



STEEPLE VIEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE . . .

WHAT WILL GOD BIRTH IN YOU?

Advent comes, and we are invited into a spiritual place which we might best name as "hush."

Unfortunately, most of us go right to a place called "rush."

Are you hungry for some conversation time with God, for some opportunities to sit quietly--perhaps in candle light, or in the woods at dusk, or by the living room window as the winter birds flock at the feeder--just to hear with the heart what our loving, caring God might whisper in your ear?

As a Pastor, I have so often made the error of excessive busy-ness. Yes, I know, I wrote about this last month, but I am hearing over and over and over again from many of you a narrative of overload, tiredness, and a sense that many of you are doing far too much. I am determined to seek a healthier, more spiritual rhythm of life, and I hope and pray that any who feel weary will do the same. Let's support one another in this! What a lovely Christmas gift that would be!

God does not require of us a frantic pace. There is a wonderful place in scripture in which God speaks through the prophet Micah, and explains that what God does require of us is this: Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God.

In this Advent time, meant to be a sweet, slow, thoughtful time of "hush," of opportunity to hear the still, small voice of God, and a time to attend to what new and wonderful thing God might seek to birth in us, I wish you peace, love, and comfort. I wish you no frazzled days, no last minute mall trips wondering what to get for Aunt Phyllis and Uncle Al, no meaningless purchases, no exhaustion, and no feeling of being glad that Christmas is over. I wish you no rush.

I wish you peace, love, comfort and.....hush.

What is God up to in your life? May Advent and Christmas reveal to you the answer to this question.

Blessings and peace,
Mary

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8*

DIACONATE UPDATE

During the month of December, our pastor will be working a somewhat reduced schedule, in order to attend to some health related concerns. Mary is addressing a chronic pain situation caused by osteoarthritis of the spine and degenerative disc disease. The Deacons are supportive of our pastor taking the time needed (generally using days off she has accrued and not taken previously) to firmly establish a good routine for the management of this. Thank you all for your patience and understanding!

TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Budget (Non-restricted): July 1, 2012 – October 31, 2012

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Income: | \$ 48,259.51 |
| Expenditures: | <u>\$ 45,911.84</u> |
| Net Income (Loss) | \$ 2,347.67 |

Restricted Funds balance at 10/31/2012: \$1,936.68

I am happy to report that income continues to outpace expenses. It is very exciting (at least it is for your treasurer) that we have reached the point where desperation does not set in when a sudden, occasional expense comes up. Rev Mary's computer, after a few reprieves, quit for good. Though there is no provision in the current year budget for a new computer, we were able to purchase one with general fund surplus money from the previous year. Mold remediation as well as some painting and repair work on the exterior of the church have recently been completed. In order to pay for these projects we spent the former Capital Campaign funds first and now are beginning to expend some of the funds from the current Capital Campaign.

I will be gone at the beginning of December and, consequently, the November 30, 2012 Treasurer's report will be late in coming out. The report should be distributed and posted by mid-December.

*Janice Brejwo, Treasurer
jbrejwo@roadrunner.com*

For further information about what you read in this newsletter, please email the editor at steepleviews@gmail.com or call the church office. We'll be happy to help!



[www.facebook.com/
FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC](http://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC)

WAKEFIELD YOUTH GROUP

This fall has seen the beginnings of the Wakefield Youth Group. In September we visited a corn maze in Lee, NH where using flashlights we maneuvered our way through 6+ acres of corn fields. In November, 14 teenagers gathered in the fellowship hall for board games, pizza and enlightening words from Reverend Mutsumbei (Baba). December 8th will find us performing as elves for the Conway Polar Express. If winter roars in as some have predicted, and we receive an abundance of snow, we hope to go tubing in January at Moose Mountain. The kids want to see Baba bundled up and zipping down the mountain side. More monthly adventures are in our future as we fellowship, and share the good feelings of safe healthy fun. If you know of a Wakefield 8th to 12th grader who would like to join us, contact Donna Ackerman at 651-6349, or friend request the Wakefield Youth Group on Facebook.

