



STEEPLE VIEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

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VOLUME 37: No. 1

JANUARY 2013

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FIRSTCONGREGATIONALCHURCHOFWAKEFIELDUCC

THE PASTOR'S PAGE . . .

ALL THINGS NEW A JOYFUL NEW YEAR TO ALL!

It is in our shared cultural rhythm to begin many things anew at this time of year. Very commonly, we embark on new endeavors with great resolve: We are going to lose that muffin top. We are going to eat more healthily. We are going to drink less alcohol. We are going to walk more. We are going to (fill in the blank)—and so on. While we have varying levels of success sticking to all of these resolutions, it truly is wonderful that are able to make up our minds to renew our lives at any time. Even better, we know we never have to do it alone: if we are seeking to make a change for the better, God can give us the strength to do what we hope to do.

It is traditional in Jewish thought for humans to see themselves as partnering with God in completing the unfinished work of creation, and to do so in a way that heals what is hurting or broken in the world. We can see vividly in the life of Jesus that he took this aspect of his religious tradition very seriously, devoting his life to the tender care of those cast aside and reviled, and to the healing of the world. We often feel that we can't really succeed at the changes we try to make in our own lives and in the situation in the world, but let us be reminded at this beginning of the year that God has promised to "make all things new." Let us see if we can adopt even just a small measure of Jesus' faith in the prospects for a healing newness to settle in our lives and in our world.

We can choose God's newness whenever we want to do so—for our own lives, and to guide us in our actions toward our fellow humans and toward God's good creation. For any new positive and healing endeavor, God stands ready to guide and strengthen us.

May it be a year of refreshing and holy newness for all, for our congregation, for our community, for our world! God is ready. Are we?

Blessings and peace,
Mary

See, I am making all things new.
Revelation 21:5

TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Budget (Non-restricted): July 1, 2012 – November 30, 2012

Income:	\$ 58,155.61
Expenditures:	\$ 56,569.35
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 1,586.26

Restricted Funds balance at 11/30/2012: \$1,729.73

We are a hard working church in so many ways. Fund Raising projects to supplement the general fund this year are really helping us stay on track. The Harvest Fair held in November raised \$1526.89. The income from online sales has reached over \$1000 as of early December. I would like to thank all those who help make these endeavors so successful.

The Budget Workshop, held in November and facilitated by Cathy Koukal, was a creative, informative, and interesting discussion. You may be surprised to hear that work has already begun on the annual budget for the next fiscal year! We are hoping to incorporate what was discussed during the workshop into the budget planning procedure.

By the time you read this, Christmas Day will be over and the New Year will be on the door step if it has not yet arrived. That means we are one half the way through another fiscal year. Time certainly does fly when you are working with such a nice group of people.

Janice Brejwo, Treasurer
jbrejwo@roadrunner.com

CHILD SPONSORSHIP/ ALTERNATIVE GIFT GIVING

Thank you once again for your generosity in sponsoring our FOOT children. As of this writing, we are just shy of having all 30 of our children and youth covered, but as our Zim friends always say, "God will provide."

Connie Littlefield

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)

ADVENT AT FCCW



From potlucks to pageants, it was a wonderful Advent at FCCW. The Parish Helpers enjoyed a potluck and Yankee swap, the Potluck Fellowship and Caroling was well received (see thank you notes elsewhere in

this issue), and the Christmas Pageant with a special visit from St. Nicholas built great excitement which culminated in a beautiful Christmas Eve Service. What a wonderful church we are!

Thanks to all who contributed time and energy into making the season special in so many ways! (For more photos of these activities, visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC)

AROUND THE NH CONFERENCE

Rev. Mary and I had the opportunity to attend the wonderful celebration of the installation of Rev. Eliza Buchakjan Tweedy at First Congregational Church of Rochester. It is so nice to be part of the Carroll-Strafford Church family and celebrate with our partner churches. The Carroll-Strafford Association will install Rev. Michael Bennett at the First Parish Church in Dover by on Sunday, January 6th at 3 p.m. It would be lovely to have delegates represent Wakefield. Please let me or Mary know if you are interested in attending.

Plans are underway for Prepared to Serve to be held at Pembroke Academy on Saturday, Feb. 23rd, with the theme "Love Into Action." This is an inspiring day of workshops covering all aspects of church ministry and spiritual growth. Our own Calling and Discernment Team will be presenting, following up on a very popular and well received workshop from last year. More details will be forthcoming but mark your calendars as you will not want to miss this exceptional event!

