



May 2024



The Gettysburg Address

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Abraham Lincoln
November 19, 1863

Memorial Day - "Lest We Forget"

The people of Leicester Evangelical Presbyterian Church would like to Thank Pastor Dave Seely for his great support during this time of Pastor David's rehabilitation.

*He has been a real blessing to us, as he has led us in Sunday worship since March 17.
May God richly bless you, your wife and family.*



The Labor Room

ἀγωνίζομαι

March 24th, 2024

Reflective Reading:
I Chronicles 12-13

I'll never forget what I experienced as one of the best weeks of my life.

Now those who know me know that I have many best things in my life...I have about 100 best books, 100 best restaurants, 100 best foods, and hundreds of thousands best experiences. But the experience at the very first Lamplighter Guild exceeds them all! Why? Words cannot describe what all 100 of our students, staff, and teachers experienced...the only possible way to even slightly describe this event is to say that we felt the unexpected wind and fire of God's presence. What caused us to experience such heavenly power? I believe it was in the preparation. Leading up to the Guild we prayed fervently. We prayed for the students. We prayed for the staff. We prayed that our hearts would be filled with God's wonders and grace. We prayed for forgiveness. WE PRAYED!

After the Guild I went into a state of mountain-top glory that quickly turned into complacency and complacency into prayerlessness. As I ponder this pattern of prayerlessness, I am reminded that mountain top experiences are often followed by the valleys of trials. These trials then drive us to our knees. Twenty-four hours after the

Continued on page 3



Pastor David Missel

585-658-1197 Residence
djmguided1947@gmail.com
585-382-3311 Church

It is our desire to assist anyone who is seeking help, if possible, whether it be spiritual or otherwise. Please contact Pastor David or any Session Elder if you would like us to be of help.

When Pastor David is unavailable:

Pastor David is presently scheduling Fridays as his day off so matters of less urgency could be left on the church office answering device, or call one of the Ruling Elders:

- George Briggs 585-382-3038
 - Patty Gregg 585-245-1311
 - Carol Griffen 585-382-3681
 - Shirley Matthews 585-382-3171
 - Cathy Mlyniec 585-322-6669
- Clerk of Session*
Leo Richardson 585-382-3153

Other Contacts

LEPC website:

www.seekinggodtogether.com

LEPC Email Address:

grichardson001@rochester.rr.com

LEPC Food Pantry:

(by appointment only)
585-245-3448

Sunshine Person:

Cathy Mlyniec
cmlyniec@gmail.com

Dear LEPC family,

Having gone through several weeks of recovery from a full hip replacement, I've been confronted with many changes and challenges from what has been my former somewhat "normal" routine of life. I am grateful for the many prayers, cards, visits, phone calls, emails and other expressions of love and support from many of you and for God's faithfulness evidenced in so many ways.

I am sharing the following article with you, written by Dr. David Jeremiah, to encourage you when you face unexpected changes and challenges. May you be strengthened as you keep your eyes on Jesus and praise him for the victory we have in him.

Pastor David

Take the Power of the Lord

written by Dr. David Jeremiah

Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. (Psalm 22:3 KJV)

When we go forth into the battle - whether we battle through a family crisis or a career problem - we have two strategies. We can go in our own weakness and face defeat, or we can go in the power of the Lord. How do we do the latter? We simply love, adore, worship, and praise HIS name. We know that God makes His home in our praises, and He will march with us even to the farthest corners of the earth and the end of the age. As we worship, our life strategies come together in ways we never could have formulated on our own. Then, as we face the challenges head-on, we keep right on praising, right on singing to the Lord, who is greater and stronger than any challenge that might stand in our path. The wonder of worship, guiding our everyday experiences, will totally change the way we think about everything that confronts us.

What is the challenge for you today? I would urge you to focus not on the misery of the crisis, but on the mastery of Christ. Then follow Him into battle. See if the demons themselves don't turn and flee from the gateway, terrified by the sound of godly praise and adoration.

