

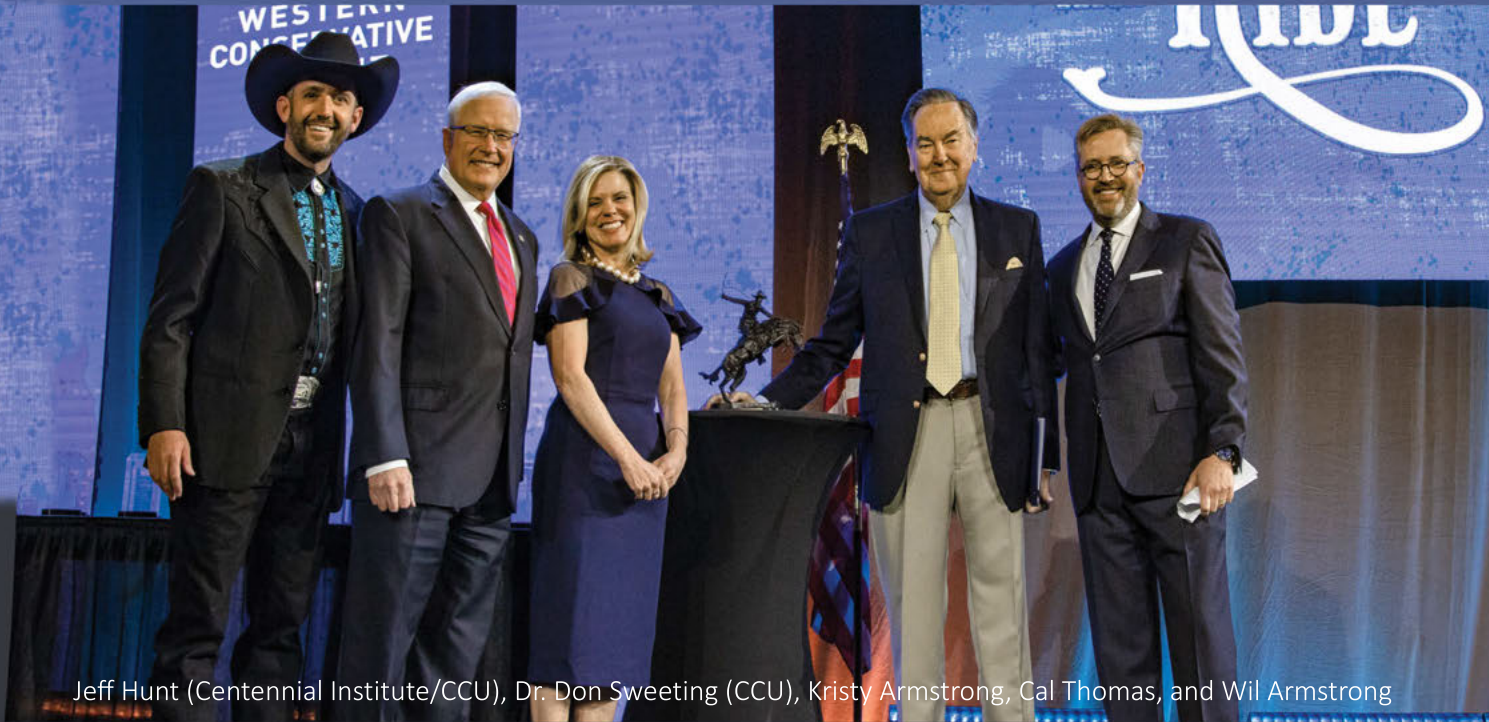
WORLD

A landmark
victory
in the fight
for life *p.38*



2022 WILLIAM L. ARMSTRONG AWARD CAL THOMAS, AMERICA'S COLUMNIST

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38

PRO-LIFERS PLAYED THE LONG GAME

Early pro-life actions kept *Roe v. Wade* unsettled, contributing to its overturn in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*

by Leah Savas



46

SITTING TOGETHER WITH PEOPLE IN PAIN

Helping Ukrainians cope with the emotional effects of war

by Jenny Lind Schmitt

52

HIGHER AND HIGHER

As fuel and other prices rise, higher costs damage every link in the food supply chain

by WJI graduates

60

PLAIN TRUTH

Amish who exit their communities find the cost of discipleship high

by Kim Henderson

66

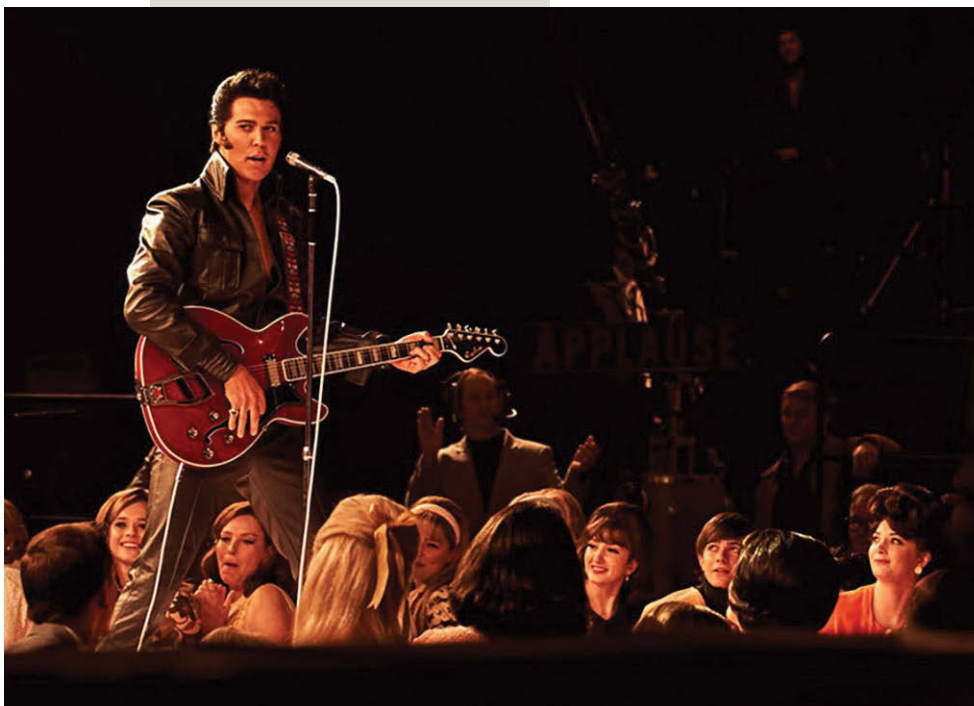
OVERCOMING HURDLES

A rare genetic disease hasn't reined in an equestrian from pursuing her dreams

by Sharon Dierberger

5 MAILBAG 8 NOTES FROM THE CEO 88 POSTSCRIPT

25



Austin Butler as Elvis

THE MAKING OF A LEGEND

Exuberant filmmaking complements the bombast of Elvis' music and lifestyle

by Collin Garbarino

Dispatches

13 NEWS ANALYSIS

A new leader for the SBC

16 HUMAN RACE

17 BY THE NUMBERS

18 QUOTABLES

19 CARTOONS

20 QUICK TAKES

ON THE COVER

Photo by rypson/iStock

Culture

25 MOVIES & TV

Elvis, Night Sky, Lightyear, Jurassic World Dominion, Jerry and Marge Go Large

30 BOOKS

32 CHILDREN'S BOOKS

34 MUSIC

Billy Childish and John Zorn are not slowing down

Notebook

77 ART

79 RELIGION

81 PRO-LIFE

82 EDUCATION

84 CRIME

Voices

10 Joel Belz

22 Janie B. Cheaney

36 Kim Henderson

72 Q&A

86 Andrée Seu Peterson

Fortitude

Stand firm in the faith.
Be courageous. Be strong.
1 CORINTHIANS 16:13 NLT



*For every battle
every man faces*

WORLD

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AND THOSE WHO DWELL THEREIN.” —PSALM 24:1

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**What
scene
caught
your
attention
in Ohio's
Amish
country?**

“I drove
down a side
road that
took me past
a house
where an
Amish boy
was cutting
the yard with
a reel mower.
He was bare-
foot, wearing
the expected
suspenders
and bowl cut,
but he
stopped and
looked at me
in my rental
car like I was
the oddity. I
guess in that
setting I was.”

—*WORLD*
Correspondent
Kim
Henderson,
whose story
begins on
p. 60

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ADOPTING AGAINST THE ODDS

MAY 21, P. 52: I pray the Chung family finds the same level of support and community my parents did when they adopted two boys from Haiti. God is faithful and provides those missing puzzle pieces you didn't even realize would fit perfectly.

Kaitlyn Garrett/Canton, Ohio

OPEN DORMS

MAY 21, P. 58: Kim Henderson's article rang true to me, not because of any college experiences, but because of my Air Force career. Placing healthy young men and women in close proximity to each other usually leads to trouble.

Bill Cate/Ferrysburg, Mich.

MAKING A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

MAY 21, P. 19: Look back to 2000, when President Bill Clinton paved the way for Communist China's entrance into the World Trade Organization. What began then—with a push from U.S. CEOs and politicians—has finally reached similar naïve and greedy residents in the South Pacific.

Doug Perkins/Wilmington, Del.

I am confident that Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare's "agreement with China with our eyes wide open" is true. I suspect what he sees is the enormous potential for personal enrichment from a new source of graft, which China would choose to ignore.

Robert Orrick/Red Bluff, Calif.

LUKE HOLLAND TICKS ALL THE BOXES

MAY 21, P. 66: I was very disappointed in this interview. It read like a marketing piece for the candidate, and the headline sounded like an endorsement.

Rosa Floyd/Fayetteville, Ark.

THE WAY TO PEACE

MAY 21, P. 30: Janie B. Cheaney's column was a beautiful exposition of the gospel. When she wrote, "He loves us, but He can't tolerate us," I had hoped she would end with "apart from being



RUSSIA'S RAPID DECLINE

MAY 21, P. 46 Jill Nelson's cover story hit the nail on the head. Soon Russia will morph into what it was 40 years ago: a medieval country with an atomic bomb.

*Randy Crews/
Spokane, Wash.*

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

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BREVITY AND CLARITY.

in Christ." But she did finish by pointing us to the better Word.

Jeremiah Wade/Memphis, Tenn.

LITHIUM: THE ENERGY SOURCE OF THE FUTURE

MAY 21, P. 23: Lithium is not an energy source in and of itself. It is an essential component in many batteries, which are energy storage media, not energy sources.

John Torczynski/Albuquerque, N.M.

I'm glad you showed a glimpse of the surface mining required to extract lithium ore. Too many people are unwilling to recognize the environmental impact that imposes. A fair analysis and comparison must include that factor too.

Wyett H. Colclasure II/Salem, Ill.

AIRPORT KAREN

MAY 21, P. 28: My wife Karen's name is abused in the secular world, but we did not expect the same from our favorite news magazine. WORLD should avoid sliding into the disrespecting ways of this present culture.

William M. McCray/Fairborn, Ohio

I am dismayed at WORLD's adoption of the name "Karen" as a pejorative. I've made an effort to avoid offense at the silliness of our society, but I am hurt to find my WORLD Magazine piling on. I still love you, though.

Karen Shore/Newcastle, Calif.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

MAY 21, P. 12: Kevin Martin seems ideally suited for the collaborative editorial model he described in his column. Keep up the good work!

Bobbi Donaldson/Thornton, Pa.

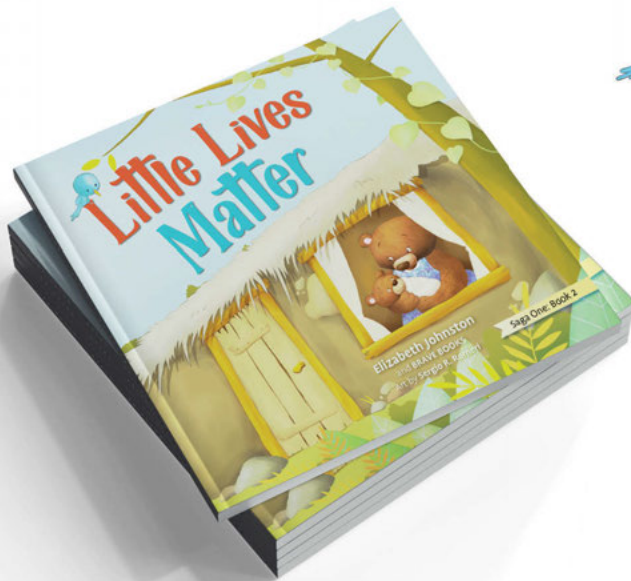
CLARIFICATION

MAY 21, P. 58: Plan B is not the abortion pill but can have abortive effects. Women sometimes use Plan B in an attempt to prevent fertilization or implantation of a fertilized egg.

OVERTURNED!

The monumental court case **ROE V. WADE** has been overturned in a 6-3 decision by the Supreme Court. This is a huge win for life and liberty!

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AFTER ROE, OUR WORK REMAINS

Life-affirming Christian journalism is more important than ever

LIKE NEARLY EVERY OTHER media organization, WORLD planned ahead a bit for our coverage of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. Because of the leak, we thought we had a pretty good idea of what we would do with the story.

Even so, there were quite a few things we didn't know: Would the majority hold? What would be the final vote? How would the concurring and dissenting opinions read? And, importantly for us, when would we have the actual decision?

All of those questions were answered mid-morning on Friday, June 24, while WORLD's board of directors, the editorial council, and management were in our annual fiscal-year-end board meeting. As it turned out, God's providential timing provided an emotional moment for our team.

Among that group were individuals who had participated in, reported on, and advocated for the pro-life cause essentially for our entire adult lives. It was amazing to share that moment together. I wish our entire staff had been able to be there.

Much as we wanted to bask in the moment, it didn't last long—a prayer of thanksgiving, a sung doxology, a few tears, some hugs. Our editors' rush from the meeting to finish and file WORLD's stories on the ruling was symbolic of the pro-life task overall: There's still work to do, even while celebrating a hard-fought victory.

Our team put extraordinary energy and effort behind dozens of stories and reflections and commentaries in the past few days on all of WORLD's platforms and in other media outlets. That kind of energy and effort is not new, or unique to this event. By God's grace, their energy and effort will not falter, but will continue as we cover every other issue God allows us to encounter in the future.

There probably isn't another concern that has so defined WORLD's reporting and commentary like the fight for life. Our annual *Roe v. Wade* issue, published every January, has provided reporting and rallying cries for the fight since we began publishing it early in WORLD Magazine's history. I did not know when we published our most recent edition of that issue a few months ago that it could be our last.

In years ahead, maybe instead of publishing annual *Roe* issues in January, perhaps we will publish an annual *Dobbs* issue in June. But all of the excitement at the end of June does show that we still have work to do and stories to write, along with the hope that God will bring abortion to an end as He brought *Roe v. Wade* to an end. ■

Kevin Martin

PONDER ANEW, WHAT THE ALMIGHTY CAN DO

When was the last time you thought deeply about the stewardship of your missions' giving? What if each dollar could touch more lives? That can happen when we shift our thinking and shift our finances towards maximizing the efforts of locals training locals. In many cases, in hard-to-reach places, your dollars can make hundreds of new disciples and plant churches at a fraction of the cost through indigenous leadership. Maybe it's time to ponder anew what the Almighty can do?



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A blunt challenge

The Church should fund education at Christian schools

WHEN I SUGGESTED in this space a few weeks ago that a growing number of Christian schools are becoming “elitist,” I should have been ready for the response. When readers think something in *WORLD* isn’t quite right, they don’t mind saying so!

Now, several weeks later, I wish I had taken the time and the space to get it right.

The term *elite*, in my computer dictionary, carries with it a handful of words both positive and negative in their connotations. To be numbered among the *elite* might be a good thing—but it might almost as easily also be a put-down.

In my recent column, I said that the growth of Christian schools over the last generation, both in number and in quality, had exacted “some cost.” That may well have understated the facts. The actual cost of enrollment in a typical Christian school has increased by a minimum multiple of two, three, four—and probably even more—over the last few decades.

That dramatic increase has jacked up the cost of a Christian school education out of the reach of thousands of middle-class evangelical families. Many get through by severe scrimping and saving. The really serious impact, of course, is on minority and low-income families.

Perhaps no one anywhere has given more thoroughly thoughtful focus to these issues than Dr. Alan Pue, head of the Barnabas Group Inc., based in Castle Rock, Colo. A longtime *WORLD* loyalist, Pue has extensive experience in school administration and consulting. Much of that comes together in his book *Rethinking Sustainability: A Strategic Finance Model for Christian Schools*.

**“IF WE CAN’T MAKE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLING
AFFORDABLE, WE’VE
STILL GOT TO FIND A WAY
TO MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE.”**

Pue thinks it confuses the issue when I refer to some Christian schools as elitist. He says: “As someone has astutely observed, ‘No money, no mission.’ Indeed, fiscal sustainability is among the gravest challenges facing virtually every Christian school in this country and around the world.

Pue continues: “Here’s reality. Schooling, for many reasons including the fact that 75 percent of the typical Christian school budget goes toward staffing, is not all that affordable. No Christian school of which I am aware intentionally intends to create financial barriers for those hoping to access such an education. For many families Christian schooling is, however, beyond their financial reach. If we can’t make Christian schooling affordable we’ve still got to find a way to make it accessible.

“Here’s another reality. While Christian schools are engaged in both educational and life transformation efforts, at the end of the day they are not unlike a business—they must produce enough money to pay their bills and fulfill their mission. This is where the evangelical church could make a huge difference. If local churches would make even the slightest effort to assist Christian schools by providing scholarships for genuinely needy families, the challenge of delivering a quality Christian education for every student regardless of their financial condition could be addressed.”

Pue is blunt in his challenge: “Sadly, however, the church chooses to ignore the current reality of the children and young people who are forced to attend their local, state-funded public schools, schools which do more to turn the minds of our kids from Christ than anything other than the pervasive media that inundates our kids on a daily basis.”

According to Pue, “I’ve seen this reality up close and find the utter indifference within the American evangelical church to step up and fulfill their mandate to express God’s love ‘to the least of these’ disheartening and maddening. We are long past time for talking. Talking about the problem is to do nothing about the problem.”

To counter that current trend, Pue produced his newest book this past summer. It’s titled *Rethinking Discipleship: Why Christian Schooling Matters*.

Sounds more democratic than elite! ■

ENDURE

A book by Bill Newton

Live Life with Godly Determination

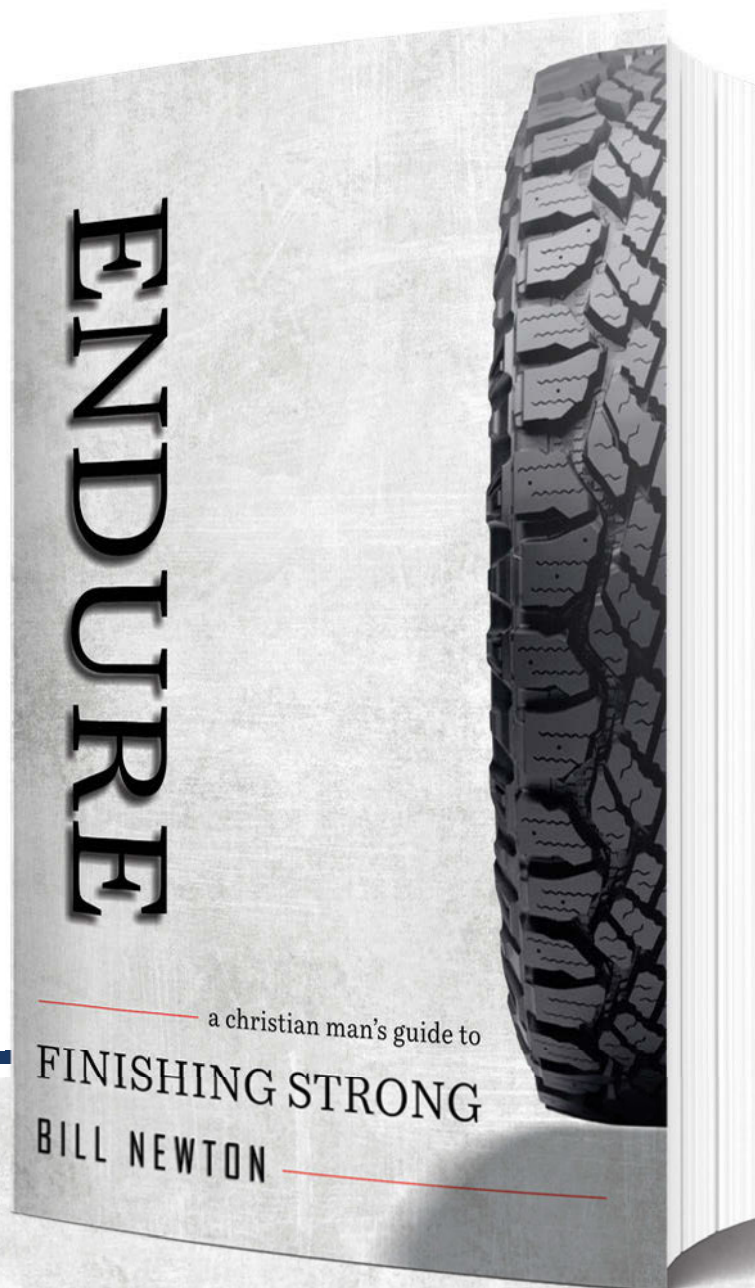
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A NEW LEADER FOR THE SBC

Bart Barber says denomination's doctrine is not the problem

by Mary Jackson

ON JUNE 14, more than 8,000 Southern Baptists in Anaheim, Calif., elected a new president to lead the 13.7 million member denomination amid ongoing division and the enormous task of implementing abuse reforms.

Church messengers chose an unconventional winner: Bart Barber, a Baptist historian and pastor of a small, rural church, First Baptist Church of Farmersville, Texas.

Barber won 61 percent of the votes in a runoff against Florida pastor Tom Ascol, who leads Founders Ministries and was endorsed by the Conservative Baptist Network. Ascol earned 38 percent of the votes. →

Bart Barber
speaks at
the SBC
convention.

Barber recorded his first update as SBC president on his farm, introducing viewers to his new bull, named “Bully Graham,” that joins Barber’s 13 heifers. Barber also updated Southern Baptists on his first job as president: selecting a new sexual abuse task force to push SBC abuse reform initiatives forward.

Barber and I met virtually on June 22 to discuss his new role. Here’s our conversation, edited and shortened.

Congratulations! How are you feeling about your new role?

I’m really excited about it. The Southern Baptist convention is my spiritual home, my spiritual family. My affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention goes back to my earliest memories. I was a Southern Baptist before I was a Christian. It’s fulfilling to be affirmed by your spiritual family like this. ... But alongside that, there’s the gravity of the task that sets in. You realize that your spiritual family is depending on you and that you have to give leadership to that family. So, there’s the excitement but also the weight of it.

