“IT ERODES THE TRUST. IT ERASES IT.” — THE U.S. REACTS TO GEORGE FLOYD’S DEATH, P. 50

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06.27.20 VOLUME 35 NUMBER 12

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After George Floyd’s death, we shouldn’t ignore protesters’ cries or looters’ destruction

by Marvin Olasky, Sophia Lee, and Emily Belz
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“HE’S HAVING A GOOD TIME WITH FRIENDS, DOING WHAT HE LOVES, AND EXPRESSING SOMETHING DEEP IN HIS HEART THAT NEEDS TO GET OUT.”

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PHOTO BY NAM Y. HUH/AP

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“The Earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world and those who dwell therein.” —Psalm 24:1
NO PATH TO NORMALCY
SUSAN DICKENS/GREENBRIER, ARK.
The authorities have tasted power during this COVID-19 shutdown, endangering the economy and robbing the populace of liberties we had taken for granted. I fear this power will be difficult to give up, and we may never regain our freedoms.

FRED SMITH/TYLER, TEXAS
There really is no going back. Scripture constantly reminds us to remember God’s faithfulness but never to long for the times past or go backward.

GLENDA COUTIER ON WNG.ORG
I, for one, don’t want things exactly as they were. I hope that we all take a few things with us from this experience: patience, love for our neighbors, Sabbath-keeping, contemplation, and family time.

TRACING MURDERS
MAY 9, P. 72—JACK KENNEDY ON FACEBOOK
Multiply Eli Olasky’s story by a generation, and we see the vast cumulative effects of PTSD. May it never happen again.

INNOVATION OVER IRRITATION
MAY 9, P. 36—KEN LANGLEY/ZION, ILL.
Mindy Belz’s celebration of the creativity and heroism of so many was right on. But to say she’s “embarrassed” by middle-class Americans “demanding their rights” is dreadful. Our rights are God-given and blood-bought, and “emergencies” are the excuse tyrants use to strip people of their rights.

KATHY CONNORS/MEDINA, WASH.
Belz is completely off base to say that we should not protest losing our right to earn a livelihood. For those who don’t want to leave their homes, don’t. But for those of us who want to buy and sell and support our local businesses using commonsense safety measures, let us.

THE ONE THING
MAY 9, P. 20—MARThA CHANEY BALL/ PITTSBURGH, PA.
This column meant a great deal to me. In a sense we are all in “lockdown,” always have been, and always will be until we realize our need for Christ.

WORKING FOR THE KINGDOM
MAY 9, P. 67—LINDA SHEVEL/BOARDMAN, OHIO
I am a member of First Covenant Church, and this article does not accurately reflect our membership decline and Pastor Tom Sharkey’s leaving. The “Living Legacy” program was thrust upon the congregation, but we had members who cared about the church and its legacy. An enormous outpouring of service and finances is beginning the rebuilding process. We have an interim pastor, some past members have returned, and many building maintenance projects have been completed.

AN ADAPTATION OF THE GOSPELS
WORTH WATCHING
MAY 9—ANGEL MCGEHEE ON FACEBOOK
This series is accurate about what is explicit in the Bible and beautifully creative about what isn’t. I also loved how it portrayed female characters, and how Jesus treated them and children.

TIES THAT BIND
MAY 9, P. 30—JANA TOP/EDGERTON, MINN.
I have three small children and read them almost every book you recommend. They really remember the books we read, and it’s important to fill their little minds with imagination and truth. Thank you.

CLARIFICATION
There is no right to abortion, only a court-ordered legalization (“Reshaping the courts,” June 6, p. 62).

LETTERS AND COMMENTS
EMAIL editor@wng.org
MAIL WORLD Mailbag, PO Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802-9998
WEBSITE wng.org
FACEBOOK facebook.com/WNGdotorg
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JOHN PIPER, CHANCELLOR

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A COVID-19 UPDATE

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Notes from the CEO  KEVIN MARTIN

If the Lord wills ...

The key to any business plan is a humble recognition that we do not know what tomorrow will bring

OME NOW, YOU WHO SAY, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin (James 4:13-17).

The end of WORLD’s fiscal year is a time for planning, budgeting, strategizing, and setting goals. We look backward, of course, to assess results from the planning we did 12 months ago. But retrospective analysis is meant primarily to help inform plans for the coming year.

We’ve never had a year that has gone entirely according to our plans. In small ways and big ways every year, we’ve had to make midcourse corrections to adjust to reality. Even during those years in which we’ve had to make big adjustments to our plans, I’ll admit that we took too lightly this admonition from James. We too glibly attached “Lord willing” to our statements about the future.

Beneath the surface of our public confession, we too often believed we had some control over our future, or that we had something to do with our own success.

If the fiscal year just ending has taught us nothing else, it is the folly of trusting in anything other than the will of the Lord. And, as James reminds us, it is more than folly. It is sinful, evil, arrogance.

Trusting God does not diminish the importance of planning. We still say “we will live and do this and that,” but we preface every such plan with “if the Lord wills” … and we believe it.

A big part of God’s provision for WORLD every year is the support of our members. You have been kind to support us, and I thank you for your encouragement and partnership in our work throughout this extraordinary year.

But we’ve never had a year like this one.

There are times when a splash of cold water is what’s needed to stir a person to alertness. In more extreme circumstances, maybe it takes smelling salts. Or a slap across the face. Is it possible we had been dozing so deeply that it took the spiritual equivalent of all three remedies to awaken us to God’s reality?

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—Lynn Arnold, Former Premier of South Australia

Also available from author Sam Hunter
A page of history
And a reminder about the power of the (printing) press

T’S PRETTY TOUGH, some wise sage has observed, to overestimate the power of the printed page. Which prompts me to ask: Does the size of that printed page make any difference in its final impact?

I raise that issue because of a nostalgic discovery I made a few weeks ago, and which I share with you on this page. It is a faithful reprint of the Sunday bulletin of the church where my father was pastor in 1949. The bulletin was a simple 3-by-5 black-and-white, front-and-back leaflet. It stirs my memory on two fronts.

The first is this little page’s representation of church life back then. Worship was serious. Twice every Sunday. Offerings at both services. But the list of announcements on the back side showed a congregation (about 50 people) busy in a variety of kingdom work. I was 7 years old, going on 8. What’s printed here is exactly the way I remember it.

But I’m stirred as well by a few technical details. This tiny bulletin was actually printed. On a real Kelsey printing press. I know that because I set the type for this issue—changing the hymn numbers and the sermon titles and whoever was hosting Wednesday night Bible study. It was movable type the way Johannes Gutenberg envisioned it. The things we changed every week were in 8-point type; the listing of officers at the far bottom, which rarely changed, was in tiny 6-point type. (For those of you who care, note the use of caps and small caps.)

Dad wanted his eight children to learn the craft of printing—but not merely as a quaint hobby. He believed the gospel truths that had become so important to him and Mom would also be burned into our hearts and souls if we were literally involved in applying the ink to the paper.

Dad always stretched our thinking. From that tiny Kelsey hand press, we moved on to bigger and more sophisticated presses, typesetters, folders, and engravers. Dad didn’t live to see the founding of WORLD. I think if he had, he would have said: “Go for it! You’re headed in the right direction.” He would have applauded WORLD’s commitment to Bible-based journalism and challenged us with a reminder that it’s hard to overestimate the power of the printed page.

And Dad would have scolded us just a bit for the fold marks near the top of both pages reproduced here. “Paper airplanes? Really, boys. Let’s get some serious work done.”
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“This is the end of Hong Kong”
Demonstrators pause to remember the Tiananmen Square massacre as Beijing tightens its grip
by June Cheng in Taipei, Taiwan, and Erica Kwong in Hong Kong
Despite a ban on Hong Kong’s annual vigil commemorating the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, thousands of demonstrators streamed into Hong Kong’s Victoria Park to mark the crackdown’s anniversary on June 4. Separate groups also gathered in neighborhoods around the city, in churches, and outside metro stations.

Rather than extinguish the memory of Beijing’s attack on peaceful democracy protesters 31 years ago, the ban only seemed to provide more reason to remember, especially after the Chinese government approved a sweeping national security law in Hong Kong to criminalize what it considers subversion and sedition.

“This is the end of Hong Kong, this is the end of ‘one country, two systems,’” said pro-democracy lawmaker Dennis Kwok after Beijing announced plans for the law. “Beijing has completely breached its promise to the Hong Kong people. ... I foresee that the international status as a city—an international city—will be gone very soon.”

The law also allows agents of the Ministry of State Security (China’s intelligence agency) or other powerful state security agents to suppress dissent in Hong Kong.

It comes after a year of demonstrations against Beijing’s presence in Hong Kong. Last year, citizens took to the streets to protest an extradition law that could have led to Hong Kong residents standing trial in mainland China. Even after officials shelved that law, protests intensified against the city’s unelected leadership and police violence. The coronavirus pandemic halted the protests. Then came Beijing’s announcement about the new national security law.

At the Tiananmen Square vigil in Hong Kong on June 4, police erected barricades around the park and stationed officers nearby. But police did not stop demonstrators from taking down the barricades and entering the park. At 8:09 p.m., people all over the city lit candles and marked a moment of silence for the massacre’s victims. A few scuffles broke out between protesters and police in the city, but in general the night remained peaceful.

Police officially banned the annual vigil—the largest in the world—over coronavirus concerns, although most believe the government had political motivations.

While Hong Kong extended its ban on gatherings of more than eight people, churches could meet at half their maximum capacity. Seven Catholic churches held Mass on June 4, while the divinity school at the Chinese University of Hong Kong held a prayer meeting.

At the high-ceilinged St. Francis of Assisi Church in Hong Kong’s Sham Shui Po district, a projector shined the service’s theme on the wall: “Fear not, God is with you.” Before the event even began, hundreds of Hong Kongers filled the sanctuary, sitting in every other seat due to social distancing requirements. Dozens stood in the back.

After observing a moment of silence, attendees listened to a message about God’s presence with the Israelites wandering through the wilderness. They prayed for the victims of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, the persecuted church in China, the development of democracy in the mainland, as well as Hong Kong’s own political turmoil.
BEIJING HAS COMPLETELY BREACHED ITS PROMISE TO THE HONG KONG PEOPLE ... I FORESEE THAT THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS AS A CITY—AN INTERNATIONAL CITY—WILL BE GONE VERY SOON.

Holding up small, burning candles, participants sang behind their masks to conclude the service. “It’s actually quite sad,” Yaffa Lai said regarding this year’s anniversary. “It seems like society is under white terror.”

In past years the nursing home employee in her 30s attended the annual Victoria Park vigil. But Lai and a friend came to church because of the ban: “June 4 is something we’ve always wanted to vindicate, and we’ve wanted to support those students’ ideals. But it seems like now even Hong Kongers are losing the right to support and commemorate them.”
For seven weeks in the spring of 1989, Chinese students peacefully protested at Beijing’s Tiananmen Square and cities around China, calling for democracy, freedom of the press, and an end to government corruption. On the night of June 3, the central government ordered the military to clear the square, killing hundreds or even thousands of protesters and civilians.

In the aftermath, the government arrested student leaders—although some escaped through Hong Kong to the West—and quashed the movement. June 4 has become a sensitive date: The government censors mentions of the massacre and tries to force its people to forget. Relatives of people killed at Tiananmen have sought answers and accountability from the government. After 31 years, all they’ve received is tighter surveillance and harassment.

IN TAIPEI, TAIWAN, on June 4, an estimated 3,000 people—including some Hong Kongers—clutched candles in Liberty Square for a vigil. Volunteers checked attendees’ temperatures as they entered. Rather than inviting speakers as in years past, organizers held an open mic for people to share their thoughts. Many connected the massacre with the current situation in Hong Kong.

Speakers included famous Hong Kong lyricist Albert Leung, kidnapped Hong Kong bookseller Lam Wing-kee, a Tiananmen Square survivor, students, and activists. An Italian man sang an operatic version of “Glory to Hong Kong” in Cantonese, while an elderly Taiwanese man led the crowd in singing “Stand by Me.” A group of young Hong Kong protesters in gas masks and helmets waved flags that read, “Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times,” and “Hong Kong Independence.” Police leisurely stood around the square’s perimeter.

Holding a homemade flag with the words “Vindicate June 4” and “Heavens extinguish CCP” glued on, Andy Kwok said he remembers watching news of the tanks rolling toward Tiananmen Square as a child. He believes it’s important to commemorate the date because the government never answered for its actions. Instead it continues to punish those who speak about it. Kwok is from Hong Kong, but he and his family moved to Taiwan six months ago partially due to the decreasing freedom in the territory.

He believes Hong Kong is an important example for Taiwan: “China wants to get back Taiwan using lies like ‘one country, two systems,’” Kwok said. “Now Hong Kong proves to Taiwan and the world that this is not working. This is a lie.”

PARTICIPANTS ATTEND A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL IN TAIPEI TO REMEMBER TIANANMEN SQUARE.
1,608,600
The number of reported abortions in the United States in 1990, according to National Right to Life (using data from the Guttmacher Institute). That year saw the highest number of abortions since the 1973 Roe decision. The number of abortions had been 744,610 in 1973.

1,312,990
The number of reported abortions in the United States in 2000.

1,102,670
The number of reported abortions in the United States in 2010.

899,500
The number of reported abortions in the United States in 2015.

862,320
The number of reported abortions in the United States in 2017, a decline of almost 50 percent since 1990.

61,628,584
The total number of abortions in the United States between 1973—when the U.S. Supreme Court forced states to legalize abortion—and 2017, according to a calculation by National Right to Life using data from the Guttmacher Institute. While the number of abortions per year has been dropping fairly steadily since peaking at over 1.6 million in 1990, the death toll still reaches several hundred thousand every year. National Right to Life noted that the share of chemical abortions rose from 16.4 percent of all abortions in 2008 to 39.4 percent in 2017.
IRVINIA GOV. RALPH NORTHAM announced plans to take down the state-owned monument to Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee in the capital city of Richmond. Mayor Levar Stoney is pushing for the removal of four other statues of Confederate leaders along the city’s historic Monument Avenue. Demonstrators have covered all five statues in graffiti during protests over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minn. “I believe in a Virginia that studies its past in an honest way,” Northam, a Democrat, said. The city of Norfolk, Va., meanwhile, planned to take down its 80-foot monument to the Confederacy in July. In Alexandria, Va., the United Daughters of the Confederacy dismantled a memorial to soldiers that had stood in a city intersection for 131 years. And in Birmingham, Ala., city officials removed a Confederate obelisk from its base on Monday night after protesters attempted to take it down.

DIED
The last person to receive a U.S. Civil War pension has died at age 90. Irene Triplett’s father, Mose Triplett, joined the Confederate army in 1862, deserting to a Union regiment two years later. He married Irene Triplett’s mother in 1924 and died in 1938 at age 92. His pension of $73.13 a month, according to The Wall Street Journal, has been going to his daughter. Triplett grew up in North Carolina, poor and struggling. She told the newspaper that she was beaten by parents and teachers, lived in a poorhouse, and during these last years needed her father’s pension to help pay for retirement homes. She died in North Carolina from complications after a surgery.

FOUND
Archaeologists uncovered an ancient Roman mosaic in northern Italy. The art was the floor of a Roman villa found near the city of Verona. Scholars discovered the villa almost a century ago, but this mosaic was uncovered only after a team set out to outline the exact parameters of the ancient building. They were digging through a vineyard in a hilly area when they discovered the mosaic. Its tiles, patterns, details, and colors are almost perfectly preserved, captured in photos posted by the town leaders. The town will work on uncovering the mosaic completely and preparing it for viewing by the public.

HIRED
A new report on joblessness offered hope the United States has seen the worst of the economic blows from the coronavirus shutdowns. Unemployment fell to 13.3 percent in May from 14.7 percent in April, according to a U.S. Department of Labor report released on June 5. The improvement in unemployment came alongside an equally encouraging May jobs report. Defying economists’ predictions, U.S. employers added 2.5 million jobs last month. The report suggests thousands of businesses moved quickly to reopen and begin hiring as states lifted coronavirus-related restrictions. The number of new applications for unemployment benefits also had declined for nine straight weeks.
“I don’t even know how to put it into context. It’s beyond anything that we’ve ever seen before.”

MAX KAPUSTIN, senior research director at the University of Chicago Crime Lab, on the 18 murders in Chicago on May 31, the most of any day for the city since the lab began keeping records in 1961. Another 85 people in Chicago suffered gunshot wounds on that day. Mayor Lori Lightfoot said the city’s 911 service received more than 65,000 calls on May 31, including 10,000 for looting. On most days, the service receives about 15,000 calls.

“They don’t care about my business. They didn’t protect our people. We were all on our own.”

KRIS WYROBEK, president and owner of 7-Sigma Inc., on the lack of assistance by Minneapolis, Minn., public officials when rioters destroyed his company’s manufacturing plant. Wyrobek says his company, which has operated in Minneapolis since 1987, will rebuild somewhere other than Minneapolis—a move that will reportedly cost the city 50 jobs. The Star Tribune of Minneapolis reported that riots damaged nearly 1,000 commercial properties in the city.

“You can smell the complete difference.”

Electrician CHAD BROWN on returning to ride New York’s subway system, which has more regular cleaning now during the pandemic.

“There’s a mad rush to get out of the city.”

GINGER MARTIN, an agent with Sotheby’s International Realty, on wealthy residents moving away from San Francisco, Calif., and into wealthy areas nearby because of COVID-19 concerns. The San Francisco Chronicle reports that the rental market is also in decline, as rates have fallen 9.2 percent in the last 12 months.

“If I didn’t have a primary, I wouldn’t care.”

OLD-SCHOOL MILLING

With Britons buying more flour during the U.K.’s stay-at-home orders, producers are getting creative to meet the unprecedented demand. To that end, the owners of the early medieval Sturminster Newton Mill in England have brought their 1,000-year-old flour mill back online. Since 1970, the water-powered mill has operated as a museum, grinding only enough grain to sell in the gift shop. But owners Pete Loosmore and Imogen Bittner said they decided to start producing at the mill’s capacity when local grocery stores ran out of flour. The first mention of the mill at Sturminster Newton dates to 1086 in the Domesday Book, a survey of people and property ordered by William the Conqueror. This April, the mill ground out more than a ton of bread flour. Loosmore and Bittner say their profits will be reinvested into the museum. “It’s been nice to bring the place truly back to life and back into something like it used to be when it was working six days a week,” Loosmore told the BBC.

2 USING THEIR NOODLES To enforce new social distancing norms, one restaurant in Germany is asking customers to wear special hats made of pool noodles. When Cafe Rothe in Schwerin, Germany, reopened its doors to dine-in customers on May 9, employees greeted each customer with a funny hat. “This was the perfect method to keep customers apart—and a fun one,” owner Jacqueline Rothe told German television outlet RTL. The temporary measure helps keep customers 5 feet apart.

3 BIG LIZARDS ON THE PROWL Georgia wildlife officials are warning residents about a new invasive species they fear could pose a threat to native plants and animals: a 4-foot-long lizard that weighs more than 10 pounds. Georgia’s Department of Natural Resources published a request that Georgians be on the lookout for Argentine black and white tegu lizards. State biologist John Jensen told CNN the lizards especially love to eat the eggs of ground-nesting birds and other reptiles but aren’t picky: “[They eat] just about anything they want.”

4 SOUND SYSTEM A Boston police officer got creative during an
unusual call to capture an escaped zoo animal. A resident near the Franklin Park Zoo phoned Boston police on May 11 to report one of the zoo’s large, male peacocks had escaped its enclosure. Zoo officials blamed the escape on the peacock’s urge to find a mate. Thinking fast, an officer who responded to the call found a peacock mating call on his smartphone and played it at full volume. The gambit worked, luring the peafowl into a fenced backyard where animal control workers could capture the bird and return him to the zoo.

