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NOV. 20, P. 38: I was delighted to see Joel Belz as WORLD’s Daniel of the Year. Thank you, Joel, for showing us what it looks like to live faithfully in the love of Christ and love of neighbor.

_Lynn Barton/Medford, Ore._

**LANGUAGE BARRIER**

NOV. 20, P. 52: While we get caught up in the elusive semantics of defining critical race theory, it is creating antagonism, conflict, and division—tragically, even within the church. CRT has become the new “enemy within.” Satan must be rejoicing.

_Karen Davis/Exton, Pa._

Sophia Lee did a good job of developing the background and attitudes of two people involved in the Southern Baptist Convention race debate, but she presents a false choice at the end based on who has more skin in the issue.

_Vic Lindblom/Oshkosh, Wis._

**DEBATABLE DISCOURSE**

NOV. 20, P. 58: I am a 17-year-old homeschool student, and I found J.C. Derrick’s article fascinating and troubling. The fact that individuals face the danger of physical harm because of their political beliefs is the consequence of a society that long ago forgot how to disagree graciously.

_AmySue Harlow/Holland, Mich._

J.C. Derrick highlighted how opposing views were causing too much tension in a Florida school district. But so much is at stake in our schools. We got into this situation because parents haven’t been active enough in the past.

_Elena Lewis/Owens Cross Roads, Ala._

**DOING HARD THINGS**

NOV. 20, P. 30: I agree with Alex Harris that American “Christian nationalism” is historically inaccurate, but he ignores the Judeo-Christian roots of our republic, particularly in our founding documents.

_Howard R. Killion/Oceanside, Calif._

I see the Christian homeschool movement as an attempt to revive a triangle of freedom in our society: raising a generation of people with faith in God, possessing virtue, and living in freedom. I do not see that as “Christian nationalism.”

_Rick Day/Whitney Point, N.Y._

**A WORLD OF GOOD**

NOV. 20, P. 38: What a pleasant surprise to open WORLD Magazine and discover that Joel Belz is Daniel of the Year! I hope you were successful at keeping it a secret for as long as possible to surprise him. God bless you, Joel, for your faithfulness ... as we bless Him for His!

_Larry Minter/Milwaukie, Ore._

**CAMPUS INFILTRATION**

NOV. 20, P. 46: Please keep up your terrific coverage of China and its undue influence on the world.

_Doug Woodford/Colbert, Wash._

**THIS OLD HOUSE**

NOV. 20, P. 18: I read Carl Trueman’s book but agree it needed something to “understand it.” Enter Janie B. Cheaney’s column. Her priceless parallels cultivated lament in me, especially when she concluded by pointing to 1 Peter 2:4-5, a passage I providentially was studying!

_Doug Perkins/Wilmington, Del._

**ETHICAL IMPERATIVES IN JOURNALISM?**

NOV. 20, P. 72: Marvin Olasky’s perspective is valuable and timely. As a 73-year-old, I am concerned that our perspective and desire or ability to pause and not panic will be swept under the rug. May God continue to direct Marvin’s heart and thinking as he serves Him.

_Barbara Smith/Arlington, Wash._

**CORRECTION**

James, Jennifer, and Ethan Crumbley are incarcerated in the Oakland County Jail in Oxford, Mich. (“Charged,” Dec. 25, p. 16).

Read more letters at wng.org/mailbag
The mountains are calling, **but you mustn’t go alone.**

JOHN MUIR

Okay, those may not be John’s exact words...

...and he probably wasn’t talking about charity work, but if you’re a poverty fighter, you know your calling is an uphill struggle—and some days, more like moving mountains than climbing them. The work has its highs seeing lives transformed, but the day to day is a slow-going test of endurance. **All the more reason not to go it alone.**

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Humble, trusting, filled with hope

Reflecting on the year gone by and looking forward to the one to come

Historically, we have published WORLD’s News of the Year issue as the final issue of the calendar year. That makes sense, except that our press deadline for the final issue of the year is way too early and misses potentially too much.

So instead of using the final issue of the outgoing year, we’re using the first issue of the incoming year. Our press deadline for this issue is Dec. 28, but that’s better than Dec. 8. A lot has happened since Dec. 8.

Of course, a lot could happen after Dec. 28, too, so there’s still a chance we’ll miss something. We’ll just have to live with the risk.

Accepting the risk that we will miss an important story that comes along in the last moments is just one way this issue is a reminder of the uncertainty of life, and our lack of control over it.

Such reminders are important for us, and it’s a big reason we publish a News of the Year issue. Life is short and uncertain. We don’t control the events of our own little worlds, much less the events of the wider world. God is in control of it all, the macro and the micro. This knowledge is where humility starts.

In his recent book, Humbled, David Mathis writes: “Within measure, we can take certain modest steps to cultivate a posture of humility in ourselves, but the main test (and opportunity) comes when we are confronted, unsettled, and accosted, in the moments when our semblances of control vanish and we’re taken off guard by the hard edges of life in a fallen world.”

That test (and opportunity) itself is a gift from God, to produce in us a “posture of humility.”

Regular readers will know that WORLD has lost several reporters and editors near the end of 2021. We are sad to see them go, and we pray that they will find fruitful ways to use their considerable gifts in God’s service beyond WORLD. We pray also that these additional reminders of God’s control will allow us humbly to approach 2022—thankful that God has always provided the people we need to fulfill our mission, trusting that He will continue to do so, and hopeful about the opportunity available to those who remain and those next to join us.
The Bible records big numbers, and the early Church experienced explosive growth. *What happened?*

- The growth of Christianity is currently not keeping up with the birth rates of the unreached populations around the world. The unreached people groups are growing faster than we are reaching them.

- National missionaries are twenty-three times more effective than American missionaries at reaching their own people. They already know the language and the culture, and they require much less training and expense to serve.

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Pursuit of a quality product like the magazine you’re holding in your hand right now involves a good bit more than concentrating on this week’s issue. We’ve got to be thinking as well about what WORLD looks like a year from now, five years from now, and even a decade down the road.

That’s why in early 1999 we took steps to form what we called the World Journalism Institute. Through WJI, we sought to shape the worldview, skills, ambitions, and journalistic habits of a number of men and women.

That summer, about 20 brave folks came to Asheville, N.C., for an intensive course in the worldview and theory of journalistic practice and to work side by side with the WORLD staff in the actual reporting, writing, and designing of the magazine. The robust success of that effort demanded that we mark the completion of the course with a noteworthy “graduation” exercise. We needed to enlist a noteworthy speaker.

Our thoughts turned to Carl F.H. Henry. Henry had been one of the foremost journalists in the history of the United States. He was a radio commentator in Los Angeles, a movie critic, editor of a weekly newspaper, a stringer for The New York Times and the Chicago Daily Tribune, an occasional contributor to the tabloid press, and then for 12 years the editor of Christianity Today magazine.

Would Henry think our fledgling institute important enough to invest the time? At first the answer was no: He cited his age, his ill health, his schedule. But WJI director Bob Case pleaded our cause, and the date and details were set. His all-night travel arrangements from a small town in Wisconsin to a small town in North Carolina may have taken the edge off his hour-long address (“Journalistic Truth in a Postmodern Age”), but this champion of Biblical truth-telling set a standard for speakers at subsequent closing banquets. Soon to follow were names as varied as J. McCandlish Phillips, veteran reporter from The New York Times, and Star Parker, the spark-plug activist and columnist for gospel-based causes.

And from those closing dinners have gone out some 500 well-equipped journalists. They have a variety of gifts exercised all over the world. You’ve seen their bylines, both in WORLD and in a host of print and digital media.

On that August 1999 night of WJI’s Carl Henry dinner, every student and guest received from Henry a brief flyer suggesting a handful of questions, beyond the traditional five W’s, every Christian journalist should be asking along the way:

1) Are you telling the truth?
2) Are there witnesses?
3) Is this the proper time and place to tell the story?
4) Has the offending party been treated as one would wish to be treated and given opportunity to reply (as in a letter to the editor or a news story)?
5) Can I identify the offender’s right intentions and note a better way of fulfilling them?
6) Am I the best-informed source to make the matter public, and can I reiterate the journalistic principles that are at stake?
7) Can the Christian source locate a relevant Bible verse or passage and show how it illumines or reinforces the right decision and action?
8) Does Christian hope shine through in anticipation of the final triumph of righteousness?
9) Does Christian commitment to global mission, as antedating the League of Nations and United Nations, remain more comprehensive, Messianic, and enduring?
10) Does good news survive the worst of all tragedies?

Henry’s speech to the WJI students in 1999 was one of his last public presentations. He died in 2003 at 90 years of age, but his journalistic influence still abides in the work of WORLD News Group.
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DISPATCHES

News Analysis  By the Numbers  Human Race  Quotables  Quick Takes

HOPE IN THE HEADLINES

Lots of news stories pointed to chaos in 2021, but 2022 is no time to despair

by Michael Reneau

WORLD’S NEWS OF THE YEAR ISSUE is an easy venue in which to reflect on the bad news of the past year (though we’ve tried to highlight the year’s positive developments in our photo roundup too). But we all need to find some hope in the headlines.

The end of the year’s news cycle continued to give us plenty to bemoan, but Christians can take heart at some of the news too. We shouldn’t seek a Pollyanna view of the world, but we can see reasons not to despair in the big headlines of the day. Here are a few hopeful signs as 2021 waned and 2022 waxed.
BACKBONES EXIST IN CONGRESS

Despite the temper tantrum the Biden administration threw following his announcement, Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia continues to remind his party that Americans didn’t elect Joe Biden president in 2020 with a sweeping mandate to launch a leftward salvo on the country. Exhibit A: the thin margins Democrats have in Congress. Manchin’s refusal to cave on Biden’s Build Back Better package should effectively end the administration’s attempts to ramrod massive progressive legislation through Congress on razor-thin votes.

Besides stymieing an administration acting as if the electorate gave it such a mandate, Manchin (and other senators, such as Arizona’s Kyrsten Sinema) represents hope that perhaps Congress will get back to working as it used to: by debating legislation and building consensus, not by party leadership foisting its wish list upon its members and lobbying for the bare minimum in support. Congress is broken, and it’ll take more brave legislators (such as Republican Liz Cheney in the House of Representatives) to buck party leadership’s stranglehold and act on principle rather than the nihilistic will to power.

FROM PANDEMIC TO ENDEMIC

Spikes in COVID-19 cases made headlines again in late 2021, but the spike’s driver—the Omicron coronavirus strain—hopefully signals the changing nature of the pandemic. Though data into the new year indicated Omicron is more contagious, those vaccinated against the coronavirus generally fared relatively well with milder symptoms. Data from South Africa show waves in new cases may level off sooner than with earlier strains. And at least one research paper indicated Omicron may help push out the Delta strain.

These developments—along with advances in treating COVID-19 itself and vaccine availability—hopefully signal a return to normalcy. COVID-19 may be with us for a long time in some form, but vaccines and medicinal treatments give us ways to fight back and avoid the sweeping shutdowns of 2020. Vaccines will hopefully ward off infection altogether, but evidence points to them certainly helping mitigate severity of COVID-19. Subsequent strains that bring less severe symptoms and even greater transmissibility could be a sign that we’re adapting and life can normalize.

SEEING ABORTION FOR WHAT IT IS

As we reported in the previous issue of WORLD, a look at attorneys’ arguments and Supreme Court justices’ questions in the recent Dobbs v. Jackson oral arguments show how far the pro-life movement has come since 1973’s Roe v. Wade decision or 1992’s Planned Parenthood v. Casey: Even many pro-aborts concede the unborn are human.

Pro-lifers hope that the Supreme Court will unwind at least parts of Roe and Casey with its decision on Dobbs. But even a full victory in the decision itself won’t bring full victory in reality. If the court overturns Roe, then the legal fight shifts from Washington to state capitals and local courtrooms.

But there, pro-lifers have an advantage: a thriving culture in which crisis pregnancy centers for decades now have demonstrated love for both the unborn and their mothers. Even though public polling suggests most Americans don’t want the Supreme Court to overturn Roe, more and more Americans acknowledge the full humanity of the unborn and want more restrictions on abortion itself.
23,000
The approximate number of soft-ball-sized or larger chunks of space debris NASA tracks in orbit.

21M
The total mass in pounds of all man-made objects in Earth’s orbit, according to the European Space Agency (that’s equivalent to the mass of 90 blue whales).

1,500
The total number of pieces of trackable space debris created when Russia destroyed its own dead satellite in November during an anti-satellite missile test.

15,700
The speed in miles per hour at which space junk travels in orbit, making even stray chips of paint potentially dangerous to sensitive craft and satellites.

8,082
THE NUMBER OF MAN-MADE SATELLITES in Earth’s orbit as of December, according to a list from the United Nations’ Office for Outer Space Affairs. Since the launch of Sputnik in 1957, the number of man-made objects in low Earth orbit steadily increased by a few dozen on average each year for decades until rapidly accelerating recently. Increasing satellite and debris traffic has scientists worried about possible collisions, like one in 2009 when a dead Russian satellite smashed into a working communications array. Scientists worry that the crowdedness of orbit will lead to collisions, more debris, and even more crowdedness.
HE 12 REMAINING Christian Aid Ministries missionaries escaped from their 400 Mawozo gang captors on Dec. 15 after two months of captivity in Haiti. The gang kidnapped the 16 Americans and one Canadian in October, later releasing five. They moved them around and kept them in small, barricaded rooms while demanding ransom. The gang provided baby food for the children, basic hygiene necessities, and sparse meals. The 12 remaining captives found a way to open a door on Dec. 15, escaping their guards' notice. The group carried the children through brambles, forest, and gang territory 12 miles before a Haitian found them and helped them call the police. Later that day, the missionaries were on a U.S. Coast Guard flight to Florida. The Ohio-based missions group said it will pause its missions to Haiti but not abandon ministry in the country.

HONORED
An Oklahoma sixth grader was honored by law enforcement and school officials last month for his heroic actions not just once, but twice in the same day. Davyon Johnson used the Heimlich maneuver on a classmate who was choking on a bottle cap at his school in Muskogee on Dec. 9. A student was trying to fill his water bottle and loosened the cap with his mouth, but the cap slipped into his throat. The choking student stumbled into a nearby classroom, where Davyon was. The sixth grader got behind the other student and performed the Heimlich maneuver, forcing the bottle cap to pop out. Later that day, Davyon helped a disabled woman evacuate her burning house.

SANCTIONED
Beijing announced Dec. 21 that four members of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) could no longer travel to China, Hong Kong, or Macao. The targeted officials include chairwoman Nadine Maenza, deputy chairman Nury Turkel, and members Anurima Bhargava and James Carr. The U.S. Treasury announced earlier in December that it had imposed similar sanctions against two Chinese officials over their involvement in targeting Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang province. China had promised to retaliate. USCIRF condemned the move and called on China to end its state-led oppression “rather than implementing misguided sanctions.” The commission has spoken out against Chinese atrocities in Xinjiang.

CONVICTED
In December, a Minneapolis jury convicted former Officer Kim Potter of first-and second-degree manslaughter in the death of 20-year-old Daunte Wright. She may spend up to 15 years in prison. Potter, a 49-year-old veteran of the suburban Brooklyn Center police force, pulled over Wright on April 11 for having expired license tags. When officers attempted to arrest him on another warrant, he tried to drive away. Potter said she feared Wright would hurt another officer and attempted to use her Taser to stun him but mistakenly grabbed her gun and shot him. The death sparked riots outside the Brooklyn Center police station.
“We don’t use knives, but the Bible to take over a cellblock.”

Pentecostal pastor SERGIO PRADA regularly ministers in Argentina’s prisons. Over the past 20 years, Argentine prison authorities have encouraged the creation of units effectively run by evangelical inmates—sometimes granting them a few extra special privileges, such as more time in fresh air.

“As a woman, I think porn is a disgrace. ... I feel incredibly devastated that I was exposed to so much porn.”

Pop star BILLIE EILISH says porn “destroyed my brain” after she began watching graphic online movies at age 11, while still in elementary school. The singing sensation—who is now 20—made the shocking confession during The Howard Stern Show in December.