You campaigned for SBC president using the slogan “army of peacekeepers.” Your closest opponent, Tom Ascol, expressed a desire to change the direction of what some perceive as a liberal drift in the SBC. Different visions?

The other candidates are my brothers in Christ. I think it’s obvious that Tom Ascol and I perceived differently the current state of the Southern Baptist Convention. ... If I thought the SBC were in the shape that Tom thought it was in, I’d probably be proposing some of the same solutions [he] was proposing.

I think Southern Baptists elected me because they trusted me to listen to them and to seek the Lord’s leadership for whatever comes our way and for the tasks we do face now, for the things we know are problems now. I believe that Southern Baptists were convinced that I will address those current problems head-on in a way that builds up the SBC family around doing the right thing.

What would you say to those who voted for Ascol or the other candidates who are deeply concerned about the direction the denomination is headed?

I do not want us to drift leftward. Let’s be vigilant about not drifting leftward. I want to take our denomination in the direction of trusting the Word of God. I think we’ve done a great job at heeding Biblical commands regarding what we should believe and teach. But we’ve done less admirably in obeying God’s commands about how we should treat one another. That shows up in the sexual abuse task force report. It’s not a doctrinal question. It’s not like we weren’t sure whether we were in favor of or against pastors molesting kids in the church or we had a sexual ethic that was unclear about abuse. The problem we had was people who knew it was wrong and did it anyway.

Do you think your outspokenness and actions on sexual abuse were key reasons church delegates elected you?

Yes, I do. The messengers wanted to take action on this. And they knew that I did, too.

Church delegates approved recommendations from the SBC sexual abuse task force to begin addressing the denomination’s past mishandling of sexual abuse and to make its churches safer. The task force chairman called those recommendations the “bare minimum.”

I am trying to move promptly to get the process started. But I think this is something we’re going to be working on. ... If I spend two terms as SBC president, it will extend beyond my own presidency because we [won’t have] implemented the solutions to these major questions that have been presented to us in the report. The abuse task force is going to have work to do. Even after we’ve addressed the things that are unaddressed at this point, I don’t know that our first stab at solving the problems that we’re starting to try to solve now, I don’t know that those things are going to work or that we’re not going to find things that need to be tweaked or addressed. I think we’ll be several years starting an attempt to address these problems and then tweaking that as time goes on. ... I’m in it for the long haul.



“

**PEOPLE NEED
JESUS. THEY
DON’T NEED THE
SOUTHERN BAPTIST
CONVENTION.
THEY NEED THE
GOSPEL. THEY
NEED THE TRUTH.**

”



Attendees hold up their ballots during the SBC convention in Anaheim.

You plan to select the members of the new sexual abuse task force in July. What kinds of people will you select?

It's indispensable for me to hear from the current task force as a whole and understand completely what they've learned over the course of this year, to hear what the incoming task force needs to do and what skill sets are needed.

You referred to Baptist polity on church autonomy as "nimble and resilient" when it comes to deterring sexual predators from SBC churches. What do you mean by that?

With regard to resilience, if you toppled the entire Southern Baptist Convention, if the whole thing just went away, the churches would still be here. They would form something new. In the wake of it all, that would look a lot like the Southern Baptist Convention. The local churches—47,000 of them—they're not all going away. They're going to cooperate with each other through some vehicle.

I suspect that some of the game-changing ideas that help us fight against sexual abuse are going to be conjured up by some pastor we've never heard of yet, who is serving in an obscure church context somewhere. He's going to try it out

and implement it where he is. ... That nimbleness comes from the fact that if we can get churches to the point where ... the majority of Southern Baptist churches recognize this problem and are looking for ways to solve it, then we've got a 47,000-member task force looking for ways to solve it.

Some of your opponents expressed concern that the SBC could face class-action lawsuits over sexual abuse. Your thoughts?

If we can make investments today to make our churches more resilient against predators, that's the morally right thing to do. Beyond that, if we can get involved in ways that strengthen our local churches, even if doing that makes an opening for a little more risk for the national SBC, if it's successful, we greatly reduce the risk at the local church level, because they are prepared better to prevent abuse, to take care of survivors of abuse, and to handle abuse correctly when it happens. ... That also protects the financial basis of the entire Southern Baptist Convention. The local churches are where it all comes from. There's no solution to the problem without solving the problem. The problem happens at the

local church level, mostly. So we need to be working and doing everything we can to try to solve the problem there.

What about those concerned about the SBC's decline in membership and churches?

I'm far less concerned about numeric decline among one denomination of churches, even if it's my own, than I am about the across-the-board decline in interest in the gospel as evangelicals proclaim it ... the Biblical New Testament gospel.

If we've kept our own house in order, and we've stayed committed to what we believe, I think the time is coming that we're going to see growth again, and that people are going to show a renewed interest in the gospel. And honestly, even if the end result is people are committed to the gospel but they go to a different kind of church, then I'm prepared to rejoice over that. People need Jesus. They don't need the Southern Baptist Convention. They need the gospel. They need the truth. I just hope that we're faithful to give people the gospel and the truth. If so, I think the gates of hell are not going to prevail against churches that do that.

There's dispute within the SBC over women holding the title pastor, particularly in relation to Saddleback Church recently ordaining women as pastors. Your thoughts?

I agree with our statement of faith. We have two Biblical offices in the church: deacons and pastors. Pastors are sometimes called elders or overseers. The office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. That's what the Baptist Faith and Message says, and it's what I believe. I think we should work towards a Southern Baptist Convention in which all of our churches agree on that. ... We probably have greater unity over that now than we did 20 years ago.

... I'm unlike some of the other folks because I'm like, why don't we try to convince one another, instead of immediately having our hand on the button to kick people out or on the leave button. ■



VINDICATED

Religious liberty scores

Supreme Court rules in favor of praying
high school football coach

THE SUPREME COURT ruled in a 6-3 decision on June 27 that former coach **Joseph Kennedy** has the right to pray on the football field after games as a personal religious expression. After repeatedly asking him to pray privately, Bremer-ton School District fired Kennedy in 2015 for kneeling on the 50-yard line at the end of games. Some students voluntarily joined him. Administrators said his actions as a school employee amounted to government speech endorsing a religious point of view that could have had the effect of pressuring students to join in. Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote in the court's opinion that Kennedy was an individual engaging in a "brief, quiet, personal religious observance" which is protected under the free speech and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment. As for the establishment clause, he said the school had misinterpreted it as requiring them to ferret out religious speech, which it does not.

DIED

A city worker heard a cry for help from a trailer abandoned on a remote back road in southwest San Antonio, Texas, on the evening of June 27. Responders found 46 apparent migrants dead in the trailer and hospitalized 16 others, including four children, for heat stroke and exhaustion, according to Fire Chief Charles Hood. The tragedy is one of the deadliest among the border crossings from Mexico in recent decades. They were likely part of a smuggling attempt into the United States, said Police Chief William McManus. Police detained three people, but it's unclear if they are linked to human trafficking, McManus added. Authorities have yet to confirm the immigrants' home countries and how long they stayed in the trailer. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is leading an investigation. South Texas has long served as the busiest location for illegal border crossings.

ATTACKED

At least 18 people were dead and dozens wounded after Russian missiles struck a crowded shopping mall in Ukraine's central city of Kremenchuk in the afternoon on June 27. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the shopping center had hosted more than 1,000 shoppers and employees. He said the mall presented no threat to Russia and called the strike "one of the most daring terrorist attacks in European history." At Ukraine's request, the U.N. Security Council scheduled an emergency meeting in New York to discuss the attack.

ALLOWED

Turkey dropped its objections to Sweden and Finland joining NATO on June 28. Turkish leadership initially objected to the Nordic countries joining NATO because of their refusal to crack down on Kurdish militants whom Turkey considers to be terrorists. The countries have agreed to extradite many of those individuals and drop arms trade restrictions against Turkey. By joining NATO, Sweden and Finland—the latter of which shares a long border with Russia—will no longer be neutral parties between Russia and the rest of Europe. Finland and the Soviet Union were at war during World War II.

120.5

The number of civilian firearms per 100 Americans, by far the highest rate in the world.

7.5M

The number of Americans who became first-time gun owners between January 2019 and April 2021, according to the Annals of Internal Medicine.

45,222

The number of deaths attributed to gunshot injuries in 2020, according to the CDC. Of those, 54 percent were ruled suicides.

31.9%

The share of Americans who own a firearm, according to the National Firearms Survey. Gun owners have an average of five firearms.

42.2%

The share of American gun owners who are female, according to the National Firearms Survey.

A GUN-OWNING NATION



393M

THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FIREARMS in civilian hands in the United States, according to Switzerland-based Small Arms Survey. The survey, conducted most recently in 2018, estimated that Americans own nearly half of the world's civilian firearms. However, high rates of gun ownership don't necessarily correlate with high homicide rates. New Hampshire, North Dakota, and Maine—the states with the lowest homicide rates, according to the World Population Review—have higher-than-average rates of gun ownership, according to the Rand Corp. A bipartisan group of senators announced the framework of a deal June 12 that would extend background checks for gun buyers under 21.

“The inescapable conclusion is that a right to abortion is not deeply rooted in the Nation’s history and traditions. On the contrary, an unbroken tradition of prohibiting abortion on pain of criminal punishment persisted from the earliest days of the common law until 1973.”

Supreme Court Justice **SAMUEL J. ALITO** writing for the majority in the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision.

“We must not rest and must not relent until the sanctity of life is restored to the center of American law in every state in the land.”

Former Vice President **MIKE PENCE** on the Supreme Court’s *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision.

“When you’re hit over the head with the same message, you just drown in it. After a while, you don’t know what the truth is. The message takes over your reality.”

NINA KHRUSHCHEVA, a professor of international affairs at the New School in New York, on Russia’s propaganda campaign inside Ukraine.

“They felt entitled to our vote. The problem is they do not represent our values of faith, community, work ethic, or the desire to seek better opportunities.”

U.S. Rep. **MAYRA FLORES**, R-Texas, on the Democratic Party and Hispanics. Flores won a special election in a House district that is 84.5 percent Hispanic.

“The court affirmed that if you can use God’s name in vain ... and verbally disrespect and dismiss His existence in public without hindrance, then others should be able to praise Him, thank Him, and talk to Him in public.”

DEON JOSEPH, a law enforcement consultant, commenting on the Supreme Court’s *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* decision.



The TRAIN WRECK.





Noisy games

Pickleball has neighborhood up in arms

by John Dawson

Pickleball is falling victim to its own popularity in one Philadelphia neighborhood. Residents who live across from the Water Tower Recreation Center in Philadelphia's Chestnut Hill neighborhood say they've had enough of the loud recreational sport. "Eight-to-nine months a year you can't open your windows," resident Joe O'Donnell told Fox 29. "Did you ever try and live someplace where you can't open your windows with the racket? That's how loud it is." Locals say the courts gained popularity once pandemic restrictions began altering lives. But the sound of pickleballs hitting paddles is louder than tennis balls hitting rackets. On May 23, local residents and pickleball players met to discuss solutions with some suggesting the use of softer balls or limiting the hours of operation at the courts. At least one threatened to file a lawsuit if players don't stop violating noise ordinances.

TALKING TRASH

A young employee at the BBC hates the Manchester United soccer club, and now the whole country knows it. The BBC had to offer an apology after the employee with the network took the liberty to post a message on the screen—"Manchester United are rubbish"—during a news broadcast. During a May 24 sports update about a tennis match, the broadcaster displayed the message on the crawl. Later that day, network officials apologized, explaining that a young employee learning to use the ticker was simply inputting words that were never meant to be broadcast. "So, apologies if you saw that and you were offended and you're a fan of Manchester United," a BBC host said later in the broadcast.

NOT A LOT OF HORSEPOWER

Facing down rising gasoline prices, a German woman has decided to ditch the car and go old school. Horse trainer Stephanie Kirchner has turned a horse-drawn wagon into her daily driver for her 3.5-mile commute in western Germany. According to the 33-year old, her Toyota SUV costs her as much as \$264 per month in gasoline. The downside: Her old 15-minute commute has turned into a one-hour journey that tends to annoy motorists who share the road. "Humanity is hectic," Kirchner said, "and then some people are annoyed if they can't get past me fast enough."



HOME WRECKERS

Two men in Iberia Parish, La., became a wrecking crew when they tried to illegally move a house to a residential lot without making the necessary preparations. According to police, homeowner Tony Domingue and a friend tried to move the house using a truck and trailer down a small drive, knocking down power lines and causing nearly 700 residents to lose power for hours. They also damaged mailboxes and trees while moving the oversized load. Police arrested the two men for obstructing a roadway after the pair abandoned the house. The pair were booked and held on \$125,000 bail while Iberia Parish sheriff's deputies prepared more charges.



SAFETY BELT DANGERS

South Korean automaker Hyundai announced a recall of roughly 239,000 cars after complaints about exploding seat belts. The fault lies with the seat belt pretensioners, devices that tighten the safety belts in anticipation of an accident. When the pretensioners malfunction they explode, sending shrapnel throughout the passenger compartment. U.S. regulators found two cases of exploding seat belts in the United States, and a third case was reported in South Korea. The recall covers Hyundai Accents made for model years 2019 through 2022, Elantras from 2021 through 2023, as well as Elantra hybrids from 2021 and 2022. Owners in the United States will be notified by the company by July 15 and be able to get a safety cap installed over the pretensioners free of charge.



NOT ENOUGH EARLY BIRDS

An Irish construction manager has complained that he can't find skilled craftsmen to fill out his workforce because no one wants to wake up early in the morning. Construction manager Conor Gray told *The Irish Times* in May that he advertised 35 work opportunities on job websites and on social media but only got two applications. "The hours that we work, a lot of our projects will start at seven in the morning. I'd be perfectly honest, there's an awful lot of young people that don't like getting out of the bed for seven o'clock in the morning and that's just a fact," Gray told the newspaper. Other contractors interviewed by the *Times* pointed to a general shortage of skilled laborers, saying many building projects were being delayed as a result.

“
**THERE'S AN AWFUL
LOT OF YOUNG
PEOPLE THAT DON'T
LIKE GETTING OUT
OF THE BED FOR
SEVEN O'CLOCK IN
THE MORNING.**”



A DRINK TO THE ALLIANCE

A Finland-based brewery has seized on recent political events by releasing a first-of-its-kind NATO-themed beer. Based on the Western security alliance, Olaf Brewing's OTAN lager borrows the French spelling of the alliance's acronym as well as the Finnish expression, "*Otan olutta*," which roughly translates to, "I'll have a beer." The brewery's operator said the decision to release OTAN lager stems from Finnish concerns about Russian aggression following the nation's invasion of Ukraine as well as renewed popularity of the NATO alliance in Finland. Finland filed an application to join NATO on May 18. The chief executive officer of the brewery described the new offering as having "a taste of security, with a hint of freedom."





Happy's standing

Elephants are magnificent,
but they aren't "persons"

WHO DOESN'T LOVE ELEPHANTS? By all accounts, they are both loveable and exceptional. Elephants form matriarchal communities with strong emotional bonds. They caress their babies and remember slaughtered relatives, even returning to the scene of death to commemorate the bones. They conduct birth and death ceremonies. An elephant can recognize itself in a mirror, produce abstract paintings, and communicate through voice and vibration. A full-grown bull can carry a tree trunk and pick up a pencil.

These remarkable creatures have been hunted, exploited, and mistreated through the centuries by humans, but now they are coming into their own. Once the star attraction of Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus (recall every circus poster you've ever seen), the venerable Greatest Show on Earth announced six years ago it would no longer feature elephant acts.

African and Indian game wardens are cracking down on ivory hunters, and elephant preserves are popping up like retirement homes. These may all be examples of good stewardship, but the NonHuman Rights Project scoffs at such half-measures.

The group's latest high-profile action was a writ of habeas corpus against the Bronx Zoo on behalf of Happy, a 50-year-old female elephant. They contended that Happy was not happy in confinement and demanded that she be moved to an elephant sanctuary.

Happy won't choose the sanctuary; the NRP will. Happy did not argue her own case; they did. Nevertheless, they insisted on Happy's standing as a "person" under law, and argued she is entitled to the same rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as any human. The New York

WOULD A RABBIT HAVE LEGAL STANDING TO SUE THE FOX WHO ATE HER MATE?

Court of Appeals didn't buy it, reasonably citing the obvious conclusion that granting personhood to Happy would undermine the principle of human ownership. Not to mention the principle of human exceptionalism.

The decision was not unanimous though; two judges out of seven dissented on the grounds that Happy was confined in an unnatural environment and deserves her freedom as much as any human. Encouraged, the NonHuman Rights Project is laying groundwork for further cases.

Their long-term goal is precisely what the Court of Appeals feared: to establish "animal standing," or recognition of animals as legal persons under law, with the right to sue their owners—eventually to do away with ownership altogether.

Farcical as it seems, if South American countries can grant humanish rights to geographical features ("Old 'Legal Person' River," May 26, 2018), animal standing may not be far off.

Peter Singer, the Princeton philosopher known for his permissive views on infanticide, created a philosophical framework for animal standing in the 1970s.

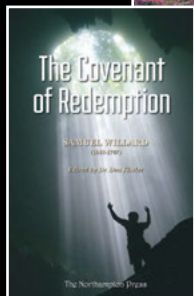
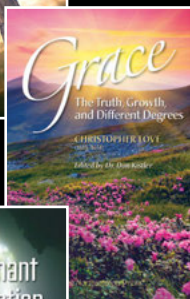
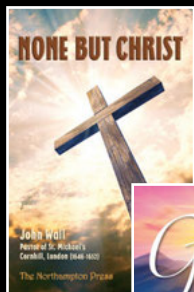
Singer's definition of personhood begins with self-consciousness: if a being is aware of itself, it should be able to claim basic rights. A grown dog is self-aware, unlike a 3-month-old infant or a 90-year-old with severe dementia, therefore the non-sentient humans can be gently terminated with no moral consequence.

Psychologist Dr. Richard Ryder takes another approach, basing his activism on "painience," or the ability to feel pain: "the only convincing basis for attributing rights, or, indeed, interests to others."

Ryder goes on to say that humans exploit animals because "we are more powerful than they are." But in what ways? Elephants have far more physical strength. Nine years ago, a 41-year-old female named Patience attacked and killed one of her keepers at the Springfield, Mo., Zoo. Should Patience have stood trial as a legal "person"? What about lions and grizzly bears who kill humans? Or other animals? Would a rabbit have legal standing to sue the fox who ate her mate? Of course not, animal-rights activists say. But why not?

In his documentary *What Is a Woman?* Matt Walsh tries and fails to get a clear definition of womanhood out of transgender advocates. Walsh says in interviews that his follow-up documentary may well be titled *What Is a Human?* We already know.

Grounding personhood in anything other than the image of God has led to slavery and exploitation and infanticide and continues to tie us up in knots. Animals have better sense.

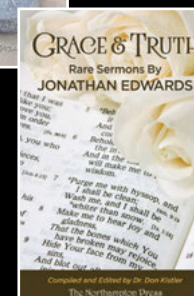
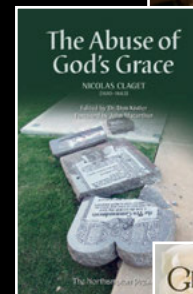


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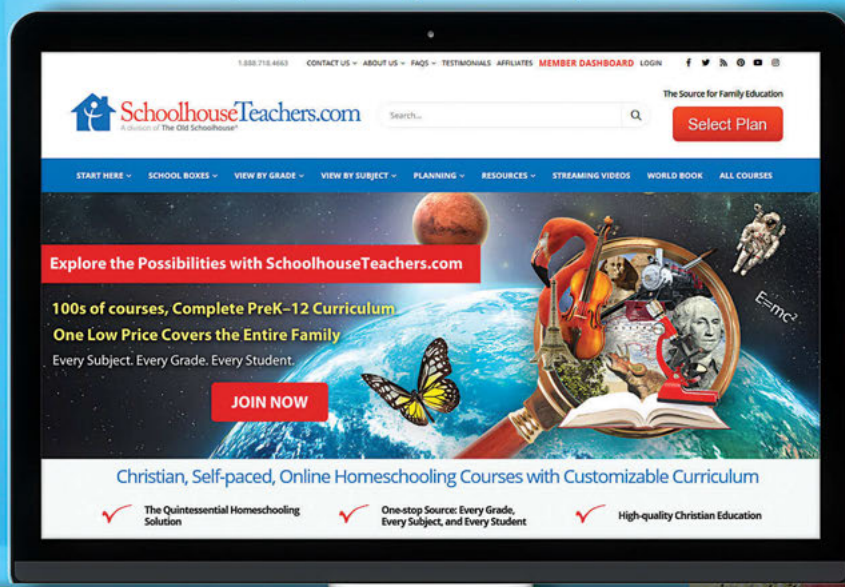
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A FLAMBOYANT RISE AND FALL

Exuberant filmmaking
complements the
bombast of Elvis' music
and lifestyle

by Collin Garbarino



AUSTRALIAN FILMMAKER Baz Luhrmann (*Strictly Ballroom*, *Moulin Rouge!*, *The Great Gatsby*) has a flamboyant aesthetic that eschews restraint, making him a natural fit to tell the story of Elvis Presley, a talented artist also given to visual excess. *Elvis*, in theaters, is a visually stunning, sometimes surreal, film saturated with color and larger-than-life characters.

The 2½-hour-long film covers the rise and fall of the King of Rock and Roll, but Luhrmann focuses the narrative on the complicated relationship between Elvis and his manipulative manager, Colonel Tom Parker.

The story plays out like a Greek tragedy. Elvis and the Colonel are both great in their own way, but the things that make them great—ambition, tireless pursuit of applause, loyalty to one another—are the things that bring them low. The Colonel began his career as a carny, and he brings a philosophy of over-the-top showmanship to managing Elvis' career. He doesn't want to promote a musical act. He wants to promote the greatest show on Earth.

The Colonel gives Elvis wings to fly, but just like Icarus who flew too close to the sun, Elvis burns out and crashes. Luhrmann suggests neither the flight nor the crash would have been possible without the Colonel.

Elvis is at its best when recounting the duo's rise to stardom. Elvis must figure out how a white man from Memphis can fit in while singing black rhythm and blues and gospel music. The Colonel must figure out how to promote Elvis' infamous wiggle on stage while managing the fall-out it provokes.

About halfway through the movie, Elvis' career peaks and things start to fall apart for the King. Disappointingly, the movie also starts to fall apart. It loses focus, trying to become a tragic love story about Priscilla but glossing over too much of Elvis' problematic courtship of the teenager. The movie alludes to our current fractured nation, showing how America was hurting during the '60s, but there's no payoff for the hand wringing.