5 NOWHERE TO BE FOUND A German government agency has apologized to Israel after inadvertently leaving the nation off a map. Germany’s Military Counterintelligence Service published an infographic on Twitter in which Jordan controlled all Israeli land. Officials with the agency blamed the mistake on a software problem and quickly pulled down the post. “I deeply regret this incident and expressly apologize,” agency boss Christof Gramm said in an email to The Jerusalem Post. “That should not have happened to the military counterintelligence service that fights antisemitism and extremism.”

6 CATCH OF THE DAY A Tennessee boy now has a whopper of a fishing story after reeling in a nearly 80-pound sturgeon. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency announced the catch via Facebook on May 12, saying the fish caught by 9-year-old Coye Price at Old Hickory Lake near Nashville tipped the scales at 79.8 pounds. It was a big day of fishing for the entire Price family as Coye’s two sisters caught a 58-pound catfish and a nearly 40-pound striper. The agency said that lake sturgeons such as the one caught by Coye can grow up to 8 feet long and up to 300 pounds during their 150-year lifespan.

7 PRISONERS IN A CASTLE For more than two months, a Bolivian music ensemble had to hole up at a German castle, unable to leave the grounds due to quarantine and unable to return home because of travel bans. Originally the orchestra was scheduled for a two-week tour after landing in Germany on March 10. Almost as soon as they arrived, their three scheduled performances were canceled due to coronavirus quarantines. When the group, with members as young as 17, tried to return home, they discovered Bolivia had closed its borders. That left the group in limbo, living in a hostel on the grounds of Rheinsberg Palace, once home to Frederick the Great, northwest of Berlin. To pass the time during weeks abandoned in a foreign land, the group reportedly practiced six hours per day.

8 LOADED QUESTION Finally, officials in Baker City, Ore., can get rid of a 25-year-old piece of heavy machinery. The City Council had deemed the 1995 Case backhoe loader as surplus and made plans to sell the machine on March 16, but the city charter forbids the council from selling surplus equipment with a value in excess of $10,000. That meant the question of selling the backhoe had to be put to voters. On May 19, 92 percent of Baker City residents voted to sell the machine. About 200 residents voted no.
THE LAW, AS PAUL EXPLAINED IN ROMANS 7, CAN'T REFORM THE HUMAN HEART.

Local failure, national tragedy

Broad-brush solutions are worse than futile

In the night of May 28, while the city of Minneapolis was on fire, Dawn Frederick noticed that looters had broken into a gas station on her block. Understandably, she called the police. Unfortunately, she tweeted about calling the police.

Frederick is the founder of Red Sofa Literary Agency, well known in bookish circles. Within an hour, three agents associated with Red Sofa resigned in protest over the tweet, citing their commitment to racial justice and the threat posed by law enforcement. Frederick tried to defend herself: “There were no protesters present. Zero protesters”—just people (black, white, or brown) running out of a smashed-in doorway loaded with stuff.

None of that mattered. The next day she apologized, but her agency appears to be in tatters, and it will probably take some time to recover. More publicly, New Orleans quarterback Drew Brees apologized for defending the American flag, but the big red “cancel” sign on his back remains.

Everyone agrees that anger at the choking death of George Floyd is justified but disagrees about what to do with it. Celebrities, officials, and talking heads have rushed to the fight with their preconceptions: This happened because of racism, capitalism, inequality, corporate corruption. “Why wring our hands over a looted Foot Locker,” asks a Facebook friend, “when the richest one percent own half the world’s wealth?” Another says, “Years of peaceful protests have done nothing to end systemic racism—maybe it’s time for rage.”

At every flash point, generalizations bloom like clouds of smoke. We’re choking on them. Yes—inequality, racism, and corruption are the problem, but these are endemic to a fallen world. They can’t be “fixed” by policy, only moderated over time. When general sins find individual expression, they must be dealt with individually.

What made Officer Derek Chauvin kneel on the neck of George Floyd, ignoring Floyd’s pleas for air until the man blacked out? We will never fully know, because motives grow deep and tangled. We can’t address Chauvin’s heart, but we can address his behavior. Records in Hennepin County, Minn., indicate that other cases of overreach by this officer went ignored, and he may have assumed immunity for this one, too. If leaders had applied the disciplinary procedures on the books when they should have, Floyd might still be alive.

What motivated two plainclothes police officers in Louisville to break into the apartment of Breonna Taylor after midnight on the authority of a “no-knock” search warrant and shoot her dead after her boyfriend (reasonably enough) assumed they were invaders and started firing? We don’t know, but we can reason that no-knock search warrants are a bad idea and probably unconstitutional besides. Most of us didn’t even know there was such a thing.

What would have prevented Gregory and Travis McMichael from tracking down an unarmed black jogger and fatally shooting him? We don’t know, but we can take aim at the old-boy network that allowed the killing of Ahmaud Arbery to go unpunished until video emerged.

Trying to address a broad canvas of historic and persistent racism with broad-brush “solutions” (like defunding the police or trashing America) is worse than futile—it’s destructive. The law, as Paul explained in Romans 7, can’t reform the human heart. The law can restrain behavior when applied. At the local level, an overreaching cop went undisciplined, a faulty police procedure went uncorrected, and overzealous vigilantes went scot-free. At the local level, anecdotal failures spilled out in national rage. We point fingers at ultimate causes but can deal effectively only with the proximate ones.

Barack Obama put it this way: “It’s important for us to understand which levels of government have the biggest impact on our criminal justice system and police practices”—not Washington, D.C., but city hall.

God put it this way: “Love your neighbor”—not your cause, your pet peeve, or your tribe. This is where we can all do better, and we must.
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2001, we had the internet. But the search for online information remained slow and cumbersome, making it a still-ripe environment for the trivia-based game show *Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?*

The real-life scandal that grew out of that fandom is the inspiration for AMC’s riveting (though somewhat potty-mouthed) new drama *Quiz.*

In the first episode, we see how the monster hit began in the United Kingdom and crossed the Atlantic to win huge ratings on ABC. But more than that, we learn how a dedicated community of “quizzers” grew up around the program.
There’s something sweetly human about the fringe community of viewers who find connection through their mutual obsession with the show. Eventually though, shared fandom takes a less sporting turn as the quizzers figure out how to game the system. This allows Diana Ingram (Sian Clifford), her brother, and finally her husband, Army Maj. Charles Ingram (Matthew MacFadyen), to maneuver themselves into the winner’s circle. It’s the unlikeliest sort of crime syndicate—if it’s a crime at all.

As feckless Charles stumbles and second-guesses himself to the biggest prize, Millionaire’s producers start to smell a rat. They review the tape of Charles’ performance and suspect the subtle coughs from the audience are really signals. It’s at this point that Quiz becomes something more than an amusing legal mystery.

Charles’ big winning episode is the original viral video—the public watches and renews a tape the producers have specially edited to amplify the coughs and Charles’ odd behavior.

Everyone thinks they know what they saw. Everyone has an opinion. Soon, people who’ve never met the Ingrams feel justified in meting out mob justice, harassing their children, shooting their dog, and spitting on Charles as he takes his daily walk.

Truth, of course, is always truth. But human beings aren’t perfect arbiters of it, and our perceptions are easily deceived. As the story takes a darker turn, it uncomfortably reflects the vicious public debates we seem to have every few months about viral videos these days. Until, at last, the last episode reviews events from other angles with broader context.

As the Ingrams’ lawyer digs deep into the concept of confirmation bias, she forces jurors to consider how justified their basic premises are and whether other interpretations of events might also be reasonable: “When an assumption signals the brain, it rearranges and reorganizes all facts to support the assumption.”

More than just interpretation, though, she highlights how quickly we render judgment and close ranks against those whose background, personality, or views don’t align with our own.

This engaging story about a million-dollar tempest in a teapot makes us question the difference between pursuing justice and pursuing the appearance of justice. And it illustrates how mercilessly we can destroy lives when we care more about appeasing an opinionated public than finding facts.

This isn’t to suggest that Quiz is a hectoring morality tale. With sharp, satirical performances, it entertains as much as it educates. In the end it has no easy answers about the Ingrams or whether justice prevailed in their case. But it leaves no doubt about how one piece of video that someone expands, edits, or presents from different angles—as in the case last year of the Covington Catholic students—can influence our impressions, and how careful we should be before we rush to judgment.
Greenland seems a world away, but its people’s miseries reinforce Solomon’s lament that “there’s nothing new under the sun.” Anywhere.

The new documentary The Fight for Greenland focuses on political and social struggles unsettling Earth’s largest island. Should Greenland break from the Kingdom of Denmark? Can Greenlanders halt alcoholism, sexual abuse, drug addiction, and suicide?

The film follows four young Greenlanders with different ideas. Tillie Martinussen and Kaaleraq Andersen are running for parliament seats. Martinussen co-founds the Cooperation Party, whose members want Denmark to help Greenland become more self-sustaining while remaining united. Andersen campaigns for total independence.

Josef Tarrak-Petrussen and Paninniguaq Heilmann have two children. Tarrak-Petrussen’s rap-infused dramatic performances highlight Greenland’s proud past but also its high suicide rate. He and Heilmann, both pro-independence, vow not to repeat their parents’ sins: alcoholism and child abandonment.

The film is peaceful and beautifully shot (unrated, with a few subtitled expletives and brief nude illustrations).

Political independence is a noble goal. But as America has demonstrated, it doesn’t bring freedom from sin and misery.
A MAN FOR OUR TIMES

Ulysses S. Grant shines in a new docuseries that mostly focuses on his military career

by Sharon Dierberger

T'S HEARTENING TO WATCH the progression: A white man working the fields alongside black slaves, then freeing a slave from his in-laws, saying, “God protect you, Wilbur.” The same man commands some of the Civil War’s first black troops. Then as president, he advocates for Abraham Lincoln’s Reconstruction plans and helps ratify the 15th Amendment to grant men voting rights regardless of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” Later, he sends agents south to capture and prosecute Ku Klux Klan members.

Ulysses S. Grant, 18th president of the United States, was a man for turbulent times, and we could learn from him now. History network’s new three-part miniseries Grant shows a steely-eyed man of character. Despite his flaws, he advocated for blacks throughout his life, loved his wife, and led his army and country tenaciously.

As Justin Salinger masterfully portrays Grant’s stoic, calm countenance, it’s easy to forget he’s reenacting. He even looks like Grant.

Salinger captures the boredom and loneliness Grant endured while at California’s Fort Humboldt several years after fighting in the Mexican-American War. It’s hard not to cringe when we watch him guzzle from a flask, trying to fill the void separation from his family left. This film, based on Ron Chernow’s best-selling biography of Grant, says he learned to control his drinking. Detractors spread rumors exaggerating his imbibing all his adult life.

Other scenes show the general’s commanding presence atop his steed: He directs troops at the brutal Battle of Shiloh. Later he maneuvers regiments into position to lay siege to well-fortified Vicksburg, high on the Mississippi River bluffs. He was an expert horseman too—a reputation he earned when he clung to a galloping horse’s side to avoid enemy fire early in his infantry career. His battlefield acumen earned him accolades as a military genius, which is the film’s major focus.

Grant’s fairness and compassion shine when he gives Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee favorable surrender terms, allowing soldiers to keep their swords and horses. Earlier he ensured Lee’s starving men got rations.

The reenactments, combined with historians’ enthusiastic insights, beautifully restored photos, color-coded battle maps, and Grant’s “voice” from memoirs, humanize an extraordinary and often misunderstood Civil War hero and reluctant politician. Each episode thrusts viewers into the heart of national upheaval and creates a desire to understand how Grant navigated the chaos.

One of the series’ shortcomings is too little examination of his two-term presidency. And, like many recent historical documentaries, it ignores Grant’s faith. In reality, he was a Methodist, though he prayed privately and rarely attended church.

The terms “grit” and “resiliency” are popular in today’s lexicon. This series shows Grant personifying both to the end. Beware: Battle scenes are gory.
IN 1912, THE BIRLING FAMILY of England seems to have it all. In their beautiful home, with servants rushing during a lavish dinner, Arthur and Sybil Birling celebrate daughter Sheila’s engagement to Gerald, son of another wealthy family. Gerald is helping run his father’s factory.

Mrs. Birling assures her daughter that she is “securing her future” with this excellent match. In the drawing room after dinner, Mr. Birling is equally confident. “You’re getting married at the best time possible,” he informs his prospective son-in-law.

“What about a war?” asks youngest son Eric.

“There’s not going to be a war,” his father insists.

The Birlings’ bold confidence crashes with a police detective’s unexpected visit. Inspector Goole’s questions cannot wait until the morning. A young lady named Eva Smith has killed herself, and her diary’s accounts have given the policeman suspicions.

Mr. Birling has cloudy recollections of the victim that sharpen when the inspector investigates further. The detective next grills daughter Sheila, who feels horrible when she realizes her callous complaints cost Eva her job. Worse yet, Gerald and Eric have both had extramarital relationships with Eva: She was pregnant when she died.

Inspector Goole seems to know each Birling’s selfishness contributed to Eva’s descent into desperation and poverty. He digs deeper and deeper, with the family’s guilt becoming clearer and clearer. Then, as suddenly as he arrived, Goole leaves the Birlings to ponder their past sins and next steps.

Now available on Amazon Prime and elsewhere, this 2015 adaptation of An Inspector Calls, a play by J.B. Priestley, brings to mind other examinations of the wickedness of man, such as William Golding’s Lord of the Flies and Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness. Priestley holds out no hope for the older generation of wealthy industrialists: They didn’t see the wars coming, didn’t look beyond their own enrichment and selfishness, and were not generous toward the downtrodden.

When it seems they may be free from charges and potential disgrace, Mr. and Mrs. Birling celebrate: Wine flows as they quickly dispatch their guilt. But Eric and Sheila show genuine remorse, and the viewer may hold out hope for changes of heart and behavior.

The play An Inspector Calls premiered in the Soviet Union in 1945, near the end of World War II. Priestley hoped socialism would answer the world’s problems. The movie accurately depicts mankind’s depraved condition but cannot prescribe a remedy that works.

While mostly family-friendly, the film does broadly hint at the sexual nature of Eva’s relationships, and characters take God’s name in vain several times.
A TALE OF TWO SERIES

Wounded lead characters and their approaches to life couldn’t be more different in *Monk* and *House*

by Roberta Green Ahmanson

Looking for a break from wondering what the world will be like when the lockdown ends? Two multiple-award-winning TV series from the dawn of this millennium might give you the diversion you need.


Why all the attention? The awards are a clue, but the deeper reason is the two strong, complicated main characters. Both Monk and House are idiosyncratic, wounded healers. Both have a gift: One solves unsolvable murder cases, the other solves the most mysterious medical ones. Similar but very different.

What about Adrian Monk draws viewers to him? A former San Francisco Police detective, Monk loses his badge when his wife dies in a car bombing and he breaks down. This is the one case Monk cannot solve—until the end of the series.

Monk is afraid of 312 things—from milk, harmonicas, heights, and tight spaces to ladybugs, messes, nudity, and foods touching on his plate. Germs may be among the most frightening. Every time Monk touches anything he needs a wipe.

Still, his idea of propriety is skewed. He only provides one beer each for the guests at his beloved friend Capt. Leland Stottlemeyer’s bachelor party. If that’s not enough to dampen the fun, his best man’s speech focuses on the captain’s divorce from his first wife and his last girlfriend’s current address: She’s in jail for murder. At that the guests think it’s time to go.

What keeps us watching? Shalhoub, for one, whose acting masterfully balances obsessive compulsive disorder with the pain of losing a wife and, with it, a place in the world. And Monk himself can be endearing.

Yes, he is a cheapskate, constantly forgetting to pay his assistant. He is always cleaning. He cuts his food into squares. He focuses on himself. But, when Monk is deathly ill, we can’t help but smile, watching him separate his pills into red, yellow, and blue before he can take them. And he is outraged by murder: His goal is to stop people who do it from doing it again. Then, when everyone least expects it, he does something, yes, endearing.

So, what draws us to House? He is the scary brilliant head of the diagnostics
department, created especially for him, at a private hospital in a town that seems a lot like Princeton, N.J. He is alone. A misdiagnosis left him with never-ending, excruciating pain that gives him reason for a Vicodin addiction and a very short temper.

But House loves solving puzzles, particularly the puzzle of why someone is dying. House’s innovative diagnostic hypotheses often challenge the rules of hospital procedure. His boss, Dean of Medicine Lisa Cuddy, keeps him on because, more often than not, he gets it right.

And House can be almost human. In one episode House assists at an in utero surgery for a baby boy with lesions on his lungs. As House drains fluid from the cavity, the baby stretches up his tiny hand to clasp House’s giant finger. House stares, mesmerized, tender. Those moments give you hope that he can change.

But House doesn’t believe in transformation. His motto: “Everybody lies.” Even himself. He lambastes patients while curing them. Most of all, he lambastes the very idea of God. Some characters believe out of experience or need—they just can’t live without God. House pulverizes them. He is the unhappiest character in the show but also the smartest. Why keep watching? Laurie’s acting takes you inside not only House’s impatience, anger, and frustration with himself and everyone around him, but also his obvious need for and yet terrible fear of love.

House takes pleasure in making other people squirm. Every time he gets close to dealing with his demons, he chooses not to. He admits himself to a rehab clinic but disagrees with and ditches his psychiatrist. He sours his long-hoped-for relationship with Dean Cuddy because his fear of losing her keeps him from standing by her in the face of a cancer scare. When she ends the relationship, he drives his car into her dining room window. That lands him in jail.

Monk is a show about a troubled person who wants to make the world right, wants to be a better person, and tries against great odds to do it. House, on the other hand, is a man angry at a father, who wasn’t his biological father, for being hard on him. He is angry about his leg. Most of all, he is angry at the universe for not making life easier. The show is filled with references to God, all of which House regularly shouts down. “Everybody lies.”

In the end, Monk finds resolution. The show is a classic comedy. The villain who ordered the death of Monk’s beloved wife is cornered and kills himself. All the good people in Monk’s orbit—the nurse, the assistant, the captain, the lieutenant—find true love. Monk goes back to work with the captain and his assistant.

House, though, is a tragic anti-hero. His one friend, the oncologist Dr. James Wilson, has terminal cancer. House’s gift for diagnosis can’t save Wilson, so he buys two motorcycles. The two will ride across the country until Wilson is too sick to go on. House will care for him until he dies. And, then? Nothing.

Monk, a show of old-fashioned hope amid adversity, has little talk of God, but people act as though He might exist. House is a saga of defeat amid adversity with an ending that couldn’t be more nihilistic if written by Friedrich Nietzsche.
A destructive addiction

On the pornography treadmill
by Marvin Olasky

As more businesses are opening up this month, Christians, sadly, need to pay attention to one industry that never closed and may even have expanded this year. The Economist last month headlined one story, “Pornography is booming during the covid-19 lockdowns.”

Even before this latest surge, Wheaton College senior Peter Biles observed in Plough Quarterly: “While it’s often not talked about openly, particularly at a religious campus such as Wheaton, porn addiction is poisoning relationships across the board. ... In my own life and in the lives of some of the people dearest to me, I’ve seen the pain and distortion it can cause. ... Addictions and coping mechanisms, engaged in to evoke the illusion of security and intimacy, increase the isolation.”


An evangelical’s fall into temptation, Perry says, “can lead to guilt and shame that makes you feel crappy about yourself, that you are immoral, that you’re violating something that’s deeply held and sacred.” That’s not all bad—a sense of sin can push us toward Christ—but some evangelicals react the other way. Perry writes, “After looking at pornography for a long enough time, they started to back away from their faith ... less likely to pray, less likely to attend church, less likely to feel like God is playing an important part in their lives.”

