are no more or less suggestive of the numinous than those in "The Resurrection." So feel free to set your playback to shuffle. In whichever order you encounter these pieces, you'll enjoy Benda's delicacy, fluidity, and precision as well as the jazz inflections of what's otherwise a style too individual to peg.



A Rose Among the Thorns

DAN GETKIN AND THE TWELVE SIX

No aspect of this quintet's presentation will bowl you over on its own—not its taste in covers (old-time hymns, "People Get Ready," Andraé Crouch's "The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power"); not its Southern-country-gospel, country-soul, country-rock, or just plain country arrangements; and not its frontman's singing. Experienced together, though, they make for consistently uplifting entertainment. And some details stand out anyway—to wit, Alex Herd's lively bass, and background singers that make everything, including the songs featuring horns and steel guitar, feel like church.



Chris Walden: Missa Iubileum Aureum

LMR JAZZ ORCHESTRA, ST. DOMINIC'S SCHOLA CANTORUM

If only for the 37 minutes it takes for his Mass—a choral composition—to unfold, Chris Walden may have found a way to unify the Catholic Church's progressive and traditional worship camps. The text derives mostly from the Latin preferred by the latter, and the music ("reverent swing," anyone?) exemplifies the innovation preferred by the former. What might spark debate: whether the use of Christopher Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" as the text of an offertory duet sung by Tierney Sutton and Kurt Elling proves an innovation too far.



Kibitzer VINTAGE CROP

The music and the ranting impressively recreate the gestalt of mid-'70s punk. Harsh guitars fill out the midrange. Bass slabs line the bottom. A sax expresses itself across the songs closing out each side of the vinyl edition. And you can pogo to the energy. The rub comes with what these guys are ranting against. Conscription, war, capitalism, royals, scam callers—they've all been ranted against before. Vintage form is one thing, vintage content another.



BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

ENCORE

Two years ago, the vaults of Verve Records' founder Norman Granz yielded the live Ella Fitzgerald gem *Ella: The Lost Berlin Tapes*. Now, those same vaults have yielded *Ella at the Hollywood Bowl: The Irving Berlin Songbook*, a private, lo-fi recording never intended for release but that Gregg Field, reprising his work on the Berlin recordings, has gone to great lengths in his role as producer to refurbish.

Other than Fitzgerald's singing, the discoveries have little in common. The Berlin gig took place in 1962 with a jazz trio. The Hollywood Bowl gig took place in 1958 with the Hollywood Bowl Pops Orchestra. The difference in accompaniment is not insignificant. The trio swung, the orchestra only when it had to (at which times—"Heat Wave," "Cheek to Cheek," "Puttin' on the Ritz"—it swung very well). Otherwise, it supplied Fitzgerald with luxurious cover for her deep dives into even deeper emotions and, in the case of "Get Thee Behind Me Satan," deep prayer. —*A.O.*



VOICES **JANIE B. CHEANEY**

Coddled minds

Misuse of the word *harm* could cause social and scientific damage

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN struck or swindled? Have you ever spent weeks in the hospital recovering from a drunk driver, or seen your reputation ruined by false accusations? If so (as many an attorney billboard reminds us), you may have suffered *harm*. But it might be time to rethink what that word really means.

A notorious incident on the Yale campus in 2015 demonstrated how "harm" was being redefined. After a student directive warning against offensive Halloween costumes, lecturer Erika Christakis sent a general email suggesting that perhaps people could be a little less sensitive about cultural stereotypes. She could not have anticipated the uproar, or the ordeal that her husband Nicholas would face when confronted on campus by a band of angry protesters. They complained of a hostile atmosphere that devalued their campus experience and caused mental distress. One girl screamed in his face, "It is not about creating an intellectual space—it is *not*! It's about creating a home here!"

Both Christakises eventually resigned from their Yale positions. Three years later Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt published *The Coddling of the American Mind*, examining how fragility, emotionalism, and an us-versus-them worldview had come to dominate too much of higher education. An entire generation was being "set up for failure."

Scoffers scoffed that these "snowflakes" would soon melt under the harsh glare of real life. But at least some of them dragged their fragility into real life. One minor example hit Twitter in August during the annual Podcast Movement convention in Dallas. The Daily Wire, the nation's No. 1 conservative podcasting platform, had purchased a booth in the exhibit hall. Co-founder Ben Shapiro, who happened to be in Dallas for another event, dropped in to greet well-wishers at the booth. At least one attendee complained about not feeling safe, prompting the convention's organizers to tweet an abject *mea culpa*: "We take full responsibility for the harm done by his presence."

The apology was so gushy it sounded like satire, but it was for real—evidenced by the fact that Podcast Movement, after further complaints, apologized to Shapiro. Not before The Babylon Bee had some fun with it: "Thousands Dead After Ben Shapiro Casually Strolls Through Whole Foods."

A weightier example appeared in an editorial for the online journal Nature Human Behaviour. Titled "Science must respect the dignity and rights of all humans," the editorial signaled its theme from the first sentence: "Although academic freedom is fundamental, it is not unbounded." Scientific research must be sensitive to potential harms. Conclusions that might be taken as "discriminatory, racist, sexist, ableist, or homophobic" would be rejected for publication, regardless of their scientific soundness and merit. "Harm" trumps truth.

Nature Human Behaviour is not a pop-up publication, and it's not alone in its hedge against so-called harm: *Science*, *Scientific American*, and *Popular Mechanics* have all dropped a knee to woke sensibilities. From offensive Halloween costumes to deliberate self-censoring of scientific research is an amazingly short ride. Have American minds become so coddled that doubting a child's gender confusion is considered more "harmful" than blocking her hormones? That words are seen as more violent than literal sticks and stones?

I've been thinking about what constitutes actual harm—irreversible damage? "What doesn't kill me makes me stronger," said Friedrich Nietzsche, thereby making death the ultimate and only harm for a *super mensch*. But for the rest of us, David says it better. "In God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me? ... For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling" (Psalm 56:11, 13).

My two great fears—of death and of failure—are already overcome. What man does may hurt, perhaps grievously, but will not permanently harm. What doesn't kill me makes me holier. I can live with that. ■

Email *jcheaney@wng.org* ***Twitter*** *@jbcheaney*

REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

ANNOUNCEMENT

Patrick Henry College was awarded regional accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) on June 16, 2022!

This is an important milestone in Patrick Henry College's mission to lead our nation and shape our culture with timeless biblical values and fidelity to the spirit of the American founding.

PATRICK HENRY COLLEGE
for Christ and for Liberty

Patrick Henry College Receives an ACTA "A." Scan code to learn more!

WORLD

OPINIONS

Sound commentary from trusted voices

SEE WHAT READERS ARE SAYING:

MARY V.
"The new opinion section of WORLD is thoughtful and helpful. People like me need help in thinking about the world/culture. Those who are writing for Opinions are solid, Biblical, and not overtly political. Biblical Christians need to stand together."

STEVEN T.
"I really appreciate the new WORLD Opinions effort. I am grateful for the convictional base that seems to lie behind this new thrust. The articles are timely, rightly sobering, penetrable, and informative."

CAP S.
"I am enjoying WORLD's new opinion page. I think it is providing a platform for some excellent voices and thought-provoking pieces to serve and challenge the body of Christ. Thank you for adding this feature to your publication."

Columns post each weekday on **wng.org/opinions**.

ESSAY

ELEGANT MOLECULAR MACHINES AT THE CENTER OF LIFE BELIE DARWIN'S THEORY



Orange dragonfly
BOONYOO/GETTY IMAGES



FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

by Michael Behe

At a recent conference, I watched a computer simulation of the most important machine in the world: ATP synthase. Without it, no life can exist. In the cells of every organism on Earth, from bluebird to blue whale, from amoeba to alfalfa to Aunt Millie, this molecular machine packages energy for cells to use, like AA batteries for so many game systems.

No batteries, no game.

I sat halfway back in the room on the center aisle, amid the hundred-odd scientists and casually dressed grad students watching the colorful animated machine, the center of which was turning like a mechanical egg beater. Narrating was 81-year-old John Walker, a British scientist who has studied ATP synthase for over 40 years—fully one-quarter of the time since his countryman, the naturalist Charles Darwin, first proposed his theory of evolution in 1859.

Evolutionary mechanisms such as random mutation and natural selection have been assumed by most scientists and public intellectuals to account for how life arose and developed over eons without any guidance or direction—or more pointedly, with no help from God. But Darwin proposed his theory long before scientists discovered such elegant machinery as ATP synthase humming at the molecular foundation of life.

Now, as ATP synthase whirred on-screen, John Walker revealed the latest science on this marvel, which in 1997 earned him the Nobel Prize in chemistry after he used state-of-the-art techniques to glimpse the outlines of its form. His audience of scientists (including me) was meeting in semi-secrecy for a conference whose theme was a specific controversial question: Did Darwinian evolution have any limitations?

Maybe, as Darwin thought, his idea really could help explain curious facts such as why modified species of animals on islands resemble ones on the closest mainland. But can it explain ATP synthase? John Walker thought so, and the assembled scientists leaned forward in their seats to hear why.