LEPC Mission Statement:

We at Leicester Evangelical Presbyterian Church, confess Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We prayerfully seek to do His will through the power of the Holy Spirit in our worship, discipleship, ministry, mission, fellowship and continually strive to make this church one that glorifies God and is pleasing to Him.

*Have I not commanded you?
Be strong and courageous.
Do not be afraid;
do not be discouraged,
for the Lord your God
will be with you
wherever you go."*

Joshua 1:9 niv

Continued from page 1
mountain top experience and spiritual coasting, my daughter-in-law was in a serious para-gliding accident; my sister was diagnosed with cancer; I was stung in the eye by a mud bee; and my mom fell and fractured her pelvis! The prayer engines then kicked into full-gear, and I was reminded once again of the necessity to “pray without ceasing!” (1st Thessalonians 5:17)

In I Chronicles 12-13, David experienced something similar. In chapter 12 he is crowned as the new king for all of Israel and Judah. It was with a pure heart, but not a clear mind, that his first decision as king was to bring the ark of God (which carried the presence of God) to a new location. I say “not a clear mind” because, although David consulted with his new legion of commanders and was confirmed by the multitude of the people, he did not consult with God.

The danger of mountain top experiences is that at some point we have to descend. In these times we are tempted to lose our fervency in prayer. We quickly discover how easy it is to coast when things are going well.

So, why is prayer so difficult for some of us? In doing a little research on this perplexing subject, I came across three prominent reasons—and their consecutive answers—as to why some of us find it difficult to pray fervently and effectively. Let’s begin.

First, we love ourselves more than we love others. When I focus on myself and am consumed with the needs of my own wounded heart, there isn’t room for the needs of others. Conversely, when the needs of others are more important than our own, our intercession becomes more powerful and our love more genuine.

Second, we underestimate and

undervalue the power of prayer. As I write this article I am even more convinced of the power of prayer. A few hours ago, one of our staff members was struggling spiritually. I had been trying to help them determine what was wrong. Was it sin? Self-love? What could be the problem? I felt badly for them because they were being robbed of joy and the wonderful fellowship that we have here at Lamplighter. Then it dawned on me! Perhaps they were being targeted by the enemy and needed someone to “*come boldly to the throne of grace*” on their behalf (Hebrews 4:16). I must admit, I don’t do this as often as I should, but tonight I did...and to my great joy the rescue from heaven began. God is so good, and he delights in answering our prayers! But often, “*we have not because we ask not*” (James 4:2).

Lastly, we lack the discipline and intensity needed to be effective. In Colossians 4:12 we read:

“Epaphras, who is of you, a servant of Christ, salutes you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”

The phrase “laboring fervently” comes from one Greek word “ἀγωνίζομαι” meaning an agonizing struggle, literally it means to compete for a prize; figuratively it carries the idea of contending with an adversary, endeavoring to accomplish something, fighting, laboring, or striving fervently.

I’ll never forget the testimony that pastor Jim Cymbala gives in his book, *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*. His daughter had gone astray from the faith, left home, and was in deep trouble in every way. Jim and his wife were just barely keeping their heads above water at the fledgling Brooklyn Tabernacle Church. It was a very painful time for them. Jim was trying to preach and teach,

bringing hope to his congregation, while inwardly dying a thousand deaths due to his broken heart for his daughter.

One night while Jim was leading prayer meeting, a woman sent him a note via an usher. She asked him to stop teaching and have the entire congregation start praying for his daughter. Jim was reluctant at first, not wanting to stop the whole service to bring attention to himself and his own needs—especially when so many had their own problems. Yet he followed what seemed to be the Holy Spirit’s leading. Jim shared his daughter’s story with the congregation and then everyone held hands and encircled the auditorium. He said the only way to describe that evening was that it sounded much like a labor room! God’s people pouring out their hearts before an Almighty God, interceding for his lost daughter reached heaven’s gates. The next morning Jim’s daughter was on her knees in her parent’s kitchen, begging for forgiveness and asking her dad, “Who was praying for me last night?! Daddy, who was praying for me?!”

I cannot help but cry every time I hear that story. God is real. God is alive. God is working. Nothing is impossible with God! But again, often we have not because we ask not; and I have to wonder, how we ask may make the difference.

