“I told myself over and over when I was going through treatment that God has a plan.”

—29-year-old Hayley Arceneaux, cancer survivor and future astronaut
Have an ordinary kitchen blender? Sarah shows you how to turn raw wheat berries into pancakes in a short video.

Watch us harvest wheat from the field and transform it into pancakes, all in 5½ minutes.

Search our website for links on how Mennonites, fleeing the Ukraine, transformed Kansas’s agriculture and the American flour industry.
Editorial cartoons can be powerful media for expressing opinions and ideas with few or no words. Consider this one, for example. The cartoonist depicts President Biden and Vice President Harris as baseball players. The President is stepping away to allow the Vice President to “catch” not a fly ball, but a large, heavy piano with a label telling what it represents. Shortly after taking office and inheriting a growing immigration crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border, President Biden appointed Vice President Harris to lead efforts associated with the issue. Some see that as abdication (shirking) of his own responsibility. The cartoonist suggests that’s because the President found the job to be too large to handle. Pay attention to details in the drawing. What do you notice? What do those details mean? Would you understand the image if it was not explained?
CALIFORNIA: LA’s Tiny Homes Offer Shelter  “I live in a gated community,” says one transitional resident of Hope of the Valley’s tiny home village. Rows of 64-square-foot prefab shelters are enclosed with a fence and security gate. But these little homes are not luxurious—unless you’re accustomed to sleeping on pavement, as some here are. Los Angeles has a homeless crisis. A 2020 tally found 66,400 homeless people in the county. So Hope of the Valley organizers worked with the city to help. Together they’ve erected 39 units on a one-acre, oddly shaped vacant lot near a park. Each unit offers two raised beds, storage shelves, an AC unit, and a locking door. A communal hygiene trailer provides toilets, showers, and laundry facilities. Homeless individuals may shelter there temporarily while seeking opportunities to provide for themselves in permanent or other managed living situations. Hope of the Valley CEO Ken Craft says, “Here people can start to chart a path out of homelessness.”

ICELAND: Long-Dormant Volcano Awakes  Sooty ash and flowing lava from Italy’s Mt. Etna made news this spring. Then a long-dormant volcano in Iceland began its own fireworks display. The Fagradals Mountain volcano lies in a remote valley. In March, it flared to life after 6,000 years of dormancy. Early aerial footage from the Icelandic Meteorological Office reveals a fairly small eruption. But the glow from the gushing lava could be seen from the outskirts of Reykjavik, Iceland’s capital, about 20 miles away. In the weeks leading up to the eruption, earthquakes shook the mountain daily. Still, the volcanic activity surprised scientists. After all, the tremors had lessened just before the eruption. Now that the volcano has started spewing, some experts believe it could continue erupting for years.

HAWAII: Million-Dollar “Affordable” Homes  What constitutes “affordable housing”? That depends on where you live. In Hawaii, new state guidelines could rate two-bedroom homes costing $1 million or more as affordable. That means buyers of those houses could be eligible for government subsidies. How does one qualify for subsidized housing? Hawaii’s government says that residents making up to 40% above the median income of about $102,000 can get help on rent or mortgage payments. Cost of living is high in Hawaii. The island state is isolated—making it expensive to get goods and necessities to the people there. Plus, its economy operates largely on tourism. Tourists expect to pay high rates for short-term housing and services. That pushes prices up for locals too. Using a mathematical formula that compares income to actual cost of shelter in Hawaii, the computed threshold for “affordable” takes on a pretty high price tag.
NEW ENGLAND: Town Hall Meetings  Effects of the pandemic may hasten the end of a longstanding New England tradition: the town hall meeting. Such meetings gather community members in the same room while voters debate and decide local issues. Town hall meetings emerged with the first European settlers. They convened in a meeting house, usually a church, for discussions on everything from road repairs to local budgets. Until COVID-19 hit, town hall meetings still happened in some form in all six New England states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Then restrictions on in-person gatherings made most assemblies impossible. Some communities postpone meetings. Others use secret ballots to decide issues, abandoning the back-and-forth debates entirely. Many New Englanders worry they’ll lose town halls forever. According to Mainer Eric Conrad, the new workarounds change the debate process. “That democratic give-and-take is lost,” he says. “But participation is better.”

ISRAEL: More Dead Sea Scrolls Discovered  “Speak the truth to one another, render true and perfect justice in your gates. And do not contrive evil against one another.” These words were found on ancient parchment fragments discovered in March. Israeli archaeologists say they retrieved dozens of Dead Sea Scroll remnants bearing biblical texts. They believe the texts were hidden during a Jewish revolt against Rome nearly 1,900 years ago, when Emperor Hadrian reigned. The newfound fragments bear lines from Zechariah and Nahum. They are the first scroll artifacts found in the area south of Jerusalem in 60 years. The greater collection known as the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in desert caves near Qumran in the 1940s and ’50s. The scrolls span a period from about 200 B.C. to A.D. 100. They include the earliest known copies of many biblical texts and documents. The scrolls’ discovery led to greater knowledge of the beliefs and traditions of the time, as well as a better grasp of the original languages for translation purposes.

AUSTRALIA: Next Up, Mice Plague  In the last few years, Australians have dealt with droughts, wildfires, and floods. Months of rain in 2020 doused wildfires in eastern Australia. The droplets ended a drought and spurred bumper crops on many farms. But the rain also generated a plague of a different kind in the Land Down Under: mice. Supermarket manager Pompy Singh says the vermin eat through everything—lettuce, potato chips, dog biscuits, tobacco, even refrigerator wires! Singh’s store placed foodstuffs in refrigerators or sealed containers, but the mice kept coming. Some days, workers caught as many as 600 mice in a single shop. Singh says mice numbers have decreased somewhat since recent floods hit, but they’re still catching plenty. And Australia’s troubles may not be over. Experts are warning folks to check their shoes and clothes as deadly spiders seek refuge from the floodwaters by moving into homes.
“Here on the front nine, players from around the world are teeing off.” The hushed voice may not be calling a golf tournament. The whispers could refer to a hybrid game winning fans far and wide. Sans clubs or cleats, footgolf is garnering aficionados of both soccer and golf—and beyond.

The word footgolf is a mashup of the words football and golf, combining one of the world’s most common ball games with one of the most elite. It merges the ball and basic footwork of soccer (which most of the world calls football) with the etiquette, rules, holes, scoring, and terrain of golf. Footgolf competitors kick a regular-sized soccer ball into a large cup. But that’s as close to soccer as this game gets.

Footgolf is usually played on traditional golf courses in areas set aside solely for the game. Players must still avoid or play through sand traps, hills, trees, and water hazards. Like traditional golf, the player who finishes with the fewest shots wins. Distances between footgolf holes are shorter than in golf—since even the best kickers can’t propel a soccer ball as far as many people can drive a golf ball. A round of footgolf takes about half the time of a round of golf.

Footgolf has a dress code. Some courses require footgolfers to wear a uniform, which often includes argyle socks, a collared shirt, and a cap. The origin of footgolf is murky. Some say footballer Juan Manuel Aensi developed the game. Others insist Michael Jansen and Bas Korsten invented it.

A version of the sport may have originated with the Tottenham Hotspurs, a British football club. It’s said that players competed by kicking practice balls back to the locker rooms in as few “strokes” as possible.

