

# WAKONDA NEWS

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

The world feels on fire

*I keep hearing this phrase from ...*

*Colleagues, friends, church members, online. This sentiment of everything feels too tender to touch or scalding hot if we dare approach any topic or subject matter which might upset another person.*

*Tensions, arguments, and disagreements are never our first choice in relationships. Yet true, real relationships are forged in these moments. Walking through these difficult moments is, in fact, what brings out the best of our faith, allowing us to practice humility, genuine listening, and prayerful transformation.*

*Beyond the discomfort of these conversations, we're also Midwesterners. Our very culture instills niceness into our bones. But niceties will not be the steppingstones to true friendship in faith. We are disciples of Christ; we are grounded in the belief that our faith is best revealed in genuine conversation with God and one another.*

*In these challenging times, I know we are unified in our prayers for peace. That peace only comes when we are willing to live beyond our understanding – an understanding revealed when our hearts and minds come together.*

*I offer you this prayer as a guide. May it illuminate the steppingstones to one another, so we might continue walking in shared discipleship, together.*

*As you pray this prayer, trust that I am praying this for you, and with you.*

*Blessings, dear ones,  
Pastor Robyn*

## **A Blessing Prayer in Difficult Times**

by John O'Donohue

May you know tender shelter and healing blessing  
when you are called to stand in the place of pain.

May the places of darkness within you be surprised by light.

May you be granted the wisdom to avoid false resistance and  
when suffering knocks on the door of your life, may you be able to glimpse its hidden  
gift.

May you be able to see the fruits of suffering.

May memory bless and shelter you with the hard-earned light of past turmoil,  
to remind you that you have survived before,

And though the darkness is now deep,

You will soon see approaching light.

May this give you confidence and trust.

May a window of light always surprise you.

May the grace of transfiguration heal your wounds.



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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# Tell me something good

Grounding ourselves in the good news this Lent

## Lent 2026: Tell Me Something Good Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent.

A lot gets lost in translation these days, and Jesus' teaching are no different. Jesus' words are easily distorted and sanitized in our modern world. Following Jesus leads to a richer, more expansive life, but it's not necessarily comfortable. Jesus' ministry can be described as "radical" which comes from the Latin word "radicalis," meaning "root" or "ground." Therefore, the good news should bring us back to our roots. Emulating Jesus and embodying his teachings should ground us in who God created us to be. Can we be "good news" people in a world too often burdened by bad news?

This Lent, let us remember that the good news really is good news. It is joyful—like fine wine saved for celebration. It grows like a mustard seed and smells like perfume poured from an alabaster jar. It tastes like bread passed endlessly through a hungry crowd. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy. The good news is alive in the world.

**Ash Wednesday, February 18 at 6:00 p.m.**

*"The Good News is...All are Invited"*



### Mardi Gras Pancake Breakfast

**Sunday, February 15 following worship.**

Join us for delicious, homemade pancakes, sausage and *bring a fun topping to share.*



### February Worship

- 1:** *Make a Splash*, Matthew 5:1-12
- 8:** Adam Preaching, Isaiah 58:1-12, Matthew 5:13-20,
- 15:** *Seeking the Light*, Matthew 17:1-9
- 22:** *The Good News is ... So Good, it Catches us by Surprise*,  
John 2:1-11, Matthew 13:31-32

## Music Note...

Hello, everyone.

January was cold. As I grieve the recent and historical state-sanctioned violence in this country, I turn to music. Lately, I've been listening to a piece composed by Felix Mendelssohn from his oratorio *Paulus (St. Paul)*. At one point in the narrative, which chronicles St. Paul's conversion and ministry through the Book of Acts, a soprano sings Jesus' words from Matthew 23:37, "Jerusalem, die du tötest die propheten (Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets)," immediately after authorities accuse Stephen of blasphemy, and just before a mob stones him to death.

A few pieces later, as Saul is on the road to Damascus, a choir of women representing the voice of the Resurrected Christ, sing, "Saul! Saul! Was verfolgst du mich? (Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?)." After he listens to Christ and answers his call, a full choir sings the text from Isaiah 60: 1-2, "Mache dich auf! Werde Licht! Denn dein Licht kommt (Arise! Rise, clothed in light, for your light has come)."

Music sometimes helps me see parallels, gives me the space to grieve, and perhaps like Saul on that road, arise and see life anew, more precious than ever before.

Seth

## Our Whole Lives Class

A partnership between Wakonda, New Beginnings Christian Church, Downtown Disciples, and Urbandale UCC is hosting an Our Whole Lives (OWL) class. Starting on February 4<sup>th</sup>, Wakonda will host 20, third-sixth graders in a course on their growing bodies, what it means to be respectful and care for one another, and what this means for our faith. We're thrilled to work together and to see such a strong response from our congregations and community members. We're also excited to explore this curriculum as a possible new camp for our Christian Conference Center. This 9 course class will span 12 weeks and will be hosted in the Thomason room on Wednesday evenings. Students will join with Wednesdays at Wakonda for dinner, then move upstairs for class. If you see a sign on the Thomason room door, please access the building through the Fellowship Hall so you won't disrupt the program.

## February Birthdays

**6** Kendal Bartlett      **7** Linda Harrold      **9** Megan Lane

**10** Jane Hein      **12** Beverly Glade      **14** Dean Lindeman

**18** Sharon Newman      **21** Gabry Babberl, Amy Wiese, Kylee Jessen

## Youth Happenings...

13 of us served at DMARC sorting food and prepping food to be picked up by those who need it. We learned that expired food gets thrown away, and people frequently donate open peanut butter.



# What's Happening at Wakonda

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
February 1 <b>8:45 a.m.</b> Sunday School <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Worship	2 <b>6:30 p.m.</b> Literacy Center	3 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Chit Chats	4 <b>10:30 a.m.</b> Bible Study via ZOOM <b>6:00 p.m.</b> W@W	5 <b>11:30 a.m.</b> W.O.W.	6	7 <b>8:00 a.m.</b> B.O.B.
8 <b>8:45 a.m.</b> Sunday School For All <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Worship	9 <b>6:30 p.m.</b> Literacy Center	10 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Chit Chats	11 <b>10:30 a.m.</b> Bible Study via ZOOM <b>6:00 p.m.</b> W@W	12	13	14
15 <b>8:45 a.m.</b> Sunday School For All <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Worship	16 <b>6:30 p.m.</b> Literacy Center	17 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Chit Chats	18 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> <b>10:30 a.m.</b> Bible Study via ZOOM <b>6:00 p.m.</b> Worship	19 <b>12:00 p.m.</b> Sack Lunch <b>1:00 p.m.</b> Coloring Group	20	21
22 <b>8:45 a.m.</b> Sunday School For All <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Worship	23 <b>6:30 p.m.</b> Literacy Center	24 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Chit Chats	25 <b>10:30 a.m.</b> Bible Study via ZOOM <b>6:00 p.m.</b> W@W	26	27	28
March 1 <b>8:45 a.m.</b> Sunday School For All <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Worship	2 <b>6:30 p.m.</b> Literacy Center	3 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Chit Chats	4 <b>10:30 a.m.</b> Bible Study via ZOOM <b>6:00 p.m.</b> W@W	5 <b>11:30 a.m.</b> W.O.W.	6	7 <b>8:00 a.m.</b> B.O.B.