Well, I don’t know about you, but I have been challenged. I have some loved one’s I desire desperately to come to Christ as their Savior—and some friends. I think I know what to do now—ἀγωνίζομαι.

Sincerely,
Mark Hamby,
M.S., M. Div., Th. M., D. Min.

Submitted by Carole Missel

EduNations Update

Regrettably, we recently received an email letting us know that our sponsored child, Margret Conteh, unfortunately would not be returning to school. Please pray for Margret and her future.



Meet Fatu Thoronka

Fatu Thoronka is our newly assigned sponsored student. She is 18 years old. Fatu is in the class of JSS1 at Mapainda Junior Secondary School in the Mayatta area. Her hobby is volleyball. Please pray for Fatu and her educational future.

LEPC supports EduNations through our Missions Funds.

Submitted by Cathy Mlyniec

2024 National Day of Prayer LIFT UP THE WORD - LIGHT UP THE WORLD

(2 Samuel 22:29-31)

Thursday, May 2, 2024

How to pray for America -
By praying into 7 centers of
influence in our nation.

- GOVERNMENT
 - MILITARY
 - MEDIA
 - BUSINESS
- EDUCATION
- CHURCH
- FAMILY

Continued Prayers for:

*Pray for peace in Jerusalem.
May all who love this city prosper.
O Jerusalem, may there be peace within
your walls and prosperity in your palaces.
For the sake of my family and friends,
I will say, "May you have peace."
For the sake of the house of the Lord our
God, I will seek what is best for you,
O Jerusalem. Psalm 122:6-9 niv*

- Pray for Israel and the Middle East
- Pray for all hostages and refugees throughout the world.
- Pray for all the "innocent" civilians caught in the middle of warring factions.
- Pray against hatred throughout the world.
- Pray for our country/our leaders.
- Pray for our soldiers that are in harms way.
- Pray for the persecuted Christians around the world.
- Pray for our church and it's members and friends.

God's will be done!



Painting by Carole Missel

Liturgists Signup for May

For those who want to read scripture during Sunday worship, please remember to sign the "Volunteer" list on the Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall so Pastor knows who is next in line to read.

Thank you and may God Bless!

Monthly Celebrations

May Birthdays

13	Jackie Roffe
13	Shirley Matthews
19	Joyce Fitzgerald
21	Mike Mallaber

Anniversaries: (none listed)

Food Pantry

"Thank you" to all who continue to donate food to the pantry.

Your continued support for the upcoming year is greatly appreciated!

Carol Griffen,
cbgriffen@yahoo.com



SOLAR ECLIPSE – A Sign and a Wonder

Excerpts taken from
ONE FOR ISRAEL.org

A solar eclipse is like a giant wink from our heavenly Father, letting us know that the universe did not come about by accident, but by perfect design. It seems a truly remarkable coincidence that despite the sun being 400 times larger than the moon, they appear to be exactly the same size from this planet—but only from this planet, rather interestingly. Almost as if it was designed that way, as a phenomenon to be seen and enjoyed from earth. And that is because it was designed. It was designed by God for our benefit, not only for our sense of wonderment, but also as a sign.

The Eclipse: a Sign and a Wonder

The diameter of the sun (1.3914 million km) is approximately 400 times bigger than that of the moon (3,474 km), but it is also 400 times farther away from us (384,400 km compared to 149.6 million km). So, when they are in the same place in the sky, the moon will perfectly cover the circumference of the sun, giving a perfect eclipse.

A total solar eclipse is one of the most awe-inspiring phenomena there is to see. The moon hides the sun, but rays from the sun peek out from around the black disc, forming the “solar corona”, or a crown of light and casting eerie shadows and

plunging us into a few seconds of darkness before the colossal globes carry onwards in their courses.