Whatever the genesis, the first footgolf tournament took place in the Netherlands in 2008. By 2014, people were calling footgolf the fastest-growing sport in the world. Footgolf’s simplicity makes it popular. Most footgolfers are former soccer players. Many are looking for a low-impact way to keep using their favorite ball, says O’Sullivan. But anyone who’s kicked a ball can play.

Laura Balestrini, president of the American FootGolf League, says golfers who’ve played some soccer usually make the best footgolf players. “Golfers with a notion of soccer take the time on the putting,” she says, “using their legs as God-given putters.”

You might imagine that golfers and footgolfers would be rivals. But for the most part, golfers (or at least golf course managers) welcome this quirky new game. After all, footgolf helps earn enough green to support the highly manicured greens, keeping the courses operable.
How much would you pay for a pink casserole dish decked in daisies? Ashley Linder, 37, of Lake Jackson, Texas, would pay $300—and did. She’s just one of many caught up in the current craze for classic kitchenware. A year of pandemic lockdowns produced a surge in home cooking. Vintage cookware fits right into that homey, old-fashioned vibe.

The first Pyrex glass dishes were born in the early 1900s when an employee of Corning Glass Works in Corning, New York, brought home a sawed-off glass battery jar. His wife used it to bake a cake. Eureka! Before this time, the Corning company had been making glass for railroad signal lanterns. Now a new and eager market had opened up: America’s housewives. Corning first released a Pyrex dish in 1915. Pyrex glass didn’t lose color over time or retain food smells after washing. It could withstand drastically changing temperatures, so cooks could stick the dishes in the freezer or the oven. And the crockery was pretty enough to show off on the table or the serving buffet too.

Pyrex is still rolling out dishes, and people still buy them. But now more than ever consumers are prowling online for the old stuff: antique pieces from the mid-20th century painted with flowers, bright colors, and with specific functions, such as bracketed chip and dip bowls or four-piece refrigerator storage sets, affectionately nicknamed “fridges.”

“I’ve always been an old soul and loved anything old,” says Megan Telfer, a collector of vintage dishes, salt and pepper shakers, cookie jars, and “a little bit of everything.” The 26-year-old parole officer from the Dallas area says her grandmother gave her mother a green and white Pyrex “Spring Blossom” mixing bowl. “That’s when my interest was piqued,” Telfer says.

Three years later, she exhibits her more than 300 pieces of vintage Pyrex on three large bookcases with protective glass doors. Her five-year-old daughter has some vintage Pyrex too.

Some collectors buy vintage dishware to try to resell it at a profit, while others are in it for nostalgia. “It reminds them of their mothers, aunts, grandmothers,” says Hope Chudy, owner of a Massachusetts antique store.

Proverbs 10:7 says, “The memory of the righteous is a blessing.” We seem to know that by instinct. Calling to mind beloved people in our pasts brings us comfort in hard times—and even casserole dishes can help us remember.

As more people collect, prices rise. One of the rarest pieces, the 1959 “Lucky in Love” covered casserole dish, sold for $5,994.
A digital mogul wants to relocate his business to the Nevada desert. Further, Jeffrey Berns hopes to create a revolutionary “smart city.” But it’s not skyscrapers or next-gen internet he’s building: Berns wants to form a new kind of government.

Berns is CEO of Nevada-based Blockchains, LLC. His company keeps track of a new type of transactions made with cryptocurrency.

Cryptocurrency, or crypto, is digital money. People can use crypto to buy goods and services online—without a go-between like a bank. Many people believe this kind of transaction is safer and more private.

Part of Berns’ vision involves a city where people buy and sell entirely with crypto. But Berns also sees a place where residents log everything—bank statements, medical records, and personal data—on Blockchains’ ultra-secure ledger technology.

Blockchains, LLC wants to break ground on such a city near Reno by 2022. Berns proposes building 15,000 homes and 33 million square feet of business space over the next 75 years.

Building a city isn’t Berns’ only big idea. He wants Nevada to change its laws to allow “innovation zones.” These zones would give companies like Blockchains, LLC powers similar to those of a local government. The powers would include creating court systems, running schools, imposing taxes, and building roads and utilities.

Berns believes the future will require such governance for freedom of invention. “There’s got to be a place somewhere on this planet where people are willing to just start from scratch and say, ‘We’re not going to do things this way just because it’s the way we’ve done it,’” he says.

A company doubling as a government? The Bible suggests there’s wisdom in separating powers. In the Old Testament, God separated the roles of prophets, priests, and kings...
among earthly leaders. Separation of powers helps prevent abuse and protect freedom for all. Only the incorruptible Jesus could fill all three roles perfectly at the same time.

Nevada lawmakers are viewing Berns’ project with both interest and suspicion. Most are eager to lessen Nevada’s dependence on tourism. But politicians don’t want to be seen as pushing business ventures while the state struggles to fund healthcare and education.

Nevada’s Governor Steve Sisolak presented a proposal in favor of the idea in February. He called it “an exciting, unprecedented concept that has a potential to position Nevada as a global center of advanced technology and innovation, while helping to create immediate positive economic impact and shape the economy of the future.”

Sisolak foresees these so-called “innovation zones” as able to transform Nevada into “the epicenter of this emerging industry and create the high-paying jobs and revenue that go with it.” But at what potential cost to its citizens?

Whatever becomes of Blockchains’ city, bit by byte, digital commerce is changing the way the world does business.

Cryptocurrency is a type of digital or virtual money. It doesn’t exist in physical form—so no folding money or spare change in the crypto commerce world. But you’ll still need a wallet to store it in—only, it’s a digital wallet too. You’ll also need a key to access your wallet—a virtual key, of course. Actually, you’ll need two keys: a public key and a private key. To buy with your crypto, you’ll share your public key with the seller. But no one gets access to your private key. That helps keep your cryptocurrency safe from hackers and thieves.

Many banks and governments use virtual currencies. They move money electronically while no cash actually changes hands. Those currencies are offered by centralized governments. The governments track and to an extent control the amount of wealth available. But cryptocurrencies work differently. They are decentralized currencies. That means no government controls their value or volume. And transactions conducted with cryptocurrency use cryptography—or complex codes—to keep them secure.

While bank debit cards and accounts are notoriously easy to hack, crypto is not. Some people even go so far as to say crypto is unhackable!

Dozens of cryptocurrencies operate right now. But the biggest and most-established brands are Bitcoin and Ethereum. Don’t be surprised if you begin to see “Bitcoin accepted here” signs showing up in the marketplace. Many investors believe cryptocurrency is the way all earthly commerce will work in the future. People already make daily purchases directly from their phones. Crypto supporters say those transactions will just become more secure.

God promises that all His people one day will “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” (Isaiah 55:1)
Yasmina El Habbal dreamed of a daughter. She planned to name her Ghalia, Arabic for “precious.” But El Habbal never married. She thought her dreams of motherhood were lost—until at age 40, she finally found her Ghalia in an Egyptian orphanage where she volunteered.

When the fussy baby girl with large brown eyes fell asleep in El Habbal’s arms, she thought: “God has created her for me.”

