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## New Year Blues

By Wendy Rojo

The new year brings up a mix of emotions for everyone. For some, it's a hopeful beginning and a way to start over. For others, the new year simply means a new year. Everyone brings in the new year differently.

For example, in my culture, we have various traditions that stem from old superstitions. We eat lentils for wealth, crawl under a table in hopes of a new romantic relationship, walk around the block with our suitcases to bring more travel in the upcoming year, and eat 12 grapes to make 12 wishes.

Traditions and superstitions change from culture to culture, but the feelings and concerns that come with the new year are universal. I get a lot of anxiety when I think of the upcoming year. My anxieties stem from the feeling of uncertainty.

***Traditions and superstitions change from culture to culture, but the feelings and concerns that come with the new year are universal.***

Anxiety, stress, and uncertainty are common feelings around the start of a new year. According to the Stylist, many face new year anxiety because they feel pressure to make the upcoming year the best year ever.

These feelings are even more present for those who carried over their anxieties and stressors from the previous year. The Hill reports that many struggle with anxiety and depression because people tend to ruminate. Instead of reflecting on the previous year, many of us tend to obsess over the bad that happened that year.

We, as a society, have a competitive



**Artwork by Stewpot artist Cornelious Brackens.**

mindset that creates pressures to be the best and make 2023 the best year. However, we need to look at the new year in reflection and see in what areas we can grow as people instead of competing with ourselves or others to make 2023 the best. The new year can be difficult for everyone; however, it can be especially difficult for those of us who put pressure on the new year.

For many, the pressure surrounding 2023 comes from years of dealing with COVID restrictions. The past couple of years have been difficult for the entire world. COVID put a pause and made life go by slowly. We were not able to socialize, and that put a toll on many of us.

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Last year was the first time many of us were finally able to celebrate the holidays' pre-covid style, and 2023 means a fresh beginning for many of us in a post-COVID era. Not only are we living in a post-COVID era, but we are living through record-high levels of inflation. According to PBS, consumer prices increased by 9.1 percent compared to 2021. As Michelle Singletary, a personal finance columnist for *The Washington Post*, puts it there are two sections in our economy -- those who can bare the financial pressure

put on by the inflationary prices, and those who were already struggling because of the pandemic who are now dealing with mountains of pressure because of inflationary prices.

We entered 2023 with COVID scars and inflation concerns; however, if we look at 2023 as a year of reflection instead of a year of perfection, we can all put our anxieties to rest. Instead of creating resolutions that create more worries, we can create manageable goals. Many of us are guilty of making our resolutions too grand.

According to Forbes, it is better to create goals instead of resolutions because goals are more specific and action-oriented. For example, if your resolution is to lose weight then some goals can be eating out only once a week or working out three times a week. Creating achievable goals for the new year can help all of us manage the stress and uncertainty that comes from the new year.

***Wendy Rojo is managing editor of STREETZine.***



**Photo courtesy of Tim Mossholder through Unsplash.**

# STREETZine

**STREETZine** is a program of  
The Stewpot.



The **STREETZine** is a monthly newspaper published by The Stewpot, a ministry of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas. The Stewpot provides services and resources for people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of being homeless. The organization also offers opportunities for a new life.

As part of this ministry, the **STREETZine** seeks to raise awareness about the issues surrounding homelessness and poverty. The monthly publication also offers financial opportunity for Stewpot clients who sell the paper to Dallas residents. Vendors are able to move towards economic self-sufficiency by using the money they receive from selling copies to purchase bus passes, food, and necessary living expenses. Clients also receive stipends for contributing articles to **STREETZine**.

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## The Pastor's Letter: Blessed are the Brokenhearted

By Reverend Amos Jerman Disasa

*Editor's Note: This essay is excerpted from a column that Rev. Disasa delivered at the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas on January 15, 2023.*

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” Matthew 5:4

Do you remember where you were when you saw a heart break for the first time? I was seven or eight when I saw my first heart-break. I remember the day my father told me that my grandfather died. We called my mother's father, Akaka, the Ethiopian word for grandfather. Since we'd immigrated here in 1983, Akaka only visited twice for a few weeks each time.

I barely knew him or anyone else outside my immediate family. But on the day my father told me Akaka was dead and Mama would be told in the morning, I immediately felt the distance between my two homes.