ATP synthase is not simple. Comprising thousands of amino acid building blocks in about 10 kinds of protein chains, its intricate structure carefully directs a flow of acid particles, beginning from outside the cell, through deep channels in the machine's organization, into the cell's interior. Somehow, like the cascade of water over a hydroelectric dam that turns a turbine, the flow of acid through the channels rotates a central camshaft. The cams push against multiple discrete areas of a stationary region of the synthase, distorting their shapes. The distortion forces together two bound feed-chemicals, ADP and phosphate, provoking

them to react to yield the energy-rich-yet-stable molecule ATP. As the camshaft completes a turn, the ATP is released into the cell, and the machine begins another cycle. Incredibly, the many copies of the machine in each person produce about 150 pounds of ATP molecules *every day,* but each is used rapidly as energy—in effect, recharging each cell like a reusable battery.

And Walker's more recent studies—using the newest, most powerful iteration of microscopy, called "cryo-electron" microscopy—would reveal its mechanism in unprecedented detail.

A LONG TIME AGO

David, Israel's second king, did not have a microscope. But he could see, and in Psalm 139 observed that he was fearfully and wonderfully made. Not only could his eyes survey their surroundings, his ears could detect the sounds of wildlife, his tongue speak to others, hands grip a sword, muscles guide a plow, fingers ply a harp. Inanimate matter could do none of that. Far surpassing everything else, his mind could, at least to an extent, grasp, contemplate, and plan. No other kind of living thing could compose songs in praise of its Maker as David could. No wonder he was impressed with himself.



King David

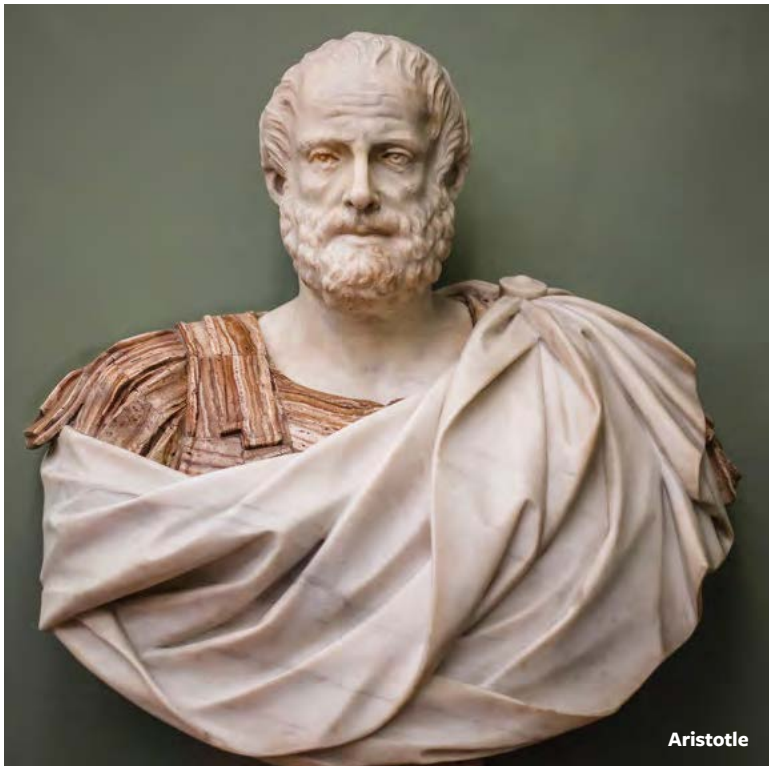
The ancient Hebrews did not have much interest in science. No surprise there, since for almost all of time, all people for all of history had been absorbed by the immediate tasks of survival. Yet the human mind is nothing if not curious, so, when some leisure time is available for reflection, questions about how life works arise quickly. Like everyone else, David knew from direct experience that his body came with all manner of cool features: eyes, muscles, and much more. But how did they work? What were they made of? How did they get here? When fingers guide thread through a needle, or an eye shifts its gaze from near to far, what exactly is going on? How does a chick develop inside an egg, or an acorn grow into an oak? All those things happen regularly and repeatedly under the right circumstances, so it seems that most if not all of the reasons should be found in the regularities of nature. But where?

Answers to questions about how life works trickled in slowly, painfully, over millennia. The first person credited with thinking about biology in even a vaguely modern sense was Hippocrates, born some 600 years after David, when earth, air, fire, and water were thought to be the basic elements of matter. Dubbed the Father of Medicine, Hippocrates knew next to nothing about healing. But he did at least urge his followers to classify common diseases and observe their progression, rather than to lazily attribute them to the Greek pantheon.

The next major figure in the history of science was Aristotle. Although many of us poorly read moderns think of him primarily as a philosopher, he was really the world's first Renaissance man, interested in practically everything. Aristotle's surprising honorific, the Father of Biology, is well-earned. Born less than a hundred years after Hippocrates, Aristotle worked hard to put flesh on the scientific skeleton. He introduced the blazingly obvious (in retrospect) idea of close observation: If you want to understand how nature works, get out of your armchair, go look, and write down what you see. With just his own observations, Aristotle was able to classify living things into broad categories that are remarkably similar to modern ones. That's what Aristotle himself did as he walked the beaches of the Aegean Sea long ago. Here's a snippet from his *History of Animals*:

The octopus breeds in spring, lying hid for about two months. The female, after laying her eggs, broods over them. She thus gets

FINE ART IMAGES/HERITAGE IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES



Aristotle

out of condition since she does not go in quest of food during this time. The eggs are discharged into a hole and are so numerous that they would fill a vessel much larger than the animal's body. After about fifty days the eggs burst. The little creatures creep out, and are like little spiders, in great numbers. The characteristic form of their limbs are not yet visible in detail, but their general outline is clear. They are so small and helpless that the greater number perish. They have been so extremely minute as to be completely without organization, but nevertheless when touched they move.

Yet, as sophisticated as they are, Aristotle's writings show not only the promise but also the peril of simple observation: Our unaided senses may not be able to perceive crucial details. We now know that those seemingly featureless baby octopuses Aristotle watched are actually exquisitely organized at a cellular and molecular level, far beyond the limits of any human's bare eyesight.

Aristotle's empirical heirs doled out more answers about how life works—at a snail's pace, over thousands of years. By contrast, Dr. John Walker took only 40 minutes to regale a room full of scientists with amazing aspects of the molecular machine on which all life depends. How its detailed structure is needed to channel acid along the right path, to turn the camshaft, to capture chemical energy with the efficiency needed to power the fundamental unit of life, the cell.

Yet, as Walker lectured on, many in the audience shifted impatiently in their seats. Despite the explicitly skeptical theme of the conference—does Darwin's theory hold water?—Walker was describing only how the machine worked but explaining nothing about how it arose.

BETTER AND WORSE

To understand nature, yes, one has to observe it, as Aristotle taught. But most of even the largish workings of life are on the insides of bodies, hidden from direct view. By using dissection, early naturalists such as the physician Galen, who practiced in Rome, were able to discover layer upon layer of further organization. For just the eye, Galen described the retina, cornea, iris, uvea, and tear ducts. With Galen's work, David's fearful body became even more so.

Yet Galen also made major mistakes, especially with his theory of blood. His naked eyes couldn't see tiny capillaries even in dissected creatures, so in his thinking blood didn't recirculate—it was consumed by tissues to nourish them.

Fast-forward to around the time of Shakespeare. In his study, English physician William Harvey is scratching his head. Since classical times, Galen had been revered as the ultimate authority on anatomy, and his work went unquestioned. Yet, by taking advantage of the newly introduced Arabic numerals, Harvey had just performed a simple calculation demonstrating that a typical human heart, pumping 2 ounces in each of its 72 beats per minute, would send out 540 pounds of blood in only one hour—triple the weight of a large man! The body couldn't make blood that quickly, so it *must* be reused. It *had* to recirculate. Galen was wrong.

The fall of Galen's ancient authority and the rise of mathematical reasoning helped launch modern science. But the study of biology needed more than that—it needed better vision.

SCIENCE GETS GLASSES

Lenses had been known from antiquity, but only in the 17th century were they ground and aligned with sufficient skill to make a working microscope. To support

FRANK NOWIKOWSKI/ALAMY

"From all these observations, we discern most plainly the incomprehensible perfection, the exact order, and the inscrutable providential care with which the most wise Creator and Lord of the Universe had formed the bodies of these animalcules."

William Harvey's back-of-the-envelope calculation, Marcello Malpighi employed a microscope to directly observe the movement of red corpuscles through capillaries that connected arteries to veins, visually confirming blood circulation.

Microscopes also changed humanity's very conception of the world. Imagine looking closely at some familiar object and suddenly realizing it is utterly different from what you had thought—like, say, a piece of paper that had tiny, previously unseen machines on it to actively fasten ink into place. That's how the first microscopists felt when they examined what they had thought were simple insects and discovered alien, compound eyes; bizarre mouthparts; and specialized structures such as the pollen sacs of bees. What had been familiar creatures of field and forest were suddenly a complete mystery.

At least insects had been known before, even if not in the detail now revealed. But completely new classes of beings were soon discovered—microorganisms, or *animalcules* in Dutch microscopist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek's coinage. He seemed even more impressed with them than David had been with himself. "From all these observations, we discern most plainly the incomprehensible perfection, the exact order, and the inscrutable providential care with which the most wise Creator and Lord of the Universe had formed the bodies of these animalcules." The deeper science peered, the more sophisticated life became.

