

Pastor's Post – “Mustard Seed” ~ Rev. Donna Gilchrist

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

~ Matthew 13:31-32, NRSVUE

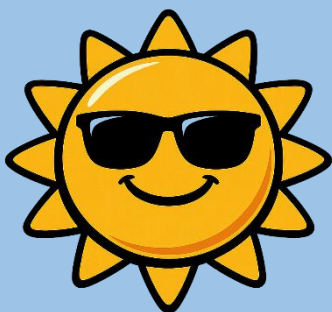
About seventeen years ago I lived in a very small town in rural Oklahoma. I'll never forget preaching on the parable of the mustard seed for the first time. As I talked about mustard plants, the farmers in the room said, “You mean that plant with yellow flowers that grows along the fence lines?” Yep. It turns out that's the one. Maybe not the exact same plant, but certainly a cousin. Mustard can be quite a weed in farming areas. The plants grow three to six feet tall and blossom with pretty yellow flowers. Once the seed pods ripen, the seeds are projected through the air. Imagine throwing a handful of small ball bearings onto a tiled floor. Once these tiny seeds have been scattered, they go *everywhere*. If you're a farmer, you don't want mustard plants in your field because they can quickly take over. Yet Jesus describes this tiny seed growing into a safe place for birds to shelter and nest. Can you imagine living in a place perpetually sheltered by God? Perhaps that is part of the kingdom vision Jesus is casting. Mustard spreads rapidly; one little seed can produce a plant that broadcasts many more little seeds. So often we

feel inadequate to answer God's callings in our lives. It's easy to become overwhelmed. This happens to communities of faith also. Later in Matthew 17:20 Jesus remarks: “...For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.” When our actions flow from our faith, others want to help us. Think about the ways the little food pantry outside our church gets filled over and over again...not just because folks at Potwin Presbyterian Church are filling it (and we are), but because like-minded neighbors and community members are part of the process. The tiny mustard seed that was planted when that pantry was established has spread seeds and accomplished more than was originally anticipated. Last year, New Life Baptist established a Back-to-School event that was so powerful that they are planning another one this year on August 8th. All of the backpacks and school supplies were given away early. With free food, clothing, and haircuts, the event was especially successful. This project was bigger than one community of faith. Potwin Presbyterian participated alongside New Life Baptist Church, as did West Side Baptist & West Side Christian Churches; merchants from the strip mall along Washburn contributed...and a great many lives were touched.

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What started as a small idea grew as other people became involved. Today we know that mustard can be pretty handy to have around. The seeds can be ground into seasoning. The edible leaves are anti-inflammatory, filled with vitamins and minerals. Mustard can also be a good cover crop, restoring nutrients to depleted soil. And one tiny mustard seed can grow into something that accomplishes great good. That's a kingdom story I want to be part of. How about you?

With Christ's Love,
Pastor Donna



BACK TO



SCHOOL

Potwin will again join New Life Baptist Church to sponsor a Back-to-School event in our parking lot on Saturday, Aug. 8th from 9am to 12pm. Free hair cuts will be available at the Barber Shop across the street, sponsored by Ed & Joyce Thomas. Please bring backpacks and traditional back-to-school items, including notebooks and paper, markers, pencils, scissors, glue, etc. as soon as you are able. Any received later will be donated to Doorstep. Clothing items from the Kids' Closet that we sponsor with West Side Christian Church will be available as well. If you are able to help on August 8th, please tell Linda Tuller. We will need folks to transport clothing items from WSCC to the site, to man the clothing booth, and interact with those attending. Remember we also designate our Loose Coin Offering in August to area schools. Last year this included Meadows Elementary, Robinson Middle School, and Lowman Hill Elementary. We are blessed to be able to share our resources with parents in the community who need assistance as school resumes. Thanks to each of you for your continued generosity!

TREASURER'S REPORT

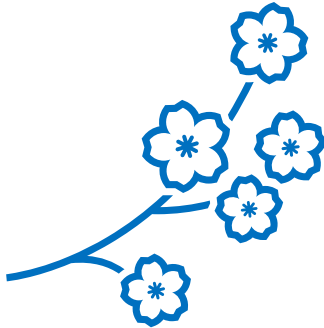
BALANCE 6/1/26	\$10,910.35
June Receipts	\$ 6,971.74
June Disbursements	\$ 7,374.15
BALANCE 6/30/26	\$10,507.94
RESERVE ACCOUNTS	\$37,765.91

Thank you for your generous contributions to the Doorstep's "Christmas in July" in the month of July.