Connie Littlefield,
Coordinator Wider Church Ministry

KUDZAI, KUDZAI, KUDZAI!
A STORY FROM ZIMBABWE
BY MAGGIE MASON

Never having met Joseph before, I was nervous when Connie told me that he would be the one meeting Ann and me at the airport. I guess it doesn't really matter how many times I get told how much I'll love someone – I'm always going to be nervous. Once I met Joseph and his two sons, Owen and Simon, I was eager to meet the rest of the family. These three men didn't only give me some of the funniest memories from my trip, they also made me feel comfortable and safe and I assumed the rest of their family would be like that too; and I was right.

The night we got to meet the rest of Joseph's family was great, but best of all was the sassy six year old, Kudzai. When the entire neighborhood ended up on Joseph's front yard, Kudzai was whispering to her friends about how she was having Connie, Ann and me sleepover. She was automatically the coolest six-year-old in Zimbabwe. Out of all of the kids I met in the three week journey, Kudzai stuck out the most. Unlike all of the other kids, she wasn't scared to come up and grab my hand or say hi to me. Her bright red sweater and matching hat was without a doubt the best outfit I've ever seen on a little girl, and her smile was so big that it lit up an entire room.

We got in the habit of saying each other's names three times instead of once. I can still hear her saying "Meggie, Meggie, Meggie!" Everyone called me Meggie, not Maggie, and Kudzai did it the cutest way.

I still tell my mom how badly I wish that I could have packed little Kudzai in my backpack and brought her home with me.



COFFEE HOUR COORDINATOR

Yeah! Lyn Shepard is excited to be coordinating present and future coffee hours (typically the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month). Please let her know if you wish to participate from time to time. There are some innovations in this important Fellowship experience being planned for 2013. Watch for news!

PARISH HELPERS

The Parish Helpers will meet January 10, at 1 p.m. Ann Bilodeau will give a presentation about her trip to Zimbabwe last summer. All women of the community are welcome!

**WAKEFIELD COMMUNITY SHAWL MINISTRY
CELEBRATES THIRD ANNIVERSARY**

On January 24, 2013, the Wakefield Community Shawl Ministry will meet and celebrate the third anniversary of their organization on January 28, 2010. The group has met each month to make prayer shawls. Shawls have been knitted and crocheted and distributed to women and men for a wide variety of reasons to both grieve and celebrate life events. Shawl ministry meetings provide opportunities to share personal stories and prayer requests. Prayer shawls are blessed with prayer. Small prayer squares are made and given to church visitors. The prayer squares are also given during care team visits.

The Shawl Ministry follows the guidelines and resources provided by Janet Bristow and Victoria Galo who gave birth to this ministry in 1998. The history of this ministry, prayers and stories are available at www.shawlministry.com

Please join us for our special gathering on January 24. We will share some special resources and celebrate with refreshments. This group is open to anyone interested in making prayer shawls or prayer squares. They can be knitted, crocheted, sewed or quilted. If you have questions, please call Jan Fairchild, 522-2123.

Ancient Gaelic Blessing

*Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the gentle night to you
Moon and stars pour their healing light to you
Deep peace to you, deep peace to you.*

(An example of a prayer resource from [Knitting into the Mystery: A Guide to the Shawl-Knitting Ministry](#), by Susan S. Jorgensen & Susan S. Izard.)

Jan Fairchild

**SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!
SAVE THE DATE!**

Mark your calendars for Saturday, Jan. 26, for what promises to be a fabulous Italian Dinner created by Barry Lockard, with assistance from the Z Team. Many of you will remember that Barry toured Italy last year, not only singing but cooking while on tour! Barry wanted to participate in the 2012 Service Auction and this is his offering!

A delicious menu is being prepared and details will be available soon so watch the Sunday bulletin and the weekly church emails alerts for all of the details. The dinner will be held at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and seating will be limited!

ANGELS AND MORTALS!

"Angels and Mortals" began on December 9 and continues until January 13 when the identity of our angels will be revealed during coffee hour.

Through Advent and in the 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 the Christmas season. Be sure to attend on Sunday, January 13, to see who your angel is!

CIRCLE 227 – CHECK IT OUT!

Begun 2 years ago, this brilliant idea was born to boost our purchasing power for the little things (and not-so-little) needed at church in honor of our 225th year: copy paper, juice, paper towels, Kleenex, crayons, dish detergent, hand soap, sheet music, fluorescent replacement bulbs, vacuum cleaner bags, etc. The list is endless. It's an important way to help extend our budget.

Refreshed seasonally, take a look at the new poster boards in fellowship hall. There may be something there you would like to provide. Just take a tag (or make a tag), do the deed and move the tag from the left over to the board on the right (accomplishments).