Despite those amazing initial discoveries, the use of microscopy fell out of favor for the next century and a half. Historian John Wootton has argued that, even though animalcules would turn out to be the cause of much human disease, the medical profession of the age,



Malpighi



Van Leeuwenhoek

worried that those upstart microscopists would trespass on its turf, wielded its influence to discourage the use of the instrument.

MODERN DAYS

Commencing late in the 18th century, the Industrial Revolution led to a general increase in wealth and leisure time, including time needed to pursue questions about life. Microscopy was revived, and the study of biology never turned back.

Yet the basic questions remained what they were in David's day: How did they (then eyes and muscles, now cells and the nucleus) work? What were they made of? How did they get here? Mid-19th-century microscopes were reaching their limits, but the profound depths of life had yet to be plumbed. For biology to continue to progress, scientists needed better ones. Gradual, cumulative improvements came over the decades, including better lenses, oil immersion, and—with the invention of the electric light—better illumination for ever-smaller, harder-to-see samples. Many other tricks would be added in the 20th century, including the use of lasers and fluorescent tags to make regions of the cell more visible.

In the meantime, other branches of science pioneered nonvisual techniques for the study of life. In 1828, a discovery by German chemist Friedrich Wöhler jolted the world. He had heated ammonium cyanate in a flask and was astounded to find it produced urea. That wasn't supposed to happen, because ammonium cyanate is an inorganic chemical and urea is a biological waste product. Wöhler's work was the first to show that inanimate matter could give rise to something from life, and it shattered the distinction science had made between life and nonlife. What's more, if life is made of chemicals, then chemists, too, could study it. That birthed the field of biochemistry. It wasn't long before the cell was shown to be composed of immensely complex, discrete chemical substances—enzymes, proteins, nucleic acids, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins, and more—all with myriad, specific, critical roles to play.

That threw a monkey wrench into the struggle to visualize biology. The foundation of life consists of enormously complicated, working molecules. And that required enormously complicated working microscopes. Happily, physics came to the rescue. Late in the 19th century, J.J. Thomson discovered the electron. Decades later the electron microscope (EM) was invented, and its use blossomed after the Second World War.

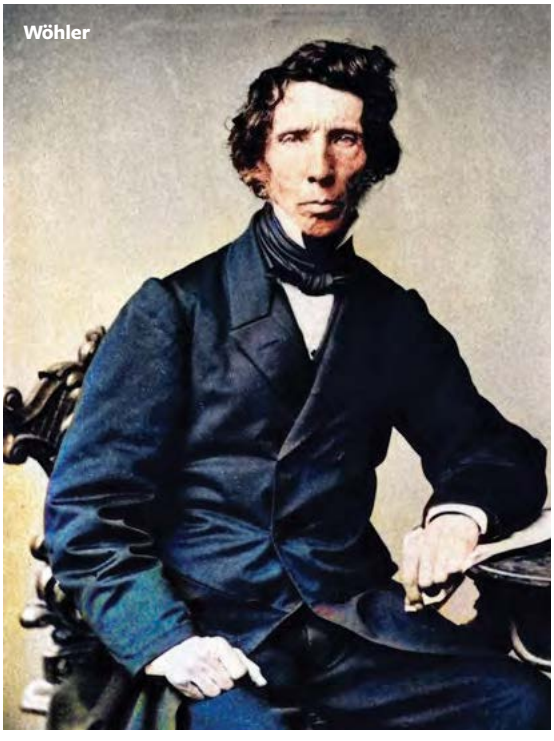
EM detected many intricate features of the cell that common light microscopy had missed. The same nucleus that had appeared to be a featureless black blob was now seen to have window-like portals. (Later work would show them to be elaborate, tightly regulated tollgates, where only substances that carry the right molecular "ticket" are permitted to pass.) In a classic EM photo, a single molecule of DNA was caught spilling out of a punctured virus—one long gossamer thread of information.

It would take another half century, until the early 2000s—the dawn of cryo-EM—when improved optical equipment and massive computer power allowed scientists for the first time to visualize some molecular machines in exquisite detail. One of those machines was ATP synthase.

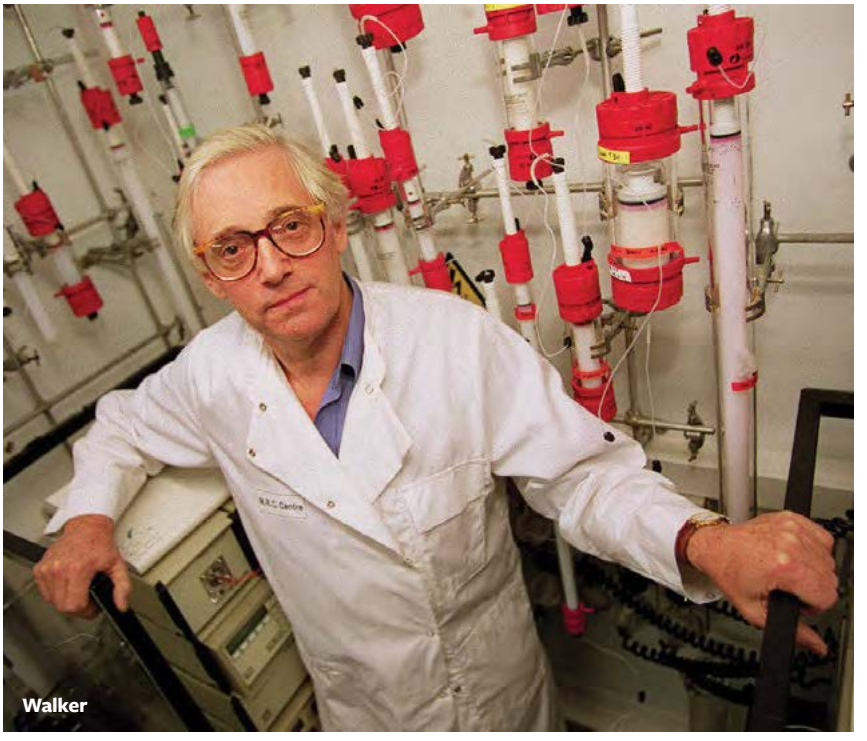
DISCERNING A PURPOSE

By now, the scientists assembled before Dr. John Walker had run out of patience. The man had just held forth for nearly an hour on this miracle of biological architecture. Elegant and complex, precision-engineered, multiplied daily in the billions across the biosphere and on which the entirety of life depends. Finally, during the Q&A period, a questioner asked him directly: How could a mindless Darwinian process produce such a stunning piece of work?

Walker's entire reply (paraphrasing): "Slowly, through some sort of intermediate or other."


Wöhler

SPCOLLECTION/ALAMY


Walker

Far out of earshot I muttered two simple words: "Game over."

If a Nobel laureate who has worked on one of life's most fundamental systems for four decades can't give an account of how it supposedly arose through a series of lucky mutations and natural selection—despite knowing its innermost workings in spectacular detail—then it's reasonable to conclude no such account exists, and the effort to find one is a snipe hunt.

And yet, almost all evolutionary speculation proceeds in the teeth of that hunt. If it's any consolation, Galen's theory of blood did ultimately collapse. It only took 1,400 years. While we wait, how do we account for molecular machines? If not Darwin, who or what? Whether it sits well with our modern clerisy or not, David had the basic answer three millennia ago: He, his eyes, and his ATP synthase all were purposely made, planned by an intelligent being.

How could a former shepherd, ignorant of nearly all biology, beat 21st-century scientists to the punch? Easy. Recognition of the work of a mind doesn't demand uncovering obscure details that can't yet be seen—it only requires grasping the relationship in what already can be seen. The dictionary defines design as "the purposeful arrangement of parts." So to perceive a mind's work—a design—we need only see that some parts are arranged for a larger purpose. That's crystal clear in ATP synthase, thanks to the work of John Walker and others. But even with just his unaided vision, David could see the purposeful arrangement of his fingers, bones, and muscles.

Designs—purposeful arrangements—aren't in doubt just because the composition of their materials is unknown. Ancient Greeks could easily recognize a purposely sculpted statue even though they had no knowledge of the chemical composition of its stone. On the other hand, the functioning of an obviously designed system might rely on even-more-sophisticated, not-yet-understood arrangements. A child can quickly perceive that the exterior of her cell phone is designed, but she would need to study engineering principles before understanding all the phone's mechanisms.

The same goes for life. The visible parts that dazzled David are purposefully arranged, and so are the hidden and microscopic parts undergirding them that took millennia of scientific progress to comprehend. Thanks to the stunning progress of science, we now know that it's fearfulness and wonderfulness all the way down. ■

"Recognition of the work of a mind doesn't demand uncovering obscure details that can't yet be seen—it only requires grasping the relationship in what already can be seen."

SION TOUHIG/SYGMA VIA GETTY IMAGES








USAID









FAMINE THREAT

As unprecedented hunger grips the Horn of Africa, impoverished families are running out of time

BY ONIZE OHIKERE





Philip, a herder who lives in the rural Kenyan village of Nakorio, this summer took a visitor on a troubling tour. Among the sights: the shriveled carcasses of dead animals lying on the dry, dusty ground around Philip's home. Only a tenth of his herd is still alive, Philip said: "They are dying daily."