Side plots detract from the tension built into Elvis' struggle with the Colonel, but even so, when Elvis gets to Vegas and sings "Suspicious Minds," Luhrmann leaves us with the feeling that the song



reflects the unhealthy codependency between the two men.

Austin Butler plays Elvis and shows himself to be a star in his own right. His performance doesn't give off a cheap impersonator vibe, and when he sings in the film's early scenes, he truly rocks (toward the end of the movie Luhrmann dubs audio recordings of the real Elvis). Butler offers a nuanced portrayal of a sympathetic, yet flawed, Elvis. He imbues the role with both hunger and humility: Elvis wants to conquer the world, but he's still just a poor boy from Memphis.

Tom Hanks' portrayal of Colonel Tom Parker is surprisingly weak. His performance veers into caricature, and the fat

suit and facial prosthetics turn him into a comic-book villain. Hanks affects an inexplicable accent for the Dutch-born Tom Parker. The real Colonel's accent wasn't pronounced, but Hanks' inconsistent impersonation swings from sounding German to Irish.

The film, rated PG-13, contains some strong language and depicts Elvis' adultery and prescription drug abuse. No one expects the rock-star lifestyle to be family friendly, but considering this subject mat-

ter, Luhrmann's interpretation of Elvis' unsavory side exhibits restraint. Still, don't take children to see it.

Elvis gives us a picture of a man who, despite his gospel roots, doesn't understand the gospel. Elvis is talented and loyal, and he desperately wants to be loved. But he's afraid that he'll never be able to work hard enough to achieve immortality.

In a pitiful scene toward the end, he fears he'll never do anything that will matter. He asks the right questions, but he just can't seem to find the answers. *Elvis* is a beautiful, flawed, tragic movie about a beautiful, flawed, tragic human being. ■

THE KING Having sold over 500 million records, Presley is recognized as the best-selling solo music artist of all time.



Long, strange trip

by Bob Brown

Franklin (J.K. Simmons) and Irene York (Sissy Spacek) are happily married septuagenarians who lead a quiet life of crosswords and trips to the diner in town in Amazon Prime's new TV series *Night Sky*. But they have a secret. A mysterious chamber below their shed has allowed them to make 856 get-aways to a glass-enclosed viewing room on a distant planet over the last 20 years.

Where did this chamber come from? The show teases a spectrum of possible answers: maybe aliens, maybe a cult, or perhaps, as one character suggests, the mystery involves "quantum entanglement." The Yorks' blissful existence is interrupted when a mysterious young man arrives at their door. How far will Franklin and Irene go to keep their doorway to other planets secret?

Night Sky (rated 16+, for bad language) owes inspiration to its subterranean-hatch-enigma predecessors, *Lost* and *Tales from the Loop*, but the show surpasses both in meshing the ordinary and extraordinary. The unhurried storyline moseys forward, but every so often, jarring revelations upend the sense of normality.

The entire cast is outstanding, and Spacek's spot-on expressiveness demonstrates why she's one of the finest actors working today. So far, *Night Sky* is a riveting sci-fi drama.



FALLING SHORT OF INFINITY

Pixar's *Lightyear* fails to measure up

by Trevor Sides

THE FUNNIEST LINE in *Lightyear* is delivered by the robotic cat Sox (Peter Sohn). Right after Buzz Lightyear (Chris Evans) has jumped to hyperspeed, Sox looks up at Buzz and says in his deadpan cat-droid voice, "That was utterly terrifying, and I regret having joined you." Hilarious. And, unfortunately, a prophetic word about the film at large. *Lightyear* promises something beyond infinity but fails to launch due to a weightless plot and a willingness to go where no Pixar film has gone before.

Buzz accidentally maroons hundreds of scientists on an uncharted planet, and he devotes himself to risky hyperspeed test flights in an attempt to get everyone back home.

Lightyear's opening title explains that this is the movie Andy from *Toy Story* saw in 1995. But the bits of space-ranger lore that movie alluded to are missing in *Lightyear*. There's nothing about the Galactic Alliance. Buzz doesn't defend the galaxy, and the Evil Emperor Zurg is neither evil nor an emperor. Nothing about this movie resembles a space opera from 1995. Instead, Buzz battles his own toxic individualism.

More troubling for parents, a space ranger, Commander Alisha Hawthorn (Uzo Aduba), has a romantic relationship with another woman. We see them holding hands and kissing. This montage takes up less than a minute of actual screen time. Yet the sequence is blatant enough to alienate a good portion of Disney-Pixar's primary audience. It's a needless salvo in the culture wars.



TOY STORY UNIVERSE

- 1 [Toy Story \(1995\)](#)
- 2 [Toy Story 2 \(1999\)](#)
- 3 [Buzz Lightyear of Star Command: The Adventure Begins \(2000\)](#)
- 4 [Buzz Lightyear of Star Command TV series \(2000-2001\)](#)
- 5 [Toy Story 3 \(2010\)](#)
- 6 [Toy Story 4 \(2019\)](#)
- 7 [Lightyear \(2022\)](#)

DINOSAURS AND DISARRAY

The action often doesn't make sense in *Jurassic World Dominion*, and neither does the film's progressive message

by Emily Whitten



IS *JURASSIC WORLD DOMINION* A GOOD MOVIE? With its 30 percent “fresh” rating from critics on Rotten Tomatoes, the answer to that question is no. But a lot of moviegoers don’t seem to mind, as evidenced by the movie’s \$145 million opening weekend box-office sales. And that makes the movie’s progressive messaging more of a problem.

The sixth movie in the dinosaur thriller franchise, *Jurassic World Dominion* unfolds a bit like a mashup of the original 1993 movie *Jurassic Park* and more recent *Jurassic World* flicks. Director Colin Trevorrow provides two pencil sketch plotlines. In throwback plot 1, Ellie Sattler (Laura Dern) once again shows up at Alan Grant’s (Sam Neill) archaeological dig, this time enlisting his help to stop massive insects decimating the world’s food supply. Their quest leads them to an evil corporation, Biosyn, where they eventually intersect with plotline 2. In it, Owen Grady (Chris Pratt) and Claire Dearing (Bryce Dallas Howard) show up

at Biosyn looking for their kidnapped daughter and a baby raptor. Both the girl and the dinosaur are clones that might hold the genetic key to Biosyn’s future.

Of course, in a summer popcorn muncher, plots usually aren’t the point. Yet even judged as spectacle alone, scenes feel so disjointed, illogical, even ridiculous that it’s hard to enjoy the moments of CGI and animatronic magic. Sadly, the action often makes no sense even within its immediate context. For instance, at one point, when a man next to Owen gets eaten by a dino, Owen quickly turns around and ... makes a phone call? Maybe the dinosaur wasn’t hungry anymore?

With such little effort given to logic or storyline, the film relies on buzzwords like “systemic corruption” and “coexist” to give audiences a warm, fuzzy, self-righteous feeling. Crichton’s original novel—though steeped in evolutionary dogma and littered with cursing—nevertheless provided a useful cautionary tale of science gone awry. We come away from the original *Jurassic Park* with a clear message that those attempting to manipulate DNA for their own gain are bad.

In *Jurassic World Dominion*, Ian Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum) provides a short, updated lecture on the dangers of human hubris. He echoes environmentalist fears that humans are “racing towards extinction of our species” by our greedy, foolish ways. But recent cultural shifts in sexual orthodoxy mean that message can’t stand alone.

According to the new dogma, genetics—and in particular X and Y chromosomes—must be conquered to serve human sexual imagination. Thus, by the end of *Jurassic World Dominion*, both animal and human cloning get a big thumbs-up from moviemakers. Because love is love—apparently even if you clone yourself and give birth to that clone.

That brings us to the fundamental message here—solidarity. The film’s closing statement explains that species must “depend on each other.” Taken on its face, solidarity between fallen humanity and creation isn’t a bad goal. Still, it’s one we aren’t likely to achieve if we ignore God’s design for creation and His power of redemption when we muck things up.

Still, dinosaurs and popcorn. Who can resist their siren call? ■

BOX OFFICE TOP 10

WEEKEND OF JUNE 24-26, ACCORDING TO BOX OFFICE MOJO. QUANTITY OF **SEXUAL (S)**, **VIOLENT (V)**, AND **FOUL-LANGUAGE (L)** CONTENT ON A 0-10 SCALE, WITH 10 HIGH, FROM KIDS-IN-MIND.COM

S V L

1	Elvis* PG-13	5	4	4
2	Top Gun: Maverick* PG-13	3	4	5
3	Jurassic World Dominion* PG-13	1	6	5
4	The Black Phone R	not rated		
5	Lightyear* PG	1	3	1
6	Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* PG-13	1	7	4
7	Jug Jugg Jeeyo	not rated		
8	Everything Everywhere All at Once R	7	7	6
9	The Bob's Burgers Movie PG-13	2	3	3
10	The Bad Guys* PG	1	3	1

*REVIEWED BY WORLD



TOP 10 FOCUS

Top Gun: Maverick reminds viewers that their lives are not meaningless. It highlights that each human life is precious and that our real worth and meaning are most often found in the service of others. The message of the film is clear: Never leave your wingman. —from Jim Hill's review of **Top Gun: Maverick** in the June 25 issue of **WORLD**



PLAYING THE ODDS

A loophole in the lottery allows a retired couple to win ... over and over again

by Collin Garbarino

WHAT WOULD YOU DO, if you knew you couldn't lose at the lottery? That's the premise of *Jerry and Marge Go Large* currently streaming on Paramount+. The movie is based on the true story of Jerry and Marge Selbee—a retired couple from central Michigan who 20 years ago found a way to use the lottery to help their struggling small town.

As the story begins, Jerry (Bryan Cranston) has recently been forced into retirement after spending decades working at a local factory. His wife Marge (Annette Bening) looks forward to their golden years together, but Jerry feels adrift.

While mulling over his lack of purpose, Jerry picks up an advertisement about the state's new lottery game. Jerry

has always had a head for numbers, and after doing some quick calculations, he discovers a flaw.

Once the jackpot builds up to a certain amount, tickets with three or four matching numbers out of six have higher than normal payouts. Jerry realizes if someone buys enough tickets on the right weeks, they'll always win more money than they spend.

Jerry's not a gambler. He's a conservative guy who doesn't like taking risks. But he's also someone who believes math doesn't lie. Once Marge finds out about the scheme, she's excited. She's not excited about the money. She's excited Jerry's found a use for his talents. And she's excited the two of them can work on Jerry's project together. They're not playing the lottery. They're working the lottery.

The couple don't keep their system for winning a secret. They tell their entire small town, forming a lottery-ticket-buying corporation letting everyone buy shares. The corporation benefits its investors and revitalizes the community.

Jerry and Marge Go Large is a sweet little movie about family and friends sticking together, and it's more interesting because it's based on a true story. The leads have wonderful chemistry, bringing a tenderness to Jerry and Marge's autumnal romance.

This isn't a movie about scamming the lottery—the heroes never do anything illegal. It's a movie about two people who love each other, love their family, and love their community. And the movie doesn't promote gambling. Jerry and Marge work hard, and just like the real-life Selbees, when the loophole closes, they stop buying tickets.

It's a shame the movie is rated PG-13 for suggestiveness and language. There's some talk about conjugal relations, and there are a few instances of bad language, mostly uttered by snotty college kids who are also exploiting the system. But ultimately, *Jerry and Marge Go Large* is an enjoyable film about the importance of family, community, and math literacy.

From Silent Cal's restraint to MAGA

Matthew Continetti has written a superb history of the conservative movement

by Collin Garbarino

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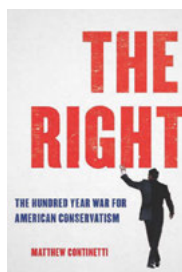
ELF-PROCLAIMED CONSERVATIVES used to rally around the ideas of free markets, religious morality, and strong national defense, but in the last decade that coalition has begun to splinter. Now we see various groups within the Republican Party accusing others of not being “real” conservatives. There’s “the establishment,” “the RINOs,” “the alt-right,” and many names not fit to print. What does it even mean to be “conservative” in America? And who gets to decide?

Matthew Continetti offers a thorough history of the movement in his recent book *The Right: The Hundred-Year War for American Conservatism*. Continetti has spent his 20-year career as a conservative insider. He worked at the now-defunct *Weekly Standard*, a conservative news magazine; helped found The Washington Free Beacon, a conservative political website; and currently serves as a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative-leaning think tank.

The book’s subtitle, *The Hundred-Year War*, communicates how Continetti understands the movement’s history. Conservatism has never been one thing, and its very nature is messy and contested. The movement, as well as the Republican Party that often houses it, has always been prone to infighting, grudges, defections, and purges. Reading the history of the movement helps put contemporary conservatives’ bickering in perspective.

Conservatism has always had a pugnacious streak to it.

The Founders conceived America upon the liberal principles of Adam Smith and John Locke, but 150 years later politicians had begun to take that liberalism in new directions. Continetti begins the story in the 1920s with President Calvin Coolidge’s resistance to progressive liberalism. Coolidge emphasized fiscal responsibility and limited government, and he tried to keep America free of international entanglements. The Great Depression caused America to abandon Coolidge’s restraint, and Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal moved



the country in a direction it’s never abandoned.

Trying to regain classical liberalism through opposition to the New Deal became the core of conservatism. But a concern with the Soviet threat defined conservatism in the second half of the 20th century. A staunch opposition to communism held the various threads of conservatism together.

The Soviet military threat required a strong national defense, communist ideology threatened free markets, and communism’s atheism attacked Christian morality.

The cultural chaos of the ’60s and the economic failure of the ’70s allowed conservatives to make their case. Finding a winsome spokesman in Ronald Reagan also helped. Reagan managed to get the disparate and often cranky voices of conservatism to work together.

But even Reagan, the conservative savior, didn’t roll back FDR’s New Deal or LBJ’s Great Society. He didn’t appreciably shrink the government, and even his tax cuts weren’t particularly conservative. Reagan’s supply-side economics promised tax cuts would promote growth so the government could collect even more revenue.

Successive presidential administrations frame the book’s chapters, but the heroes of this story are the writers—men like Friedrich Hayek, Russell Kirk, Milton Friedman, Irving Kristol, and Bill Buckley—who wrestled with the meaning of conservatism.

Once the communist threat ended, the strands of national defense, religious morality, and free markets started to unravel. The movement found itself entrenched in Washington and flailing, but conservative media thrived, shifting the locus of thought from intellectuals to populists who were more concerned about ratings than consistency.

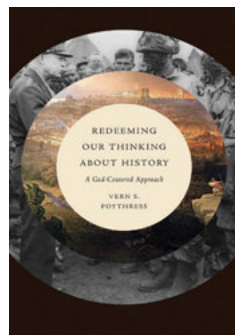
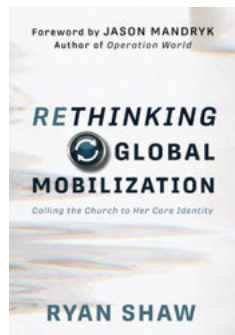
The populist turn would eventually lead to a Trump presidency, and it’s hard not to read *The Right* without a looming sense of Donald Trump. When early conservatives argue about immigration, trade deals, and international entanglement, we hear echoes of what’s to come.

The Right shows conservatism has always experienced disagreement and controversy and no one’s ever earned the right to define the whole movement. But it also shows a love of freedom undergirds the movement, but freedom isn’t found in government. It’s enshrined in the institutions of family, community, and church—institutions that promote human flourishing. ■

Beyond silver-bullet strategies

Four books with accessible theologies

by Caleb Nelson



THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD AND THE GLORY OF GOD David Schrock

What is a priest's purpose? Schrock assembles the Biblical evidence and finds that priests are called to sanctify God's holy place, sacrifice God's offerings, and speak God's covenant. As a royal priesthood, Christians are charged with making the Church holy by offering their bodies as living sacrifices in service to God and one another. This is all powered by reading and hearing Scripture and speaking to God in prayer. Ultimately, says Schrock, individual believers are priests to God because they are united to His Son, their Great High Priest who cleansed the Temple, offered Himself to God through the Spirit, and said "This is my blood of the New Covenant." Jesus, says Schrock, is "a royal priest who radiates the glory of God."

RETHINKING GLOBAL MOBILIZATION: CALLING THE CHURCH TO HER CORE IDENTITY Ryan Shaw

Convinced that God is "changing the face of global mission," missionary Ryan Shaw spent years in study and prayer to produce this book, which attempts to cast a compelling vision for a global mission that's changed

for the better. Shaw's main point is simple: Every Christian ministry needs to move mobilization up the priority list. Most Christians don't actually believe that they personally need to be evangelizing and making disciples of the people around them. Shaw tries to describe what would happen if even 20 percent of Christians made it their business to be laborers in the harvest field. The picture is gratifying, but the challenge it presents to the Church is immense. Only the Lord of the harvest can mobilize like this—so pray to Him!

NO SHORTCUT TO SUCCESS: A MANIFESTO FOR MODERN MISSIONS Matt Rhodes

Clearly exhausted by studying Arabic and exhorting himself as much as his readers, Rhodes insists that if you don't speak someone's language, you can't evangelize or disciple. Thus, the "silver-bullet strategy" of converting a few local people who then proceed to do all the missions work in their spare time is not viable. Missionaries must be skilled in language, theology, conversation, and teaching. In fact, they need to be professionals at those tasks, because "how shall [the world] hear without a preacher" who speaks their language? Rhodes is persuasive: He himself is in the trenches in Muslim North Africa; he quotes regularly from the book of Proverbs, something very few missions books do; and he presents piles of evidence that sturdy churches grow from decades of self-sacrificial labor.

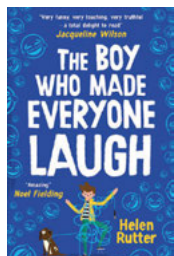
REDEEMING OUR THINKING ABOUT HISTORY: A GOD-CENTERED APPROACH Vern Poythress

Is it possible to discern God's purposes in history? Absolutely, argues Vern Poythress. To deny that God's purposes can be discerned ultimately results in the absurd conclusion that one cannot see the Almighty's hand in a person's conversion. So far, so compelling. But Poythress does not work in any examples for the reader. At the beginning of the book, he discusses a case he was personally involved in during the 1970s, the Norman Shepherd controversy at Westminster Seminary Philadelphia. But he never returns to discuss what divine purposes a devout historian might discern in that event. Poythress is correct to argue that we can know God well enough to guess what He might be doing—but also correct to be wary of getting too specific.

Lazy summer reads

Four books for middle graders and young teens

by Whitney Williams



THE BOY WHO MADE EVERYONE LAUGH Helen Rutter

Eleven-year-old Billy Plimpton dreams of being a stand-up comedian—he's got the humor for it, that's for sure—but his stutter won't let him get a word out. Not wanting to be the punch line at his new school, Billy decides to sink into the shadows, but even there, he can't help but shine. Bolstered by a great teacher, a few good friends, supportive parents, and Granny Bread—his biggest fan—Billy eventually realizes what he has to offer, stutter and all, and readers can't help but cheer as he steps onto

life's stage. (Ages 8-12)

THE SECRET LAKE Karen Inglis

A disappearing dog has 8-year-old Tom Hawken literally digging for answers in the communal gardens near his home despite threats from gardener Charlie Green, who seems to have something to hide. Armed with a spade, the boy soon uncovers an underground tunnel that takes him and his older sister, Stella, 100 years back in time. There, they find the missing dog, a little bit of trouble, and friendships unconstrained by time. Note: One mild curse word and a few British words that may be unfamiliar to American readers. (Ages 8-12)



AVALANCHE M. Liz Boyle

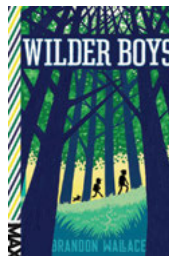
Fifteen-year-old Marlee Stanley knows she and her two sisters shouldn't be sneaking out for a moonlit mountain hike with their two guy friends, but Sawyer Miles, the eldest boy, seems like a trustworthy guide. The group prays together for God's protection and blessing, but their well-laid plans literally crumble around them—avalanche!—and they must work together to survive. In the midst of stress and hardship, we see the characters spiritually mature alongside one another and witness the sweet beginnings

of a God-honoring teen love story. (Ages 13-16)



WILDER BOYS Brandon Wallace

Brothers Jake, 13, and Taylor, 11, run away from their Pittsburgh home after their mother's abusive boyfriend, Bull, puts her in the hospital. The boys know Bull is coming for them next, so they set out to find their dad, who left home when they were little in search of a place for their family to live off-the-grid. The boys grew up feeling as though their dad didn't care about them, but then they discover some letters stating otherwise with clues to his hush-hush whereabouts in the Wyoming wilderness. (Ages 9-13)



Afterword



Doug Cornett's *Finally, Something Mysterious*

opens with hundreds of rubber duckies showing up in the yard of the Bellwood Bratwurst Bonanza's reigning bratwurst eating champ just a short time before he is to defend his winning title. A trio of mystery-loving pre-teens decide there must be something sinister going on—and they can't get enough of the distraction from an otherwise boring summer. The friends meet together in their secret headquarters to discuss the who, what, where, when, and why of the duck dump, how Mr. Babbage's yard got wet (the town is in a drought, after all), and how a dead fish ended up in his tree. Then, they confront their suspects.

Cornett mixes in clever, clean humor and heart-warming moments during hard times (including a sibling's worrisome premature birth). A refreshing bonus: The lead character's parents have a fun, joy-filled marriage, which in recent literature seems to be about as odd as a yard full of rubber duckies. —W.W.



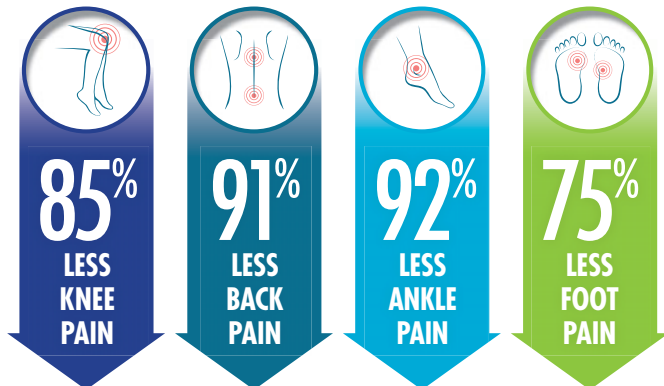
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Songs like heavenly lights

Billy Childish and John Zorn are not slowing down

by Arsenio Orteza



THE SINGER, SONGWRITER, POET, AND PAINTER Billy Childish has made well over 100 albums. The composer, multi-instrumentalist, and Tzadik Records recording artist (and CEO) John Zorn is responsible for four times that amount.

Obviously, Childish and Zorn have the prolificacy market cornered. Yet, despite being sexagenarians, they're not slowing down. As of this writing, they've released at least four albums in 2022 apiece.

