



WAKONDA NEWS

From the Pastor's Desk

Wakonda Christian Church
3938 Fleur Drive DSM IA
50321
515-285-8394
Office Hours
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Sr. Pastor Robyn Bles

Small Group Link
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4598748094>

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I've had many different titles in my years of ministry. I've been a Youth and Children's Minister, an Associate Minister (the general catch-all), a Senior Minister, and a Minister of Growth.

This last one was a little bit of a head scratcher. In churches we often focus upon counting the number of folks on our roles, how many baptisms, births, and deaths happen in the year, what the weekly attendance is, how many hospital visits or communion calls were made. We count and measure how we're growing often by these numbers. Those numbers do tell us something. How much communion should we prepare, how many elders do we need as baptism sponsors, as well as when to do baby blessings and fill the baptistry.

But numbers don't tell us the whole story. I used to joke that everything I ever needed to know about ministry I learned as a youth minister. I still stand by this. Most of ministry is best done when you show up for one another, remember that a silly game or song can open us up to experience God, and no matter what you have on hand, it can be made into communion. PB & J or chips and salsa are still some of my all-time favorite communion meals.

But the Minister of Growth title was the one that really challenged me. My whole job was focused not upon the number of folks who joined, or how many members we had, but rather focused upon the depth of our growth as Christians. Our faith is a living part of us – and the ways we tend to it, nurture it, and give it space to grow, determines the size our faith can become.

There are unfortunately many factors outside our control which provide those opportunities for growth. The loss of a job, an illness, the death of a loved one, or a world-wide pandemic. We do not have control of those things – and yet, what we do have control of is how we turn toward God in those moments. Some of my most humbling moments in ministry have been witnessing the ways people respond with compassion, grace, and gentleness in these toughest of moments.

As a church with an active Sunday school program, I know we're committed to the growth of our personal faith. If you're looking to deepen your faith, there is a Sunday morning class, Wednesday morning Bible study, or monthly book study which will happily welcome you into the fold.

But growth also can simply be taking 10 minutes out of your day to pray. Set a timer on your phone and unplug your brain from the world. Take a page out of your work notebook to write a letter to God. Pick up the phone and reconnect with that old friend or family member you haven't spoken to for a long time. Dig in your garden and marvel at the splendor of God's creation. Or if everything is overwhelming right now, pause to pray. And if you fall asleep while doing so, trust that you're falling into a moment of rest with God.

In this season of growth, I pray you'll respond to the invitations God is setting before you to grow.

Peace,
Pastor Robyn



BEYOND
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
EPHESIANS 3:20-21

Now to the one who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to the power that is at work within us, to them be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. - Ephesians 3:20-21



Please pray for our church as Disciples from across the United States and Canada gather in Memphis, TN, July 11-16. Our General Assembly is the time to worship and play together. We celebrate the work of the many ministries of the church, all while hearing directly from our congregations.

Guest Preacher

Sunday, July 6th, Connie Ryan, Executive Director of the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa is joining us in worship. Connie Ryan, a lifelong Disciple of Christ, will come to speak with us the rise of Christian Nationalism in our country. Connie will speak to us about the ways Christians can be patriotic, support our country's leaders, celebrate and pray for our service men and women, uphold religious freedom, all without being nationalistic.

This is an opportunity for the growth of our faith, our trust in one another, and most of all a greater expression of the Gospel of love we proclaim. I know this is a sensitive topic – one which requires us to listen deeply and speak with generous grace. Many in our congregation have already done a lot of reading, discussing, and training on this issue. I know they are looking forward to Connie's visit.

Thank you for being a church who responds to what's going on in our world with the consistency and courage of the gospel as our guide.

Building Maintenance Assistance Needed

The Property group has some needs for assistance.
Please contact Gene with which project you can help with and when.

1. The exterior of the church building windows could use a good pressure wash. We have the equipment and cleaning solutions.
2. There is one (for sure) downspout that is full of rock from the roof that needs to be cleaned out. We will look into having Smith's Sewer clean the other downspouts so that there isn't build-up to clog them.
3. There is some high-altitude exterior trim painting that needs to be done. This would require climbing on ladder and being up high.
4. There is also some lower altitude exterior painting that needs to be done - mostly the trim around old windows in the original building. We have the paint, primer, brushes, etc.

In addition, Gene will be taking vacation in July. He'll be gone **July 18th to July 27th**.

Thank you very much Wakonda for the generous gift I received of money to get me started on my journey to the University of Iowa. It will go towards getting stuff ready for my dorm room. Thank you for all of the support over the years. It has meant a lot to have you in my corner. I will miss coming to Wednesday's at Wakonda and Deaconing with my mom among other things. I will miss all of the friendships that I have gained, but hopefully we can still keep in touch. Again Thank You from the bottom of my heart.

Nate Worthington

Music Notes...

Hello, everyone!

I'd like to send one last 'Thank You' out to the choir for a wonderful '24-'25 year. They wrapped up their last Sunday of the season on June 8th and will begin rehearsing again in late August.

Meanwhile, after a couple of offertory duets from Mike and I, and an upcoming organ solo from Mike, look for some featured soloists and even a vocal quartet to enhance our worship services in July and August.

Stay cool, everyone!
Seth

Bible Study

Wednesday morning Bible Study is taking a summer break for Pastor Robyn's church travels. Our weekly Bible Study will resume on July 23rd. All are welcome to join this fun and enriching discussion on the upcoming sermon text. We gather in the comfort of your own home, on zoom, at 10:30 a.m. Follow the link to join us on July 23rd.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4598748094>

July Worship

July 6 Connie Ryan, Director of Interfaith Alliance Preaching

Luke 10: 25 – 37 "Who Is My Neighbor"

July 13 Brents Oliphant, 1 Corinthians 13:13, "The Greatest of These"

July 20 Luke 4:16-21 "Is This What I Asked For?"

June Outreach Giving

Disciples Mission Fund \$1575
Pentecost \$490
VBS \$150

Week of Compassion \$535
Food Pantry \$345
Total \$3095

What's Happening at Wakonda

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Mission Trip 8:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	30 Mission Trip	July 1 Mission Trip 10:00 a.m. Chit Chats	2 Mission Trip	3 Mission Trip 11:30 a.m. W.O.W.	4 Mission Trip	5 Mission Trip 8:00 a.m. B.O.B.
6 8:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	7	8 10:00 a.m. Chit Chats	9 .	10	11	12
13 8:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	14	15 10:00 a.m. Chit Chats	16	17 1:00 p.m. Coloring Group	18	19
20 8:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	21	22 10:00 a.m. Chit Chats	23 10:30 a.m. Bible Study via ZOOM 5:30 p.m. Elders Mtg 6:00 p.m. Mission Team Mtg 7:00 p.m. Board Meeting	24	25	26
27 8:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	28	29 10:00 a.m. Chit Chats	30 10:30 a.m. Bible Study via ZOOM	31	1	2

July Birthdays

1 Gloria Marshall **2** Susan Thies **8** Jamie Badger **13** Brents Oliphant
14 Steve McIntosh, James Uthe **16** Larry Scott **17** Emily Guentert
18 Marian Scott **22** Nancy Koll **23** Marcia Lund **28** Margaret Page