Evangelical porn users in their 20s are less likely to go to church, and maybe also less likely to marry and have children. But the knee bone connects to the thigh bone. The unmarried are more often the unchurched, who more often are the unsaved. Satan smiles.

Kyle Harper’s From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity (Harvard, 2013) shows how slavery was “absolutely fundamental to the social and moral order of Roman life,” and “the flesh trade was a major institution.” Almost all women in ancient Rome were either slaves or treated like slaves, required to engage in any sexual action their masters or husbands demanded, whenever they demanded it. This was all public knowledge.

Christianity transformed the Roman Empire: Wives were to obey their husbands and slaves their masters, yes, but husbands were to love their wives and slaves became beloved brothers in the Lord. Some historians try to scoff and sneer, but From Shame to Sin shows how the change was real: “Few periods of premodern history have witnessed such brisk and consequential ideological change. Sex was at the center of it all.”

But modern history witnessed ideological backsliding, as many Southern Christians defended slavery—and “the peculiar institution” had not only economic but sexual ramifications. Some masters turned slaves into personal prostitutes. Permanent ownership of sex slaves ended in 1865, and Southerners then joined Northerners in short-term rental of slaves known as prostitutes or longer rental of slaves known as mistresses.

Matt Fradd’s The Porn Myth (Ignatius, 2017) undercuts all the usual porn apologetics or minimizations. To be anti-porn is not to be anti-sex, since porn often becomes a substitute for real sex. Porn is addictive, it does not reduce rape and sexual violence, and it’s more than fantasy: It changes lives.

As C.S. Lewis might say, it’s sad to see people playing in a mud puddle instead of going on holiday to the seashore. Now it’s easy to wallow in mud, and even pretend that it doesn’t leave us dirty. But brain studies on porn users show the effects. Among the most injured are the latter-day slaves known as porn performers. After a half-century of women’s liberation, most are women.

But hope remains, as Elisabeth Elliot reminded us in lectures that make up Suffering Is Never for Nothing (B&H, 2019). This short book offers bracing wisdom from someone who experienced much suffering. Elliot noted with understated prose, “There have been some hard things in my life, [but] if I thank God for this very thing which is killing me, I can begin dimly and faintly to see it as a gift.”
If I Were You by Lynn Austin: Audrey and Eve become fast friends as children on an estate near London. They grow up and grow apart until the onset of World War II rekindles their friendship. Audrey plans to move to the United States with her American husband after the war. But when he’s killed, she opts to stay in familiar surroundings in England. Seeing a way out of poverty, Eve assumes Audrey’s identity and moves to America, duping Audrey’s in-laws into thinking she’s their dead son’s wife. When Audrey finally travels to New York to meet her in-laws, she discovers her old friend’s deception. This engrossing story explores the power of friendship and forgiveness and illustrates God’s willingness to welcome back His children when they return to Him in repentance.

The Summer House by Lauren K. Denton: Lily Bishop woke one morning to find divorce papers and a shocking goodbye note from her husband. Recently relocated to rural Alabama for her husband’s new job, she has no friends or connections to the place. A chance encounter leads her to apply as the live-in hairdresser at Safe Harbor Retirement Village. The village manager is a gruff woman who for some reason feels empathy for Lily, and she offers her the job on the spot. Despite her age difference to most of the residents, Lily builds a new life for herself in the community. A friendship with a local shrimper hints at possible future romance. This hope-filled starting-over story features quirky characters in a Southern coastal setting.

Carolina Breeze by Denise Hunter: When the tabloids declare her guilt in a Hollywood scandal, actress Mia Emerson needs somewhere to hide from paparazzi. She takes refuge in remote Bluebell, N.C.—the destination of her now-canceled honeymoon, as well as her dead mother’s childhood home. There she meets innkeeper Levi Bennett, a hardworking guy trying to take care of his sisters and keep the family business afloat. An old journal written by Mia’s grandmother suggests a valuable necklace could be hidden at the inn. Mia and Levi team up to search for it. Their mutual attraction grows despite their lives being worlds apart. Mia’s insecurity stemming from her father’s abandonment further complicates their relationship. This charming tale is Book 2 in the Bluebell Inn Romance series but works as a standalone.

Masquerade at Middlecrest Abbey by Abigail Wilson: Set in 1815 England, Masquerade at Middlecrest Abbey is a well-balanced mix of historical romance and murder mystery. Lord Adrian Torrington, owner of Middlecrest Abbey, is a British spy against the French. To disguise his latest covert mission, he proposes marriage to Elizabeth Cantrell. The single mother sees no better option and reluctantly agrees to a marriage of convenience. Ironically—and secretly—the father of her child is Lord Torrington’s wayward brother. Both Adrian and Elizabeth assume their sinful past decisions have forever doomed them to unhappiness. But they find that with the forgiveness of God and each other, they have a chance for love and contentment.
**History-makers**

Four historical books for middle graders

by Kristin Chapman

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**Monument Maker** by Linda Booth Sweeney: This extended picture book profiles American sculptor Daniel Chester French and tells the story of the Lincoln Memorial’s construction. From the time he was a small boy, French loved observing and drawing the natural world and later showed an uncanny ability to carve and sculpt. When he was 20 in 1870, the city of Concord, Mass., commissioned him to create the *Minute Man* statue. His career ultimately would culminate with the beloved statue of a seated Lincoln. Black-and-white ink drawings illustrate the story, and extensive endnotes fill in additional details. *(Ages 7-12)*

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**My Name Is Tani … and I Believe in Miracles** by Tanitoluwa Adewumi with Craig Borlase: After the Adewumi family flees its Nigerian home to escape Boko Haram, the family members move to New York City to start a new life. They are grateful to find lodging at a homeless shelter and to begin jobs and school. Tani joins a chess club and pours all of his time into mastering the game. The chess coaches mentor him, melding strategy sessions with character cultivation, and a year later Tani will defy the odds to win the 2019 New York State Chess Championship. An inspiring story showcasing the way acts of kindness can have a miraculous effect. *(Ages 9-12)*

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**Prairie Lotus** by Linda Sue Park: In the heartland of 1880s America, Hanna struggles to find acceptance as a half-Chinese girl. After her mother dies, Hanna and her father move to a new town where they plan to open a dress goods shop. Hanna, a talented seamstress who dreams of becoming a professional dressmaker, faces discrimination and rejection in a town suspicious of anyone who is different. As Hanna stoically perseveres, she discovers she doesn’t need other people’s approval to live a good life. A charming book that sheds light on the struggles minority groups faced in early American history. *(Ages 10-12)*

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**Who Got Game? Baseball: Amazing but True Stories!** by Derrick Barnes: In this recent release geared for baseball aficionados, Barnes uncovers lesser-known trivia tidbits and highlights the unheralded players in America’s favorite pastime. Four sections feature 42 interesting facts related to Pivotal Players, Sensational Stories, Radical Records, and Colossal Comebacks. Readers will learn about the man who invented the box score and the first woman who played on a major league team with male athletes, as well as what game was the longest, which trading card is the most expensive, and how the spitball met its demise. Colorful illustrations pair with humorous writing to make it a fun read. *(Ages 8-12)*

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**Afterword**

In *Where Is Wisdom* (B&H, 2020) Scott James takes children on a treasure hunt to find the source of wisdom. As he guides readers past the places of earthly treasure and toward the source of true treasure, he shows how even hidden things can be found when we know where to look. The story concludes with a note to parents on how to connect the story to further Bible study.

In *The Prisoners, the Earthquake, and the Midnight Song* (The Good Book, 2020) Bob Hartman tells the story of Paul and Silas’ imprisonment and the earthquake that changed a prison guard’s life forever. Hartman centers his story on the sounds people would have heard if they had been present during those extraordinary hours.

In Ellie Holcomb’s latest board book *Don’t Forget to Remember* (B&H, 2020) she celebrates the reminders of God’s love that children can find all around them. Her companion CD *Sing: Remembering Songs* reaffirms the book’s message with songs inspired by the Psalms and creation.
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AMITY SHLAES GRADUATED from Yale, became a journalist, and is now a Forbes columnist and the author of five books, including The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression and her latest, Great Society, which spotlights the cracks in Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty and Richard Nixon’s attempts to expand it. Her reporting-honed ability to tell a good story, with human interest and specific detail, makes those history books a delight to read. Here are edited excerpts from our February interview, just before COVID-19 upended our society and economy.
I suspect you learned a lot about economics through writing for The Wall Street Journal, but was this an interest of yours before? My father built buildings in Chicago. He was a small entrepreneur amid big power interests. I learned the difference pretty early between rent-seekers—institutions that appear to be capitalist but are just interest groups—and true entrepreneurs. I’m very proud to say some of the buildings my father built are very beautiful. He used high-quality brick with good masonry and all the pride of the individual Midwestern entrepreneur.

Did you think of majoring in economics? I probably wouldn’t have been the best econ student, and I thought I had to be the best in the class. I should have just majored in econ or double majored in econ so I had the knowledge, even if I got the occasional B. This is a reason to go to a university that is not tip-top in its reputation. It’s intimidating to go where everyone else is way better at something—nationally ranked dancer, ice skater, concertmaster in the best orchestra at age 14.

I talked with a Harvard economist years ago who said he was deliberately not having any children because he felt each child would lose him a book. You and I each have four children, and yet we’ve written books. Did you ever do a calculation like this foolish Harvard economist? Well, I’m very lucky in the husband department. He wanted lots of children and didn’t mind the work. But the main thing is: Children enrich life, they don’t impoverish it. You’d often be richer in dollars if you’d had no children, but with kids you’re richer in social capital, in happiness. Children keep one abreast: Without my children I’d be pretty isolated as to what’s going on among people in their teens or 20s. Also, it’s very gratifying to see a child do something you hoped to do but never were able to. I have four; I wish I had five, maybe six.

That’s how I feel. Let’s turn to Great Society. You start out with a discussion of the 1960s TV show Bonanza. Why? It was an enormously popular series that challenged the cowboy assumption up until then: You ride in, you ride out. In Bonanza the question is: Once you are rich, what do you do with your wealth, what do you do for your community? That was also the question of the 1960s. We are the affluent society. What do we do with the money? Do you share it? Do you teach people how to earn money? These are the questions we ask when we talk about society.

We’ll touch on people, places, and things. People: Who’s the hero of the book? Jane Jacobs. Brilliant writer. She saw that a neighborhood that is called a slum can un-slum—she used that verb, un-slum—if it’s left to its own devices and has enough opportunity and traffic. There’s no limit to what a community can do for itself if left alone and not disturbed with wrong incentives or perverse incentives imposed from far away.

You’re positive about Walter Reuther, which surprised me. He was a good man. He was the head of the powerful United Auto Workers. He was not corrupt. The existence of such a powerful union was, I would argue, legally corrupt, but that wasn’t really his fault. I liked him. He was not a Communist. He was against Moscow, he was against bad totalitarian governments, but he thought neat social democracy could occur in America. And he worked very hard on the Great Society, which had a socialist component.

I know how in writing history books we can like people who are wrong. Reuther was wrong. He made a number of wrong bets. He bet that no competition would ever threaten the U.S. auto and he could take the prosperity of the U.S. auto industry for granted. That turned out to be a terrible, fatal mistake. Finally, he bet on the social democratic utopia. He tragically dies when flying to a union retreat he was building, Black Lake. He dies on the way to a utopia he’ll never build and never get to.

He was almost like a father to Tom Hayden. Hayden was one of the founders of Students for a Democratic Society. He and others met on a property owned by the union and put out a manifesto called the Port Huron Statement. It’s rambly and hard to understand with a little bit of Hegel mixed in. Basically it’s “we are a new generation, and we’re going to do what we like because the world looks disappointing to us.” Reuther bet that his student wing would be reasonable. Instead it turned out to be violent, anarchist, and silly—the Weathermen. When a project turns out to support an end that is opposite yours, you’re infuriated. Reuther was furious.
Isn’t this in microcosm almost the history of socialism? You get into it with ideals. You don’t get the results you want. You become thuggish to get people to do what you want them to do. Right. You double down and become thuggish. That’s the story of the unions too. So, I found it enormously instructive. We’ve been running a natural experiment since the 1940s and learning that if you live in the state with a right-to-work law you’re more likely to have employment and more jobs are likely to be created there than in a non-right-to-work state. The AFL-CIO in the 1960s made repeal of right-to-work its primary goal, but Lyndon Johnson ended up being too tired to push through legislation repealing the option for a state to opt out of heavy unionism.

Your portrayal of Johnson is different from Robert Caro’s. Caro in his books portrays him as a master user of power. In your book he’s a little befuddled. A master user of power is often befuddled, because it’s all about the power. You can’t remember why you’re doing something. Johnson had some principles. He really believed in education spending, in government. He really believed old people should have medical care, and probably from the government. But most of the time he just operated out of sheer ambition and legacy. He was trying to complete the New Deal for the hero of his youth, Franklin Roosevelt, and to show what a great legislator he was. All presidents are a collection of impulses, and the overwhelming impulse of Johnson is ambition.

We often hear the ’60s portrayed as the good old days of bipartisanship, as opposed to today’s polarization. I’m not really thrilled with those days. Should Everett Dirksen be our role model? I like Everett Dirksen, but I’m from Illinois. Everett Dirksen supported civil rights laws that Johnson pushed, but on repealing right-to-work so every state would be under unions, Dirksen said I don’t think so. He’s very old, very ill, and he said I don’t think so. Illinois was a union state, so it took a lot of guts for Dirksen to take that position.

You’ve raised my estimation of him a bit. Now we need to help the Everett Dirksen library and society. Maybe we need a film. Or a Broadway play like Hamilton: We’ll just call it Dirksen. Oh, that would be great, yeah.

Let’s talk about Robert McNamara. I want WORLD reporters to operate at street level, not suite level. Robert McNamara seems like the ultimate suite-level guy. It seems he did not really want to hear what was going on at ground level in Vietnam. I am not an expert on the Vietnam War, but we clearly did plan from above: Who dared to dispute McNamaraland and its positions? What I will say is the error on the foreign policy side—arrogance, an unwillingness to take in evidence—was mirrored on the domestic side. We had any number of geniuses who thought their intelligence was better than everyone else’s.

Let’s turn to places. Government housing projects where if you earn more money the rent goes up. Did anyone think what this did to incentives to work more and raise your pay when you’ll have to turn it over to the government? There were terrible, terrible incentives at work. Incentivizing families to break up. If the dad didn’t leave, and he was hiding in the closet—this actually happened—the mom taught her kids to lie and deny the father was present. Incredibly perverse. Public housing encouraged dependence. In the case of heavily unionized St. Louis, economic growth that would have made housing project arithmetic work was missing. Growth migrated to other states, sometimes right-to-work states.

And government housing was supposed to break even. With growth, the Pruitt-Igoe project might have been able to pay for the repair of its elevators so the poor people would not be stuck in the elevators and be mugged by children there. Or had St. Louis produced enough jobs, more dads might have stayed in St. Louis and the boys would have been less likely to join gangs. The problem wasn’t just a crazy welfare law, though it was crazy.

—For more from this interview, go to wng.org/shlaes
YOUR GUIDE THROUGH THE GREAT BOOKS.

OLD WESTERN CULTURE

ROMANROADSPRESS.COM
Dion and friends

With new *Blues* album, an aging DiMucci sounds sharp in the tooth

by Arsenio Orteza

So says the slide guitarist Sonny Landreth of his relationship with Dion DiMucci, a connection resulting from Landreth’s playing on a cut from the Rock and Roll Hall of Famer’s new album, *Blues With Friends*.

“Choosing a song that lines up with a particular artist is really quite an intimate thing,” Landreth told me. “There has to be a chemistry, and I think Dion recognized that. I really dug the groove, and he was real happy with the results. I had fun.”

The song that DiMucci selected for Landreth was “I Got the Cure,” the latest in a line of playfully cocky Dion numbers going all the way back to his 1961 smash “The Wanderer.” It connects with his past in another way too. When he boasts of not needing “smack,” he’s alluding to a heroin habit that 50-some-odd years ago almost did him in.

What saved him, as is now well known, was his wife, his 12-step sponsor, and his relationship with God, one that in the 1980s turned him into an unlikely CCM star and in the 1990s saw him emerge as an even unlikelier Roman Catholic apologist.

*Blues With Friends* contains two nods to DiMucci’s faith: “Uptown Number 7” (about a train bound for heaven) and “Hymn to Him” (a selection from his CCM album *Velvet and Steel* reimagined in a minor key). The former features guitar contributions from Stray Cats’ Brian Setzer, the latter the background vocals of Patti Scialfa and a poignant guitar solo from her husband, Bruce Springsteen.

It’s the first word of the album’s title, however, that characterizes most of the songs. And, despite DiMucci’s age (he turns 81 in July), his latest blues—a genre that he has been mining in earnest since 2006’s *Bronx in Blue*—do not sound long in the tooth. Sharp in the tooth is more like it, thanks to the grooves of his one-man backup band Wayne Hood and a parade of guests who bring their “A” game.


Finally, there’s Mike Aquilina, the much-published Church historian who has become DiMucci’s go-to songwriting sidekick. Not counting “Hymn to Him” or “Kickin’ Child” (which DiMucci first recorded in 1965), Aquilina and DiMucci collaborated on every song.

“Dion’s a perfectionist,” Aquilina told me, “and he’s constantly refining. Some of the songs on this album have been in the tumbler for almost 10 years.”

But, Aquilina adds, “working with him has never been anything but a joy. He’s having a good time with friends, doing what he loves, and expressing something deep in his heart that needs to get out.

“It’s one way he prays.”
**Lonely pilgrimages**

Noteworthy new or recent releases

*by Arsenio Orteza* 

**Love in the Midst of Mayhem by Joe Ely:** Ely has said that he recorded this album to avoid “going completely batty” once the coronavirus lockdown hit Texas. And he didn’t waste time, releasing the soft copy in mid-April. The songs, however, gestated slowly, comprising as they did lyrics long in search of melodies and vice versa. (He began writing “Soon All Your Sorrows Be Gone” in 1972.) Given such provenance, it’s not surprising that they’re among Ely’s most difficult to pigeonhole. “Folk” comes close, given the clear, bright mix and the prominence of acoustic guitar and accordion. But even that descriptor feels inadequate in light of songs that in some cases feel experimental enough for psychedelia, art rock, or (in the case of “Glare of Glory”) Alice Cooper.

**Ephphatha! by Joel Henry Little:** New Testament readers will recognize *ephphatha* as the word that Jesus cried out when He loosened a deaf man’s tongue on the Decapolis coasts. Pop musicologists will detect in the music and instrumentation a blend of cabaret and chamber pop tailored to the album’s organizing principle: a dialogue between two young women centering on (to quote the Bandcamp notes) “loneliness, unhealthy attachment, and deception.” Little’s voice, which splits the difference between Robin Gibb and Gilbert O’Sullivan, is androgynous enough to sell the exchange. And, ultimately, knowing which songs are Agnes’ and which songs are Sheila’s is the kind of small stuff that listeners needn’t sweat. As with any dialogue, you either see yourself in both halves or in neither.

**Little Dreams by Marie Miller:** Freed of the need to inhabit a specific niche along the country-pop spectrum (she went indie in 2018), Marie Miller pushes out into deep waters with a mandolin and an acoustic guitar for oars. And even though “Wayfaring Stranger” is centuries old and “Butterfly Collector” could be, there’s sympathy aplenty for contemporary pilgrims. She figure sleeps through a storm (“Silently With Me”) and implores God to save her from what she only thinks that she needs (“More Than What I See”). Her profoundest discoveries, however, occur in the somewhat misleadingly titled “Don’t Look for God.” “Don’t Look for God Anywhere Else” would’ve been clearer—“Looking for God in All the Wrong Places” clearer still.

