

# West Side Times

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## KAIROS

### A TIME FOR ACTION



By Rev. Donna Gilchrist

*All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work. Shun youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*

2 Timothy 2:21-22, NRSV

**HOLY VESSELS...**I've been pondering this phrase during our "Holy Vessels" Lenten worship series. In the Gospel of Matthew, as Jesus healed he was completing actions similar to what might have taken place in cultic temples of his time period (Wilson, *Healing in the Gospel of Matthew*). Instead of healing in a temple, Jesus healed people right where they were. Scholar Walter Wilson writes that Jesus himself is the embodiment of a temple. Jesus is a Holy Vessel...a container for all that God is. Jesus freely pours God's mercy, healing, grace, and justice on those around him and when he is depleted turns to God to be replenished through prayer.

If Jesus is a holy vessel, then we, who were created in the image of God, must be holy vessels also – created both to contain the love that comes from God, and to pour it out freely and without reserve.

Containers, whether made of glass or pottery, can be broken. Jesus' body was broken during his trial and crucifixion, yet his spirit remained free as he relied upon the Divine for strength and fortitude through that harrowing experience.

During the pandemic we have lived through a year of harrowing experiences. Too often our lives have been broken by grief, illness, fear, and a plethora of other feelings. Like empty bottles smashed and left for refuse, we have wondered if we will survive, yet God fills and replenishes our spirits. Like broken glass that has been tumbled and polished by ocean waves, we have been changed over the past year. Each time we rely on God, we are transformed a little bit more until, like beach glass, we become recycled treasure.

During Lent I invite you to think of vessels (containers) in your

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Photo by Gary Jantz, West Side Christian Church

# KAIROS

life that have special meaning for you. Why is a certain container special? Often it is not a material object that holds meaning, but the memories we hold of that object. What do you find in your memories when you use a treasured object? Where is God in those memories? Is there a holy story or understanding connected to a vessel that you treasure?

For example, the soup pot pictured here is a holy vessel given to me by my sister many years ago. It holds nourishing food, as well as the bowls for serving that food. Just as we can become broken as we live all that life brings us, so one of the soup bowls is broken and glued back together. For me,



this soup set is a symbol of the gathered community, and God's love that we can share with people everywhere as we break bread together.

The robin's nest pictured on the front of the newsletter is one that is refurbished each spring on Gary and Norma Jantz's front porch. Last year Gary provided us with a photographic journey of what those tiny vessels called robin's eggs carried. Eventually, the vessels themselves were fractured, yet it was wondrous to witness the new life that emerged.

In other places in this issue of *West Side Times*, you will find pictures and stories of holy vessels in the lives of West Siders. As you think about these images, remember the holy vessels you treasure in your own life and that *you* are also a holy vessel.

No matter what has occurred over the past year, God holds us close, polishing our brokenness until we are restored as transformed treasure.

With Gratitude for God's Grace,

*Donna*

## BLESSING BOX

### WHAT IS A LITTLE FREE PANTRY?

#### WHAT IS A BLESSING BOX?

A Blessing Box, or Little Free Pantry, is a "holy vessel" that contains free nonperishable food and other items such as hygiene products, school supplies, laundry detergent, or socks.



**WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?** To fill an immediate need for families or individuals in the community and to provide a means to donate to those in need: take what you need, bring what you can.



## HELP NEEDED TO BUILD WSCC BLESSING BOX

**MOST OF US ARE AWARE** that food insecurity is a very real problem for many in our community. Although West Side does not have the resources to solve this problem, we can be part of a movement that can help.

We'd like to join the Little Free Pantry Project by installing a free food pantry on the church property. The pantry would be stocked by members of the congregation and, hopefully, also by our neighbors who can afford to do so.

There are *lots* of different plans available for building one of these boxes. One source shows an estimated list of purchased materials from Lowes adding up to under \$300. It could be

that some members of our congregation who like to build things have scrap materials on hand that could help keep the cost down.

If you would be interested in supporting this program, please send an email or phone the church office and leave a message. Let us know if you are interested in building, installing, and/or paying for needed materials.

