



STEEPLE VIEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

REVEREND MARY A. JAMES, PASTOR

REVEREND GEORGE HARVEY, PASTOR EMERITUS

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THE PASTOR'S PLACE . . .

NEW!

In the deep of winter, the celebration of the turn of the calendar year arrives. We marvel at the fact that it is now a year so very advanced in the march of time in relation to our own lives; to speak the number of the new year out loud always sounds strange to our ears. Time for us seems so fleeting and fluid; every now and then, we will find the number of a year long past flowing out of our pens as we write a check, or begin a letter. Happy New Year, we proclaim, and we do very much long for it to be both happy and new. And no matter how much of a mess we have made of our lives, or life has made of us, God wants these things for us, as well. The great thing is that God also provides all we need to make these things possible, and possible for every single one of us humans.

On the day this piece was written, I had to drop my car off at the Durham Village Garage for an oil change. When you first walk into this garage, the condition of the office does not inspire confidence. It is, in a word, a shambles. There are piles of paper everywhere, seemingly from years ago. An old coffee pot no discerning customer would touch sits ready for anyone who dares to pour from its encrusted container. There are many shelves filled with out-of-date yearbooks of some sort related to cars; the calendar of appointments is kept by hand. The old wood floors are crooked, and the model cars displayed in their boxes are covered with dust. The proprietor, George, is dealing with a constantly ringing phone (not the latest model) and the plastic lawn chairs in the old waiting area, entered by an old half-glass, half-wood door, are generally in use by waiting customers.

Nothing seems new here, but it is the best garage around. You see, George always treats you as if you are a brand new customer. George always remembers your name and treats you like you are the only customer in the world at that moment. He knows the models and years of your cars and remembers their particular quirks, and no matter when you call he always has time to take a look at your ailing vehicle. When your teenager buys his or her first car, George will check it over and give an opinion on the prospective purchase as if your child was his own. He wants his customers to be happy and their cars to run like new, and one can always count on him. No matter how crazy things get in his little disheveled office, his attitude is always new, and it is one of kindness and reassurance.

George's kindness and calm in the midst of apparent mess and chaos reminds us that no matter how broken our lives, how deep our sorrows, how messy we have made things, or how much life has "messed us up," like George in his garage, God is there for us—and how much more so! God's love and grace offer us a path to peace and newness, to grace and a fresh beginning. May this assurance be a source of happiness and peace in this New Year—and, even better than happiness, a deep and sustaining joy that cannot be rocked, even by hard circumstance.

Blessings and peace,
Mary

Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11: 28

TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Budget (Non-restricted): July 1, 2013 – Nov 30, 2013

Income:	\$ 58,062.97
Expenditures:	\$ 57,389.03
Net Income (Loss)	<u>\$ 673.94</u>

Restricted Funds balance as of Nov 30, 2013: \$3,173.78

November ended with a positive balance! The Harvest Fair assisted greatly by raising over \$1600. This will come in handy since the next quarterly bills as well as those pesky winter bills are beginning to arrive.

It was cold outside and snow started to fall, but spirits were high during our newest fund raising venture, "Christmas in the Village". The event raised around \$1000 for the church's general fund as well as showcasing our historic neighborhood and wonderful church building.

Alternative Gift Giving is once again in full swing to benefit some of our favorite causes including the Wakefield Food Pantry, Heifer, The Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund and of course, ongoing Zimbabwe projects. I will let you know the results of this wonderful giving tradition next month.

Janice Brejwo, Treasurer
jbrejwo@roadrunner.com or
fccwtreasurer@gmail.com

CARROLL-STRAFFORD ASSOCIATION CHOIR SWAP

On January 12th, we will participate in an association-wide choir swap. We will host the choir from the First Parish Congregational Church UCC in Dover, and they will host our singers. Let's offer a very warm Wakefield welcome to the Dover choir folks on Sunday, January 12th!

Looking for more information on something you read in the Steeple Views? Call the church office during open hours (Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.) or email the editor at steepleviews@gmail.com. We'll be happy to help! See more from FCCW at our Facebook Page!



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

COMMUNICATIONS

We strive to keep our members and friends informed! In addition to the monthly Steeple Views, you can see the News in the Pews in our Sunday bulletins and church emails. You can check our website and Facebook page. And of course, if you have questions, feel free to call the church office! If we don't have your email address, please contact the church office at fccwakefieldnh@gmail.com or the Steeple View editor at steepleviews@gmail.com.

WAKEFIELD PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY CELEBRATES 4TH ANNIVERSARY

Wakefield Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet at 10:00 am on Thursday, January 23.