“Wish me happy birthday.”

Tornado survivor KYANNA PARSONS-PEREZ when rescuers pulled her from the rubble of a tornado-hit candle factory in Mayfield, Ky., at 12:03 a.m., on Dec. 11, her 40th birthday.

“So there you go, boy number nine for us. What are the odds?”

Dallas mother of eight sons, YALANCIA ROSARIO, posted Dec. 18 in a gender reveal video on her YouTube channel. She and her husband, Michael Rosario, 36, are expecting a boy, adding another son to eight other boys, ages 5 months to 12 years.

“I would like to hope that there are still Democrats that feel like I do. ... I’m socially and fiscally responsible and socially compassionate.”

U.S. Senator JOE MANCHIN, D-WV., said on Fox News Sunday after announcing that he could not support President Joe Biden’s $2 trillion social spending bill. Without Manchin’s support, Biden’s Build Back Better bill cannot pass the Senate.
Got your goat
One-horned goat: 1
Army: 0
by John Dawson

In a common prelude to the iconic Army-Navy football game, cadets from the United States Military Academy pilfered what they thought was the goat mascot for the Naval Academy in November. The West Point cadets slipped into a Maryland paddock under the cover of darkness in order to snag Bill 37 but made too much noise, spooking the animals to flight. After a short chase, cadets nabbed a goat and made a quick getaway, only later discovering they had taken Bill 34, a 14-year-old goat with one horn that had been Navy’s mascot years ago until retiring. Both the Army and Navy acknowledged the botched prank in a joint statement, reiterating that neither of them sanction mascot theft.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER
After 110 years, an edition of the New Chronicles of Rebecca found its way home to a public library in Boise, Idaho. Librarians at the Garden City (Idaho) Library found the old leather-bound book in a return bin in November. According to the book’s return card, its due date was Nov. 8, 1911. Garden City librarians noticed markings from the Boise Public Library on the book and arranged for its return. Assistant Anne Marie Martin noted that the library stopped collecting return fees in 2019, but the book would have amassed over $800 of fees in the previous system.

MAGICAL NO-PARKING ZONE
Some motorists who legally parked their vehicles on one Earley, U.K., street returned to find parking tickets on their windshields. Even more confusing: The drivers found yellow lines indicating a no-parking zone had appeared underneath their vehicles. According to Earley Councillor Shirley Boyt, the cars had been lifted by a crane Nov. 28 while street crews created no-parking zones underneath. After the street crew returned the vehicles to their original locations, parking wardens ticketed the cars. “It’s like a trick has been played on them,” Boyt told the BBC, calling the mistake a farce. “The residents can’t believe what they’ve done.” Earley’s parking enforcement service apologized for the error and promised to cancel all issued tickets.
**HAWAII-BOUND? PACK YOUR PARKA**

The National Weather Service issued a blizzard warning for parts of Hawaii on Dec. 2 when a large storm system stalled off the east coast of the Big Island. At the time of the announcement, Hawaii joined Alaska as the only states with blizzard warnings. Though the news surprised some weather watchers, snowfall at the peaks of the Big Island’s mountains is more common than some may assume. According to the National Weather Service, Hawaii saw a similar blizzard warning in 2018. Still, Hawaiians across the island chain are experiencing unusually chilly temperatures. The cold front that brought snow to 13,803-foot dormant volcano Mauna Kea also brought a record-low 56-degree temperature to Honolulu on Dec. 4.

**WRONG NUMBER PLEASE**

A fat-fingered error by a high-school freshman while typing in a phone number led to the teen’s school basketball team connecting with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. A ninth grader at Notre Dame Preparatory in Pontiac, Mich., had been attempting to create a group text for his teammates. But the teen typed the number incorrectly and instead added NFL cornerback **Sean Murphy-Bunting**. In November, the person with the mysterious number asked in the group chat, “Did you mean to add me to this group?” Eventually Bunting revealed his identity to the boys, sending them a picture of himself in the Buccaneers’ locker room. Bunting also started a video chat with the shocked boys, passing his phone to teammates Leonard Fournette, Rob Gronkowski, and Tom Brady. “They didn’t have to do that for us,” one of the ninth graders told WDIV.

**POPULAR PEAR NOW PEST**

Once seen as a beautiful addition to suburban neighborhoods, the Bradford pear tree has fallen so far out of style that states are banning its sale and offering bounties for its destruction. In December, state horticulturalist Gary Fisher said Maine was poised to add the Bradford pear to its “do not sell” list. In August, South Carolina regulators placed the tree on the state’s plant pest list, effectively banning its sale as of 2024. Last year, Clemson University in South Carolina kicked off a bounty program offering one free native tree in exchange for every Bradford pear destroyed. Horticulturalists like Fisher complain that the imported decorative tree crowds out local species.

**OASIS FROM THE STORM**

It’s a good thing they liked the rock band Oasis. Pubgoers at Britain’s Tan Hill Inn became snowbound for days beginning Nov. 26 when a winter storm dropped enough snow to make escape impossible. Many had turned up for a show by an Oasis cover band, **Noasis**. By the time the show ended, roads were impassible. By the next morning, all 61 of the pub’s guests were resigned to waiting out the blizzard at the inn. Over the course of the three-day ordeal, the tribute band played a few more sets for the stranded patrons while staff at the Tan Hill Inn found sleeping accommodations for all guests and set up trivia games and karaoke contests.
What’s wrong with the world?
And where do we place guilt?

NY G.K. CHESTERTON FAN remembers his reply to a query from the Times of London. Supposedly a Times editor wrote to several early 20th-century authors, asking, “In your opinion, what is wrong with the world today?” The great essayist replied, “Dear sir: I am. Yours, G.K. Chesterton.”

Perhaps too delicious to be true, and it may not be. The Chesterton Society has found no documentary evidence for it, so even if the letter was sent, it likely wasn’t published. Still, the story has a very Chestertonian flair. He published a book of essays, What’s Wrong With the World, in 1910, and perhaps that title didn’t come out of the blue.

Origins aside, everyone, at every time, knows that something is wrong. Throughout recorded history, every culture has sensed that the world is not as it should be, and all have a story to explain why. From Pandora opening her boiling box of worldly ills to man-made climate change irritating Mother Earth, blame always finds a place to rest.

Broken down to basics, though, there are only three possible answers to the question the Times posed.

What’s wrong with the world? They are. This is the default answer, a primitive impulse going back to childhood when we fingered little Jimmy or big sister Sue or the bully next door for making our lives miserable. As our world widens, that malevolent teacher or disciplinarian dad morphs into the System or the Man. To Nazi Germany it was the Jews and other “inferior” races. To a Marxist it’s the capitalist system. To a capitalist it’s creeping socialism. To a woke progressive it’s the whole matrix of oppression pushed (intentionally or not) by Western civilization. Which raises another possible answer to the question:

We are. This sums up wokeness in two words. It began legitimately with the civil rights movement of the 1960s exposing rank injustice at all levels of society, legal and personal. The elimination of separate drinking fountains and public facilities happened quickly, but residual racism lingered, along with residual guilt. Guilt not only lingered, it bulked up and became an ideology taking over the university and most of the media. We are the problem is a much more complicated formula than They are or You are, because it’s partly true. Whatever the problem, and whatever group consists of “we,” there’s usually some guilt to share.

But “we” don’t always know where to draw the line. Shortly before the pandemic shutdowns, wealthy white ladies were paying $2,500 apiece for “Race to Dinner” events, where two women of color harangued them about how racist they were. As race2dinner.com not-so-subtly suggested, “White women: you need to sit in your discomfort.” Why women? And why bother with food, since lamb chops with a side of discomfort would go down like cardboard? Why not just pay the inquisitors $300 to expose white fragility by the hour?

We are the problem can thus become a circular, convoluted route back to You are. That makes collective guilt a form of self-justification—for those who are willing to acknowledge it and move over to the side of the angels.

That brings us back to Chesterton’s answer: I am. A nation can and should acknowledge wrongs and make amends. But only individuals can experience guilt, labor under guilt, and access effective remedies for guilt. Human nature is collective: “in Adam all die.” Human responsibility is individual.

I remember mouthing off to my dad once as a teenager. It was out of character: Usually I just ignored his rants about hippies and rock music. His angry reply was something along the lines of “You think you’re so smart,” but somehow it struck a guilty nerve. I remember clearly thinking, He’s right. Though random in his salvos against my generation, he was right about me. I later apologized, with mutual tears, and will always be grateful for that moment.

I am may not fully answer the question, but it’s the right place to start.
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“Your word I have hidden in my heart…” Psalm 119:11
Spider-Man: No Way Home has turned out to be quite the Christmas present for the beleaguered movie industry. In its first weekend, the film raked in $260 million domestically and another $340 million in overseas markets, shattering pandemic-era records and making it the second-biggest opening ever, behind Avengers: End Game.

This was the movie that fans were clamoring to see, but No Way Home almost didn’t happen. Two years ago, Disney and Sony couldn’t come to terms over what to do with Spider-Man in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). Disney owns Marvel, but Sony currently...
owns the film rights to the Spider-Man character, and it looked like Spider-Man: Far From Home, which came out in 2019, might be the last joint project between the studios. Fans panicked because that movie ended on a cliffhanger, but Disney and Sony eventually put their differences aside, giving us this latest Spider-Man movie. Even though No Way Home is set in Disney’s MCU, this movie manages to feel more like a love letter to fans of Sony’s Spider-Man legacy. Most importantly, it resolves the previous installment’s cliffhanger.

At the end of Far From Home, the world discovered Spider-Man’s secret identity, and the revelation brought endless trouble to teenage Peter Parker, once again played by boy-next-door Tom Holland. Half the world thinks Peter’s a hero. The other half thinks he’s a menace. He’s worried about his new situation, but he’s even more worried about his friends and family. (Marisa Tomei is back as Peter’s Aunt May, and Zendaya and Jacob Batalon reprise their roles as Peter’s friends MJ and Ned.)

Hoping to straighten out his mess, Peter seeks help from fellow Avenger Doctor Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch). Strange tells Peter he can cast a spell that will cause the whole world to forget Peter Parker is Spider-Man. Peter agrees, but after second thoughts he causes the spell to go wrong. The botched spell causes Spider-Man villains from outside the MCU to get sucked into that universe’s story. Doctor Strange warns Peter, “The multiverse is a concept about which we know frighteningly little,” but Spider-Man fans are pretty familiar with the idea.

I don’t want to spoil all the surprises, but director Jon Watts hits some satisfying nostalgic notes in this, his third, Spider-Man film. The fantastic Alfred Molina is back as Doctor Octopus, and we also get to see Willem Defoe again as Green Goblin. Both appeared in Sam Raimi’s excellent Spider-Man films from almost 20 years ago, but seeing them play off Tom Holland’s version of the webslinger feels fun and fresh. You won’t get lost if you haven’t seen all Sony’s previous Spider-Man movies, but there’s a good chance you’ll want to go back and watch some of them.

Spider-Man: No Way Home is rated PG-13 for some language, superhero action, and brief suggestive comments, but the movie’s got a lot of heart. Peter and his friends MJ and Ned are possibly the most likeable characters in any superhero franchise, but this movie ups the stakes with some surprising themes. We see sometimes virtue isn’t rewarded. Sometimes doing the right thing doesn’t guarantee a good outcome, but we’re reminded we should do the right thing anyway. Audiences have become accustomed to seeing superheroes save people through self-sacrifice, but Spider-Man:

No Way Home puts a new and powerful spin on that idea. We don’t often see an action movie explore the command to “turn the other cheek.”

All the choices Peter faces throughout the movie boil down to whether he’s going to put others before himself. Disney and Sony seem to have taken that message to heart and decided to put fans before their franchise feuding. The studios have already announced they’re developing new films in the series, and that’s good news because I can’t wait to see what the next chapter holds for Tom Holland’s Peter Parker.
**HOLIDAY HAWKEYE HITS THE BULLSEYE**

The superhero without a superpower

by Collin Garbarino

MARVEL STUDIOS WRAPPED UP a busy year with its newest TV series *Hawkeye*, streaming on Disney+. Jeremy Renner reprises his role as the world’s most underrated Avenger, Clint Barton, in this funny Christmas adventure that focuses on friendship and family.

Clint, aka Hawkeye, doesn’t have any superpowers—just a bow and arrows—and now that he’s saved the universe with the Avengers, he wants to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. The six-episode series begins with Clint and his three children on a Christmas vacation in New York City, but the fun gets cut short when Clint’s biggest fan, Kate Bishop (Hailee Steinfeld), accidentally revives a ghost from his past. *Hawkeye* is an action comedy—rated TV-14 for moderate language and mild violence—in which the grizzled Clint is reluctantly forced into a partnership with the wide-eyed Kate. Kate is a capable archer and fighter in her own right, but her bubbly optimism annoys Clint. Most of the series’ fun comes from watching their odd-couple bantering as we see the “Hawkeye” mantle passed from Clint to Kate.

It’s a lighthearted show about Christmas in New York, in which neither the world nor the universe is in jeopardy. The biggest danger often seems to be that Clint won’t make it home by Christmas morning. I found the refreshingly low stakes a welcome change.

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**KALEIDOSCOPIC KARAOKE WITH A MOVIE THROWN IN**

by Juliana Chan Erikson

It may be bursting with colors, critters, and pop song covers, but *Sing 2* feels more like karaoke with a kaleidoscope than a movie with a good story.

Picking up where *Sing* left off, Buster Moon (an overambitious koala voiced by Matthew McConaughey) goes back to packing audiences in his newly renovated theater. But he still hasn’t found what he’s looking for—recognition from critics. So, Buster takes the show where the streets have no name—yes, U2’s Bono voices a key character—and barges into an audition with his ragtag troupe of amateurs. No surprise, they win the audition, but their new producer is a literal, big, bad wolf.

After Buster fails to recruit a mega-star, the wolf dangles the koala over a skyscraper ledge. But animated koalas can’t die in PG-rated family films, and wolves can’t get arrested for attempted murder, right?

Or maybe they can. But there’s no time to think—the show must go on! And we’re ready to go too. We’re whisked into a musical extravaganza that’s all sunshine and smiles. But when the music is so much better than the extravaganza, you’re better off adding that to your headphones and skipping the movie.
**AMERICAN UNDERDOG**, which opened in theaters Christmas Day, tells the true story of a remarkable athlete—NFL Hall of Fame quarterback and Super Bowl MVP Kurt Warner. And it tells the important role his wife and family played in his achievements.

An against-all-odds athlete success story always inspires audiences. But this PG film focuses mostly on Warner’s personal and relational struggles and growth. His eventual embrace of Christianity comes naturally, without cloying, overemotional scenes.

Warner grew up idolizing four-time Super Bowl champion quarterback Joe Montana. All Warner wanted to do was be an NFL quarterback. But no team drafted him after playing at Northern Iowa University, and the Green Bay Packers cut him at training camp. Warner, played by Zachary Levi, winds up at the local Hy-Vee supermarket stocking shelves, ironically including boxes of Wheaties plastered with a photo of Miami Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino.

While in college, he meets and later marries Brenda (Anna Paquin), a single, divorced mom with two children. Her unfaithful husband left after he dropped their son, causing a traumatic brain injury and irreversible blindness. Scenes between Warner and Brenda’s son, Zack, played by Hayden Zaller, who is also blind, provide the film’s warmest moments.

Brenda has her own compelling story, telling Warner she’s a work in progress. Her strong faith in God helps Warner see he’s made his own dreams paramount to God’s will.

Never losing his desire to quarterback, Warner grudgingly agrees to play Arena Football with the Iowa Barnstormers. (The movie doesn’t refer to his time with the NFL Europe Amsterdam Admirals.) It’s a whole different style of play on a smaller field. But Warner learns valuable skills that garner attention from the St. Louis Rams, who sign him.

How Warner gets his big break at the expense of the injured starting quarterback is only part of his success story. Head coach Dick Vermeil (Dennis Quaid), who also made a comeback after 14 years out of coaching, calls him aside to tell him, “There’s something special about you, son, and I can’t wait to find out what it is.” Vermeil himself reports these words as 100 percent accurate. Apparent antagonist, offensive coordinator Mike Martz (Chance Kelly), derogatorily calls him “Pop Warner” (a reference to youth-league football). But there’s a reason behind his jabs.