I'm not asking those willing to support the program by providing food for our pantry to let us know because I am sure so many people would call in it would overwhelm Dana.

Prayerfully consider this project, and if you think you might be interested in helping with materials, building, or cost, check out plans and ideas at [www.littlefreepantry.org](http://www.littlefreepantry.org).

I look forward to working with you in this partnership with our community.

Becky Duncan



# HOLY VESSELS



**YOU MIGHT BE ASKING**, “What’s holy about a couple of cheap plastic glasses and a water bottle?” These are just some of the branded gear I’ve accumulated over the years from American Cancer Society (ACS). Each piece reminds me of the debt I owe that organization for the wig they gave me, the soft turban I wore at night, the information that made me feel more in control, and especially the research which influenced my treatments and the treatments of many others.

I’ve been attempting to pay ACS back for 15 years now by raising money through Relay For Life. A number of West Side friends and others have joined my team to help. I believe this work is holy, and I invite you to join in this work. Donate or even become a part of our team. To learn more, go to this link: [https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR/RelayForLife/RFLCY21NOR?team\\_id=2551110&pg=team&fr\\_id=98936](https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR/RelayForLife/RFLCY21NOR?team_id=2551110&pg=team&fr_id=98936)

—Becky Duncan

**THIS YELLOW PYREX DISH** is one my mother had. She used it for lots of things. My most vivid memory is that it had carrot/pineapple orange Jell-O salad in it—sometimes red Jell-O with bananas. It has been to family holiday gatherings and potlucks at the church or the American Legion. I don’t use it much because I don’t want to break it.

My mother was a very loving, caring, and sharing person—very strong in her faith. That is what carried her through the last 17 years of her life of battling cancer twice and the autoimmune disease, scleroderma. She never complained but just believed the good Lord would take care of her. She believed a good attitude and God were the best medicines.

When I see or use this dish, I think of her and all she went through and how strong she was through it all. —Kathy Marion



**THIS TEAPOT SAT ON A DRESSER** in my parents’ home. Besides being robin’s egg blue, a color that I love, the teapot symbolizes other things. It reminds me of life steeped in the love of family – my parents, my sister, my grandparents, and our extended family. In our home, heartfelt talks can take place over a cup of shared tea. I’m reminded of early mornings, conversing with my mother, solving the world’s problems – or at least my own. Teapots are cozy and warm. They can be used to refill our cups, just as Christ refills our lives when we are feeling depleted. —Pastor Donna





**BACKYARD BIRDFEEDERS** are favorite holy vessels of ours. When our feathered friends catch our attention, cares and concerns are pushed aside as we praise the Creator of such beauty and variety. Recalling moments we've shared with family and friends enjoying these pleasant sights and sounds warms our hearts as well.

—Dennis & Marti Bass

**THIS TEAPOT IS PART OF A SET** given to my mom by her brother back in the 1940s. He sent it to her when he was in the army stationed in Italy at the end of World War II. I can't remember her ever using it. It was always kept in her china cabinet "just to be looked at," but she treasured it because of the love and thoughtfulness of her brother. When she was ready to part with it, she gave it to me saying she knew I would keep it safe and pass it on when the time came.

I'm keeping it safe in my china cabinet, and when my great-nieces and nephews ask, I tell them how this little teapot made its way from Italy to Kansas because of the love shared by their great-grandma and great-great-uncle.

—Nancy Warren



## VESSELS OF LOVE

**ONCE FILLED WITH** warming rice, soup or stew, sustenance for one's body, and often lifting the spirit too. Vessels now worn and cracked but no less treasured. Slowly through the crevice, or abyss, light begins to show and shine.

A healing light is now reshaping and transforming our spirits, lifting, downtrodden souls. Filling our heads with enlightenment and understanding, that vessels can be made whole again. Filled with a warming coursing of the Holy spirit, His love so praiseworthy, bubbling over with joy.

Treasured memories of Faith passed on through the ages, handed down through what have now become Holy vessels of love.

—Janet Bayless

# FAMILY NEWS

## SHINING FOR PEACE



ON MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2020, West Siders focused on peace and reconciliation in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Topeka's 28th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. "Whose Dream Is It?" Celebration was available to view through Facebook and on the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice's website.