Umbraphile (eclipse fanatic) David Baron explains why he travels across the world to catch every eclipse he can in a TED talk on the subject. He is not a spiritual man, but admits that his first experience of a total solar eclipse changed him forever. He said, “*It is the ultimate experience of awe... True awe is a sense of wonder and insignificance in the face of something enormous and grand is rare in our lives but when you experience it, it’s powerful. Awe dissolves the ego, it makes us feel connected, indeed, it promotes empathy and generosity. Well, there’s nothing more awesome than a total solar eclipse.*”

Of course, there is something more awesome than a total solar eclipse, and ***that’s the One who created the entire universe and all its intricacies by the power of his word!*** And he is calling for our attention in a powerful way.

The Sign in Genesis 1

Then God said,

“Let lights in the expanse of the sky be for separating the day from the night. They will be for signs and for seasons and for days and years. They will be for lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the land.” And it happened so. Then God made the two great lights—the greater light for dominion over the day, and the lesser light as well as the stars for dominion over the night. God set them in the expanse of the sky to shine on the land and to have dominion over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:14-18)

The observable wonder of the sun, moon and stars in their movements is so remarkable that peoples of the past erred by worshipping these celestial bodies instead of the

one who put them there.

However, Job, likely even before the time of Abraham, knew that it was a grave mistake to make:

*If I looked at the sun when it shines
or the moon moving in splendor,
so that my heart was secretly enticed,
and my hand threw a kiss from my
mouth,
then this also would be iniquity to be
judged,
for I would have denied God above.*

Job 31:26-28

No, Job was righteous, and he knew who had created these wonders. He knew there was only One worthy of our worship. As we enjoy the eclipse, the wink of God, and appreciate his handiwork, may our thoughts and worship echo the words of Job:

*He alone spreads out the heavens,
and treads on the waves of the sea;
He makes the Bear, Orion and Pleiades,
and the constellations of the south;
He does great and unfathomable things,
wonders beyond number.*

Job 9:8-10

There have been some very interesting things happening in the skies over the last few years, with the tetrad of blood moons falling on the Jewish holidays, the “Star of Bethlehem” phenomenon reappearing for the first time since the birth of Yeshua, and there is more to come. Now that we have the technology and equipment to understand better what is happening up there, we need to be paying attention. Yeshua told us that there would be signs in the sky, in the sun and moon and stars (Luke 21:25) and he told us to “*look up*”, as our redemption draws near. Are we listening? As Americans appreciate the wonder of this eclipse, we can all ask God what is on his heart at this time.

Voice of the Martyr's:
icommittoprayer.com

March 21, 2024 | Iran

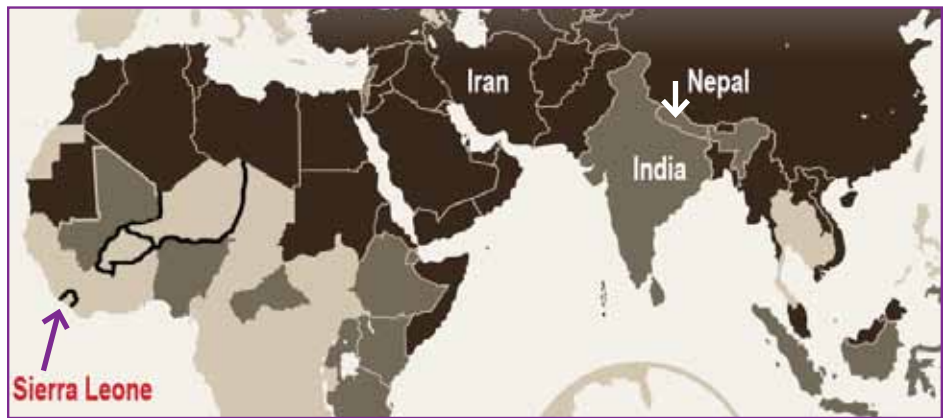
Christian Arrests Increase

Front-line workers in Iran report an increase in the number of Christians being arrested, partly due to regional tensions and conflicts. "Persecution against Iranian Christians is rising," a front-line worker said. "Every Christmas and Easter, officials usually arrest some Christians, but this year the number went way up, and we're concerned about what might occur around Easter." The worker mentioned that in the past, Iranian officials would occasionally arrest church leaders and later release them with a strong suggestion that the Christians leave the country. "But now the officials are holding onto people's passports and regularly keeping them detained," the front-line worker said. "Please pray that God will make believers invisible to Iranian authorities."