The movie includes some notable game footage of the real Warner spliced in well with the actors’ gridiron action. But the film drops the ball in one way: Levi plays a believable Warner, replete with athletic build and a decent forward pass, but at 41 he looks way too old to play Warner in college scenes.

Even though we know how the movie ends, it’s still an inspiration to watch—especially the less familiar parts off the field. The Erwin Brothers do a good job telling a true sports story that elevates faith, marriage, family, and overcoming the odds.
NEW WEST SIDE STORY SOARS

Box office for West Side Story is low, but not because it’s lacking
by Sharon Dierberger

Tony is a former Jet, who in this version has just returned from prison after nearly killing a man and is working to change himself. “I want to be unlike who I was,” he says. Maria is the sister of Bernardo, leader of the Sharks.

Like the first, this production juxtaposes dynamic singing and electrifying dancing (choreographed by Justin Peck) against squalor and racism. That paradox works to make us care even more about the characters, hoping somehow the ending will be different this time.

From the portentous finger snapping to the familiar, beloved Leonard Bernstein songs and Stephen Sondheim lyrics, the movie mostly follows the original script. But screenwriter Tony Kushner made several significant changes.

Most notably, all those cast as Puerto Ricans are of Hispanic heritage. The original simply used dark makeup on white actors. The only Puerto Rican then was Rita Moreno, who played Maria’s best friend, Anita. She won an Oscar for her performance. Spielberg enlisted her, now 90 years old, for a new role in this film. She plays Valentina, the Puerto Rican widow of Doc, owner of the candy store where the Jets congregate and where Tony now works.

In one touching scene, Moreno, sitting alone, gently sings, “There’s a place for us,” expressing hope for societal changes toward living and forgiving. The song had originally been a love song between Tony and Maria.

Where 1961’s version used a few Spanish words for flavor, characters here often speak Spanish without subtitles. It adds realism. Though Anita (played by Ariana DeBose who powers the show with her acting, singing, and dancing) keeps telling everyone to speak English. Gang members use coarser language than the original, fighting is still rough, and sexual mores aren’t moral.

Fresh-faced Rachel Zegler, 18, plays a naïve, beautiful Maria. All the leads do their own singing, unlike the original where directors dubbed in ghost singers. Maria and Tony (Ansel Elgort) seem to have more screen time here, which creates greater empathy for their plight.

ENERGY BURSTS from colorful choreography, dancing, and singing—with backdrops of neon signs, blaring police sirens, shouting storekeepers, subway stations, and even an empty church. Thanks to Spielberg’s eye for detail and the story’s timely underlying message that peace is better than racial rivalry, this updated musical may capture a new generation of viewers and please older ones.

The Romeo and Juliet–inspired plot set in the mid-1950s in New York City’s upper west Manhattan slums revisits the tragic love story of Tony and Maria. They are caught between gang rivalries of the Sharks, who are Puerto Rican, and the Jets, who are white.
THIS IS MY NEXT-TO-LAST book page, and Ben Miller, a subscriber for 25 years, asks, “Will you keep publishing your reviews of books somewhere? I do not have the time to sift through the latest writing and I depend on your judgement.”

Thanks for the vote of confidence, and the answer is yes. I’m putting 45-word reviews, article suggestions, and comments on Twitter, which you can access by adding @MarvinOlasky to your feed. If you’re interested only in books, you can search for #Olaskybooks.

Here’s my lineup of nine recent reads:

Allen Guelzo’s *Robert E. Lee* (Knopf, 2021) combines thoughtful insight and fine writing. Lee may have left the U.S. Army with intentions to make Virginia a third force, but he could not avoid Confederate command. He thought slavery immoral but always felt financially insecure.

Benjamin Labatut’s *When We Cease to Understand the World* (NYRB, 2020) is a strange mixture of history and fiction that shows how worldviews, including mystical insights, influence scientific discoveries. The result should be humility: We understand so little.

John Le Carre’s *Silverview* (Viking, 2021) is the spy novelist’s last, posthumous book. It’s a worthy conclusion that adds the indignities of old age to the moral ambiguity of the great Smiley trilogy and probes the nature of loyalty, treason, trust, and ideals.

Hervé Le Tellier’s *The Anomaly* (Other Press, 2021) is a thought-provoking novel about discovering we live in a simulation. (Many nontheists who learn of Earth’s intelligent design become believers in either a multiverse or a simulation by an incredibly advanced civilization.)

*How Democracies Die* by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt (Broadway Books, 2018) shows that the U.S. is in danger of going the way of contemporary Venezuela and Turkey, or Italy and Germany a century ago. The 2024 election, if close, is likely to be a disaster.

Bill Haslam’s *Faithful Presence* (Thomas Nelson, 2021) is a winsome and reasonable example of how Christians (and Republicans) can be unifiers in the public square. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church member won reelection as Tennessee’s governor in 2014 with 70 percent of the vote.

Kevin Sabet’s *Smokescreen: What the Marijuana Industry Doesn’t Want You to Know* (Forefront, 2021) offers sensational facts at high pitch regarding the effects of legalization: Ten times as many daily users as when Bill Clinton was president, much higher potency, etc.

Adam Serwer’s *The Cruelty Is the Point* (One World, 2021) is a hard read for folks on the right but an important one for understanding how the other half thinks and for recognizing two decades of movement from compassionate to callous conservatism.

In *Taking Leave of Darwin: A Longtime Agnostic Discovers the Case for Design* (Discovery Institute, 2021), Neil Thomas shows how intelligent design is scientifically irrefutable. It’s a terrific book to give the committed scoffer in your family.

**Bookmarks**

Joseph Epstein’s *Gallimaufry: A Collection of Essays, Reviews, Bits* (Axios, 2020) contains 57 pieces by America’s best essayist. He and I agree that the length of baseball games is no problem as long as you keep a book on your lap.

Peter Kreeft’s *Three Approaches to Abortion* (Ignatius, 2002) is an oldie but goodie. Kreeft provides a 15-step logical argument against abortion, a pro-life motivation map, and a way to dialogue with abortion proponents. They’re worth a try, although unlikely to work without a push from the Holy Spirit.

Tim Flach’s *Birds* (Abrams, 2021) is a beautiful (but expensive) coffee table book with wonderful close-ups. A picture of the cover is better than more words from me. —M.O.
Family dramas with faithful perspective

Four novels from Christian publishers

by Sandy Barwick

THE NATURE OF SMALL BIRDS Susie Finkbeiner
The Nature of Small Birds is a fictional tale of Operation Babylift, a true event at the end of the Vietnam War, when thousands of orphans were flown from Saigon to the U.S. and other countries to be adopted. In time-slip fashion, three narrators provide details through their own eyes: mom Linda in 1975, sister Sonny in 1988, and dad Bruce in 2013. They tell the story of little Minh, a young Vietnamese girl they welcomed to their family. Finkbeiner is a master of nostalgia and perfectly captures the nuances of the slang, clothes, and pop culture of each era. A recurring theme throughout the story is learning how not to be afraid and to trust God in all circumstances.

THE ONE YOU’RE WITH Lauren K. Denton
Everyone knew high-school sweethearts Mac and Edie would marry. After all, they were a couple all through school except for the one summer they broke up before their senior year of college. Now almost 20 years later, he’s a respected pediatrician and she’s a talented interior designer. They have two wonderful children. But one day a young lady arrives at Mac’s office, a daughter he never knew he had, from that fateful summer. Her sudden appearance has the potential to destroy all the Swan family has built. Each family member—especially Edie—has difficulty with this unexpected upheaval in their lives, and they must decide how to move forward. A thoughtful story, however devoid of spiritual influence.

BEYOND THE TIDES Liz Johnson
When Meg Whitaker’s mother falls ill, her father decides to sell his lobster-fishing business to have more time to care for his wife. But when Meg finds out the prospective buyer is Oliver Ross—a guy she’s had a grudge against since high school—she volunteers to take over the business, although she knows nothing about it and gets seasick every time she steps on a boat. Oliver is equally determined to prove himself worthy to run the operation. Meg’s dad delays his decision, forcing them to work together for the season. Love grows through mutual hardship. Meg’s pastor counsels, “Sometimes when the pain is too loud, all we can hear is the person crying with us. And that sounds a lot like love.”

‘TIL I WANT NO MORE Robin W. Pearson
Maxine Owens knows honesty is the best policy, but when it’s time for premarital counseling with her fiancé Teddy, she avoids the truth. The tighter she holds onto her secrets, the greater her guilt grows. And when her ex, JD, returns to town, Maxine realizes she must face her past to get on with her future. Older characters like Maxine’s grandma Ruby dispense sage advice. While preparing a meal she says, “That roast is like a marriage. A lot goes into it … sweet, sour, savory. All that work makes your life together into somethin’ good.” Pearson uses authentic Southern phrases in this feel-good, family drama and naturally weaves faith in God into the conversation without being preachy.

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Resistance and resilience
Four books about the Holocaust
by Kristin Chapman

**Hidden** Loïc Dauvillier
One day Dounia’s father comes home and tells his Jewish family they are all going to be sheriffs, and her mother stitches gold stars to their coats. Dounia soon discovers the truth, though, as her world unravels around her. After the Nazis seize her parents, friends rescue Dounia and keep her hidden away. Note: Marc Lizano’s illustrations in this graphic novel show some acts of violence, and the text mentions—but does not depict—a teacher pulling down a Jewish boy’s pants in class to show what circumcision looks like. (Ages 8-11)

**Signs of Survival** Renee Hartman with Joshua M. Greene
In Nazi-controlled Bratislava, 10-year-old Renee serves as the ears of her Jewish family: Her father, mother, and younger sister, Herta, are all deaf. As hostilities heighten, the girls find themselves separated from their parents and left to fend for themselves. Despite staggering odds, the sisters survive Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and endeavor to rebuild their shattered lives. This oral history account captures the travesty of what happened to the Jewish people while sparing younger and sensitive readers from the more graphic details of the Holocaust. (Ages 9-12)

**The Boy on the Wooden Box** Leon Leyson
When the Germans forced all Polish Jews into the Krakow ghetto, Leyson’s family struggled to survive. Providentially, his father had a factory job working for Oskar Schindler, which opened the door for Leyson and his mother, brother, and sister to find employment—and some protection—on Schindler’s list. After suffering from years of malnutrition, Leyson was so small he had to stand on a wooden box to reach the machinery. As the youngest employee he was also the least experienced, but Leyson recalls how Schindler was always kind to him. (Ages 9-14)

**The Light in Hidden Places** Sharon Cameron
In this novel based on true events, teenager Stefania Podgorska and her sister Helena hide 13 Jews during the Nazi occupation of Przemysl, Poland. The story chronicles the trials and tribulations Stefania faced: working 12-hour shifts; feeding 15 people on two ration cards; suffering experimental treatment by German doctors, and housing two German nurses while her band of Jews lived in a secret attic room above. A remarkable story of courage and hope amid darkness. Note: Some crude language and narrowly avoided rape. (Ages 14 and up)
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Many Christians struggle to steward their relationship with the world’s culture. Do you see the world’s culture as becoming increasingly hostile toward Christian values (or perhaps it’s just always been hostile)? Absolutely, yes, the culture is more hostile to Christianity. Whether speaking of the academy, the media, government, business, popular entertainment, the arts, or social media—our culture is growing more hostile toward Christian beliefs and values. It is not the same as it has always been.

The question, “How do you respond to this?” requires a week’s answer or a sentence. I opt for the sentence: First, repent for the ways Christians’ inconsistent lives have harmed the Church’s credibility. Second, love your neighbor as yourself. Third, let people know you are a believer—don’t hide it. Fourth, make sure you are not harsh or clumsy in your words (be sure it’s the gospel that offends...
and not you). And last, don’t be afraid of persecution. Jesus promises to be with you.

**How did you develop your conviction and interest in justice?** First, when I began to read the Bible intensively, trying to get through it over and over, I began to see how often the Scripture talks about justice for the widow and orphan, for the immigrant and the poor. It’s remarkable.

Second, when I preached on the parable of the Good Samaritan, I had to study the story in depth and I came to see the implications. When Jesus is asked, “What does it mean to love my neighbor?” He tells a story of a man risking his life to stop and sacrificially giving physical and material help to a man of a different race and different religion! Finally, when I began living in New York City, the needs of the poor became even more visible to me.

**Give me an example when you needed to take an unpopular stand, either against non-Christians or against fellow believers.** I think it is important to understand how radical the entire enterprise of Redeemer was. Every Sunday I preached, every meeting I taught, I took unpopular stands that went against the grain of center-city dwellers. I faced weekly—sometimes daily—opposition and hostility.

Redeemer Presbyterian Church is a conservative, evangelical church in secular, liberal Manhattan. Every single week I was telling people things that most considered absolutely outrageous, if not dangerous—Jesus is the only way to salvation; without believing in Him you are lost and going to hell; the Bible is true in every word and you must submit to it whether it fits your opinions or not; sex is only for a man and a woman in marriage; you should be radically generous with your money, and, if you are prosperous, you should adopt a modest lifestyle. And so on!

Planting the church and publicly preaching the Scripture expositionally was and is extraordinarily confrontational. I often had people after services expressing strong opposition. Most were civil, but some were very angry, even cursing me. Some were in tears.

**What do you see as the greatest threat to modern-day Christians?** In the United States, I think the second-greatest threat is a new progressive, secular ideology that is coming to dominate the academy, the government, the corporate world, and the mainstream media. It is against freedom of speech and deeply opposed to religious people expressing or practicing many aspects of their faith in public.

However, the first and greatest threat is the failure of the American church itself:

- The mainline church wedded itself to liberal political parties, and the evangelical church has done that with conservative political parties, and so we are now seen as nothing but a political power bloc.
- Also there have been numerous egregious examples of hypocrisy with many prominent church leaders being found guilty of various forms of abuse and corrupt behavior.
- Instead of admitting past ways in which the American church has participated in the marginalization and exploitation of various peoples, a vociferous segment of the modern evangelical church has refused to repent and listen, and instead has become harsh and denunciatory in its communication.
- The church has failed to fulfill the Great Commission in our time, in that it has not discovered a way to evangelize a post-Christian, secular culture. (See Leslie Newbigin’s seminal article, “Can the West Be Converted?”)

**You probably don’t remember everything you’ve said or written, but is there something you might change now?** At one level, times change, and therefore if I look back on things I’ve written or said 20, 30, or 40 years ago, I’m sure I might argue for them differently, or express them somewhat differently—certainly I might illustrate them in different ways.

But when it comes to positions on Biblical and theological issues, I have the same position on most all of them that I did when I left seminary.

**On creation and evolution?** I believe in the “old earth” and that Genesis 1 is a poetic expression of the meaning of creation, not a recipe; but I also believe in the special creation of Adam and Eve as our ancestors.

**On social justice?** I believe God does want Christians to work against racism and poverty and create a more just society, but they are to do it scattered out into the world. The church qua church [in its capacity as the church] is to evangelize and then disciple Christians to change the world, but it should not as an institution ally itself to particular political organizations and parties.

**On the work of the Holy Spirit?** I am not charismatic, but I’m also not anti-charismatic and unappreciative of the strengths of the movement.

**On sexuality?** I believe sex is only for within marriage between a man and a woman. On abortion—I believe abortion is the taking of human life and therefore a sin and great evil.

**On complementarianism?** I believe that in the marriage/home and in the
Church men are to exercise “headship,” and that headship is modeled on Christ’s definition of authority as the authority to serve and to die. Servant-leadership is never to be used as a power to compel or exercise authority for its own interests. I believe women should not be ordained ministers and elders, but could be deacons. I only put “complementarianism” in quotes because Kathy and I arrived at our position before that word was coined, and often people who use the label throw in lots of extra-Biblical rules for women (such as not working outside the home, or only taking certain jobs, etc.) to which we would never subscribe. We have not changed in our views on this subject since seminary.