To grieve the dead from a distance, without the closure afforded to those who are present for the burial, was an unavoidable circumstance of being newly settled in this country. In place of the funeral and burial, fellow Ethiopians in our South Carolina community would bear witness to the resurrection as best we could. Mostly that meant we huddled up close together, all in the same room for several days.

I was too young to know it at the time, but what everyone was mourning as much as Akaka's death was that we weren't home. The mourning for death came suddenly, but the broken hearts were already there.

But today, I am especially confused by Jesus' blessing that the mourners will be comforted. A simple deconstruction of this blessing concludes that if one is now mourning, comfort is yet to come. If you've lost something significant enough to make you mourn, the soft promise of comfort seems to come up a little short. If you've lost something you love, and the result is mourning, a

more advantageous promise would be that the lost thing might be returned.

It is as if Jesus is offering us a tissue when what we really want is a return — a return to the way things once were, a return to life if we are mourning death, a return to health if we are mourning illness, a return to peace if we are mourning violence, a return to wholeness if we are mourning sin. Take us back Jesus! Bless us with some resurrection and not merely some consolation.

But I am not sure that Jesus is simply handing out tissues to those who mourn when he promises that they will be comforted. Something else is happening here. The promise must extend beyond those moments in time when we wear black and lay those we lost to rest in their graves.

*But I am not sure that Jesus is simply handing out tissues to those who mourn when he promises that they will be comforted. Something else is happening here.*

I propose that we set aside our cultural assumptions about what mourning looks like. As best you can, erase the images of people beating their breasts in anguish. Set aside your own experience of funerals, memorial services, and unfortunate anniversaries. Do this to make space for a wider interpretation of this blessing for the brokenhearted.

### The get-over-it-gang

Because if there isn't anything else, if the promise doesn't extend beyond the rituals of mourning, then what will we say to the get-over-it gang?

Do you know about the get-over-it gang? Let me explain, then.

It's common these days to lament our divisions. We are divided geographically by our choice of where to live, small town or big city, on a coast or somewhere in-between. We are divided by conservative or liberal, Democrat or Republican. We are divided by income, with the gap between the rich and everyone else never wider.

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# Executive Director's Report: Goals for 2023

By Brenda Snitzer

Since I was young, I have tended to be very goal-oriented. I don't remember where I heard that you are more likely to achieve goals if you write them down, even if you don't read them every day. So, that's what I've done most of my life – whether it was for my educational, career, or personal plans. I write down my goals.

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I believe this sets my intention of what I will do. Most of the time I have achieved the majority of them in some fashion. I usually try and set an overall vision for how I want things to be, then write my goals and reflect on them on a monthly basis. Plus, I work my action plan for my month and week based on my goals.

When I first started at The Stewpot five years ago, I had a vision for the direc-

tion I thought the organization should go based on what the committee that hired me shared as well as the pastor and The Stewpot senior leadership.

I had about 10 goals in 2018 that I wanted to eventually achieve. One of the goals I set in 2018 was to have a housing program. Another one was to renovate that entire facility; knowing I would have to raise money for that, I figured it would take some time.

The facility renovations happened a lot sooner than I had hoped. We were able to complete the downstairs by the end of 2019. The upstairs renovations were completed by mid-2020. The housing program took a little longer, but we were able to implement that by March 2021. Since then, it has progressed to a very strong program.

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Every year, I start with what goals I had the prior year and how those have come along and what still needs to be achieved. I will revise based on how the organization is doing and where I believe we need to go next based on the community's and client's needs, as well as the internal organization and the staff status.

For 2023, my Stewpot goals are:

- Continue to grow people, processes and programs;
- Continue to develop the resources to support these areas; and
- Engage all Stewpot staff in creating a culture of excellence and the best for our clients, volunteers, supporters, and staff.

Our goals follow from this vision in the areas of stewardship, growth, and staff engagement.

In terms of the larger Dallas community and people experiencing homelessness, I would like to see the continued reduction of homelessness and poverty through an increase in affordable housing and getting folks housed.

The Stewpot is working with Housing Forward to achieve that goal. And all of our programs work to support those experiencing homelessness or who are formerly homeless to achieve stability. We also help those in poverty through our Children and Youth and Family Stabilization programs.