**Thank
You**

LOOSE COIN OFFERINGS

Mid-Town Community Services	\$341.41
Doorstep	\$409.89
Heartland Center	\$362.95
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$554.73
World Central Kitchen	\$415.10



ONLINE GIVING OPTION – Please scan the QR code below if you are interested in using our online giving option through Subsplash.



Potwin Presbyterian Church
400 SW Washburn Ave
Topeka, KS 66606
(785)235-1311

Find us on Facebook or visit us online at www.potwinpres.org

Rev. Donna Gilchrist, Pastor
Libby Adams, Pastoral Assistant
Gwen Jones, Music Director
Angela Juarez, Office Assistant
Erica Marshall, Financial Secretary
Linda Tuller & Jordan Nutter, Co-Treasurers

Session

Rev. Donna Gilchrist, Moderator

<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>
Bob Harrison	Gwen Jones	Cameron Charity
Libby Adams	Jordan Nutter	Caitlin Charity
Linda Tuller		
Vacant – Youth Elder (1 year term)		

Clerk of Session: Gwen Jones
Building Coordinator: Pat Abbey

Administrative Council

Cameron Charity
Jordan Nutter

Sunday School Team – contact church office
Adult Bible Study – contact church office
PNK Youth Representative – contact church office



Jane Sewell	3 rd
Madeline Bigham	5 th
Jody Scott	12 th
Caitlin Charity	15 th
Ella Breitenstein	15 th
Rod Seel	16 th
Britton Stasiulis	18 th
Brenda Strobel	20 th
Brynn Stasiulis	22 nd
Elizabeth Chermok	22 nd
Angela Juarez	23 rd

**Like God the Father,
we celebrate the day
you were born!**

**If we don't have you or
your loved ones on our
birthday list, and you
would like to be
included, please email
Angela or the church and
let us know.**



Loose Coin Offering



August – Back to School Drive

The loose coin offering for August will go towards back to school needs for students at our partner elementary schools, Meadows and Lowman Hill. School principals and counselors will use the funds to provide for youth who need assistance with back to school supplies. In addition, Potwin Church will collect boxes of Kleenex and Clorox wipes to be shared between the schools—these items are always in need! Please help as you are able.



Deadline for September Potwin Post is Aug. 20*

Please email your submissions to Angela Juarez at arp0371@gmail.com or potwinchurch@att.net.

****Any submissions received after the deadline WILL NOT be included in the next Potwin Post. No exceptions.***

PRAYER CORNER

If you have any items you would like to add to the Prayer List, please contact Angela Juarez or the church office. If a name has been removed that you would like to keep on the list, please let us know. The Prayer List will be published in the newsletter every month.

- Jason, son in law of Debi Harvey, who was hospitalized as a result of diabetic ketoacidosis, UTI, and inability to keep anything down
- All students and staff as they prepare to start a new school year
- We lift up those names and concerns that are mentioned each Sunday during church.
- All those with health concerns, whether it be for themselves or loved ones.
- Church Elders and the Shared Ministry Task Force as they continue working together to keep the covenant between Potwin Presbyterian and Westside Christian.
- All those dealing with tragic circumstances such as fires, storms, and other natural disasters.
- All those mourning the loss and absence of loved ones.
- Our nation and its leaders that they will be wise and compassionate, working for the good of all.
- May we come together by letting go of fear, anger, divisiveness, and instead embrace Christ's ways of love. May we continue working towards eliminating all forms of oppression in our society and to speak up when we see injustices.
- All those struggling with addiction, mental illness, homelessness, victims of human trafficking, etc.
- Our nation's military, police, fire and emergency personnel here and around the world.
- Our mission partners including: Presbyterian Mission Agency, Presbyterian Disaster





—\$8,800

—\$4,400

—\$100

HELP PAY FOR NEW CHAIR LIFTS

JOIN US IN REACHING OUR
GOAL OF \$8,800 FOR TWO
NEW CHAIR LIFTS!

**DONATE
TODAY!**

SHREK HAS A FAN CLUB!

Congratulations to Cameron Charity, who has been selected to play Shrek in Topeka Civic Theatre's summer musical production of Shrek the Musical! What a wonderful accomplishment, Cameron — we are so proud of you and excited to cheer you on in this fun, heartwarming production. If you haven't had a chance to see the show yet, or if you'd love to enjoy it again, tickets are still available. Reserve your seats soon by calling the Topeka Civic Theatre Box Office at 785.357.5211 or visiting the theatre's website. The show runs through August 8, and tickets are going fast!