*Your Friendly FCCW Youth Coordinator
Donna V Ackerman*



HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO RING A HANDBELL?

The bell choir is always looking for substitute ringers so that our choir members can take an occasional break or visit out of town family on Sunday mornings. It may seem daunting to ring in the handbell choir; however if you can read music, we can teach you how to ring a handbell. We are planning to hold a bell ringing clinic on a Sunday evening in January. Date still needs to be determined, but tentatively we are looking at January 20 at 6 PM. The date will be set according to the needs of those who plan to attend. Please be thinking about this challenging but rewarding mission. Basic music skills are a must. Please let Jan Stanley know if you are interested and if Jan. 20 works for you.

Jan Stanley

ANGELS AND MORTALS!

Back by popular demand, we will engage in our wonderful community building activity that we affectionately know as "Angels and Mortals," beginning on Sunday, December 9th. All who wish to take part will put their names in a common "hat," and then will draw the name of another church member or friend. The person who draws your name is your Angel, and the person whose name you draw is your Mortal. For the Advent and Christmas season, Angels are asked to keep their Mortals in prayer, and to do little thoughtful things on their behalf, such as send cards, or bake some cookies, or that sort of thing. There should be very little expense attached to this--it is not meant to be a burden. Rather, it is to know that someone in your church family is especially keeping you in thought and prayer through Advent and Christmas. The identity of our Angels is kept secret until the first coffee hour after Epiphany, when we will reveal the identities of our Angels!

If you wish to participate, be sure to be in church on Sunday, December 9th. If you are unable to be there and wish to take part, let Mary know and she will be sure to put in your name and to draw the name of a mortal for you. Please participate only if you are committed to following through.

We have had such fun with this over the last three years; we hope all will jump in and enjoy this once again!

ADVENT FELLOWSHIP

Come one, come all. Come to our **Advent Pot Luck Luncheon** to be enjoyed immediately after worship on **Sunday, December 16th.** Please bring your favorite dish to share. Maybe someone could even bring a scrabble or cribbage board to play in good company.

And for those whose Advent season wouldn't be complete without Christmas Caroling, all interested singers will be heading out into the community after lunch to lift their voices in song.

Please join the fun on December 16th.



Margie Galabrun – Lunch organizer
Connie Littlefield – Caroling organizer

ONLINE SALES FUND-RAISER



Ah, those beautifully wrapped gifts that look so nice in the package, but you know you will never wear or use. We have a suggestion for those treasures. Maybe you could offer them to our church's on-line sales fund raiser. Someone out there in *online land* really wants that gift, and your donation could help the church balance its budget.

It's very simple. All you have to do is notify us when you have an item to donate. We'll take pictures and try to sell your item online. You keep the item in your home until it's time to ship. We'll even take care of the shipping for you. After your item sells, you will receive a statement of donation indicating the value of the amount received. Now that is a great gift.

Margie Galabrun

ALTERNATIVE GIFTING

I saw Christmas lights up in someone's yard last week and it isn't even Thanksgiving yet. Well some people just can't wait. For those of you who have started your Holiday shopping early, don't forget to look to alternative gifting. Instead of giving another fruit cake, (do people really make those?) try giving the gift that keeps on giving. No not a life-time supply of energizer batteries. I'm talking about Heifer International. Here's how it works:

- You decide to donate a sheep or portion of a sheep in the name of your Mom. She has always loved sheep.
- Mom receives a card from you telling her about the donation in her honor.
- Now one more family is on the road to self-reliance.
- A family is trained on how to care for the sheep and then receives a healthy ewe.
- The sheep provides wool for clothing for the family, or the wool could be sold for food, medicine, or school fees.
- In turn the family will pass on one or more of their sheep's offspring to another family in need.
- See, the gift that keeps on giving.