**We Still Go to Rodeos by Whitney Rose:** The title cut walks right back to the good old days, with sentiments and chord changes as sweet as lemonade on a hot summer’s day at the old-folks’ home. But as the album’s last selection, it’s clearly an afterthought. Everything that comes before it embodies a new direction in Rose’s previously country-only road map. “In a Rut” bursts out of the gates like the Stones’ “Hang Fire” while “Just Circumstance” sounds as if it were grown from a sliver of Lucinda Williams’ “Passionate Kisses.” There’s even power-pop. Mainly, though, there’s real-life drama, including but not limited to the romance-gone-bad scenario that plays out across “Home With You” and “Believe Me, Angela” and that climaxes with the keying of a car.

**Encore**

With the death of Little Richard, the piano-pounding shouter whom many consider the Big Bang of rock ‘n’ roll, the world lost not only a larger-than-life entertainer but also an outspoken Christian. He vacillated between the fleshpots of show business and the holiness of the Church (Seventh-Day Adventist in his case), but he spent more time pursuing and proclaiming the latter than his obituaries suggest. Two years after promising his dying mother in 1984 that he’d always remain a Christian, Little Richard recorded the album *Lifetime Friend*. It was an all-gospel affair, eight of whose 10 tracks found him channeling the energy of his ‘50s hits through ‘80s big-bam-boom production in the service of his Lord and Savior. (The two mellower cuts, “One Ray of Sunshine” and “Somebody’s Comin’,” were no less evangelical.) And his concerts, while remaining part rock ‘n’ roll, morphed into revivals. The verdict on their effectiveness is still out. There’s no doubt, however, that his mother would’ve been proud.
Earth on our heads

Twin calamities present an opportunity for deep lament and mighty pardon

EHEMIAH ON THE 24TH DAY of the month gathered the people of Israel “with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads.” Eight Levites—each of them named twice in the space of two verses (Nehemiah 9:4-5)—stand on a scaffold before them, crying in loud voices, recounting their story, confessing their sins.

We call these “specific details” in journalism. They suggest the importance of an event and its context. They help verify that the reporter did his homework, perhaps was an eyewitness. The Bible is full of good journalism to remind us that worship and God’s acts aren’t disembodied from His people.

Lament has accompanied God’s people from the time of Moses. It’s a systemic requirement for the systemic injustices residing first within God’s people, then throughout the fallen world.

“Earth on their heads” is a powerful outward mark of sorrow, a commentator writes, afflicting people grieved over “any great calamity, or commission of any extraordinary crime.” It takes place outside the sanctuary, where God’s people feel the absence of His covering and the full brunt of their sin.

Memorial Day 2020 did not arrive as others have, ushering in the summer and our season of relaxation. It arrived with the United States approaching two million COVID-19 cases and 100,000 deaths. The country the world has looked to for vanquishing diseases instead was spreading one, forcing other countries to ban U.S. travel and institute safeguards against us. Yet as a country we didn’t mourn the turnabout. We divided over it.

My inbox filled with recriminations, with blame for mainstream media and political bias, with statements minimizing our high death toll. In 30 years of journalism I’ve seen nothing like it, growing these months while all around me people are hanging by their fingernails to family cohesion and economic stability.

The reality, for anyone with eyes to see and ears to hear, is that we probably have more cases and more deaths than we know. For now we are recovering better than we hoped. But we have cut our elderly from their loved ones, institutionalized them in incubators of contagion to die, left families to mourn alone under trying stay-at-home orders. We’ve divided even over how to count deaths, as though the lives of the aged are more expendable, somehow less worth protecting.

And into this moment, on the 25th day of May, streetgoers outside Cup Foods in Minneapolis watched policeman Derek Chauvin place his white left knee into the black neck of George Floyd, who lay prostrate, expiring, by the grimy wheel of a police car. “No one trains that way,” a police captain in New Jersey told one of our reporters (see p. 58), which is to say: The root here is deeper than one policeman’s misconduct.

Those eight minutes watching Floyd die, and all that have come after, have again overflowed to the world our country’s anguishes and failures. The diseases from within and from without can’t be untwined, challenging us to be humble, to repent, to listen, and to pray.

It’s not time to be trite: The justifiable anger of protesters, the violence in our streets, and the possible use of military force against our own people will drive us to greater calamities. Heed the caution of the nation’s top generals and the war correspondents who know.

We who worship God in Christ have another way. The people of Nehemiah 9 bowed so deeply to the ground they came up with earth on their heads. Try it. They listened to the roster of sins past and present. Then they worshipped, because the most powerful tool we have is to ascribe to God the honor due His name. It wins over dwelling on our sin and the sins of others. It’s a way back and down that leads us forward.

Matthew Henry, commenting on the scene, writes: “It is often as hard to persuade the broken-hearted to hope, as formerly it was to bring them to fear. Is this thy case? Behold this sweet promise, A God ready to pardon!”

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THE ROAD TO RE

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WORLD 06.27.20
Businesses around the U.S. are reopening after the coronavirus pandemic, but different places face different challenges

BY HARRISON WATTERS, CAROLINA LUMETTA, NAOMI BALK, MARIA FERRARO, GRACE SNELL, ADDALAI NOWLIN, ELIAS FERENCZY, AND MHARI REID

HAIR DOESN'T STOP GROWING in social isolation. That’s why on May 25, when John Floyd reopened the Brownsboro Center Barber Shop in Louisville, Ky., customers wearing face masks were waiting outside. Floyd began work at 4:30 a.m. that day and stayed busy until his shop closed 14 hours later.

Some procedures were different. Floyd wore a black face mask sprinkled with white hair clippings. He walked to the door to let in each customer. He pulled disposable masks from a cardboard box for customers who didn’t have
According to Michigan’s Department of Health, the county by then had suffered 801 confirmed cases and 49 deaths.

WEST MICHIGAN BEEF CO. in Hudsonville, Mich., sits an hour’s drive up U.S. 131 from Kalamazoo—and company owner Don Vander Boon does not need a governor’s speech to tell him about COVID-19 dangers. By May 26, eight of his about 50 employees had tested positive for COVID-19. On May 1, one employee’s wife died from it, after probably contracting the disease from a noncompany source.

Vander Boon closed the beef processing plant on May 4 and reopened it two weeks later after a floor-one. After each haircut he walked the customer to the door, changed his black rubber gloves, grabbed a disinfectant wipe, and cleaned the door.

Floyd and many of his customers are white-haired, so they face more risk from COVID-19 than the young. But with extra rules in place from the Kentucky Board of Barbering, Floyd was ready to move forward: “We’re doing the best we can.”

Eight World Journalism Institute students in eight different states heard similar sentiments. While some large cities remained under lockdown, smaller ones—particularly in the Midwest and the South—were reopening, and sometimes tiptoeing around the orders of perhaps-overreaching governors.

GAZELLE SPORTS IN KALAMAZOO, MICH., for example, abided by the letter of the state executive order that required Michigan businesses to operate by appointment only—but staff members counted walk-ins as appointments as long as the store didn’t exceed capacity limits. On May 26, store manager Joe Trupp stood outside, armed with a face mask and clipboard to keep track of the number of customers inside. Staffers encouraged customers to wear masks, but they didn’t kick out unmasked customers: Instead, they served them in a separate section of the store.

“It’s not about rights, it’s about making sure everyone is comfortable and safe,” Trupp said. Staffers didn’t touch customers’ items during checkout. They wiped down every contact point after a customer left. By offering online shopping, virtual fitting appointments, limited walk-ins, and curbside pickup, Trupp hopes to bring back many former customers: “If we even get to 40-50 percent of what we used to be, we’ll be sustainable.”

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s latest executive order—which she later canceled—extended a stay-at-home order until June 12, much to the dismay of Caffè Casa co-owner Kathy Beebe: On May 26, with the Kalamazoo restaurant sporting more potted plants than customers, she said that unless the state reopens more, her business is “on the chopping block.” Only a few customers trickled in that day under a “NOW OPEN” banner above the door, and Beebe doesn’t make them wear masks. Acoustic music echoed in its empty storefront. Blue tape on the floor marked spots for customers to stand 6 feet apart.

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to-ceiling sanitization. Among the changes: Another company steam cleans the break room, locker rooms, and offices four times each week. Employees who work within 6 feet of each other wear masks. Vander Boon and executives removed all tables from the break room and set up a tent outside for employees to go in during breaks. They check workers’ temperatures each day when they walk in. The plant is now back to processing 300,000 pounds of meat per day: “These past weeks are the first time I can ever remember being lauded as heroes and being told we’re essential.”

LIFE AND DEATH DID NOT APPEAR so close at hand at a Dunkin’ (formerly Dunkin’ Donuts) 400 miles south in the downstate Illinois city of Jacksonville. One employee sang along with a radio tune. Employees chattered, coffee brewed, and spoons stirred. Manager Jacob Goeringer said his Dunkin’ had increased weekly sales by roughly 46 percent during the coronavirus shutdown: Other coffee shops closed, so many new customers came to Dunkin’.

With Illinois in stage three of five reopening stages on May 25, restaurants could open with outdoor seating but only for 10 people: Stage four allows for gatherings of up to 50 people, and Goeringer was eager for that. His doughnut sales have decreased—coffee and sandwich sales took off—but he expects them to rise when customers can come in. On May 25 in the eating area, 18 chairs sat upside down on tables, and a sheet of plexiglass guarded a cash register. Many times each hour an employee wiped the counter around the register.

When Dunkin’ opened its dining room, stickers on the floor encouraged social distancing. On May 25, an employee without a mask took a Dunkin’ bag to a silver car outside and handed it to the customer through the car window. Goeringer was glad to see cars in a drive-thru line extending to the street, but he wants to see a line of people out the front door again. Morgan County had had only 34 known cases of COVID-19 and one death at the time.

DRIVE ANOTHER 100 MILES SOUTH and we’re in Town and Country, Mo., where patrons of Napoli 2 no longer had on their tables napkins carefully rolled and tucked into wine glasses. Salt, pepper, olive oil, and Parmesan were also missing. Guests who received their silverware rolled into a napkin had to pack their own to-go boxes.

Because of COVID-19, general manager Ande Pietoso furloughed most of his staff on March 16. The restaurant switched to curbside service, with a plan to open its dining room on April 1. Every night, Pietoso worked alongside his cousin, his chef, and one other employee to keep the business afloat. Running the restaurant usually requires 40 staffers. He eventually chose to shut down completely for the month of April before resuming curbside service only on May 1 and opening again for limited seating on May 18. But the fine-dining experience is not the same.

Some guests ordered meals when Pietoso transitioned to curbside service. Others purchased gift cards and tipped extra—some left a tip as large as the entire bill. Pietoso hoped by early June the restaurant could operate at 50 percent capacity—and later, he hopes, “the hugging and the shaking hands and the backslaps and the kisses of the guests” will return.

Restaurant reopenings are coming after a long period of uncertainty for St. Louis area residents. In late March, the number of active COVID-19 cases peaked. The state of Missouri decided to start phase one of reopening on May 4, but both the city of St. Louis and St. Louis County delayed for two weeks. They accounted for more than half of Missouri COVID-19 cases by May 4.

ROADS ALONGSIDE THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER take drivers north from St. Louis through Mark Twain’s Hannibal, picturesque cities like LeClaire, Iowa, and Potosi, Wis., and onward to Minneapolis. There, the work of hospice nurse Sheryl Seignious in a Twin Cities suburb never seems to cease. She contracted COVID-19 mid-April, and fatigue made work exhausting for a month. But in late May she was once again visiting patients in their homes and nursing homes.
When Seignious enters a COVID-19 unit in a nursing home, she wears full personal protective equipment. Her asthma makes breathing through an N95 mask difficult. Instead, she uses a mint-green tie-on medical mask under a clear plastic face shield. As she talks, her glasses and the shield cloud up. The sleeves of her blue polyester smock—too large for her 5-foot, 2-inch frame—fall to her hands. Now she has a new smock with elastic cuffs that make it easier to avoid contaminating her gown when she washes hands between patients.

To avoid spreading the virus, Seignious schedules visits with healthy patients first, then COVID-19-positive patients: “I’ve had people on hospice for six months to a year. They get COVID, and they are dead within 24 hours to five days.” She remembers a two-week period in April when 12 patients died, eight of them from COVID-19.

Seignious isn’t sure when long-term care facilities will reopen to the public—guidelines change daily, and patients may remain isolated through the summer. Minnesotan tragedies have grabbed nationwide headlines: Eighty-one percent of deaths in the state came from long-term care facilities and nursing homes.

**ONE THOUSAND MILES EAST** lies Corning, NY, which advertises itself as the “Most Fun Small Town in America.” Just after Memorial Day a duct tape aid to social distancing marked Glaswerk Optical’s brick walkway. A masked woman faced optician Martin Ennulat at a temporary stand outside his storefront. She tried on frames, placed them on a table, and strolled away. Ennulat picked up the frames, dipped them in a sanitizing solution, and returned them to a rack. Then he wiped the tabletop.

That’s what Ennulat’s days are now like at what he calls his “lemonade stand.” Wearing a face mask and latex gloves, he makes sure his stand has eyeglass cleaner and isopropyl alcohol. Despite the sanitary precautions, halting traffic prompted Ennulat to close shop in mid-March and furlough his only employee.

The situation in Corning, 250 miles northwest of New York City, was far different from the highly publicized crisis in the metropolis. Steuben County had only 241 cases and 41 deaths in late May.

**COVID-19 FATALITIES** were more symbolically evident in the chapel of Farris Funeral Service in Abingdon, Va., where 43 balloons represented 43 people who couldn’t attend a funeral because Virginia’s social distancing guidelines disallowed gatherings larger than 10 people. On April 14, handwritten cards of condolence hung at the end of the balloon strings and showed the concern of friends and family members who couldn’t attend.

Director Kim Luke said she’s seen other funeral homes do drive-by viewings of the casket or drive-in services: She chose to have standard funeral services open to immediate family members. Luke and her staff have handled three COVID-19 corpses since the out-
middle of State Street. So did the evidence of the two states’ approaches to COVID-19 precautions: Shoppers standing in the middle see Virginia flags flapping on one side and bright red Tennessee flags on the other. Banners of senior athletes from rival high schools—Tennessee High and Virginia High—hang from shop windows.

Restaurant-goers on the Tennessee side in late May found “dining room open” signs. Laughter and shouts echoed from a newly reopened pub. Across the street, padlocks and “face masks sold here” or “no walk-ins welcome” signs hung on doors. Diners had only one option on the Virginia side: Quaker Steak and Lube, but only for outdoor seating and curbside pick-up.

By governor’s orders Virginia businesses could not reopen until June, while Tennessee businesses were able to reopen on April 30.

**IN BRISTOL, TENN.,** at 7:30 a.m. on May 26, Abram Arwood was helping his first patient of the day rehabilitate an ACL injury at Holston Medical Group (HMG). Sweat seeped through the patient’s face mask and fell onto the handlebars of a stationary bike. Then Arwood walked into a waiting room where 10 people sat on chairs close together. He took the temperature of his next patient.

After Tennessee began reopening businesses, Arwood started seeing more of his patients return to physical therapy. He and his colleague, Dan Almond, worked through the state shutdown, seeing about 25 in-person patients a day between the two of them.

Arwood said patients wearing face masks during therapy run the risk of overheating: “Most of my patients are high-level college athletes who can wring the sweat out of their masks after just a 10-minute warmup.” He wonders how sanitary the masks really are for them, and he thinks about his older patients who don’t hear well: “Do I risk exposing them by pulling down the mask to speak to them or do I keep the mask on and hope they understand what I say?”

HMG adopted hospital-regulated restrictions on March 27. Regular patients canceled in-office appointments, managers furloughed the office staff, and doctors and physical therapists took 10 percent to 15 percent pay cuts. Therapists found new ways to help patients, such as by videoconference, but Arwood chuckled about it: The heaviest weight some patients have at home is a gallon of milk, and “that will get them nowhere in physical therapy.”

**THREE HUNDRED MILES FARTHER WEST,** and we’re back to Louisville. The week John Floyd reopened his barbershop, Kentucky ranked 33rd in the nation for its number of coronavirus cases, with about 8,950 people infected and 390 dead. Louisville and its suburbs in Jefferson County experienced a quarter of those cases and more than one-third of Kentucky’s COVID-19 deaths. But on May 26 the daily number of new cases had dropped from the 80s to the single digits.

At Chair No. 3 another stylist held a mirror in front of a white-haired man she called George: “Does it look like you again?” Business owners across the United States are asking the same thing: When will America look like itself again?

Some businesses had to take surprising detours off the COVID-19 recovery route. On June 1, reacting to the death of George Floyd, looters in Kalamazoo, Mich., smashed through Gazelle Sports, Caffè Casa, and other downtown businesses. Owners boarded up their stores the next day. Like many Americans, they shifted from one historic crisis to another.
BOTH SIDES, NOW

After George Floyd’s death, we shouldn’t ignore protesters’ cries or looters’ destruction

BY MARVIN OLASKY

A PROTESTER HOLDS A SIGN WITH AN IMAGE OF GEORGE FLOYD DURING A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE POLICE HEADQUARTERS IN LOS ANGELES.

PHOTO BY MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES
A lady of civil rights” when she refused to move to the back of a Birmingham bus: She later said she was “tired of giving in.” Millions of minority members feel that way.

Meanwhile, millions of white folks who don’t live within a few miles of oceans or great lakes are tired of being chastised as dumb “deplorables.” They’re tired of scorn from almost every major media outlet and in almost every grove of academia. They’re appalled at urban scenes that look like outtakes from The Dark Knight (2008) and last year’s alienation movie, Joker.

Peaceful protests honored Floyd, who by all accounts was a gentle giant. The clustering of demonstrators seemed weird to those told it was dangerous to cluster in churches. Oddly, more than 1,000 public health pros declared in an open letter regarding the protests: “We do not condemn these gatherings as risky for COVID-19 transmission. … We support them as vital to the national public health.” But the real villains were those like CNN’s Chris Cuomo, recovered from his coronavirus bout, who urged on rioters by saying, “Show me where it says that protesters are supposed to be polite and peaceful.”

Let’s unpack this. Derek Chauvin, the Minneapolis police officer now charged with murder, should never have had the opportunity on May 25 to kill George Floyd by pressing his knee on Floyd’s neck minute after minute, even when Floyd repeatedly said, “I can’t breathe,” even when Floyd went silent. Chauvin’s record included 17 prior complaints, including pulling a woman out of her car after she went 10 mph over the speed limit—but it’s hard to fire a police officer, given union rules.

On June 1 Minneapolis police union President Bob Kroll had the gall to send out a letter complaining that Chauvin and the three other officers at the killing of Floyd “were terminated without due process.” Chauvin was among those protected from the consequences of his actions—until he went too far while the whole world was watching. Compare his situation with that of George Floyd, who was exposed: Once his high school and community college basketball career ended, he bounced from unskilled job to job, most recently losing his position in a restaurant that closed because of COVID-19.

In that way our pandemic and our racial pandemonium are parallel. The coronavirus has medically hit all kinds of people, but the impact of our national shutdown has not been economically awful for those protected from the consequences by being able to work from home. It’s been horrendous for those who lost their jobs and their small businesses—and the recent riots increased the bleeding.

Another divide is tired-of-harassment vs. tired-of-chastisement. Anyone who’s the parent of African American teens knows they are more likely to be treated with suspicion, when they’re in a store or driving a car, than their white counterparts. In 1955 Rosa Parks took her first step toward becoming “the first lady of civil rights” when she refused to move to the back of a Birmingham bus: She later said she was “tired of giving in.” Millions of minority members feel that way.

Meanwhile, millions of white folks who don’t live within a few miles of oceans or great lakes are tired of being chastised as dumb “deplorables.” They’re tired of scorn from almost every major media outlet and in almost every grove of academia. They’re appalled at urban scenes that look like outtakes from The Dark Knight (2008) and last year’s alienation movie, Joker.