After all, we want to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

***Brenda Snitzer is the executive director of The Stewpot.***



***Brenda Snitzer (right) participating at an all saints day communion.***

# It Takes a System to End Homelessness

*Christine Crossley is director of the City of Dallas' Office of Homeless Solutions. The goal of the office, which she has headed since 2021, is to make homelessness brief and non-recurring.*

*A graduate of the London School of Economics and Political Science, Crossley previously worked for Catholic Community Services in Western Washington. Her work there involved directing a rental subsidy and homeless service program. She spoke with Brenda Snitzer, executive director of The Stewpot, and Bill McKenzie, a member of STREETzine's editorial board, about the Office of Homeless Solutions' goals for 2023. The interview below only has been edited for length and clarity.*

## **What are the Office of Homeless Solutions' goals this year for people experiencing homelessness in Dallas?**

Our goal is the same as it was last year, and that is to house people through the Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing (DRTRR) Initiative. It is a public-private partnership worth about \$72 million in federal dollars, private donations, and housing vouchers to house 2,700 people within a two-year timespan.

*Our goal is the same as it was last year, and that is to house people through the Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing (DRTRR) Initiative. It is a public-private partnership worth about \$72 million in federal dollars, private donations, and housing vouchers to house 2,700 people within a two-year timespan.*

We are rounding the corner on year two well ahead of our goal. We were to house about 1,000 people before December, but we have housed as of now about 1,500 people. We housed 1,000 last August, and we will house the remaining by the end of 2023. We are very excited about that.

We also stood up our Homelessness Action Response Team, which is a homelessness crisis response team. It is a multi-department team to resolve

issues quickly as they arise, while the rest of our team focuses on their normal day-to-day work. The response team was set up near the end of 2022 and has done great work.

We have more people this year on our Street Outreach team, too. The team is dedicated to DRTRR and we are partnering with local agencies to expand our Street Outreach teams that answer 311 service requests.

The Office of Homeless Solutions is largely a contracting body, so we are putting out new, exciting projects. We just had one for emergency shelter funding that we knew was needed. We carved out \$1 million in our last budget and said, "Let's do this, it is important."

We are doing this to make sure we are maximizing our opportunities to put people in housing and end homelessness in a way that is sustainable.

## **How else do you plan to meet your goals?**

We have a number of partnerships. We have several with Dallas County. We work with Housing Forward as our lead agency for the Continuum of Care (CoC) for the region and we partner with the Dallas Housing Authority.

We also work with the City of Dallas' Office of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization and the Office of Community Care. I see those departments as the upstream ways of solving homelessness, working to make sure people who are unstably housed are supported and don't become homeless. We work with them on permanent, supportive housing from the ground up. It involves issues like development, land-trust banks, and infill.

In a lot of cities, these departments may be one unit. In Dallas, they are broken out into separate departments. That gives us the bandwidth to be specifically focused as well as work together so nothing falls through the cracks.

We have a permanent supportive housing strategy group that involves all these groups I just mentioned. We partner with them in several ways, including on the Dallas R.E.A.L. Time

Rapid Rehousing Initiative.

*The "how" of how we accomplish goals is through partnerships. The thing I am most proud of is how transformed we are as a system.*

The "how" of how we accomplish goals is through partnerships. The thing I am most proud of is how transformed we are as a system. Our department alone can't take credit for that. There always has been a will for thinking as a system. But bringing it all together and having actionable, achievable items given this funding has led to a nimble response system. This is part of the "how" we achieve these goals.

## **What do you see as the biggest challenge in meeting all these goals? Is it managing partnerships? Finding enough housing? Something else?**

It's the housing. We know the units are out there, but landlords don't have to take anyone. A rental subsidy guarantees you rent. Case managers are on-site through the Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing Initiative. It takes away all the worry and guarantees you the funding. Plus, if that person doesn't work out, we find you someone else. We have had that happen very few times because the placements have been well-researched. We want to set people up for success.

*Still, there is a stigma about the unknown and what rental subsidies used to be. There is a long stigma that leads back to thinking about a type of subsidy that was difficult to work with. But that was the '80s, the '90s, not now.*

Still, there is a stigma about the unknown and what rental subsidies used to be. There is a long stigma that leads back to thinking about a type of subsidy that was difficult to work with. But that was the '80s, the '90s, not now. We have to get past this baggage and inform landlords that this is something different. We are working on that.