I am, if anything, more profoundly appreciative of the wisdom and truth of the Reformed confessions, especially my denomination’s Westminster Standards. On a number of confessional issues—such as understanding how the “regulative principle of worship” plays out, and how we practice the Sabbath—I have not changed my position since entering my denomination.

As I said above, I am always revising my teaching notes so that I can say what I mean more clearly. But that means I would change how I preach, not what I preach. Some people will say that such a lack of change over four decades of ministry is bad, showing a lack of “growth,” and others might think it good (I do.) I’ll let others be the judge.

I have heard many fellow Christians accuse you of being a liberal—both theologically and politically. I should start by reminding us that these terms politically “liberal” and “conservative” are fairly imprecise and subjective. Some years ago I interacted with a minister in my denomination who believed strongly that neither women nor single males should be allowed to vote in civil elections, but only the male heads of households. He believed this was the Biblical position, and it was one of the reasons he eventually left the denomination, saying that 99 percent of its ministers were horribly “liberal.”

Another Christian leader I conversed with told me that tax money should go to nothing but supporting the police and the military. Everything else should be done privately, not by the government. He based this on what he thought was the right interpretation of Romans 13. He believed any level of taxation beyond that extremely low level was a form of socialism. When I said I thought taxes could also go to building bridges and roads, he called me a liberal. Again, compared to him I was less conservative on the spectrum.

What about the term politically liberal?

As the term has been used by the great majority of people in the last several decades, I am not politically liberal. I am not a supporter of a highly centralized, government-controlled economy or of taxes at the level of European socialist countries. I am pro-life. I am, of course, a major supporter of religious liberty, a term that the left now puts in scare quotes and a concept it opposes. Political liberals do not consider me politically liberal.

So why have some people called me a political liberal?

The first reason is that, in a highly politically polarized environment, anyone who is not fully, loudly, and explicitly supporting you is now seen as supporting the other side. During the last election I simply said that, as a minister, I could not bind Christians’ consciences (see Westminster Confession Chapter 20) and tell them how to vote. That angered many conservative people who believed that any effort to be “apolitical” was really to be on the liberal side.

The second reason is because I often preach what the Bible teaches about how strongly Christians should work for and support the poor and needy. Even though I simply expound the Scripture and say nothing about government or taxation, many people believe any such emphasis will lead to higher taxes and bigger government and therefore is “liberal.” This is not true, of course. To say Christians must be deeply concerned for the needs of the poor is simply presenting a Biblical truth and is not speaking to political policy.

Third, many believe that if I am not denunciatory and unfriendly to liberals I must myself be a liberal, which is not true. Jesus called us to publicly “greet”
and wish peace to not just our own fellow believers but to all (Matthew 5:43-48). Recently on Twitter I congratulated an atheist (Greg Epstein) on being selected as head chaplain at Harvard. He is a man whose views I have publicly debated, and I am on record as having opposed his atheistic beliefs. Yet he has also been friendly to me, and is a man whom insiders know to be more fair-minded and open to allowing all chaplains—including evangelical ones—to do their ministries than some Harvard head chaplains have been in the past. Nevertheless, many on social media expressed their conviction that if you show friendliness to atheists and liberals you must be at the very least a closet liberal yourself. That is not true.

**What about the charge of being theologically liberal?** I must confess that I am quite perplexed by that one. I am a member of the Presbyterian Church in America, which is doctrinally quite conservative, and I am satisfied with its theological positions, with the single exception that I would prefer that women could be ordained as deacons. I do not think that makes me theologically liberal in any way that such a term has been used by most people over the past decades. My best guess is that some people think my emphasis on justice and concern for the poor means that somehow underneath, I must be both politically and theologically liberal, despite my orthodox doctrinal beliefs and profession.

Again, these are my best guesses, so it’s possible I’m not fully seeing the picture. But overall, I’m OK confusing people on whether I’m liberal or conservative in their eyes. If a Christian is living in obedience to Scripture, he or she won’t fit into a binary political ideology or party. I’ve come to embrace the confusion.

**I’ve also heard people say you’ve endorsed critical race theory and have become too “social justice”-oriented.** I’ve already spoken to the issue of social justice under other questions above. I only expound what the Bible says about justice—and it says a lot. I would only add here that some fear that emphasizing social justice leads to a loss of concern for evangelism. Anyone who knows anything about Redeemer or my ministry knows that never happened. I personally am chiefly an evangelist in my calling.

As for the statement that I’ve endorsed critical race theory: First, I wrote a critique of critical race theory with which many people friendly to CRT did not agree.

Second, many people don’t know what critical race theory actually is. Some have a working definition of CRT as “talking a lot about racism.” The Bible at many places addresses the sin of being a “respecer of persons” on the basis of their class, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, or any other social status. I have therefore been addressing racism from the Bible since I began my ministry in the mid-’70s. Most people trace critical race theory to the work of Derrick Bell and others beginning in the mid to late 1990s. That means that my teaching about the sin of racism pre-dates CRT.

Nevertheless, I do believe what the Bible teaches (and also what the American black church has been telling us for decades)—namely, that there is such a thing as “systemic” or “institutional racism.” That means there are social structures that disadvantage certain groups or classes of people even when nearly all those working within the structure are not personally and individually racist (or sexist, etc.) in their beliefs and attitudes.

There are many who insist that anyone believing in systemic racism is automatically a proponent of critical race theory. That’s not true. In an article on the subject I show that the concept is taught in Scripture.

**Looking back, what were your biggest challenges as a pastor? Any times when you felt like quitting ministry?** In May of every year I was exhausted and tired and toyed with the idea of doing something else (something I think many other pastors do as well), but I never seriously considered it. At one point when my wife Kathy was very ill, I did at least think about going back to teach at seminary. But even then I don’t think she would have let me do it.

**Many people know you personally as Tim Keller, a man. Many more people don’t know you personally, and know you as Tim Keller, the pastor and theologian. How would you like those people who don’t know you personally to remember you, long after you’re gone?** I want my children and grandchildren to remember the things I tried to teach them by word and example. I want my books to continue to be read because I intentionally sought to present Biblical teaching that I thought would have abiding relevance. But apart from that, I don’t think it’s my job to care about my “legacy.”
OLLING STONE magazine has always known which side its bread is buttered on, so it’s no surprise that it’s currently heaping lavish praise on ABBA while slagging Eric Clapton.

ABBA has just released its first album of new music in 40 years, *Voyage* (Capitol). Clapton, on the other hand, has come out against COVID-19 lockdowns and vaccine mandates, making him Public Enemy No. 1 to the publication’s target audience.

Still, for a magazine that once ranked Clapton as the second-greatest guitarist ever (behind Jimi Hendrix), eight negative Clapton stories in the last four months seems surreal.

Typical of their tone is the publication’s announcement regarding Clapton’s latest album, *Lady in the Balcony: Lockdown Sessions* (Mercury Studios): “When Eric Clapton wasn’t complaining about COVID-19 regulations and spread-

ing ridiculous claims about vaccines, he recorded a live album featuring acoustic renditions of past hits.”

Recorded with Clapton’s core accompanists Nathan East, Steve Gadd, and Chris Stainton, *Lady in the Balcony* serves as a belated sequel to Clapton’s mega-selling *Unplugged*, with which it shares nearly soundalike performances of “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out,” “Layla,” and “Tears in Heaven.”

The only audience member during the recording was the balcony-dwelling lady referred to in the title, Clapton’s wife Melia. The resulting cozy intimacy mirrors the interplay of the musicians as well as the deep blues feeling on display in “Key to the Highway,” “Long Distance Call,” and “Got My Mojo Working.”

But the highlight is the folk instrumental (and Clapton original) “Kerry.” Frolicsome yet autumnal, it might be the loveliest 2 minutes and 27 seconds in Clapton’s vast body of work.

Loveliness—and, of course, catchiness—abounds on ABBA’s *Voyage* too. You think that Agnetha, Benny, Björn, and Frida would stage a high-stakes comeback without bringing their A game?

*Voyage* finds them mining their well-known emotional history for no fewer than three songs that poignantly dramatize the heartbreak of broken or breaking marriages. The protagonists in “I Can Be That Woman” and “Don’t Shut Me Down” own up to their failings while trying to convince their men to give them another chance. In “Keep an Eye on Dan,” a divorcée articulates the pain of dropping off her son for his shared-custody week with Dad.

The album concludes with the wistful “Ode to Freedom,” which concludes with the singers “wish[ing] someone would write an ode to freedom that we all could sing.”

Freedom. Perhaps, when all is said and done, ABBA and Clapton have more in common than *Rolling Stone* thinks.
Revisiting the past
Noteworthy new or recent releases
by Arsenio Orteza

A LOVE SUPREME: THE PLATINUM COLLECTION John Coltrane
Impulse!’s recently unearthed A Love Supreme: Live in Seattle made its hard-copy debut in August, whereupon it began racking up laudatory reviews. It now makes its digital debut as the third “disc” of this downloadable omnibus, a context in which newcomers to Coltrane’s masterpiece will find it making more sense. By itself, it explodes almost immediately into potentially bewildering free jazz. Following the studio version and the previously released Live In Juan-les-Pins, France, it detonates like the bomb at the end of a long-burning fuse, more than doubling the original’s length with “interludes” that could stand on their own and a first movement that at 21 minutes feels too short.

STOMPING GROUND Dion
If you liked last year’s Blues With Friends, on which Dion bolstered his latest recordings with cameos from the likes of Billy Gibbons, Sonny Landreth, Joe Bonamassa, and Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Springsteen, you’ll love this 2021 reprise, on which those same contributors reappear, joined by the likes of Eric Clapton, Mark Knopfler, Peter Frampton, G.E. Smith, Keb’ Mo’, and Boz Scaggs. But the main reasons that this year’s model feels like an upgrade are “The Night Is Young” (sounds like a long-lost FM-radio hit), “There Was a Time,” “Angel in the Alleyways,” and “Hey Diddle Diddle” (an explicit anti-woke anthem). You thought maybe Dion was winding down? Turns out he’s just getting started.

A SONG IS WAY ABOVE THE LAWN Karen Peris
With the conclusion of track 7, “Sister Birds,” Karen Peris’ musical purpose becomes clear: to provide the soundtrack for the next cinematic interpretation of the life of Francis of Assisi. Maybe not all of it—her diaphanous chamber-folk would hardly do for the emotionally charged Francis’ showdown-with-his-rich-merchant-father scene. But nothing would better set the mood during the opening credits or reaffirm the mood at the end than these lyrics, and the lighter-than-air way that Peris sings them, from “Flowers”: “And we will be listeners and we will be peacemakers. / And we will bloom in love from the buildings like flowers. / Yes, we will bloom in love, and love will shine forever.”

METAL BOX: REBUILT IN DUB Jah Wobble
Replacing John Lydon, Keith Levene, Richard Dudanski, David Humphrey, and Martin Atkins with the former Siouxsie & the Banshees guitarist Jon Klein, Jah Wobble revisits eight songs from the 1979 Public Image Ltd. album that made him a post-punk bass legend and PiL more than a Sex Pistols footnote. You want “rebuilt”? Wobble and Klein have taken the music apart, cleaned and oiled its components, and put it back together in such a way that there’s no mistaking its throbbing ambience for anything other than the major sonic statement that it was and is. Want more “rebuilt”? The album concludes with renovated versions of the best and the weirdest tracks from PiL circa ’78.

A LOVE SUPREME: THE PLATINUM COLLECTION

METAL BOX: REBUILT IN DUB

STOMPING GROUND

Recovered & Recoloured

Encore

Had the Donna Summer album that has come to be known as I’m a Rainbow been finished and come out when it was supposed to 40 years ago, it would’ve probably gone gold on Summer’s momentum alone. The independent-woman themed “Back Where You Belong,” the happy-nuclear-family-themed “Brooklyn” (about the arrival of Summer’s second daughter), and “Don’t Cry for Me Argentina” might’ve even been hits. But when in 1996 (still semi-finished) it finally did come out, it sounded dated.

Now, shorn of the filler that initially made it a two-LP project and pumped with juicy contemporary sounds from an array of sympathetic producers, the album has been rereleased by the Driven by the Music label as I’m a Rainbow: Recovered & Recoloured, and it shines more brightly than it could’ve in 1981. It also outshines every other Summer noncompilation. Bad Girls, The Wanderer, and She Works Hard for the Money remain dynamic history. Recovered & Recoloured restores Summer to the present. —A.O.
News year resolutions
Advice for healthy news consumption in 2022

IS THE SEASON for New Year’s resolutions, and without piling on New Year burdens, I’d like to propose three modest resolutions—or at least suggestions—for approaching the news in the coming year:

1) Don’t retreat.
Some news cycles are so overwhelming, it’s tempting to stop paying attention to the news altogether. Breaks from news consumption are crucial to spiritual and mental health, but resolving not to pay attention at all runs the risk of not paying attention to what God is doing in His world beyond us.

I always enjoy the Apostle Paul’s asides in his letters to New Testament churches, and I’m always impressed by how much he wanted scattered Christians to know what was happening beyond them. At the end of his letter to the Colossians, Paul writes: “Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. … I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts.”

We’re right to want to know what’s happening in other parts of the world, including what’s happening with Christians in places often foreign to us or different from what we experience. Seeing redemption in hard places can encourage us, and it can show us how to pray for God’s work in the world.

Indeed, the Apostle Paul often wrote about what God was accomplishing through the prayers of scattered believers. As we stay informed, we have an opportunity to participate in the work God is doing beyond us through our prayers.

2) Don’t obsess.
For some, the temptation may not be to retreat from the news but to creep to the other end of the spectrum: to become obsessed with it—or at least to become preoccupied in unhelpful ways.

If anxiety or agitation or anger are the primary emotions we experience when we interact with the news or social media, it might be wise to recalibrate our intake. A question to ask: Am I consuming content or is content consuming me? Part of analyzing consumption is evaluating our diet: Am I consuming healthy meals (interesting journalism with solid substance) or am I cramming down empty calories that fuel my desire for more junk food?

Christian professor and author Jeffrey Bilbro writes: “It’s easier to get an emotional hit from shallow, sensational news than it is to spend the mental energy required to engage with more serious matters; watching the world blow up is more exciting than studying its treasured wealth.”

3) Memorize Psalm 131.
What’s the link between memorizing a psalm and thinking about news-related resolutions? I’d suggest that Psalm 131 offers a path for avoiding retreat or anxiety over the news. David writes: “O LORD, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother.”

At first glance, the psalm might look like an argument for news retreat, but David personally dealt with kingdom-altering news for most of his life. He likely isn’t expressing a lack of interest in the highs and lows of God’s kingdom and his own place in it. Instead, David seems to resolve not to fret about what he can’t control or fully understand.

If we try to figure out all of God’s purposes in all the perplexing news we read or hear or experience, we’re occupying ourselves with things too great and too marvelous for us. Psalm 131 commends the quiet trust of a child who doesn’t understand everything in his mother’s mind, but who does fully trust in the care of one who loves him. It’s a good reminder for 2022: Whatever happens, our Father’s own resolve to care for us won’t be broken.
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NEWS OF THE YEAR
Heran Abebe, 6, reacts while her father, Alebel Belay, receives a COVID-19 vaccine in Washington, D.C., on May 6. By mid-December, 61 percent of eligible people in the United States had received two vaccine doses, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

JACQUELYN MARTIN/AP

Healthcare worker Nazir Ahmed carries a cooler with vaccines for Kashmiri shepherds on a hillock in Tosamaidan in Indian-controlled Kashmir. At least 300,000 Indians died in a spring COVID-19 outbreak.
Volunteers bury the body of a woman who died of COVID-19 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, on Aug. 12. Burial teams worked around the clock during a wave of deaths from the Delta variant of the coronavirus in 2021.

Demonstrators protest school mask mandates in Broward County, Fla., in May. Schools and school boards became COVID-19 battlegrounds in some states when education officials in some communities sought mask mandates but faced opposition.
A mob swarms the Capitol in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6 in an attempt to stop Congress from certifying results of the 2020 presidential election. Federal authorities arrested more than 700 people in the weeks after the violence.