“There’s no way I could have loved her more or become more attached to her had I given birth to her,” the mother reflects. She expresses precisely the complete union that adoption brings to parent and child. That same union is ours when, through Jesus Christ, we are adopted into the family of God. God calls Jesus “the firstborn of many brothers,” and us “heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.” (Romans 8:17, 29)

But El Habbal, along with the majority in Egypt, is Muslim. Under Islam, adoption is not legal—at least not adoption in its fullest sense. Islam emphasizes blood lineage. Adopted children are not allowed the legal rights and privileges of biological offspring. Instead, Islam designates a condition called Kafala. Under Kafala, an adult may become an orphan’s guardian—but the orphan is never elevated to heir.

Orphans in Egypt are often stigmatized. That society looks down upon them as less worthy due to their status of parentlessness, whether that’s because they were abandoned or born outside of marriage. But God does not abandon or devalue the orphan. He calls Himself the Father of the fatherless (Psalm 68:5) and defines pure religion as showing love for widows and orphans. (Exodus 22:22, James 1:27)

Today, Egypt has a problem of too many homeless children. Muslims look at Kafala with mistrust, fearing even fostering children—which isn’t prohibited—is somehow “unholy” under Islam. El Habbal’s own father is not supportive of the adoption. He refuses a relationship with the “unrelated” little girl.

So El Habbal and others try to change cultural views about orphans and adoption. They share their stories on social media to normalize adoptive families as real and complete.

El Habbal has shared snippets of life with Ghalia on Facebook: the girl giggling as she’s rocked; bundled up by a campfire; mother and baby sporting matching Superman T-shirts.

The message is this: Louli—her nickname—is an ordinary child. She laughs, cries, gets sick and gets better, without shame. And she is dearly, dearly beloved—just as any child should be.
They’ve waited for months or even years in Mexico. Now some people seeking asylum in the United States will be allowed into the country as they wait for their cases to be heard. Edwin Gomez hopes to be one of them. He says his wife and 14-year-old son were killed by gangs in El Salvador after he couldn’t pay extortion fees. He is eager to join his 15-year-old daughter in Austin, Texas. She already won asylum and is living with family.

The change occurred in February. It reverses one of the Trump administration’s immigration policies. It also returns the U.S. asylum system to the way it worked for decades. These people come seeking a protected legal status. But before it is granted, they must present their cases. A U.S. court determines if the applicants are fleeing their home countries for legitimate reasons: Dire violence and persecution are two possible conditions that might result in asylum.

Previously, asylum seekers were allowed to wait in the United States while their cases proceeded. But former President Trump created the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), also called the “Remain in Mexico” policy. Asylum seekers coming to the U.S. southern border had to stay in Mexico after applying. The policy was meant to discourage people who didn’t really need asylum. But the program also kept needy and displaced people in dangerous border cities.

The Biden administration says that asylum seekers will be allowed into the United States with notices to appear in immigration courts. It will take time to work through more than 25,000 active Remain in Mexico cases. U.S. officials are warning people not to come to the U.S.-Mexico border. They say people with active cases and those who are appealing court decisions should register online. Migrants are tested for COVID-19 before entering the United States.

It’s not surprising that people living in impoverished and crime-ridden nations would long to move themselves and their families to safer territory. But immigrating to the United States is no easy feat. It can take many years and thousands of dollars to complete the process. Most people agree that the immigration system is broken. But they disagree about how to fix it. Some, including President Biden, think this policy reversal is a way to help the people in the most urgent need. Others think it will cause more problems. The Bible talks about helping foreigners. Leviticus 19:33-34 is one example. People might differ on “How?” But even as we wrestle with that question, God calls us to be compassionate toward people forced to flee their homes.
In February, amateur investors experienced the volatility of the stock market firsthand. Spurred by social media, many bought shares of a few select companies. Their actions drove low value stocks high, shocking market veterans. Some insiders say such activity by amateurs should be illegal. But could those power players be sore losers?

In simple terms, the stock market is a system of buying and selling stocks, or shares of ownership in a company. Companies sell stocks to raise money for growing their businesses. People buy stocks as investments or simply to earn cash.

Stock prices rise and fall all day, every day, Monday through Friday. For long-term success, buyers hold stock, sometimes for years. They wait for their stocks to increase in value. Investors make money by selling stocks at a higher price than they paid for them.

However, professional stockholders have figured out how to profit from stocks they think will lose value. The strategy is called “short selling.” Here’s how it works:

An investor borrows (as in a loan from a bank) shares from a lender and promises to return them by a contracted date. The investor sells the borrowed stock right away. That’s because he or she expects the stock price to fall.

If the prices do fall, the investor buys the shares back—for less than the selling price.

The investor returns the borrowed shares and keeps the difference between the two sales. Short selling can work . . . but only if the stock price declines as predicted. And that’s where trouble can happen. If prices rise instead, the investor must still buy the shares back to return. The more the stock price rises, the more money investors lose.

This winter, many large investors

The world’s most famous stock market crash took place in 1929. Over several days, nervous U.S. investors sold so many shares of stock that the entire system collapsed. Almost every part of the nation’s economy suffered: Banks closed, businesses failed, farmers couldn’t sell crops, and wages bottomed out. This 10-year period became known as the Great Depression.
The stock market has been a hot topic lately. Its volatility (wide value ranges, from high to low) was in full swing in February and March. Social media frenzies pushed some novice investors to buy low-value stocks in an effort to drive up the prices. The results shocked veteran investors who protested and sought to freeze trading. For many, all the hoopla raised questions: How does the stock market even work? Should I buy stock?

Stock prices rise and fall throughout business hours, every day, Monday through Friday. Investors make money by selling their shares at a higher price than they originally paid. Carrie Schwab-Pomerantz is a financial literacy expert and senior vice president at Charles Schwab & Co. She says, “Investing is a means of using your money to try to create more money.”

“Playing the market,” as it’s called, can be a good opportunity when done responsibly and with guidance. But one should approach investing while striving to be good—even shrewd—stewards. Believers must not be greedy for quick gain or self-serving with their profits. But buying and selling well are biblically affirmed activities.

WORLD reporter Emily Belz shared with WORLDteen how her dad led her into responsible investing. He gave her a small amount of money and then explained the risks inherent in the market system. Emily says her father advised “that I should put the money in expecting that I might lose all of it.” (One must never invest more than one can afford to lose.) Emily chose a company she was familiar with. That company was Apple. “It turned out to be a smart gamble,” says Emily. “I sold it in college . . . and made some money. But not as much as if I had held onto it!” (In 2000, Apple shares sold for about $1 each. Today, Apple stock is worth more than $100 per share.)

God encourages good economic stewardship. He sets up economies and works in markets and commerce settings. Jesus gives an example of making use of investment opportunities in Matthew 25:14-30. And God mightily used Lydia, a merchant in Philippi who was busy in the common marketplace.

Through her business there, she not only earned money to support a household, but she made contacts that helped the new church grow and spread in the Gentile world. Godly economic management isn’t reflected only in how much we individually profit. It is evident also in how our participation benefits others in God’s bigger plan.
British fishermen need to sell more fish locally. That’s because Brexit has made shipping products abroad more difficult. New rules and delays make sales take a dive. What a fine kettle of fish! Their solution? Rebranding. What used to be known as the “megrim sole” and “spider crab” (eww) will now be “Cornish sole” and “Cornish king crab” to bait the local market.