After the online celebration, West Siders and neighbors took to the streets to "Shine a Light for Peace" and to silently pray for our country, our state, our city, and our neighborhoods. The "Shine a Light..." celebration was sponsored by Potwin Presbyterian Church, West Side Baptist Church, and West Side Christian Church.

## BABY ANNOUNCEMENT

JUSTIN CASE & KATIE MURPHY  
are the proud parents of **CHARLES MICHAEL CASE**

**BORN:** 7:17 p.m. on February 25, 2021  
8 lbs. 11 oz., 20 inches long

**BIG BROTHER:** Robbie Case

**GRANDPARENTS:** Robyn and Marlin Case  
Terry and Dino Coster  
Brian and Kim Murphy

**GREAT-GRANDPARENTS:** Robert and Nancy Brooks

*CONGRATULATIONS!*

## IN MEMORY

WITH LOVING HEARTS, we remember these West Side members and friends who recently passed into the arms of our Lord:

**MEMBERS:** Dr. Roy W. Browning, Jr., Hazel Burge, Clyde Burton, Stanley "Stan" Carl Senne, Edna Snook

**FRIENDS:** Joan Brosemer (Pat Rodriguez's sister-in-law), Rex Heavin (Charlie Heavin's brother), Julia "Julie" Helms (Rita Lewis's daughter), Philip Ray Korthanke (Betty Jo Burris's brother), Margaret McCullum, Jett Meier (Andy & Carolyn Anderson's grandson), DeVern Phillips, Barbara Rhoads (Pat Rodriguez's sister), Richard Lee Sumner (Brenda Kipp's uncle)

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPACT



## LENTEN HOME WORSHIP SERVICES

Join West Side online for the Lenten series “Holy Vessels,” teaching us that we are holy vessels: battered and sometimes broken by life, but still beautiful. The scripture for each service is a Gospel story of Jesus’ healing, and topics include healing ourselves, our society, and our planet. Go to the church’s website or Facebook page to watch. If you did not receive a Lenten bag from the church, please call or email the church office.



## BLESSING BOX IN THE WORKS

West Side is planning to install a Little Free Pantry on the church property. For more information, see the articles on pages 2-3. If you would like more information or to help with this project, please call or email the church office.



## CAMP REGISTRATION AT TAWAKONI IS OPEN

The Disciples Center at Tawakoni is planning in-person camps this summer! If you know a child or teen who would like to attend, or if you would like to experience Grand-Camp with your grandchildren, call Deba Brant or the church office for more information!



## SPECIAL OFFERINGS: EASTER AND PENTECOST

The Easter Special Offering, supporting general ministries, will be received on Sundays March 28 and April 4 this year. Your gift supports college student leadership development, global mission partners, health and social service ministries, formation of new congregations, and support for pastors and chaplains.

The Pentecost Special Offering, supporting new church development, will be received on Sundays May 16 and 23. Thank you for your generosity!



## SAVE THE DATE: CHILDREN’S PEACE CAMP

West Side will host a children’s Peace Camp this summer on the mornings of July 5-9. We will need volunteers to cook and to help with kids. Please be praying for this outreach and your involvement. We had to cancel last summer’s event, and we can’t wait to finally see the kids this year!



## RECEIVE WEEKLY NEWS IN YOUR EMAIL

Sign up for all the latest news! The church publishes a weekly newsletter *West Side Weekly*, with encouragement, announcements, and community events. To sign up go to [www.eepurl.com/ga4Oev](http://www.eepurl.com/ga4Oev). Or you can read online at [westsidedisciples.org](http://westsidedisciples.org). (Look for the Newsletters tab.)





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Return Service Requested

**Online Worship Celebration @**  
**[www.westsidedisciples.org](http://www.westsidedisciples.org)**

Phone: 785-234-0469

Email: [office@westsidedisciples.org](mailto:office@westsidedisciples.org)

Website: [www.westsidedisciples.org](http://www.westsidedisciples.org)



**“See, I am making  
all things new.”**

**Revelation 21:5b**