The visitor was Edgar Sandoval, CEO of the international relief group World Vision. Sandoval saw other troubling signs in Nakorio, a rural community in Kenya's drought-hit northern Turkana region. For example, the village chief told Sandoval he'd been hearing more arguments coming from inside people's homes. One family with 18 goats is down to its last animal. Some mothers now watch over their hungry and out-of-school children alone while their husbands travel to nearby towns in search of work. And inside the village dispensary, Sandoval saw a nursing mom who could not produce enough milk to feed her baby, and other moms brooding over their emaciated kids. Martha Losike, who has worked as the dispensary's nurse for six years, said the situation was "never this bad."

Nakorio is emblematic of a struggle with hunger that now grips the Horn of Africa and is unprecedented in the modern era. Multiple factors have converged to produce a deepening humanitarian crisis. Parts of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia have suffered through four consecutive failed rainy seasons and now face the worst drought in more than forty years. Water sources have evaporated and pastures have withered in a region traditionally home to nomadic herders and small-scale farmers. More than 7 million livestock have died. Families fleeing hunger and seeking urgent medical care are trekking hundreds of miles to larger cities in search of help.

Meanwhile, crop-devouring locusts, pandemic lockdowns, the war in Ukraine, inflation, and persistent regional conflicts all compound the misery. More than 18 million people now face acute food insecurity—one stage away from a formal famine declaration—according to the World Food Program. Aid workers in the Horn of Africa are calling for more support and attention to prevent an "explosion of child deaths." But with the world's attention focused elsewhere, they fear help won't arrive in time.

ON THE OUTSKIRTS of the Somali capital of Mogadishu, forests of tiny makeshift tents have popped up like mushrooms. Aid workers say Somalis arrive daily as the worsening drought has displaced more than 800,000 people in the country. Many come with tales of family members dying from starvation. Malnutrition treatment centers in Somalia recorded at least 730 deaths between January and April. The numbers are still growing, with many cases likely unreported.

"We finish doing [food] distributions and a whole new group of people will arrive the following day in desperate need," said Mark Smith, World Vision's vice president of humanitarian emergency affairs.

In some of the country's worst-hit regions, the World Food Program has seen water prices rise by up to 72 percent since November, forcing people to walk further in search of water.

Elias Kamau, World Relief's Kenya country director, has noticed a similar movement across northern Kenya. In a village in Turkana, residents dug holes in a dry riverbed, hoping to find water. Kamau met a woman who



PREVIOUS SPREAD, TOP (L-R): DONG JIANGHUI XINHUA/EYEVINE/REDUX, FARAH ABDI WARSAMEH/AP, EDUARDO SOTERAS/AFP VIA GETTY, ED RAM/GETTY; MIDDLE: YASUYOSHI CHIBA/AFP VIA GETTY, DESMOND TIRO/AP; BOTTOM: PETTERIK WIGGERS/PANOS PICTURES/REDUX, ED RAM/GETTY, EDUARDO SOTERAS/AFP VIA GETTY, BRIAN INGANGA/AP



A woman holds her malnourished 1-year-old daughter at a camp for the displaced on the outskirts of Mogadishu.

had walked more than 27 miles from her community in Todonyang to the town of Lokitaung, where she found a household with members of her tribe.

"They didn't have much food either, but they said, 'We can't allow her to live in the open,'" Kamau said. "They have a very strong social fabric."

When the Kenyan government began imposing pandemic restrictions in March 2020, only essential businesses received clearance to operate, and authorities promoted cashless transactions. Both factors hurt small businesses and workers' ability to send money back to families in rural areas, said Joseph Kamara, World Vision's humanitarian lead in East Africa.

Now, amid Russia's war with Ukraine, fuel costs have skyrocketed, making food transportation more expensive, Kamara said.

The Ukraine war also disrupted the regular supply of products like wheat and fertilizers. Between 2018 and 2020, Russia provided 32 percent of African wheat imports while Ukraine contributed 12 percent. "Farmers are saying they can't farm because they don't have access to fertilizers," Kamara said. "It's like a combination of different factors that have created this huge tsunami."

INSIDE A TEMPORARY CLINIC in Ethiopia's Amhara region, Rabih Torbay, the CEO of Project HOPE, watched a 4-year-old girl who had suffered for months with severe malnourishment. As she lay partially responsive next to her mother, Torbay thought she looked more like a 2-year-old. And she wasn't the only child the mother had to care for. "When you give food to the baby, they have to share it with the other kids as well," Torbay said.

In November 2020, the Ethiopian government, with support from Eritrean forces, launched an offensive against local Tigray Defense Forces, touching off a war. The fighting displaced more than 2 million people and left at least 400,000 on the edge of famine.

At one of the camps on the outskirts of the central city of Debre Birhan, Torbay met a family first displaced by the

FARAH ABDI WARSAMEH/AP

drought and then the conflict. "All three children were moderately malnourished," he recalled. "They were getting to a point where it could become risky for their lives."

The region's health system is another casualty of war. Doctors Without Borders last year warned that armed groups had vandalized and looted medical facilities, rendering the majority of them nonfunctional. The destruction extended to neighboring regions, like Afar.

In response, Project HOPE has set up six mobile clinics, and Torbay said it has plans to expand to as many as 30. It is also training local health workers who can see patients in homes or in the clinics, and who can also alert Torbay's group to local needs.

Yet even as desperation climbs, international aid has dropped. Norway announced in March plans to redirect $300 million from various global crisis zones to Ukraine, and the United Kingdom followed suit. Overall aid to Africa has declined for two years straight.



Kabasa camp for displaced people in Dullow, Somalia, has been filling up with people seeking assistance because of the drought.

Katherine Zimmerman, a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, said Western governments have somewhat fixed dollars designated for humanitarian aid. Those funds are now spread "very thin globally," she said. Perceptions may also play a role in decisions to divert funds away from African nations. Zimmerman, who researches global Salafi-jihadist movements on the continent, said the West views Africa as a long-term problem with a long list of challenges, including unreliable partners.

The rise of Islamist groups has also made it difficult for aid groups to reach some areas in East Africa. Al-Shabab, for example, controls parts of southern Somalia and has banned aid groups and kidnapped their workers, claiming relief teams are spying for Western governments or promoting Christian agendas.

WORLD VISION'S KAMARA says the compounding crisis has had harrowing ripple effects. Pastors and community leaders are reporting more cases of teen pregnancies and gender-based violence. One father, whose daughter dreamed of becoming a doctor, decided to marry her off to get money to care for the rest of the family. When the World Vision team asked the father why he made that decision, he replied, *Give me another option*.

"As a father myself of a girl of a similar age, that was heartbreaking," Kamara said. Many aid groups are focusing on emergency interventions. World Vision is providing care and nutrition through health clinics, access to clean water, and other forms of livelihood support. The ministry has introduced new businesses such as basket-weaving and charcoal burning while also creating market access for products. "The situation is so dire that they're open to new ways," World Vision's Sandoval said.

Elias Kamau's team in Kenya also has worked through its network of church and community leaders to introduce more adaptable agricultural practices. They have encouraged people to breed chickens and have introduced a goat

SALLY HAYDEN/SOPA IMAGES/SIPA VIA AP



cross-breeding project that mixes the drought-tolerant Turkana goat with the bigger, stockier Galla breed. And they are encouraging people to introduce more drought-resistant crops like cowpea, kale, and watermelon. The farmers are learning to use no-drip irrigation systems and mulch to avoid evaporation.

The efforts have yielded some fruit. When Kamau visited the village of Manalongoria, nearly 2 miles north of Lokitaung, a village elder showed off his watermelon plants, explaining that he sells the fruit at Lokitaung to get money for food. "It has created some resilience in the families that have been able to practice farming," Kamau said.

The team also launched a poultry project for women in the community. Kamau said they encouraged the women to use some of the money from their egg and chicken sales to build savings. They coupled that with lessons on financial literacy and Biblical principles in the marketplace. Several of the women later used their savings to buy goats and start small businesses.

International governments are also trying to step up to the task. In April, the United Nations and European Union co-hosted a roundtable in Geneva that generated $1.39 billion in pledges for humanitarian assistance to the Horn of Africa. The United States—the largest single-state contributor of aid to East Africa—pledged an additional $200 million, bringing its total to $361 million for the year.

Still, the pledges fall far short of the $4.4 billion funding appeal presented by humanitarian groups working in the region.

Back in Nakorio, Sandoval's team introduced a different kind of crisis intervention. They have trained pastors to lead a program called Celebrating Family. Sandoval said it spurs conversation on how families can apply a Biblical worldview, both in planning their livelihoods and keeping their marriages strong despite struggles.

He sees such resources as necessary to keep families from breaking, even as gnawing environmental pressures force them to bend. Sandoval says Christians around the world need to find their way into that suffering and hope.

"With so much happening, it's easy to turn away from the pain, but having been in Turkana, as Christians we need to be stepping towards, not away." ■

Russia's grain blockade

Ukraine is the world's fifth-largest exporter of wheat and supplies nearly 70 percent of Somalia's grain and half the world's sunflower oil. The Russian blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea ports has prevented 20 million tons of grain from leaving the country.

That grain is at risk of rotting if it isn't moved soon, and Ukraine's farmers need their warehouses emptied before they can harvest their next crop. Nearly one-fifth of the country's grain silos have been damaged in the war or are in regions occupied by Russian forces.