## **What gives you hope about the City's ability to meet these goals?**

It is the same thing I said about the

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We also are divided by the story we choose to tell about our nation's history and how much progress we've made reckoning with and correcting our past. We are divided by our worldview, America first or we're all in this together.

In truth, these divisions aren't new, they've always been present. What's different now is how unwilling we are to change our minds and give our neighbor the benefit of believing that they've come by their convictions in good faith.

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Still, I think there is a common cause for each of our divisions. Our conflicts over whose rights need the government's protection, or whose story about our nation's founding is true, or whose bodies should be privileged, these conflicts are really about another conflict we refuse to acknowledge that I think explains why Jesus reserved one of his blessings for the broken-hearted.

What we are really arguing about is how to answer this question: Who gets to mourn and for how long?

***What we are really arguing about is how to answer this question: Who gets to mourn and for how long?***

Love anyone or anything hard and long enough and your heart will be broken. Look with intention upon the world God made and grief will find you.

It's a fact that none of us can avoid being heart broken. But it's also true that some tears are privileged over others. And some hearts are never even allowed to break.

The get-over-it gang demands that hearts broken from the grief that comes with generational poverty get over it and focus on your schoolwork so you can make good grades and go to college.

The get-over-it gang demands that hearts broken from the vast loneliness of the pandemic get over it so we can move on.

The get-over-it gang demanded that Jesus stop talking about his broken-heart for the poor and the prisoners, and get with the program of bending a knee to the powerful. When he didn't, they killed him.

The get-over-it gang demands that hearts broken from the desecration of the natural world for the sake of convenience, get over it because there's only so much we can do.

I think that's who Jesus is blessing today, those whose broken heart threatens others and those who are told their broken heart isn't real.

I remember a lot from the day I saw a heart break for the first time. But what I don't remember is anyone encouraging my mother to get on with it. Nobody told her to look on the bright side, or find the silver lining, or count her blessings.

### **A letter to the broken-hearted**

In preparing this sermon, I wrote a letter to the broken-hearted. It goes like this:

*I wish I were right beside you, even now, to give you a hug. There is no easy way to fix all this immediately and make it go away. But there is a love that is immune to the perplexities of life. It flows from the heart of God and was made real to us in Jesus Christ.*

*The strange thing is that this overwhelming love is perfected in weakness and known intimately through suffering. It is the paradox of the Gospel — to gain your life, you must first lose it.*

*Right now, the life you thought was your own is slipping away. The pain you know is grief, as if someone had died. But in fact, someone did - the person you thought you would be. When the future is too dim to see and the past is littered with the residue of guilt and shame, the only thing you can trust becomes the right now.*

*I am not the one to counsel you on being present, there are others much better at it, but I do know that it is often in these "in-between" moments of life that the grace of God is transferred from theological possibility to ever-present truth.*

*Suddenly you see it everywhere: in the gentle voice of friend, in the sun, in the cold, in the Bible. Hold on to this even as you let go of the past. God is redeeming what hurts (a pain God did not cause and yet still knows) by redeeming what God loves — you.*

***Reverend Amos Jerman Disasa is Senior Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas.***

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# Taking a Year One Day at a Time

By Vicki Gies

For the longest time I didn't celebrate the holidays much at all. My father died one year three weeks before Thanksgiving, and my mom died in another year two weeks before Christmas. My family was very close, and I was an only child. So, for a long time, I didn't want to celebrate Thanksgiving or Christmas. It took a while before I could enjoy the holidays again.

This year, the only thing I did to celebrate Thanksgiving was to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in the morning and football in the afternoon. For Christmas, I put up a small tree.

The start of a new year doesn't really affect me. It's just another day, besides the fireworks. When we were homeless and living in a tent, we knew the animals were going to keep away from the fireworks, either up in a tree or down in a burrow.

Some people will fire their guns up in the air on New Year's Eve. A good rule of thumb is to remember that what goes up will most certainly come back down. During the years we were homeless, New Year's Eve really scared us, but we managed to survive it without any holes in our tent.

