



MEDIA RELEASE

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Small Business Series Features Mer-Mer's Bakery

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.— Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs interviewed Chandra Taylor, owner of Mer-Mer's Bakery as part of his video series highlighting small businesses.

During the series, the Mayor has conducted interviews with small business owners and operators, providing them the opportunity to talk about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their families and employees and share any plans they have for the future. A new vignette runs each week on the county and Mayor's various social media platforms. In recognition of Black History Month, this series will focus on Black-owned businesses during February.

Mer-Mer's Bakery opened its doors in 1998 to serve the family's famous pound cake and other homemade favorites. Now they offer specialty cakes—the most requested are carrot and red velvet. They say, "If you can describe the look or provide an image, we can make it."

In this week's interview, Mayor Jacobs and Ms. Taylor discussed the difficulties and challenges of running a small business as a "one-person band."

"Since (COVID-19) has happened, I haven't been able to have an employee in here, I've basically been doing it all...and we just have orders only at this time," said Taylor.

The Mayor asked Taylor whether she adjusted her business model during COVID-19 and whether there were any practices or ideas the bakery would continue to use.

"We opened a new store—Sweet Confections—where we sell supplies to bakers to make their own cakes and offer cookie decorating and beginner cake decorating classes and hope to add candy-making classes to help people who want to learn these skills," she said.

The mayor noted that "during bad economic times some people are able to expand their business and find opportunities in those times to take advantage of them, which sounds like you've done."

He asked what advice Ms. Taylor had for someone interested in going into business themselves.

She said, "I'll show them how to do a plan. It seems harder than it is. If you really want to do it, you just have to put the motivation to it."

To hear more of what was said, check out the [video](#).

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