Under a deal brokered in July by Turkey and the United Nations, 17 grain vessels gained permission to depart for the Middle East and Africa. The first one—filled with 26,000 metric tons of corn—arrived in Djibouti at the end of August.

But the deal to move grain out of Ukraine still faces obstacles. In early September, Russia's Vladimir Putin threatened to restrict grain shipments again, claiming they were being diverted to European Union markets instead of going to developing nations. To minimize Putin's influence, France and Romania agreed to a deal allowing grain exports to come through Europe by land. Those shipments will provide food for both Europe and the developing countries that need it most.

Kyiv has also accused the Kremlin of stealing Ukrainian grain from farmers in occupied territories and selling it for profit. Ukraine's Foreign Ministry claims Russia has stolen an estimated 400,000 metric tons of grain worth more than $100 million. The ministry believes the grain is being transported to ports in Crimea—illegally annexed by Russia in 2014—and smuggled into the Middle East.

Russia and Ukraine together supply one-third of the world's wheat, and Russia is the world's top supplier of fertilizer, an essential source of nutrients for crops. The war between the two nations, now entering its eighth month, is a key factor in rising food prices and has prevented many Ukrainian farmers from planting this year's crops. Even if grain shipments reach their destinations and the food supplies are fairly distributed to the world's most needy, experts warn the scope of the hunger problem is far bigger than the grain problem.

World Vision lists the Middle East and East Africa as the Top 2 "hunger hotspots" on the globe. The countries facing food insecurity or catastrophic levels of hunger include Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan, Haiti, Honduras, Nigeria, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the countries in the Horn of Africa. *—Jill Nelson*



ENGLAND ADRIFT

Christian Britain has lost its most prominent defender of the faith

by Collin Garbarino



The coffin of Queen Elizabeth II is carried during a procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Hall in London.

FELIPE DANA/AP



IN HER LAST CHRISTMAS address, Queen Elizabeth II offered a personal glimpse of her pain at losing her husband Prince Philip: "Christmas can be hard for those who have lost loved ones. This year, especially, I understand why." But her speech didn't focus on mourning. Instead, she ended with a word of hope, telling her people, "It is this simplicity of the Christmas story that makes it so universally appealing, simple happenings that formed the starting point of the life of Jesus—a man whose teachings have been handed down from generation to generation, and have been the bedrock of my faith."

Elizabeth's forthrightness in expressing her faith in Jesus' teachings shouldn't surprise—after all, she was the titular head of the Church of England. But those words of faith directed at her nation seem incongruous when compared with the secularization of Britain that occurred during Elizabeth's reign. Now that she's been laid to rest in St. George's Chapel, the last vestiges of a Britain rooted in Christian morality seem to have been buried with her.

The 20th century saw the United Kingdom reshaped by massive social and cultural changes. Two world wars exacted a heavy toll on both the island nation's population and its confidence. Britain began to divest itself of its global empire. The creation of a welfare state along with the 1960s counterculture changed people's relationship with long-standing institutions. The Church of England, the kingdom's national church, changed as well, losing millions of members.

And in the midst of these changes, Queen Elizabeth projected the impression of tradition and stability, characteristics even the most progressive commentators admired in her despite attacking them in almost anyone else.

For hundreds of years, British monarchs have occupied a position of religious leadership, stylizing themselves "defender of the faith" and "supreme governor of the Church of England." In the 16th century, the Roman Catholic pope gave King Henry VIII the "defender of the faith" moniker to thank him for his written defense of the sacraments against the attacks of Protestant Reformer Martin Luther. A decade later, Henry himself abandoned the Roman church, taking his entire country with him, because the pope refused to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Henry, however, decided to keep the title, and also called himself the "supreme head" of the Church of England. His daughter, Elizabeth I, softened the title to "supreme governor."

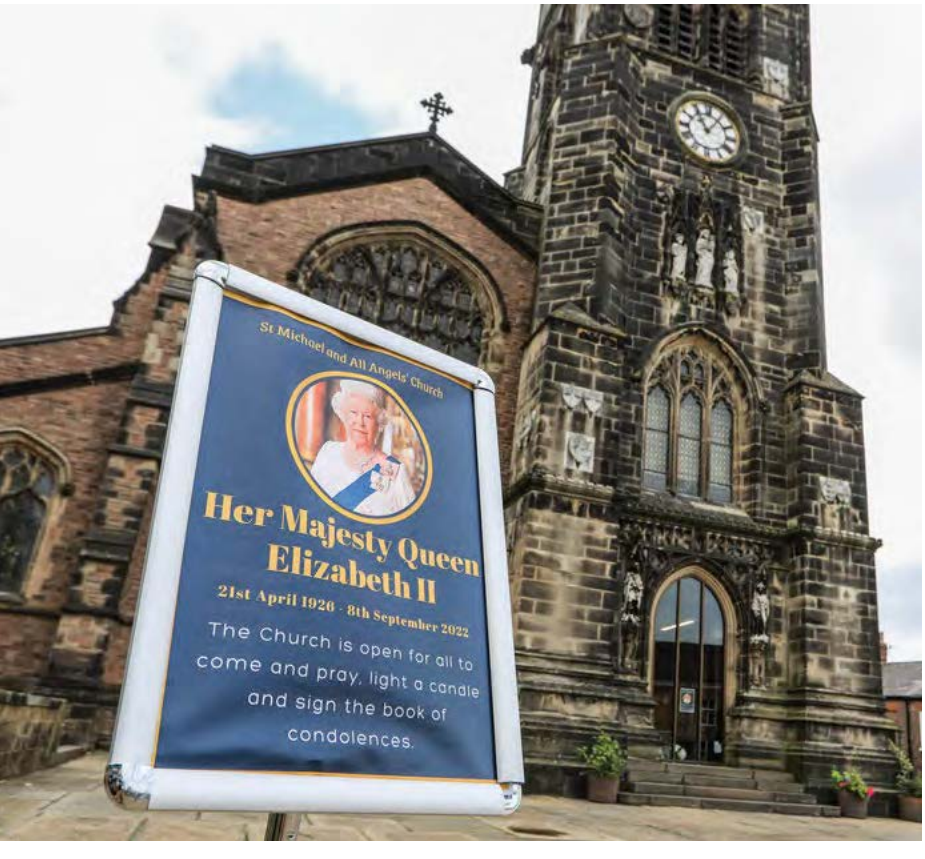
For centuries, the Church of England remained the primary means for Christian expression among English speakers, though it spawned groups of nonconformists, like congregationalists and baptists. But during the 20th century, church attendance began a steady decline. By midcentury, just 3.5 percent of England could be found in attendance in a Sunday morning service. Now that number is closer to 1 percent. In spite of declining attendance, almost half the population of Britain has been baptized and self-identifies as Christian.

JASON MAYHALL MOVED to the U.K. from America to pastor Bethany Church in Houghton-le-Spring, a small town in northeast England. His "free church"—what Americans would call nondenominational—meets in a 25-year-old building where between 200 and 250 worship each Sunday. Half a mile away sits the beautiful Anglican St. Michael and All

PROCESSION: OLI SCARFF/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES







TOP LEFT: Thousands gather to watch the procession of the queen's coffin. ABOVE: Queen Elizabeth records her 2021 Christmas broadcast in Windsor Castle. LEFT: St. Michael and All Angels' Church.

Angels' Church, which dates back to the 12th century. An average Sunday morning service at the Anglican parish church has fewer than 30 in attendance.

When Mayhall first moved to Houghton-le-Spring, he reached out to the local Anglican vicar, but Mayhall said, "There's not a lot of room for partnership." He says the vicar, while nice, isn't interested in associating with people who take the Bible seriously.

Most people in Mayhall's community identify as Christian, but "they don't have a very deep view of Scripture," he says. "They see the Bible as a holy book that you respect. Everyone's going to have one in their

CHRISTMAS: VICTORIA JONES/POOL VIA AP; CHURCH: CONOR MOLLOY/NEWS IMAGES/SIPA USA VIA AP

home because everyone gets one when they're baptized as a kid." But they don't look at the Scripture as an authoritative guide to the Christian life.

Mayhall's observations are borne out by a Pew survey from 2017. Among Britons who identify as Christian but rarely attend church, less than a third believe the Bible accurately communicates who God is. Even among regular church attenders in the U.K., only 57 percent trust the Bible's depiction of God.

The Church of England has invested millions of pounds in recent years in an attempt to boost church attendance, but it's met with little success. Many Britons both inside and outside the church believe the Church of England's main benefit to the country lies in its social work. Mayhall says the vicar in Houghton-le-Spring sees his job primarily as a community organizer.

THE CREEPING SECULARISM of the 20th century reached a gallop with the 1960s sexual revolution that coincided with church attendance's steepest declines. Queen Elizabeth might have been admired for her stalwart traditionalism, but the rest of Western civilization seemed eager to cast off its Judeo-Christian sexual ethic.

The queen's own family wasn't immune from the loosening of moral standards surrounding marriage and divorce. In fact, they were on the cutting edge. In 1936, her uncle Edward VIII gave up the throne because he insisted on marrying the twice-divorced Wallis Simpson, and the Church of England at the time wouldn't recognize the remarriage of a divorcée while her spouse still lived. In the early 1950s, Elizabeth's sister Margaret provoked a scandal when she sought to marry the divorced Peter Townsend.