Childish's most interesting new efforts—*The Baptiser*, *Cowboys Are SQ*, *Paralysed by the Mountains*—are credited to “the William Loveday Intention,” a Childish-led band

that includes David Tattersall (guitar), Adolphus Havard (drums), J.W. Loveday (bass), Jim Riley (harmonica), Jon Barker (organ), and sometimes Richard Moore (violin). They share a sound rooted in the raw, undifferentiated density of '60s garage rock and Childish's love for emoting Beat-like lyrics.

A consequence of Childish's abundance is that it tempts one to compile the strongest cuts of *Baptiser*, *Cowboys*, and *Paralysed* into one 10- to 12-track longplayer. Were one to do so, the results would have an unmistakably New Testament flavor.

Consider this couplet from the *Cowboys*' blues song “Cave”: “From the heart of darkness Jesus can save, / like Lazarus stepping from a deep, dark cave.”

Then there's *The Baptiser*'s title cut (about John the Baptist in case you wondered). Childish sometimes takes poetic license, but when he sings “I baptize you with water, / but One is coming who will baptize you with fire, / One whose sandal straps I'm not fit to kiss ...,” he scores a bull's-eye. He even works a “Jesus saves” into the refrain of the *Paralysed* centerpiece, “Joe Strummer's Grave.”

Zorn's most attention-getting recent releases are the spacey, prog-lite *Perchance to Dream...*, featuring Bill Frisell (guitar), Brian Marsella (keyboards), John Medeski (organ), and Kenny Wollesen (drums, chimes), and the jazz-metal improv fest *Spinoza*, featuring Frisell, Zorn (sax), Matt Hollenberg (guitar), John Medeski (keyboards), and Kenny Grohowski (drums).

Their titles suggest inspiration by *Hamlet* and a certain 17th-century philosopher respectively. But recognizing either in Zorn's music is like seeing Orion the Hunter in a constellation: Unless you know what you're looking for, you'll miss the connections—assuming they aren't just illusions conjured by titles supplied after the fact.

You won't miss the breadth of Zorn's imagination.

The static opening cut “Introit” aside, the songs on *Perchance* twinkle like heavenly lights in a clear night sky, creating a lovely nocturnal tapestry.

But while the first song on *Spinoza*, “Immanence,” has its twinkling moments, the 20-minute title cut revels in extremes, as if Zorn had said, “Let's jam as hard and as loudly as we can, and if we start getting comfortable, zoom off into another direction.” ■

Still plying their trade

Four new or recent releases

by Arsenio Orteza

WHATEVER YOU NEED

Johnny Ray Daniels

At 76, this gospel-music veteran is long overdue for a solo debut. And he doesn't waste the opportunity. Making no concessions to modernity unless clean production counts, he applies his rich, explosive voice to the kind of old-school material that frees him after a couple of verses to settle into a repetitive call and response with his background singers that builds in intensity, eventually approaching the level that gave rise to the term "church wrecking" back in the day. He doesn't get there on his own. A five-man "Sacred Soul Sound Section" that doesn't hide its Hammond organ under a bushel meets him more than halfway. But whether praising, expounding, or testifying, Daniels commands the spotlight.



ROOTS Jimmy McNeal

The album begins with McNeal's "Paw-paw" singing Willie Walker's "I Want to Be at the Meeting" a cappella and ends with McNeal himself singing it with a contemporary combo. In between, McNeal delivers songs of worship and inspiration fit for congregations of any color, assuming that they have the vocal and musical wherewithal to do the more soulful moments justice. And if you think that an album titled *Roots* should pack more than two covers ("Don't Move That Mountain" by Dolly Parton's aunt joins the aforementioned

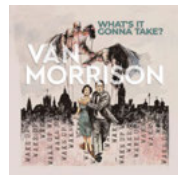


Walker tune), at least be impressed that McNeal's roots apparently include Andraé Crouch and Queen, without whom he might never have constructed the powerhouse "A Little While Longer."

WHAT'S IT GONNA TAKE?

Van Morrison

If you loved Morrison's 128-minute *Latest Record Project, Volume 1*, you'll like this 79-minute follow-up. Like the former, it's front-loaded with COVID-lockdown pro-



test numbers, and this time Morrison's naming names (Klaus Schwab ["the wizard"], Bill Gates ["playing God"]). Also like *Volume 1*, this one winds down with songs considering a somewhat bigger picture. Not that "I Ain't No Celebrity," "Stage Name," and "Fear and Self-Loathing in Las Vegas" break new ground—Morrison has been mining the burdens of stardom for decades, and "Absolutely Positively the Most" is hardly his first God song. But "Pretending" is a Van song for all seasons. And the *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* cover art is a hoot.

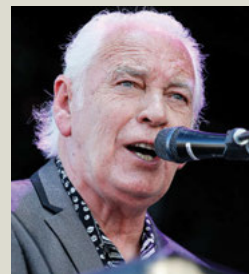
WHEN DO WE GET PAID

The Staples Jr. Singers

In 1975, along with the rhythm section of Ronnel Brown and Corl Walker, the teen-aged Mississippi siblings Annie, A.R.C., and Edward Brown recorded these 12 slices of skeletal gospel funk so that they'd have something to sell at the church gigs that had become their bread and butter. Hence the album's name, which, yes, looks funny on the cover surrounding praying hands. But as the title cut makes clear, the Browns weren't hankering after Mammon. They were simply reminding their audiences that the laborer is worthy of his wages. Now in their 60s, they're still plying their trade. One hopes that the attention generated by this reissue helps them finally lay the matter of compensation to rest.



Encore



Cancer claimed **Gary Brooker**, the longtime lead singer and principal composer of the English rock band Procol Harum, in February. He was 76. Upon his death, streams of the group's catalog surged, and "A Whiter Shade of Pale," a worldwide smash for the band in 1967 and one of the earliest and most literal examples of Baroque pop, reentered the British charts. Also, Cherry Red Records made *Within Our House*, a little-known Brooker live album from 1996, available as MP3s for the first time.

Credited to "The Gary Brooker Ensemble with Choir and String Quartet," the album conflated two fund-raising concerts performed at the Anglican St. Mary and All Saints Church in Surrey. The choir alone sang "Steal Away" and "Gospel Train" (aka "Get on Board, Little Children"). And Brooker, who was in excellent voice, rewarded the faithful with his greatest hit. But he also performed the gospel standard "Jesus on the Mainline," and his exuberant setting of Psalm 150 ("Psalm for St. Mary") stole the show. —A.O.



Parris Island in July

Hometowns and a way of life
worth protecting

FOR ME, MILITARY HISTORY begins in 2015. That's when Son No. 3 flew the coop, landing 663.4 miles due east, and for those of you who want to know what he took with him to Marine-land, the answer is, not much—his driver's license, his Social Security card, a pocket-size address book, a New Testament, and \$20 cash, as per a sheet of strict instructions.

According to been-there, done-thats, Parris Island is bad enough in cool seasons. Our person of interest arrived in a month of heat so notorious it is the stuff of country music. Trace Adkins' crooning of those conditions is said to have compelled more than one fence-straddler toward the recruiting station, and his lyrics were belting out loud across our badminton net during a pre-D-Day (as in departure day) family match. The "so gung ho to go and pay the price" line was more than this mama could take, though. A five-minute melt-down/game delay ensued.

Just who was responsible for the military bent in our son I cannot say. There was the Veritas Press catalog, I suppose, where we got that *Basher Five-Two* fighter pilot book he liked so much. And then there was my dad and his friends down at the 51 Diner filling his head with their enlistment tales. That toy soldier set he picked out at Williamsburg. The airsoft battles he waged with camoed-up friends. His fascination with documentaries about Navy SEALs. But when pressed hard, that son of mine puts the blame where blame often ends up—on Mom.

"It was that diorama of the Twin Towers you made me do," he says, referring to a project assigned during a weeklong firefighting study years ago. His research led him to read about the loss of 341 New York City firefighters in the 9/11 attack. "I feel like 9/11 was the

THERE WAS MY DAD AND HIS FRIENDS DOWN AT THE 51 DINER FILLING HIS HEAD WITH THEIR ENLISTMENT TALES.

call of my generation," he goes on. And on. He reminds me (for the umpteenth time) why he had to do his four years—"his duty."

I get it. Duty had him taking an oath and walking down a concourse on that long-ago Monday, and it was duty that had me setting one less place at the dinner table.

And contemplating that strict set of packing instructions.

Because the truth is, our Marine-in-the-making went off with a lot more than was on that list. He had a happy hometown history tucked under his belt that began in a delivery room at the local hospital and wound its way through nearby baseball diamonds, Scout camps, and lawns deeply beholden to his weed-eating skills.

That display we saw up there at the international airport just before he jetted off, the one showcasing all the locally made products? Maybe it should have a picture of those fresh-faced recruits my husband prayed over that day, because one thing is certain: They are each a product of a place and its people.

Our son had the friendly ear, nose, and throat doctor to teach him first aid, and the patient Mr. Russell to teach (well, try to teach) him piano.

He had coaches who worked him out and over, and mowing customers who just plain worked him.

He had the fish house and the pizza place and all points in between spend years filling him up and filling him out.

He had afternoons at Ms. Dorsie's pond, nights at Exchange Club fairs, and a first drive in his first truck down the town boulevard.

Best of all, he had a church send him off with its blessing and pastors' promise to hold him accountable.

So maybe the military bent started there, in a community with a way of life that made him believe they're worth protecting. Clearly, he had enough of all those things and people and places and experiences to give him a sense of duty, and maybe that's the benefit of living where folks seek the welfare of their city, like Jeremiah described.

A mom should be thankful for that.

So while for us it became clear that a parent's duty, hard as it is, may be to raise them up just to see them go, it's also equally obvious that a hometown's duty may be to stay with them forever—even if only in their memories.

Upon further reflection, Son No. 3 may have broken the rules after all, because he definitely didn't pack light. If only all recruits could say the same.



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Gunjan Devi
Hindu Worshipper

Retired June 2021

PRO-LIFERS PLAYED THE



LONG GAME

Early pro-life actions kept *Roe v. Wade* unsettled, contributing to its overturn in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*

BY LEAH SAVAS



Pro-lifers celebrate
outside the
Supreme Court.

STEVE HELBER/AP

THE NEWS BROKE AT 10:10 A.M., EASTERN TIME, ON FRIDAY, JUNE 24:

The Supreme Court had ruled 5-4 in favor of overturning *Roe v. Wade*, a case that seven justices in 1973 had used to protect an invented constitutional right to abortion and invalidate protections for unborn babies nationwide. It meant the end of an era and a future of new possibilities and challenges for the pro-life movement.

Within hours, existing pro-life laws in states like Missouri, South Dakota, and Kentucky took effect, protecting unborn babies from abortion in most cases. Abortion facilities in several states announced their closure. Outside of the barricaded Supreme Court building, pro-lifers shouted, waved signs, cried, and hugged as they celebrated the long-anticipated decision.

The phrase of the year for pro-lifers had been “cautiously optimistic.” When in May 2021 the Supreme Court first agreed to hear *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, the case over a pro-life Mississippi law, some pro-life legal experts were surprised.

The court had dozens of other possible abortion cases to choose from, including ones involving abortion restrictions like parental consent laws. The one the court chose featured an all-out ban on abortions after 15 weeks, which went beyond the court’s precedent of allowing abortions up to viability, roughly 24 weeks. The move signaled a willingness to reconsider *Roe*, although the court could still nominally uphold *Roe* while severely debilitating it by upholding the 15-week ban.



But Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch in her brief in the case called for *Roe*’s overturn. The justices seemed OK with the idea when they heard oral arguments on Dec. 1, leaving pro-lifers even more “cautiously optimistic” than before.

The caution continued among leading pro-life groups, even after a leaked draft opinion published by Politico on May 2 showed an opinion in which the majority of justices were willing to agree that “*Roe*

was egregiously wrong from the start. Its reasoning was exceptionally weak, and the decision has had damaging consequences.” But it was just a draft: They knew things could change before the final opinion.

The final majority opinion kept that part and a lot more word-for-word, spelling the end of *Roe* and a victory for the pro-life movement as it returned the abortion issue to the states for them to

TIMELINE OF IMPORTANT DATES FROM *ROE* TO *DOBBS*

1973

Roe v. Wade decided.

1974

Nellie Gray organizes first national pro-life march.





legislate. It was not the end of the battle, but significant for thousands of unborn lives in states willing to enact protections.

As the majority of justices acknowledged in the decision, *Roe* and the 1992 *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* decision affirming it “enflamed debate and deepened division” on the abortion issue.

If pro-lifers had allowed it to blow over, *Roe* may never have ended. But

instead, this *Dobbs* decision was the culmination of decades of work from a diverse pro-life movement that refused to allow abortion and *Roe* to become settled law. I spoke with longtime pro-lifers about how the various branches of the movement worked early on to keep *Roe* unsettled.

THE 1973 *ROE V. WADE* DECISION unsettled 25-year-old grad student Peggy Hartshorn (now board chair of Heartbeat International) when she heard about it on NPR while driving to meet her Ohio State University dissertation adviser.

As soon as she could get to a phone, she rang her husband, an attorney with access to the telefacsimile machine in the Federal Courthouse Library in Columbus that could produce copies of the new Supreme Court decision. She wanted to read it for herself to see if the reports of a ruling so antithetical to the right to life were true.

After reading it, she searched in a phone book for a phrase she had heard before: “Right to Life.” On the phone, she told the president of Columbus Right to Life she was a Ph.D. English student and wanted to help. The group was desperate for volunteers, so she quickly joined as the education director.

The strategy? To educate people that life began at conception. Hartshorn remembers the slide presentation created by pro-life educational leader Dr. Jack Willke that Columbus Right to Life would use to introduce people to the issue: its images of fetal development and of the different procedures used in abortions.

“We thought that through major educational campaigns, people would, in a sense, organize themselves,” Hartshorn

recalls. “And work toward what we thought was the only solution at that point, which was to amend the Constitution with a human life amendment.”

An amendment seemed to be the only solution because other legislative avenues had not worked: Within two months of the *Roe* decision, Rhode Island passed a law that called unborn children persons and prohibited abortions in all cases except to save the mother’s life.

The state appealed lower court rulings against the law to the United States Supreme Court in a case that would have challenged *Roe*, but the Supreme Court declined to consider the case. The law was too similar to the pro-life Texas law struck down in the *Roe* decision.

Lobbyists had better success protecting taxpayer money from funding abortion: Chuck Donovan, now the president of the Charlotte Lozier Institute, landed a job at National Right to Life as a Capitol Hill lobbyist thanks to a paper he wrote about recipients of the federal government’s Title X family planning funds that were performing abortions.

Government funding of abortion became a theme of his work: He created and maintained a voting record for National Right to Life, printing out the record at a print shop in the back of a church in Manassas, Va., and spending hours double-checking the thousands of x’s and o’s documenting votes on the Hyde Amendment, a budget rider that since 1976 has prevented federal funding of abortion. He helped gather signatures on a congressional brief in defense of the Hyde Amendment when the issue went before the Supreme Court and celebrated when the court in 1980 handed down a 5-4 decision upholding it.

1976	1976	1979	1979	1980s	1980
Hyde Amendment bars the use of federal funds to pay for abortion.	Republican Party adds a pro-life stance to the party platform.	Francis Schaeffer’s <i>Whatever Happened to the Human Race?</i> sparks evangelical Christians’ involvement in pro-life movement.	SCOTUS rules that teenagers do not need parental consent to get an abortion in <i>Bellotti v. Baird</i> .	Pregnancy help centers and crisis pregnancy centers start opening.	SCOTUS upholds Hyde Amendment in <i>Harris v. McRae</i> .
 Henry Hyde					

But, over the next 10 years, Capitol Hill lobbyists and lawmakers would come to realize that the amendment efforts wouldn't produce fruit. Usually, the amendments didn't even make it to a vote.

On top of that, by the 1980s, the movement was split over two approaches: a Human Life Amendment that would define babies as human from the moment of conception and a Human Life Federalism Amendment that would return to the states the power to legislate on abortion. Even with a pro-life majority in Congress and Ronald Reagan as president, both failed. The amendment efforts were at an end.

AS ALL THIS PLAYED OUT IN D.C., two branches of the pro-life movement began to grow into prominence: pro-life direct action and the pregnancy help movement. As legislative efforts stalled, some pro-lifers turned to these.

Monica Migliorino Miller started counseling women on the sidewalks of abortion facilities when she was 23. In 1978 at age 24, she became involved with pro-life direct action when she participated in her first sit-in at an abortion facility, an event organized by Joseph Scheidler, a so-called architect of nonviolent abortion protest.

On March 11, she and 26 others pushed past the security guard at Concord Medical Center and used their bodies to block the hallway to the abortion procedure rooms. Miller and at least one other woman in the group passed out pamphlets and tried to talk with the clients gathered in the waiting room. The police soon arrived to make arrests—Miller's first—and the group spent the day in jail.

From there, Miller went on to organize a few "rescues" on her own in Chicago and in Milwaukee while also continuing to offer help to women outside of abortion facilities and, sometimes successfully, convincing them to keep their babies.

The pro-life rescue movement took off in 1988, when police arrested 1,300 pro-lifers with Randall Terry's Operation Rescue for blockading abortion clinic entrances in Atlanta during the Democratic National Convention. Some pro-lifers didn't appreciate the image the method gave to the pro-life movement. But for some, participating was a matter of conscience (such rescues continued until Congress passed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act in 1994, and largely shut down the previously booming sit-in movement).

"We felt that doing these rescues—and I still feel very strongly—the unborn deserve this protection," Miller explained in 2022. "And if my life was at stake, if somebody was about to murder me, wouldn't you want someone to come along and interfere with, you know, the violence that's going to happen?"

That same insistence on the humanity of the unborn even led Miller and other pro-life activists into the dumpsters behind abortion facilities, where they would sift through the trash to find the bodies of aborted babies. She recalls collecting 600 aborted babies from behind a single Chicago abortion facility between February and April 1987. Over the years, Miller stored boxes of aborted babies in her apartment, arranging proper burials and photographing the victims of abortion—their perfect, translucent hands and feet, their tiny, mutilated bodies.



April 22, 1992: An Operation Rescue protester is carried away by police in Buffalo, N.Y.

"I think that exposing the reality of abortion contributes to the reversal of laws like *Roe v. Wade*," said Miller. "[A picture] shuts down the conversation because they can't deny this is a human hand, this is a human foot. This is a human leg, completely cut apart."

1983	1986	1986	1990	1992	1993
James McMahon develops dilation and extraction (D&X)—aka partial-birth abortion.	Operation Rescue is founded.	First 3D ultrasound image of a baby.	Guttmacher records record high abortion numbers—1.6 million.	SCOTUS uses new standard of "undue burden" in <i>Planned Parenthood v. Casey</i> .	Murder of abortion-ist Dr. David Gunn .
					



Back in Ohio, Hartshorn was learning how legalized abortion complicated decisions for pregnant mothers. The Columbus Right to Life office in the 1970s would get calls from women asking for help: pregnant women who felt pressured to have an abortion from friends or family and needed another place to live.

Hartshorn and her husband in their late 20s started housing some young women in the front bedroom of their

one-bathroom Victorian-style house in Columbus. She said they thought of these women like their daughters, doing it all with them from hosting birthday parties to crying with them as they struggled to decide between adoption and parenting.

Through her involvement with Columbus Right to Life, she also met women who had been through abortion and learned about how the experience traumatized them.

During those years of hosting young mothers, Hartshorn heard about pro-life pregnancy centers for the first time. Although such centers had existed before *Roe*, the 1980s saw growth. The Christian Action Council, a group that had once focused on political lobbying, opened its first pregnancy center in Baltimore in 1980. In 1983, when the final amendment effort failed at the federal level, the group turned its focus to developing pregnancy centers. The group's leaders eventually changed the name to Care Net.

Two years after hearing about crisis pregnancy centers at a 1978 Ohio Right to Life convention, Hartshorn took a similar turn, shifting her focus from the local Right to Life group to starting, with her husband, a 24-hour pregnancy help hotline and pregnancy center.

For six months before they opened the office, the hotline phone sat on an antique wooden stand in their bedroom, where they'd take calls even in the middle of the night, listening to women facing crisis pregnancies and offering resources to help. The hotline moved to the pregnancy center after its doors opened on Jan. 22, 1981, the anniversary of *Roe*.

AS THE DIRECT ACTION and pregnancy help branches of the movement grew, activists on the political and legislative sides of the issue formed a new strategy for overturning *Roe v. Wade*: Instead of focusing on amending the Constitution, they turned their eyes to defeating it through the courts.

Americans United for Life senior counsel Clarke Forsythe remembers first hearing the strategy articulated at the 19th-century Palmer House Hotel in Chicago in March 1984. Hundreds of pro-lifers

1994	2000	2000	2003	2004	2007
Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act is passed.	FDA approves mifepristone , which would account for 54 percent of U.S. abortions in 2020.	SCOTUS strikes down Nebraska partial-birth abortion ban in <i>Stenberg v. Carhart</i> .	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban passed by Congress and signed by President George W. Bush.	U.S. district courts in California, New York, and Nebraska rule that the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban is unconstitutional.	SCOTUS upholds Partial-Birth Abortion Ban in <i>Gonzales v. Carhart</i> .



from all over the country attended the one-day conference in the hotel's ornate ballroom: law professors, historians, litigators.

At the time, Forsythe was a volunteer at Americans United for Life, 25 years old and fresh out of law school. But when he officially joined Americans United for Life as staff counsel in 1985, the idea of passing state legislation calculated to pose nuanced challenges to *Roe* in the federal courts and slowly chip away at the “right to abortion” was the leading strategy.

That strategy brought him on what he remembers as his first trip to the Supreme Court in November 1985. The case was *Diamond v. Charles*, a lawsuit over a 1979 Illinois law requiring abortionists to get parental consent before performing an abortion on a minor. Forsythe’s boss, Dennis Horan, argued the case before the court alone. The state of Illinois had not appealed the lower court’s ruling against the law, leaving the task of defending the law to the pro-life pediatrician Eugene Diamond, whom Horan represented.

The next April, the Supreme Court unanimously dismissed the appeal, holding that since the state apparently had no desire to uphold the law, Diamond didn’t have jurisdiction to defend it. Later that year, the court ruled against a pro-life Pennsylvania law in the case *Thornburgh v. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists*, argued the same day as the *Diamond* case.

Those attempts to chip away at *Roe* failed. But one week after the *Thornburgh* decision, President Ronald Reagan announced the retirement of Chief Justice Warren Burger, a member of the *Roe* majority, and the nomination of *Roe* dissenter William Rehnquist to take Burger’s

place as chief justice. Reagan also said he would nominate pro-life Judge Antonin Scalia to fill the empty seat.

