

# WAKONDA NEWS

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

We're living in a world filled with bad news, but we are forever Good News People. My friends, this Lenten season we not only are reminded that we are steeped in the Good News of Jesus' Christ loving presence for us and the world; but that we are called to live out this Good News in every way possible.

This Good News looks like gathering for worship in our beautiful sanctuary. Every week we ground ourselves in God's presence as we're surrounded by our church community. Through our prayers, uplifting music, and congregational connections, we are reminded that we are not alone in living and sharing this Good News.

This Good News looks like opening our doors to multiple community groups who do their good work in and through our building. The Lion's Club, Boys Scouts, our own Literacy Center and Preschool, the Neighborhood Association, Al-Anon, and our Nesting Congregation are all serving members of our community. The Good News is Wakonda is a deeply connected community partner.

This Good News looks like our Youth Group partnering with three other congregations in the city to share in a mission trip and weekly OWL class. The Good News is our students know they are loved and supported

through congregations throughout our city

This Good News looks your mission team partnering with AMOS and the Palm Sunday Path to stand with our neighbors and listen directly to our neighbors to discern how best we can love and support one another. It's your mission team exploring the Inclusive Church process to discern how best Wakonda can live out our calling to Welcome the neighbor and stranger.

This Good News looks like completing our Capital Campaign projects a year ahead of schedule. Our preschool is able to expand to year-round care, our education and office wing is energy efficient with new windows, and our newly remolded Narthex is hosting not only our Sunday morning Fellowship, but weekly gatherings of students and parents finding support. Thank you to our countless volunteers, particularly our own Gene Koll, for making these efforts of hospitality and care possible. And thank you Wakonda for your faithful generosity and support in making this happen. You are transforming our building into a place and space for everyone.

Wakonda, this Lent we're asking, "Tell Me Something Good...". As your pastor, I'm here to remind you, you are that something Good. Thank you for continuing to prayerfully grow and share this Good News with others.

Peace,  
Pastor Robyn



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>

March 2026  
Volume 71 Issue 3  
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## Lent 2026: Tell Me Something Good

### Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent.

**Mar. 1,** *The Good News is ... great love for God and Neighbor, Luke 7:36-50, Matthew 25:35-40,*

**Mar 8,** *The Good News is ... Together, the Impossible IS Possible, Mk 6:32-44, Ephesians 3:20-21*

**Mar. 15,** *The Good News is ... Protection and Care for the Vulnerable, Mt 19:13-*

**Mar. 22,** *The Good News is ... Rooted in Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness, John 8:2-11, Mt 23:23*

#### Holy Week:

**Palm Sunday,** Mar. 29, *The Good News is ... Inspiring Us to Act, Mark 11:1-11*

### Palm Sunday Path: Standing with our Neighbors

Wakonda's Mission Team is partnering with the Interfaith Alliance on the Palm Sunday Path. This Palm Sunday, March 29, Christians all over the country will reenact Jesus' own peaceful protest into the capital city of Jerusalem, where witnesses waved palms in partnership with Jesus' invitation to feed the hungry, heal the sick, and welcome the stranger.

In the words of our Regional Minister, Rev. Josh Patty, "this is our 'March on Washington' moment! We'll join with a broad coalition of Iowa's clergy, congregations, and denominational leaders in reclaiming Christianity as the embodiment of Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves. Please join us in this strong and meaningful movement based in faith and scripture, with an emphasis on Matthew 25 – caring for our neighbors.

## AMOS: A Mid Iowa Organizing Strategy

AMOS, an invested in our neighbor's community organizing group is interested in hear what's keeping you up at night? What is the driving concern within your family and closest friends? AMOS does not come with an agenda, but rather, is here to listen to you and your concerns. They're currently working with the faith communities of Perry and Madrid on improving the Emergency Response capacity to our rural areas. They have successfully added mental health and teen support to the Emergency Response system. We have trained leaders at Wakonda who would like to convey your concerns and worries. Susan Thies, Brents Oliphant, Richard Guentert, and Pastor Robyn are collecting your concerns and hopes for our community and loved ones. Please reach out to us for a conversation or respond to an invitation to be part of a group conversation at church. Working in collaboration with other faith and community groups in the greater Des Moines area allows us to accomplish far more than we could alone.

## Calling all Interested Greeters

The Congregational Care Ministry team is looking for individuals who are interested in being a greeter on Sunday morning. It involves welcoming our members, guests and visitors with a warm Wakonda "hello" and offering them a worship bulletin. If they have not been to the church before, they may need guidance in locating the sanctuary, restrooms, and/or nursery. It also includes doing a count of the numbers of people (adults and children) who are in worship. Instructions would be given on how to do this. Please contact Sharon Newman @ 515-556-6193 if you are interested and/or if you have questions.