Peaceful protests honored Floyd, who by all accounts was a gentle giant. The clustering of demonstrators seemed weird to those told it was dangerous to cluster in churches. Oddly, more than 1,000 public health pros declared in an open letter regarding the protests: “We do not condemn these gatherings as risky for COVID-19 transmission. … We support them as vital to the national public health.” But the real villains were those like CNN’s Chris Cuomo, recovered from his coronavirus bout, who urged on rioters by saying, “Show me where it says that protesters are supposed to be polite and peaceful.”
Cuomo may not have been up on the First Amendment, which protects “the right of the people peaceably to assemble.” Most protesters were peaceful, but from May 30 to June 1, under the cover of darkness and dark thoughts of revenge, rioters in dozens of cities smashed store windows and beat up small-business owners or managers who tried to stop them. When one marauder murdered retired St. Louis police Capt. David Dorn, a handwritten sign next to flowers and a teddy bear read, “Y’all killed a black man because ‘they’ killed a black man???”

So where do we go from here? Conservatives can get mad by staring at computer screens and watching videos labeled “Man stomped and stoned for trying to defend a bar from being looted ... Destroying store and beating unarmed woman and her husband ... Restaurant manager beaten and stomped for trying to defend his workplace ... Looting in Union Square NYC ... St. Louis neighborhood on fire ... Pharmacy destroyed/looted in Dallas ... Destroying Justice Center Portland.”

I’ve also watched videos primarily passed around by liberals: “Cops push a protester to the ground, his head slams on the concrete ... Protester walking home when police tackle and beat him ... NYPD tackles a guy and beat him ... Protester badly injured as a cop bashes his head in with a shield ... Police attack peaceful protesters.”

And don’t forget all-purpose anarchists, who can relish thieves’ taste for brand names: “Ransacking Target ... AutoZone on fire ... Looting Louis Vuitton store ... Destroying Apple Store.” One shot of a looted Nike store shows its famed come-on in big letters along one wall: “Just do it.” Some did. Viewers might even relish some tragic slapstick comedy along the Proverbs 26 line of “Whoever digs a pit will fall into it”: “Rioter sets himself on fire while trying to set a building on fire.” (His companions helped him put out the flames.)

Whatever our perspective, a few of these videos go a long way. After informing ourselves, we can continue to mainline videos and trade horror stories—or we can try to develop a different divide. On one side: the overwhelming majority of Americans, liberal or conservative, who favor peaceful discussions of our differences, and look for opportunities to work side by side to solve problems. On the other side: the relatively few, left or right, with horror in their hearts.

So what’s the big takeaway from peaceful protests and violent destruction in our urban centers, such as the City of Angels? We shouldn’t ignore “Shocking Video: LAPD officers seen striking protesters with batons.” But we should also remember how vandals trashed the Santa Monica Music Center, which Chico and Victor Fernandez started in 1972. For nearly half a century adults and children who could not afford to buy their own musical instruments went there for inexpensive rentals. On May 31 gangs with guns, machetes, and hammers stole instruments and amplifiers, then smashed cash registers and display cases. Both sides are part of the story.

On the next page you can read Sophia Lee’s look at the Los Angeles mosaic of peaceful protests and broken glass. After that comes Emily Belz’s story from Camden, N.J. Two decades ago I visited Camden streets where drug dealers and murderers ruled. Now, though, the police department has reformed, and crime is down.
Many protesters blame the police for inciting violence—but they also blame unknown “instigators” among the crowd who threw water bottles and rocks at the police or set police cars on fire. The riots that erupted worry activists: Will people who share outrage over Floyd’s death (and others) turn against the protest’s original message? A few protesters argue that riots are necessary for social change. Protesters who want to maintain peace try to calm more-aggressive protesters.

The protests have attracted people with different agendas to slink in and take advantage of the madness. In many cities, looters broke into stores and hurried out with arms bulging with stolen goods. In some cities, people got hurt. In St. Louis on June 2, gunmen at a protest shot four officers. The same night, looters shot to death a retired St. Louis police captain, David Dorn, trying to protect a friend’s pawn shop. Dorn was black. In Buffalo, N.Y., on June 1, an SUV driver charged into police officers, injuring two.

Victims have included peaceful protesters, journalists, bystanders, and business owners: On June 3 in Orange County, Calif., a Mini Cooper plowed into a crowd of peaceful protesters in broad daylight. In Fort Wayne, Ind., on May 30, an off-duty television journalist lost his eye when police fired tear gas.

It was around midnight when Yuko Watanabe crouched in the corner of her restaurant in downtown Los Angeles and called her parents in Japan, yearning for a comforting voice. Rioters had hurled concrete blocks into the window of her restaurant. Raucous looters, night revelers, loud bangs, and smoke filled the streets. Broken glass and dead plants were scattered across her restaurant.

“Did you call the police?” her mother urged.

“Mom, you don’t get it,” Watanabe said. “They’re targeting the police!”

That was May 29, three days after protests began in Minneapolis over the death of George Floyd. Then protests calling for racial justice and police accountability spread across the United States from New York to Los Angeles, and even from Paris to Seoul.

Most protests have been peaceful, but many have ruptured into violence: Some ended with the police spraying rubber bullets into the crowd, striking people with batons, and releasing tear gas. Other times, rioters torched buildings—including a police precinct in Minneapolis and City Hall in Nashville—and looted stores.

Protesters stand on top of a burned police cruiser as another burns in Los Angeles.
We have people here that need your help. This is when y’all stand together with the community, with society, to stop governmental oppression.

The troops said they couldn’t leave their post, but when another protester asked them to take a knee, the three members did. Then one member motioned to the other guardsmen, and they took a knee with the protesters. The crowd cheered. Later, an LAPD sergeant also joined a moment of silence with the protesters. With arms wrapped around each other, officer and protesters bowed their heads for a few minutes. One organizer declared: “We don’t want any violence. We don’t want anyone hurt. We just want our voices heard.”

Wes Tarte, 28, said he hopes the National Guard members and police officers return home having experienced a little change of heart: “We’re all humans. But as soon as they put their

outraged against the looting and the violence than they are to the murders happening against black and brown people not only in LA, but all over the country,” St. James said.

Still, many police officers across the country—chiefs of some of the largest departments in the United States—have publicly condemned the actions of the four Minneapolis police officers in the Floyd tragedy. In many areas, officers also displayed support by marching alongside protesters or kneeling in solidarity. Even Patrisse Cullors, co-founder of Black Lives Matter, said she thinks “people’s minds are changing, hearts are changing.”

At a June 3 protest in Hollywood, where more than a thousand mostly young people gathered to demonstrate, I saw 26-year-old actress Keke Palmer passionately exhorting three National Guard members to march with them: “We have people here that need your help. This is when y’all stand together with the community, with society, to stop governmental oppression.”

The troops said they couldn’t leave their post, but when another protester asked them to take a knee, the three members did. Then one member motioned to the other guardsmen, and they took a knee with the protesters. The crowd cheered. Later, an LAPD sergeant also joined a moment of silence with the protesters. With arms wrapped around each other, officer and protesters bowed their heads for a few minutes. One organizer declared: “We don’t want any violence. We don’t want anyone hurt. We just want our voices heard.”

Wes Tarte, 28, said he hopes the National Guard members and police officers return home having experienced a little change of heart: “We’re all humans. But as soon as they put their
uniforms on, it’s like they lose their humanity. What we’re trying to do is get them away from that and do what’s right.” Beside him, his 18-year-old brother grumbled—he still doesn’t trust the authorities and doesn’t believe they were genuine when they knelt. Tarte sighed: “My brother doesn’t agree. He’s young, he’s angry, his generation is up next and things have not changed.”

He said he too is angry. Every time he sees a police car, his heart skips: “When a white boy’s heart skips, he’s worried about a speeding ticket. When my heart skips, I’m worried about getting killed. I shouldn’t have to worry about that.” Still, he said he believes in the slow, gradual work of communication and compassion: “Our job as the people is to take our anger and aggression and frustration and instead of going up against their faces, we gotta hit right into the heart and say: Listen! This is what we’re going through!”

Watanabe, the restaurant owner in downtown Los Angeles, said she’s lucky that all she suffered was a broken window. When her property manager called her in the middle of the night, she rushed to her restaurant. Many people were still roaming downtown, swigging liquor, some performing doughnuts in their cars on the streets. She grabbed a broom and started sweeping the broken glass outside. As she did so, one kid began tagging the building with spray paint. “Go away!” Watanabe screamed. One young woman told her: “Honey, it’s a revolution. Have fun with it.” Another young man stuffed a wad of cash through her broken window and mumbled an apology.

Watanabe was at her shop until 4:30 a.m. cleaning up the mess. One group of young adults leaned into the cracked window and called out, “Hey, you want to buy some kitchen equipment?” They held up Tupperware, pans, trays, and nuts—goods that Watanabe suspected they looted from nearby restaurants. She chased them away.

Like many business owners, Watanabe is conflicted. On one hand, she supports advocating against police brutality and racism. But she sees some demonstrations spiraled into lawlessness: “What do we do? The system is all broken now. When I’m scared, I used to call the police. Now I can’t. Now I need to protect myself.”
The week that demonstrators around the United States displayed outrage over the police-instigated death of George Floyd, Camden, N.J., resident Brenda Antinore got an email from a captain in the Camden County Police Department.

Capt. Zsakhiem James sent out the department’s use-of-force policy, established in 2013, to local ministry leaders. He noted that the department wants to be transparent and also accountable to the community so something like Floyd’s killing will not happen in Camden. Now, Camden police procedures do not allow chokeholds of any kind. James later told me the death of Floyd is “a stain on all of us” that set back by “decades” a movement toward “realistic community policing. It erodes the trust. It erases it.”

“This is what we do over here”

Camden, N.J., shows a path forward for police departments in need of reform

By Emily Belz
In Philadelphia, Pa., on the weekend after Floyd’s death, rioters smashed windshields of police vehicles, looters set fires in businesses, and police shot rubber bullets and tear gas into crowds of protesters. A social media video showed a Philadelphia SWAT officer pulling down the face masks of kneeling protesters and spraying pepper spray into their faces. That incident is under investigation. Philadelphia officials on May 31 ordered all retail stores to close at 2:30 p.m.

Just across the Delaware River in Camden, none of that happened. The weekend that riots began, a Camden hair salon owner organized a protest against police brutality, and contacted Camden police about it. The police, including the chief, asked if they could join the protest, and they marched with the protesters. At night things remained peaceful.

Camden’s protest with police joining in was more than a photo-op. It reflected years of work rebuilding trust between the police and residents of the city that a decade ago had a reputation as one of the most violent in America. Before all of this, the Camden police and community have regularly gone on “peace walks,” walking through neighborhoods together, sometimes praying as they go.

“The police have done a good job of not only ensuring public safety but cultivating bridges with the community,” said Ernest Grant II, lead pastor at Epiphany Camden and an African American. “I don’t feel like the police are antagonizing me or intentionally trying to stoke violence. They feel like the guardians and protectors.” He added that for systemic change in the city, “church can’t do it on their own, police can’t do it on their own.”

The week when protests rippled across the country, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams said on WNYC’s Brian Lehrer Show that Camden “could be a model.” Other police departments began to adopt some of the reforms that Camden had undertaken years ago. “What we’ve done started long before last week,” said James. “You have to meet with the community in the absence of crisis. You have to put that social currency in the bank … before they need you.”

In 2012, Camden police were living a different story. Four officers attempted to arrest a suspected drug dealer, only to have a crowd of more than 100 attack them and free the suspect. That year Camden had a per capita murder rate five times that of Chicago. Several officers had pleaded guilty in a major corruption case.

State, county, and city leaders decided to dissolve the department

PHILADELPHIA POLICE SHOVE BACK PROTESTERS (LEFT); CAPT. ZSAKHEIM JAMES OF THE CAMDEN POLICE DEPARTMENT MARCHES ALONGSIDE DEMONSTRATORS.
entirely, turning it from a unionized city force into a nonunionized county force. Camden Mayor Frank Moran told me in 2018 that the police union had stood in the way of the reforms they tried to enact: “The police union refused to give anything.”

The new Camden police force unionized after reforming, but with lower salaries. That allowed the county to hire more officers, which made a big difference in covering territory on foot patrol, the goal of its new community policing approach.

Camden Police Chief Scott Thomson, who retired last year, headed up the department through its dissolution and re-formation. He and Moran both emphasized working with local faith leaders and walking neighborhoods. They also ramped up technology like ShotSpotter, a gunshot detection system.

From 2012 to 2017, Camden achieved a 26 percent drop in violent crime. Excessive force complaints in Camden have dropped 95 percent since 2014. The approach, leading Camden out of its worst crime rates, came to the attention of national police groups and academics studying policing.

Local officials elsewhere took notice. Baltimore had a massive police corruption case that resulted in convictions for eight Baltimore officers. In 2018, Baltimore state Delegate Bilal Ali proposed that the city follow what Camden did: dissolve the police department, rehire the good officers, and institute reforms. “There is a blueprint for success, empirical data to guide us, and a light at the end of the tunnel,” Ali said about Camden.

Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh immediately dismissed the idea. The next year she resigned amid a fraud case and has since received a three-year prison sentence. Until the protests, other localities had not followed Camden’s radical approach of dissolving its police force to reform it. On June 7, a veto-proof majority of the Minneapolis City Council announced that it would vote to dissolve the Minneapolis police department, but unlike Camden, the council talked about a “police-free future,” and acknowledged it had no clear plan for what that might mean.

“All I can say is how we do things,” said James. “I would never disparage another police department for how they respond to situations I’m not at. There are certain situations I can look at and say, ‘Yeah, I’m not going to do that.’ The Floyd incident—no one trains that way.”

Camden’s use-of-force policy, which Thomson crafted in 2013 and has revised over the years, has as its foundation “sanctity of life.” It has the unusual blessing of both the police union and the state American Civil Liberties Union. “Use of force should never be considered routine,” the policy reads. “In exercising this authority, officers must respect the sanctity of all human life, act in all possible respects to preserve human life, do everything possible to avoid unnec-
necessary uses of force, and minimize the force that is used, while still protecting themselves and the public.”

De-escalation is a “core value,” so Camden officers train in it over and over: “That’s the key,” said James. “They come into situations, they can rely on their training.”

The policy also states that officers shouldn’t position those under their control in a way that could obstruct breathing and that officers “should not sit, kneel, or stand on a person’s chest or back, and whenever feasible should not force the person to lie on his or her stomach.”

The use-of-force policy has another unusual core principle: that officers have a “duty to prevent and stop illegal and inappropriate uses of force by other officers.” The policy says officers seeing inappropriate uses of force have a duty to “interrupt the flow of events.”

Major police departments elsewhere are starting to adopt some of these use-of-force standards in response to the Floyd protests. On June 3, the Los Angeles Police Commission announced it plans to require officers to intervene when they see misconduct from fellow officers. The San Diego Police Department announced it will no longer use chokeholds.

Partnership with local ministries has been a core part of Camden’s revised approach. Top brass from the police, usually including Chief Joseph Wysocki, have had weekly meetings with dozens of leaders from local ministries to hear what’s going on in neighborhoods, respond to concerns, and talk about hot spots in the city.

When the COVID-19 outbreak began, the police moved those weekly meetings to Zoom, which has allowed more people to attend. Brenda Antinore leads a ministry to women suffering from addiction and working in prostitution in Camden: She and her husband, Bill, also run other street-based ministries under the umbrella organization Seeds of Hope (a 2014 winner of a WORLD Hope Award for Effective Compassion). Capt. James and Chief Wysocki recently visited the Antinores’ house in South Camden, where women in addiction recovery stay, to check whether they had enough personal protective equipment since they work on the street.

“If there wasn’t that open dialogue we would be guessing, and a lot of times it would be wrong,” said James. “We want to be the police department that the community needs.”

It’s hard going in a tough city with serious drug and crime problems. Parts of Camden had begun to recover after decades of postindustrial decline, but COVID-19 and the attempt to stop it have led to increased addiction, homelessness, and unemployment. Antinore said it is “as much if not more desperate out here than it’s ever been.” More tents have popped up on Camden streets.

The Antinores and their team of volunteers have been cooking and boxing up breakfasts for hundreds. The other day one woman they help screamed for them to help an overdosing teenager: They were able to do so, using Narcan. “We’re really grateful to God that He’s allowed us to stay present,” Brenda Antinore said.

The Antinores and other ministry leaders have for years regularly met outside City Hall to pray for the police, the mayor, and other community leaders, a gathering that is not advertised or public. Recently, Antinore overheard a woman outside on the phone, talking to a friend in Philadelphia about the looting over there. “She goes, ‘Why are you doing all that, this is what we do over here,’” said Antinore. “It was good to hear that.”
BIDEN’S SUMMER BET

Picking a potential vice president is a critical moment in Joe Biden’s presidential campaign—and it’s now more complex than he anticipated

By Jamie Dean
American cities erupted after the death of George Floyd on May 25, a short list may have grown shorter for Democrat Joe Biden: his slate of potential vice presidential candidates.

It certainly grew more complicated.

A few weeks earlier, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., hosted a Zoom fundraiser with Biden and helped raise $1.5 million for his presidential bid. By the end of May, Klobuchar was watching Minneapolis burn and fielding questions about whether she should drop out of contention for Biden’s running mate.

The problem wasn’t Klobuchar’s proximity to the crisis: It was her history as a prosecutor in the county.

For eight years, Klobuchar served as the top prosecutor in Hennepin County, a jurisdiction that includes Minneapolis. Crime rates dropped, but critics point out Klobuchar didn’t bring charges against a slew of police officers facing allegations of excessive force.

One of the names that surfaced just as Klobuchar left for the U.S. Senate: Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer now facing murder charges for pinning down George Floyd, as Floyd gasped for breath. Floyd, 46, died shortly after Chauvin knelt on his neck for several minutes.

Klobuchar had already left the prosecutor’s office for her Senate post in 2007 when a grand jury declined to indict Chauvin over the shooting death of a suspect in a separate case. Reports that Klobuchar personally refused to prosecute Chauvin don’t appear accurate, but she still faces questions about how she handled other cases involving officers.

In such cases, prosecutors usually presented evidence to grand juries, and the juries decided whether to issue indictments. But Klobuchar has recently said she should have made more of the decisions about charging officers herself.

It’s difficult to know if the cases would have turned out differently, but the question mark is enough to complicate Biden’s decision-making about a running mate, particularly as the country has faced some of its most widespread urban unrest in decades.

Klobuchar isn’t the only candidate on the vice-presidential list with a background in law or law enforcement, and Biden will have to decide whether such credentials are assets or liabilities before his self-imposed deadline for choosing a running mate by Aug. 1.

The magnitude of the decision intensifies as Biden acknowledges his age: The former vice president will be 78 in November. He told a crowd in January he realizes the person he picks as a running mate should immediately be capable of stepping into the presidency if necessary: “I’m an old guy.”

A few supporters in the crowd chuckled. Biden responded, “No, I’m serious.”

CHOOSING A RUNNING MATE has always been serious, but the vice presidency hasn’t always been taken seriously. Benjamin Franklin once suggested calling the vice president “Your Superfluous Excellency.”

The role has grown in complexity over the years, but even for the most low-key vice president a high responsibility remains: If the president is unable to serve, the second-in-command catapults to the Oval Office.

If that happens, it’s usually by a president’s death, but the 25th Amendment also gives the vice president power to join a majority of Cabinet members (or another body formed by Congress) to declare a president unfit to serve. If a president objects, it would take a two-thirds vote by Congress to approve his removal.

Such circumstances would be extraordinary, but it’s a reminder of the linchpin a vice president could be in such a dramatic moment.