As I look to the year ahead, I don't know if it's going to be a good year or not. I just take it one day at a time. I have several goals that I'd like to achieve in 2023. First, I'd like to have another home with a fenced yard for our dogs. We are no longer homeless, but a fenced yard would be really nice.

My physical goal is to be healthy again. My spiritual goal is to go to church every Sunday. My financial goals include writing articles for STREETZine and selling STREETZine for extra money.

*Vicki Gies is a STREETZine vendor and frequent STREETZine contributor.*



Artwork by Stewpot artist Colleen Pryor.

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“how” of achieving them. It is the system. We are so transformed, and we are just getting started. We are a year-in and having some amazing conversations because of the work we have put in.

This will steer us forward. It's not enough to fund something and say it is all done. If you start something, but aren't responsible and focused on sustainability, that mechanism or muscle will atrophy.

I think we have done a very good job as a system in what we have stood up, that we intend to be successful. We aren't planning to go our separate ways anytime soon.

We are starting to have conversations with the Department of Housing and Urban Development around what it would look like to partner with them on some things for the region. That is because of the work we have done.

**Probably most of us don't understand the role systems play in meeting the challenges people experiencing homelessness face. Could you elaborate upon their role in taking on these challenges?**

The “system” is all of the area providers, including the City of Dallas and Dallas County, who operate under the umbrella of the Continuum of Care. There are Continuum of Care all over the United States. They are the federal designations that the government uses to fund initiatives. Housing Forward is the lead agency and lead administrator in our Continuum of Care region.

It is important for us to work together through the CoC. That is how we get funding and get things done. It is how we show the federal government, through our performance data, how well we are getting things done. It's also a competitively based system, so doing things well tends to make you eligible for more funding.

Working through the CoC also gives us additional connections to boots-on-the-ground services, like with The Stewpot. Those connections keep us in touch with what people need. We can pinpoint through the various agencies involved with the CoC whose case management a person might most need and set them up for success. Everyone is working together, instead of standing next to each other asking the same questions and confusing people who just want help.

As a system, it is our responsibility to simplify this for people who need help.

# Writers' Workshop Essays

*Editor's Note: Each Friday morning at 10 a.m., The Stewpot hosts a Writers' Workshop. During the sessions, participants address selected topics through prose or poetry. In this edition of STREETZine, we feature the essays of writers about the new year.*

## My Common Practice of the New Year Resolution

By Larry Jackson

The concept or "resolution" or a New Year's resolution comes from religion and tradition. From the footsteps of my parents, I follow into this tradition. As the years pass, I receive an understanding of it. There are many different ways the resolution is used. Mostly it is a checklist of what I want to accomplish in the coming calendar year. The resolution can be a checklist unto God.

*There are many different ways the resolution is used. Mostly it is a checklist of what I want to accomplish in the coming calendar year. The resolution can be a checklist unto God.*

I've found out how to make a resolution a valuable part of my life. There are many dos and don'ts and bad behavior that can affect a person's life. A resolution can determine success or failure. Time plays a big part.

Change will always cause friction to a person. In some cases, in a calendar year most of the resolutions will be fulfilled. But hope in God will always lead the way. Yes, we all have issues in life, from eating problems to bad behavior. Drawing from some of my failure and success in this tradition, I will reflect.

Eating has always been one of my stumbling blocks. Many times, I've had to request help with this problem through dieting and medical advice. A habit is hard to break, so a petition or request is warranted in this area. Seeking strength from my higher power through a resolution and prayer can help me solve the problem.

Sometimes behavior causes a problem. Knowing my dos and don'ts is one thing. But keeping them is another. Like riding down the highway and the sign is flashing: All you can eat! Smothered pork chops, mashed potatoes, green beans, toast and ice-cold lemonade. Lord, have mercy on me! Larry, don't stop! Setting at the table, my belt is loose on my pants, my shoes are off. Resolution or a New Year's resolution is out the window. Yes, I'm a work in progress.

As I finish watching the late-night movie, the household is asleep. On that table is a butter pound cake, the ice cream is in the fridge. Mercy, mercy me!

But there's something stronger I can use in this area. All tradition has taught us to reach out to God. In our faith and belief, we must make a stand. Most things we can handle. God will allow us to solve our problems. But for the things we can't handle, God will step right in. God's way can and will enhance a person's life.