During the 1960s the divorce rate in the U.K. steadily increased and then



Wallis Simpson and former King Edward, 1937



Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles, 2005



Prince Philip and Queen Elizabeth, 1972

FROM TOP: BIPPA/AP, TIM GRAHAM PHOTO LIBRARY VIA GETTY IMAGES, LICHFIELD ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES

doubled in the early '70s before peaking in the mid '90s. Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip's relationship set an example for marital faithfulness, but three of her four children's marriages dissolved in the 1990s.

It wasn't until 2002 that the Church of England began to recognize second marriages in cases where the first spouse still lived, paving the way for Elizabeth's son, now King Charles III, to marry the previously divorced Camilla Parker Bowles in 2005. Over the last 20 years, the divorce rate in Britain has fallen, but that's mainly due to the precipitous drop in marriage rates over the last three decades.

Britain's abandonment of a traditional sexual ethic correlates with people fleeing the church in the United Kingdom. According to the Pew survey, the majority of Britons who stopped claiming Christianity said they shed their religious identity because they disagreed with their religion's teachings on social issues. But digging into the data clarifies the situation. It's not social issues in general but the Bible's teachings about sex in particular that bothers people.

When it comes to immigration or governmental welfare, the attitudes of religious and nonreligious people in Britain aren't dissimilar. But when asked about divorce, abortion, or same-sex marriage, those who identify as non-church-attending Christians hold opinions similar to those who don't identify as Christian at all. In the U.K., two-thirds of churchgoers approve of keeping abortion and same-sex marriage legal, but 85 percent of people who don't attend church yet still identify as Christians approve. Interestingly, according to Pew's survey these self-identified Christians are slightly more liberal in their social views than atheist and agnostic Britons.

Most of the attrition in the Church of England's attendance, however, isn't from people actively walking away from Christianity. It stems from a lack of new blood. The church hasn't attracted young people, who have grown up in a society that views church teaching as outdated. As older parishioners die off, no one takes their place.



The royal family walks to church at Sandringham in May 1969.

THE QUEEN ATTENDED Sunday services every week, sometimes driving herself. But Dudley Delffs, who authored the biography *The Faith of Queen Elizabeth*, says she didn't focus on the declining membership in the Church of England. "Her Majesty chose to acknowledge and celebrate religious diversity and tolerance in the United Kingdom," said Delffs. "The Queen's Christmas and Commonwealth Day messages often addressed the theme of inter-faith harmony and respectful tolerance."

And while it's true she was respected by leaders from other religions, the older she got, the more explicit she grew about her faith. Her Christmas message of 2000 seemed to have been a turning point for her. In it she suggested other faiths might have some "divine inspiration and practical guidance," but she emphasized that her faith was founded upon the teachings of Jesus. She usually encouraged the nation to follow the example of Christ rather than trusting in His grace, but in 2002's Christmas message she said, "I draw strength from the message of hope in the Christian gospel." In 2016, she wrote the foreword for a Bible Society pamphlet celebrating her 90th birthday titled "The Servant Queen and the King She Serves." In it she wrote, "I have been—and remain—very grateful to you for your prayers and to God for his steadfast love. I have indeed seen his faithfulness."

In his service of prayer and remembrance for Queen Elizabeth, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby said, "She lived with the sure and eternal hope of resurrection to new life through Jesus Christ. She lived with that as her guide in times of joy and times of sorrow, and she most certainly knew both." He also acknowledged the years of her reign encompassed a period of change: "When something that has been solid and enduring moves, it feels as though the whole world has shifted on its axis, and we hardly know how to identify ourselves or anyone else."

Without Elizabeth tying them to traditional Christian morality, many Britons might become aware for the first time how far their nation has drifted. ■

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

GOD'S WORLD NEWS Building news literacy to better live out the gospel

Introducing Your News Coach

In this age of constant information, the sheer volume of voices—reliable and otherwise—can feel like an overwhelming firehose of content. At God's WORLD News, we heard parents and teachers express the need for a clear, calming voice to cut through the noise and walk alongside them as they disciple kids and students through current events.

You asked. We listened.

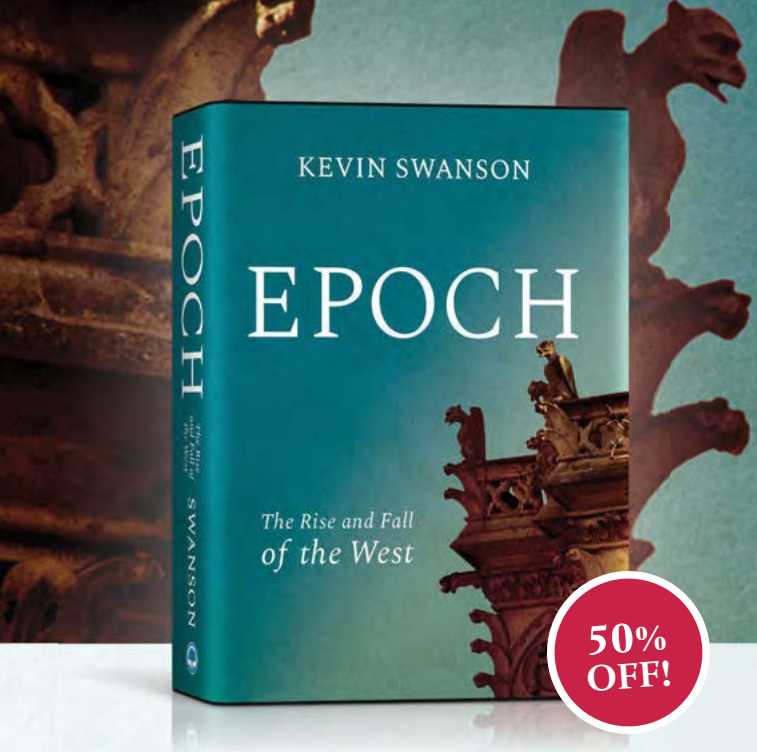
We're delighted to introduce News Coach Kelsey Reed. Her goal: **to partner with adults discipling the children they love.** Through weekly email newsletters and essays, Kelsey breaks down best discipleship practices with gentle, robust encouragement for those called to serve kids and teens.



Start reading Coach Kels' essays at **gwnews.com/teachers-lounge.**

God's BIG WORLD worldkids WORLD TEEN

God's WORLD News is an arm of WORLD News Group



"We have seen the fall of the Christian West. . . Kevin Swanson has written a marvelous book called Epoch. Highly recommend it."

- **Dr. John MacArthur**, Pastor, Grace Community Church (Sermon, June 19, 2022)

"Epoch is a stunning achievement. It is extremely well-researched and is so accessibly written that it easily stands with the finest secular texts. . . I highly recommend it."

- **Dr. J.P. Moreland**, Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, Talbot School of Theology, Biola University

The rise of the Christian West was spectacular. The fall of the West was similarly spectacular, especially for those who witnessed it firsthand. But the rise was more spectacular than its fall. That's the conclusion drawn in this epochal story of the Western world. The fall of Western civilization constitutes the most significant seismic shift in world history since the fall of Rome. And, such eschatological developments call for an immediate response — an extended explanation based in a definitive Christian interpretive framework. What conclusions should Christians draw from this cataclysmic event?

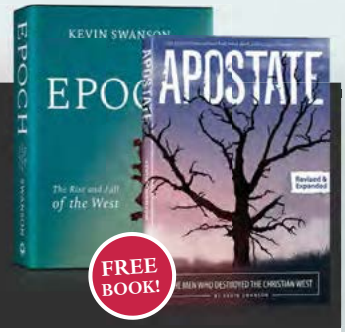
The timing was never better for a 2,000 year survey of the rise and fall of the Christian West. We are living in a moment when we must understand the times in order to know what to do, and how to respond. The West has already fallen, although the news has yet to sink in with most Europeans and Americans in 2021. The East is on the rise. The Christian faith is fast moving east and south, and the glory has departed from the West.

Epoch carefully chronicles the phenomenal impact of Jesus Christ and His people upon the culture, economy, religious character, charitable institutions, educational systems, science and technology, and worldview of the Western world—and the West's subsequent impact upon the whole earth. The book then traces the devastating decline and fall of a civilization, identifying the principal defectors and key provocateurs along the way.

Yet, the war is not over yet. The world goes on. So *Epoch* concludes with an international vision for the Christian church, and a clarion call for Christians to press forward in the work of discipling the nations in the generations to come. An absolute must-read for any Christian seeking to understand the times and seasons in which we live.

— FEATURES —

- Learn how the West was shaped by Christianity in every conceivable way including art, science, medicine, charity, economics, ethics, and more
- Trace the amazing effects of Christianity on Western culture as it transforms Europe and America
- Become well-versed in the major events of Western church history
- Discover a vision for carrying on our Christian heritage both here in the West and all around the world



50% OFF
YOUR HARDCOVER COPY OF *EPOCH*
- PLUS -
A FREE COPY
OF THE SEQUEL - *APOSTATE: THE MEN WHO DESTROYED THE CHRISTIAN WEST*

Use code **WORLD** at checkout to **save 50%** on your hardcover copy of *Epoch* and claim a **free copy** of Kevin's sequel *Apostate*.