But will a simple name change make the megrim sole or the spider crab more attractive to British consumers? After all, there are plenty of other fish in the sea. And would a fish by any other name smell less fishy?

God created our senses to work together. Research shows that humans “eat with their ears.” Sounds heard while eating or drinking can affect the way people think about food (whether that’s your own chomping or the background music). And when we hear the name of a brand, we form a positive or negative impression of it even before we see the product. Why? Different sounds have symbolic meaning. For example, certain vowels, such as i and e, can lead to an impression that the brands are smaller, lighter, milder, thinner, softer, faster, colder, or friendlier.

Consider this: You’re offered two ice creams, one called “Frosh” and another called “Frish.” Which do you think would be creamier? Psychologists found that most believed “Frosh” would be creamier. Altering one sound made a difference in consumer perception. Brand names really are an important part of successful product marketing.

The associations we make with a brand matter too. A tourist destination in the United Kingdom, popular for its beautiful coastline, Cornwall is a “brand” in its own right. When people hear the word “Cornish,” they likely think of the sea and seafood with pleasant associations. So fishermen want to use the name as a promotional hook. “Spider crab,” on the other hand, could conjure a vision of eating spiders—and that might make customers green around the gills. And the prospect of a megrim (a word meaning low spirits or a migraine) meal is rather grim, which could cause sales to flounder.

The fishing industry thinks that if it can get people to try its newly branded fish, they will like what they taste. However, with the right-sounding name, consumers may not even need to try it to make up their minds! Do you think British customers will be reeled in hook, line, and sinker by the new names, netting fishermen more profits? Or will customers feel catfished?
“The worker deserves his wages,” says Luke 10:7. But figuring out what’s fair for a certain job can be a serious challenge. A minimum wage increase proposal has been tossed around the U.S. government lately. So far, a bill hasn’t passed to raise the existing $7.25 per hour wage that’s been in place since 2009. But that doesn’t mean a legislated increase isn’t coming.

Minimum wage is the lowest hourly payment that employers can legally pay employees. The rate varies between countries. For example, Kyrgyzstan has the world’s lowest minimum wage at $14 per month, or about nine cents per hour! Australia pays at least $15.12 hourly. (Rates adjusted to U.S. dollars.)

Democrats hoped to force a rate increase in the March $1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill. The bill initially required yearly increases in the minimum wage to a whopping $15 per hour by 2025. The House of Representatives approved the hike, but it didn’t make it through the Senate for a vote.

Many people say the current minimum wage is insufficient compared to the cost of living. Families struggling to make ends meet see hope in a minimum wage increase. The Bible reminds us not to be anxious about finances. (See Luke 12:24, Philippians 4:19, and 2 Peter 1:3.) Others say increasing wages will reduce jobs by making it financially impossible for many businesses to survive. Increased wages also drive up inflation, making necessities more costly.

Due to human nature, there are problems on all sides of the worker/pay issue. Some employees want to work less but earn more. Not everyone has a strong work ethic. On the other hand, some employers insist on paying the least amount they can. Greedy for gain, they pocket large profits while people in their charge go without.

In a 2014 column entitled “Upside-down Golden Rule,” WORLD News Group Founder Joel Belz says, “Isn’t minimum wage another way of saying, ‘If I could legally pay you less, I would?’” (world.wng.org/2014/02/upside_down_golden_rule) That realization changed his perspective on caring for employees.

What should determine a raise? The U.S. Congress? Mr. Belz says that employers may need a heart-shift like he experienced. He tells his dedicated employees, “My goal is to pay you just as much as I possibly can—while balancing our budget, giving our investors a good return, and making sure we’ve got reserves for future operations. I value you, and I don’t want you to leave us to go somewhere else.”

If you are an employee, work hard. If you become the employer, ask God for both wisdom and a generous heart that reflects His. Meditate on Colossians 3:23. “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.”
Creeeeaaaakkk . . . some of the world’s most celebrated doors have reopened. Global pandemic measures shuttered countless buildings, including those of the Vatican in Rome. But for one man, the famous Sistine Chapel and access to Michelangelo’s magnificent ceiling frescoes never really closed.

Vatican City is a distinct territory located in Rome, Italy. The Catholic Church governs the quarter-mile-square area, home to the 26 Vatican Museums. The museums contain nearly 70,000 priceless pieces of art, including ancient Roman sculptures and Renaissance paintings collected over centuries.

Gianni Crea is the chief key-keeper of the Vatican Museums. Before dawn, he opens doors and clicks on lights through four and a half miles of Vatican art and artifacts.

Crea begins his rounds in a museum “bunker” that houses safes full of keys. With all 2,797 keys clattering from giant keyrings, Crea wends through marble halls and gold-leaved treasures to the Sistine Chapel. At a tiny wooden doorway, he tears open a white envelope and pulls out a small silvery-brass key.

Built in the late 1400s, the Sistine Chapel is most famous for its ornate ceiling decoration by Michelangelo. Painted between 1508 and 1512, the ceiling depicts scenes from Genesis. The chapel also serves as a setting for religious and papal activity.

The Sistine Chapel key is so important that Crea handles it with its own procedure: After the chapel closes for the day, the key goes into a new white envelope. Crea seals and stamps the envelope, and then places it in the bunker safe. He logs its every move in a register.

Crea has been making his Vatican rounds for 23 years. He worked for three years before being allowed to open the Sistine Chapel by himself. For two decades, he has had the privilege of viewing Michelangelo’s scenes of the Bible solo in the empty quiet of dawn.

“All the statues, all the rooms have a unique history, but naturally the Sistine Chapel always gives you [particular] emotion,” Crea says.

Last year, Vatican Museum visits took place around Italy’s two COVID-19 lockdowns. The buildings were closed for 88 days. But Crea’s team of 10 key-keepers kept opening and closing for cleaning and maintenance. Restorers also performed work that is impossible with nearly seven million visitors during a normal year.

These days, to maintain social distancing, the museum staggers admittance. Visitors purchase timed-entry tickets in advance.

Crea confesses to sometimes misplaced his own housekeys. But he calls making it possible for guests to view the extraordinary treasures of the Vatican Museums “an incredible privilege”—so he makes sure the doors are wide open.
For decades, China strictly controlled how many children a family could have. Communist leaders thought this would preserve scarce resources for the country’s growing economy. Now China must increase the country’s plunging birthrate—or face economic decline and social turmoil.

In 1979, China established a one-child-per-family policy. The ensuing low birthrate quickly became a negative: No children meant no workers.

When China began allowing a second child per family in 2016, the country’s birthrate ticked up—nearly eight percent the next year.

However, the increase was only temporary. After decades, single-child homes were the norm. Chinese culture simply did not view multiple children and larger families as worth sacrificing for. (See “China’s Confusion over Births” at teen.wng.org/node/5184.)

Many Chinese still believe the lie told them for decades by their government: Without enough resources to go around, children are too costly for families to support.

Last year, China’s birthrate fell another two percent. Many couples cited the high cost of raising children and other economic and social barriers (including what their parents and neighbors might think) as reasons not to have more offspring.

The Chinese government’s attitude toward children has been directly opposed to God’s. Psalm 127:3 calls children “a heritage from the Lord” and “the fruit of the womb a reward.”