Look for a gifting table to be set up during coffee hour in December, and be prepared to hear more about Heifer International during church services. Give the gift of hope and save the fruit cake and your waistline.

Donna Ackerman

ADVENT TO EPIPHANY: CHILDREN'S CHURCH SCHOOL

*To introduce Advent as a time of expectant waiting.
To discover ways in which we prepare for Christ's coming.*

To explore the significance of Jesus' coming.

To explore the excitement of impending birth.

To celebrate the birth of Christ.

To reflect on Jesus' childhood and our lives.

To celebrate Epiphany and the story of the Magi.

All of the above statements are the goals of the Sunday School lessons for our children in the unit, "Fulfillment and Promise." Our lessons continue to bring learning challenges and joy!

Our Collaborative Church School Team – Ra恒ya Morann, Ginny Schweitzer and Jan Fairchild -- continues to staff the weekly lessons and communicate with parents. Penny Ellis is preparing the children for the Christmas Pageant which will be December 23.

We welcome more volunteer teachers and assistants and are eager to talk to you about the new curriculum. If you are interested, please contact us.

Jan Fairchild

GIVING THE GIFT OF HOPE

ALTERNATIVE GIVING THROUGH CHILD SPONSORSHIP

As the holiday season approaches The Z Team asks you to consider "alternative gift giving" for someone on your shopping list. Through this program we have been able to sponsor children in Zimbabwe and have witnessed first-hand the difference it makes for a child who has food, clothing, the ability to attend school and ultimately, a renewed sense of hope and self-worth.



A gift in any amount may help a child such as Solomon Govhana, a young boy who has lost both of his parents. He can now attend Grade 5 because he is being sponsored through FOOT (Friends of Orphan Trust).

If you are interested in Alternative Gift Giving, please see any member of the Z Team -- Donna Ackerman, Ann Bilodeau, Chris Federn, Debbie Fogg, Cathy Koukal, Connie Littlefield, Julia McCarthy, Jan Stanley, or Jo Szirbik. A holiday card, with a special insert, will be available for you to give to your "recipient."

Connie Littlefield

HOLIDAY READING

We invite you to stop in our library and see the many holiday titles we have available. I bet there is one just for you! . Remember we love to receive book reviews of the books you enjoy!

*Library Ministry
Mary Beth Cook and Nancy Dee*

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

We have reached an interesting juncture in our progress towards the Capital Campaign goal of \$300,000. We are just about half-way there, but appear to have "plateaued" at this level. After a great start, only a few more pledges have been made over the past month. This is a concern, because as we enter the Holiday Season folks will get ever busier, and will in addition need to have money available for gifts, decorations, food and the like.

At the time of this writing, a total of \$137,445 has been pledged by 43 households, of which \$47,539 has been received in cash.

The Capital Campaign Team has been hard at work making visits to people's homes to listen to their hopes and dreams for our church and to hear their questions and concerns. There is great value in learning what folks are thinking and how they feel about the church; the information will guide us as we go forward.

Of course, they are also asking for pledges because, as we all know, the maintenance and preservation of the church is the primary focus of the campaign.

Please don't be concerned if you haven't been contacted yet. Each Capital Campaign Team member has agreed to get in touch with as many as 10 potential contributors, and this takes time in what are already busy lives. Be patient, we will get to you!

We are working towards wrapping up the campaign. If you have been contacted, but have not yet turned in your confidential Pledge Card, now would be a good time to prayerfully reflect on what the church means to you, and how you would like to contribute to its future. It has been said before, but bears repeating: this is an historic moment in the life of our church. Whatever you can contribute, please be a part of it. Thank you.