Anyone interested in making prayer shawls or prayer squares is welcome! We have a huge supply of free yarn to share and we are eager to share our prayer resources. During each meeting we share prayer requests and we bless completed shawls, which Rev. Mary James distributes to people experiencing either hardship or special joy.

Please spread the word that all are welcome! Refer questions to Jan Fairchild.

COFFEE HOUR COORDINATORS

Coffee Hours provide opportunities for church friends to visit with one another and enjoy refreshments. We are grateful to Priscilla Frothingham for organizing the coffee hours from September through December. Many thanks to Priscilla, her regular assistant Midge Leonard and all those who contributed delicious snacks! Rachel White and Sharon Theiling will co-coordinate coffee hours from January through April 2014. Thank you for offering to share your spiritual gift of Hospitality!

Jan Fairchild
Calling and Discernment

HOORAY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH!

We are all in agreement that our church is called to offer more experiences that will be relevant and meaningful for children and youth. In this spirit, our Christian Education and Diaconate ministries have decided that we will offer a true Family Sunday experience on the second Sunday of every month, beginning this month. Second Sundays will bring fresh and innovative services that will be meaningful for parishioners of ALL ages, including our youngest friends! Our first Family Sunday in this new series will be offered at our worship service on January 12th. Let's spread the word!

Celebrations!

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

2 John Tamilio III	19 Bob Crowe
3 Donald Silcocks	19 George Szirbik
4 Austin Gehring	20 Gail Leyare
4 Caitlin KoukalHowes	20 Edward Morrison
6 Penny Ellis	24 Sid Girardin
7 Donna Ackerman	25 Aileen Koukal
8 Jim Pirie	25 Martha Jo McCarthy
9 Jason Denver	28 Samantha Michalsky
9 Rachel Wilson	28 Erin Seaboyer
15 Lindsay Baldwin	29 Timothy McCarthy
16 Carole Doughty	30 John Hebb
16 Robert Chadbourne	30 Joanne Dolbear
17 Warren Berg	30 Janie Silcocks
18 Eric Boggs	

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

12 Richard & Diana Peckham
16 Jeff & Valerie Ward

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Paul T.	Cathy K.
Dot R.	Mackenzie M.
Jo W.	Beth M.
Julia W.	David M.
Tom and Barbara T.	Florence M.
George B.	Curt C.
Art W.	Marsha



And for:

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

PARISH HELPERS

Twenty –nine Parish Helpers met on December 12 for the annual potluck luncheon and Yankee Swap. Everyone enjoyed the fabulous variety of dishes that were offered by our very talented home cooks! Rachel White did an outstanding job of decorating and the room looked very festive. Our thanks the hostesses, Priscilla Frothingham, Donna Vanderhoof, and Rachel White for making it a memorable meal! The Yankee Swap was so much fun—these ladies are not as mild-mannered as you may think!

Our next meeting is on January 9 at 1 p.m. Our guest speaker will be Jessie Crockett. Jessie is a resident of Milton Mills and has just published her second novel, “Drizzled to Death”, a murder mystery. Jessie is no stranger to many of us as she is a member of the Gafney KnitWits. She has been described as, “A nearly life-long resident of the Granite State, who naturally adores black flies, 98% humidity, killing frosts in August and snow banks taller than the average grandmother.” I’m sure you’ll find her very entertaining. Hope you’ll join us!

Carol Jeffery

STATUS OF LIBRARY REORGANIZATION

Our adult library books have been organized into new subject headings identified by the shelf labels. There are listings of holdings by title in notebooks available in the Fellowship Hall and Parish Helpers libraries. Once you have found the title you want, match the letter code for the item to its subject heading and then identify which library has that subject. At this point books are not arranged by title on the shelves, so you will need to look through them to find the one you want. The books will be organized by title next year as will the listing and reorganization of the children’s library.

New Library Books--Check-out the new books on the mobile shelving unit in Fellowship Hall. Those of you who subscribe to the UCC’s Stillspeaking Daily Devotional will recognize some of these authors.