Today, fewer than five percent of China’s people worship Jesus. Chinese beliefs—or the lack of them—may affect choices about family size and career. Without faith in a God who delights to provide for those created in His image, humans often fear the worst. They seek comfort above all else.

Many in China have lost the concept of training up generations of descendants as a joy and privilege worth deep sacrifice. Instead, they see children as little more than an economic drain and added pressure.

China’s National Health Commission plans research to “further stimulate birth potential.” So far, the group isn’t mentioning specifics.

Whatever it entails, the strategy will focus first on northeastern China. This former industrial heartland has seen a major population decline. Young people and families departed for better opportunities elsewhere. In 2019, the region’s total population dropped for the seventh straight year. Last year, registered new births fell more than 15 percent.

With about 1.4 billion people, China is currently the world’s largest population. But its citizens are aging. Experts predict that China’s workforce won’t be able to support the country’s elderly in retirement. The country’s economy will likely wither. The troubles are revealing: China desperately needs Jesus—and more children.
Captain Tom Moore raised more than $45 million for British health-care workers by walking laps around his garden. His attitude, more than his fundraising, made him a hero. Moore passed away in February. But his legacy lives on, inspiring more people to do their best in helping others.

During his daily walks, the then-99-year-old Moore challenged others to “do whatever you can to help others.” (Read “Captain Tom Moore Passes” at teen.wng.org/node/6599.) Moore’s attitude is a bit like the one encouraged in Galatians 6:10: “Let us do good to all people.” (NASB) He persuaded young people that it’s never too soon to start helping, and the old that it’s never too late.

Five-year-old Tony Hudgell lost both legs as a baby. But when he heard what Moore was doing, he wanted to help. He set out to walk 6.2 miles and raise $686 for the Evelina London Children’s Hospital. Tony’s challenge attracted over $2 million in donations.

“Captain Sir Tom inspired so many people to take on their own extraordinary challenges, from running marathons to swimming lakes,” says Ellie Orton, chief executive of the United Kingdom’s National Health Service (NHS) Charities Together. She adds, “He gave us all hope.”

Margaret Payne is on the other end of the fundraising age range. The 90-year-old climbed stairs in her home to raise over $570,000 for the NHS. Payne calculated that her 282 flights was equal to climbing Suilven, one of Scotland’s best known mountains, or 2,398 feet.

Imogen Papworth-Heidel also followed Moore’s example. The 11-year-old soccer player dreams of playing for England. As she watched Captain Tom push his walker around his garden, she wanted to help. She chose something she’s good at: keepie uppies. Also called keep-ups and kick-ups, the skill involves juggling a ball with feet, head, and shoulders and without letting it touch the ground.

Imogen chose an ambitious goal: 7.1 million kicks. That’s “one for every single key worker in the whole of the country,” she says. After realizing it would take her a long time on her own, Imogen found other people who did keepie uppies. Her band of volunteer ball bouncers donated their kicks to her via video.

“People did six million keepie uppies in total, and I did 1.1 million,” she says. “It’s just really amazing how many people donated and spent their time actually doing the keepie uppies. I’m really grateful.”

Imogen ended up juggling her way to $20,500 for key workers keeping British hospitals open, streets safe, and trains running. Plus, the practice gained her more accuracy and ball control—which could help her national team goal.

But the lessons gleaned from Captain Tom go beyond feats of walking, climbing, and kicking. Imogen says she learned to “keep on going and not to give up halfway through something.” That’s a lesson for life.
Margaret Stegall stared at the Facebook post. She had never seen the person in the photo before. “Janet . . . is in desperate need of a liver transplant,” the post began. The caption described the woman’s decline from a healthy 19-year-old to someone at times crippled with disease. Stegall read to the end of the paragraph: “A qualified live donor with blood type O positive or negative would only need to donate a small portion of his/her liver. Would you prayerfully consider donating?”

As a teenager, doctors diagnosed Janet Pierce Thorin with an autoimmune disease called Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC). PSC inflames and scars the liver ducts. The damage prevents the transport of fats and other nutrients to the body’s organs. PSC turned Thorin’s skin yellow and made it itch horribly. She was fatigued nearly all the time and lost a dangerous amount of weight.

Stegall and Thorin didn’t know each other, although they had attended the same Christian college, eight years apart. They would later discover many ties—a sibling at summer camp, friends who attended the same church—connecting them. None was stronger than being part of the family of God.

“I couldn’t just hit ‘like’ and go on about my day,” 25-year-old Stegall says of the June 29, 2020, post on the Bob Jones University alumni page. “I couldn’t get away from the feeling I was supposed to help.”

Stegall knew she was type O+. She knew that type Os can give blood to the other types—but can accept blood only from other Os. What Stegall didn’t realize was that in the world of organ donation, that makes getting O organs extra difficult.

As far back as 2004, Thorin knew she would eventually require a transplant. Her disease was making her sicker and sicker. Her family had checked relatives for a match but come up empty. Transplant coordinators say people needing organs can’t imagine anyone other than family would be willing to donate an organ.

Thorin’s doctors kept saying, “You need a liver.” Her healthcare team encouraged her to reach out on social media.

“How do you even request such a thing?” wondered Dave Thorin, Janet’s husband. It seemed like an impossibly big request. The Thorins’ pastor’s wife eventually made the plea that Stegall saw last summer. Her post included an email address. Before the day was out, Stegall had sent a message: “I’m willing to be tested.” [To be continued . . . Go to https://teen.wng.org/node/6720 for the rest of the story.]
Sigrid Stokes is 76 years old, but she’s not inclined to retire. The nurse is fighting the spread of COVID-19, following in the footsteps of her mom, who battled another worldwide pandemic more than 100 years ago.

Stokes’ mother was Kristine Berg Mueller. Mueller tended to sick people during the Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918. (The Spanish influenza didn’t necessarily originate in Spain. It was so named because only Spain was openly reporting spreading cases of the illness at the time. Other nations, trying not to seem endangered or insecure during World War I, did not publicize the presence of the flu in their communities until later.)

Mueller grew up in Norway. She was a 14-year-old student when the influenza hit. Eventually, that flu killed about 50 million people—twice as many as died in World War I.

“She and a friend volunteered at the local hospital to help out in whatever way they could….,” Stokes says of her mother. “Feeding people, bathing people, you know, changing beds, whatever they could do.”

The flu pandemic inspired Mueller to become a nurse, but her family had no money to send her to nursing school. An aunt in San Francisco, California, agreed to take Mueller in. She moved to the United States and became a nurse.

Photos from 1918 look eerily familiar right now. Barbers, office workers, policemen, and others have their noses and mouths covered to protect from spreading the Spanish Flu virus.

Like COVID-19, influenza affects the respiratory system. Unlike COVID-19, the Spanish Flu commonly posed serious health dangers for little kids and younger adults as well as older people. Scientists still don’t know what made the 1918 H1N1 influenza strain so nasty.

Maybe you or someone you know has been swabbed or vaccinated for COVID-19. But there were no Spanish Flu tests or vaccines. People did what they could: They limited group gatherings, kept clean, covered their coughs and sneezes, and isolated the sick.

Stokes arrives to work at Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital in California wearing earrings she made from a Norwegian necklace her mother proudly sported each day. Her mom died in 1995, but the jewelry makes Stokes feel like they’re working together.

