



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

PHONE: 603-522-3189

FAX: 603-522-3302

WEBSITE: FCCWAKEFIELDNH.ORG

EMAIL: FCCWAKEFIELDNH@GMAIL.COM

VOLUME 38: No. 3

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FIRSTCONGREGATIONALCHURCHOFWAKEFIELDUCC

THE PASTOR'S PLACE . . .

LENTEN STORM, EASTER HOPE

As I write this, I am sitting at the dining room table, looking out at the white-out conditions of yet another snow storm. Good thing Lent is coming, I think, because this means spring cannot be far off.

The storms of our own lives are many, much as it is with the ever changing and capricious weather of this beautiful region in which we live. To get through these storms, we draw upon reserves of spirit, just as we have to dig deep (no pun intended) to shovel through the drifts of snow again and again in a hard winter like this one. This is why, on a stormy day on which many are posting photos of this next impossibly heavy snowstorm on Facebook and laughing in shared consternation, I am swooning with gratitude over the coming of Lent. Not only does it mean spring can't be too far off, it also means that the Church, in one of her great shows of wisdom, will once again provide for us a season for confronting our own places of inner lost-ness, during which we may seek to rebuild our spiritual reserves. It is a season in which we go to the hard places, the stormy places, but emerge with hope, and not despair—by the abundant grace of God.

Some folks in our congregation have done some lovely things to enrich the way of Lent for all of us. A beautiful "Home Grown Lenten Devotions" booklet has been put together to be shared with anyone who would like a copy. Jan Fairchild and I will lead an adult spiritual enrichment series called "LOFT: Lenten Opportunities for Transformation" on five Sunday mornings before worship in Lent. We are, at the time of writing, also working on extending LOFT into digital space so that the conversation can continue over the course of the week, and include folks who are not able to attend in person.

We will also offer a beautiful Ash Wednesday service on March 5th at 6:00. Several folks who usually attend have shared that this service means a lot to them as a way of intentionally beginning the walk through Lent. On this night, we find on our lips the words of Psalm 51: *Create in me a clean heart, O God/ and put a new and right spirit within me.* I ask you: who can't use that?

Seasons of the spirit that parallel the cycles of life, yet emphasize the presence and grace of the eternal God through it all, are part of the pure genius and gift of the Church at its best. Being present to Lent in an intentional way is a treasure not to be missed.

Come, taste and see. See what God will create in you.

Blessings and peace,
Mary

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Psalm 51: 12

Z TEAM NEWS

While Julia McCarthy still has the distinction of being the youngest Z Team member, we are so happy to welcome Jillian Currier to the team! Jillian is an 8th grader at Paul School. The Z Team is getting busy and we have a lot of events coming up!

Saturday, March 22 is the next Z Team Breakfast! Come and celebrate spring's arrival with some yummy pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, muffins, juice and hot beverages from 7:30 – 10:30. Price is \$7.00 for adults, \$5.00 for kids; Children under 3 eat free! The family plan – 2 adults and 2 kids – is \$20.00. As always, the camaraderie and fellowship are priceless!

Put on Your Sneakers for Dzika! Our entertaining decathlon, a bonding experience for sure, will be held on Sunday, March 30th at 2:00 p.m. at the Spaulding High gymnasium. It is just \$10 to join a team and all money raised will be used for the borehole at Dzika, Zimbabwe. We can use teammates as well as volunteers to help with scoring. Please see any Z Team member (Connie, Cathy Koukal, Jo Szirbik, Ann Bilodeau, Chris Gatchell, Jan Stanley, Debbie Fogg or Jillian) for more details.

The 2014 Shipping Container is coming! May 24th is the date to pack our 2014 effort. A list of priority items will be available at church and on our website. Your donations are so greatly appreciated and make a huge difference to our friends in Zimbabwe.

Looking further ahead...another fabulous Service Auction is in the works! In the coming months the Z Team will be calling on members and friends to donate a service --baked goods, a dinner, yard work, or some specialty--for the rest of us to bid upon. The Service Auction will fund the mission supplies for the three work camps planned during our August trip – building a home for a handicapped woman, working on the parsonage at Rufumiso, and finishing renovations at Dzika Primary!

Check out The Zimbabwe Team on Facebook and see all the photos of the 2013 container arrival as well as other updates!