Biden says he’s healthy, and his campaign has dismissed questions about his mental acuity, but he’s aware his age makes a health crisis a more elevated possibility. (President Donald Trump talks less about his age, but he turns 74 on June 14.)

Biden also hasn’t publicly ruled out the possibility of only serving one term if he’s elected in November. And while vice presidents don’t have a stellar track record of winning the presidency, a one-term Biden would accelerate his vice president’s chance to aim for the top spot.

The most important question in picking a vice president is intensely practical: Who could best step into the presidency if necessary? But the question also becomes inevitably political: Who could best help me win?

For Biden, that choice is complicated by a particularly unusual election year.

What will be the most pressing issue in November? Will economic distress be improving or worsening? Will COVID-19 be weakening or surging? Will racial tensions and police relations be on the front burner or back burner?

That last question may be on Biden’s front burner at the moment. After reports resurfaced in late May about Klobuchar’s record as a prosecutor in Minnesota,
an analyst for The Cook Political Report declared the senator is “off the list.” Klobuchar defended her tenure as a prosecutor, which included a tough-on-crime approach when Minneapolis was struggling to stem a soaring murder rate in the 1990s. But she didn’t publicly argue for Biden’s selection either way: “It’s his choice.”

Biden already had narrowed down his choice with an early promise: He says he plans to name a woman to the ticket. With heightened racial tensions in the United States, his advisers may urge him to select one of the African American women already on his radar. But some of those choices come with complications too.

Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., has emerged as a top prospect for the job: She has national name recognition for her grilling of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh during his confirmation hearing and for her own run for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Voters might also recognize Harris as the candidate who pounced on Biden during the Democratic primary debates: She attacked Biden’s record on race and busing. Biden seemed stunned.

FORMER SEN. JOE LIEBERMAN, WHO SERVED AS AL GORE’S RUNNING MATE IN 2000, COMPARED THE EXPERIENCE OF UNDERGOING THE VETTING PROCESS TO HAVING AN INVASIVE MEDICAL PROCEDURE WITHOUT ANESTHESIA.
Harris also has her own record as a prosecutor in California, where she served as San Francisco’s district attorney and then the state’s attorney general. During the Democratic primaries, Harris faced scrutiny over what some called a mixed record.

For example, Harris declined to pursue the death penalty against an assailant who fatally shot a police officer, but she also appealed a separate judge’s ruling that could have worked toward outlawing the death penalty in the state. Early last year, her campaign platform said she would seek a federal moratorium on executions.

Aside from potential inconsistencies, Harris would face a raft of questions about the slew of cases she’s worked over the years—all while debates over racial tensions and criminal justice roil the nation.

A lesser-known candidate has also drawn attention: Rep. Val Demings, D-Fla. Though Demings doesn’t carry broad name recognition, she does tick boxes that could be appealing to Biden: She’s from a swing state, she served as a impeachment manager during the Trump inquiry, and she once worked as the chief of police for the city of Orlando.

After George Floyd’s death in Minneapolis, Demings penned a blunt column for The Washington Post: “As a former woman in blue, let me begin with my brothers and sisters in blue: What in the hell are you doing?”

Still, Demings likely would face questions about her own department’s history during her tenure as Orlando’s police chief: The Orlando Sentinel reported that Orlando police used force at more than double the rate of similar-sized agencies. The investigation’s span included one of the years Demings served as chief.

In 2010, Demings’ department cleared an officer who broke an 84-year-old man’s neck while subduing him. Officers said Daniel Daley had become belligerent over his car being towed. A federal jury awarded Daley $880,000 in damages.

If Biden’s camp gets skittish over choosing a candidate with a history in law or law enforcement, his choices narrow even more, but a handful of women are still drawing speculation as hopefuls.
Susan Rice, former national security adviser to President Barack Obama, told PBS she would “certainly say yes” if Biden asked her to be his running mate. Michelle Lujan Grisham, the Latina governor of New Mexico, said the reports that Biden was considering her for the post were “flattering.”

Other names floated: Stacey Abrams, a former representative in the Georgia Legislature and the Democratic nominee for the state’s governor in 2018. (She lost to Republican Brian Kemp, but has declared her ambition to be elected president within the next 20 years.)

Biden said Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer was on his list of potential picks even before she publicly clashed with President Donald Trump during the COVID-19 crisis. He’s also reportedly vetting Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill. The 52-year-old Asian American is a combat veteran who lost both legs in the Iraq War.

The biggest wild card might be a senator who has expressed enthusiastic interest: Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass. Warren might appeal to supporters disappointed in her failed bid for the presidential nomination—and perhaps to those still stinging from Sen. Bernie Sanders’ loss to Biden. But a Warren pick could also spook moderate or centrist voters worried the senator would push Biden even further left along the Democratic spectrum.

Another potential downside for a Warren pick: If she won the vice presidency and stepped down from her Senate post, the Republican governor of Massachusetts could appoint a Republican senator to take her place until a special election—and potentially reduce Democratic power in the Senate temporarily.

Biden could also pick a running mate few expect. The late Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., tried to shake up the 2008 presidential contest by tapping Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin. (It shook up the race, but McCain still lost.)

IF IT SOUNDS LIKE a lot to process, it’s just a glimpse into the massive job for the team vetting candidates for Biden. Former Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., who served as Democrat Al Gore’s running mate in 2000, compared the experience of undergoing the vetting process to having an invasive medical procedure without anesthesia.

That probe will extend into the candidates’ personal lives and into the many aspects of their legislative records that extend far beyond any histories with criminal law. That means while it might be tempting for Biden to allow the current turmoil to guide his decision for a running mate, it might not be the best long-term strategy.

Mark Caleb Smith, the director of the Center for Political Studies at Cedarville University, says he thinks Biden’s decision-making should lean toward a candidate with federal experience, who could be well equipped to step into the presidency if needed.

Smith says he doesn’t see much evidence that a vice presidential pick could deliver a particular state to Biden (or lose many voters already loyal to him), but he does think the choice could sway independent voters considering a vote for the former vice president. It could also influence those contemplating the possibility that always looms for the second-in-command. John Adams, America’s first vice president, was thinking about that too, as he took on the role: “I am Vice President. In this I am nothing, but I may be everything.”
No time to be distant

WHEN SINGLE MOMS FACED A PANDEMIC CRISIS THAT MIGHT SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO STATE CARE, CHRISTIAN FAMILIES STEPPED UP TO HELP—BUT TWO STATES HAVE BLOCKED THE NONPROFITS THAT ENABLE SUCH WORK

by Emily Belz in New York

PHOTOS BY SHAWN PATRICK OUELLETTE/GENESIS
DAN AND LISA WELLS OUTSIDE THEIR HOME IN RICHMOND, MAINE
IMAGINE YOU’RE A PARENT who suddenly needs hospitalization for COVID-19, but you have no one to care for your child. ¶ Last month a hospital in Maine admitted a mother, fairly new to the United States, who became seriously ill with COVID-19. She had nowhere to send her two teenage children, who also had contracted the virus and were alone at their apartment. (WORLD agreed to withhold their personal details for privacy reasons.) The hospital had called the local Child Protective Services (CPS) about the children, which is what hospitals must do in such cases.

Forty-five minutes away live Dan and Lisa Wells. He is lead pastor at North Harbor Community Church, and she is the family ministries pastor. They also volunteer with Safe Families for Children, a church-based group that keeps children from entering the foster care system.

That help either comes as day-to-day support—buying groceries or running errands—or by hosts taking in children temporarily, usually for a few days. “This is an opportunity for the church to be that extra circle of support, that aunt or uncle that the family might not have,” said Lisa Wells. The results of such work can be dramatic. One city in the United Kingdom, Nottingham, saw a 12 percent drop in children entering state care in the course of a year of working with Safe Families.

When the hospital in Maine called CPS about the sick mom and her two kids, CPS contacted Safe Families. Safe Families called Lisa Wells, whose family had hosted five times before.

At first Lisa thought it might be a bad idea to take in the teens with COVID-19. Aside from the concerns about exposing her family to the virus, her family’s church was in the middle of a personnel crisis that was taking a big emotional toll.

“Something—I’m going to say it was the Holy Spirit—caused me to hold my tongue before I said why it wasn’t a good idea, and check in with my family,” she said. Her kids were enthusiastic, especially for other kids to come over after so many weeks of social distancing. Dan said he had “hit the wall that day” with the emotional drain of their work crisis, but when he heard his kids’ enthusiasm, he agreed to the idea as well.

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, the United States needed more foster parents. The pandemic, plus a possible post-pandemic surge in abuse or neglect cases, makes nonprofits that help prevent children from entering the foster system even more essential. In this outbreak, when hospitalized parents faced putting their children in state care, Christian volunteers have opened their homes to families. But some states’ regulations make such help almost impossible to give.

Lisa Wells said her family was ready to take a risk but didn’t want to be “fool-hardy.” They strategized together with Safe Families and a local official from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The family’s 12-year-old daughter Claire agreed to give up her room on the top floor so the teens could isolate there, where they would have their own bathroom. Claire would bunk downstairs with her younger sister Josie.

CPS and the teens’ mom finalized arrangements late that night, and they had to figure out how to get the sick children to the Wellses’ house. A police
officer was with the children at their apartment, but he told Safe Families he couldn’t transport the children because of jurisdictional issues. CPS told Safe Families the agency couldn’t transport the children because they were in the police officer’s custody. So Lisa Wells put a mask on and drove 45 minutes to pick them up.

Once the teens were ensconced in their new space, they were still fighting fevers from COVID-19. The Wellses made sure they had Tylenol, at their mom’s request, and a thermometer. After a day, their fevers were gone along with the worst of their symptoms. The Wellses would leave their meals outside their door. Whenever the teens came out of their room, they wore masks. The Wells family had agreed with the teens to message over Facebook and make sure they had Wi-Fi for school.

In the meantime, the Safe Families support team delivered groceries to the family, and friends brought them pizza, masks, and vitamin C supplements. Lisa and Dan had both felt physically rundown and kept thinking they were getting sick, but they never did.

“It is not one isolated family helping another isolated family,” said Lisa. “It is the entire church wrapping around families in need and creating a sense of community and support for both the hosted and the hosters.”

Ten days into their stay, when the teens could come out of isolation, they all had a big celebratory breakfast together with pancakes, eggs, bacon, and fruit salad. Then the kids all went outside and played soccer and basketball together, and that night they had a big bonfire. Lisa said the teens were “outstanding people and fun to be with.” While around the fire, Lisa texted a picture to the teens’ mom, still hospitalized, who sent her first text back to Lisa, asking for prayer for her health. Sitting there around the fire, Lisa asked if they could all pray for the mom right then.

“I made it clear, ‘It’s OK if you don’t want to,’” she said. “They all did. Every single one of them offered a word to lift her up in prayer.”
The teens’ mom was in serious condition when she went into the hospital, but she turned a corner and after two weeks went home. When CPS confirmed that she seemed well enough to take the children, Lisa and her daughters drove the teens to their mom’s apartment. The Wellses brought her Gerbera daisies. The mom and teens each wrote a thank-you card. They talked about spending time together later in the summer. The Wellses are now what Safe Families calls a “family friend,” so if the family needs groceries or other support, they can reach out to Safe Families and the Wellses can help.

**NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY**—both centers of the national coronavirus outbreak—do not allow Safe Families to help when kids need emergency hosting. “There’s no category for us in New York state law,” said Laura Galt, who heads Safe Families in New York City, where currently volunteers can serve as “family friends” but can’t do overnight hosting. New York only allows hosting via licensed foster care agencies, with everything going through the same process as a foster case. That defeats the purpose of Safe Families as an in-between prevention model.

Since the pandemic lockdown in mid-March, Safe Families of New York City has had 11 requests for hosting, even though the organization has no referral mechanism and its website says that it does not offer hosting in the state. Most of the requests came from mothers about to give birth who needed someone to watch their children. I asked Galt whether she had found out what happened to the New York moms who had asked for help: “I don’t want to know,” she said.

Usually Safe Families NYC refers moms in those situations to a crisis nursery, but the nursery wasn’t taking new children because of the pandemic. One mom already connected to Safe Families needed an elective surgery, but she has five children and was delaying the surgery until someone could host her children.

There’s good news: The New York Foundling is one of the city’s largest foster care providers. CEO Bill Baccaglini said the group still has available foster homes even in the pandemic, and none of the organization’s foster parents requested children’s removal because of COVID-19. He also noted that New York’s admissions for foster care have been trending down, which he attributes to a focus on preventive services, like New York Foundling and Safe Families.

“We haven’t seen this few kids in foster care in New York City since the early ’70s,” said Baccaglini. But he added: “We’re very nervous about, at the other end of this, what happens to abuse and neglect reports. ... What does the system look like a few months after the pandemic?”

New York’s Office of Children and Family Services is considering a regulatory change to allow Safe Families to host, but Safe Families said the current draft is too vague. Safe Families has submitted its comments on the proposed changes and hopes another draft could iron out some problems. Safe Families also would prefer a legislative change, since regulations could change at any time.

In New Jersey, Safe Families has been trying to get hosting status for about 10 years. Regulations prevent Safe Families from accessing background checks unless it is a licensed adoptive or foster agency. “We’ve found New Jersey to be one of the more difficult regulatory states just in general,” said Robin Chamberlain, the head of Maine Safe Families who also works for the group on a national level.

Meanwhile, Safe Families chapters across the country have fielded a range of needs. A volunteer family helped a
mom fleeing domestic violence who needed a temporary home for her child. Another host family in Wisconsin took in a woman who was released from prison with her baby due to coronavirus concerns. A single mom volunteering with Safe Families in Chicago took in the 2-year-old daughter of a homeless woman hospitalized with COVID-19.

In New Hampshire, one mom who was working at a low-paying nursing home job lost her housing. She asked the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth, and Family to take her 4-year-old into the foster system so the child wouldn’t be sleeping in the car. The state social worker contacted Cindy Thomas, who heads up the state Safe Families.

Thomas called up one of the group’s hosts, the Melick family, and the mother, Adrienne Melick, said it was a “no-brainer”: They would take in both the mom and the child. She and her husband have four teenage daughters, who got to work right away cleaning out the closet of one of their bedrooms, stripping the sheets, and putting a Spider-Man bedspread out for the little boy.

“The coordinator asked, what time works for you ... and [my daughters] were like, ‘Why not tonight?’” Melick said. “We were honestly really excited to do this. It didn’t feel like a hosting, it felt like expanding our family.”

The mom working in a nursing home did increase the potential viral “exposure” to the family, Melick acknowledged, but she and her husband were already continuing their work outside the home so they weren’t anxious about it.

“We put our faith in God that this is what we should be doing,” she said.

They were all immediately comfortable together, Melick said, partly due to the “innocence of a 4-year-old,” who would wander into the Melicks’ bedroom in the morning and greet them before they had woken up. The mom, who is young, felt like “another daughter,” said Melick, and they talked about potential paths out of the low-paying nursing home job, like going back to school.

After two weeks, the mom had found out she had made it off the waiting list for a more permanent spot in a local home for single mothers. Before she left, she and the Melicks planned a Saturday the next month for a barbecue together.

Lisa Wells, who with her family helped the hospitalized mother in Maine, says her family has benefited as well.

“I’m not being glib: There is always a blessing in it,” she said. “This is all about Jesus, showing His love, in super-mundane, practical ways. It’s making a sandwich for someone who is staying at your house. It’s making sure the bathroom is clean before they come. It’s giving up your bedroom. It’s praying for somebody. It’s easy to get overwhelmed with the big-picture pandemic stuff. But it was great that we were required to be focused on these little acts of love.”
BRUTAL
A local terror group’s increasing attacks in Mozambique are raising concern of a new Islamist force in southern Africa  

BY ONIZE OHIKERE

AND BRAZEN
EARLY IN MAY, A SENIOR PASTOR ENDED A HARROWING SEVEN-DAY JOURNEY WITH his wife and four children at the doors of Iris Global Ministries in Pemba, the capital of Mozambique’s northernmost Cabo Delgado province. The pastor, whom WORLD is not identifying for security reasons, had served with an Iris church in the provincial district of Macomia, some 117 miles from Pemba, since 2009. As insurgent attacks worsened in the region, the pastor said he and his family could neither go to their farm nor sleep in their homes out of fear. They decided to leave, walking for four days and resting in surrounding bushes. They ate snails to survive. The family arrived in the city of Monetpuez, where they hitchhiked a ride for another three days before arriving in Pemba, with only a supermarket bag of their belongings. “They had basically been cornered into surviving,” said Marina Mariane Vilela, a missionary with the U.S.-based ministry. The family is among an increasing number of people fleeing into Pemba and other provinces as Islamist attacks worsen across northern Cabo Delgado. The attacks have killed more than 1,000 people and displaced 211,000 others. Little is known about the leadership of the local group—called Ahlu Sunnah Wa-Jama (ASWJ)—that claims responsibility for most of the attacks. Yet ASWJ’s
brazen choice of targets and its international affiliations have left the government scrambling for a solution to the brewing humanitarian crisis and regional security threat.

Security groups have traced ASWJ’s beginning as an Islamic religious sect opposing what it considered moderate Islamic practices in the region. (Ahlu Sunnah Wa-Jama means “followers of the prophetic tradition.”) The terror group began low-level acts of defacing local mosques and confronting imams before retreating into the bushes of the Quirimbas National Park to build its radical forces in 2015, explained Paolo Israel, a professor and senior researcher on northern Mozambique at South Africa’s University of the Western Cape.

The insurgents resurfaced on Oct. 5, 2017, with an attack at Mocímboa da Praia. Some 30 armed insurgents stormed into the port city, where they killed 17 people, attacked three police stations, and seized weapons. Security officials regained control later in the day.

In June of that year, ISCAP for the first time recognized ASWJ, reporting “the soldiers of the Caliphate were able to repel an attack by the Crusader Mozambican army” in Mocimboa.

Israel said the group is still quiet on its leadership and how deep its involvement with the Islamic State runs. Locals call the terrorists “al-Shabaab,” although the group has no known affiliation to the Somali-based terror group with the same name. But some of the insurgents received combat training with the Allied Democratic Forces, an Islamist rebel group active in DRC and Uganda, Israel added.

ASWJ has increasingly become more brazen in choosing targets, and its mission has become clearer. The group carried out more than 100 attacks between January and April, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED).

On March 23, the terrorists tried for a second time to seize control of Mocimboa. They set up barricades on major roads in the town and erected their black-and-white flag over the police headquarters. They captured five army and police barracks before responding forces regained control one day later.

The group launched a similar attack days later on the district capital of Quissanga, where militants seized a police station and set up flags before security forces pushed them out. At least six security officials died in the unrest.

Word of the attack and the ensuing panic spread quickly around the province. The same day, Vilela’s team was traveling by boat across narrow channels and low-lying mangroves on an aid mission to the village of Jimpia. They found the villagers at the seashore, their homes empty.

“They stayed up all night watching,” Vilela said.

In April 2019, ASWJ claimed allegiance to the Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCAP), an Islamic State affiliate only previously recognized in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
In May, Mozambique’s ministries of Defense and Interior confirmed a string of attacks across seven districts, where insurgents kidnapped at least 14 people and destroyed a new hospital and several telecommunication and electricity centers.

The insurgents occupied Macomia from May 28-30, when they killed at least 19 people and released inmates from a prison before withdrawing. On June 5, Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) withdrew from Macomia due to the attacks. The group pulled out of Mocimboa da Praia in March.

**CABO DELGADO**, the northernmost region bordering Tanzania, is one of Mozambique’s poorest provinces despite its political and economic significance. The nation’s 10-year struggle for independence that ended in 1964 began in the province’s Muidumbe district. Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi comes from the province, and it is a stronghold for his ruling Frelimo party.

The city of Montepuez is also home to one of the world’s biggest known ruby deposits.