When we all do a little, A LOT HAPPENS! Bless you!

Carol Lundgren

EDUCATING LIBERTY

He's but a boy, growing into manhood without mother or father. Yet, he feels something from this church. Bless you for moving change from your purse or pocket and dropping it into the JAR in the church entry way. Every month \$25 is sent to Joseph Sibya in Zimbabwe. Joseph manages the FOOT program (Friends of Orphans Trust) and this allows young Liberty to continue his education. It is a great blessing to this young boy in a far away land. Who knows where he will go? Now he has options that YOU and our Church School children make possible.

Carol Lundgren

ONLINE FUNDRAISING

It's been suggested that we give the congregation the opportunity to buy some of the wonderful donations we've been given for our online fundraising effort. I think it's a great idea. We've received quite a variety of items, but this month I would like to high-light the vintage "Made in USA Limoges Dinner China". I didn't even know Limoges was ever made in the US. This particular pattern is Wild Rose. We have 12x 9 3/4" dinner plates, 2x 9" vegetable bowls, 1x 8" handled vegetable bowl, 1x 12" handled oval serving platter, 1x 15" handled oval serving platter, a gravy boat and some coffee cups.

What a wonderful donation! Currently they're for sale on both Amazon and E-bay, but if you or someone you know is looking for replacement pieces, we can un-list them and sell them to you without shipping costs. Please help these pieces find the right home. Thanks, Beth Fox, for this suggestion.

Margie Galabrun



JENNIFER RUSSELL MISSION OUTREACH FUND

Rev. Jennifer Russell, along with her husband Rick, served as the pastor of this church following her graduation from Bangor Theological Seminary in 1984. She was energetic and amazing, and among other things she served on conference committees (getting many of us to serve on conference committees as well) and served as Chaplain at Horton Center Church, encouraged us sponsor refugees from Cambodia, and Ethiopia. Jennifer would go on to serve on the United Church Board for World Ministries from 1989 to 1995 and led several mission trips to India, Bosnia and China.

What did she mean to us? Mary James said it well:

“In every church, in each era of its life, there is usually a pastor who for a very long time is thought of as that “back in the day” minister. The “back in the day” minister is one whose tenure, when it came along, was so life-giving, direction- changing and spirited that it becomes, at some point, a positive emotional reference point for the congregation for a very long time.

For the First Congregational Church of Wakefield, New Hampshire, of the United Church of Christ, to this current pastor’s constantly listening ears, the pastoral tenure shared by Jennifer and Rick Russell is surely felt in the heart of the church to have been the most recent pastorate powerfully influential enough to qualify for “back in the day” status. While I had the immense privilege of meeting and speaking more deeply with Rick as a student in care when he served on our Association’s Committee on Church and Ministry, I believe I have only met Jennifer briefly and in passing once or twice. However, as the current lucky pastor of this beloved congregation, I feel I know Jennifer better than our passing introductions would normally allow, because of the way she (and, of course, Rick) are still loved and celebrated in the life of the church. I feel deep gratitude and admiration for both of them and the work they carried out here.

Spunky. Spirited. Spark-plug. Generous. Prophetic. Challenging. Cutting edge. Fearlessly inclusive. Funny. Down to earth. These are the words of remembrance and love that are uttered when folks speak of Jennifer. These are the qualities that make for a “back in the day” kind of pastorate. People who know Jennifer well would often, over the years, remember her and look at each other and chuckle affectionately, fond memories firing in their grateful hearts, and more or less just say, “Wow.” And last week, some of those same dear folks sat quietly together and wept at the hard news that Jennifer has left this plane of existence for the next one, because they will miss her and will greatly lament the absence of her much needed self here in this world.

The Wakefield congregation sends deepest condolences to Rick and the whole Russell clan, and to all who know and love Jennifer. May it be a comfort to know that the presence of her spirit and the grand influence of the pastorate she shared with Rick in Wakefield still reverberate. “Back in the day,” by God’s grace, has folded seamlessly into the present, and Jennifer’s presence is still felt and cherished.”

Jennifer’s had an unsurpassed love of mission and was a fount of new, creative and innovative ways of doing things. In this spirit, preliminary thoughts are being shared on how we might establish a Jennifer Russell Mission Outreach Fund in her honor. As her obituary stated, memorial gifts were encouraged to be sent to Global Ministries or “anyplace where healing or joy is needed.” This church is all about finding ways to serve and finding ways to provide healing and joy. I can only imagine Jennifer’s contagious smile and laughter as she watches what we come up with!

Connie Littlefield

Celebrations!