For more information on articles you read in the Steeple Views, contact the editor at steepleviews@gmail.com or call the church office at 603-522-3915. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 a.m to 1:30 p.m. You can also:

www.facebook.com/

FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC



WIDER CHURCH NEWS

There is a lot happening around the NH Conference!

Peace and Justice Event—The NH Conference Peace and Justice Task Force is sponsoring Building a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence Conference on March 10th. Nationally known peace activist John Dear will lead the event. This will be held at Brookside Church in Manchester from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. More information is available by contacting Rev. Barbara Currie: pastorbarbara2003@yahoo.com

Lenten Carbon Fast—We talk about reducing our carbon footprint, but how exactly do we do that? The Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ is inviting us to a Lenten Carbon Fast. Check out the website at <http://www.macucc.org/pages/detail/2410> for more on this powerful initiative which begins on Ash Wednesday! Carroll Strafford Association Pot Luck

Mark your calendars for Friday, April 4th! A pot luck supper with a music program will be held at the Durham Community Church. It is always fun to get together with other great UCC folks in our area. Watch for more details!

Connie Littlefield

STEWARDSHIP NOTES

Educating Young Liberty – Thank you dear church school children and congregation ... for putting coins into the education fund jug in the Narthex for Liberty Shanguro. Liberty has written of his gratefulness that he is achieving an education he never thought possible as an orphan in Zimbabwe. You are making an important difference in the life of this child who is so far away, but able to feel our love up close and personal.

Circle 228 - Soon the snow “men” on the circle and heart poster boards in Fellowship Hall will give way to some welcome Spring flowers. Thank you to ALL who **take a tag** (regardless of season) and provide something our church needs. It is truly amazing. Forever stamps, dish-washing soap, toilet paper, paper towels, church school supplies and snacks, gift certificates to Staples, Rite Aid, Hannaford and Market Basket are just some of the tags that await further generosity. What does Circle 228 mean? This congregation is 228 years young! We are an all-inclusive circle of Christians, sharing from our God given riches.

Carol Lundgren

LOFT:

LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSFORMATION

You are invited to participate in a five week study series, Lenten Opportunities for Transformation or LOFT!

Rev. Mary James and Jan Fairchild will co-lead the classes which will combine prayer, silence, meditation and conversation. Come and find nurture for the soul, compelling ideas for the deepening of faith, and encouragement to deepen the walk with God and one another!

Sessions will focus on the spiritual connections found in poetry, prose, art and video resources. Classes will meet in the large classroom at 8:45 am on Sundays- March 9, 16, 23, 30 and April 6. Please notify Mary or Jan if you plan to join us! If you are available to drop in at the last minute, you are welcome. There will be an online conversation venue for participants to share further discussion during the week; this will also open the group to others who cannot make it in person.

Jan Fairchild

TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Budget (Non-restricted): July 1, 2013 – Jan 31, 2014

Income:	\$ 83,124.40
Expenditures:	<u>\$ 85,136.40</u>
Net Income (Loss)	<u>\$ (2,012.00)</u>

Restricted Funds balance as of Jan 31, 2014: \$2,936.74

Expenses continue to outpace income at the end of January. Even though it does not look like it, with a net loss of \$2,012 as of January 31, there has been improvement in the bottom line since December. The church budget, just like our household budgets, has been strained by the cold and snowy winter. Most likely, we are in agreement that warmer weather cannot come soon enough.

As you probably know, I will be stepping down as treasurer at the end of this fiscal year. Who will step forward as our next treasurer? Will it be you? Please consider if being the next treasurer might be the perfect opportunity to use your time and talents to help out our church community. I guarantee you will learn a great deal about our church just as I have during my time in this position. I will be available and happy to assist during the transition period if needed.

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

SOME SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICE NOTES

Ash Wednesday, the first day in Lent, will be on March 5th. We will offer an Ash Wednesday service that evening at 6:00. If you have not come to this before, those who have attended can attest that the service offers a very meaningful way to begin one's journey through Lent. Please join other neighbors and friends in this time of worship, and experience the spiritual value of intentionally entering Lent with this shared time of prayer.