*Bill Goodwin
Capital Campaign Team Coordinator*

DECEMBER 2012

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | |
|--|---|---|--|---|-----------|--|--|
| | | | | | | 1 World Aids Day | |
| 2 First Sunday of Advent Worship with Holy Communion & Church School - 10 Leadership Council Mtg. 11 a.m. | 3 Choir 6 p.m. | 4 Bible Study 12 noon | 5 Diaconate Meeting 4:30 | 6 Scrabble 10 a.m.. Weight Watchers—5:30 String Band Beg.—6 p.m. Mixed—7.p.m. | 7 | 8 First Night of Hanukkah | |
| 9 Second Sunday of Advent Worship and Church School 10 a.m. Coffee Hour *Installation—3 p.m. | 10 Choir 6 p.m. | 11 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer—4 p.m. | 12 Pairs and Spares 6—8 p.m. | 13 Parish Helpers - Noon Ready to Learn 4 p.m. Weight Watchers—5:30 p.m. String Band Beg.—6 Mixed —7 p.m. | 14 | 15 Tree of Memories Town Hall 1 p.m. | |
| 16 Third Sunday of Advent Worship and Church School 10 a.m. Potluck and Caroling | 17 Choir 6 p.m. | 18 Scrabble 10 a.m. Bible Study 12 noon | 19 | 20 Weight Watchers—5:30 String Band Beg.—6 Mixed —7 p.m. | 21 | 22 | |
| 23 Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship and Christmas Pageant 10 a.m. Coffee Hour | 24 Christmas Eve Service 7 p.m. | 25 Christmas Day  | 26 | 27 Prayer Shawls 10 a.m. Weight Watchers—5:30 | 28 | 29 | |
| 30 First Sunday after Christmas Worship and Church School 10 a.m. | 31 New Year's Eve | | | | | | |
| | | | | *Installation of Rev. Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy as Pastor and Teacher at UCC Church in Rochester, 3 p.m. | | | |

Celebrations!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Tom Stanley | 11 Dorothy MacKenzie |
| 1 Rachel Yazinka | 13 Carol Jeffery |
| 2 Shannon Mercer | 16 Jeff Ballard |
| 2 Lynn Watts | 16 Jay Tamilio |
| 3 Robert Gehring | 20 George Harvey |
| 3 Marie Hebb | 26 Jessica St Pierre |
| 8 David Silcocks | 30 Greg Crowell |

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- | |
|------------------------------|
| 1 Art & Louise Wheeler |
| 10 Eric & Amanda Boggs |
| 27 Peter & Linda Foss |
| 28 John & Persis Hildebrandt |
| 31 Bill & Pam Judge |

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Connie B. | Tom and Barbara T. |
| Paul T. | George B. |
| Dot R. | Art W. |
| George H. | Cathy K. |
| Jo W. | Mackenzie M. |
| Julia W. | |

Our global neighbors in places in which there is great strife
Our servicemen and women
Our friends in Rufumiso, Zimbabwe
Residents of the Nursing Homes and Retirement
Communities in our area



COMING IN JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day—Office Closed
- 2 Diaconate Meeting 4 p.m.
- 6 Epiphany Sunday
- 13 SLFF Team meeting;
- 13 Carroll-Stratford Assoc. Pulpit Exchange
- 18 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- 21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 24 Third Anniversary of Prayer Shawl Ministry

PARISH HELPERS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

The December Parish Helpers meeting will be a potluck luncheon on Thursday, December 13, and will begin at 12 noon. We should each bring a salad, entrée, or casserole. Dessert will be provided by the hostesses, Marie Hebb, Jean Lloyd, and June Taylor.

We will also have the very popular Yankee Swap. Please bring a wrapped gift (\$10 value) and be prepared to have some fun! The Parish Helpers welcome all women of the Church or community to join our group! We meet the second Thursday of the month at the church. Hope to see you there!