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

2 John Tamilio III	17 Warren Berg
3 Donald Silcocks	18 Eric Boggs
4 Austin Gehring	19 Bob Crowe
4 Caitlin Koukal Howes	19 George Szirbik
6 Penny Ellis	20 Gail Leyare
7 Donna Ackerman	20 Edward Morrison
8 Jim Pirie	25 Aileen Koukal
9 Jason Denver	25 Martha Jo McCarthy
9 Rachel Wilson	28 Samantha Michalsky
15 Lindsay Baldwin	28 Erin Seaboyer
16 Carole Doughty	30 John Hebb
16 Robert Chadbourne	30 Joanne Dolbear
16 Bill Judge	30 Janie Silcocks

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

12 Richard & Diana Peckham
16 Jeff & Valerie Ward

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 where there is great strife.
Our servicemen and women
Our friends in Rufumiso, Zimbabwe
Residents of the Nursing Homes and Retirement
Communities in our area



LOOKING AHEAD TO FEBRUARY

6 Deacons meet 4:00
13 Ash Wednesday
17 First Sunday in Lent; Installation of Gina Finocchiaro as Pastor and Teacher at First Congregational Church in Wolfeboro, time TBA
20 Wakefield Clergy Luncheon
23 Prepared To Serve, Pembroke

THANK YOU TO THE CAROLERS

A big "thank you" to the wonderful group of carolers who came to our house on Sunday, December 16, and who sang to us. It was a lovely day with light snow falling and it really put us in the Christmas spirit.
With love from Curt and Janet Carr

It was ten days before Christmas and all was quiet. Marion and I were in the kitchen cooking sautéed mushrooms and making bread.

Then all of a sudden out on the farmer's porch we heard a commotion of a lot of feet.

Marion ran to the door and opened it. To her surprise she found Christmas carolers from the Congregational Church coming to sing Christmas carols to us.

It was a wonderful wonderful blessing for us to have everyone come to our home and bring us Christmas cheer. We wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

*With all our thanks and love,
George/Melvin and Marion Blomster*

IN APPRECIATION

Grateful thanks to Dr. Herb Clark for providing an eye exam and much needed glasses to Rev. Mutsumbei, gratis. If you are a patient of Dr. Clark's at Rochester Eye Care Associates, please be sure to express thanks and appreciation on behalf of our church community.

If you are someone who is looking for a great optometrist and all around great guy, Herb is the one! (He's also a local Great East Lake resident.)

Connie

JANUARY 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Year's Day	2 Diaconate Meeting 4:00	3 Scrabble 10 a.m.. Weight Watchers—5:30 String Band Beg.—6 p.m. Mixed—7.p.m.	4	5
6 Epiphany Sunday Worship and Holy Communion Church School 10 am RSM Meeting— 11:30 *Installation in Dover—3 p.m.	7 Choir 6 p.m.	8 Bible Study 12 noon	9 Pairs and Spares 6—8 p.m.	10 Parish Helpers - 1 p.m. Weight Watchers— 5:30 p.m. String Band Beg.—6 Mixed —7 p.m.	11	12
13 First Sunday after Epiphany Worship and Church School—10 a.m. C-S A Pulpit Swap Rev. Maren Tirabassi preaching here. “Angels and Mortals” Reveal at Coffee Hour	14 Choir 6 p.m.	15 Scrabble 10 a.m. Bible Study 12 noon	16 Wakefield Clergy Luncheon	17 Weight Watchers—5:30 String Band Beg.—6 p.m. Mixed—7.p.m.	18 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	19
20 Second Sunday after Epiphany Worship and Church School—10 a.m.	21 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Choir 6 p.m.	22	23	24 Prayer Shawls 10 a.m. Weight Watchers— 5:30 String Band Beg.—6 p.m. Mixed—7.p.m.	25	26 Diaconate Retreat Time TBA
27 Third Sunday after Epiphany Worship and Church School—10 a.m. Coffee Hour	28 Choir 6 p.m.	29	30	31 Ready To Learn Conversation Group, 4-5:30 Weight Watchers— 5:30 p.m. String Band Beg.—6 Mixed —7 p.m.	*Installation of Michael Bennett as Pastor and Teacher at First Parish Church Dover, 3 p.m.	



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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JANUARY LECTIONARY

January 6 — Epiphany

Isaiah 60:1-6
 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
 Ephesians 3:1-12
 Matthew 2:1-12



January 20—2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 62:1-5
 Psalm 36:5-10
 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
 John 2:1-11

January 13—1st Sunday after Epiphany, Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 43:1-7
 Psalm 29
 Acts 8:14-17
 Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 27—3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
 Psalm 19
 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
 Luke 4:14-21