On March 9th, we will celebrate our third Family Sunday service, a worship experience during which the whole service is geared so that children can meaningfully participate and understand what is going on. If the first two are any indication, these services are turning out to be meaningful and inspiring for the whole congregation, and we have heard from many adults that they have found these services uplifting and relevant to their lives! We will also welcome a group of new members on this day and celebrate their joining the church at coffee hour!

On March 16th, Community String Band, under the direction of Shana Aisenberg, will provide much of the music for our worship service. Traditional Irish melodies are often so beautiful, and on this Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, we will offer some lovely tunes to nurture the spirits of all who attend! You might even find your toes tapping during some of the tunes . . .

Rev. Mary James

CALLING AND DISCERNMENT MINISTRY

The primary responsibilities of the Calling and Discernment Ministry are to educate and assist people in the identification of their spiritual gifts and to encourage the practice of those gifts within and beyond the church community. We maintain close communication with church officers and ministry coordinators and attempt to respond to ministry needs by recommending specific plans and/or recommending people to fulfill responsibilities. This process depends on *everyone's* commitment to personal clarity about their spiritual gifts, passions, available time and careful discernment about how they will practice their gifts in the life of the church. Janice Brejwo and Pam Frazier have exemplified this fulfillment of their gifts as they have served as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer for the last four years. They have notified us that they wish to complete their service at the end of this fiscal year, June 30, 2014. We appreciate the thoughtful notice they have given us to "call" out new people to fill these positions. We ask that everyone carefully consider the job descriptions (See the February Steeple Views). Are you the person for either of these church offices? Do you know someone who would be appropriate? Please pause, pray and discern -- listen with the ear of your heart. What do you hear? We welcome conversation -- please share your questions, comments and recommendations.

*Jan Fairchild, Coordinator
Donna Ackerman, George Ackerman, Mary James*

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN as of 2/14/13

(Questions regarding this report should be directed to Bill Goodwin at billsusie58@hotmail.com)

	<u>Pledged</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Spent*</u>	<u>Available</u>
	\$164,095	\$109,762		
Less consultant fees	<u>(14,500)</u>	<u>(14,500)</u>		
Amount to allocate	<u>\$149,595</u>	<u>\$95,262</u>	<u>(\$7,982)</u>	<u>\$87,280</u>
Inreach 70%	\$104,716	\$66,683	(\$7,982)	\$58,701
Legacy 20%	\$ 29,919	\$19,053		\$19,053
Outreach 10%	<u>\$ 14,960</u>	<u>\$ 9,526</u>	<u> </u>	<u>\$ 9,526</u>
	<u>\$149,595</u>	<u>\$95,262</u>	<u>(\$7,982)</u>	<u>\$87,280</u>

*\$7,982 has already been spent from the Inreach portion of the funds. These expenditures include:

- 50% of Mold remediation: \$2,200
- Balance of Key Day exterior work completed to date: \$3,461
- Septic System permits, state & town: \$325
- Water System: \$1149
- Safety/Security: \$847

THINK SPRING!

Although we have not entered the Lenten Season, it is time to start thinking about Easter flowers. As is our usual custom, we will be offering lilies, tulips and daffodils for purchase to decorating the sanctuary. These plants can be purchased in memory of or in honor of loved ones or anyone you choose to recognize during this holiday. The plants will be yours to take home after the Easter Sercixe on April 20th. Forms for ordering will be available by March 2nd with prices and orders will need to be made by April 6th. Completed forms and money can be returned to the Visual and Decorative Arts box in the narthex., mailed to the church, C/O Visual Decorative Arts ministry or given to me personally. Checks should be made out to the First Congregational Church of Wakefield (FCCW). If anyone has ideas or questions regarding Palm Sunday decorations or Easter flowers, please contact Deborah Smiley @ 569-2867 (h), 475-4347 (c) or by email at smiley.deborah@gmail.com.

Deborah Smiley

TIPS FOR THE UCC WEB SURFER

Are you responsible for promoting a UCC related cause? The national UCC website is a wonderful resource: www.ucc.org. Once there you can educate yourself about the cause and find free promotional materials you can download. Are you planning to attend a NH Conference related event or do you want to find out what's going on in churches in New Hampshire, the NH Conference website is where you want to go: <http://www.nhcucc.org>. One particularly useful feature is the directory of all the NH UCC churches which contains essential contact information on each church. Once you're at these websites, there are two efficient ways to find the information you're looking for. You can either use the site's "Search" box which is at the top of the site's home page or you can go to the bottom of the website and click on the "Site Map" which will display the information the website contains in an orderly way by categories that you can click on when you find the pertinent one.