March 28, 2024 | India

Pastor, Son Brutally Beaten for Christian Worship

While 80 Christians gathered on Feb. 19, 2023, to worship, a mob of Hindu extremists broke into the church and demanded proof that they had permission to be there. When the mob began to attack Pastor Zahir, his son, Ashok, defended him and also became a target. The two men were kicked, punched and beaten with a microphone stand until they were both bleeding and unconscious. Other members of the congregation were also injured as the mob ransacked the church while shouting Hindu slogans. When the police arrived, they took Zahir into custody and questioned him but refused to accept his criminal complaint against the attackers. Both Zahir and Ashok have recovered physically, though Ashok continues to experience pain. Pray for the wellbeing of this family and church amid persecution. "Please pray for the vandals," Ashok said. "Pray that they bend their knees in front of Jesus."



April 4, 2024 | Nepal

Children's Bibles Lead to Salvation

Bishwas Thapa, a 10-year-old boy who has been regularly attending a children's fellowship for the last year, received a children's Bible during a distribution event. His mother, Kamala, was attracted by the colorful pictures and began to read the Bible herself. Through this Bible, both Bishwas and Kamala came to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. They, along with three other children who received Bibles, publicly committed their lives to the Lord on September 16, 2023.



O Gracious Father,

Thank you for the gift of your Word that is active in the lives of our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters.

Thank you that the power of your Word corrects, transforms and emboldens. Thank you that your Word is neither bound by man-made borders and laws nor thwarted by the evil of satanic forces.

We ask that you give courage, wisdom and endurance to those who smuggle and distribute Bibles and to those who disciple new Christians in your truth. And for those who read your Word for the first time, we pray that you will quicken their hearts to receptivity and their minds to understanding.

May the truth of your Word shatter all false belief, and may every believer living in a hostile area or restricted nation soon have his or her own Bible.

As we are inspired by the persecuted Christians we read about, we pray for a renewed hunger for and appreciation of your Word.

In Jesus' name, Amen

Taken from The Voice of the Martyrs magazine, April 2024

Submitted by Paul Griffen



Our Mission

The EPC exists to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus as a denomination of Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations.

Our Vision

To the glory of God, the EPC family aspires to embody and proclaim Jesus' love as a global movement of congregations engaged together in God's mission through transformation, multiplication, and effective biblical leadership.

Our Motto

*In Essentials: Unity.
In Non-Essentials: Liberty.
In All Things: Charity.*

The Steeple Newsletter

is published monthly by the Leicester Evangelical Presbyterian Church, for the purpose of proclaiming that Jesus is Lord and that He is moving among his people here. Our intent is to keep the readers informed of local events, provide information to stimulate and edify it's readers, mixed with a touch of humor to lighten the day.

For those who would like a printed version of the church newsletters, we keep the last 2 months' issues in the brochure rack, on the wall to your right, as you exit the sanctuary to Fellowship Hall.

**Submission Deadline:
The 3rd Sunday of the month.**

Contact:
Sharon Richardson
srichardson002@rochester.rr.com
Leo Richardson
grichardson001@rochester.rr.com

Staying Connected: If anyone does not receive the Steeple Newsletter, participate in Prayer Chain Activations, receive church updates by e-mail, or has a change for the "Birthdays and Anniversaries" and wants to be included, please contact Leo Richardson.

Pending Session Highlights

The next Session Meeting is yet to be scheduled due to Pastor David and the Clerk of Session Leo Richardson, both recovering from surgery. Below are some items of interest that have not been officially acted upon.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Operating Fund books were reviewed by Richard Gifford and were found satisfactory.

Witness Report: HeGetsUs: To Date: 49 Explorers to date. Explorers since last meeting: 1.