LEV RADIN/SIPA USA VIA AP
Supporters of then-President Donald Trump erect fake gallows on the grounds of the Capitol on Jan. 6.

Rioters clash with Capitol Police officers. More than 140 officers from the Capitol Police and Metropolitan Police departments suffered injuries in the attacks.
Capitol police draw their pistols and barricade doors as rioters try to force their way into the House of Representatives Chamber on Jan. 6.

Rioters wander through the halls of the Capitol on Jan. 6. Among them is Jake Angeli, also known as Q Shaman, wearing a horned hat.
Following the riot on Jan. 6, D.C. National Guard troops reinforce security near the Capitol on Jan. 17, days before the inauguration of President Joe Biden.

J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP
Fireworks explode on Oct. 1 over Cinderella Castle in the Magic Kingdom as part of celebrations for the 50th anniversary of Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla.

Worshippers gather for an Easter sunrise service hosted by Hope Community Church of Manasquan (New Jersey) on April 4. After celebrating Easter with virtual services in 2020 due to COVID-19, many churches gathered in person again in 2021.
Democrats Jon Ossoff (left) and Raphael Warnock bump elbows during a rally with President-elect Joe Biden on Jan. 4, a day before they beat Republicans David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler in runoff elections for Georgia’s two Senate seats. The victories gave Democrats effective control of the U.S. Senate.

Bystanders carry an injured man after skirmishes following a military coup in Myanmar. Since the military toppled the government in February, it has killed more than 1,300 people in clashes.
Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel feeds Australian lorikeets in Marlow, Germany. Merkel left office on Dec. 8 after serving 16 years as chancellor.

A firefighter places his hands on engravings along the south pool of the National September 11 Memorial and Museum in New York on the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.
Pro-lifers pray in front of the U.S. Supreme Court on Dec. 1. The Supreme Court heard oral arguments that day in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health*, a Mississippi case that could upend abortion law in the United States.

*Katherine Morgan drinks water and cools off in front of a box fan in her apartment in Portland, Ore., during a sweltering summer heatwave in the Pacific Northwest.*
Residents huddle as Hurricane Ida blows through LaPlace, La., on Aug. 30, as a category 4 storm. It then marched into the Northeast United States, causing flooding and sparking tornadoes in six states.

PATRICK T. FALLON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES
Atlanta Braves shortstop Dansby Swanson and second baseman Ozzie Albies celebrate after the Atlanta Braves won the World Series on Nov. 2, beating the Houston Astros in Game 6.

Jorge Sanhueza-Lyon stands on his kitchen counter to warm his feet over his stove on Feb. 16 in Austin. Thousands of Texans went days without electricity after temperatures dropped into the single digits.

Republican Glenn Youngkin speaks at a rally before winning Virginia’s gubernatorial election on Nov. 2. He won in part thanks to more Hispanic voters supporting Republicans, a trend that looks to continue into 2022.
A father carries his child to shore after crossing the Rio Grande in a dinghy at the U.S.-Mexico border on April 9 near Roma, Texas. Record numbers of immigrants attempted to cross the border in 2021.

JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES
A police car’s lights shine on a family apprehended at the U.S. border near Mission, Texas, on Feb. 10.

Haitian immigrants cross the Rio Grande and head back into Mexico on Sept. 20. A large caravan of Haitians attempted to gain entry into the United States.
Vilma Iris Peraza, 28, from Honduras, cries with her two children in Cuidad Juárez, Mexico, after U.S. authorities deported them on March 18.

A U.S. Border Patrol agent tries to stop a Haitian immigrant in September. The photo sparked controversy after a reporter misidentified the horse reins as a whip. The Biden administration stopped the Border Patrol’s use of horses in the area as a result.
Joe and Jill Biden arrive at the White House on Jan. 20 after Joe Biden was inaugurated the 46th president of the United States.

JIM WATSON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES
The lights on Broadway were dim for a full 18 months due to the coronavirus. Shows didn’t reopen until Sept. 14, when Wicked, Chicago, Hamilton, and The Lion King reopened simultaneously.

Migrants and refugees from different African nations wait for assistance aboard an overcrowded wooden boat off the Libyan coast in the Mediterranean Sea in February.
Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., rushes back to closed-door negotiations with other senators in June. Manchin became the ire of progressives after keeping Democrats from enacting several pieces of legislation in the closely divided Senate.

Aug. 14’s 7.2-magnitude earthquake in Les Cayes, Haiti, killed at least 2,248 people and damaged or destroyed 137,500 buildings. But this wasn’t Haiti’s first disaster in 2021. President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated on July 7. The Caribbean nation’s infrastructure is still in disrepair from its 2010 earthquake, and gangs rule the streets.
The Panamanian-flagged container ship *Ever Given* became wedged in the Suez Canal on March 23 and blocked canal traffic for six days. More than 200 cargo ships were delayed.

Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth II, died April 9 at age 99 at Windsor Castle. The Duke of Edinburgh, the longest-serving royal consort in British history, was at the Queen’s side for more than six decades of her reign. The royal family, including the 95-year-old queen, follow Philip’s coffin through Windsor Castle.
M.J. Eberhart, 83, of Flag Mountain, Ala., became the oldest hiker to complete the 2,193-mile Appalachian Trail in November. “Nimblewill Nomad,” his trail name, is a retired optometrist.
One of the most dominant gymnasts of all time, Simone Biles, 24, holds seven Olympic medals and led the U.S. team to gold in 2016 and silver in 2021. Biles competed in the women’s balance beam final at the Tokyo Olympic Games on Aug. 3 but withdrew from several events, citing mental blocks.

JEFF PACHOUD/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES
American swimmer Katie Ledecky competes in the final of the women's 1500m freestyle at the Tokyo Olympic Games, postponed since 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Ledecky won two gold medals and two silver medals in Tokyo.

Team Great Britain’s Declan Brooks rides during a training session for the Cycling BMX Freestyle ahead of the Tokyo Olympics.
Gold medal winner Flora Duffy from Bermuda (center), bronze medalist Katie Zaferes from the U.S. (top), and silver medalist Georgia Taylor-Brown from Great Britain (right) react after completing the women’s individual triathlon.

Matt Stutzman of the United States competes during an archery event at the Tokyo Paralympic Games in August.
The United States’ two-decades-long occupation of Afghanistan culminated in a hastily organized airlift in August in which more than 124,000 civilians—including Americans, Afghans, and others—evacuated as the Taliban took over. But thousands of other U.S.-allied Afghans at risk of Taliban persecution were left behind.
An Afghan girl plays in a poor neighborhood in Kabul, Afghanistan, after the Taliban took control of the city. Hundreds of internally displaced people from eastern Afghanistan have lived there.

After U.S. troops pulled out on Aug. 31, Taliban fighters gather in the streets of Kabul to celebrate.

In an image that became an icon of their plight, Afghans desperate to escape the Taliban hand a baby to a U.S. Marine outside the Hamid Karzai International Airport on Aug. 19.
A tornado leveled buildings in Mayfield, Ky., on Dec. 11, part of a storm outbreak across several U.S. states that killed dozens.

LIAM KENNEDY/BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES
Lisa Robinson celebrates the April guilty verdict in the trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who was convicted of killing George Floyd in May 2020. The event set off months of racial and anti-police protests across the country.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Zack Greeley hugs his wife, Emma, after returning from deployment aboard the USS Minnesota submarine the day after Thanksgiving.
Not all votes came this easy during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in June. Politicking around the vote for president was fierce with Ed Litton, a little-known pastor of Redemption Church in Saraland, Ala., edging Georgia pastor Mike Stone by 556 votes in a runoff.

A chairlift at Sierra-at-Tahoe ski resort sits surrounded by the Caldor Fire on Aug. 30. Over 8,000 wildfires in California burned more than 2 million acres in 2021.
William Shatner (second from left) finally got a chance to go to space after playing Capt. James T. Kirk in the Star Trek TV show and movies. He, Audrey Powers, Chris Boshuizen, and Glen de Vries traveled 66.5 miles above the earth in October.

Trucks line up to enter a Port of Oakland shipping terminal on Nov. 10 in California. Intense demand and backed-up supply lines left some consumers without the goods they sought in 2021.
Lava flows destroyed houses in La Laguna on the Canary Island of La Palma, Spain, on Nov. 28, after the Cumbre Vieja volcano erupted. Some residents were able to return to their homes by mid-December, when the volcano eruptions appeared to have ended.

Protesters demonstrate in Manhattan on March 21 following weeks of increased violence against Asian Americans. On March 16, a shooter in the Atlanta area killed eight people at spas—including six Asian women—though police said race wasn’t a motive.
The Chicago White Sox and New York Yankees take the field for a game at the Field of Dreams in Dyersville, Iowa, set of the 1989 feature film.
Ten people died and hundreds more were injured as crowds rushed the stage to hear rapper Travis Scott perform at the Astroworld Music Festival in Houston on Nov. 5. The youngest person to die was 9 years old.

Environmental response crews clean up an oil spill on Oct. 4 in Huntington Beach, Calif. Days before, a pipeline offshore ruptured, releasing tens of thousands of gallons of oil along a 3-mile oil slick.
Police arrest a protester in Havana, Cuba, on July 11. Thousands of Cubans protested the communist government, shouting, “Down with the dictatorship” and “We want liberty” before the government cut off internet and electricity.

Parents and students comfort each other on Nov. 30 after a shooter killed four students and wounded seven others at Oxford High School in Oxford, Mich. Both the shooter and his parents face charges after prosecutors say the boy’s parents could have stopped him.
Search and rescue workers comb the remains of the Champlain Towers South in Surfside, Fla., on June 27, three days after it collapsed, killing 98 people. Degraded structural support caused the 12-story building to collapse.

GIORGIO VIERA/AFPO VIA GETTY IMAGES
Kyle Rittenhouse waits for his attorneys during his homicide trial in November. A jury acquitted Rittenhouse of all charges stemming from the August 2020 incident in which he shot three people, killing two, during an anti-police riot in Kenosha, Wis.

Former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo speaks during an event in April, months before he resigned as governor amid a series of sexual harassment scandals.
Tight end Rob Gronkowski (87) and quarterback Tom Brady (12) celebrate the Tampa Bay Buccaneers’ 31-9 Super Bowl victory over the Kansas City Chiefs on Feb. 7. Brady has quarterbacked his teams (the Buccaneers and the New England Patriots) to seven Super Bowl victories.

Stranded travelers wait out delays or canceled flights at John F. Kennedy International Airport in Queens, N.Y., on Christmas Eve. A wave of the Omicron strain of the coronavirus halted travel as airline crews and would-be flyers tested positive.
DEATHS
compiled by Susan Olasky
PAUL WESTPHAL
Jan. 2; 70 / Hall of Fame basketball player who won a championship with the Boston Celtics but spent most of his career with the Phoenix Suns, as both a player and coach. After his pro career ended, Westphal coached at Southwestern Baptist Bible College and Grand Canyon University.

TANYA ROBERTS
Jan. 4; 65 / Actress for TV and film who had roles on Charlie’s Angels and That ’70s Show and as a Bond girl in A View to a Kill.

TOMMY LASORDA
Jan. 7; 93 / Longtime L.A. Dodgers manager who led the team to two World Series championships. He earned a reputation as a nonstop motivator during his seven decades as a player, scout, minor league manager, and ambassador for the organization.

NEIL SHEEHAN
Jan. 7; 84 / Reporter who won the Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award for the 1988 book A Bright Shining Lie.

ED BRUCE
Jan. 8; 81 / Songwriter who penned “Mamas Don’t Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys,” which became a huge hit for Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings. He ended his career writing Christian music after his conversion in 1997.

VED MEHTA
Jan. 9; 86 / New Yorker writer who introduced American readers to his native India through a 12-volume autobiography, writing in a visual style even though he was blind from the age of 3.

SIEGFRIED FISCHBACHER
Jan. 13; 81 / Entertainer and part of the act Siegfried and Roy. He was a Las Vegas institution with an act that combined big cats with magic.

DALE BAER
Jan. 15; 70 / Animator on films including The Lion King and Who Framed Roger Rabbit with a reputation as an animator’s animator through his work at Disney, Hanna-Barbera, and his own studio.

STEPHEN LUNGU
Jan. 18; 78 / Evangelist in Malawi with a reputation as the Billy Graham of Africa, he went from living on the streets and gang membership to Bible college after his dramatic conversion. During his life, he preached to large crowds and headed up Africa Enterprise in Malawi and internationally.

JOE SCHEIDLER
Jan. 18; 93 / Pro-life activist for half a century, he marched, picketed, and wrote books and pamphlets to inspire other activists.

DON SUTTON
Jan. 18; 75 / Baseball broadcaster and Hall of Fame pitcher with 324 career victories who had a reputation for workmanlike durability, starting 756 games, more than any pitchers other than Nolan Ryan and Cy Young.

SHARON KAY PENMAN
Jan. 21; 75 / Writer of carefully researched historical novels and mysteries set in the middle ages, she was an Edgar Award finalist in 1996 for her first mystery, The Queen’s Man.

HANK AARON
Jan. 22; 86 / Hall of Fame baseball slugger who broke Babe Ruth’s home run record, he overcame racial prejudice throughout a career that took him through the Negro Leagues and the Southern Association, where black players had to stay in separate accommodations. He then played 23 years in the majors, mostly with the Braves, a team that moved from Boston, to Milwaukee, and then Atlanta. As he chased Ruth’s record, some fans reviled him with racist taunts and hate mail. A convert to Catholicism, Aaron told Guideposts, “I need to depend on Someone who is bigger, stronger and wiser than I am. God is my strength.”

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HAL HOLBROOK
Jan. 23; 95 / Actor who for more than 60 years played Mark Twain in a one-man show. He also played other historical figures: Lincoln (twice), John Adams, and Deep Throat in the movie All the President’s Men.
LARRY KING
Jan. 23; 87 / Television and radio personality who conducted more than
50,000 on-air interviews, he was
famous for his suspenders, eight
marriages to seven different women,
and soft interviews of people ranging
from presidents to psychics.

J.D. POWER III
Jan. 23; 89 / Founder of the consumer
research firm that carries his name,
he got his start as a paperboy in
Worcester, Mass., and credited his
Jesuit education at Holy Cross College
with helping establish and maintain
his personal value system.

FRANK SHANKWITZ
Jan. 24; 77 / Arizona Highway Patrol
officer who in 1980 helped a boy with
leukemia realize his wish to be an
honorary patrol officer for a day. He
went on to serve as president and
CEO of the fledgling Make-A-Wish
Foundation.

GEORGE MCDONALD
Jan. 26; 76 / Successful businessman
who quit and took a vow of poverty,
he started the Doe Fund to provide
jobs and second chances to ex-offend-
ers and homeless people in New York.

CLORIS LEACHMAN
Jan. 27; 94 / Actress who won a
supporting actor Oscar for a role in
The Last Picture Show and worked
with Mel Brooks in Young
Frankenstein, she won eight Emmys
for her television work in comedies
like The Mary Tyler Moore Show and
Phyllis. She appeared on Dancing
With the Stars in 2008 at age 82, the
oldest dancer ever to appear on the
show.

CICELY TYSON
Jan. 28; 96 / Oscar-nominated actress
for her role in Sounder, who played
dignified black women in The Trip to
Bountiful on stage (for which she won a
Tony Award at age 88) and TV’s The
Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman,
which earned her two Emmys. Her
memoir Just As I Am: A Memoir came
out two days before her death.

ALLAN BURNS
Jan. 30; 85 / Screenwriter and co-creator
of The Mary Tyler Moore Show, The
Monsters, and Lou Grant, who got his
start working in Jay Ward’s animation
studio, where he created Fractured
Fairy Tales and Dudley Do-Right.

DUSTIN DIAMOND
Feb. 1; 44 / Child actor in television’s
Saved By the Bell and spin-offs, he failed
to find new roles when the show ended.

EMIL FREIREICH
Feb. 1; 93 / Pioneering cancer doctor
at the National Institutes of Health
and MD Anderson Cancer Center, he
helped develop the standard treat-
ment for acute childhood leukemia.

