

Triumph over Tragedy: Shona House's Journey from Heartache to Baking Cakes

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The story of how one woman turned her person tragedy into a very successful bakery.

Bakery: Faith Baked Cakes

Product: Freshly baked custom cakes, pies, and pastries, fondant & sculpture cakes, gluten free upon request.

Prices: Range from \$20-\$150 depending on size and difficulty

Payment: Only cash or check

Location: Rogersville, TN

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[facebook.com/shona.house](https://www.facebook.com/shona.house)



Ordering a cake in Hawkins County can prove to be very difficult. There are the obvious choices such as Wal-Mart and Food City, but what about local bakers? In Rogersville, there are only two bakeries and only one of those makes cakes for special occasions. Having grown up in Rogersville, I am personally connected to both of these bakeries. I went to grade school with the owners' children and consulted the bakers when I decided I wanted to learn how to make cakes and decorate them extravagantly. Faith Baked Cakes is the best choice when ordering

cakes in Rogersville. The bakery was created from extraordinary circumstances and is now the leading cake business in Rogersville.

History behind the Cakes

Shona Bare married Eric House on February 14, 1989. She made cakes out of her home to help pay the bills during their first couple of years of marriage. She had been to school to learn how to decorate cakes but did not obtain a business license at this time. She mainly made cakes for her friends' weddings and baby or bridal showers. She enjoyed making the cakes but in 1990 she discovered she was pregnant.

Shona had her first son, Landon, with Eric in April of 1991. She slowed down on making the cakes to take care of her newborn baby. A little over a year later, Shona discovered she was expecting again. She had her second son, Justin, in February of 1993. Shona then decided to take a break from making cakes altogether in order to take care of her children.

Shona is a very religious person and often gives praise to God for everything in her life. Her children grew up in church as she did herself. She and Eric were active members at East Rogersville Baptist Church. She would later turn her faith in God into a name for her bakery.

An Unexpected Tragedy

Fast forward a few years. It is now May of 2010. Shona's oldest son, Landon, is graduating from high school. Shona, her husband Eric, and their younger son Justin are on their way to pick up Landon from graduation practice. When the cement truck in front of Eric begins

to swerve, Eric panics. He loses control of his own vehicle and flips his truck. Eric is instantly killed on impact. Shona and Justin are both severely injured.

Shona was understandably heartbroken. She did not want to live without the man she had loved for more than half of her life; however, she decided that she would overcome her sorrow, frustrations, and anger in order to make others happy.

From Faith to Cakes

Shona decided in late 2010 to rekindle her passion for baking. She wanted to open a bakery, but she had no money to buy a building. She decided to open it in her own kitchen. She spent many months on preparation. She had to get a business license and find out what permits she needed for opening a bakery in her home.

In January of 2011 Shona had a grand opening party for Faith Baked Cakes in her home in Rogersville. More than half the town came out to support what would soon become the town's leading bakery.

Shona gives praise to God that she was able to take the accident that changed her life and create something good from it. She says her faith is the only thing that keeps her going from



This is an example of a wedding cake Shona has made.

day to day. Her faith is what helps her have the strength to bake these cakes, and she thanks God daily for getting her through all of her struggles.

The First Months

The first few months Faith Baked Cakes was open were very difficult for Shona. She was under a lot of pressure. She was making 10-15 cakes per week. She also had to pay for her house, her car, her sons' cars, and many other necessary things. She took a job as a bus driver to help make ends meet in her home.

At the end of May in 2011, Shona's business had taken a turn for the better. She was able to quit her job as a bus driver. She had as much cake on her plate as she could handle without the added responsibility of driving a bus. She was now able to support her family with just her cake business.

The Cakes

Shona makes cakes for any occasion. She makes wedding cakes, anniversary cakes, birthday cakes, baby shower reveal cakes, bachelor/bachelorette cakes, or simply just because I wanted one cakes.

Shona caters to many different clients. She strives to make each and every one of them as happy as possible. She offers many different cake flavors. My personal favorite is her



This is a birthday cake Shona made for a girl named Jordyn.

orange cream cake. She also makes banana chocolate, strawberry chocolate, mocha coffee, and many other flavors. She can decorate her cakes to match the flavor. She puts chocolate covered strawberries on top of her chocolate strawberry cake, another of my personal favorites. She will make any flavor of cake into cupcakes upon request.