DOORSTEP NEEDS LIST

CLOTHING AND HOMEWARE DONATIONS – (Gently Used, Not New)

Clothing	Drapes, throw rugs
Diapers	Towels and towel sets
Toys	Jewelry
Small household appliances	Dishes
Sheets, blankets, linens	Pots and pans
Shoes	

Due to the small space of our building and redistribution restraints, we are not able to accept furniture of any kind or car seats. To donate these items (gently used and in good condition), please contact: God's Storehouse 2111 SW Chelsea Dr Topeka, KS 66614 (785)608-6743 or Giving Tree 3343 S Topeka Blvd Topeka, KS 66611 (785)408-1392.

FOOD DONATIONS

Mac & cheese	Cereal: hot & dry	Canned vegetables
Pinto beans	Jelly	Corn
Spaghetti	Bread	Green beans
Canned fruit	Egg noodles	Peas
Canned soups	Rice	Pork & beans
Ramen noodles	Spaghetti sauce	Crackers
Milk: canned & powdered	Tuna	Peanut butter
Hamburger: 1lb pkgs	Sugar, flour, cake mixes, cooking oil	

PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEM DONATIONS

Toothbrushes/Toothpaste	Deodorant
Shampoo/Conditioner	Body Wipes
Soap Bars	Combs/Brushes
Feminine Hygiene Products	

Donations Accepted:

**Monday – Friday
9am – 2pm**

1119 SW 10th Ave
(10th & Buchanan)
Use the South Door

Doorstep's Christmas in July & August ***Donations Needed for this Christmas!***



**Help us collect items for our 2026 Christmas adoption
of 285 households, with nearly 900 individuals!**

Toys

Footballs & Basketballs - Pokemon
Hello Kitty - Toys for Ages 5 - 12
Educational Toys (all ages)
Spiderman - K-Pop - Lelo & Stitch
Sonic Hedge Hog - Jewelry
Make-Up & Nail Kits



Toys

Roblox Gift Cards (\$10-\$20)
Paw Patrol - Bluey -
Minecraft - Puzzles - Legos
Sensory / Fidget -
Board & Brain Teaser Games -
Color Books for All Ages
Teen Board Games



Men's & Women's Gifts

Tool Sets - Flashlights
Fishing Items (Poles/Tacklebox/Etc)
Car Cleaning Items - Boots & Sneakers
Men & Women's Cologne Sets
Sweats (All Sizes, All Ages)
Pajamas - Teen/Men/Women(All Sizes)

Kitchen Items

Silverware - Glasses - Crockpots
Dish Sets - Pots & Pans - Air Fryers

Other Items

Towel Sets - (Bath, Hand & Washcloth)
Blankets - Queen & King Sizes
Full Size Hygiene Items: Deodorant
Shampoo + Conditioner - Bar Soap
Combs - Brushes - Toothpaste -
Toothbrushes - **Cleaning Supplies**



School Supplies

Notebook Paper (College/Wide)
Spiral Notebooks (College/Wide)
Pens - Pencils - Glue - Erasers
Folders (2 Pocket) - Backpacks
Rulers - Markers - Scissors

Bring donations to your Faith Community during the months of July & August!

Thank you for making the holiday season brighter for your neighbors!

Doorstep, 1119 SW 10th Ave - Donation Hours: M-F, 9am-2pm, South Door

Doorstep's Christmas Cash Bash



Donate to Doorstep during the months of
July & August and help us earn 'match
money' from anonymous donors!



If we receive \$10,000 - We earn \$5,000!
If we receive \$15,000 - We earn \$7,500!
If we receive \$20,000 - We earn \$10,000!



Ways to Donate:

- Mail it to Doorstep
- Bring it to our office
- Online DoorstepTopeka.org

Let us know if you
belong to one of our
Mission Member
Faith Communities



Help us reach our goal of \$20,000+ for **Christmas Cash
Bash**, and we will receive \$10,000 more to help your
neighbors this holiday season!



DOORSTEP

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Doorstep, Inc.
1119 SW 10th Ave Topeka, Ks 66604
Online: www.DoorstepTopeka.org
Office Hours: Mon - Fri 8am - 3pm

Topeka Rescue Mission NEEDS LIST

PRIORITY NEEDS: Donations can be brought to our Distribution Center at 401 NW Norris, Monday-Friday 8 am to 3:45 pm. This list highlights our most needed items right now, but we will gladly accept other donations as well, such as: clothing of all sizes, appliances, furniture, housewares, nonperishable/perishable foods, etc. For questions or to speak with our Distribution Center, call (785)357-4285.