JOHN J. SWEENEY
Feb. 1; 86 / Lifelong Roman Catholic
and head of the AFL-CIO for 15 years,
he saw unionism as an outgrowth of
his faith.

RENNIE DAVIS
Feb. 2; 80 / Leader of the anti-
Vietnam War movement, he helped
found Students for a Democratic
Society and was one of the Chicago
Seven, anti-war protesters who faced
conspiracy charges for disrupting the
Democratic convention in 1968. He
later became a mystic and New Age
entrepreneur.

WAYNE TERWILLIGER
Feb. 3; 95 / Baseball lifer, he played
and coached for 62 years. He achieved
fame when writer Annie Dillard wrote
in An American Childhood that her
mother once heard the phrase
“Terwilliger bunts one” during a
broadcast and fell in love with the
sound of the words. Terwilliger titled
his memoir Terwilliger Bunts One.

CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER
Feb. 5; 91 / Actor who starred in The
Sound of Music, a role he disliked and
considered an “empty carcass,” he
used his classical training to play
Shakespearean roles on stage and
television. He won an Oscar, two
Tonys, and two Emmys over a seven-
decade career.
HERSHEL SHANKS
Feb. 5; 90 / Jewish lawyer who became fascinated with Biblical archeology and founded the magazine *Biblical Archaeology Review*. He broke the stranglehold certain academics had on the Dead Sea Scrolls, publishing bootleg copies, which led to their broad dissemination.

LEON SPINKS
Feb. 5; 67 / Former heavyweight boxer, he won gold at the 1976 Montreal Olympics and defeated Muhammed Ali, who outweighed him by 25 pounds, to become heavyweight champion in 1978.

RAJIE COOK
Feb. 6; 90 / Graphic designer, he co-created the familiar pictographs used in public buildings to designate men's and women's restrooms, smoking and nonsmoking areas, exits, parking, food, etc.

GEORGE SHULTZ
Feb. 7; 100 / Republican who served in three cabinet-level posts in the Nixon administration (Labor, Office of Management and Budget, and Treasury) and as Secretary of State under Ronald Reagan. He encouraged Reagan to engage the Soviets, helped negotiate the INF arms control treaty, and pushed Soviet officials to allow Jews to leave the USSR.

MARY WILSON
Feb. 8; 76 / One of the original Supremes, she stayed with the Motown girl group until it disbanded in the late 1970s. She appeared on *Dancing With the Stars* in 2019 and wrote several books about the Supremes.

CHICK COREA
Feb. 9; 79 / Jazz pianist who earned 23 Grammy Awards and three Latin Grammys, he was an innovative player and composer who played with Herbie Hancock, Miles Davis, and other greats.

S. PRESTLEY BLAKE
Feb. 11; 106 / Founder with his brother of the Friendly’s restaurant chain, which, he called “his baby,” he was a history buff, collector of Rolls Royce cars, and generous philanthropist: To celebrate his 100th birthday, he built a replica of Monticello in Somers, Conn., which he donated to Hillsdale College for the Blake Center for Freedom and Faith.

LESLIE ROBERTSON
Feb. 11; 92 / Structural engineer who designed the World Trade Center towers and lived to see terrorists destroy them in 2001.

TOM BETHELL
Feb. 12; 84 / Journalist who moved to the U.S. from London to write about jazz. He was a conservative and traditional Roman Catholic who was a media fellow at the Hoover Institution, wrote for *The American Spectator*, and challenged evolution in the book *House of Cards: A Journalist’s Odyssey Through the Darwin Debates*.

LYNN STALMASTER
Feb. 12; 93 / First casting director to receive an Oscar and the first to receive a credit in the main titles of a feature film (*The Thomas Crown Affair*). He discovered Christopher Reeve (*Superman*) and jump-started the career of John Travolta (*Welcome Back Kotter*).

MELVIN BANKS
Feb. 13; 86 / Founder of Urban Ministries and a graduate of Moody Bible Institute and Wheaton College, he realized that the black church needed teaching materials with positive images of black people, so he set out to publish them.

LOUIS CLARK
Feb. 13; 73 / Musician with the Electric Light Orchestra, he brought classical music to ordinary people with the popular *Hooked on Classics*, which fused a drum beat to classical compositions.

CARMAN
Feb. 16; 65 / Gospel Music Hall of Fame singer who drew large audiences of Christian teens to concerts with elaborate videos and hit story-songs, including “The Champion” and “Radically Saved.”
BERNARD LOWN
Feb. 16; 99 / Cardiologist who invented the modern direct current defibrillator, opposed nuclear weapons, and won a Nobel Peace Prize.

JESSICA MCLINTOCK
Feb. 16; 90 / Former teacher who purchased a fashion business and turned her love for romantic hippy/Victorian design into a business that designed wedding dresses for the likes of Hillary Clinton.

RUSH LIMBAUGH
Feb. 17; 70 / Broadcaster who in the 1980s gave voice to conservatives who recoiled at the leftward trend of the mainstream media, he used his daily show to skewer liberals. In the process he revitalized talk radio, inspired imitators on the right and left, and contributed to our polarized political climate.

ARTURO DI MODICA
Feb. 20; 80 / Italian sculptor whose 3.5-ton bronze “Charging Bull” came to symbolize Wall Street, he spent $350,000 to cast it and erected it without permission after the 1987 stock market crash.

LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI
Feb. 22; 101 / Last of the Beat poets and founder of San Francisco’s City Lights bookstore and City Lights Publishers.

ALEKSANDER DOBA
Feb. 22; 74 / Polish adventurer who kayaked three times across the Atlantic Ocean, making his third crossing when he was 70. He died on the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

JOHN BAKER
Feb. 23; 72 / Co-founder of Celebrate Recovery, a Christian 12-step program, he was a recovering alcoholic when he proposed the idea to Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church. It now has chapters in more than 30,000 churches and works with Prison Fellowship.

DAVID MINTZ
Feb. 24; 89 / Inventor of Tofutti, he experimented for nine years to create a nondairy ice cream for observant Jews who can’t mix milk and meat at the same meal. It became popular among vegans, health nuts, and celebrities, earning Mintz millions and launching the nondairy dessert category.

JOHN GEDDERT
Feb. 25; 63 / Former USA gymnastics coach who led his team to the 2012 London Olympics. He committed suicide hours after Michigan charged him with 24 felony counts, including human trafficking and sexual assault of gymnasts in his care.

PATRICIA BARTLEY BROWN
Feb. 26; 103 / One of the female code-breakers at Bletchley Park, she led the effort to crack the Nazi’s diplomatic code Floradora, enabling the allies to read Hitler’s encoded messages.

LARRY CRABB
Feb. 28; 77 / Influential Christian counselor, Bible teacher, and author of more than 25 books, he was involved for three decades with Colorado Christian University.

IRV CROSS
Feb. 28; 81 / NFL player and the first black sports analyst on network TV, he anchored NFL Today for 14 years. Cross wrote in his memoir, “There hasn’t been one problem I’ve ever had that wasn’t addressed in the Bible. To me, to solve any issue, you turn to Jesus Christ.”

VERNON JORDAN
March 1; 85 / Washington, D.C., lawyer and power broker who survived an assassination attempt, he began his career after law school working as a civil rights lawyer and then head of the National Urban League. He used his connections with business and political leaders to help the next generation of black leaders advance.

MARK PAVELICH
March 4; 63 / Olympic gold medalist as part of the 1980 “Miracle on Ice” hockey team, he played in the NHL where he suffered repeated concussions that may have led to his serious mental illness.
ALLAN MCDONALD  
March 6; 83 / Engineer with the company responsible for the space shuttle Challenger's booster rockets, he refused to approve the January 1986 launch out of concern that freezing temperatures had weakened the ship's O-rings. NASA ignored the warnings and Challenger exploded, killing everyone onboard.

LOU OTTENS  
March 6; 94 / Dutch engineer with Philips who invented the audio cassette, which transformed the way people listened to music.

CARLA WALLENDA  
March 6; 85 / One of the Flying Wallendas, she first appeared on the high wire when her parents carried her across on a bicycle at 6 weeks old. She last performed at age 81 when she did a handstand atop an 80-foot sway pole.

NORTON JUSTER  
March 8; 91 / Author of The Phantom Tollbooth and The Dot and the Line, he was also an architect who designed the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst, Mass.

LARRY WALKER  
March 8; 88 / Hebrew scholar and Baptist seminary professor, he was the last living member of the original NIV translation team.

JOAN WALSH ANGLUND  
March 9; 95 / Poet and illustrator who wrote more than 120 little books, including A Friend Is Someone Who Likes You, and sold more than 50 million copies of her books worldwide.

JAMES LEVINE  
March 9; 77 / Conductor of the Metropolitan Opera for more than four decades before illness and charges of sexual harassment and abuse brought him down.

ROGER MUDD  
March 9; 93 / Noted television political reporter at CBS, NBC, and PBS who was present at Robert Kennedy's assassination.

JOHN POLKINGHORNE  
March 9; 90 / British physicist, writer, and Anglican priest who retired from science after 25 years to pursue the priesthood. He wrote 26 books and received a knighthood and the Templeton Prize among other honors.

LUIS PALAU  
March 11; 86 / Evangelist who preached to large crowds in Latin America and sponsored festivals in the U.S. that reached beyond evangelicals.

MARVIN HAGLER  
March 13; 66 / Hall of Fame boxer who changed his name to Marvelous Marvin Hagler, he was the undisputed middleweight champion from 1980 to 1987.

YAPHET KOTTO  
March 15; 81 / Actor who played Idi Amin in the 1976 TV movie Raid on Entebbe, the Bond villain Mr. Big in Live and Let Die, and a police lieutenant on the TV series Homicide: Life on the Street.

GLYNN S. LUNNEY  
March 19; 84 / NASA flight director who devised the plan to return safely three Apollo 13 astronauts after an explosion disabled their spacecraft.

ELGIN BAYLOR  
March 22; 86 / Hall of Fame basketball player and 11-time All Star who changed the game with his ability to jump and change direction in midair.

BOBBY BROWN  
March 25; 96 / Veteran of two wars (WWII and Korea) and an infielder with the New York Yankees whose bat came alive in postseason play. He hit .439 in 17 World Series games, earning four championship rings. He attended medical school while playing baseball, became a cardiologist, and served as American League president for 10 years.

BEVERLY CLEARY  
March 25; 104 / Creator of well-loved children's books about Henry Huggins and Beezus and Ramona, she was a children's librarian who wrote because kids asked her for books about children like them.
LARRY McMURTRY
March 26; 84 / Novelist and antiquarian bookseller who wrote more than 30 books, many of which became movie and television hits, including *The Last Picture Show*, *Terms of Endearment*, and *Lonesome Dove*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature.

G. GORDON LIDDY
March 30; 90 / Lawyer who worked for Richard Nixon, he led the White House “plumbers,” a group of dirty tricksters who bugged the Democratic National Committee. He served 52 months in prison and went on to write best-selling books and host a talk radio show.

ROBERT E. COOLEY
April 1; 91 / Archaeologist and former president of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, he was one of the founding board members of the Museum of the Bible.

PENELOPE LAINGEN
April 3; 89 / State Department wife who became famous when Iranian militants took her husband and other Americans hostage in 1979. Inspired by the song “Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree,” she tied a yellow ribbon around the tree in her front yard, setting off a movement that made its way even to the White House. The original yellow ribbon is now at the Smithsonian.

CHARLES COOLIDGE
April 6; 99 / He earned the Medal of Honor for his “heroic and superior leadership” during a WWII battle in France that lasted for four days.

ALCEE HASTINGS
April 6; 84 / Sitting congressman from South Florida, he was a civil rights lawyer and impeached federal judge before his election to the U.S. Congress in 1992 as a Democrat.

JOHN NAISBITT
April 8; 92 / Business analyst who transformed himself into a futurist with the bestselling *Megatrends*, he predicted the rise of the information age and the movement of populations from the industrial North and Midwest to the Sun Belt.

DAVID B. CALHOUN
April 9; 83 / Professor of church history at Covenant Seminary for 30 years, he served as a missionary in Jamaica, wrote books about the Reformers, and used his decades-long struggle with cancer to teach on suffering.

RAY LAMBERT
April 9; 100 / Medic in WWII who received honors in 2019 from Donald Trump for heroism at Omaha Beach during the D-Day invasion of France, saving fellow soldiers despite his own serious injuries.

PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH
April 9; 99 / Born Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, he was husband of Queen Elizabeth II for 73 years and is remembered for helping modernize the royal family.

RAMSEY CLARK
April 10; 93 / Attorney General under LBJ who filed lawsuits to desegregate schools and uphold voting rights. He supported and then turned against the Vietnam War, becoming a critic of American foreign policy and defender of dictators, including Muammar al-Gaddafi and Saddam Hussein.

BERNIE MADOFF
April 14; 82 / Ponzi-schemer who bilked thousands, including Sandy Koufax and Elie Wiesel, in the largest fraud in Wall Street history. He died in prison where he was serving a 150-year sentence.

CHARLESGESCHEK
April 16; 81 / Computer scientist and co-founder of Adobe Inc., he became a father of desktop publishing. He was a product of Catholic education and donated to Catholic agencies and schools.

HESTER FORD
April 17; 116 / America’s oldest person for a time, she was born in 1904 and witnessed profound cultural changes, especially for African Americans. She had 12 children, 48 grandchildren, 108 great-grandchildren, and approximately 120 great-great-grandchildren.

Liddy: Brownie Harris/Corbis via Getty Images; McMurtry: Business Wire/AP; Philip: Tim Graham Photo Library via Getty Images; Madoff: Jin Lee/Bloomberg via Getty Images
WALTER MONDALE
April 19; 93 / Liberal U.S. senator from Minnesota from 1964 to 1976 who served as vice president under Jimmy Carter. He ran for president in 1984 but lost to incumbent Ronald Reagan in a landslide. His running mate, Rep. Geraldine Ferraro from New York, was the first female vice-presidential nominee of any major party in U.S. history.

DANIEL KAMINSKY
April 23; 42 / Chief scientist at White Ops, the internet security firm he founded. He learned to code at age 5 and discovered in 2008 a major security flaw in the basic address system of the internet. He alerted authorities who fixed the problem before hackers could take advantage of it.

ARTHUR STAATS
April 26; 97 / Psychologist who invented the “time out,” he was, according to Child magazine, one of the “20 People Who Changed Childhood.”

MICHAEL COLLINS
April 28; 90 / Astronaut who piloted the command module of Apollo II, he orbited the moon while fellow astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin flew the lunar lander to the moon. He left NASA to head up the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum.

JASON MATTHEWS
April 28; 69 / CIA officer for 33 years who plumbed his experiences in writing realistic spy novels, including Red Sparrow.

MARTIN BOOKSPAN
April 29; 94 / “Voice” of Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Opera, and the Boston Symphony who provided commentary along with broadcasts of classical music on public radio and television for half a century.

ELI BROAD
April 30; 87 / Los Angeles billionaire, he built two Fortune 500 companies and donated billions to arts organizations, universities, charter schools, and the Democratic Party.

OLYMPIA DUKAKIS
May 1; 89 / Actress and cousin to 1988 Democratic candidate for president Michael Dukakis, she won an Oscar for her role as an Italian mother in Moonstruck.

HELEN MURRAY FREE
May 1; 98 / Chemist who developed with her husband a dip-and-read test to detect glucose, which made it easier to accurately diagnose and monitor diabetes.

DAMON WEAVER
May 1; 23 / Child news reporter who interviewed Joe Biden, Oprah Winfrey, basketball player Dwyane Wade, and Barack Obama. That interview took place at the White House when Weaver was only 11 years old.

BOB ABERNETHY
May 2; 93 / Journalist who retired from NBC and launched Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly to examine the spiritual aspects of the news.

BOBBY UNSER SR.
May 2; 87 / Member of car racing royalty, he won the Indianapolis 500 three times and the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb 13 times, a record for the twisty race that ascends 4,720 feet, making 156 turns over its 12.42 mile length.

LLOYD PRICE
May 3; 88 / Singer and songwriter, member of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, and entrepreneur who wrote “Lawdy Miss Clawdy,” “Stagger Lee,” and “Personality.”