She makes all the cakes and decorations from natural organic ingredients. She is very health conscious and wants people to feel good about what they are eating. She also makes a variety of flavors with a gluten free recipe so those clients with wheat or gluten allergies can also enjoy cake. This way everyone will be able to have their cake and eat it, too.

Shona's specialty is creating cakes that look almost too good to eat. Her work with



This is a bride and groom's cake that Shona and Lori made for a fireman and his bride.

fondant, moldable clay made from sugar, is extraordinary. She recently started experimenting with a fondant made from marshmallows. This new type of fondant tastes much better than the original sugar fondant. Shona can make almost anything with fondant. She has made many characters for cakes with fondant that look spectacular. For a firefighter's wedding she made a fondant fire truck with the

groom climbing up the ladder to his bride waiting on

top of the cake. She has done Mickey and Minnie

Mouse cakes. She made a fondant doctor and patient

for one cake. She has made Smokey the dog cakes. Any character you can imagine; Shona can

make. One of my favorite cakes she has done is a cake in which she made an almost full size owl to put on top in very bright pink and orange fondant.

Help Wanted

In November of 2011, Shona realized she could not continue with her current workload alone. She hired Lori Smith to help her bake and decorate cakes. Lori is a long-time friend of Shona. The two met in a cake decorating class at Walters State Community College. Lori's specialty is also working with fondant. For my sister's baby shower in June of 2012, Lori decorated a cake with a fondant father owl, mother owl, and baby owl. As a personal touch, Lori added in a fondant schnauzer, which my sister considered her first child. This cakes cost around \$90, but we had enough cake left after the shower to eat for two weeks.



This is my sister's baby shower with the fondant owls and schnauzer.

Lori added many new clients to Shona's already growing list. She helped to more than double the clientele with her own previous clients and has helped to add many new clients with her fondant creations.

What Competition?

Lori and Shona have almost eliminated all of their competition in the Rogersville area. There were three bakeries when Shona opened her business. There was Faith Baked Cakes, Sweet Creams, and Miss Bea's Perks and Pies.

When Shona opened her bakery, Rick, the owner of Sweet Creams, was already struggling to stay open. He offered cakes, cookies, and other sweets in his bakery. He would make a cake and cookies on Monday and barely have the whole cake sold or half the cookies by Friday. His cakes were dry and his cookies were hard. In comparison with Shona, Rick's cakes did not stand a chance. After Shona's business had been open for a few weeks, Rick folded under the pressure. Most of his regular clients had gone to Shona and Lori. He no longer could afford to keep his bakery open. He closed up shop and moved to Kentucky, where his family lives. He planned to try to open the bakery up there. He and his wife have now decided to take a break in the bakery business to focus on adopting a foster child they have had in their home for around 3 years.

Miss Bea's Perks and Pies is not much of a threat to Shona's business. Miss Bea's caters to a different class of clients than Faith Baked Cakes. Miss Bea's offers cake by the slice along with a deli style lunch menu and several types of coffees. Miss Bea's Perks and Pies is a shop in which you can stop in, have lunch, and get dessert to go. Miss Bea's does not offer cakes to the extent that Shona does.

The only other competition in Rogersville would be the bakeries in Wal-Mart and Food City. In comparison to Faith Baked Cakes, well, there really is no comparison. Most cakes from

Wal-Mart and Food City have been shipped there on a truck and simply iced with a plastic decoration on top. Of course if you want them to, they can write your name on the cake. Nine times out of ten a person would choose the taste and decoration of Shona's cakes over the taste or decoration of a cake from either of these bakeries.

Shona has taken the horrific death of her husband and channeled her feelings of rage, pain, sorrow, and confusion into a successful business. Shona says her late husband has a lot to do with her success as he always pushed her and their sons to do and be their absolute best. She says her faith in God to get her through the loss is what helps her make these cakes. If you are ever in need of a cake of any kind, for any occasion, Faith Baked Cakes should be the first (and only) bakery you contact. You can rest assured you would be getting the best possible ingredients and decorations for your cake.



This is another version of a baby shower cake Shona and Lori have made.