Claim your copies at Generations.org/world

Applies to online purchases of hardcover format only. Can't be combined with other discounts. Offer expires Dec. 31, 2022.

NOTEBOOK



LCC K-9 COMFORT DOGS



LIFESTYLE

Canine comfort

How a group of golden retrievers brought a quiet presence to a Texas town in grief

by ADDIE OFFEREINS in Uvalde, Texas

CHRIS WEHMEYER and her husband were watching TV on May 24 when the news flashed across the screen. An 18-year-old gunman had stormed Robb Elementary School, killing 19 children and two teachers in a small farming community of 15,000.

"It was hard to believe it was little Uvalde, Texas," said Chris, who lives with her husband Ken in Bastrop, about three hours to the northeast. The next day, they jumped in the car and headed for Uvalde. But first, they picked up Abner, a large golden retriever from Austin.

Abner was one of nine golden retrievers from Oklahoma, Texas, and Colorado that were on their way to the grieving town. The Wehmeyers and their golden charge are part of Lutheran Church Charities K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry, which sends teams of dogs to scenes of tragedy. Another ministry branch, LCC Hearts of Mercy & Compassion, erects crosses for victims. When a catastrophe overwhelms a community, LCC workers and volunteers arrive by invitation from local churches or leaders, meeting pain with a quiet presence.

Comfort dogs provide relief to mourners at the Uvalde Town Square fountain.

"The dogs are a bridge," explains Ken. "If you give me one of these dogs, I can talk to anybody."

The day after the Uvalde shooting, members of the community gathered for a prayer vigil at the Uvalde County Fairplex, a multipurpose stadium that usually hosts rodeos and monster truck rallies. There, the Wehmeyers and other handlers lined up with the dogs as people shuffled in.

The dogs know when someone is in sorrow. They don't offer platitudes, just companionship. Children silenced by trauma often begin to talk while they stroke the silky fur. Parents are relieved to see their child crying or talking because they haven't been able to get them to express their emotions. "They don't know they're petting, but the words are flowing," said Bonnie Fear, the LCC K-9 crisis response coordinator. "So we see a lot of relief on parents' faces."

At the Fairplex, as Ken took Abner outside for a drink of water, a man and his daughter walked up to them and asked if they could pet the dog. Ken said yes. As it turned out, the girl, a young teen, had lost her younger sister in the shooting.

The dog handling group also visited with first responders, the FBI, Texas Highway Patrol, and Border Patrol. LCC K-9 spends →



about two years training the dogs at its headquarters in Northbrook, Ill. Afterward, each dog is assigned a home church. Abner belongs to Bethany Lutheran Church in Austin. He greets churchgoers and sleeps during Sunday sermons. A host family cares for him during the week. When he's not driving cross-country, he visits nursing homes, schools, and first responders at local police departments and 911 centers. LCC K-9 has over 130 comfort dogs serving in 26 states.

The Wehmeyers joined Bethany Lutheran Church about five years ago. When the retired couple saw Abner, it was "love at first sight," Chris said.

LCC Hearts of Mercy & Compassion worked with the city of Uvalde to find a central location to place 21 cross memorials for the victims of the shooting. Robb Elementary was guarded by yellow police tape and swarmed with reporters, so the group placed its crosses around a fountain in the middle of town.

"We want them to remember that someone loves them and prayed for them."

The volunteers started with raw lumber and paint. Each cross bore a pale blue heart, the outline of a fish, and a Bible verse. "Once you put a name on that heart, they come alive," said Jody Lockwood, the Hearts of Mercy & Compassion Uvalde deployment lead. "Every time I do this I have all the names and their stories going through my head."

A black marker is attached to every cross. Now, notes and prayers are scrawled across the memorials. "Give my mom a hug for me. You are a hero," says one message written on the cross for Irma Garcia, one of the two teachers who was killed.

The Wehmeyers helped assemble the crosses. Local residents helped unload the trucks. The offerings at the base of each memorial—flowers, stuffed animals, candles, toys—grew until the crosses were barely visible. After installing the crosses, handlers in royal blue polo shirts stood by silently with their comfort dogs.

Uvalde children who started school again on Sept. 6 didn't go back to Robb Elementary. Some attended other public schools, while parents of others chose to homeschool them or enroll them in private schools. Many children were afraid to step back into a classroom.

Ten dogs and 20 handlers returned to the town to greet children who did return to classrooms. The Wehmeyers took Abner to Uvalde High School, where students petted the animal in the hallway between classes.

While handlers like the Wehmeyers hold leashes, they'll also listen and pray. "We're trained to listen, have empathy, and not talk a whole lot," said Fear. "We want them to express their grief or their joy. We want them to remember that someone loves them and prayed for them." ■

LAW

Abortion as religion?

Advocates defend procedure as a religious right

by STEVE WEST

THE AMERICAN CIVIL Liberties Union appears to have "got religion."

On Sept. 8, the ACLU's Indiana branch filed a class action lawsuit arguing that an Indiana law that prohibits most abortions violates the state's Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). Indiana's RFRA, like the federal law it is modeled on, requires the state to show a compelling interest and use the least restrictive means whenever it enforces a law that burdens religious exercise.

Five anonymous individuals make up the nucleus of the lawsuit's plaintiff class: three Jews, a Muslim, and a nontheist. Yet the legal complaint asks the court to recognize as litigants all persons "whose sincere religious beliefs are that they may and should obtain abortions" for reasons not authorized by Indiana law.

The Indiana lawsuit mirrors one brought by a Florida synagogue in June challenging a state law restricting abortions after 15 weeks' gestation. Congregation L'Dor Va-Dor of Boynton Beach contends the law violates Jewish teachings that require abortion when necessary to protect the mother's mental or physical health.

Both the Indiana and Florida lawsuits face stiff headwinds, argued ethicist Andrew Kubrick in the online journal *Public Discourse*. Whether certain religious beliefs not only permit but require abortion in certain circumstances is in dispute, and the government always has a compelling interest in preserving the life of an innocent unborn child.





SCHOOL DRESS CODE CASE APPEALED

A North Carolina charter school is asking the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold its school policy requiring that girls wear skirts. A divided federal appeals court had previously ruled the skirt policy violated the Constitution's equal protection guarantee and "blatantly perpetuates harmful gender stereotypes ... with potentially devastating consequences for young girls."

Charter Day School, which operates four schools in the state, says its schools are not an extension of the state and so have freedom to develop their own educational approach. Charter schools are largely publicly funded and their teachers are public employees, yet the schools operate independently of other public schools.

Should the lower court ruling stand, say school lawyers, it will effectively allow the state to impose the same requirements on privately run charter schools as apply to public schools, stifling the innovation charters were meant to promote. *—s.w.*

ABORTION: JEREMY HOGAN/SOPA IMAGES/SIPA VIA AP; STUDENT: ISTOCK



Weizmann lab workers

SCIENCE

Synthetic mice in a lab

Scientists coax the growth of embryos from stem cells

by HEATHER FRANK

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE and Weizmann Institute of Science researchers recently created the first in vitro mouse embryo that grew spontaneously without using sperm or egg. In papers published in *Nature* on Aug. 25 and in *Cell Stem Cell* on Sept. 8, the scientists reported the culmination of a decadelong quest to get stem cell lines to "talk" to one other successfully. Interactions between three stem cell populations critical to early mammalian development produced a self-organization of structures that ultimately grew into embryos.

These synthetic embryos reached the most advanced stage of development achieved to date in a stem-cell derived model. Surviving eight days, the embryos had the beginnings of brains, beating hearts, and intestinal tracts and were 95 percent similar to natural embryos in terms of their internal structures and genetic profiles.

The mouse embryo model, which the researchers aim to coax to full term (20 days), may shed light on why some pregnancies fail. The researchers also think a human model could be used some day to grow organs for people who need transplants—an ethically fraught prospect. Study author Jacob Hanna said that the synthetic embryos can't develop into full-grown mice.

INTELLIGENTLY DESIGNED METAMORPHOSIS

Female *Lagria* beetle larvae carry beneficial bacteria in special pockets on their backs, and new research shows how they pass it on to offspring. In a study published in *Frontiers in Physiology* on Aug. 30, scientists tracked beetles during the pupal, or cocoon, stage of development by covering them with microscopic fluorescent plastic beads assumed to act similarly to the bacteria. When the beetles emerged from their cocoons, most of the beads had moved from their backs to the tips of their abdomens. The bacteria, which protect beetles against fungi during their early-stage development, can easily be transmitted from their new position on the matriarch's abdomen to her eggs.

Leaf-cutter ants also carry symbiotic bacteria in exoskeleton pockets, and one type of weevil species carries yeast inside special pockets. *—H.F.*



BUTTON BATTERIES INCREASE CHILDHOOD INJURY RISK

A new study published in *Pediatrics* found that the annual rate of childhood battery-related emergency room visits more than doubled in the 2010-2019 period compared with 1990-2009. Small lithium "button" batteries were responsible for the most injuries, and children under 5 were at the highest risk. When swallowed, even small lithium batteries can generate an electrical current that can produce potentially deadly injuries. Button batteries are often used in electronic devices such as toys and remote controls. *—H.F.*

LAB: ILIA YEFIMOVICH/PICTURE-ALLIANCE/DPA/AP; BATTERIES: ISTOCK

TECHNOLOGY

Patterns of life

Police turn to warrantless phone surveillance app in the fight against crime

by ELIZABETH RUSSELL



VIRGINIA-BASED data broker Fog Data Science is selling personal location data to law enforcement agencies at local, state, and federal levels, according to privacy experts. The digital privacy rights organization Electronic Frontier Foundation reported that the company's app, Fog Reveal, offers "mass surveillance on a budget."