Property: Still waiting to hear from the contractor about fixing the front steps of the church. An electric circuit in Fellowship Hall was fixed. The shed is scheduled for repairs. The Kiwanis Club is planning to re-stone the present Starr Park driveway, from the entrance to the pavilion, this spring, at their expense. **Lisa Cottone, of State Farm Insurance, has reserved the use of Fellowship Hall for Safe Driving Classes, on Saturdays, possibly quarterly. The first class is scheduled for May 4, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Mowing Lawn Volunteers Sign up Sheet will soon be appearing on the Memorial case!



**Baskets
Full of Blessings!**

Not one but two! The "Women of Encouragement" quilting group gathered many quilting notions, a variety of fabrics, a few patterns and Bibles. These items filled two baskets that are being donated to "Baskets and Brunch, a benefit for **Genesee Valley Young Life**, taking place on Saturday, April 27, 2024.

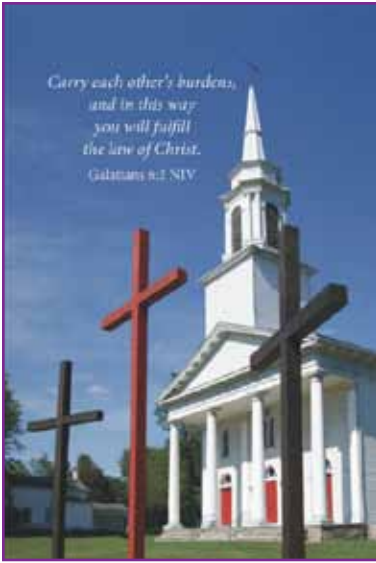
Submitted by Cathy Mlyniec

*Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths,
you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.*
Psalm 139:7-10 niv

**It's Spring!
And yes, the grass
is growing!**

It's time to start thinking of helping to keep our lawn in "tip top" shape as usual. There will be a lawn mowing sign up sheet on the Memorial case soon, or see Gene Gregg and let him know you will be able to help.

Many THANKS to all those who helped last summer! The church is indeed blessed with such good workers!



EPCConnection

EPCConnection is the news and information service of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, a denomination of Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations. To the glory of God, the EPC family aspires to be a global movement of congregations engaged together in God's mission through transformation, multiplication, and effective biblical leadership, embodying Jesus' love to our neighbors near and far.



To subscribe go to:
<https://epconnection.org>

Everyone is Welcome!

Sunday morning Worship
 9:15 - 9:30 Prayer and Share
 9:40 - 10:20 Berean Adult/Teen
 Sunday School class
 10:30 - 11:30 Traditional worship
 (Hymnals/piano)
 Communion First Sunday of the
 month
 Dish-to-Pass Luncheon
 2nd Sunday of the
 month after church



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 161 Main Street
 P.O. Box 202
 Leicester, NY 14481

On the Lighter Side... Taken from Reader's Digest

THE PROBLEM WITH JURY DUTY

Just as she was celebrating her 80th birthday, our friend received a jury-duty notice. She called the clerk's office to remind them that she was exempt because of her age.

"You need to come in and fill out the exemption forms," the clerk said.

"But I filled them out last year," she replied.

"You have to fill them out every year."

"Why? Do you think I'm getting younger?"

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

I knew that my husband's hearing had deteriorated after our friend—new to the city—asked where he could meet some singles. "Well," said my husband, "I see them in the Kmart parking lot diving for fries."

"Dear," I intervened. "Singles, not seagulls."

LEXUS OR ACURA

My husband can't activate our Amazon Echo, because he keeps forgetting its name, Alexa. "Just think of the car Lexus and add an 'a' at either end," I suggested. The next time he wanted to use our new toy, he looked a bit puzzled. Then he remembered what I'd said and confidently called out, "Acura!" —Linda Price

YOU NEED A SHORTER PASSWORD

While he was visiting, my father asked for the password to our Wi-Fi. "It's taped under the modem," I told him. After three failed attempts to log on, he asked, "Am I spelling this right? T-A-P-E-D-U-N-D-E-R-T-H-E-M-O-D-E-M?"

—Sharon McGinley, Talbott, Tennessee

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

I have no respect for gangs today. They just drive by and shoot people. At least in the old days, like in West Side Story, the gangs used to dance with each other first.