In 2010, the U.S. Anadarko Petroleum Corp. discovered significant gas reserves in the Rovuma Basin that forms the border between Mozambique and Tanzania. The country’s Afungi Peninsula in Palma district is now a hub for several energy companies, including Total and Exxon Mobil. Alex Vines, head of the Africa Program at U.K.-based Chatham House, said the gas reserves will likely make the province “much more important for the GDP of Mozambique.”

Yet the natural wealth contrasts with the region’s large-scale poverty. That contrast has allowed the ASWJ to build on what Vines called a “hearts and minds campaign,” where it poses as the remedy to the locals’ grievances of poverty and government discrimination.

During the brief capture of Mocimboa, ASWJ distributed food and money to the people. In a video that emerged afterward, one militant speaking in the local Kimwani language criticized the government’s individualistic and corrupt nature, and reiterated its plan to set up Shariah law: “Look in the prisons, the poor people wail; have you ever seen a chief arrested?”

The provincial capital of Pemba now resembles a war zone. Armed military officials patrol the streets, and the whirring sounds of helicopters fill the airspace.

Some say the military has lashed out at the wrong targets in response to the insurgency. In 2018, Human Rights Watch documented stories from 12 witnesses and victims of abuse who said military officials arbitrarily detained, tortured, and executed dozens of people they suspected of involvement with the terrorist group.

One year later, the advocacy group documented several cases where military officials unlawfully detained local and international reporters for as long as 13 days and seized their memory cards.

In an additional desperate attempt to quell the unrest last September, Mozambique welcomed a team from Wagner Group, a private military company owned by Yevgeny Prigozhin—a Russian oligarch with close ties to President Vladimir Putin. South African private military company Dyck Advisory Group has also provided aerial support to the government’s counteroffensive operation.

On April 28, Mozambique’s Interior Ministry reported security forces killed at least 129 insurgents that month across the province. About two weeks later, officials reported the death of another 50 insurgents.
they report any sightings of a stranger to the local chiefs, who verify the stranger’s identity.

One missionary told me his team has shut down operations in nine of the province’s 16 districts, where villagers have either abandoned their communities or the insurgents have blocked access. His team is working on a contingency relocation plan in case the unrest extends into Pemba.

Vilela echoed similar concerns, saying her team is mindful of the possibility of an evacuation in the future. The attacks and growing security presence have already limited their physical reach. For now, they continue to assist people seeking refuge and document the stories of survival. (The pastor’s family who arrived with only a supermarket bag of belongings now lives in a home built by Iris Global in Pemba.)

“It’s been suffering with and for the people,” she said. “I’m strengthened by their strength.”
“All come to look for America”

Four classics from authors who tried to find meaning in their traveling

by Marvin Olasky / illustration by Stephanie Dalton Cowan
IT’S HARD FOR AMERICANS to stay home. We are all descended from people who traveled thousands of miles to get here, freely or in chains. We have 205,000 miles of U.S. highways and interstates. A lot of us can recall our own versions of what Simon and Garfunkel first sang in 1968: “It took me four days to hitchhike from Saginaw. I’ve gone to look for America.”

This is the time of year when a lot of us would like to be on the road, again. But, given the coronavirus, it might not be time, yet. If we can’t be out and about, is the next best thing reading about those who were?

In social isolation recently I read four classic American road books: Jack Kerouac’s On the Road (1957), John Steinbeck’s Travels With Charley (1962), William Least Heat-Moon’s Blue Highways: A Journey Into America (1983), and Larry McMurtry’s Roads: Driving America’s Great Highways (2000). They’re all interesting. All four authors in different ways took to heart Simon’s lyrics: “I’m empty and aching and I don’t know why. … All come to look for America.”

ON THE ROAD is on “great books of the 20th century” lists published by Time, Modern Library, and many others. Its plot is simple: Sal and Dean (Kerouac and his buddy Neal Cassady) go back and forth across the United States on whims, abandoning girlfriends and scrounging for food, drugs, and beer. In a typical scene, Sal in San Francisco walks 4 miles and picks up 10 cigarette butts so he can pour the tobacco into his pipe.

Periodically, the 20-somethings yearn for more. They steal food in Texas and drive by “comfortable little homes with chimneys smoking. … I wished we could go in for buttermilk and beans in front of the fireplace.” Sal has occasional moments of self-realization: “I was beginning to cross and recross towns in America as though I were a traveling salesman [with] rotten beans in the bottom of my bag of tricks, nobody buying, … running from one falling star to another till I drop.”

But then Kerouac suggests life offers only two choices: Living on the road or working “an all-night shift at the boiler factory.” Dean tries to justify his choice: “You spend a whole life of noninterference with the wishes of others … you cut along and make it your own way.” But one woman rightly lectures him: “You have absolutely no regard for anybody but yourself and your damned kicks. … It never occurs to you that life is serious and there are people trying to make something decent out of it instead of just goofing all the time.”

Kerouac influenced an entire generation to hitchhike and sleep around. (In my craziest pre-Christian year, 1972, I hitchhiked up and down the West Coast as a Communist Party member, crashing in comrades’ apartments and eating bags of chocolate chip cookies for dinner.) Kerouac’s run-on-sentence “spontaneous prose” style became popular for a time, even though Truman Capote rightly said, “That’s not writing, it’s typing.”

But in reading this book after 50 years, I’m struck by the children left behind. Dean “had four little ones and not a cent, and was all troubles and ecstasy and speed.” We learn about two addicts: “Their food bill was the lowest in the country; they hardly ever ate; nor did the children—they didn’t seem to care.” Sure. “Johnny, seven years old, dark-eyed and sweet,” appears in a tent where the adults get drunk and two of them decide to have sex. One asks, “What about Johnny?” The other says, “He don’t mind. He’s asleep.” But Johnny wasn’t.

Sal’s aunt, who enables his travel, reminds him of the children: “Those poor little things grow up helpless. You’ve got to offer them a chance to live.” Sal honestly says, “I had nothing to offer anybody except my own confusion.” The same could be said of On the Road generally, but The New York Times called Kerouac the “avatar” of the 1950s beat generation and his novel “the most beautifully executed, the clearest and the most important utterance yet made” by those nihilistic rebels.

Kerouac’s buddy Neal Cassady died in 1968 after overdosing on barbiturates. Cassady left this advice to posterity: “My kids are all screwed up. Don’t do what I have done.” Kerouac’s last paragraph in
On the Road includes this: “So in America when the sun goes down and I sit on the old broken-down river pier watching the long, long skies over New Jersey, and sense all that raw land that rolls in one unbelievable huge bulge over to the West Coast, and all that road going, all the people dreaming in the immensity of it ... and tonight the stars’ll be out, and don’t you know that God is Pooh Bear?”

Kerouac, not grasping God’s reality and changing his life, died in 1969 at age 47 from an internal hemorrhage caused by cirrhosis.

FIVE YEARS AFTER On the Road, John Steinbeck’s Travels With Charley: In Search of America became a No. 1 bestseller. Its style is very different—short sentences, crisp writing—and the narrator is mature: Steinbeck, already famous, would soon win the Nobel Prize in literature. But some of Steinbeck’s criticism of America, oddly enough, parallels Kerouac’s.

Steinbeck, at age 58, said he was traveling because “I had not felt the country for twenty-five years ... heard the speech of America, smelled the grass and trees and sewage, seen its hills and water.” He started in New York where Kerouac ended and headed out in a pickup truck with a camper top and his 10-year-old French poodle, Charley, who often seems more mellow than his master. Steinbeck, anticipating the movie The Graduate (1967), quickly bemoans a Maine motel where “everything was done in plastic—the floors, the curtain, table tops of stainless burnless plastic, lamp shades of plastic.”

Steinbeck yearns for authenticity and adventure. He hates seeing “two water tumblers ... sealed in cellophane sacks with the words: ‘These glasses are sterilized for your protection.’” He hates seeing across a toilet seat “a strip of paper with the message ‘This seat has been sterilized with ultraviolet light for your protection.’ Everyone was protecting me and it was horrible.” He describes one restaurant “with simulated leather stools. ... Everything that can be captured and held down is sealed in clear plastic.” Another “was all plastic too—the table linen, the butter dish. The sugar and crackers were wrapped in cellophane.” (Why so much whining?)

Steinbeck was often disappointed to see that “the new American finds his challenge and his love in traffic-choked streets, skies nested in smog, choking with the acids of industry, the screech of rubber and houses leashed in against one another. ... This, as I found, is as true in Texas as in Maine.” He complains about food that is “clean, tasteless, colorless, and of a complete sameness.” He complains to Charley about “racks of paperbacks with some great and good titles but overwhelmingly outnumbered by the volumes of sex, sadism, and homicide. ... If this people has so atrophied its taste buds as to find tasteless food not only acceptable but desirable, what of the emotional life of the nation?”

But as Steinbeck drives on, he remembers “how rich and beautiful is the countryside—the deep topsoil, the wealth of great trees.” He sees “a noble land of good fields and magnificent trees. ... The land dripped with richness, the fat cows and pigs gleaming against green.” He loves two magnificent parts of America that also overwhelmed me when I saw them a decade later: Montana, “rich with grass and color, and the mountains are the kind I would create if mountains were ever put on my agenda.” And the redwoods of Northern California: “The feeling they produce is not transferable. From them comes silence and awe. ... The vainest, most slap-happy and irreverent of men, in the presence of redwoods, goes under a spell of wonder and respect.”

Steinbeck doesn’t much like what man hath built. In Seattle, for example, “traffic rushed with murderous intensity ... high wire fences and mile-long factories stretched, and the yellow smoke of progress hung over them. ... Everywhere frantic growth, a carcinomatous growth.” Steinbeck’s trip finally takes him through the South during the civil rights era, where he portrays racial ugliness in New Orleans. He writes that he knows others there, “thoughtful, gentle people, with a tradition of kindness and courtesy.” But we don’t see them. Steinbeck shows us “blowzy women” displaying “the demented cruelty of egocentric children.”
When William Least Heat-Moon in 1978 traveled blue highways, those secondary roads that old Rand McNally road atlases often showed as blue lines, he was halfway between Kerouac and Steinbeck in both age and attainment. Heat-Moon had a Ph.D. in English and a marriage, but he had just lost his job and separated from his wife. Early in *Blue Highways: A Journey Into America* he stops for directions, and a would-be helper asks, “Where’d you lose the right road?” Heat-Moon responds, “I don’t know. Somewhere around 1965.”

Like Steinbeck, Heat-Moon complains about the stuff of America: “the backsides of suburbs and miles of carpet sample, unlaidered freight, factory outlet, and furniture warehouse stores. ... Things raced past like the jumpy images of a nickelodeon: abandoned and stripped cars on the shoulders, two hitchhiking females that nobody could stop to pick up, a billboard EAT SAUSAGE AND BE HAPPY.” Approaching New York City, he sees “the World Trade Center like stumps in the yellow velvet sky.”

But unlike Kerouac, who suggests life is meaningless, and Steinbeck, who claims American life has lost its meaning, *Blue Highways* is a search for meaning. One depressive asks, “When you’re driving, do you ever feel like swinging over in front of a semi that’s really moving?” Heat-Moon replies, “I know the urge.” How to fight it? He admires those who make something: a man rebuilding a cabin, another building a boat. Heat-Moon appreciates a Kentucky church sign announcing an Easter sermon: “‘Welcome All God’s Children: Thieves, Liars, Gossips, Bigots, Adulterers, Children.’ I felt welcome.” But he doesn’t go in.

Heat-Moon is a good observer of external geography. On one memorable stretch he drives through “the Texas some people see as barren waste. ... They say ‘There’s nothing out there.’” Heat-Moon proves them wrong by stopping on a mesa 240 miles west of Austin and making a list of 30 nothings: mockingbird, mourning dove, bumblebee, ants, spiders, opossum skull, jackrabbit, deer scat, coyote tracks, snake, cactus, mes-
having folksy conversations with people I meet. ... Today, in fact, I drove 770 miles ... speaking only about twenty words: a thank-you at a Quik Stop south of Duluth ... a lunch order in Missouri, and a request for a room once I got to Wichita.”

McMurtry the driver, in short, seems a lot like taciturn Woodrow Call the cattle driver in the great novel and televison miniseries, Lonesome Dove. Capt. Call liked to move, and a good day for McMurtry was when “I plunge 800 miles down a highway in a single day ... not even stopping for museums. Particularly not stopping for museums, the acquisition of a broadened cultural awareness not being the point of these trips.”

What was the point? McMurtry, who turned 84 on June 3, was not only a producer of books but a buyer and seller. For years he ran a big bookstore and spent most days “unboxing, pricing, sorting. ... Working with books always relaxes me, but the books bring people, and ... there comes a point at which I want to be away, drive somewhere, see some sky.”

Roads has a lot of accurate seeing. I’ve enjoyed some of McMurtry’s experiences and reactions. In Minnesota, “a skim-milk light began to spread itself over the forests and the fields.” In Arizona “when the first sunlight spills over the mountains it brings an hour of quiet, cool clarity.” In Montana “the rivers, the valleys, the mountains, and the big sky manage, as nowhere else, to combine the grand vista with the intimate view.”

McMurtry isn’t against buildings, even plastic. By 2000 he had stayed in “about 200” Holiday Inns. He notes approvingly that much of central Michigan is “prosperous farming country, judging from the size of the houses.” But he loves Michigan’s Upper Peninsula for “the beauty of the waters, which split the immense forests and open the world to the sky again.” He likes Louisiana’s sounds of silence when he crosses “the great Atchafalaya swamp—a land of mystery ... a silent world—the snakes and alligators and other water creatures that inhabit it make little noise.” He likes “heading south, toward warmth, or west, toward bigger skies and stronger light.”

McMurtry has much to say about good and bad interstate highways. Regarding Interstate 35, for example, he praises “the wonderful stretch of rangeland south of Emporia, Kansas, on the 35,” but rightly condemns “the long stretch from Dallas to San Antonio—an old, crumbling interstate that passes through endlessly repetitive stretches of ugly urban sprawl.”

WHAT TO MAKE of these four road books? Give Kerouac credit for comprehending the meaninglessness of life without God. His last sentence of On the Road depicts well the assumptions of an atheistic worldview: “Nobody knows what’s going to happen to anybody besides the forlorn rags of growing old.”

Give Steinbeck credit for being impressed with a Biblical presentation, although it did not change his life: In Travels With Charley he describes visiting a “John Knox church” and finding prayers “to the point, directing the attention of the Almighty to certain weaknesses and undivine tendencies I know to be mine and could only suppose were shared by others.” The pastor was not one of “our psychiatric priesthood [saying] our sins aren’t really sins at all but accidents.”

William Least Heat-Moon offers at various times a base of Native American spiritualism with a sprinkling of Buddhism and some undertones of Christian mysticism. Halfway through his account he quotes John le Carré’s comment about the journey of death: “Nothing ever bridged the gulf between the man who went and the man who stayed behind.”

Larry McMurtry went repeatedly on long trips but often had no destination in mind. As a college undergraduate he wrote a paper noting his “antagonism to organized religion. ... I am agnostic.” I haven’t found any indication that he outgrew that bias. Driving America’s great highways became his opiate. It’s a score of years since he wrote Roads. I pray that he’s learned the score.
ONLY HALFWAY IN, 2020 seems as if it’s packed a decade’s worth of alarming and tragic news stories. Especially in years like these, we all need breaks from the headlines. Here are books some of WORLD’s writers have enjoyed.

Fiction

THE BEEKEEPER OF ALEPPO
by Christy Lefteri (Ballantine Books, 2019)

In reading reports about the Syrian civil war and its refugees, it’s easy only to see burned-out ruins, desperate families escaping on inflatable rafts, and the political implications of the global displacement. Yet the novel The Beekeeper of Aleppo brings readers into the lives of beekeeper Nuri and wife Afra, an artist. We experience the prewar sights and sounds of Aleppo—the buzzing of bees in a field of apiaries, weekly dinners with relatives, the laughter of their young son Sami. But the war steals their business, their home, their son, Afra’s sight, and their hope as they make the treacherous journey through Turkey and Greece to the United Kingdom, where they seek refugee status. (Warning: Keep tissues nearby.) —Angela Lu Fulton

THE DOOR ON HALF-BALD HILL
by Helena Sorensen (Rabbit Room Press, 2020)

Haunted hills overshadow Blackthorn village. Bitter water contaminates the river, and the bog advances, drowning more crops each year. As the villagers starve, Idris the bard seeks a sacred Word to comfort his people and answer the question Can death die? This novel is not for everyone: It brims with mythology, lore, and rituals. The world Sorensen has created feels dangerous and dark, though the story is hardly violent. I appreciated the rich detail, excellent writing, and serious themes of death and hope. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this story of people suffering from a blight and finding hope despite death felt particularly relevant. —Charissa Koh

EVERY DAY IS FOR THE THIEF
by Teju Cole (Random House, 2014)

This diary-styled novel introduces readers to a Nigerian American returning home for the first time in 15 years. Concrete details about actual locations take readers through the funny but frustrating bouts of corruption and societal failures, which happen daily at different levels of authority and in different communities. The title is based on a local proverb: “Every day is for the thief, but one day is for the owner”—a sign of hope that justice can still prevail in any society. —Onize Ohikere

RILLA OF INGLESIDE
by L.M. Montgomery (originally published in 1921)

Set during World War I, this coming-of-age novel follows Rilla Blythe, the youngest daughter of Anne Shirley, aka, Anne of Green Gables. Selfish and spoiled, teenage Rilla only wants to attend dances and someday marry a certain handsome man. But foreign conflicts ruin her plans by forcing her brothers and sweetheart to join the military. While she waits for their uncertain return, Rilla must learn to support the war effort from home by doing tasks she once despised. A grittier and arguably funnier novel than Montgomery’s other Anne books, this final installment touchingly depicts the sorrows and challenges of life during the war. —Leah Hickman

PERUSAUTION
by Jane Austen (originally published in 1818)

“The strongest of all warriors are these two—Time and Patience,” said Leo Tolstoy. If only he knew Anne Elliot, the heroine of Jane Austen’s last novel. Persuasion, like its main character, exists unappreciated in the Austen
canon, its romantic leads perhaps too old or complex for Hollywood screenwriters.

Elliot at 27 seems comfortably single when she again meets Capt. Wentworth, to whom she’d once been engaged. They remain distant in a social circle subsumed by elitists and depressives. How their virtues prevail rests not only in Anne’s patience but her self-awareness. That two outwardly virtuous characters find room for confession and repentance makes *Persuasion* my new Austen favorite. —Mindy Belz

**LEEPIKE RIDGE**
by N.D. Wilson (Random House, 2007)

Though N.D. Wilson wrote it for younger readers, *Leepike Ridge* also draws in adults. Like Huckleberry Finn, 11-year-old Thomas Hammond sets off on a raft ride down the river, but Tom’s raft is a slab of packing foam. His ride violently ends when the current pulls him over a waterfall and spits him out in an underground cave. There Tom meets other castaways, including a man named Reg, who survives on juice boxes and raw crawdads. From there, the plot twists like the river rapids that landed Tom in his predicament. Wilson’s detailed scene-setting and humorous character descriptions made *Leepike Ridge* a favorite of mine growing up and a joy to read as an adult. —Hannah Harris

**ASTERIX COMICS**
by René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo

The March death of Albert Uderzo, the illustrator behind the delightful comic series *Asterix*, served as a reminder of how great his work was for both young and old. Asterix is a small, Gaulish warrior with superhuman strength. He fights the Roman Empire with goofy friends from his village. Each book introduces the characters at the beginning, so it doesn’t much matter what order you read them in, but I have enjoyed the early ones most. Reading the comics in their original French is a great way to learn another language: The writing is simple, and the illustrations help you understand what’s happening. Most importantly for our current moment, Asterix can make anyone of any culture laugh. —Emily Belz

**Nonfiction**

**THE LAST SEASON**
by Eric Blehm (HarperCollins, 2007)

Eric Blehm slowly unravels the mysterious, true story of Randy Morgenson, a once-legendary seasonal ranger at the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks in California. Morgenson became an expert at wilderness survival and at locating lost hikers, but during his 28th season, the ranger went missing himself.