Though too old to treat COVID-19 patients safely, Stokes can help with vaccinations. “I give very good shots … good jabs,” she says with a smile, then deftly plunges a needle into the arm of a masked healthcare worker. The worker doesn’t even flinch.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another. — 1 Peter 4:10
Hayley Arceneaux beat bone cancer, so she figures rocketing into orbit on SpaceX’s first private flight should be a piece of cosmic cake. St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital announced that the 29-year-old physician assistant (PA) will launch later this year, joining a billionaire who’s using his purchased spaceflight as a charitable fundraiser.

Arceneaux will make history on two counts when she blasts off this fall with entrepreneur Jared Isaacman and two other contest winners. She will become the youngest American in space AND the first person to launch from Earth with a prosthesis. When she was 10, Arceneaux had surgery at St. Jude to replace her knee. She also received a titanium rod in her left thigh bone. Although she walks with a limp and suffers occasional leg pain, SpaceX has cleared Arceneaux to fly as well as serve as the crew’s medical officer.

“I told myself over and over when I was going through treatment that God has a plan,” explained Arceneaux in an interview for St. Jude. She’s right. “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope,” says Jeremiah 29:11. It’s been nearly 20 years since Arceneaux’s battle with cancer. “I’m overwhelmingly grateful for His faithfulness and my wild journey.” That journey keeps getting wilder.

“My battle with cancer really prepared me for space travel,” says Arceneaux. Her message for young patients and other cancer survivors is that “the sky is not even the limit anymore.” She believes, “It’s going to mean so much to these kids to see a survivor in space.”

So how in the world did Arceneaux score a seat on the premier private flight out of this world? Isaacman announced his space mission on February 1. He pledges to raise $200 million for St. Jude, half of which will be his own contribution. As the flight’s commander, he gifted one of the four SpaceX Dragon capsule seats to St. Jude. The research hospital considered its employees who had once been patients and chose Arceneaux. The PA was at home in Memphis, Tennessee, when she got the unexpected call asking her to represent St. Jude in space. Her enthusiasm was apparent: “Yes! Yes! Please!”

As for the two other crew members, one will be a sweepstakes winner. Anyone who donated to St. Jude in February is eligible. The other seat will go to a business owner who uses Isaacman’s credit card-processing company.
In 2020, COVID-19 disrupted nearly every aspect of life. As lockdowns ramped up, professional science studies suffered worldwide. As these projects languished, community programs—featuring children and adults alike—flourished. Citizen scientists to the rescue!

Much scientific study involves long-term tracking of animals, plants, and ecosystems. Observing organisms and environments over time allows researchers to analyze the effects of natural events (such as storms and wildfires) and human activities (such as construction and development). Such ongoing studies offer insights into patterns and processes. They also help experts predict future conditions.

In the spring of 2020, travel restrictions and social distancing forced career scientists to cancel or pause their work. The breaks reduced the accuracy of weather forecasts and created large data gaps in astronomy, biology, and other areas. More than ever, scientists began relying on other sources of information.

For years, science has benefited from the work of citizen scientists. By engaging volunteers, science can yield more data and cover larger areas than professional scientists can achieve on their own.

Qualified researchers recruit and train citizens for certain jobs. Citizen science projects often involve collecting observations of plants and animals, daily rainfall totals, water or soil quality, or asteroid activity. Volunteers sometimes translate ancient scientific writings.

The United States has several long-term monitoring programs such as the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON). NEON operates 81 field sites. At each, citizen scientists study climate, landforms, vegetation, and more. Many state and local government agencies conduct similar activities.

In other programs, citizen scientists participate in tracking butterflies or birds, recording seasonal activity in plants and animals, verifying data collected by satellites, documenting new insect species, discovering exoplanets, and even finding cures for rare diseases.

To ensure data quality, citizen science programs often provide extensive training and support. They construct data entry apps so that volunteers can’t mistakenly input dates in the future. They also flag unusual reports for review. Several programs like eBird and eButterfly involve expert reviewers. These experts evaluate and verify citizen scientist reports before publishing the data.

Citizen science benefits go beyond bailing out the experts. They help participants too. Joining a community science program can deepen contributors’ connection to an area and increase their understanding of the flora and fauna they monitor. Researcher Theresa Crimmins of the University of Arizona says participants say that “making observations has enabled them to see and experience much more in places they know well, and to enjoy those places all the more.”

Have you contributed as a citizen scientist? If so, tell us about it in the comments at teen.wng.org/node/6694.
**Talk Like a Naked Mole-rat**

*Buggy or shopping cart? Have you ever noticed that people from different parts of the same country might use different words for the same item? Human communication often changes from region to region. Research indicates that some groups of the same animal species also communicate in distinct ways.*

A dialect is a form of a language typical to a specific region or social group. Someone’s answer to the question above gives a clue about where that person is from: Southerners tend to say *buggy*; Northerners and Westerners prefer *shopping cart.*

Termites, ants, bees, elephants, lions, baboons, dolphins, penguins—all live and socialize in groups. Scientists have studied behavior within their hives, prides, pods, and troops. But what’s less widely known is that differences can also exist in the sounds animals of the same species make to communicate. Yep. Animals have dialects too.

- Birds, cats, and even whales may use different dialects depending on their home turf or surf.
- Certain songbirds show regional differences in their calls. One study showed that birds living in a city setting sang differently from the same species in the country.
- Most recently, scientists discovered dialects in an east African rodent species—the naked mole-rat.

Despite their name, naked mole-rats are not completely bare. They have sensory hairs on their bodies. Their underground colonies may consist of hundreds of related individuals that cooperate to dig and defend the tunnels and find food.

Naked mole-rats see and hear poorly. But they “speak” well, producing a wide range of calls. In one study, a team of scientists found that naked mole-rats seem to use dialect to determine who’s a colony member and who isn’t. Clever!

- The researchers recorded over 35,000 chirps from mole-rats in four captive colonies. A computer analyzed the differences. The computer identified which animal made each chirp—and which of the four colonies that animal was from.
- The mole-rats often responded to chirps played through a loudspeaker by chirping back, especially if the recordings were of members of their own colony. They even responded to fake calls that mimicked their colony’s dialect.
- If scientists moved baby mole-rats to different colonies, after several months they would “speak the dialect” of their foster colony. That led scientists to wonder whether a mole-rat could fake a dialect in order to be accepted into another colony.

Animal dialects like the mole-rats’ may give researchers information about the development of languages and other cultural traits in humans.

Remember the incident in Judges 12:5-6 involving a word—Shibboleth. One group of people used the word to tell who was friend and who was foe based on pronunciation.
The pandemic has wreaked havoc worldwide. Now a supply bottleneck has U.S. businesses awaiting goods from Asia—while docked ships can’t unload. Something in the supply chain’s gotta give.

The supply chain is the process of making and selling goods, from beginning to end. Obtaining raw materials, manufacturing and delivering products, selling them—these are links in the chain. When one link gets jammed, or bottlenecked, the whole chain suffers. Such bottlenecks create delays, raise production costs, and leave people in need.