90 Minutes in Heaven: A True Story of Death and Life - D. Piper

Forgiveness: Finding Peace Through Letting Go – A. Hamilton

Why? Making Sense of God’s Will – A. Hamilton

When “Spiritual but Not Religious” Is Not Enough – L.Daniel

Grace at Table – D. Schaper

Living Faith While Holding Doubts – M.Copenhaver

Children’s Book: Number the Stars – L. Lowry

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

JANUARY 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 Scrabble—10 a.m. Weight Watchers—5:30 Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	3	4
5 Worship and Holy Communion & Church School— 10 a.m. Leadership Council 11:15 a.m.	6 EPHIPHANY Choir 6 p.m.	7 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer 4 p.m.	8 Deacons Meeting 4:00 p.m.. Pairs and Spares 6 p.m.	9 Parish Helpers 1 p.m. Weight Watchers—5:30 Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	10	11
12 Baptism of Christ Family Sunday 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Angels and Mortals Reveal	13 Choir 6 p.m.	14 Bible Study 12 noon	15	16 Weight Watchers—5:30 Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	17	18 Beginning of week of prayer For Christian Unity
19 Worship and Church School— 10 a.m. Team Synergy Meeting 11:15 a.m.	20 MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY Choir 6 p.m.	21 Scrabble—10 a.m. Bible Study—12 Centering Prayer 4 p.m.	22	23 Prayer Shawls 10 a.m. Weight Watchers—5:30 Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	24	25
26 Worship and Church School— 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	27 Choir 6 p.m.	28 Bible Study 12 noon	29	30 Weight Watchers—5:30 Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	31	

Z TEAM NEWS

Comments from Rev. Mhururu: The Wakefield Congregational Church through its subcommittee the Z Team deserves a big thank you. Makaita zvakanaka.

The recipients communities I am sure they will have a joyful Christmas wearing those clothes that you send to them. The few boxes for my family which were also in the container also arrived safely.

All Ministers in the Northern Conference had a Retreat Meeting 108 Kilometres north of Harare at place called Masvikadei Resort Centre. So I failed to travel to Mutare to go and off load the container but my son Tapuwanashe managed to go and assist.

Can you extend our great appreciation to Rev James and the entire Church.”

Thank you.

Blessing and peace, Rev A. Mhururu.

THE SHIPPING CONTAINER ARRIVES IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS!

After three months, the container was finally cleared and the boxes unpacked in Mutare, Zimbabwe on December 16 just in time for Christmas. Messages of grateful appreciation came in abundance.

From Rufumiso member Gift Dhliwayo, deputy headmaster at Goko High School:

*To the Wakefield Church and Z team in general,
You wonderful people of God. Our church shall write you in the near future. Meanwhile I personally & sincerely would to express profound gratitudes & to implore God the Almighty to abundantly bless you!!*

From dear friend Sibongile Mukonzvi:

We are EXCITED here that the container arrived and that people have already taken their boxes. Thank you for the timely Christmas presents. Pass our sincerely gratitudes to everyone there who participated in this gesture. God bless you all.

And from Joseph Sibiya, who put in countless hours with Zim authorities and who fielded endless calls from waiting, questioning folks: *I want to take this opportunity to express our thankfulness for all your efforts and kind hearts. Everyone who receives this donation is highly appreciative. THANK YOU.*

Thank you to all who participated in making this gigantic humanitarian effort a reality!

The Z Team



Nyasha, 2 1/2 year old son of Rev. Mutsumbei, PROUDLY on his new bicycle obtained from a USA yard sale!



Joseph Sibiya clearing the container with Zimbabwe customs authorities

WHAT IS THE ZIMBABWE TEAM?

The Z Team is the mission team of the FCCW dedicated to the empowerment of children in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe Team (Z Team) facilitates side by side "love in action" with the UCC Zimbabwe.

- 1) We are committed to a partnership with our sister church, Rufumiso UCCZ, and have worked together to rebuild their church and renovate local schools.
- 2) We promote the sponsorship of children through Friends of Orphan Trust. (FOOT)
- 3) We are committed to rebuilding Dzika Primary School and funding for a borehole for the Dzika community.
- 4) We oversee the delivery of humanitarian supplies through a shipping container in collaboration with other churches and organizations.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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FAMILY SUNDAY
 JANUARY 12
 SEE PAGE 2
 FOR DETAILS

JANUARY LECTIONARY

Sunday, January 5
Second Sunday after Christmas

Jeremiah 31:7-14 or Sirach 24:1-12
 Psalm 147:12-20 or Wisdom 10:15-21
 Ephesians 1:3-14
 John 1:[1-9] 10-18

Sunday, January 19
Second Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 49:1-7
 Psalm 40:1-11
 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
 John 1:29-42



Sunday, January 12
The Baptism of Christ

Isaiah 42:1-9
 Psalm 29
 Acts 10:34-43
 Matthew 3:13-17

Sunday, January 26
Third Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 9:1-4
 Psalm 27:1, 4-9
 1 Corinthians 1:10-18
 Matthew 4:12-23