“We practically danced down the street—Dearborn Street in Chicago, where our office was—because we were thrilled by his nomination,” said Forsythe.

Another thrill came with the nomination of pro-life Clarence Thomas by President George H.W. Bush in 1991. David Souter’s nomination the year before had

Oct. 18, 1991: Clarence Thomas is sworn in to the Supreme Court by Justice Byron White. Watching (from left) are first lady Barbara Bush, President George H.W. Bush, and Thomas’ wife, Virginia.

been less thrilling, considering his track record of approving abortion on the New Hampshire Supreme Court. In a bitter 1992 ruling that pro-lifers had hoped would bring the end of *Roe*, he along with Reagan appointees Sandra Day O’Connor



2015	2015	2017	2018	2018	2020
Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood shooting. 	CMP releases Planned Parenthood videos.	Neil Gorsuch confirmed to the Supreme Court. 	SCOTUS upholds pro-life center's First Amendment rights in <i>NIFLA v. Becerra</i>.	Brett Kavanaugh confirmed to the Supreme Court. 	Amy Coney Barrett confirmed to the Supreme Court. 



and Anthony Kennedy joined the majority to reaffirm *Roe*.

Forsythe remembers processing the disappointment while watching TV coverage of the decision from his office in Chicago. He and his colleagues had worked on briefs for the *Casey* case, providing the Supreme Court with information that could help justify the overturn of *Roe*. But, after taking media interviews and holding a press conference about the

decision, the next day “we had to start anew,” said Forsythe.

That year, the abortion numbers were higher than ever. In the fall, Bill Clinton won the presidential election. Forsythe and others knew they wouldn’t get a majority willing to reconsider *Roe* for years: “That was a very difficult time to persevere and continue to stay focused on the fight against *Roe v. Wade*.”

BUT THE LOSSES at the Supreme Court and in the White House were also motivating to pro-lifers. It spurred 45-year-old Peggy Hartshorn to step into the role of president at Alternatives to Abortion International, which would soon be renamed Heartbeat International. She and others on the board were convinced that the political climate meant pregnancy help could be the only way to reduce the number of abortions, and they needed someone to take charge. Up until that point, she had been working as a college English teacher, doing her volunteer pro-life work on the side.

Hartshorn bought a computer and a five-drawer filing cabinet and moved the headquarters into a storage closet at her Columbus pregnancy center. She started answering the phones to connect pregnancy centers with each other, provide them with training manuals, and give other support to help fuel the growth of centers around the world.

Around that time, Alternatives to Abortion International had about 250 affiliates. The *Casey* decision also spurred many existing centers to introduce medical services, including Hartshorn’s own center in Columbus, enabling centers to show the reality of the unborn human in another way.

By 2005, the number of Heartbeat affiliate centers had surpassed 1,000. In a 2021 amicus brief at the Supreme Court in the *Dobbs* case, Heartbeat International noted the sheer number of pregnancy centers and their increasing services: By then, pregnancy centers outnumbered abortion facilities nationally 3 to 1. Heartbeat cited this network as a reason why women don’t need abortion or *Roe*.

Despite the pro-abortion political wilderness that came after *Casey*, pro-lifers continued to target *Roe* at the political level, electing politicians who promised to pass pro-life laws that would challenge *Roe* from all sides: bills protecting babies from abortion once they’re capable of pain or have a detectable heartbeat or because of sex or disability.

Pro-life groups backed the controversial presidential nominee Donald Trump, banking on his pro-life promises, including to nominate conservative justices to the Supreme Court. In 2021, the year the Supreme Court agreed to take up the *Dobbs* case, states passed more than 100 pro-life bills.

Those laws faced a friendly court. With George W. Bush’s Justice Samuel Alito and three Trump nominees joining Justice Thomas, pro-lifers were finally “cautiously optimistic” that they had a court willing to at least reexamine *Roe*.

The eventual overturn replaced cautious optimism with a bittersweet thankfulness in many pro-lifers. Monica Migliorino Miller said she had prayed for *Roe* to be overturned, but was still saddened that it was so long in coming: “All along we’ve said this was a bad decision. ... And we were right all along. But in the meantime, 62 million human beings were exterminated.” ■

2021	2021	2021	2022	2022	2022
American Rescue Plan Act doesn't exclude abortions from \$459 billion in federal funding (first time).	SCOTUS agrees to take <i>Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization</i> .	Texas Heartbeat Act is passed.	SCOTUS allows Texas Heartbeat Act to stand.	SCOTUS draft ruling leaked seven weeks before ruling.	SCOTUS rules on <i>Dobbs</i> and overturns <i>Roe</i> on June 24.
					





Sitting together with people in pain

Helping war-torn Ukrainians cope
with the emotional effects of war

by Jenny Lind Schmitt



RYNA ARUTE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL when she came to the United States as an exchange student in 1999. She continued her studies at Wheaton College and eventually married and settled near Chicago, but her family and a big part of her heart remain in her native Ukraine. When Russia invaded in February, Arute recalls weeks of tumult trying to keep track of family members—all living around Kyiv—and make sure they reached places of relative safety. Once they did, Arute began thinking of what she could do to help. A clinical psychologist specializing in trauma therapy, she knew Ukrainians would need help to process their war experiences, and the Razom Initiative was born. ¶ As Ukrainians endure a fifth month of war either displaced in their own country, hunkered in place, or having fled abroad, relief organizations are seeking resources to care for their emotional needs as well as physical ones.

Arute says the first steps to starting the Razom Initiative came from her own sense of powerlessness, watching horrific events unfold from a distance. But when she looked further into the future, she realized she did have something to offer. “I was aware of my desire to do something, anything I could do to help Ukraine and my people get through this nightmare,” says Arute. “I knew that there was one thing I could do with the experience and network I have. That was to create a setup for people to get the mental health care that they need.”

In Ukrainian, *razom* means “together.” The initiative is a network with the goal of providing mental health care to Ukrainians affected by war. A secondary purpose is to get support and resources to Ukrainian therapists so they can continue their work in-country. Arute realized quickly the Razom Initiative was going to grow exponentially, so she formed a nonprofit called Mansio Global Collective under which the Razom Initiative could work. She wants to make sure it’s sustainable for the long term.

“Mental health care is a bit different in that we need to start now for sure,” says Arute. “But we also need to plan on it being needed for years to come, because this is going to be a long haul to deal with the devastation this war has brought on people personally and nationally in all sorts of ways.”

Once begun, the project took off quickly. Arute says that while these first months her focus has been on building the network, still in that time over 200 clients spread out over 30 countries have been matched with 80 vol-

unteer Ukrainian-speaking therapists to begin counseling. To Arute’s surprise, 60 percent of the volunteer counselors in the network are in Ukraine. Some have told her that doing this work and helping others has been critical in maintaining their own well-being. Razom is creating a grant program to provide professional support and financial assistance to those therapists: Most of them have lost their incomes because of the war.

ONE OF THOSE COUNSELORS is Olga Malahkova. She is a psychotherapist and counselor in Rivne, a city in northwestern Ukraine. Even while dealing with her own shock at the attack on her country, she wanted to help. At first she provided supplies for the Ukrainian army. Eventually she realized the best way for her to help was to be available in her role as a counselor. Through a social media group she learned about the Razom Initiative and signed up to be in the counselor network. She now meets with clients who are spread out all over the world as well as those still in Ukraine.

“All of them have the same fears about their future or about their relatives,” Malahkova said. She says that for people under 35, it was easy to leave Ukraine. But for their parents’ generation, 50 and above, most refused to leave even dangerous regions. They feared more the loss of their homes than their lives. This is hard for younger people abroad to accept. “This is a big problem for those who have left and are now in safety, but their moms and dads and other relatives decided to stay near Kyiv,” says Malahkova. “It’s difficult



for them to understand their relatives' decisions."

Currently almost 60 percent of Malahkova's clients are in Ukraine and 40 percent in other parts of Europe. Of those in Ukraine, a good portion are refugees from Kharkiv and Mariupol.

Malahkova says there is also a split between clients from western and eastern Ukraine. For those who lived in the west before the war, their conversations center on job security and how finances and relational problems have been affected by the upheaval. But for those coming from the east where fighting has been severe, most are dealing with post-traumatic stress from months of constant bombing or hiding in shelters.

"The most difficult situations to work with are people who have moved from Ukraine and now feel guilty about their safety and about their relatively good life

in, say, Germany," says Malahkova. "They are also debating whether to look for a job in their hosting country or to take government refugee assistance. Even when they do find work, there is guilt because they can have a better quality of life than in Ukraine." Some clients are still living in refugee care centers where practical problems like internet bandwidth or lack of privacy play a role in their access to therapeutic care.

According to Malahkova, when the time comes to rebuild Ukraine, part of that rebuilding will need to be psychological care, on an individual level, but also on a national level. Until now, stories of previous decimations in World War II and Stalin's purges have lingered in the collective Ukrainian memory. Every family can point to a tragedy in the Holodomor genocide of 1932

Iryna Arute



and 1933 which killed millions of Ukrainians by starvation. Today's war horrors, replayed continuously on television and social media, will mark the nation for generations to come. Many Ukrainians have family in Russia, and it is hard not to view those relatives as traitors or co-belligerents. Malakhova says that in the same way people go to the gym because they care about their physical health, they need to accept that good mental health care sometimes requires help.

MARION KNELL IS A CONSULTANT on refugee care to the European Evangelical Alliance. Based in the U.K., she provides resources to frontline workers meeting refugees for the first time, in what she calls psychological first aid, a concept she developed in assisting with the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015. The themes coming out of the Ukrainian crisis are like those in other refugee crises: family separation, death and disappearance, traumatized children, people who left home with no time to prepare and no time to process.

"The unique thing about the Ukrainian situation," says Knell, "is that they haven't given up on their coun-

try. They haven't been hounded out in the way that the Syrians and Afghans were. In a sense they 'chose' to leave or were sent to safety, but with every expectation that they will return, hopefully in the near future." Knell says that leaves refugees in limbo, not knowing how long their "temporary stay" will last. "You can't put roots down when you live in expectation of a return," Knell says.

For Knell, language is a huge barrier to helping refugees process their experience and take steps into their future. She's encouraged by some refugee care organizations now offering trauma training in Ukrainian and the languages of neighboring and welcoming countries. Knell says that the first needs to be met are relatively "easy": food, clothing, and shelter. But as time goes on, refugees need connection to networks and to human connections that make them feel safe. "Trauma induced by humans is the worst sort of trauma," Knell says. "The victims have lost trust in humanity."

Knell says the Church can offer the kind of community that other relief organizations can't. "That's what we're supposed to be good at," she says, "connections as believers across towns and countries, safe places for



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children. A church is multigenerational, and respect for age is part of Ukrainian culture. That’s really important, especially where you haven’t got men, haven’t got fathers or grandfathers.”

Knell says often helping is more about “don’ts” than “dos.” “Don’t force people to talk, but be open to it if they would like,” she says. “Don’t tell people what they should be thinking or feeling or what they should have done. Don’t make promises you can’t keep. Don’t tell them it’s all going to be all right in the end, because you don’t know that.”

Some people will need to tell their story over and over again. Knell says that eventually as time goes on, a point will come where they will need help to reframe their life now. For that they need to know about resources available to them in their community. Reframing is difficult in the context of a conflict that is continuing and where updates are constantly available on smartphones. It is hard for refugees to disconnect from the ongoing violence. “You can’t keep people from seeing that,” says Knell. “But can you watch it with them? Can you in some way limit it? How can you help people who are being retraumatized by just what they’re seeing on a daily basis?”

FOR SOME REFUGEES, a stable environment, a listening ear, and connection to a network of resources may be all that is needed to carry on. Others need more support. “Trauma can be loosely understood as too much pain for too long by yourself,” says Arute. “We can’t control the amount of pain people are enduring, but we can somewhat control for how long and whether or not they are by themselves.”

In the acute phase of trauma, while the source of trauma is still present—as is the case in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine—the focus is to help a person cope in the present moment and not be alone. According to Arute, only after a person begins experiencing relative safety can their nervous system relax enough to allow them to start processing deeper layers of trauma. That can take from months to years. Hence Arute’s desire to build a network structure that can expand to the need and be stable over time.

Arute wanted to make the process especially simple for war-torn people seeking help, so on the website (mansiofglobalcollective.org) she created a matching system based on 10 different criteria including language, presenting issues, religious background, and time zone. The semi-automated system quickly matches persons seeking counseling with therapists, who then reach out to them directly. Razom is not an explicitly faith-based initiative, but as clients come from a wide variety of backgrounds, the volunteer therapists are equipped to integrate clients’ faith practices. Clients who wish to meet with a Christian therapist can do so.

Arute’s own faith is the strength behind her work. “To me,” she says, “trauma work is like holy ground work. The work of healing is slow, messy, nonlinear. It requires a lot of patience, a lot of curiosity, a lot of humility. Without those qualities you risk doing more harm than good. But with them, there are a lot of good things that can come out of that space, not least the joy of incarnational love: just joining with another human being, being with them in the darkness, the pain, and the sense of disorientation. But we don’t have to fix anything. We don’t even have to have helpful things to say to them. Just our presence is often times enough.”

Arute has a caution for Christians looking for the positive in the Ukraine situation. She says that usually stems from their own discomfort with an uncomfortable and incomprehensible situation: “The reality is: There’s absolutely nothing positive about war and trauma. Of course there will be healing and redemption. But God is not using the war per se; He is simply deeply present in the midst of it in a mysterious way that is beyond human understanding. It’s important to get rid of this pressure to explain the evil or have a way to spiritualize it. We don’t know why it’s happening, but we can be together with people in pain and just sit with them, like Job’s friends did. They got it right at the beginning when they just showed up and sat with him. There is something very powerful about not being alone.” ■

HIGHER AND

As fuel and other prices rise,
higher costs damage every link
in the food supply chain

by Peter Biles, Abi Churchill, Bekah McCallum,
Alexandra Presta, Elizabeth Russell, and
Ava Woodard in Sioux Center, Iowa

ILLUSTRATION BY KRIEG BARRIE



N D H I G H E R



TWENTY-ONE CARS formed a line around the block only 10 minutes after Hope Food Pantry opened for the day on a Wednesday afternoon in Sioux Center, Iowa. Many had their windows rolled down to keep cool. Three volunteers pushed grocery carts filled with bags from inside the food bank. Along with other pantry items, they made sure to put rice, toilet paper, “any sauce,” and a can of ravioli in every car. The manager, Marianne Sjaarda, held a clipboard and explained that their numbers within the past year have gone up “by about 30 families.” Every Wednesday, the pantry fills around 125 cars. The line now often blocks the road.

The Hope Food Pantry is a microcosm of what is happening nationwide. As high production costs and inflation work their way through the food supply chain, businesses and individuals struggle with rising prices and shortages.

Why have costs risen so much? Nathan Russell, professor of economics at Patrick Henry College, says a host of factors have combined to create the perfect storm. It began with pandemic-related government policies: the Federal Reserve’s gratuitous printing of money and Congress’ stimulus payments. The government also imposed stricter policies on domestic oil production, followed by the closure of several U.S. refineries, and an import ban on Russian oil after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

These two factors sent the cost of a barrel of crude oil skyrocketing from \$55 at the beginning of the year to well beyond the \$100 mark in late June. Refinement is almost 20 percent of the cost to produce diesel fuel. Some refineries shut down or cut back due to decreased demand during the pandemic lockdown, while others went offline to convert to recycled diesel. Russell, who suggests the government reverse all its energy policies from the last 18 months, said, “Food prices are of secondary importance in policymakers’ and decision makers’ minds.”

WORLD reporters visited a community in northwest Iowa that is involved in every link in the food supply chain to see how higher prices affect each stage.

BRIGHT MORNING SUN filtered through the greenhouse's plastic walls as John Wesselius stooped and turned on the hose. He walked down the rows of tiny squash seedlings in their black plastic trays, spraying them one last time before planting. If all goes well, the squash will be ripe

this fall. John, his wife Janna, and their few employees will harvest and deliver it to nearby farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture shareholders.

The Wesselius' farm, the Cornucopia Farm, grows "vegetables from A-Z" in Sioux County, Iowa. Squash, onions, lettuce, beets, carrots, cucumbers—you name it. But next year, their list of produce may be shorter. Their production costs have risen dramatically within the last year.

"In a year when we're looking at a lot of other higher expenses ... we might have to bypass this crop or that crop," Janna said.

Farmers like the Wesselius family are facing heavy price pressures. Nearly everything they need to produce crops—diesel fuel, fertilizer, seeds, and tools—has become significantly more expensive within the last 12 months. Fuel and fertilizer have experienced particularly dramatic surges in price.

The national average price of diesel fuel has risen over 40 percent in the last year. John said that in his area the price has almost doubled.

Kelly Nieuwenhuis, who farms corn and soybeans in Iowa's O'Brien County, buys urea fertilizer each year for his 2,700 acres. Last year, the fertilizer cost \$300 a ton. This year, he paid \$1,000 per ton.

Increasing production costs have



John Wesselius works on the irrigation system for Cornucopia Farm.

driven up food prices nationwide, largely because farmers can't afford to charge less.

"We raised our prices 10 percent in January," John Wesselius said. "We thought that would be enough." That was before diesel prices surged even higher. Now, he doesn't know if his farm will make any profit this year.

His wife wonders how long this can go on. "There's a limit to what people will pay, too," she said. "There's a limit to what the market will bear."

Mitch Nettinga sees that every day in his job at a farmer's co-op several miles away. The co-op rises out of the flat farmland in Hull, Iowa. Giant metal grain silos block part of the distant horizon. Diesel-fueled semi-trucks roll into the co-op's weigh station. A little wooden



house that serves as the co-op's office sits behind the scale. Hull Co-op provides local farmers with the fertilizer, grain, seed, and lumber they need. Mitch, the office manager, grew up in Hull and has spent his entire career at the co-op.

Over the past two years, Hull Co-op has experienced extreme changes in price and supply. The farmers Mitch serves have had the same problems as the Wesseliuses: The prices of feed, seed, corn, diesel, and fertilizer have increased so sharply that they struggle to maintain already thin profit margins.

Mitch also runs a small farm with his father. Together, they grow corn and soybeans and raise dairy cows. Last year, it cost him \$2.86 to produce a bushel of corn. "What I'm projecting in order to break even this year, to produce the same bushel of corn, is about \$4.47," he said.

Mitch added farmers haven't seen the worst of it yet.

Farmers typically pay for supplies months in advance. For example, many farmers prepaid for their 2022 seed between November and

December of 2021. Locking in last year's lower prices means current production costs are high but manageable. However, seed for the 2023 planting season will cost even more—driving up next year's food prices even higher. "The profit margin disappears at that point," Mitch said.

Mitch explained that consumers see the high prices of the food they buy but not the high production costs the co-ops and farmers face. The more it costs to grow, package, and ship a product, the more it costs to purchase.

These costs are passed on to the next link in the food supply chain: food processing companies. When livestock feed costs more to grow, these companies must raise meat and dairy prices. One such processing company is Smithfield Foods, the world's largest producer of pigs and pork products in the world.

"One of our biggest expenses is grain to feed our ... hogs," said Smithfield's vice president of Corporate Affairs, Jim Monroe. "The prices have gone up significantly." Jim attributes that to idle land in Ukraine, which produced one-tenth of the world's grain before the war.

THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY links every stage of the food supply chain. Brent Ver Steeg begins work at 5 a.m. during the busy season as a dispatcher for Rozeboom Trucking in Sioux Center, Iowa, but he's available around the clock. He logs 10,000 minutes on the phone every month making sure drivers are on time, calves are ready to ship, and the schedule is finalized. He also records the shipping rates in a book—not a computer—and adjusts them to make sure truckers can earn a living.

“It’s difficult to keep a guy happy enough to keep trucking,” he said.

Diesel prices going from \$3.25 to \$5.57 in the last year hasn’t helped.

Diesel is the backbone of the shipping industry. Livestock leaving the feedlot, waffle fries heading to a local restaurant, eggs going to the grocery store—they all move on semi-trucks that run on diesel. Higher diesel prices ripple down the supply chain, ultimately raising the cost of consumer goods.

Rozeboom has no choice but to raise its prices when diesel goes up. In the last 18 months, the company’s fee for shipping livestock has gone from \$4 a mile to \$5.50. Farmers have to pay the increased prices because their animals have to be moved.

Unfortunately for Rozeboom, fuel is a trucking company’s second-highest expense. A Rozeboom semi burns 16,000 gallons of diesel a year. With 23 trucks running every day, that means fuel costs for the company are up \$840,000 for the year.

But even after raising prices, trucking companies like Rozeboom still face losses. Because diesel is used to produce and transport products such as tires and steel, other costs have also increased. The cost of a new truck has gone from \$170,000 to over \$200,000 in the last nine months.

Brent believes the financial stress will squeeze companies out of the business. But Brenda Neville, president and CEO of the Iowa Motor Truck Association, hasn’t seen a single company go out of business due to fuel prices in her 36 years at IMTA.

“You have to move the product,” she said. “Trucks have to move.”

Truckers, restaurants, and grocery stores absorb small amounts of the price increase at each step—but much of it ends up with the consumer. “It’s going to be tough,” Brent said. “Everything follows that trend.”



FOR RESTAURANTS, which were hit hard by the pandemic, the current rising costs have created new problems.

Shelly Wassenaar never expected her friend George Jacobs’ Blue Mountain Culinary Emporium to shut its doors permanently. He used to own the classic barbecue joint in Orange City, Iowa. Every morning, George crossed the street to her breakfast restaurant, the Hatchery, for a cup of fresh coffee. Now, the Blue Mountain sits empty. George had to shut its doors when the pandemic became too much to handle.

The Hatchery survived. It operated as the only breakfast restaurant in town and had a to-go window behind the front counter, allowing Shelly to generate substantial income, at least for a while. Now, with increased prices, she is struggling to afford the ingredients.

The USDA predicts all food prices will increase by around 7 percent in 2022. In April, an avian influenza outbreak drove up farm-level egg prices by 110 percent. Poultry and egg prices are expected to increase about 75 percent.

Shelly’s menu relies heavily on eggs and dairy. She purchases 30 dozen eggs two times a week from a local farmer, who has to follow market costs to stay in business himself. Eggs used to cost around \$15



“In my 67 years,
I have never seen such
a disaster.”

FAR LEFT: Brent Ver Steeg. LEFT: Fuel prices in San Francisco on June 11.

per 30 dozen. Now, they cost her around \$80.

Shelly says she “rides the wave,” but she will have to change her menu prices again if her egg costs hit \$100.

“I try to adjust my menu prices once every six months,” she said. “Once to twice a year at the most. Within the past four months, though, I’ve had to raise prices twice just to keep balance.”