The deeper way to solve a problem in life is through vows. The vow is a personal agreement with God. The Bible warns about making the vow:

*When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*  
Ecclesiastes 5

As John 4:24 tells us, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

In my present or past history, I have used the resolution and vow. Again, a work in progress is better than failure. Making future plans is a serious business. Along the way a person will be challenged to bring out the best. All future goals are locked in resolution, vows, and hopes for better tomorrow, with God as the focal point.

*Along the way a person will be challenged to bring out the best. All future goals are locked in resolution, vows, and hopes for better tomorrow, with God as the focal point.*

Living life under one calendar year has taught me many lessons. Life is for the living. Happy New Year 2023. Let the journey begin. As it says in Ezekiel 37, "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest."

*Larry Jackson is a STREETZine vendor and a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop.*

## I Prefer Short-Term Goals

By David Yisrael

Now that the new year has arrived according to the Gregorian calendar, it is customary to make one or more New Year's resolutions. An individual will express a goal/goals they hope to achieve in the new year.

New Year's resolutions are infamously hard to keep and usually end up falling by the wayside as the year progresses on. I myself have fallen out of the habit of enacting said practice. I have found it much easier and manageable to focus on small-term daily goals rather than one or more larger aims.

I have found that when I list several small goals a day, and then check them off as I complete them, I am motivated to accomplish more than I would have if I had tried to take on a larger project.

I believe that a lot of people make the mistake of making one or two large New Year's resolutions. I can remember in the past feeling at least pressured subconsciously to make and to complete my resolution. I can also remember that I always felt a bit depressed when I saw them slowly evaporate as my resolve weakened.

It was only after years of this vicious cycle that I grew wiser and began limiting my focus on my day-to-day business rather than letting my focus wander to the end of the year. That way, I could finally get something accomplished. I have achieved far more as a result than I would have otherwise.

So, this new year I no longer focus on resolutions but rather limiting my focus on my day-to-day activities. I would recommend others do so as well.

*David Yisrael is a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop and an artist in The Stewpot's Art Studio.*

## New Year's Goals

By Jason Turner

Starting a new year is, for me, a remarkably triumphant reflection of accomplishments. This includes being aware and grateful for surviving the events of the previous year.

Along with the cold air, the holiday season flourishes with hope that ideas for resolutions will get perfected into practical goals. Like most people, I usually make a resolution for the new year. The best resolution I ever made was my year of, "no." However, it did not work out too well. My weight loss resolution surprisingly worked out better.

*Jason Turner is a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop.*



Comic by Stewpot artist David Yisrael.



## My 2023 Goals

**By Gershon Trunnell**

As I look back on 2022, I see that the time that has passed has been a great transition in my life. The year was a maturing experience, helping me be a better version of myself.

New Year's resolutions are goals that we set in hopes of being a better version of ourselves. As a whole, I feel that people are making efforts to be kinder with each other and love one another.

Personally, my goal is to quit smoking. Quitting smoking is a goal that I have set before. I hope to accomplish it this year, when I turn 50.

By quitting, I can achieve better health. I also want to help someone else who wants to quit smoking, giving them advice and tips in their struggle to be a better version of themselves.

Reaching this goal will build character, self-esteem, and self-worth. This will allow me to feel better about myself and help others feel better about themselves.

*Gershon Trunnell is a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop and an artist in The Stewpot's Art Studio.*

## My 2023 Goals

**By Darin Thomas**

This year will be a good year for me. I'll receive my disability so I can pay my bills. Working at Goodwill three days a week will help me out as well.

I also will be able to visit my son in prison, see my daughter more, attend church, pray to my Heavenly Father, and put my trust in Him.

Just doing what's right will be fun and exciting. I will take it one day at a time, going to see my probation officer and attending my Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous classes.

I have set short- and long-term goals. My short-term goal is getting my disability going. My long-term goal is to get a car, be able to pay all my bills, and stay out of trouble.

I also want to make new friends and might even find a good woman. I would like to have a wife one day.

Those are my short and long-term goals and I plan for 2023 to be a good year.