Alejandro Bras’ company, Womple Studios, supplies monthly educational activity boxes for kids. Bras orders from factories in China. He used to receive toys and books for his boxes in 30 days. Now, with supply chain bottlenecks, “We’re adding an additional two months,” he says, sometimes longer.

Here’s why:
Early in 2020, illnesses from the novel coronavirus forced factory closures throughout China. Soon after, Americans began quarantining at home and altering buying habits. Many stopped ordering clothes (who needs ‘em? Everyone’s wearing pjs!) and started ordering fitness equipment and home improvement items.

The United States then flooded re-opening Asian factories with orders to meet new demand. Goods from Asia began entering West Coast cities. But low on workers, U.S. ports couldn’t handle the influx. At times in late 2020, as many as 40 ships holding up to 14,000 containers each sat offshore, some for over a week.

There were choke points on land as well. One ship can require 8,000 trucks to haul its cargo away. When those trucks finally arrive, load up, and hit the road, there aren’t enough vehicles left to hold the cargos of the ships that wait in line.

Even if trucks are available, the virus itself is sidelining dockworkers. It takes five to seven days to unload a ship in port now instead of the usual two to three.

“Normally, a shipment can be booked with a couple days’ notice,” says Peter Mann, CEO of an air purifier maker that imports supplies. “Currently you have to book containers 30 days in advance.”

Today, many businesses wait months instead of weeks for deliveries from China. No one knows when the situation will resolve.

Craig Wolfe’s company, CelebriDucks, has had trouble getting rubber ducks from China. One shipment sat on a dock for three weeks because no railcars were available. Another that Wolfe expected to ship by mid-February still hadn’t left China at the first of April.

CelebriDucks aren’t typical ducks—they’re based on current celebrities and pop culture trends. So Wolfe’s faddish waterfowl have a limited popularity shelf life. He’s hoping the shipping industry can get its ducks in a row soon so that he can sell his!
What time is it? Just about everything we do is based on our clocks—when we go to work or class or bed at night, and especially when we get up. But how did people wake up before alarm clocks were invented?

Some people hired others to wake them. In the 1400s, town criers of the port of Sandwich, England, roused sailors with a weather report. Much later, professional “knocker-uppers” might use a pea shooter or a stick to tap on windows, alerting customers that it was near time for their factory shifts.

If another human had to wake you up, though, that usually meant that person had to stay up all night. But still, he or she needed to know when to sound the alarm. Enter the water clock. Ancient and medieval water clocks used water to show time passing. Water dripped out of or into bowls at a regular rate. Later, people also used sand hourglasses.

Mechanical clocks were invented in the Middle Ages. Gravity pulled weights down to run the clock, which were then wound back up for another cycle—every day. A whole village could hear bells strike the hours from a church or town belfry. Keeping the clock wound became an important job.

Over time, individuals owning their own personal clocks became more common. By the mid to late 1400s, some houses had their own heavy iron wall clocks. Many could ring a bell at a particular time.

In our modern lifestyles, clocks are essential for keeping track of time. But not everyone thinks about time exactly the same way. Some cultures, like many in the United States and Europe, see time as linear—it moves in a straight line toward the future. Being on time and following a schedule are very important to people who think this way. These cultures are called monochronic.

Other cultures, like many in Latin America and the Middle East, are more polychronic. People focus more on what they are doing, rather than the timeframe. In a polychronic culture, attendees might show up to a party or church service later than scheduled. And they might linger long after the event’s suggested ending time. These differences can cause confusion between cultures. But neither way of thinking is good or bad—just different.

People are created inside time. We’re also bound by it. We can’t travel back in time or jump ahead to the future. God works within time, but being “uncreated,” He is actually outside of it. Why? Because He created time. 2 Peter 3:8 tells us that God is not limited by time like His creatures are: “But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”
Most homes are built block by block, brick by brick, or board by board. But this model house in Calverton, New York, was constructed scan by scan. Its walls were made using a giant 3-D printer that squeezes out concrete.

There are other 3-D printed houses around the world, but most are tiny, meant to be experimental or low-cost housing. This house, though, has three bedrooms and two bathrooms. Plenty of room for an average-sized family to call home!

SQ4D, the construction firm that made the house, had to design and build its own 3-D printer. “We took the idea of a plastic 3-D desktop printer and wanted to make it much larger and spit out concrete,” says Kirk Andersen. He is the director of operations for SQ4D.

Andersen and his team constructed tracks for the giant printer on each side of where they planned to build . . . or, print. They set up a large gantry (overhead structure that supports the printer). The printer goes back and forth, extruding a layer at a time. The layers stack up into walls.

Andersen points out the concrete scan lines on the walls with pride. “People like to see the lines. It’s unique. It’s got some character,” he says. But home buyers can also request different finishes, like stucco or drywall.

The printing time for the walls took about 48 hours, part of an eight-day process to build the entire home. Andersen says that the process is much quicker, and cheaper, than building a home using standard construction methods. And less human labor is needed. The 3-D method saves about 30% in total construction cost over a traditionally constructed concrete home.

“Everyone loves to save 30% on your everyday things,” says Andersen. “We can save you it on a house.”

Another advantage? The strong concrete walls help the house withstand hurricanes, floods, and mold. In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus tells a parable about building on a firm foundation. That’s important not only for houses but for life.

The next step is building a house that someone will buy and live in. SQ4D has on the market a to-be-built house in Riverhead, New York. At 1,400 square feet, the house is currently priced at $299,000. The footings, foundation, slab, and walls will be made entirely with the 3-D printer.

The new process has garnered mixed feelings from the construction and real estate community. Some aren’t ready to discard traditional methods. But Andersen is convinced that 3-D printing is the future of the industry.
**Send in the Clones**

Cyclone Filomena crashed through central Spain in early January, pelting the Spanish capital with enough snow to bring down beloved, 100-year-old cork oak trees. Now it’s time to send in the clones . . . the tree clones, that is.

Forester Francisco Molina moves under one of the downed trees, chopping off a long branch, removing extra small twigs, and cutting the bough into eight-inch bits that will be bundled up and sent to the lab.

Molina’s team has been cataloguing and cloning trees in Madrid for 10 years. After Filomena hit, the agency offered to help replace sentimental trees, including cork oaks. Cork oaks are famous in Spain for producing acorns to feed the also-famous acorn-eating pigs raised there. (You also may remember these trees from a book you read as a kid: *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf, where Ferdinand the bull loves to sit just quietly under the beautiful cork tree.) So cork oaks are beloved, but that doesn’t change their fatal flaw: broad leaves that collect heavy snow that can cause the trees to topple.

Molina’s samples are scrubbed with a stiff brush before their required bath in fungicide and bleach. Afterward, growers place the squeaky-clean sticks in a substrate and watch for fresh baby leaves to sprout. They hope acorn seeds will form from these leaves and shoot out roots when replanted in pots. These new baby clone trees will have the exact same genes as the tree they came from.

Next comes a whole lot of patience: It takes years for trees to grow, and tree clones are no different. Decades will pass before the trees lost to Filomena stand tall again, but if tree cloners can get them to that point, the cork oaks should endure. Some cork oaks survive blight and insect attacks for more than 100 years. Molina says trees like that are worth preserving.