She could cut her 12 workers’ wages, but they are already worried about the higher cost of living. Besides, she can’t afford to lose them.

Barry Staples, manager of the Sioux County Livestock Co. in Sioux Center, is in a similar situation. The family restaurant’s food prices, specifically for eggs and meat, have tripled. However, he has changed his menu prices only once in the past four years. The small staff works hard to keep customers returning. If pay cuts are necessary, Barry said, managers will take them first.

Some restaurants can turn to secondary suppliers to manage higher costs and availability issues. Shelly brought in a second vendor for the Hatchery to help offset the prices from her first supplier. When she runs low on foam to-go containers, she utilizes the local Fareway grocery store and Sam’s Club. This is risky. Sometimes those businesses don’t have the supplies either, but she says not having them at all can be better than paying higher vendor prices.

Above all, Shelly wants her restaurant to succeed. If food and living costs get too high, she worries about the future.

“Something will have to give,” she said, looking out the window to Blue Mountain’s closed doors. “Something is going to have

to crash, or something will have to be done, I don't know. I just don't know."

THE SITUATION ISN'T as dire for grocery stores. Nathan Russell, the Patrick Henry economist, said Americans shifted food consumption away from restaurants and other institutions during the pandemic and relied more on grocery stores. Higher restaurant prices may continue the trend.

But grocery stores and their customers are still affected. At the Hy-Vee grocery store in Sioux Center, Iowa, Tyler Halstead, dressed in slacks and a red polo shirt, pushed a line of carts across the parking lot on a windy day in May. He's been the store's assistant manager for 10 months.

Hy-Vee is an employee-owned grocery company with 280 locations across the Midwest and South. It prides itself on offering affordable prices to customers. However, it's struggled to keep prices low in recent months.

Tyler said customers are opting for individual brands like Hy-Vee's "Crav'n," since they're cheaper, but the store itself has seen a 20-percent uptick in prices across the board. Twelve-packs of soda went from \$4.99 to \$6.99 in recent months. Tyler has seen supply chain issues since the beginning of the pandemic. Two years later, there are still gaps on his shelves and customers are feeling the strain of rising prices.

Local shoppers Bridgette and Julio Bazaldua lamented the uptick in meat and dairy prices, noting that their weekly grocery expenses are now \$100 for just the two of them. Another customer, Erica



Groen, said she must plan her meals much more deliberately these days. "Getting rid of leftovers is getting rid of money," she said.

In the dessert aisle at Hy-Vee, a shelf that's supposed to be full of Keebler fudge cookies is practically empty. Tyler also struggles to keep foil pans and certain pastas stocked. The recovery process from pandemic shortages has been gradual, but he believes things are slowly getting better.

Ryan Ahrens, the grocery manager at Fareway in Sioux Center, also says prices have risen. Fareway, a Midwest chain headquartered in Boone, Iowa, doesn't have as many stores as Hy-Vee. Like other grocery stores, rising diesel prices have forced Fareway to raise its prices to remain financially stable. "Everything takes [diesel]," Ryan said with a shrug.

Ryan greeted a customer by name while answering a question. To him, excellent customer service remains the recipe for success. He also seemed fairly confident that "things are slowly getting better," even though the increased expenses are burdening the store's customers.

One of those customers is Christine Guetmaat, who scanned the Fareway aisles a few feet away from Ryan's office. Her purple blouse with white daisies was pilled and faded. She said she hasn't bought new clothes recently because groceries are more important. She has Hashimoto's, an autoimmune disease. Because of her condition, she can't eat products that contain gluten or change her food habits to



LEFT: Ryan Ahrens inspects a display at Fareway. RIGHT: Marianne Sjaarda oversees food distribution at Hope Food Pantry.

accommodate high prices. Gluten-free goods have always been expensive, but their prices have skyrocketed.

"I still buy what I have to," she said. Since Christine does not have any other mouths to feed, she cuts back in other ways. Some Sioux Center locals do not have that luxury. Higher prices have forced many with low incomes to supplement their groceries.

BACK AT THE HOPE FOOD PANTRY, just behind the Hy-Vee, Ellen Martin (WORLD agreed to use a pseudonym for privacy reasons) waited in line in her gray Honda minivan. Her husband was at home with a brain injury. Ellen said a two-by-four hit him on the head at work, and he hasn't been able to go back. He also doesn't have worker's compensation, and they make \$22 too much to apply for state aid. She works constantly but said she barely makes a living. "Half the time we don't eat," she said.

Several grandchildren depend on the groceries. Ellen waited for an hour and a half in the lengthening line while a few of the remaining 20 gallons of gas in her car slowly turned to fumes. She didn't know if she would be able to fill it up again soon.

"In my 67 years, I have never seen such a disaster," Janet Pickell said through the window of her dented Suburban a few cars ahead of Ellen. Even during the 2008 recession, she could not remember seeing empty shelves.

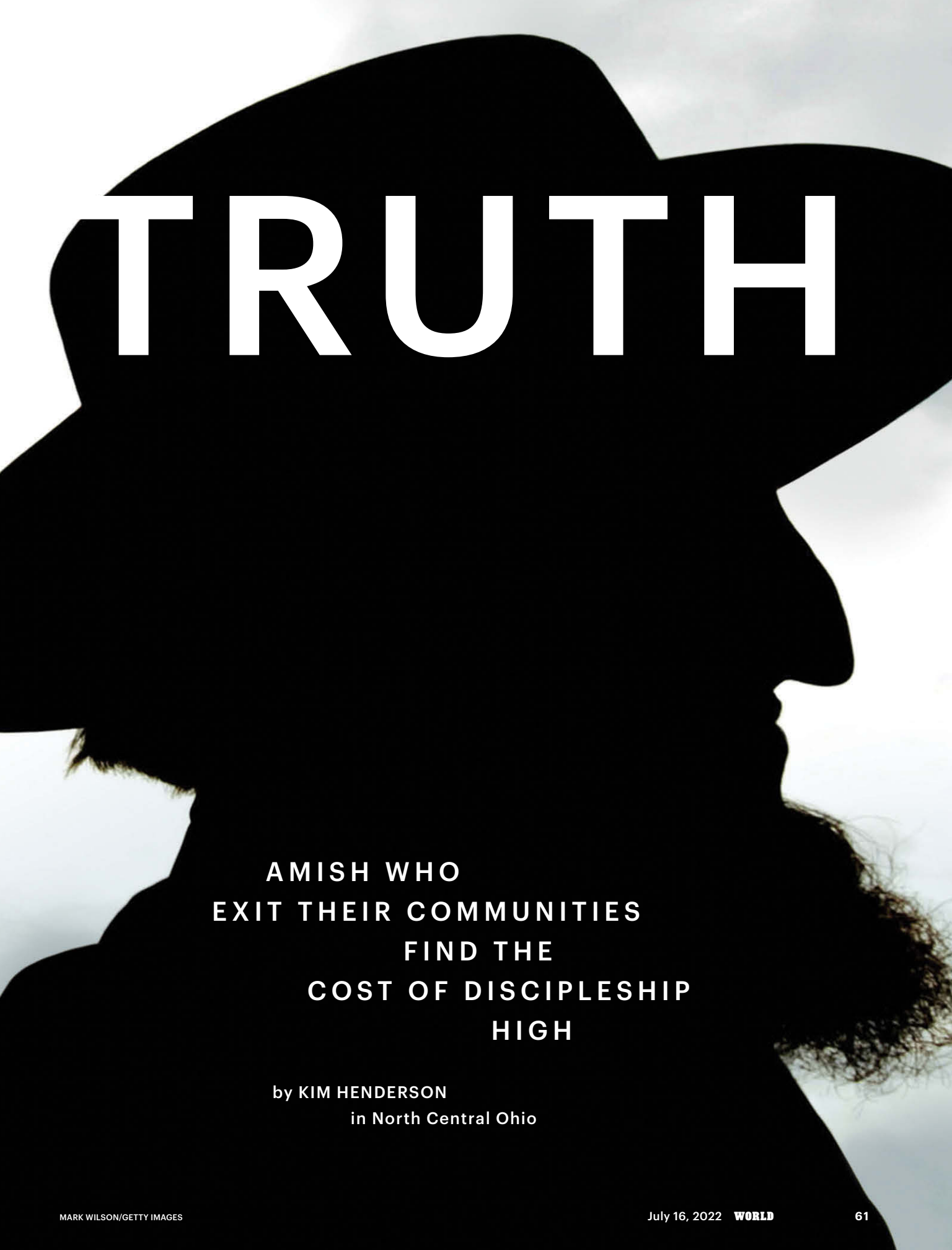
Marianne Sjaarda, the pantry manager, said the community donates even more than usual because they "see the need." But the rising prices constrict the pantry's budget. Combined with store-bought food, the pantry provides enough to help struggling families for about a week. But if more cars than expected show up on a given day, they must give each family less.

Some people in line seemed relieved to talk about their situation. Others avoided eye contact as they waited. One woman wiped at her running mascara but had no comment. ■

—The writers are WORLD Journalism Institute graduates

PLAIN

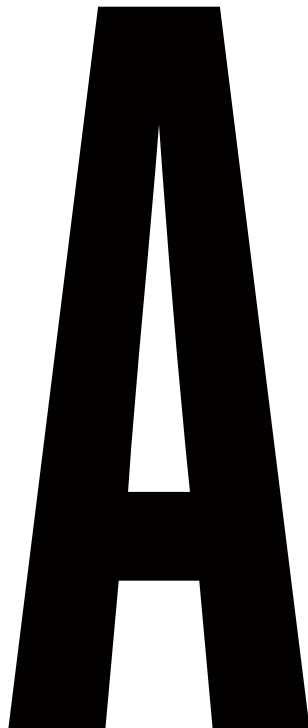




TRUTH

AMISH WHO
EXIT THEIR COMMUNITIES
FIND THE
COST OF DISCIPLESHIP
HIGH

by KIM HENDERSON
in North Central Ohio



An Amish boy works on a farm in Wayne County, Central Ohio.

N HOUR OUTSIDE OF CLEVELAND, the wheels of time turn backward. They move buggies along tarred roads and push reel mowers through bluegrass. They pulley clotheslines hung between porches and the peaks of barns a hundred feet away. Amish properties, like those Amish wheels, are easy to spot in a place like rural Ohio.

The surest sign? Power lines stretch here, but they do not stretch there. That's true along County Road 175, where field after field is upturned, dirt smiling at a clear May sky. Plows with a six-horse hitch have done the prep work, and now men wearing suspenders and straw hats do the next thing, dropping fledging tomato plants into rows covered with punctured plastic. Nobody likes weeds, not even the hardworking Amish.

A few miles away, three generations of the Schrock family have their own garden to tend, but they do it with the help of a diesel tractor. Just 15 years ago, though, the sound of that engine would have been foreign on their 68 acres. That, plus indoor plumbing and the tangle of cords charging their iPhones. The Schrocks were Swartzentruber Amish,

the strictest sect within the larger Amish community.

And while farms surrounding them focus on growing vegetables, their family and other Christians in this area are hoping for a harvest of a different type. They see gospel opportunity in Amish country, and they're intent on scattering seeds of truth. The climate, however, is harsh. Their Plain friends will have to count the cost to follow Christ.

TACO TUESDAY gets a different branding at Andrew and Hannah Schrock's dinner table. Sure, it's Tuesday and bowls are filled with what looks like taco salad, but here it's called an Amish haystack. Layers of ground beef, quinoa, lettuce, the works. It's good, but it's pushing 10 o'clock before Andrew Schrock, 38, pauses to eat. His four daughters have gone to bed. His mother and father have left to finish milking.

It's quiet when the straight shooter draws a final conclusion: Fear holds the Amish community together. "It's the great fear of being excommunicated. That's No. 1," Schrock explains, stroking his 5-inch beard. "When you don't have the peace of God ruling your heart, the possibility of something like shunning really bothers you. Until someone actually gets set free by Jesus Christ, they won't leave."

Fourteen years ago, that kind of fear prodded Schrock to challenge a converted cousin about his new-found beliefs. With concordance in hand, Schrock pored over the Scriptures, zeroing in on the topic of law—God's and man's. Although he mainly spoke Dutch and English, Schrock's Bible was written in German. "I was taught all my life that English is corrupt, that people who read English get deceived." Schrock was fluent enough to make it to some life-altering verses in the second chapter of Colossians. That's when he says the whole weight of religion lifted off his shoulders.

"When I read that the traditions of man are not of Christ, it was crystal clear for the first time," he says, remembering his excitement. "I couldn't wait to show it to my bishops. I thought they would see that we'd had it wrong all this time."

Today Schrock can laugh at that memory and his naivete, but he acknowledges the meeting with his church leaders





Family members sit around Andrew and Hannah Schrock's dinner table.

wasn't funny. They gave him two weeks to come to his senses, but by the time those two weeks were up, Schrock had moved on to reading Romans and the Gospels. He says he'd also managed to buy a tractor and get his driver's license. "I was on a roll," he remembers.

The average Amish family includes five children, but Schrock's mother, Lena, gave birth to 12. Typically, 85 percent of children raised in Amish households join the Amish church, and the Schrocks were on track to line up with that statistic until their oldest son, Moses, left home looking for answers. When he ultimately became a Christian, Lena says she couldn't abide by the strict shunning imposed by their church. "Moses would come for visits, but I would make him hide his car," she whispers with a smile.

When Andrew started making waves, Lena and her husband, Dan, began voic-

ing questions, too. Lena says she eventually found the answer to hers within the pages of an evangelical Chick tract. "I had peace for the first time, assurance of salvation," Lena remembers, thumbing through the tract she's kept for all these years. It was a pivotal, belief-bucking moment. The Amish say assurance of salvation is prideful, even grounds for excommunication.

But by the time Dan and Lena came to their new beliefs, two of their daughters had married Amish men and had children of their own. The Schrocks' decision to leave their Amish community meant the couple wasn't just turning their backs on the only life they'd ever known. They were saying forever goodbyes to children and grandchildren, too.

THE YOUNG CENTER FOR Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Pennsylvania's Elizabethtown College numbers the Amish population nationwide at more than 356,000. If the current trend of doubling

in size every 20 years continues, they'll surpass the 1 million mark by 2050. But just who are the Amish? And why do they cling to old ways and uniform lifestyles?

The word *Amish* originates in a name, that of Jakob Amman, a Swiss minister whose influence grew after a 17th-century schism in the Anabaptist church. Amman admonished his followers to conform to Biblical teachings by forsaking the world, but in early rural America, Amish ways didn't really stick out until the Industrial Revolution. That's when Amish leaders rejected modern progress and expanded their list of rules, known as the *Ordnung*. Even now, the church is adding rules to regulate the latest flashlights. No LED versions allowed. Only old style, two batteries max.

Thanks to fiction writers like Beverly Lewis, Wanda Brunstetter, and Cindy Woodsmall, Americans have developed a fascination with Amish culture. Combined, they've sold more than 30 million

books filled with picturesque descriptions of quilting bees, courtships, and barn raisings. Lewis told *Newsweek* her readers want the nostalgic bent: “They feel the family is fragmented in our society. They find such peace in the way Amish children are brought up.”

When asked about the genre’s popularity, Amish scholar Donald Kraybill doesn’t disagree, but he’s concerned about who benefits: “Amish fiction written by non-Amish authors provides an anchor of stability to comfort non-Amish readers who feel threatened by social change.” But the books aren’t all bonnets and buggies. Some show a beautiful culture with flaws—like the belief that a right standing with God comes from man’s law-keeping, rather than Christ’s.

Joe Keim knows a thing or two about that beautiful, flawed culture. At 15, he left his Old Order Amish home to explore the “English” world. He had \$50 dollars in his pocket and a cousin by his side, and they spent their first night bedded down in an open vehicle in a stranger’s garage. Facing the surprised homeowner the next morning was tough, but hearing that Keim’s father was fasting until he returned was tougher. He went back. Then left again. The tug-of-war lasted six rounds. By the seventh Keim was 18, married, and converted. Still, when in 1987 he and his wife, Esther, were ready to leave for good, he says the transition was difficult: “We weren’t born into the English culture. It’s like a U.S. citizen going to another country.”

Keim landed a factory job, where many mornings he sat outside praying for his former community before heading into his shift. At home, he and Esther would lie awake at night wondering who would go to spiritually rescue their people. “We realized churches were sending missionaries around the world, but no one was sent to the Amish.”

That changed in 2000 when Keim helped establish Mission to Amish People (MAP), a Savannah, Ohio-based ministry that today operates with 22 staff members and more than 50 volunteers. The main task area displays the complexity of their work—mixing the old with the new. Modern computers anchor a line of desks, but a whole wall of shelves is organized for outgoing mail. Printed correspondence

is the only way to reach many of the 60,000 Amish families on MAP’s mailing list.

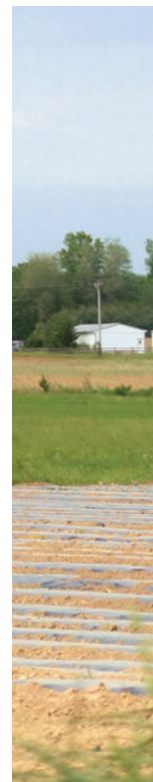
While the priority is evangelism, Keim and his team also help young adults who have left the Amish culture acclimate to a new one. They work through language and customs barriers, apply for Social Security cards, open bank accounts, obtain driver’s licenses, and study for the GED, an important step since Amish students finish school at the eighth grade.

Keim gets round-the-clock inquiries from Amish who are curious about faith, grace, and life on the outside, including 60 messages he missed during a meeting this morning. In 2012, he took a furtive call from Samuel Girod, a grown man who stood shaking like a leaf behind his own home in Indiana. He was afraid someone was going to catch him talking to an excommunicated Amishman, but the calls continued for six months.

“Then one night he came here,” Keim says, pulling out a picture he snapped of Girod at that first meeting. “He literally walked away from his properties and a construction business, and he stood here with two duffel bags. That was all he had.”



LEFT: Levina Hershberger stands in front of the Amish schoolhouse she attended from first through eighth grades. **RIGHT:** A farm near West Salem, Ohio.



Girod now travels throughout the United States speaking on behalf of MAP.

GRANT RITCHEY GREW UP driving on roads in a part of Ohio where Amish buggies weren’t a common sight, but after a year as the sole reporter for the *Ashland Times-Gazette*, he’s used to them. Everyone who comes to Ashland gets used to the ruts in the pavement caused by horse-shoe studs. They get used to the litter of manure and buggy-passing delays, too.

Ritchey traveled Ashland’s roads while covering stories like April’s rash of vehicle break-ins and the completion of pickleball courts at Cahn Grove Park. What he didn’t cover much was the Amish.

“They really keep a low profile,” Ritchey explains, speaking over the din at Downtown Perk, a local coffee shop. That’s why he was surprised early this year when officers arrested 74-year-old Joas Swartzentruber for sexual assault of minors.

For Ritchey, who can’t recall covering



“They’re afraid to leave it because they’ve heard from a baby up if they do, they will go to hell.”

a single crime involving the Amish before the story broke, writing a 200-word report about Swartzentruber’s February indictment was difficult. Pulling up court documents on his laptop, he reads aloud information about the alleged victims. “This one was actually born on my birthday,” he points out, referring to “Sarah Doe.”

Ashland County Prosecutor Christopher Tunnell declined to comment on the case, but Ritchey, who has since moved on to another reporting role, continues to think about its effect on the Amish community. “I’m wondering if it stereotypes them in a bad light. The Amish act as a group, and when one individual is accused and charged with such a serious offense—multiple offenses—I’m wondering what the long-term application of that will be.”

Some would say the application is simple. Sin is a reality in the Amish community just like it is everywhere else. Consequently, Joe Keim does a lot of counseling at MAP, where he often hears Amish express a hopelessness bound up in their beliefs. “With rules come bondage and depression, condemnation. You can never reach the bar even on a good day, and

when you live under that mindset, it’s very depressing,” Keim explains. “Just yesterday, another 18-year-old boy shot and killed himself. This is what these young people are experiencing, but they’re afraid to leave it because they’ve heard from a baby up if they do, they will go to hell.”

THAT’S WHAT LEVINA HERSHBERGER believed. She was a bishop’s daughter, one who liked to work outdoors tending fields and the family’s big Belgian horses. She married an Amish carpenter named Andrew, but five children into their marriage his devotion to Amish beliefs started to diminish. He began to read his Bible in earnest. After two years, he’d come to understand there was nothing he could do to earn salvation. “We had some arguments about it,” Hershberger admits. “Andrew would take me to the Bible, and I’d see the truth for myself.”

When the Hershbergers tell their story, they occasionally slip into Dutch. It’s a part of their makeup as much as the Amish work ethic, but they speak without faltering when they describe their costly breaking away. Andrew lost his construction business because church members could no longer work for him. His parents threatened to leave their property unless he did, forcing them to move.

Last year, however, the Hershbergers came back. They built a house about a mile from the home where Levina was born, and today she can look out her kitchen window and watch her mother drive past in her horse-drawn buggy. Her mother won’t stop, though. She won’t enter the new home with the van parked outside and the black stainless steel refrigerator in the kitchen. She won’t visit with Levina or Andrew or her now seven grandchildren.

Andrew Hershberger says that’s OK. His dark eyes are calm and steady, resigned. Leaning his arm against a plastic tablecloth, he says the move back was simply about being available. He and Levina want to let the family members and friends who rejected them watch them up close. They want to be a living testimony before the Amish. “Questions will come up, and when they go through hard times they will wonder what we have that makes us different. That’s when I want to be here.” ■



OVERCOMING HURDLES

A RARE GENETIC DISEASE HASN'T REINED IN
EQUESTRIAN STACEY JOHNSON FROM
PURSUING AND SHARING HER DREAMS

by SHARON DIERBERGER

photos by MATTHEW MILLER/GENESIS



Martha Johnson could barely believe it when the therapeutic equestrian center in Dallas called to say her 19-year-old daughter was sitting on a horse, and they had just jumped over an obstacle together. The year was 1998, shortly after brain surgery left Stacey an invalid, having to relearn almost everything, including how to walk and how to ride a horse again. Doctors had cautioned that Stacey would likely always be wheelchair-bound, so news she was riding a horse blew Martha away.

“I’m amazed at what horses have done for her,” Martha said remembering that moment and many milestones since. “But Stacey has sheer determination.”

Stacey Johnson was 12 when doctors diagnosed her with Van Buchem disease. Fewer than 30 people have ever been diagnosed with the debilitating chromosomal anomaly that causes unregulated bone growth. Among other issues, Van Buchem disease causes ongoing thickening of Stacey’s skull, squeezing her cerebellum. Often she has excruciating headaches. Even a minor sinus infection increases intracranial pressure, causing migraines that may knock her flat for weeks. She lacks hearing completely in one ear and 85 percent in the other. Stacey also has vision problems that keep her reliant on thick-lensed glasses.