Fog Reveal works by harvesting advertising identification numbers from popular smartphone apps, like Waze and Starbucks, that track a user's location. The numbers and locations provide a detailed picture of a phone user's life, including history of movements stretching back up to two years. Police can identify the phone's owner using documents like property records. So far, the app has scanned around 250 million phones.

Fog Data Science has sold its software to about two dozen law enforcement agencies to date. Fog Reveal has successfully aided in several investigations, including the murder of an Arkansas nurse. But police are not typically required to disclose use of the app in court documents—and they don't have to obtain a search warrant to track someone's location on Fog Reveal.

Arkansas prosecutor Kevin Metcalf told the Associated Press that Fog Reveal gives law enforcement a necessary edge in cracking cases. "We push the limits, but we do them in a way that we target the bad guys," he said.

But others, like former police analyst Davin Hall, argue the app violates Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable search and seizure. Hall quit his job at the Greensboro, N.C., police department due to its use of Fog Reveal. "I just feel angry and betrayed and lied to," he said.



EMERGENCY ALERTS AID POWER GRID DURING HEAT WAVE

Have low-tech text messages become key to keeping the power on in summer? When California temperatures soared to the triple digits during the week of Sept. 4, millions of households ran their air conditioning units, driving power usage on the state's primary electric grid to a record high.

To prevent rolling outages, the California Independent System Operator issued daily "Flex Alert" texts to millions of phones, warning residents to reduce power usage between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m., the hottest part of the day. Recommendations included setting thermostats to 78 degrees and unplugging unused devices.

After the alerts went out, power usage dropped substantially, prompting CAISO President Elliot Mainzer to thank residents for helping minimize outages (although some customers still lost power temporarily). CAISO first issued such alerts in 1998. *—Bekah McCallum*

PHONE APP: ALLEN G. BREED/AP; CALIFORNIA: KIRBY LEE VIA AP



VOICES **ANDRÉE SEU PETERSON**

Washington's *grande bouffe*

Massive debts don't stop Congress from piling up more and more

WHEN ALL IS LOST, there is a type of man who will decide to go out in style. Take *The Bucket List* (2007), a film about two elderly gentlemen with nothing in common except a terminal diagnosis, who demur to go gentle into that good night, and set out instead to tick off their bucket list in the short time that remains.

Or consider a man in trouble of his own making who, rather than opting for restraint and course correction, proceeds whole hog on the path that got him into the jam he's in. In *La Grande Bouffe* (1973), four decadent friends make up their minds to eat themselves to death with sumptuous feasting in a French villa.

Movies are not your thing? To the Bible, then. How about the four lepers ostracized and doomed to certain death who decide they have nothing to lose by going over to the enemy and turning themselves in, who then are gobsmacked to find a camp deserted in haste and the food all left behind. They proceed to gorge themselves (2 Kings 7:3-20).

"Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!" might be a good caption for the go-for-broke mindset encapsulated in these scenes, this throwing all caution to the wind—but with apologies first to Adm. David Glasgow Farragut, who uttered the words in a more glorious context in the 1864 Battle of Mobile Bay.

The related vignettes come to mind as I consider with a certain terrified wonder the profligacy and almost gleeful abandon with which our federal government is throwing around dollars to the tune of a trillion here and a trillion there. Pretty soon that's big money, as the joke goes. You will agree that it's a phenomenon we have never quite seen before in America. I want to pen a letter to D.C. along the following lines:

"Dear Washington, you have overspent our money and refused to live within your budget. There is not a social program you have not lusted after. If that were not bad enough, when you saw your own state of financial untenableness, rather than cutting back, you have decided to print more money to pay for the resulting deficits. Thus you have created more dollars chasing after fewer goods, resulting in higher prices, with no end in sight. Please explain. Yours truly, J.Q. Citizen."

The new and very curious thing is the lack of federal hand-wringing. At least they used to wring their hands. At least they made the pretense of self-flagellation and newfound earnestness, and ran on promises to rein it in. All of that is gone now. Now they're like drunken sailors, too inebriated to be bothered anymore with sound fiscal policy. The attitude seems to be, *We have thrown so much money away! Let's throw some more!*

Is there a flash point reached in the psyche where the government figured, like Ugo, Philippe, Marcello, and Michel in *La Grande Bouffe*: "What the heck, we're all going to die anyway, may as well go out with a bang." Have they darkly reasoned, like King Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:19), that at least it won't catch up with them in their day?

Unless the truth is even worse. What I mean is, suppose this suicidal dance is not stupidity but deliberate? Preposterous, you say? Well, if a set of policies, day after day, all tend to destruction, the thinking man should at least consider the possibility that it is not accidental but on purpose, as a means to achieving some political purpose, Cloward-Piven style.

As for me, I take comfort in that God will have the last word after all the trumpets, seals, and bowls are spent. ■

Email *aseupeterson@wng.org*


WORLD Watch
TODAY'S NEWS DELIVERED IN TEN MINUTES
STREAM NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN JOURNALISTS
Play engaging, timely reports produced by Christian journalists on any device. Build news literacy, critical thinking, and—most importantly—Biblical discernment in ten minutes each weekday.
Here's an award-winning current events program that informs you but also reminds you, "Whatever the news, the purpose of the Lord will stand."
Stream a whole week for free at worldwatch.news.
Subscription will auto-renew for $6.99 per month after promotional period.
WORLD Magazine subscribers take 20% off the standard monthly price with code WORLD20 at checkout.

A chat with Michael Behe

On de-volution, couch potatoes, and God's marvelous molecular machinery

by LYNN VINCENT



ON PAGE 42, Lehigh University biochemist Michael Behe takes us inside a semi-secret conference that questioned secular science's holy grail—the theory of evolution. I asked Behe what's happened since 1996, when he sparked controversy in secular circles with his book *Darwin's Black Box*, a scientific takedown of Darwin's theory:

Since *Black Box*, we've seen intelligent design advocates systematically silenced. Any good news on that front? We can divide the news since then into disappointing and terrific. The disappointing news is, the scientific community remains implacably opposed to intelligent design. The terrific news is that, as the actual science advances ever more rapidly, the case for intelligent design gets ever stronger while the case for Darwin gets much weaker (if that's even possible). That's exactly what you expect to see when your theory is correct—new results confirm it.

In *Black Box*, you coined the term "irreducible complexity" to describe biological systems that could not function without a minimum number of components, and that therefore could not have "evolved" from simpler systems. What is the most common evolutionist response to your proposition? The most common overall response is to question my ancestry. The most common serious response is to deflect the question to the future: Give us more time, they write. But, of course, it has now been more than 25 years, and a grand total of zero of the examples in the book has been explained in a Darwinian fashion.

What new areas of scientific inquiry show the most promise for advancing the theory of intelligent design? In biology, pretty much all of them. The cell has much more elegant machinery than was thought just a decade ago. It has more sophisticated control systems, does more things that no one ever suspected. Another such study was just published. Researchers were able to make movies of a molecular machine that handles tangles that arise in DNA during cell replication. Meanwhile, pretty much every new study trumpeting how natural selection helped a species survive finds that the underlying mutation broke a preexisting gene. That's de-volution, not e-volution.

Tell us about your faith and family. My grandfathers both worked for the Altoona railroad. My dad joined the Navy right out of high school during the Second World War. He was the first of his family to go to college, on the GI Bill. I was born in 1952 into a large Catholic family and attended parochial school. I always feel at a loss when I'm asked by other Christians to share my conversion story since I don't have one! I was blessed to be taught the faith by my parents and never doubted its truth. My wife and I decided to carry on the tradition with a large Catholic family of our own. Like all families, we've had our ups and downs, but God has richly blessed us.

What kinds of hobbies or sports might we find you enjoying on a weekend? I'm a proverbial couch potato. I love to watch football and cheer for the Philadelphia Eagles. A lot of my wife's and my time is spent in family get-togethers with one or more of our nine kids, who all still live in the area.

If you could take a year off to study one subject outside your career field, what would it be? I've always wanted to learn carpentry, to work with my hands in making something. I am one of the least handy guys you'll ever come across. If I had a free year, I think I'd apprentice myself to a particularly patient carpenter. ■

ILLUSTRATION BY ZÉ OTAVIO


WHERE WILL
YOU BECOME?
College is about becoming. It is about discovering who you were created to be. Where do you want to spend your college years learning and growing?
Come to Covenant College for an integrated faith and learning journey that nourishes you spiritually, challenges you academically, and equips you with the skills and experiences needed to lead a successful life and career. Located on beautiful Lookout Mountain, Georgia, we're just 20 minutes from thriving downtown Chattanooga.
Learn more about our holistic educational experience and how it can help you uncover your life's purpose and calling.
COVENANT
COLLEGE

WORLD
Sound journalism, grounded in facts
and Biblical truth



In the midst of chaos
and confusion, you need
a source you can trust.

Join Albert Mohler for a daily
analysis of news and events
from a Christian worldview.
Subscribe today.

ALBERTMOHLER.COM