PAUL VAN DOREN
May 6; 90 / Creator of the rubber-soled Vans shoes, the skateboarding shoe of choice that Sean Penn popularized in the movie Fast Times at Ridgemont High.

LEIGH PERKINS
May 7; 93 / Avid fisherman and hunter who bought the oldest mail-order company in America, Orvis, and turned it into a brand with thousands of stores and employees.
PIERRE “PETE” DUPONT IV
May 8; 86 / An heir to the DuPont fortune and governor of Delaware, he brought to his state fiscal discipline, banks and credit card companies, and desegregation of public schools.

SPENCER SILVER
May 8; 80 / 3M chemist who invented a unique adhesive that failed to catch on until another engineer experimented with it on the paper he used to bookmark his church hymnal—thus was born Post-it Notes.

ROBERT QUACKENBUSH
May 17; 91 / Author and illustrator of more than 200 children’s books featuring characters such as Miss Mallard, Henry the Duck, and Sherlock Chick.

BUDDY ROEMER
May 17; 77 / Louisiana Democrat-turned-Republican who served in Congress for eight years as part of the conservative “Boll Weevils,” Democrats who supported many of Ronald Reagan’s policies. He later served one term as governor of his state.

CHARLES GRODIN
May 18; 86 / Stage, movie, and TV actor who earned plaudits from The New York Times for portraying a “kind of masculine dunderhead that every decent man aspires to be.”

ARTHUR HILLS
May 18; 91 / Noted golf course architect for more than 50 years, he moved from landscape design to golf course design at a time when golf was exploding in popularity and golf communities were developing across the country.

HARVEY SCHLOSSBERG
May 21; 85 / A police detective with a psychology degree, he persuaded police departments to adopt a “waiting and talking” strategy in hostage situations.

ERIC CARLE
May 23; 91 / Children’s book author and illustrator of titles including The Very Hungry Caterpillar, he used bright collage illustrations, cutouts, and simple storytelling in books that sold more than 170 million copies worldwide. Born in the U.S. of German parents, Carle spent WWII in Germany because his homesick mother wanted to return. The grayness of those war years resulted in his love of color.

SAMUEL E. WRIGHT
May 24; 74 / Voice of Sebastian the Crab in the 1989 Disney movie The Little Mermaid who starred in Broadway plays including The Tap Dance Kid and The Lion King. He earned two Tony nominations and sang the Oscar-winning song from Mermaid, “Under the Sea.” He was married to his wife, Amanda, for nearly five decades.

LOIS EHLERT
May 25; 86 / Illustrator of Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, she used bright collage artwork to illustrate 38 children’s books, including the Caldecott Honors awardee Color Zoo.

JOHN WARNER
May 26; 94 / GOP Senator from Virginia for 30 years who had military expertise and was Elizabeth Taylor’s sixth husband.

FOSTER FRIESS
May 27; 81 / Investment manager who became a major donor to Republican candidates and provided startup funds for the Daily Caller and Turning Point USA, he gave away $500 million to Christian and other charities.

GWEN SHAMBLIN LARA
May 29; 66 / Founder of the Weigh Down Workshop who founded Remnant Fellowship Church, which critics called a cult because it denied the Trinity and treated Lara as a prophet.

GAVIN MACLEOD
May 29; 90 / Actor who played a reporter on The Mary Tyler Moore Show and a genial cruise ship captain on The Love Boat. He professed faith in Christ in the 1980s and turned his attention to Christian film, including The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry.
FLOYD MCCLUNG
May 29; 75 / Missionary with Youth With a Mission (YWAM) for 35 years, including eight years as international director, he founded All Nations to train missionaries and wrote the bestselling The Father Heart of God.

B.J. THOMAS
May 29; 78 / Country/pop singer whose “Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head” reached No. 1 on the pop charts. He made a profession of faith in Christ after a decade of drug and alcohol dependency.

ARLENE GOLONKA
May 31; 85 / Comedic actress who played Millie Hutchens on The Andy Griffith Show and its spin-off, Mayberry R.F.D.

RAYMOND DONOVAN
June 2; 90 / Secretary of Labor in the Reagan administration who resigned after a Bronx grand jury indicted him on fraud and grand larceny charges.

F. LEE BAILEY
June 3; 87 / High-profile and controversial criminal defense attorney who defended O.J. Simpson and the Boston Strangler, wrote books about his cases, and was disbarred in Florida and Massachusetts.

CLARENCE WILLIAMS III
June 4; 81 / Actor who played the hip Linc Hayes on The Mod Squad (1968-1973), one of the first regular starring roles for a black man on network TV.

RICHARD ROBINSON
June 5; 85 / Son of the Scholastic founder who turned the company into a billion-dollar business with series including Harry Potter, Magic Schoolbus, Clifford the Big Red Dog, Hunger Games, and Captain Underpants.

MARTHA WHITE
June 5; 99 / In 1953, two years before the Montgomery bus boycott, Martha White, 31, sat down in a “whites only” section of a bus in Baton Rouge, La., leading police to threaten her with arrest. Subsequent events led to a boycott, which pioneered techniques that MLK later used in Montgomery.

B.J. Thomas

RICHARD LONGENECKER
June 7; 90 / Evangelical New Testament scholar who wrote Paul, Apostle of Liberty and commentaries on Galatians and Romans.

JIM “MUDCAT” GRANT
June 11; 85 / Major League pitcher for 14 seasons who was the first black pitcher in the American League to win 20 games, which he did in 1965 for Minnesota. He also sang as part of Mudcat Grant and the Kittens, including three goodwill tours for the troops in Vietnam.

NED BEATTY
June 13; 83 / Supporting actor who played southern-fried characters on stage and in movies, including Deliverance and Nashville.

BOBBY UNSER JR.
June 13; 65 / Stunt car driver in the TV series Walker, Texas Ranger, he was the son of the famous racing champion who died in May 2021.

RICHARD STOLLEY
June 16; 92 / Founding editor of People magazine, he convinced Abraham Zapruder in 1963 to sell his amateur movie of the John F. Kennedy assassination to Life magazine for $150,000.

JOAN ULLYOT
June 19; 80 / Doctor and marathon runner who helped convince the International Olympic Committee to include a women’s marathon in 1984.

PATRICIA REILLY GIFF
June 22; 86 / Two-time Newbery Honor–winner for Lily’s Crossing and Pictures of Hollis Woods, she also wrote humorous books that drew from her experience as a reading teacher.

DONALD RUMSFELD
June 29; 88 / Defense secretary under Gerald Ford in the 1970s and George W. Bush in the 2000s, he became famous for talking about “unknown unknowns—the ones we don’t know we don’t know.”
HENRY PARHAM
July 4; 99 / Member of the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion of D-Day who was part of a black combat unit responsible for launching at night enormous balloons, tethered by cables adorned with explosive charges, to bring down Nazi planes.

JOHN P. McMEEL
July 7; 85 / Co-founder of Universal Press Syndicate, he was the salesman who brought Doonesbury and Calvin and Hobbes to the funny pages.

ANDY WILLIAMS
July 9; 49 / Drummer for Casting Crowns from 2001 to 2009 who died from injuries suffered in a motorcycle accident while riding to church.

CHARLIE ROBINSON
July 11; 75 / Actor who played Mac on the television series Night Court, he had a 50-year small screen and stage career.

EDWIN EDWARDS
July 12; 93 / Four-term Louisiana governor who served more than eight years in prison for bribery and extortion.

KURT WESTERGAARD
July 14; 86 / Danish cartoonist whose cartoon depicting Muhammad with a bomb-shaped turban set off protests and made him the target of Muslim ire.

FLOYD COOPER
July 15; 65 / Illustrator of about 100 children’s books, mostly on episodes in black history. He won the Coretta Scott King Award for The Blacker the Berry. His last book, Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre by Carole Boston Weatherford, came out in 2021.

ROBBY STEINHARDT
July 17; 71 / Violinist and singer with Kansas who brought violin to rock music in songs such as “Dust in the Wind.”

PHYLLIS GOULD
July 20; 99 / One of the first six women hired to work in a California shipyard during WWII, she became a model for Rosie the Riveter and worked to see all the Rosies honored with a National Rosie the Riveter Day (March 21) and a Rosie the Riveter Congressional Gold Medal, which she helped design.

JACKIE MASON
July 24; 93 / Ordained rabbi who quit the rabbinate after his rabbi father died, then became a stand-up comedian with a Jewish sensibility.

ROBERT P. MOSES
July 25; 86 / Civil rights leader who helped blacks register to vote in Mississippi. He later founded the Algebra Project to help poor black children perform better in math.

DUSTY HILL
July 28; 72 / Long-bearded, Stetson-wearing bass player for ’80s rock group ZZ Top. He gained entry into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2004.

RON POPEIL
July 28; 86 / TV pitchman and inventor of the Veg-O-Matic and the Pocket Fisherman. He sold his products through late-night infomercials and home shopping networks, becoming an icon of popular culture.

GARY B. NASH
July 29; 88 / Historian who headed up a government-funded drive to establish national history standards in the 1980s and 1990s despite criticism from conservatives.

DAVE SEVERANCE
Aug. 2; 102 / Marine captain at the time who sent his company to the top of Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima during WWII to plant an American flag. The brave act, captured by AP photographer Joe Rosenthal, encouraged Americans at home.

J.R. RICHARDS
Aug. 4; 71 / Overpowering pitcher with the Houston Astros who led the National League in strikeouts in 1978 and 1979. In July 1980 he suffered a stroke and never pitched again in the Majors.
ELOISE GREENFIELD
Aug. 5; 92 / Poet and winner of the Coretta Scott King Award who wrote for children many biographies of black Americans, including Rosa Parks, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Paul Robeson.

WALTER WANGERIN JR.
Aug. 5; 77 / Lutheran pastor, professor, and writer who won a National Book Award for his Book of the Dun Cow and wrote about his relationship with an adopted son in Father and Son.

JANE WITHERS
Aug. 7; 95 / Popular child actress in the 1930s; as an adult she played Josephine the plumber in ads for Comet cleanser.

BOBBY BOWDEN
Aug. 8; 91 / Legendary Florida State football coach who took his team to national championships in 1993 and 1999. He was open about his Christian faith, earned the nickname Saint Bobby, and told his children, “There’s only one person who’s ever been perfect on this earth, and He ain’t your daddy.”

MAKI KAJI
Aug. 10; 69 / Japanese college dropout who took an existing logic puzzle, spiffed it up, dubbed it Sudoku, and made it a worldwide phenomenon.

NANCY GRIFFITH
Aug. 13; 68 / Singer-songwriter who earned a place in the Texas Songwriters Hall of Fame for songs like “Trouble in the Fields” and “Love at the Five & Dime.”

DON POYNTER
Aug. 13; 96 / Inventor who made many TV appearances. He had more than 100 patents for gadgets and novelty toys: a basketball backboard for a waste basket, the Creeping Golf Ball, and the Talking Toilet. He also turned his college baton twirler and drum major experience into a three-year stint as a side entertainer with the Harlem Globetrotters.

GILBERT SELTZER
Aug. 14; 106 / Architect and one of the last surviving members of the “Ghost Army,” a WWII unit of 1,100 soldiers that used camouflage, inflatable tanks, and sound effects to make the Germans think the Allied armies were massing where they weren’t.

DANIEL FARRELL
Aug. 16; 74 / Antiques expert who brought the British Antiques Roadshow to PBS in 1997.

SHEILA BROMBERG
Aug. 17; 92 / Harpist and classically trained musician who played harp for orchestras, including the London Philharmonic, and picked up extra cash in the 1960s as a session musician for the Beatles, Bing Crosby, Sammy Davis Jr., and Frank Sinatra.

IOHAN GUEORGUIEV
Aug. 19; 33 / Wilderness bikepacker who traveled from Canada to Argentina making long-form YouTube “See the World” videos of his adventures, capturing the isolation and grandeur of the rugged, off-road paths he took.

TOM T. HALL
Aug. 20; 85 / Country Music Hall of Fame singer and songwriter of hits including “Harper Valley PTA” who earned the nickname “The Storyteller” for his narrative tunes.

DON EVERLY
Aug. 21; 84 / Oldest of the harmonizing Everly Brothers of “Wake Up Little Susie” and “All I Have to Do Is Dream” fame. He and his brother earned 15 Top 10 hits between 1957 and 1962 and a place in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

CHARLIE WATTS
Aug. 24; 80 / Drummer for the Rolling Stones for half a century, he was a graphic artist by training and a jazz drummer by passion.

ED ASNER
Aug. 29; 91 / Actor and liberal political activist who played crusty journalist Lou Grant in The Mary Tyler Moore Show and its spin-off, Lou Grant.
MICHAEL CONSTANTINE
Aug. 31; 94 / Greek American actor who played the father in My Big Fat Greek Wedding and a principal on the TV series Room 222.

DAVID PATTEN
Sept. 2; 47 / Undrafted receiver out of Western Carolina who played 12 seasons in the NFL, including four with the Patriots. He earned three Super Bowl rings and became a minister after retirement.

WILLARD SCOTT
Sept. 4; 87 / Goofy Today Show weatherman who gave shout-outs to people celebrating their 100th birthdays. He joined Today in 1980 and retired in 2015. A Baptist who often said if he hadn’t become an entertainer he would have been a preacher, he loved people: “I’m like a dog. You just open the door and I go, ‘rrrr, rrrr,’ and then I lick everybody’s face.”

CLIFF FREEMAN
Sept. 5; 80 / Advertising copywriter who came up with “Where’s the beef?” for Wendy’s and the jingle “Sometimes you feel like a nut, sometimes you don’t,” for Almond Joy and Mounds candy bars.

JOHN SHELBY SPONG
Sept. 12; 90 / Bishop in the Episcopal Church who ordained the first openly gay priest, favored the ordination of women, denied the virgin birth and Christ’s resurrection, and wrote best-selling, pop theology books.

REUBEN KLAMER
Sept. 14; 99 / Adman, inventor, and National Toy Hall of Fame member who created The Game of Life to celebrate the 100th anniversary of toy company Milton Bradley. The game, a reimagining of a 19th-century board game, has sold more than 70 million copies worldwide.

NORM MACDONALD
Sept. 14; 61 / Comedian on Saturday Night Live who earned a reputation for droll wit as the show’s “Weekend Update” anchor.

JANE POWELL
Sept. 16; 92 / Golden Age actress who played opposite Fred Astaire in Royal Wedding and Howard Keel in Seven Brides for Seven Brothers. She was a bridesmaid in Elizabeth Taylor’s first wedding and sang at the inauguration ball of Harry S. Truman.

MELVIN VAN PEEBLES
Sept. 21; 89 / The “Rosa Parks of black cinema,” he wrote, directed, and starred in early 1970s movies that influenced black filmmakers of the next generation.

TOMMY KIRK
Sept. 28; 79 / Actor and “Disney Legend” who starred as a child in Swiss Family Robinson, Son of Flubber, Old Yeller, and The Hardy Boys adventures.

TODD AKIN
Oct. 3; 74 / Six-term Missouri Republican who gave up his House seat to run for the Senate in 2012, losing that race after he said rape rarely resulted in pregnancy.

EVELYN MANGHAM
Oct. 5; 98 / Christian and Missionary Alliance missionary who pushed evangelical churches in 1975 to sponsor refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. She and her husband co-founded World Relief’s refugee resettlement program.

MARTIN SHERWIN
Oct. 6; 84 / Pulitzer Prize–winning co-author of American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer about the father of nuclear weapons.

WILLIAM “BILLY” ABRAHAM
Oct. 7; 73 / Irish-born Methodist scholar who wrote more than 20 books and was the founding director in 2020 of the Wesley House of Studies at Baylor’s Truett Seminary.

RAYMOND ODIERNO
Oct. 8; 67 / Retired four-star general and the 38th Army Chief of Staff who led U.S. forces during the second Iraq War and oversaw the “surge.”