While Van Buchem disease has wreaked havoc on her body, it hasn’t stopped her, even at age 43, from living joyfully, purposefully, and competitively. She literally has ridden above her difficulties, including after a global organization’s boomerang decisions to first allow, then disallow, and then, at the last minute, allow her to compete at an important international event.

As we talk, Stacey sits up close, watching and listening intently, trying not to miss a word. But when she sits astride a horse, it’s hard to notice any disabilities. Stacey herself declares exuberantly, “Riding into the arena, I’m just like everybody else!” It’s impossible not

to smile watching a video of Stacey confidently riding her horse, guiding it around the arena through prescribed patterns and gaits.

Stacey climbed onto a saddle for the first time shortly after her original diagnosis and immediately fell in love with riding horses. Martha calls it “the blessing that changed her life.” With a riding instructor, she quickly learned to walk the horse, canter, and even jump.

Soon, she began physical therapy that integrates equine movement (hippotherapy) to improve her strength, balance, and functional independence. That, combined with her horse fervor, got Stacey walking again after the surgery left her incapacitated. Martha says she sees God’s blessings behind it all.

Several doctors had confirmed Stacey needed the surgery—clipping her brain’s cerebellar tonsils—to relieve pressure on her brainstem and spinal cord and create more space for her squeezed cerebellum. But even after post-surgical MRIs and spinal fluid checks, no physician could determine why Stacey awoke unable to walk or even sit up.

And none of her doctors can fully explain how Stacey now walks and rides again so well.

Her mother knows the day may come when Stacey has a headache so severe and interminable that surgeons may need to enter the front of her skull to give her brain more space, but she’s hopeful that is many years away.



Weekly, Stacey still goes to the therapeutic horsemanship center to work with her physical therapist, Sandy Ehrett, who uses hippotherapy each session. Sandy says Stacey is a joy: “She makes people feel valued—she’s genuinely interested in others and remembers little details about them. And I love that she loves to laugh!” She mentioned how committed Stacey’s family has been and the sacrifices they’ve made to ensure Sta-

cey gets all she needs to be able to participate in so many activities, despite her challenges.

Martha advocates for Stacey, coordinates her busy schedule, attends events with her, and finds new pursuits to enhance her daughter’s life. Stacey’s sister and aunt sometimes help, too. Stacey’s father, Jerry, is blind and diabetic, so he can’t always be at events but encourages all Stacey’s endeavors. At one point, the family moved to San Antonio for three years but returned to Dallas because of its exceptional riding and therapy opportunities.

NOT LONG AFTER STACEY learned to ride, her riding instructor entered her in a competition—just for fun. Some of the competitors rode \$100,000 horses. Stacey showed up with a therapeutic riding horse. When Stacey won—against able-bodied riders—she and her mom knew she’d found a niche: Stacey wanted not only to ride, but to compete.

When the Johnsons learned the Special Olympics had equestrian events, Stacey signed up—and has never looked back. It’s when she’s talking about the Special Olympics and all she’s done with the organization that Stacey is most animated: “I love Special Olympics! I get to do so many things, and I meet so many people. It’s really, really fun.”

Among other awards, she won gold and bronze medals at the 2003 Special Olympics World Games in Dublin, Ireland, despite having to ride a luck-of-the-draw enormous draft horse. “She looked like a little flea on a big dog,” laughs Johnson.

She recounts how during one event of the competition, Stacey, whose legs aren’t that strong, kicked the horse’s sides so often trying to get the behe-

moth moving forward that soon all the people in the arena started stomping the bleachers to help.

Stacey laughs, too, and says she still remembers looking down at the horse’s huge head. Then she focuses on how kind the Irish people were and how green the grass was in Ireland. She talks about a volunteer who gave them a tour of a Dublin courthouse “where the judges wear funny wigs, and everyone was so nice.”

In 2012, Stacy became the first U.S. American Quarter Horse Association high-point award winner in four equestrian events for disabled riders. Special Olympics named her Texas Female Athlete of the Year in 2013.

Riding increased her confidence and strength to compete in track; she won two golds and a silver at the 2018 USA Games in Seattle. This May, at the Special Olympics Summer Games in San Antonio, she won a gold in the 100-meter walk and fourth place in the javelin throw. Also in May, she took a gold, silver, and bronze at the Equestrian Summer Games in College Station, Texas. “The horses, the people, the competition ... it all keeps Stacey going,” her mom says.

Stacey grins and says she competes in bocce ball, too, and loves to dance at organization galas and Special

Olympics events and parties. Once, she rappelled down a 16-story building for a Special Olympics fundraiser.

ENTHUSIASM TUMBLES OUT of Stacey when she talks about horses: “I have met so many people because of riding! I have so many friends now!” Before discovering riding, she says she had few friends because she couldn’t do the same activities as classmates. She couldn’t perform on the drill team like her older sister, either. Few activities could accommodate anyone with disabilities like hers.

Johnson says Stacey hardly talked before horses opened her world. Now she’s a Special Olympics global messenger and regularly gives speeches—over 200 so far—promoting the organization and how riding transformed her life. Stacey tells about two trips to Washington, D.C., where she met legislators and encouraged

Stacey and her mom, Martha, at a farm north of Dallas



them to vote for bills that support the Special Olympics.

“People seem to really connect with Stacey,” Martha says. “She listens to them, and they listen to her. She loves talking. She has more friends than anyone I know.”

But recent, ever-changing decisions by the International Special Olympics Committee created great distress for Stacey. When she found out last year she’d been chosen for the USA Summer Games in Orlando, June 5-12—the first time equestrian would be an official sport at nationals—the international organization had no requirement for COVID-19 vaccinations. The Texas Special Olympics also had no such mandate.

Then in December, six months after they’d chosen her, the ISO abruptly changed its rules, decreeing all participants had to be vaccinated, despite falling numbers of coronavirus cases nationwide. Ironically, Florida had some of the least restrictive coronavirus policies,

**“RIDING
INTO THE
ARENA,
I’M JUST
LIKE
EVERYBODY
ELSE!”**

And Florida Surgeon General Joseph Ladapo has said parents have the right to question whether their children get the vaccine.

Because of Stacey’s severe health issues, doctors warned her not to get the shot. She’s had bad reactions to other vaccines, and physicians said her health conditions could be critically exacerbated by a COVID shot. Also, Stacey had COVID-19 in 2020.

Despite pleas to the organization and letters and calls to legislators and others of influence, the ISO did not respond to Martha. She says Texas state Senator Angela Paxton also tried to have her staff encourage the ISO to change its policy, but officials wouldn’t budge, so Stacey forfeited her spot at the Summer Games.

She had already raised money to go, paid her fees, booked a hotel room, and celebrated with the community. And she was excitedly preparing with three other Texas athletes who are friends and were going, too.

“Stacy was devastated,” her mother said. “I had never seen her so down, even when she was in the wheelchair. And this happened to many other athletes nationwide.”

She was also concerned because Stacy is getting older and has to work even harder to stay strong enough to compete. Martha says she has read about other Special Olympians with similar scenarios; like Stacey, they might never be able to compete at nationals again.

For six months, Stacey says, she was “so so sad” and couldn’t believe she wasn’t going. Even her riding instructors commented on her deflated demeanor. Jerry kept saying God had a reason for all this.

And then, at the ninth hour, or in this case, two days before opening ceremonies, the ISO made an about-face. It responded to Florida’s threat of a \$27 million fine if the organization imposed the requirement, so it withdrew its vaccine mandate. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said the ISO mandate violated a ban on vaccine passports signed last year.

Stacey was ecstatic. Texas Special Olympics rebooked her flight, and she headed to Orlando the next morning. But Martha says she’s aware that for many competitors it was too late and too overwhelming to drop everything to get to the Games in a day. She is frustrated it took a \$27 million threat for the ISO to listen, and then not until the last minute.

And yet, for Stacey, there’s a happy ending. On June 8, her 43rd birthday, she took the gold medal at nationals in equitation, the art and practice of horsemanship and riding.

True to form, Stacey was already planning her upcoming week, filled with riding, swim therapy, massage, physical therapy, and track. Her seemingly indomitable spirit is contagious.

“Stacy just keeps going and always tries to stay positive,” her mother says. “She is a miracle. And I do think she still has to finish some of God’s work down here.” ■



CAMPAIGNING IN A CHANGING AMERICA

Social media and polarization make politics
a different business than it used to be

**CAROLINA
LUMETTA
INTERVIEWS
CHRISTOPHER
NICHOLAS**

I RECENTLY SAT DOWN for a turkey club sandwich in Harrisburg, Pa., with Republican political consultant Christopher Nicholas. His company, Eagle Consulting Group, has represented more than 800 campaigns and last year celebrated its 30th anniversary. Pennsylvania is often seen as a political bellwether for the rest of the country, and political consultants have a seat in the cockpit of the campaigns that make the headlines.

How did you get into the world of political consulting?

I grew up working on campaigns, and I have not missed an Election Day since I was 10. My dad was a precinct committeeman. My mom was one of the nice people at the polls that helped you vote when you went to vote twice a year. My uncles were involved. That's just kind of what I did. When I set out looking at colleges, I didn't want to go to a school in the state because I grew up in Bucks County. I ended up going to D.C. to attend American University. And I took very few of their theory courses but took every course they had on campaigns and all that other stuff.

What did college teach you that you still use today?

I was a political science major, but I had already worked on campaigns a lot, which was not true for your average 18-year-old. I soon discovered that not everybody knew exactly what they wanted to do with themselves, which I thought was odd because I knew what I wanted. I was either going to go into writing or in politics. I worked on the student newspaper, *The Eagle*, which is where I got the name for my company. What did college teach me about how to be a political consultant? Not a whole lot. Political consulting is like a guild. Don't pay to go to graduate school to learn how to manage a campaign. Go work on one and get paid to learn how to do it.

What's been one of the most memorable campaigns that you've worked on?

My best known campaigns were the two Arlen Specter campaigns that I managed for Specter for Senator. The first one was in 2004, the other in 2010. The 2004 race was a big-time primary against then-Congressman Pat Toomey. That was a big ideological battle because Toomey's whole reason for running was saying Specter had been too liberal for too long. But Specter's ideology and outlook was a perfect match for the state as a whole, which is why he became our longest-serving senator and served five terms.

But he was not as conservative as the primary Republican electorate had become by the early 2000s. Our argument was that he was a senator and had delivered for the state. President George Bush endorsed us, the other Republican



**THERE'S ALSO
A DISTURBING
TREND WHERE
THERE'S TOO
MUCH EMPHASIS
ON POLITICAL
CAMPAIGNS AS
ENTERTAINMENT.**



senator at the time, Rick Santorum, endorsed us.

How have campaigns changed since you started? Things are much more expensive now, even accounting for inflation. There's also a lot more coverage of the ins and outs of campaigns now with online news sites like Politico. If you

watch the national cable networks, most of them have huge chunks of their coverage every day focused on politics. To me, there's also a disturbing trend where there's too much emphasis on political campaigns as entertainment, which they should not be. Finally, the pace moves faster. Back when I started, you barely had one computer and no social media. So the news cycle was a day or two days. Now with everything moving so fast, you have three or four news cycles daily. Now you have to be on Twitter and Facebook and YouTube and Instagram, in addition to being in the real world.

Back in the day, there was something called hotline, which is an online compendium of political news, almost all campaign news. I couldn't afford the daily version, but they offered a weekly version. So every Friday, my fax machine would ring, and I would comb 16 pages of that week's campaign news. Well, that took 15 minutes. Now, you gotta be on Twitter constantly where there's just so much more information coming at you from all sides.

Have you noticed changes among Republican voters in Pennsylvania? Republican voters have gotten more conservative, Democratic voters have gotten more liberal. There are fewer pro-choice Republicans, fewer pro-life Democrats, fewer anti-Second Amendment Republicans, fewer pro-Second Amendment Democrats. People are moving more to the edges and [within those edge groups] becoming more ideologically similar to each other.

So does a moderate candidate have a strong chance of winning anything? You have to match up to what your district is. So if you're running statewide, your statewide Republicans are here in central Pennsylvania. If you're running in western Pennsylvania district for Congress, those Republicans are going to be more conservative than Republicans as a whole. If you're in the Philadelphia suburbs, they're gonna be more moderate than Republicans as a whole. It depends on where you are in the state, which is not unique to Pennsylvania or to the parties.

How does abortion function as a campaign issue? A lot of times our issues →



here end up becoming Kabuki dances. You can kind of predict at the beginning what is going to happen because the Republican-controlled General Assembly is more conservative than the Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf.

The state adjudicated politically the issue of abortion very early in with some 1990s court decisions and the Abortion Control Act. It passed the state Senate, won control by Republicans, won by Democrats, got signed by a conservative pro-life Democratic governor. That would never happen today.

What are some other litmus test issues?

The Second Amendment is another divider. Democrats see that as a violence issue when Republicans see it as a freedom/family time/recreation type issue. Most of that difference is because the Democratic base is in cities, where there is more gun violence, and the Republican base is not in cities, where there is markedly less violence. And the conservatives will say, if you restrict my guns, the only people that will have guns are the criminals, because they're already not following the law. But Democrats would say, oh, there's too much gun violence, we need fewer guns on the street. And people would say, well, a criminal is not going to stop just because something's illegal. They already don't care about the law. But more conservative Republicans don't live in a world where their cousin's next-door neighbor got shot in a drive-by. There are two different worlds between the two tribes these days.

What effects would you say the Trump campaigns and presidency had on polarization?

I think it increased it. I think if Hillary Clinton had been elected president, it still would have increased. It's just where our trajectory is. Let's admit it, Trump is an outlier on a lot of things. ... So some of that is you just can't deal with it because it's so far out of the mainstream. If Hillary Clinton had, unfortunately, become president, she would have had the same level of polarization.



**A DEMOCRAT IN
A CITY WHERE
REGISTRATION IS
80 PERCENT IN
A DEMOCRAT
DISTRICT
DOESN'T HAVE
TO CARE WHAT
A REPUBLICAN
THINKS, BECAUSE
THERE'S SO FEW
OF THEM THAT
THEIR MOST
IMPORTANT
ELECTION IS
THE PRIMARY.**

The people who get rewarded in politics are further to the left or to the right within their tribe. The other thing is that more people have sorted themselves by where they live. So it's harder to draw competitive state Senate, state House, or congressional districts. A serving Congress member doesn't have to worry about dealing with Democrats because they're just trying to get to the side of the Republican primary in the spring and the general election is an afterthought. Vice versa, a Democrat in a city where registration is 80 percent in a Democrat district doesn't have to care what a Republican thinks, because there's so few of them that their most important election is the primary.

The U.S. Senate race between television personality Mehmet Oz and hedge fund CEO David McCormick came very close in the primaries. What surprised you?

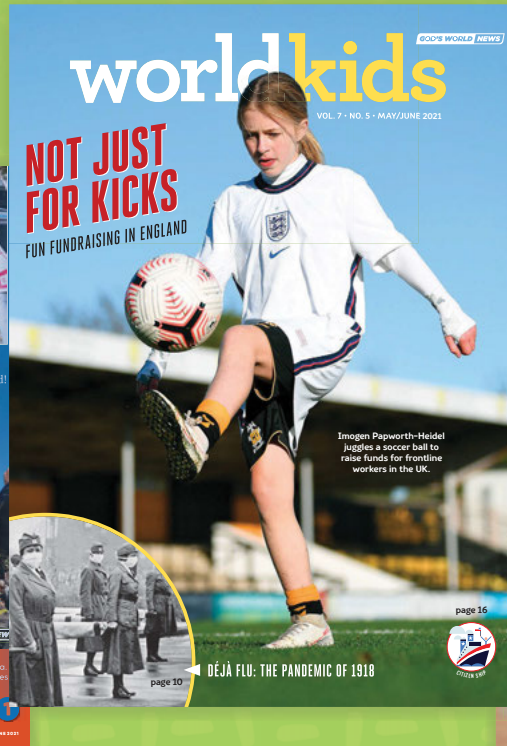
McCormick and Oz were the richest candidates, and both had really good name ID. Oz turned out to be a very comfortable campaigner, obviously a very intelligent guy. I'm sure that David McCormick will go to bed many nights over the next couple of years wondering why he couldn't have found an additional 1,000 votes somewhere. That margin was so close and that kind of stuff can drive you crazy. Hopefully, he's come to peace with that. But both those guys pummeled each other and spent a lot of money publicizing their own record. The 2016 general election between Katie McGinty and Pat Toomey set a \$164 million record for most expensive race, and we already blew through that just in the primary.

What makes all the politics worth it for you?

There are certainly easier ways to make more money, and being a consultant is a tough life. It's very cyclical, so you don't make any money in December or January, so you have to pool resources. It's very competitive unlike any other business. But when I was 10, my uncle ran for state representative, and as part of the campaign, we saved a historic house in Bucks County called Bolton Mansion, which had been one of the original homes of William Penn. That's when I thought, "Boy, campaigns are kind of interesting and they can accomplish things even beyond winning or losing the race." ■

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NOTEBOOK

Art Religion Pro-life Education Crime

the biblical narrative serves to serve as a vehicle for
recovered human history that is just before the surface.
I have discovered a deeper layer to the great religious
pictures of the past. These works contain a common
message and when it is seen in these great images
the biblical narrative serves to serve as a vehicle for
recovered human history.

Bruce Herman

JUST A SERVANT

How an artist serves God by
surrendering control of his work

by Abi Churchill

BRUCE HERMAN REMEMBERS doing homework in his bedroom on the second floor of a suburban home in Williamsville, N.Y., in the mid-1960s. It was for Mr. Kirschmeyer's seventh grade art class, and he had to get special permission from his mother to tack the 4-foot-high drawing to his wall. He was so absorbed in turning the picture of a statue of Isaiah into a charcoal drawing that he had no idea how long he'd been there.

But when it was done, he carried the drawing downstairs to his father.

"Bruce, this is amazing," his father told him in genuine awe. "You should be so proud of yourself."

"No, no, you don't understand," he protested. "I didn't do this. I think God did it."

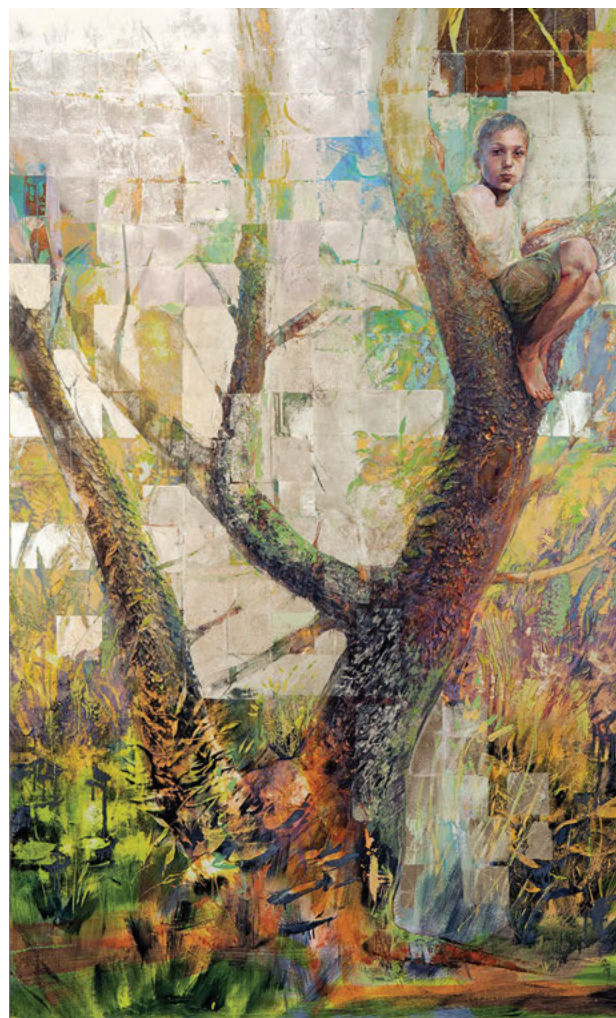
Herman went on to earn a BFA and MFA from Boston University and currently holds the Lothlórien Distinguished Chair in the art department at Gordon College. An internationally recognized artist with decades of experience, he feels the same way as when he was 14. He doesn't create art. He moves the paint, but the result is up to God.

"I'm aware that something or Someone bigger than I am is directing me," he said. "I'm just showing up."

Herman doesn't remember starting to draw or deciding to become an artist. He always knew that he was an artist because God had given him a gift he hadn't earned.

"I can't account for this thing," he thought about his charcoal drawing. "I can't say it's my deed that I'm proud of."

But Herman didn't stay that humble. After his family



moved to Atlanta in 1967, he spent a year and a half taking psychedelic drugs every weekend and 12 years experimenting with Eastern mysticism. He got married in 1973 and completed his MFA in 1979. Over time, his focus shifted to getting his name out into the art community as he went to parties and tried to meet the right people.

The day after Christmas in 1982, he realized that Eastern religion wasn't bringing him any closer to God. He renounced it and became a "student of Jesus."

"My art is so hopelessly mired in egotism that I'll never be able to do it for God," he thought.

He decided to give it up and started taking classes at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Hamilton, Mass.

"Would all those who are entering full-time ministry stand up?" his professor asked at a couples' night hosted by the seminary.

LEFT: Meg (©Bruce Herman, 2017)
from the series *Ordinary Saints*;
oil and silver leaf on panel; 30" x 30"

ABOVE: QU4RTETS No. 1 (Spring) Portrait of Will Herman
(©Bruce Herman, 2012-2013);
oil, gold, moon-gold, and silver leaf on panel; 97" x 60"



Herman stood up. He felt a tug on his shirt and looked down to see his wife, Meg.

“Sit down,” she whispered. “They’re talking about people who are becoming pastors.”

The couple in front of them looked back, smiling.

“Oh, you think ...” Realization hit her. “You’re an artist. I put you through art school. You’re supposed to make art.”

Herman sat down.

Relief washed over him as he realized the Lord was telling him to continue making art—but for His glory now.

He joined the faculty at Gordon College in 1984 and founded the art department. His art has been exhibited all over the world and is on display in museums such as the Vatican Museums in Rome and the Armand Hammer Collection in Los Angeles.

In his latest series, *Ordinary Saints*, eerily alive faces gaze out from in front of abstract backgrounds. The golds, greens, and reds invite closer inspection, but getting too close to the figures that the colors surround feels like an invasion of personal space.

Herman loves that feeling of life in a painting, but he can’t make it himself. “The best part of my art is outside of my control,” he said.

When he displayed a series of expressionistic paintings on Good Friday in the early 1990s, he saw a friend, Thomas Howard, standing alone in front of a large painting titled *The Crowning*, which depicts Jesus being crowned with thorns.

“Oh, Bruce,” Howard turned to him with eyes red from crying, “what were you feeling when you made this painting?”