Carol Jeffery

TREE OF MEMORIES

One of the most meaningful and expressive events of the holiday season, the Hospice Tree of Memories, is celebrating its 17th annual commemoration at the Wakefield Town Hall on Saturday, December 15, at 1 p.m. This occasion provides opportunities for family, friends, and neighbors to remember a loved one by placing an inscribed porcelain dove, a symbol of serenity, peace, and tranquility, on a lighted tree. Everyone is welcome to attend the ceremony.



To purchase a dove in the name of a loved one, please speak to Ginny Schweitzer (522-9593) or contact the VNA-Hospice of Southern Carroll County at 569-2729 by December 6.

WIDER CHURCH NEWS

The Carroll-Strafford Association held the Nov. meeting at the Union Congregational Church of Madbury Church with the Maranatha Indonesian Church, UCC. The C/S Association currently has three seminarians in care. Stay tuned as plans unfold for an association wide pulpit exchange to be held on January 13th and another book group!

On Sunday, December 9, the C/S Association will install the Rev. Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy as the Pastor and Teacher of the First Congregational Church, UCC, in Rochester. The service begins at 3:00 p.m. Rev. Mike Bennett, the new pastor at First Parish Church in Dover will be installed on January 6th. Members of FCCW are cordially invited to attend both services.

Rev. Gary Schulte, NH Conference minister, Rev. Kim McKerley of Brentwood – Kingston UCC, Dr. Erik Hobbie of Exeter UCC, Kathy Blair of Keene UCC, and Nancy Boyle of Dover UCC attended the installation of Rev. Ephraim Ngadziore, the president of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe.

The NH Conference is working through Church World Service to provide emergency clean up buckets, blankets, and hygiene and school kits for areas impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Check out the link at : www.cwsglobal.org/Sandy

*Connie Littlefield, Coordinator
Wider Church Ministry*

Please use this form to order your Christmas Poinsettia plants.

Orders must be placed by **December 17**. Checks should be made out to the First Congregational Church of Wakefield.

Order forms and payments may be left in the Diaconate mailbox, to the attention of Titia Bozuwa, located in the church narthex or mailed to the church.

Name of Donor (s) _____

Dedication (In Memory of/ in Honor of) _____

_____ Red Poinsettia Plants @ \$10 each = _____

_____ White Poinsettia Plants @ \$10 each = _____

Plants may be picked up after the Christmas Eve Service

LETTER OF THANKS FROM THE RUFUMISO CHURCH

Dear Wakefield Church members,

We greet you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. We want to express our sincere gratitude towards the gifts you sent us. May the Lord our Father continue to pour showers of blessing upon you all. You have loving and caring hearts. We pray that all your plans and goals be blessed by our dear Father in heaven. “Blessed are those who give, for they shall receive the Kingdom of heaven.” To tell you the truth, everyone was really thrilled to receive an item from you our dear friends. The sharing was done freely and was open and fair. School children benefitted quite a lot. Thanks again for the hospital consignment. The items shall go a long way to sustain wherever applicable.

Connie, Ann, and the Z Team, we thank you again for the support you rendered us toward the ordination of our Reverend G. Fakarai. Your gift played quite a big role. The event was a success because of your help and support. We also thank you for attending the event. We now have an ordained pastor, i.e., Reverend G. Fakarai who can now perform all ministerial duties without hesitation. We are now about to finish the church extension. We are working on glazing and outside plastering. We thank you for the great help you had rendered throughout the whole process. I hope you are fine. Greetings from all Rufumiso members. God loves you all.

Yours in Christ, Mwandi Sithole, Church Secretary

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS - 2012

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2718 WAKEFIELD ROAD, PO BOX 809
SANBORNVILLE, NH 03872



DECEMBER LECTORY

December 2 — First Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Psalm 25:1-10

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

December 16—Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Isaiah 12:2-6

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:7-18



December 9—Second Sunday of Advent

Baruch 5:1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4

Luke 1:68-79

Philippians 1:3-11

Luke 3:1-6

December 30—Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a

Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 80:1-7

Hebrews 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-55