*Only God can make life happen, of course, and that includes the life of a tree. But people can study His work to remake His creations. They’re following His playbook and taking every step from His design.*

*There is hope for a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease.* — *Job 14:7*
ANCIENT “PARTY CAR” FROM A.D. 79 UNEARTHED
Archaeologists in Italy discovered an intact ceremonial chariot in the ruins of a settlement north of Pompeii. The chariot, with its four wheels and iron elements, bronze decorations, and mineralized wooden remains, was parked in the portico of a stable. The remains of three horses previously were discovered in the same spot. The Archaeological Park of Pompeii was thrilled with the find, saying the vehicle was “in an excellent state of preservation.” It was found on the grounds of one of the most significant ancient villas in the area around Vesuvius. Researchers believe the cart was used for festivities and parades, and perhaps also to carry brides. While more utilitarian chariots had been found before, this is the first ceremonial one unearthed in its entirety.

INAUGURAL CLASS OF FEMALE EAGLE SCOUTS
Boy Scouts of America hit a new milestone earlier this year. The organization honored nearly 1,000 girls and young women in a virtual ceremony. They were the inaugural (first, intended to be annual) class of female Eagle Scouts. The Eagle Scout rank has held hallowed status for more than a century, but until now, it was endowed only upon males. Astronauts, admirals, U.S. senators, and other high-profile men list the achievement on their résumés. The Boy Scouts began accepting girls as Cub Scouts in 2018. Older girls entered the flagship scouting program in 2019. Overall, more than 140,000 girls have joined ranks previously designated only for boys. To achieve Eagle Scout, a girl must earn a minimum of 21 badges and perform a public service project—the same requirements boys must meet.

BIRTH RATES FALL DURING COVID BABY BUST
With families and couples locked up at home in March 2020, some people mused about a baby boom (lots of births) nine months later. But in reality, many nations including the United States are seeing a baby bust. Analysts studying birth rates say the United States was already trending toward fewer children per family. But the trend has accelerated. By December 2020, when the first COVID-era babies could have begun making their worldly debuts, several states reported serious declines from the previous December: Florida was down 8%, Ohio down 7%, and Arizona down 5%. Sociologist Philip Cohen calls this “a bad situation.” People make big decisions—like having a child—when they “have confidence about the future.” The pandemic shook that confidence for many. But believers do well to remember that God promises provision. Like Proverbs 31 says, faithful Christians can “laugh at the days to come.” (verse 25, NIV).

DR. SEUSS PUBLISHING LIST GETS A TRIM
March 2 was the anniversary of Theodor Geisel’s birth. On that day, the foundation begun by the wife of the man known as Dr. Seuss made an announcement. Six of his books originally published between 1937 and 1976 would not be reprinted. A representative said that Dr. Seuss Enterprises felt stereotypical images in those particular titles “portray people in ways that are harmful and wrong.” The announcement brought outrage from some on social media, who claimed “Dr. Seuss is canceled.” Others charged “censorship.” But the prolific author penned more than 60 titles before his death in 1991, and this decision was not made by a government entity. Instead, the decision came from the people who stood to profit from continued sales. They felt in good conscience that it was best to lay those outdated perspectives to rest. Dr. Seuss’ most famous books, The Cat in the Hat and Green Eggs and Ham, were not on the list of discontinued titles.
FISHY NAME CHANGES  “Please stop changing your name to Salmon!” a Taiwanese official implored. The surge for a new identity was not based on the heroic Salmon (husband of Rahab; father of Boaz) of the Bible. It was a rush for free fish. A popular chain of sushi restaurants in Taiwan offered an even more popular promotion: If your name contained the word “salmon,” you and up to five friends could enjoy all-you-can-eat sushi for free. Under Taiwan’s law, an individual can change his or her name legally up to three times. The promotion spawned a flood at the government registry office. One man reportedly changed his name to include not only salmon but also lobster, crab, and abalone—in case future food promotions had different featured delicacies.

UK’S MOUSER IN CHIEF  Larry the cat, four-legged inhabitant of London’s 10 Downing Street, marked a decade as Britain’s chief mouse-catcher this spring. The tabby was recruited by then-Prime Minister David Cameron, who had seen rats scuttling too close to the official residence. The former stray has since served three prime ministers and met numerous world leaders. While reports of his rodent-killing abilities vary, consensus says Larry is exceptionally skilled at nap-taking.

“Please stop changing your name to Salmon!” a Taiwanese official implored. The surge for a new identity was not based on the heroic Salmon (husband of Rahab; father of Boaz) of the Bible. It was a rush for free fish. A popular chain of sushi restaurants in Taiwan offered an even more popular promotion: If your name contained the word “salmon,” you and up to five friends could enjoy all-you-can-eat sushi for free. Under Taiwan’s law, an individual can change his or her name legally up to three times. The promotion spawned a flood at the government registry office. One man reportedly changed his name to include not only salmon but also lobster, crab, and abalone—in case future food promotions had different featured delicacies.

What do you think the cartoonist is trying to say in this illustration that came out shortly after the news that six Dr. Seuss books were being dropped from print? Send your response to WORLDteeneditor@wng.org.
**Quiz My Reading**

1. **What is necessary for short selling to work?**
   - a) A large number of people must band together to buy one stock.
   - b) Stock prices must decline as predicted.

2. **What do most people use investing for?**
   - a) becoming company owners
   - b) making money, either quickly or over long investments

3. **Why are British fishermen calling two types of fish by different names?**
   - a) to make them sound more appealing to consumers
   - b) to confuse officials who enforce Brexit rules

4. **What is minimum wage?**
   - a) the lowest payment employers can pay their employees
   - b) the highest payment employers can pay their employees

**Words to Bank**

1. **volatility**
   - a) explosion
   - b) unpredictable changeability
   - c) volunteerism

2. **reap**
   - a) rend
   - b) regret
   - c) garner

3. **shrewd**
   - a) cunning
   - b) fussy
   - c) critical

4. **inherent**
   - a) intrinsic
   - b) adopted
   - c) purged from

5. **conjure**
   - a) concoct
   - b) cause to reject
   - c) bring to mind

6. **ethic**
   - a) value system
   - b) pleasing appearance
   - c) adaptability

**Mind Stir**

1. What are some good reasons a person might consider investing money in the stock market? What are some not-so-good reasons?

2. How do you think a government should approach setting a minimum pay rate for employers and workers?

**Quiz Answers on Page 29**
Scan (right) to check out our “Farm News” page.

Have an ordinary kitchen blender? Sarah shows you how to turn raw wheat berries into pancakes in a short video.

Watch us harvest wheat from the field and transform it into pancakes, all in 5½ minutes.

Search our website for links on how Mennonites, fleeing the Ukraine, transformed Kansas’s agriculture and the American flour industry.

Henry Moore Yellow Corn
Bloody Butcher Red Corn
Blue Hopi Corn
Tenn. Red Cob (White Corn)
Hard Red Winter Turkey Wheat
Pennsylvania Dutch Butter Flavored Popcorn
Soft Red Winter Pastry Wheat
Hulless Oats
Hard Red Spring Bread Wheat
Buckwheat

AVAILABLE AS Whole Corn Kernels, Wheat Berries, Oat Groats & Raw Cold Rolled Oats
Stone Milled: Cornmeals, Corn Grits, Sifted/Whole Wheat & Buckwheat Flours, Scottish & Irish Oatmeals

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