“Do you really want to know?” Herman asked. “I was feeling ... It needs a little bit of green right about there.”

When Herman paints, his focus is on the work itself. Putting the colors, textures, and shapes in the right places. He says he doesn’t know how to evoke emotion or instill meaning, so he just does what he knows: He paints.

“Because of the grace of God, my work’s been used to touch other people,” he said. “But I have no control over that. I’m just a servant doing what I’m told.” ■

—Abi Churchill is a graduate of the World Journalism Institute



TREATING DISEASE AT ITS SOURCE

Challenging Europe’s trajectory of unbelief

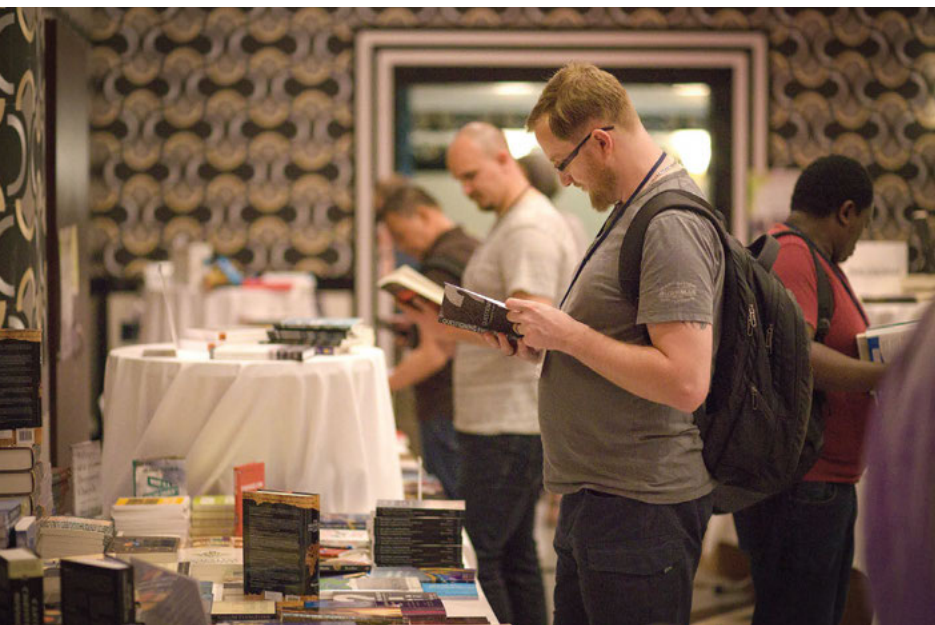
by Jenny Lind Schmitt in Wisla, Poland

IF UNBELIEF is the greatest challenge to the spread of the gospel worldwide, what is the antidote? That’s the problem leaders at the European Leadership Forum wrestled with at the forum’s annual meeting. If unbelief is a cancer, they say, it should be treated at its source. The group’s vision is to renew the Biblical Church and evangelize Europe. To that end over 500 evangelical leaders from every European nation came to Wisla, Poland, in late May to pray, learn, and fellowship together.

While Europe was once fertile ground that supported the growth of early Christianity, now the continent has the world’s highest percentage of atheists and agnostics. That unbelief is quickly spreading across the globe. This can lead to defeatist thinking and a rhetoric of Europe as a lost cause. “But that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and limits God’s sovereignty,” stresses ELF President Greg Pritchard. Over two decades ago, Pritchard met Swedish apologist Stefan Gustavsson at Oxford. As they discussed the spiritual →

Participants at European Leadership Forum break out for small group study.

The European Leadership Forum's bookstore sells more than 1,500 unique titles.



future of Europe, the seed germinated for what would become ELF: a place to bring together European leaders for encouragement and networking.

Gustavsson, who is director of Sweden's Apologia Centre for Christian Apologetics, likens the situation in Europe to a divorce: "There is a familiarity that breeds contempt. Europeans think they already know everything there is to know about the Church."

In that environment of unbelief and contempt, evangelical leaders are isolated and often discouraged. Hungarian theologian Adam Szabados says he was weary and tempted to join other pastors in giving up ministry when he first attended the forum. The community he found there made the difference in his continuing his ministry and theological studies.

Leaders insist the forum is an ongoing movement, not just a weeklong conference. One part of this "movement" is yearlong mentoring in specific areas of ministry: youth ministry, pastoral care, discipleship, women in leadership.

Another is nationwide initiatives to bring speakers and resources to individual countries and in their national languages. (The meeting in Wisla is held entirely in English.) Szabados is now director of the Hungarian Evangelical

Forum, which puts on events for evangelical leaders in Hungary.

Per Ewert is an apologist and director of the Clapham Institute, Sweden's leading Christian think tank. His own research studies how Sweden became the world's most secular and individualistic nation, at the forefront of the problem that ELF seeks to address. He participates in both the European Forum and a national forum in Sweden, held the last three



**EUROPEANS THINK
THEY ALREADY
KNOW EVERYTHING
THERE IS TO
KNOW ABOUT
THE CHURCH.**



years. On both levels, the greatest value for Ewert is uniting believers.

"We talk a lot these days about 'safe spaces'—that you're supposed to be 'safe' from conservative or Christian values in society," says Ewert. "But I find it valuable to be in a place where we are on safe evangelical ground, and we can talk to each other and relate to each other as Christians, without fearing we are under the secular, autonomous pressure that we are in the rest of the time."

Encouraged by colleagues, Beni Moreno came to ELF for the first time this year. Moreno is writer and host of *Buenas Noticias TV*, the only evangelical show on public television in Spain. The goal of the show is to evangelize—Moreno makes an offer of a free Bible to viewers at the end of each program—and to show Spanish society who evangelicals are and what they believe.

"Evangelicals are not foreigners. We've been in Spain since the 16th century," says Moreno. "We're not strange people, just people who have a faith in Jesus and live it every day."

Moreno says she came to the European Leadership Forum without expectations but was leaving with a wider picture of what's happening in other parts of Europe. Aside from the joy of meeting brothers and sisters in the faith, Moreno says, the workshops addressed issues important to European evangelicals.

"Sometimes you need to hear about the basis of thought philosophy. Sometimes you need to know what Christians are doing on other public channels. Sometimes you need to know what are the challenges ahead of us. All those have been treated here. I've received a lot of vision, and it encourages me a lot."

Beyond teaching and networking, one of the forum's biggest draws is the bookstore, where attendees can purchase 1,550 different titles ranging in subject from systematic theology to counseling to discipleship, at greatly reduced prices. ELF participants from Eastern and Southern European countries are eligible for scholarships to attend, and that includes funds to buy books. This year attendees bought over 6,000 books. ■



A PROGRESSIVE PRO-LIFER RISKS JAIL TIME

The bodies of five aborted babies in Washington, D.C., could be crucial evidence in defense of pro-lifers

by Leah Savas

PRO-LIFE ACTIVISTS handed over the bodies of five late-term aborted babies to the District of Columbia Medical Examiner's office nearly three months ago. As far as they know, the babies are still at the office. The two activists, Lauren Handy and Terrisa Bukovinac, want to know if an abortionist at the Washington Surgi-Clinic killed the babies in violation of federal laws—but so far the medical examiner has provided no insight into the manner of the babies' deaths.

In a news conference outside of the U.S. Department of Justice, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, announced to a small crowd on June 9 that an attorney for Bukovinac and Handy's organization, the Progressive Anti-Abortion Uprising (PAAU), confirmed the medical examiner had agreed to allow a private pathologist to examine the bodies.

The outcome of that examination could affect a federal trial that Handy faces for participating in a 2020 sit-in at

the same D.C. abortion facility where she and Bukovinac obtained the aborted babies from a medical waste truck. Handy, 28, has continued to protest on behalf of the unborn in the nation's capital, but she could serve jail time for charges related to her pro-life activism in the District of Columbia, Michigan, and elsewhere.

Handy made headlines in March and April for storing the five babies in her basement apartment. The same day that local officials came to pick up the aborted babies at the request of an attorney helping Handy and Bukovinac, FBI agents arrested Handy outside of her apart- →

Lauren Handy demonstrates for life.

ment for participating in the 2020 sit-in at the Washington Surgi-Clinic.

Handy and eight other pro-lifers involved in the sit-in each face up to 11 years in prison and \$350,000 in fines for conspiracy against rights and for violating the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, a law passed in 1994 to deter pro-life activists from engaging in abortion center blockades.

According to the indictment, Handy made an appointment at the abortion facility for 9 a.m. on Oct. 22, 2020, under the name Hazel Jenkins. Once the facility opened that morning, she and seven other pro-lifers entered the waiting room and blockaded the doors with chairs. Some of them chained and roped themselves together while Handy stood at the main entrance to prevent patients from coming in. A ninth activist livestreamed the demonstration on Facebook.

Handy is a self-described “Catholic anarcho mutualist” who wants to create “trans-inclusive spaces within the pro-life movement.” She said her goal since starting pro-life activism as an 18-year-old has always been to bring back the rescue movement of the 1980s, when large groups of pro-lifers would use civil disobedience to interrupt operations at abortion facilities. Handy knew about the FACE Act and understood that the longer she participated in direct action, the more likely it became that she would be charged under federal law.

But Handy said the devastation of seeing the bodies of the aborted babies has drowned out the emotional effect of the federal charges.

“There’s not words that can truly express the devastation and tragedy of holding, you know, like literal babies in your hands who were murdered,” she said.

Since news about the babies first broke in late March, Handy and Bukovinac have participated in regular news conferences and protests, including outside of the D.C. mayor’s office, the Washington Surgi-Clinic, and the medical examiner’s office.

Handy last attended a status hearing in the federal case on June 13 and has another scheduled for Aug. 9. But she could wind up in prison mere days before that hearing. ■

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS EQUAL TREATMENT FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

Court green-lights a Maine program allowing parents to direct tuition assistance to school of choice

by Steve West



A

SUPREME COURT MAJORITY in June rejected an attempt by Maine to bar parents from using state tuition assistance to pay for their children to attend religious schools where no public school is available.

Under Maine’s program, if a student lived in a rural district without its own public school, parents could receive tuition assistance for their child at a nonsectarian, accredited private school in or out of the state. But they could not use the money at a religious school.

In the June 21 6-3 opinion authored by Chief Justice John Roberts, the court ruled that Maine’s attempt to limit

the use of funds to nonsectarian schools violated the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.

“There is nothing neutral about Maine’s program,” wrote Roberts. “The state pays tuition for certain students at private schools—so long as the schools are not religious. That is discrimination against religion.” The ruling came as no surprise, given positions signaled by the justices at December 2021 oral arguments.

Two families sued the Maine Department of Education in 2018 contending that the state’s requirement that they use tuition assistance funds for their children at nonsectarian schools violated their religious liberty. David and Amy Carson, who lived in Glenburn, wanted to send their daughter to high school at Bangor Christian Schools. Troy and Angela Nelson, who lived in Palermo, sent their son to Temple Academy, which was affiliated with Counterpoint Community Church. Both a federal district court and a court of appeals rejected their arguments.

For Roberts, a decision in favor of the parents involved a straightforward application of previous rulings of the court in *Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Inc. v. Comer* and *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*.

In 2017’s *Trinity Lutheran*, the court struck down a rule preventing Missouri from sponsoring a church preschool playground remodel using surfaces made from recycled rubber tires. The justices concluded that it would be discriminatory for the state to exclude the church because of its religious character.

And in 2020’s *Espinoza*, the court applied its reasoning from *Trinity Lutheran* in striking down as discriminatory a provision of the Montana Constitution that barred government aid to any school controlled in whole or in part by a church, sect, or denomination. The ruling upheld a state program that provided tax credits to donors who sponsored scholarships for private school tuition.

Attorneys for Maine argued, and the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed, that the court’s rulings in *Trinity Lutheran* and *Espinoza* centered on “solely status-based religious discrimination,” while the Maine rule “imposes a use-based restriction,” yet the majority

rejected that distinction as a misreading of the cases.

“In *Trinity Lutheran* and *Espinoza*, we held that the free exercise clause forbids discrimination on the basis of religious status,” the chief justice wrote. “But those decisions never suggested that use-based discrimination is any less offensive to the free exercise clause.” Roberts went on to note that the attempt to make such a distinction by scrutinizing how the school would use funds “would also raise serious concerns about state entanglement with religion and denominational favoritism.”

Justice Stephen Breyer, joined by liberal Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor, penned an 18-page dissenting opinion. Breyer emphasized the “play in the joints” between the establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment that “sometimes allows a State to further antiestablishment interests by withholding aid from religious institutions without violating the Constitution’s protections for the free exercise of religion.” Avoiding religious strife was at the heart of the two religion clauses, said Breyer, who added that states should have leeway to advance this interest.

While joining much of Breyer’s dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote separately to emphasize her disagreement with the court’s path, criticizing both the majority’s opinion and previous rulings

in *Trinity Lutheran* and *Espinoza* as ones that “revolutionized free exercise doctrine by equating a state’s decision not to fund a religious organization with presumptively unconstitutional discrimination on the basis of religious status.”

The chief justice issued a sharp rebuke to the dissenters. “The dissents are wrong to say that under our decision today Maine ‘must’ fund religious education,” wrote Roberts, noting that other options are available to the state, such as expanding the reach of its public school system. Yet having made the choice to fund private education, the state may not discriminate, Roberts wrote. “Regardless of how the benefit and restriction are described, the program operates to identify and exclude otherwise eligible schools on the basis of their religious exercise.”

Attorneys for the parents celebrated the ruling. “School choice empowers parents to pick the best school for their child—and today the Supreme Court made clear that the government cannot eliminate religious educational options, regardless of whether the state is motivated by a school’s religious status or by the fact that the school provides religious instruction,” said Institute for Justice managing attorney Arif Panju. ■

Dave, Olivia, and Amy Carson at Bangor Christian Schools



ALLIES AGAINST CITY VIOLENCE

Working alongside police, community-based violence interruption programs can help prevent crime

by Addie Michaelian and Adel Kuchyk



THE REV. DELONTE GHOLSTON pastors Peace Fellowship Church, a multi-cultural congregation in a predominantly black neighborhood in Washington, D.C. His friend, Olu Williams, was shot and killed a block away from the church in 2013. The shooter followed Williams home from the Deanwood Metro Station and shot him in the chest with a double-barreled shotgun. In 2018, Gholston's nephew was shot five times. He was 16 years old. "God spared his life," Gholston said. Gholston's father was also shot and survived. The new year began with a triple homicide across the street from another D.C. church, Macedonia Baptist.

Violent crime in Washington, D.C., and other U.S. cities grew worse during the pandemic. As cities search for ways to keep violence in check and consider alternatives to policing, some are turning to violence interrupters. These men and women from violent parts of the city are paid hourly to find out what's going on behind the shootings and help de-escalate tension before it explodes in violence. But the programs are most effective when they work alongside law enforcement—although police relationships with community residents are often strained.

During the first year of the pandemic, homicides in D.C. jumped by 20 percent. The city hit 200 homicides in 2012, the highest count in 18 years. The city is on track to see even more this summer. The most violence happens from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Last year, the city witnessed 227 homicides. National firearm homicides broke records at more than 19,000 deaths in 2020, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Last year, the Justice Department announced it would award \$444 million to communities around the country to support efforts to reduce violence, including violence intervention programs. On May 13, the White House released a statement encouraging cities and states to dedicate state and local funding to expanding "evidence-based community violence interruption programs" along with "accountable community policing."

In New York, Gov. Kathy Hochul pledged to provide more than \$6 million to fund gun violence intervention programs across the state. Lawmakers in Indianapolis; Savannah, Ga.; and Knoxville, Tenn., have started or expanded violence interruption programs, and officials in Lake County, Ill., announced that teams of violence interrupters will infiltrate crime-ridden neighborhoods by late summer.

Back in Washington, D.C., Gholston reached out to religious leaders across



Hambino Godbody, a member of Gideon's Army violence interrupters, talks with kids from the Cumberland View projects where he grew up in Nashville, Tenn.

the city and launched a loose coalition called Peace Walks. Volunteers walk, pray, cook, and engage residents on blocks and in neighborhoods where the shootings are happening. The group partners with local violence interrupter teams. When families come for a fish fry at the church, they introduce them to professional interrupters.

Violence interrupters connect people with the resources they need to help stop a shooting before it happens and broker cease-fires between feuding blocks—even if it's just for one weekend. Last summer, interrupters brokered a 100-day cease-fire in Washington Highlands, one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the district.

Credibility is key. These men and women understand the mindset of residents in violent neighborhoods. Many of the victims and perpetrators are young. "So many of them have been shot," Gholston said. "They've been traumatized

by being nearly killed. So they feel like in order to protect themselves they have to carry." Neighborhood residents who won't talk to law enforcement are more willing to open up to an interrupter.

Smaller cities are also turning to violence interrupter programs. Advance Peace in Richmond, Calif., (population about 110,000) is working to address gun violence by rebuilding trust. "Because they've had such poor relationships with the public system, and with the community, they don't trust anybody," founder DeVone Boggan said. The program encourages participants to think about life goals, sometimes for the first time, and learn how to engage with society beyond merely surviving a neighborhood.

Long-term results are difficult to

gauge because many programs lack the resources and infrastructure that they need. "Many of these violence interrupters are just community members who have a passion to help minimize conflict," said Howard Henderson, a senior fellow with the Brookings Institution.

As a result, the research is "mixed, incomplete and very difficult to do," Jeffrey Butts, a researcher at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, told Vox.

The *Annual Review of Public Health* reviewed the results of five studies that surveyed interrupter programs in multiple American cities with mixed results. One study connected a program in Pittsburgh with a rise in violence in some neighborhoods. In New York, interrupter programs apparently contributed to a decline in gun violence. John Jay College published a 2020 review of alternatives to police that described the evidence for interrupters as "promising but mixed."

To improve their effectiveness, violence interrupters must work in tandem with law enforcement, Henderson said. Interrupters should identify crime hot spots—the areas in a neighborhood that experience the most crime—before police do. When they do, they can help de-escalate the situation before any crime is committed.

But it's a delicate dance. Intervention workers can lose their credibility with communities if people find out they are working directly with the police. When a neighborhood resident comes to an intervention worker to get rid of an illegal weapon, sometimes what is needed is a "trusted third party that doesn't directly involve police," Gholston said. "I think that trusted third party needs to be somebody in the faith community."

In Danville, Va., a city of less than 100,000, Robert David works as the city's youth services and gang violence prevention coordinator. The police deal with hardened criminals, but individuals who want to change come to an outreach worker, said David: "We all work together to do a single job. It's almost like an orchestra. We all are playing what we are supposed to and respecting boundaries, but at the end of the day, we have one common goal." ■



Signs of the times

A trip into the kingdom of noise in Brooklyn

IT'S A SIGN OF THE TIMES that my latest trip to Brooklyn was by Megabus, not by car. This is because it is too expensive to drive our cars now. Which I understand is Putin's fault.

The Megabus didn't show up at 6th and Market at 9:20 a.m. as scheduled because (I learned at 10 o'clock) it was Pride Day. I wasn't sure what kind of Pride the bus company was celebrating, but it clearly wasn't pride in keeping its commitments. I Ubered to a less celebratory bus, ever noting signs of the times—like an altercation onboard between patrons regarding mask protocol. All will be featured on some “America in 2022” YouTube in ages hence.

In idle moments one seeks guilty escapes into “America in 1957” videos where Boomers reminisce about saddle shoes, pogo sticks, and “See the USA in your Chevrolet” on 25-cents-a-gallon gas pumped for you by uniformed attendants who check your oil and clean your windshield.

The spiritually minded pray.

In Manhattan I walked nine blocks to the C-train which I rode for eleven stops, scrunched next to a woman wearing layers of dirty clothes (though it is summer) and taking up three seats with shopping bags stuffed with matted receipts that she scooped up in handfuls close to her face, pretending to read them while talking incessantly to herself. She was unaware of me, like the dwarfs at the end of *The Last Battle* who could not by any means be brought back to reality. Satan, not content with bondage, relishes humiliation.

This time in New York I didn't see the romantic “can-yons of steel” Louis Armstrong rasped nostalgically about, or the jazzy optimism of Duke Ellington's “Take the A Train.” I saw a city going down and inhabitants

I THOUGHT I WOULD NAP WHEN THE BABY NAPPED, BUT THE KINGDOM OF NOISE WAS NOT HAVING IT.

in denial. The 17-year-old I sat with for an hour said her parents like believing their leafy neighborhood is safe, but that she feels uncomfortable on the subway and walking past homeless people and oily men hitting on her.

The tenants of the brownstone apartment that is now like a second home to me pay \$3,000 a month in rent. Their next-door neighbors can be found sitting at all times of day and into the evening on their stoop talking trash and playing what passes for music in our day, for the benefit of everyone on Prospect Place, like it or not. How does that work? How long can it work?

I thought I would nap when the baby napped, but the kingdom of noise was not having it, waxing all the louder in the vacuum, with its hellish rap lyrics and soulless metronomic syncopation that no human ever drummed. After naptime, baby and I walked to the playground-basketball court on Park Place where the musky smell of marijuana wafted among children at play. It will seep into them unawares, permanently wired into memory.

The talk everywhere is of those who have left, and those who are thinking of leaving, since COVID turned out for the falling and rising of many.

At 6 a.m., before the baby wakes, an angry car horn under my window obliterates the dawn, persisting for a good 10 minutes. Its author is a woman boxed in by a double-parked vehicle that has no doubt been there all night. I watch to see what will happen. Another woman emerges from a door across the street, choice words and threats are exchanged, then the second woman moves her car and the hostage speeds away.

My duties come to an end, and I board the bus to Philadelphia, a more accustomed danger, thinking with mild amusement of a Scripture: “It will be as though a man fled from a lion only to meet a bear, as though he entered his house and rested his hand on the wall only to have a snake bite him” (Amos 5:19).

Not a pretty essay. Not a pretty time of man. Further and further we go from “See the USA in your Chevrolet.”

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YELLOWSTONE DAMAGE

Flooding shuts down, forces changes at national park

HEAVY RAINS AND SNOWMELT on June 13 brought devastating flood waters to the north entrance (above) and other parts of Yellowstone National Park. The floods forced visitors to evacuate and kept the park closed until June 22. Damage was most extensive in the northern part of the 3,500-square-mile park, and officials with the National Park Service estimate that recovery could cost as much as \$1 billion. Those costs will include the rebuilding or repairing of facilities, roads, bridges, and sewer systems and conservation efforts. The park's reopening saw less than 5,000 cars enter the park, about half the normal traffic for this time of year, as the park instituted a system of allowing cars with license plates that end with odd digits to enter on odd-numbered days and even digits on even-numbered days. Park officials said the system would remain in place for the rest of the summer. The northern section of the park remained closed, and officials said they weren't sure when they could reopen it.



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