

**JENNI
WANGSNESS**
HEALING HEARTS FUND

EST.
2022

A FUND OF THE



WINNESHIK COUNTY
**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

here for good.



Jenni Wangsness

January 8, 1979 – November 29, 2021

Jenni Wangsness lived her life with her faith in action. Her devotion to helping others was an inspiration to many, and the need for people like her in this world is great. Jenni's life was cut short on November 29, 2021, by colon cancer at the age of 42. She taught the people around her the importance of compassion and that everyone has worth and value.

Jennifer Beth Wangsness was born in Decorah, IA, on January 8, 1979, and moved with her parents, Holly Pontier and Phillip Osborn, to Texas shortly thereafter.

Since childhood, Jenni was an active participant and member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church. She was baptized and became a member of the Remembrance Seventh Day Baptist Church in Ft. Worth, TX, while she was in high school, after having completed membership classes given by her grandmother. She also attended Camp Wakonda and became interested in Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC). She served as an SCSC member of Team Shine and loved the experience. Jenni attended the Church's General Conference regularly, assisting with the children's programs and serving as Camp Director for Camp Miles for the Southwest Association. Over the years, Jenni also served as Church treasurer, moderator, and Sabbath school teacher.

Growing up and taking after her mother, Jenni learned to play the flute and enjoyed participating in marching band and color guard at Decatur High School.

From the time Jenni was in 3rd grade, she told everyone that she wanted to be a kindergarten teacher, so it was no surprise when she graduated from the University of North Texas (UNT) with a Bachelor's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies (Elementary Education) with a focus on early childhood development in 2002. During her first two years in college, Jenni got a job in the file room at the tax firm where her mother worked. Her junior and senior years, she worked at a Primrose Preschool and then became a nanny.

Jenni moved to Milton, WI, in 2004 to help her grandparents with their medical issues while also assisting the Milton church with several youth-oriented programs including AWANA and VBS. Jenni remained there until both of her grandparents passed away in 2009. The following year, she moved to Dodge Center, MN, where she transferred her church membership. This is where Jenni's commitment to the Seventh Day Baptist Women's Society began. Jenni would go on to serve on the national Women's Society Board of Directors for 10 years, the last six years as President.

cont.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS FUND, CONTACT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AT 319-287-9106.
ONLINE GIFTS CAN BE MADE TO THE JENNI WANGSNESS HEALING HEARTS FUND AT
[FUND.CFNEIA.ORG/HEALINGHEARTS](https://fund.cfneia.org/healinghearts)



In July 2010, Jenni met the love of her life, Erik Wangsness, in Decorah. It was love at first sight, and Jenni and Erik dated long-distance for two years. Erik proposed at a park in Dodge Center using a geocache. The couple married on November 24, 2012, and lived on Erik's family farm in rural Decorah. Jenni and Erik remained active members of their respective churches while also becoming associate members of each other's congregations.

In 2013, Jenni accepted a position with Semcac Community Action Agency's Head Start program. Jenni put her degree and her love for toddlers to good use, starting out as an in-home educator for infants up to age three. She was promoted a couple of times at Semcac and ended her time at the agency in the position of Education Coordinator. Jenni was an excellent teacher, advocate for children, and had a strong passion for the mental and emotional health of preschoolers. She made it clear that a healthy emotional connection, filled with love, that is made early in childhood, leads to a life with purpose and meaning.

Many of Jenni's years were centered on children and youth ministries, and fighting for others so that they would see themselves as God sees them. Anyone who knew Jenni would say she was a shining beacon for God and she always worried more about others than herself. She was an amazing mentor, teacher, friend, sister, and wife. Her heart of service was evidence of God's love and grace. Jenni's shining smile could light up any room and her kindness will never be forgotten.

Erik established the Jenni Wangsness Healing Hearts Fund with the Winneshiek County Community Foundation to honor Jenni's memory and support her passion and unending love for God and for children.



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About the Healing Hearts Fund

Jenni Wangsness lived her life with her faith in action. She was an excellent teacher, advocate for children, and had a strong passion for the mental and emotional health of preschoolers. She made it clear that a healthy emotional connection, filled with love, that is made early in childhood, leads to a life with purpose and meaning. Jenni's life was cut short on November 29, 2021, by colon cancer at the age of 42.

The Jenni Wangsness Healing Hearts Fund has been established to honor the memory of Jenni Wangsness and to support her passion and unending love for God and for children. The fund will help young children develop emotionally healthy lives by providing financial assistance to access counseling for traumas of any kind, and by providing the resources they need to grow in all areas of their young lives.

Giving to the Fund

The Jenni Wangsness Healing Hearts Fund is held with the Winneshiek County Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa which is confirmed in compliance with national standards for U.S. community foundations. The fund is professionally managed and invested to grow over time. Your gift to the fund will be eligible for federal deductions for charitable giving. You will receive an acknowledgment of your gift to the fund from CFNEIA, an accredited local nonprofit organization.

For questions or to learn more about this fund, contact the Community Foundation at 319-287-9106 or visit online at fund.cfneia.org/healinghearts.

Yes! I/we want to support the Jenni Wangsness Healing Hearts Fund by making a gift.

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

My gift is made in honor/memory of:

Make checks payable to:

Jenni Wangsness Healing Hearts Fund

Please send checks to:

Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa

3117 Greenhill Circle

Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Gifts can also be made on our secure webpage at

fund.cfneia.org/healinghearts

I would like information about additional giving opportunities such as stock gifts, retirement assets, etc.

I would like to learn more about leaving a gift in our will or estate plan.