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION CENTER NEEDS

Urgent Food Items: Loaves of Bread, Peanut Butter, Frozen Meals, Canned Soups (All Types)

Food Items Always Needed:

- Canned Proteins (Tuna, Chicken, Sloppy Joe, Beans, Chili, etc.)
- Peanut Butter & Grape Jelly, Loaves of Bread
- Dry Pasta (All Types), Pasta Sauce, Rices (All Types)
- Cereals, Oatmeal
- Canned Soups (All Types), Canned Fruit, Canned Vegetables
- Spagettios, Frozen Meals (Pot Pies, Pizza, Corn Dogs, Frozen Meals), Meat – All Types (Must be USD Certified)

Clothing:

- Men's & Women's Underwear (NEW)
- Men's Jeans – Size 30-40
- Men's Shirts – Any Size
- Packages of Socks
- Baby Diapers – Size 4-5
- Pull-Ups – Size 2t/3t & 4t/5t

Toiletries:

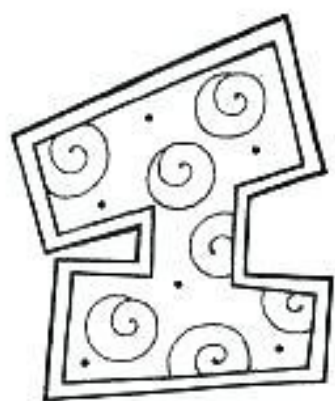
- Baby Lotion/Shampoo/etc.
- Full Size Conditioner
- Men's & Women's Deodorant
- Q-tips & Foot Powder
- Ibuprofen, Tylenol, Cough Drops, Tums
- Razors & Shaving Cream
- Brushes/Hairbands

KITCHEN NEEDS

- Variety of Meats (Beef, Sausage, Pork, Chicken)
- Liquid Eggs
- Loaves of Bread & Hamburger/Hot Dog Buns
- Lunch Meat
- Canned Fruits/Vegetables (#10 type cans preferred)

MAP NEEDS (Please visit <https://www.trmonline.org/needslist> to see additional specific MAP needs that can be purchased on Amazon and shipped directly to TRM.)

- Women's Underwear size small 4-6
- Men's Underwear sizes 30-36
- Men's Jeans sizes 30-36
- Travel size deodorant, conditioner, lotion, soap & shampoo



can do

all things

through

CHRIST

who strengthens

me

Philippians 4:13

WEB

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

DOORSTEP UPDATE – Please note that Doorstep has extended their Christmas in July donation drive and the Christmas Cash Bash into the month of August. You may refer to the flyers on pages 9 & 10 for more details.

UPCOMING EVENTS – August 8th: Potwin Church will again join New Life Baptist Church at the Back-to-School event on August 8th. Last year's fair in our parking lot was a huge success as they gave free haircuts, backpacks, and school supplies. Please refer to the article on the bottom of page 2 in this newsletter for more details.

BELL CHOIR & MUSIC NEWS – Bell Choir rehearsals will resume in September. Anyone wishing to join the choir or interested in learning to play bells should contact Gwen Jones. All are welcome!

If you have any musical talents you would like to share during the summer months, please contact Gwen Jones.

BLESSING BOX & LITTLE LIBRARY – Our Blessing Box and Little Library are being constantly refilled to meet needs in our neighborhood. Many in our neighborhood have been assisting us in this effort. Thanks to all who contribute to these local missions. Remember our blessing box when you shop as it is always in need of items.



AUGUST 2026

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

Sunday Worship 9:15 AM						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Happy Birthday Jane Sewell		Happy Birthday Madeline Bigham			Back to School Bash 9AM-12PM
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
			Happy Birthday Jody Scott			Happy Birthday Caitlin Charity & Ella Breitenstein
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Happy Birthday Rod Seel		Happy Birthday Britton Stasiulis		Happy Birthday Brenda Strobel		Happy Birthday Brynn Stasiulis & Elizabeth Chermok
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Happy Birthday Angela Juarez						
30	31					

AUG. 2026 POTWIN POST
POTWIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
400 SW WASHBURN AVE
TOPEKA, KS 66606
(785)235-1311

Potwin Presbyterian Church is a safe and sacred place to worship God where Christ's love is revealed through actively and joyfully sharing, caring, and giving to others in our congregation, community, and world.

You can find us online at
www.potwinpres.org & on Facebook at
<https://www.facebook.com/PotwinChurch>.

You can reach us by email at
potwinchurch@att.net