## Music Note...

Hello, Wakonda!

Let's Ring in Spring! Wakonda's Handbell Choir is back, and we have already begun rehearsing after worship on Sunday. You'll hear them ring again on Easter Sunday!

Meanwhile, we've been graced by musical guests McKinna Shinnars, Emily Katich, Clara Uthe, Matt Stilwell, and my friends Gary Goudelock and his son Jaiden in recent weeks. We'll feature esteemed Wakonda extended family member, and Iowa Jazz and Blues Hall of Fame trumpeter, Scott Davis once again on Palm Sunday.

March promises to be full of Good "Musical" News to match our Lenten theme, before we Ring in the Risen Christ on Easter morning.

See you in worship!

Seth

## Youth Happenings...

### Tell me Something Good... about the Playground

There is something that has been happening in the Playground for the last several months. I don't remember when it happened - nobody planned it, it just happened organically. When communion starts, the kids all drop what they are doing and go sit with Brents Oliphant. Sometimes it is 3 kids, sometimes it is 7. They all sit with Brents, to take communion together. Sometimes I see a child breaking the bread with their tiny piece of communion just as the pastor is doing. If you ever question if the kids pay attention or are listening in worship, I assure you they are. Thank you for this safe space for our youngest disciples to learn and grow in their faith.

### Tell me Something Good... about Worship & Wonder

As a church we have seen a few of the stories being told a few times. There is certain language that we use in telling the stories and certain traditions we do with certain stories. I got a peek into how amazing this program is for our kids this week when I got to be the Storyteller. The story for the Sunday was a parable - it is a gold box with a gold string wrapped around it. We start by saying "I wonder if this is a parable?..." and before I could say anything else a couple of our sassy kids said "It is a parable, it's gold because it is a gift from God and it is special!" Yes, that is what we say about parables.

### Tell me Something Good... about Youth Group

Wednesday nights are chaotic and beautiful and full of energy at Wakonda. We have had a steady 10-12 kids for youth group, and 19 kids attended the special OWL class that is taking place at Wakonda. A few weeks ago, the youth served at DMARC. We had 10 kids serving together to help our community. It is a beautiful sight and sound when they can't wait to serve others. They were excited to be there, being goofy as they organized food, and asking great questions. There are a lot of good happening.

### Upcoming Events:

March 8 - Children and Youth are Worship Leaders

March 18 - No youth group (Happy Spring Break!

March 27/28 - YOUTH LOCK-IN! 6:30pm- 10am

March 28 - Easter Egg Hunt! 10am

March 29 - Palm Sunday Parade in worship

## Inclusive Church Invitation




We're exploring the ways Wakonda can live our Mission and Identity statements in being a welcoming and inclusive church. Please join us Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> during the Sunday school hour to learn more about this process and the ways you can be involved. We'll gather in the Thomason room for a brief presentation, followed by questions and small group discussions.

Your input and contribution are needed to make our Mission and Identity statements come alive.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. for small group discussions.

# Wakonda Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday, March 28th, 10 AM**  
**meet in the church sanctuary for directions**

-  Separate hunts for preschool, k-2nd, 3rd-5th
-  Adorable photo opportunity
-  LOTS of CANDY



**WAKONDA** CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST



# Easter Candy Donations

**Please drop-off individually wrapped Easter Candy/small toy to the Easter Candy Basket in the narthex until Sunday, March 22nd.**

**CANDY DONATIONS MUST BE PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE**



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DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

# What's Happening at Wakonda

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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.
8  <b>8:45 a.m.</b> Sunday School <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 <i>Spring Break Week</i>	17 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Chit Chats	18	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 <b>7:30 p.m.</b> Board Meeting	26	27	28
29 <i>Palm Sunday</i> <b>8:45 a.m.</b> Sunday School For All <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Worship	30 <b>6:30 p.m.</b> Literacy Center	31 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Chit Chats	April 1 <b>10:30 a.m.</b> Bible Study via ZOOM <b>6:00 p.m.</b> W@W	2 <b>11:30 a.m.</b> W.O.W.	3	4 <b>8:00 a.m.</b> B.O.B.

## March Birthdays

**2** Dave Lund, Stu Shepard      **3** Jean Williams      **4** Jess Jessen, Isaiah Patty, Kris Fitzgerald  
**6** Maddie Bartlett      **7** Laura Lane      **9** Kathie Scott      **12** Denny Jones  
**14** Craig Davisson      **15** Noah Worthington      **16** Mike Walag      **20** Rob Worthington  
**21** Shirley Gardner      **22** Anita Schlenker      **24** Mackenzie Harvey