SCOTT AND POWELL: NBCU PHOTO BANK/NBCUNIVERSAL VIA GETTY IMAGES; MCDONALD: MICHAEL SCHWARTZ/WIREIMAGE VIA GETTY IMAGES; KIRK: DISNEY GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT VIA GETTY IMAGES

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SHAWN MCLEMORE
Oct. 9; 54 / Singer with the gospel group New Image, he had hits including “I Believe” and appeared in Tyler Perry stage plays.

RUTHIE TOMPSON
Oct. 10; 111 / Official “Disney Legend” (for her longevity at the studio) who worked as a painter and scene planner for 40 years on films, including classics Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Pinocchio, Dumbo, and The Rescuers.

BRIAN GOLDNER
Oct. 11; 58 / Head of Hasbro Inc., he thought iconic toys like Transformers, Mr. Potato Head, and My Little Pony should star in movies and television shows. The six Transformer movies brought in more than $4 billion, proving him right and encouraging other toy companies to go and do likewise.

GARY PAULSEN
Oct. 13; 82 / Author who twice ran the 1,200-mile Iditarod dog sled race, wrote children’s adventure books, including Hatchet, and was a three-time Newbery honoree.

BRIAN GOLDR
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TOM MOREY
Oct. 14; 86 / Surfer and inventor of the lightweight foam Boogie Board, he made riding the waves possible for almost anyone.

DOROTHY STEEL
Oct. 15; 95 / Retiree who started acting at age 88, she appeared as a tribal elder in Black Panther at age 90, appeared in Jumanji: The Next Level, and was filming the Black Panther sequel when she died.

RALPH CARMICHAEL
Oct. 18; 94 / “Father of contemporary church music” who introduced new musical forms to Christian music, wrote more than 300 gospel songs, scored movies like The Blob and The Cross and the Switchblade, and became a producer for secular artists, including Rosemary Clooney, Bing Crosby, and Nat King Cole.

COLIN POWELL
Oct. 18; 84 / Barrier-breaking Army general who served as national security adviser to Ronald Reagan and the first black Secretary of State under George W. Bush. He became a familiar figure during the presidency of George H.W. Bush for leading military operations in Panama and against Saddam Hussein in the first Gulf War.

LESLIE BRICUSSE
Oct. 19; 90 / Songwriter and composer for stage and screen who collaborated on hits, including “What Kind of Fool Am I,” “The Candy Man” and “Pure Imagination” from the movie Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, “Goldfinger” from the James Bond film, and “Talk to the Animals” from Dr. Doolittle.

JERRY PINKNEY
Oct. 20; 81 / Caldecott Medal winner and author or illustrator of more than 100 books who combined his love of classic tales with a desire to celebrate black culture. He also illustrated a series of black heritage stamps for the U.S. Postal Service.

HALYNA HUTCHINS
Oct. 21; 42 / Ukrainian-born cinematographer who died from a gunshot wound on the set of Rust.

PETER SCOLARI
Oct. 22; 66 / Actor who played opposite Tom Hanks in Bosom Buddies, with Bob Newhart in Newhart, and in Girls with Lena Dunham.

A. LINWOOD HOLTON
Oct. 28; 98 / First Republican governor of Virginia (1970-74) after 100 years of Democratic rule who supported racial integration and gained union and small business support.

BOB BAKER
Nov. 3; 82 / British screenwriter who was co-creator of robot dog K-9 on the original Dr. Who and co-wrote Wallace and Gromit features, including The Wrong Trousers.
MAX CLELAND
Nov. 9; 79 / Vietnam War veteran and triple amputee who served as head of the Veterans’ Administration under Jimmy Carter and one term in the U.S. Senate as a Democrat from Georgia.

F.W. DE KLERK
Nov. 11; 85 / Last president of apartheid South Africa who supported the country’s racial laws before changing his mind, releasing Nelson Mandela from prison, and joining with him to remake the country. He and Mandela share the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize.

JAY LAST
Nov. 11; 92 / Physicist and seminal figure in Silicon Valley who was one of the founders of Fairchild Semiconductor, which pioneered the design and manufacture of computer chips that made modern technology possible.

LABIB MADANAT
Nov. 14; 56 / Palestinian Christian pastor who evangelized his Jewish and Muslim neighbors, he headed the Palestinian Bible Society, opened a Christian bookstore in Gaza, and raised funds for a Bible translation into modern Hebrew.

DAVE FRISHBERG
Nov. 17; 88 / Jazz songwriter of “Peel Me a Grape,” he gained a larger and younger audience with “I’m Just a Bill” and other songs for Schoolhouse Rock!

PETER BUCK
Nov. 18; 90 / Nuclear physicist and co-founder of Subway, he encouraged the son of neighbors to open a sub shop to help pay for college and invested $1,000 to get the shop off the ground.

IAN FISHBACK
Nov. 19; 42 / Member of the 82nd Airborne in Iraq who in 2005 reported abusive behavior by U.S. Army members toward Iraqi prisoners, which led to an investigation and passage of the Detainee Treatment Act.

PHILIP MARGO
Nov. 13; 79 / Member of the early ’60s group the Tokens, he sang baritone on their 1961 hit “The Lion Sleeps Tonight.”

ROBERT BLY
Nov. 21; 94 / Prolific poet who opposed the wars in Vietnam and Iraq and launched a men’s movement with the book Iron John, which sat for more than a year on The New York Times bestseller list.

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
Nov. 26; 91 / Tony Award–winning composer and lyricist, he wrote the lyrics for West Side Story and Gypsy, and the words and music for 12 plays, including A Little Night Music, Company, Sweeney Todd, and Sunday in the Park With George, which were often more popular with critics than the theater-going public.

ADOLFO
Nov. 27; 98 / Fashion designer for a who’s who of Manhattan society women in the ’60s, ’70s, and ’80s, he designed hats for Lady Bird Johnson (for her husband’s 1964 inaugural festivities) and dresses for Nancy Reagan, as first lady both of California and of the U.S.

LEE ELDER
Nov. 28; 87 / Barrier-breaking black golfer who was the first African American to earn an invitation to the Masters tournament (in 1975) and the first to play on the U. S. Ryder Cup team. He played many years on the UGA tour—like baseball’s Negro League—when blacks were banned from the PGA tour. He won four PGA tournaments even though he was 40 years old when he played in his first PGA tournament.

CARRIE MEEK
Nov. 28; 95 / Granddaughter of slaves, she became in 1992 the first African American to serve in Congress from Florida since Reconstruction.

PHIL SAVIANO
Nov. 28; 69 / Sexual abuse survivor in Boston, he became an important source to the Boston Globe reporters investigating the scandal as portrayed in the movie Spotlight. “My gift to the world was not being afraid to speak out.”
MARCUS LAMB
Nov. 30; 64 / Televangelist and founder of Daystar Television Network, he provided a forum for vaccine skeptics like Robert Kennedy Jr.

BOB DOLE
Dec. 5; 98 / WWII veteran who suffered near fatal injuries in the war’s last weeks, he overcame his injuries—including a paralyzed arm—to become a U.S. Senator from Kansas, where he served for 27 years. He had a reputation while Senate Majority Leader for getting things done, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the WWII Memorial in Washington. He left the Senate when he won the 1996 GOP presidential nomination, a campaign he lost to Bill Clinton.

BILL GLASS
Dec. 5; 86 / Defensive end for the Detroit Lions and Cleveland Browns with an 11-year career in the NFL, he went to seminary while in Cleveland, discipled his teammates, and later established a prison ministry to serve incarcerated people.

MASAYUKI UEMURA
Dec. 6; 78 / Inventor of the Nintendo and the Super Nintendo (which sold 49 million units worldwide).

AL UNSER SR.
Dec. 9; 82 / Four-time Indianapolis 500 winner. He and his brother Bobby (who died in May) were the only brothers to win the Indy 500, and he and his son Al Jr. were the only father/son winners of that race.

MICHAEL NESMITH
Dec. 10; 78 / Stocking-cap-wearing member of the Monkees and the son of the woman who invented Liquid Paper, he had a brief solo music career and created one of the first music videos.

ANNE RICE
Dec. 11; 80 / Novelist and author of Interview With a Vampire and other books in the Vampire Chronicles, she had been an atheist until 1998 when she returned to her childhood Catholic faith and wrote several Christian-themed novels and a spiritual memoir.

HENRY ORENSTEIN
Dec. 14; 98 / Polish Jew who survived the Holocaust and came to the U.S. as a refugee, he became a toymaker with more than 100 patents, most notably for Transformers.

JOHNNY ISAKSON
Dec. 19; 76 / Republican U.S. Senator from Georgia for 15 years who brought a conciliatory approach to issues he cared about, including veterans’ healthcare.

GRACE MIRABELLA

RICHARD MARCINKO
Dec. 25; 81 / Hard-charging founding commander of Navy SEAL Team 6, the most storied American special operations unit, he wrote tell-all bestseller, Rogue Warrior, and cemented the SEALs in pop culture as heroes and bad boys.

DESMOND TUTU
Dec. 26; 90 / Nobel Prize–winning Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa, who opposed apartheid, preached non-violence, and led his country’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

SARAH WEDDINGTON
Dec. 26; 76 / Lawyer who argued successfully Roe v. Wade before the Supreme Court at age 26; she later served in the Texas House as a Democrat, worked in the Carter administration, and taught law.

JOHN MADDEN
Dec. 28; 85 / Hall of Fame NFL coach turned broadcaster, he boiled action on the gridiron down to excited but simple soundbites. He also lent his name to a football video game franchise.

HARRY REID
Dec. 28; 82 / Longtime Democratic U.S. Senator from Nevada, the former boxer controlled the Senate as majority leader from 2007 to 2015 and imposed his will through backroom wrangling.
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MARY V.
“The new opinion section of WORLD is thoughtful and helpful. People like me need help in thinking about the world/culture. Those who are writing for Opinions are solid, Biblical, and not overtly political. Biblical Christians need to stand together.”
HOW ARE YOU RESPONDING to runaway inflation? My personal response might seem a bit counterintuitive: I just elected the Rolls-Royce option for cataract surgery—out of pocket (insurance doesn’t cover it). The serenity with which I conveyed my decision seemed to impress the A-scan technician that I was either Daddy Warbucks or a fool.

In my defense, the doctor offered the choice of seeing far or seeing near. May as well have asked me to choose between saving my son or my daughter in a house fire. “Both,” I lunged, in the moment not conceiving of aught better to splurge on. Hairdressers, manicurists, new car, gym membership, overseas travels—none of these I have or do. None trump being able to see. I like seeing. What shall a man give in exchange for his sight?

I started developing a sense of unreality about money even before fuel prices jumped over 59 percent and food prices over 6 percent last year. Maybe it began when my grandmother scraped together $100,000, nickels at a time, only for someone to talk her into pouring it into a lost cause. That made me ponder life and the curious lack of correlation between hard work and earnings, on the one hand, and how your life turns out, on the other. “Wealth … is so uncertain” (1 Timothy 6:17).

I used to get a little interest on my savings account, and when that trickled down to nothing, they told me an “investor’s account” was the ticket. It was for a while, then that stopped too, and I asked why, and the bank mumbled something about the feds. So now my accounts not only don’t accrue but erode daily. The longer my money’s in the bank, the more I lose. Which brings me to the complicated logic of choosing the soup-to-nuts eye surgery: I will use what money I have for important things before it buys nothing at all. Hey, my father is 97. If the Lord leaves me here that long, I’ll want to see.

Once by sheer dawdling and indecisiveness, which I underscore are faults and not virtues, I was spared a loss of $8,000 (according to my then accountant) in the 2008 crash when many a more conscientious soul lost a fortune. It just so happened that my money was in limbo while I dithered over a list of stocks, thus dodging a bullet, like the uncannily lucky Mr. Magoo. It was God’s protection, of course.

Maybe my sense of unreality comes from a multitrillion-dollar federal infrastructure bill they tell us will cost us nothing. Where is the outcry from fifth grade math students across the nation?! And how is it that daily operational costs of this country will bear no relation to tax collection? Are madmen in the Treasury basement just cranking out Federal Reserve notes like it’s going out of style?

Money is going out of style, actually. First, they steered us from cash to plastic. Now, from plastic it looks like the next thing is some form of digital transaction system.

I have been rich and I have been poor. Both relatively, of course, the “rich” by world standards, the “poor” by American standards. But neither was the result of merit or fault, I wish to emphasize. The rich period I was born into because my grandfather was intelligent. The poor period was likewise the result of factors outside my control, which the author of Ecclesiastes is at pains to detail: “time and chance happen to them all” (Ecclesiastes 9:11).

My personal bottom line about money: Be a wise steward of it (Luke 16:9), and be generous to others (Proverbs 11:25). And as you see where things are headed in this country, keep enough on hand to pay the border guard.
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Understanding CRT

Spiritual insights are paramount

CHRISTIANS WERE RIGHT in 2021 to criticize critical race theory, but in 2022 let’s criticize accurately. We often hear that CRT is Marxist, but it’s not classic, class-based Marxism. Its fixation on race is a virulent variant.

Here’s some backstory. In the 18th century Jean-Jacques Rousseau sneered at the Christian concept of original sin and argued that civilization made humans bad. Rousseau’s favorites became known as “noble savages,” even though Rousseau himself was more savage than noble: He dispatched all five of his babies to orphanages where most infants died.

Rousseau’s belief in original goodness caught on, and the search began for people uncorrupted by church life or capitalism. In the 19th century Karl Marx thought it poppycock to put primitivism on a pedestal. Having no confidence in the rural majority, Marx sought another revolutionary agent and thought he found it in the proletariat, the noble industrial workers of all ethnicities who would respond savagely to savage employers.

Early in the 20th century, Vladimir Lenin knew the Russian proletariat was small and often faithful to the Russian Orthodox Church, so he portrayed the atheistic Communist Party as “the vanguard of revolution.” In 1917 he relied on Russian navy sailors to be the noble savages who initially provided the muscle. Later, he killed them. Josef Stalin intensified Leninism, murdering not only his enemies but his friends.

In the 1960s members of the American “New Left” did not like the proletarians they observed: These workers seemed content to own a home and a boat—how boring! The New Left self-appraisal: We’re wiser and purer. The new idols: foreign communists like Fidel Castro, an intellectual who went to the jungle and remade himself into a noble savage.

In the 1970s and 1980s, some radicals idolized an assortment of savages: the Symbionese Liberation Army (kidnappers of Patty Hearst), the Shining Path in South America, and even the Baader-Meinhof Gang. None produced lasting inspiration, but I can commend some of the radicals in one respect: Red or yellow, black or white, all were precious (or plutocratic) in their sight.

The “black is beautiful” movement in the late 20th century was helpful in many ways, because some racists had contended that lighter skin is better than darker and hair straighteners are essential tools. Some black children internalized that bias and suffered psychological damage. But the 21st century has brought in a “white is ugly” movement. My wife and I have learned much from living in and traveling to places where whites are the minority, but it’s wrong for a teacher to suggest to a child that he or she is of less value because of skin color.

That type of bigotry is not Marxist, though. Marx emphasized class. The Apostle Paul said in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, and communists can claim that race and ethnicity also don’t matter in their belief system. Since most readers won’t go back to the 1990s, and since my predictions are so often wrong, I’ll semi-sheepishly summarize for 2022 a column I wrote in 1998 headlined, “Scrips vs. Bloods: The philosophical battle of the 21st century is shaping up.”

That was a playful reference to two famous gangs with origins in Los Angeles, the Crips and the Bloods. By “Scrips” I meant those who read Scripture and realize that spiritual understandings—not race, ethnicity, or gender—are paramount. “Bloods” are those who emphasize physical differences like skin color.

Blood emphasis is twisted predestinarian: A specific consciousness goes with membership in a particular group. Young radicals can recycle traditional Marxist values by muttering about oppressed groups: “people of color” substitutes for the working class, “angry white males” for the bourgeoisie, and “homophobes” for other oldtime villains.

CRT can remind us of structural problems such as real estate redlining and bias against charter schools. But CRT also promotes tribalism, which has been a disaster throughout history—Bloods stomp other Bloods. Scrips, though, know God’s transformative power and look to bring in the sheaves, not burn them. Providentially, God turns some Bloods into Scrips.
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