*Darin Thomas is a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop.*



*Photo courtesy of Prateek Katyal through Unsplash.*

## **Holiday Meals: Spread the Love**

**By Larry Jackson**

The New Year's Day meal is an annual tradition for my family. You bring your favorite dish to the gathering.

You will find everything from store-bought food to all sorts of game: Veal, deer roast, smoked wild hog meat, hams, wild turkey and turkey from the store, raccoon, fried chicken, baked chicken, neck bones, pig tails, and pig feet. The foods are seasoned to perfection.

There also will be all sorts of vegetables and salads: black-eyed peas, snap beans, green peas, cabbage greens, mustard greens, collard greens, corn salad, potato salad, and green salad.

And don't forget the desserts: sweet potato pie, apple pie, lemon pie, pecan pie, coconut pie, three-layer jelly cake, three-layer chocolate cake, almond pound cake, 7 Up pound cake, vanilla pound cake, and million-dollar pound cake.

Just forget about your personal diet plan or the doctor's what-to-eat list. Throw them out the window. Enjoy the fruit of your labor on this table. Plus, Grandma's hands are all over the place, spreading love.

You will hear chatter from the kitchen, and soon hear "the table is on." The stage is set to reflect back on those who have passed away. You give them their respects during a moment of silence. Then the pastor will come forward in his own special way and bless the food.

Now, it is time to eat. Happy New Year to all!

*Larry Jackson is a STREETZine vendor and a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop.*

## **New Year's Resolution**

**By Mike McCall**

For years on end, people have been celebrating the dawn of a new year with a resolution to change something. The new year brings about feelings of hope and a renewed energy to make our lives better.

Humans have always tried to improve themselves in one way or another. The birth of a new year just feels like the perfect place to start. So, when 2023 embraces us, be willing to look at what you can do to better yourself or help others in their pursuit to better themselves.

Be bold and take a chance with your new endeavor and regardless of the outcome, be inspired by one of my favorite Winston Churchill quotes: "Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts."

This should help you start every new day with a continuing effort to become the person you were meant to be.

*Mike McCall is a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop.*

## **My Thoughts for the New Year**

**By Charles A. Duff**

We all want and need change. Change is inevitable, as time goes by. From the day we existed in the womb, we have been forced to change. From infancy to manhood, everything changes — our minds, our bodies, even our souls. As time goes on, we all change, including this rock on which we live. Everything evolves.

In making New Year's resolutions, we should seriously think about what needs to change. Most of us fail in commitments from eating better, losing weight, smoking, and drinking.

I've come to learn that in this thing called life we have a choice to willingly change, but most of the time we bite off more than we can chew.

I believe the best resolution we could possibly make is one to change our ways of thinking.

A few years ago, I made a resolution to simply be a better person, to trust in God more, to help my fellow man, to love myself more. And since making this resolution, I have succeeded in noticeable change, and believe me, I feel great.

Try this work on you. Change your way of thinking. Act on the thoughts of positivity, and watch your whole world change.

Believe me, if you turn more to God and challenge yourself daily, you will see true resolution.

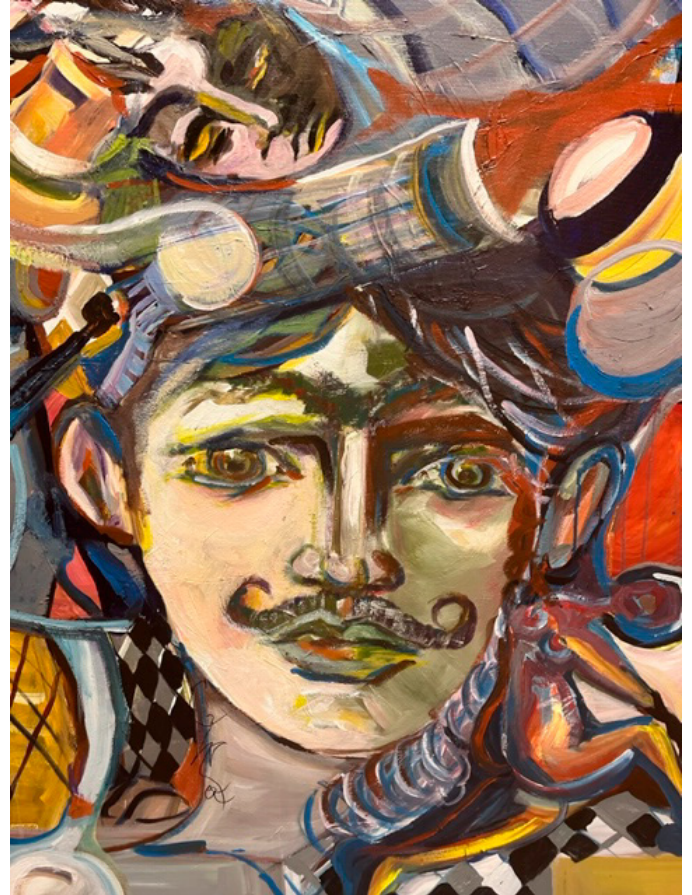
Till next time, love God, love yourself, love life. Happy New Year, folks.