Blehm unpacks Morgenson’s idyllic childhood growing up in the stunning Yosemite Valley and his lifetime pull toward the grandeur of creation. That pull included personal brokenness, and Blehm takes readers on an adventurous trek to discover what happened in the mountains of the Sierra Nevada. —Jamie Dean

**UNKNOWN VALOR: A STORY OF FAMILY, COURAGE, AND SACRIFICE FROM PEARL HARBOR TO IWO JIMA**
by Martha MacCallum and Ronald J. Drez (Harper, 2020)

Martha MacCallum, a Fox News anchor, and Ronald J. Drez, a former U.S. Marine captain, tell the story of the Pacific theater of World War II. They begin at Pearl Harbor and go to the Battle of Iwo Jima, the bloody, 36-day firefight on a cave-riddled volcanic island where 6,800 Marines and more than 18,000 Japanese fighters died. Interspersed in the narrative are the stories of several young Americans—including Harry Gray, MacCallum’s cousin—who leave home, family, and sweethearts to fight for “a cause bigger than themselves.” As their paths converge at Iwo Jima, some will live and some will die capturing 8 square miles of Japanese territory. (Caution: profanity.) —Daniel James Devine
When I covered the Newtown shooting in 2012, where twenty first graders and six adults died, press swarmed the small town, but no one was writing about the local evangelical churches where a number of the victims’ families were going. I went to a few of those churches and interviewed one of the pastors who was planning funerals for the children who died from his church, and we cried together.

I think that event showed that sound journalism grounded in God's Word means we look for different stories than other journalists. But it also means that we can live in the gospel as we're reporting, weeping with those who weep and giving this pastor a chance to share with our readers the hope of Christ’s triumph over death in the midst of a horrible moment.

""
A DOCTOR GOES TO NEW YORK

One Minnesota doctor’s experience volunteering at the COVID-19 front lines for a week

by Hannah Harris

ON APRIL 23, BEN DAXON, a critical care physician, donned scrubs and a scuba mask. Fitted with a 3D-printed adapter for a viral filter, the mask was “heavy, tight, suffocating,” he says. But it was necessary during Daxon’s shift working in one of six COVID-19 intensive care units at a Brooklyn, N.Y., hospital, where he volunteered for a week and where only curtains divided one critical patient from the next.
Daxon’s mask kept the coronavirus out. It also blocked his voice. By the end of his first shift, he had a sore throat from yelling through the mask. After that, he instead used an N95 mask, which rubbed his nose until it bled.

Ordinarily, Daxon, 36, works as an intensivist at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and also logs into satellite hospitals, communicating with patients remotely by video link. With the spread of COVID-19, especially in hot spots like New York City, Daxon wanted to do more than answer questions from his computer.

After halting elective surgeries and procedures, Daxon’s employer furloughed or cut the pay of 30,000 employees. Meanwhile, a friend who was volunteering in New York told him how bad the situation was there. Healthcare workers were making do with a lack of personal protective equipment. Some had contracted the virus themselves. Many were working overtime and outside their area of practice. “They needed help yesterday,” Daxon realized.

Ben and his wife, Amanda, decided Ben needed to go to the front lines. Amanda, a high-school literature teacher, would keep things running on the home front and stay with the Daxons’ three children, ages 6, 4, and 2. Before he left, Amanda asked her husband if his will was up to date. “We weren’t naïve to how serious this was,” she says.

At the Brooklyn hospital, the COVID-19 unit was “the sickest ICU I had ever seen,” Daxon says. Of the 24 patients on his floor, almost all had multi-organ failure and were “on the brink of death.” He realized many of his patients were going to die, but decided, “I was going to do everything I could to stop it.”

During one shift, he noticed a patient’s ventilator was delivering very small breaths. An ultrasound showed that the man had a tear in his lung. His ventilator was still pumping, but the air was trapped. The air pressure could eventually crush the man’s healthy lung and heart. Daxon had to perform an emergency procedure: insert needles into the patient’s chest to let the trapped air escape. He did, and the patient improved shortly after. It was the first time Daxon had ever performed the procedure.

He had to make other difficult, urgent decisions. Two patients needed dialysis machines (some COVID-19 patients experience kidney failure), but the hospital didn’t have any to spare. Daxon decided one patient was doing well enough to take her machine and give it to the person who needed it more. Another complication: The hospital’s ventilators were old, subpar models provided by FEMA. Though every patient at the hospital had a ventilator, the machines didn’t work well. “It’s like giving a surgeon a machete when they need a scalpel,” says Daxon.

Being able to talk medical jargon with Amanda, a former ICU nurse, helped Ben process his experiences in New York. When his night shift ended at 7 a.m. each day, he’d call his wife, walk back to his hotel, and write a journal entry.

Ordinarily Daxon doesn’t finish a week working in the ICU without questioning some of his decisions. Since returning from New York, new medical evidence (including studies suggesting ventilators might be overused on COVID-19 patients) makes him wish he had done some things differently. Would his patients have fared better with a different treatment approach? Doctors with more experience than him have wondered the same thing, he says.

Daxon recalls four or five patients died during his volunteer week, but after his return home, he heard good news about two others: Doctors extubated one and discharged the other. “It’s hard to describe to people outside of the ICU how rewarding that is,” says Daxon.

Even though he’s home now, he still thinks about the doctors and nurses on the front lines: “I’m in my kitchen. Those people are still there.”
Anglicans seeking to retain church property score a rare legal win in Texas

by Daniel Van Oudenaren

DOCTRINALLY CONSERVATIVE Episcopalians have rebranded as “Anglicans” in many parts of the United States, but some are still holding on to the name “Episcopal”—and not just as a matter of branding. In North Texas, two groups call themselves the “Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth.” Each claimed rightful ownership of some 60 church properties worth over $100 million.

The Texas courts had to decide: Which was the real Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth, and which, in effect, was the imposter?

After a decade of litigation, the Texas Supreme Court settled the matter unanimously on May 22. The conservatives, it ruled, get to keep their property.

The Fort Worth case is a rare legal victory for Anglicans who left The Episcopal Church (TEC) over a decade ago. Several other dioceses that left the national denomination have lost substantial amounts of property. In South Carolina, litigation is pending over some of the oldest churches in the United States.

At the root of these property disputes are doctrinal differences, including over same-sex marriage. TEC performs same-sex marriages, whereas the Anglican Church in North America affirms a Biblical definition of marriage. But the case also highlights the denominations’ divergent views over church government, which have grown more pronounced over a decade of separation.

If the Fort Worth ruling had gone the other way, conservative congregations throughout North Texas would have been tossed out of their churches, said Scott Brister, the attorney who argued the winning side and who is himself a former state Supreme Court justice.

Churches elsewhere have been sold or stood vacant for years after TEC won similar lawsuits against wayward parishes or dioceses, including in California, Connecticut, and Wisconsin. “The risk was that the majority of these churches would just close,” Brister told me.

That assertion is borne out by statistics published by TEC’s New York headquarters: The loyalist diocese in Fort Worth lost 79 percent of its Sunday attendance in the decade since the schism, falling to 1,392 attendees by 2018, less than a third the size of the breakaway diocese.

Not all Anglican churches have
The dispute in Texas dates to 2008. A convention of the then-united diocese, led by Bishop Jack Iker, voted to disaffiliate from TEC, taking with it most of the diocese’s property, members, and clergy, before going on to help establish the ACNA. The national Episcopal church rejected the decision, installed its own bishop over the remaining loyalist congregations, and sued to recover the property.

In the May 22 Texas Supreme Court ruling, Justice Eva Guzman stressed the court wasn’t making an “ecclesiastical” judgment as to which faction was the true Episcopal Diocese. That kind of ruling would put the court afoul of First Amendment protections against state involvement in church affairs.

Guzman pointed to a 1979 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Jones v. Wolf*, that prohibits courts from settling church property disputes on the basis of religious doctrine or practice. But *Jones* allowed judges to apply “neutral principles” to examine the language of deeds, local church charters, and provisions of a denomination’s constitution.

Nothing in the organizational documents had prohibited the Diocese of Fort Worth from withdrawing from the denomination, Guzman wrote. “Under Texas Associations law, control and governance are determined by the terms of the Fort Worth Diocese’s charters. ... Having complied with the diocese’s charters, the majority, not the minority, constitutes the continuation of the Fort Worth Diocese under the terms of its charter.”

In an interview after the ruling, Bishop Ryan Reed, Iker’s successor, said that his flock was feeling “a sense of relief.” But he added, “There is no sense of triumphalism. ... This ruling has freed us up to go back to investing in our ministries and our facilities.”

The dispute over church structure was apparent in court filings, where TEC emphasized its structure is “three-tiered,” consisting of local parishes, regional dioceses, and a national convention. No unit of the middle tier—a diocese—had a right unilaterally to withdraw. “That’s the way the canons are set up,” said Kevin Johnson, an Episcopal priest in Arlington, Texas. “Same way in the Roman Catholic Church.”

But Reed contrasted the increasingly centralized Episcopal Church with the ACNA’s structure. The ACNA has limited the size and power of its national bureaucracy and denominational structures and left more to the discretion of regional bishops, he noted.

Even as Anglicans and Episcopalians continue to drift apart, in Fort Worth they will have to learn to live alongside each other for at least a while longer. According to Reed, loyalist congregations are using six diocesan properties. He said it was too early to say what would happen to those parishes. Brister, the attorney, said, “They are going to have to find somewhere else to worship.”

Johnson, the Episcopal priest, said he hoped the two sides “would be interested in engaging in a conversation around how we work this out.” Johnson’s own congregation isn’t directly affected because it already worships at a theater. He noted that he doesn’t speak for the diocese.

There’s a small possibility that the case could drag on in federal courts. A separate federal trademark case over the diocese’s name and seal is still pending, and TEC could still appeal the Texas court’s decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. But Brister noted, “The U.S. Supreme Court hasn’t taken a church property dispute since 1979.”

An attorney for TEC didn’t respond to a request for comment. Scott Mayer, provisional bishop for the TEC-affiliated diocese, wrote in a statement, “I, other diocesan leaders, and our legal team have to make decisions about our next steps.”

Thus far the cost of the litigation is “in seven figures” on each side, according to Brister. Texas courts have ordered TEC to pay the costs for both sides.

Reed suggested the years of litigation have also taken a spiritual toll. “We’ve got to refocus ourselves and rededicate ourselves,” he said. “In the end, as much as I want to celebrate keeping our property, it still is just property and buildings. Those are only tools for us to make disciples of others.”
CANINES AGAINST DISEASE

Specially trained dogs can help seizure sufferers and perhaps identify coronavirus infections

by Michael Malament

MAN’S BEST FRIEND, coronavirus’s worst enemy? Dogs have long proven themselves adept at helping the blind and comforting the downcast, but now medically trained service dogs are helping in ways you may not have known—by potentially detecting the coronavirus and responding to epileptic seizures.

Dog trainers have previously taught canines to detect “volatile organic compounds” linked with diseases including ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, Parkinson’s disease, diabetes, and malaria. A dog’s nose can have as many as 300 million smell receptors, giving it an advantage for detecting very subtle aromas. (The more common breeds for medical detection training include Labrador retrievers, golden retrievers, and German shepherds.)

As it turns out, subtle aromatic traits could also offer early warning of the presence of a coronavirus infection, despite a person’s lack of symptoms.

Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine are training eight Labradors to detect coronavirus infection in patient body fluid samples, according to Live Science. If the training proves successful, such detection dogs could be a valuable resource in preventing community spread of the coronavirus by identifying asymptomatic persons unaware of their own infection.

At the University of Helsinki in Finland, a pilot study has already shown preliminary success in training dogs to identify urine from persons infected with the coronavirus. Commenting on another canine COVID-19 detection study currently underway in the United Kingdom, James Logan of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine told The Washington Post, “Each individual dog can screen up to 250 people per hour.”

In contrast to disease detection, seizure detection and supportive care can help many of the approximately 3.4 million Americans who endure epileptic seizures every year. Seizure episodes, lasting from a few seconds to several minutes, impair a person’s level of consciousness and threaten his ability to engage safely in activities such as cooking, work, school, and recreation.

A trained seizure response dog can sense when its owner is having a seizure. Depending on its training, it may bark to alert caregivers, activate an electronic alarm, or move in close to its owner to provide physical support and prevent the person from falling. Afterward, the dog can assist its owner by picking up dropped objects or retrieving medication and other needed items.

While such dogs are not trained to predict seizure activity, some clients have reported their seizure response dogs eventually developed an ability to alert their owners to an impending seizure. In a 2004 survey of 45 dog owners whose children had epilepsy, about 40 percent of the families reported their dogs showed seizure-sensing behaviors, such as moving physically closer to the child, pawing the child or parent, or barking to get the owner’s attention, ahead of the actual seizure.

Professional service canine trainer Rebecca Golian says seizure response dogs can also “increase a person’s confidence to go out in public; just knowing another being is there is an encouragement.”

—Michael Malament is a graduate of the WJI mid-career course
Walking stick
A habit with a great and godly history behind it

My father finds it amusing that I keep a collection of walking sticks hidden behind a tree stump near the wrought iron gate to the wooded cemetery where we walk each day. You don’t need it, he is thinking, and even he in his 96th year elects to be a biped, not tri-ped, for as long as he is able.

To his puzzlement regarding my enamorment of shards of American sycamore branches that line our winding way I give the same reply each time: I like the feel of them, both in my hand and as they scrape the road below and make an earthy sound and ground me in creation.

Truth be told, the pleasure goes beyond that more communicable answer, to some atavistic call that joins me to a cloud of witnesses stretching back and back. The very first boys gathered sticks to make a fire to offer up their produce or their yearlings (Genesis 4). As did Abraham, whose son, alarmed, cried out, “My father! ... Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” (Genesis 22:7).

Jacob peeled white streaks on rods of poplar, hazel, and chestnut, setting them by drinking troughs for flocks to see, which then conceived the speckled sheep miserly Laban designated as his wage (Genesis 30). In the wilderness, alone with God upon the eve of his escape from 20 years’ hard labor, Jacob with emotion said in praise, “With only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps” (Genesis 32:10). On his deathbed Jacob “blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff” (Hebrews 11:21).

It was by the staff of Judah, Jacob’s son, that Tamar secured justice and that God ensured the line of the Messiah would continue (Genesis 38:25). Hundreds of years later God enlisted Moses’ staff to scare a pharaoh and release the progeny of Jacob from another servitude (Exodus 4:2-3). The selfsame staff of Moses was raised high at God’s command to part the sea (Exodus 14:16). But why oh why was it then raised illicitly to strike a rock that God had said to speak to (Numbers 20:7-12)?

A rod from each tribe’s house settled the matter of which of the 12 had God’s authority to serve as priests, when Aaron’s staff alone produced not only buds and blossoms but ripe almonds (Numbers 17). A later priest from Aaron’s tribe, ashamed in filthy robes, elicited from Satan condemnation, but God overruled and called the shamed prelate “a burning stick snatched from the fire” (Zechariah 3:1-3).

A prophet’s borrowed ax head was retrieved from water that it had flown into when Elisha threw a stick in it and made the iron float (2 Kings 6:4-7). But the same staff was powerless to raise the Shunammite’s dead son when wielded by the ignoble Gehazi: Elisha had to go and stretch himself upon the child before his blood would warm again (2 Kings 4:18-37).

Jesus, training new evangelists to trust, forbade them to bring aught with them on missionary journeys but their staff—“no bread, no bag, no money in their belts” (Mark 6:8). God Himself would shepherd them, and His own rod and staff would comfort and supply (Psalm 23). Only let God’s people not “say to a tree, ‘You are my father’” (Jeremiah 2:27): “My people inquire of a piece of wood, and their walking staff gives them oracles” (Hosea 4:12). “Those who make them become like them” (Psalm 115:8).

Two “sticks” (Ezekiel 37:16), one called Judah and one Ephraim, will become “one stick” (v. 17) on the day that God “will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. ... They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols ... their children and their children’s children shall dwell there forever” (vv. 20, 23, 25).

A promise to cherish while walking at my father’s elbow with my walking stick.

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ANY OF US ARE FAMILIAR with the Jerusalem event of A.D. 30 or 33 that is the turning point in all human history and our own salvation. Fewer of us know of the Jerusalem disaster of A.D. 70 that offers a crucial spiritual lesson.

Picture this scene 1,950 years ago: Roman legions, the top soldiers in the world, have spent four years subduing almost all of ancient Israel. Romans have crucified thousands, some upside down or sideways, and enslaved others. Desperate Judeans and Galileans have responded ferociously.

Jewish general-turned-historian Josephus described the battles in his seven Wars of the Jews books, all now readable for free online. For example: In one Galilee town, defenders poured scalding oil upon assaulting Romans, then threw the containers “as they were still hissing from the heat of the fire ... the oil did easily run down the whole body from head to foot, under their entire armor, and fed upon their flesh like flame itself. ... They could no way get free from this burning oil, they could only leap and roll about in their pains” (Book 3, Chapter 7).

Romans eventually captured the towns. Then it was Jerusalem’s turn, but with powerful armies surrounding the city its inhabitants fell into civil war. As Roman historian Tacitus put it, inside Jerusalem tangled “three generals and three armies, and among these three there was constant fighting, treachery, and arson.” Meanwhile the high priests, like their predecessor Caiaphas, were often Roman collaborators.

The differences among the three groups were not great. John of Gischala’s forces minted coins proclaiming “Freedom of Zion.” The coins Simon bar Giora issued said “Redemption of Zion.” Eleazar ben Simon, known for his “tyrannical temperament,” was out for himself, according to Josephus, who was not entirely trustworthy but gave specific detail to back up his contention that all three “had their right hands polluted with the murders of their own countrymen” (Book 6, Chapter 1).

Seeing each other rather than the Romans as their prime enemy, the three dueling Jewish forces acted insanely. Jerusalem had enough food to last a yearlong siege, but zealots burned each other’s supplies. Some even destroyed their own so as to boast of their utter dependence on God, or (according to one Talmud source) to make others ready to fight harder, since one way or another they had only a short time to live.

Crazy, but unsurprising to the small number of Jewish Christians who fled Jerusalem while they could. They remembered that Jesus had predicted destruction (Mark 13, Luke 21). The horrid prophecies in Leviticus—“You shall eat the flesh of your sons”—and Deuteronomy came true. The cannibalistic history recorded in 2 Kings repeated itself. As Josephus wrote about one mother, “She slew her son, then roasted him, ate the one half,” and offered the other half to soldiers.

When it was too late, many surrounded in Jerusalem tried to escape. If they made it past zealot troops, the external enemy usually caught them: Romans were soon crucifying 500 each day, every day. Finally, the elite troops burst through the walls, massacred tens of thousands, and burned the Temple, as Jesus’ forecast 40 years earlier came true.

My own sense of this: The zealots, amid adversity, had a prosperity gospel. God owed them political independence. God owed them their daily bread, even if they destroyed the bread He had already given them. They did not ask God to turn stones into bread, but they turned bread into stones. They thought anyone who disagreed with them deserved death.

They and their parents had received a great gift: The Messiah had walked among them. But they chose to be their own messiahs. We also have that temptation. Scorn Donald Trump and view his backers as knaves, or praise the president and see his critics as traitors. Coronavirus reopenings: mindless. Coronavirus closings: tyrannical. At least from now to Election Day, when we’re tempted to attack our brothers and sisters, please think of blood spilled in Jerusalem, and Christ’s blood shed for supporters of many causes.
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