*Charles A. Duff is a writer in The Stewpot's Writers' Workshop.*

# Stewpot Artists



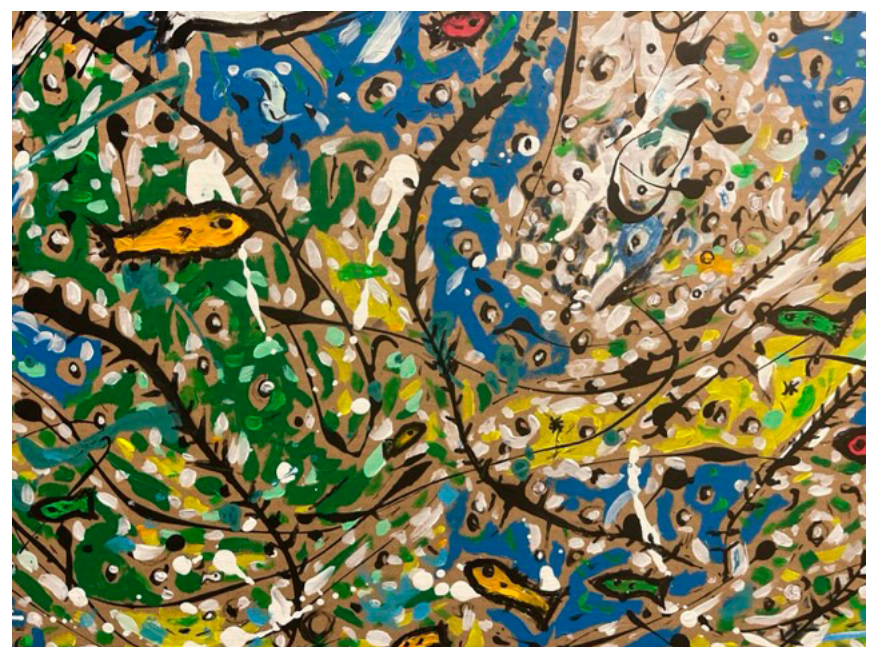
Jennifer Moore



Charles William



Teresa Zacarias



Michael Norwood

# Street Newspapers - A Voice for the Homeless & Impoverished

## What is **STREETZine**?

**STREETZine** is a nonprofit newspaper published by The Stewpot of First Presbyterian Church for the benefit of people living in poverty. It includes news, particularly about issues important to those experiencing homelessness. **STREETZine** creates direct economic opportunity. Vendors receive papers to be distributed for a one-dollar or more donation.



## Advertise in **STREETZine**

Support **STREETZine** and its vendors with your business or personal advertisements and announcements.

**Email:**

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They are required to wear a vendor badge at all times when distributing the paper. In order to distribute **STREETZine**, vendors agree to comply with Dallas City Ordinances.

If at any time you feel a vendor is in violation of any Dallas City Ordinance please contact us immediately with the vendor name or number at [streetzine@thestewpot.org](mailto:streetzine@thestewpot.org)

## CHAPTER 31, SECTION 31-35 of the Dallas City Code PANHANDLING OFFENSES

Solicitation by coercion; solicitation near designated locations and facilities; solicitation anywhere in the city after sunset and before sunrise any day of the week. Exception can be made on private property with advance written permission of the owner, manager, or other person in control of the property.

A person commits an offense if he conducts a solicitation to any person placing or preparing to place money in a parking meter.

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