Linda Petkunas/Church Librarian

OUR MOTIVATION, YOUR MOTIVATION

There are many things we may all agree on about our Church and our mission within its doors, within its community and within its world. Yes, within its world. A world which is simultaneously becoming larger and smaller as our knowledge and familiarity with its people, cultures and all our relationships with God helps to broaden and shape our visions, and challenge all we thought we knew of our existing world to date. What once we thought was of the most importance to us may be even further enriched or it may be replaced with new and relevant matters as our knowledge and awareness of our world broadens. And that is healthy whether it is our personal selves or our united Church—to be willing to listen and learn and grow.

We as a Church and a people have had remarkable and unique opportunities this year to challenge ourselves and push our comfort zones. While we blessed Rev. Mary's sabbatical and the opportunity for her to be spiritually enriched, we welcomed Rev. Mhururu into our midst and looked to him as our spiritual leader. And while this was a new and fulfilling experience for us, can you imagine putting yourselves into Rev. Mhururu's shoes and conceive the courage and faith it must have taken him to venture into a new part of his yet unknown world? Now our collective worlds have joined, developed and we have all grown with the grace of God.

As we look to our future we are on a precipice—of growth or stagnation. Have you noticed that on many Sundays there are as few as 2 or 3 children in the front pew listening to Rev. Mary's children's story? And don't we all notice with great joy when more children are in our midst? What a shame that more aren't here to hear her loving words of comfort and as she embraces them with God's love. What a difference that would make in so many more children's lives, and our own. As we look to our future, we have yet another opportunity, or more aptly an obligation, to ensure the future of our Church and its missions within our community and beyond.

You will soon receive your Invitation for Intentional Giving. We ask that you prayerfully consider your vital importance to the life of this Church, our community and our world. As God's stewards, we *can*, and *do* make a difference.

For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints – and this, not merely as we expected: they gave themselves first to the LORD, and by the will of God, to us, that we might urge Titus that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking among you. (2 Corinthians 8:3-7)

*In God's name,
Chris Feddern &
Carol Lundgren, Stewardship*



A LENTEN INVITATION

The **N.E.R.E.M. – New England Regional Environmental Ministries** invite our congregation to join in a Lenten Fast . . . From Carbon!

2014 will be the fourth year a day-by-day opportunity to fast from carbon as a Lenten discipline will be provided. Initiated by the UCC and endorsed by other denominations and faith groups, people of every Christian perspective – and people who are not Christians – have benefited from this opportunity to become more conscious and conscientious in their daily lives.

Ash Wednesday (March 5, 2014) invites us into the season of Lent – a time within the church year to acknowledge that we are mortal, limited. Lent awakens us to hope in God whose "steadfast love endures forever" and to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. The Lenten disciplines of repentance, fasting, prayer, study and works of love are guides for returning to the steadfast love of God. During Lent we confess our mortality, our limits and our vulnerability so that we might be transformed and become the new life God calls us to be.

We invite you to join us as we commit to fasting from carbon during Lent. Beginning Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent, participants will receive a daily email with the day's suggested carbon-reducing activity. Many will also suggest ways to engage others. Each daily email will also provide material that can be the basis for a weekly congregational conversation.

The activities range from the very simple: eliminate "vampire" electrical use; to the moderately challenging: take "military showers;" reduce your driving speed; to more long term: buy local produce and get involved in a community garden.

This invitation is being emailed to congregations all over the country by UCC Conference Ministers and by our "bishop" counterparts in numerous denominations. Our experience is that Christians the world over – from every denomination – will participate in this carbon fast.

We are on Facebook! Beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 5, each day's activity will be cumulatively posted on this page. [Click here to go to the Facebook page.](#) Or to sign up for daily emails and more information, go to <http://www.macucc.org/carbonfast>.

God is calling us to be the change we long to see. Let us engage this spiritual discipline, grateful for all God has entrusted to us, and trusting that with God all things are possible.

Celebrations!

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 John Shaffer	15 Gemma Golden
3 Linda Currin	17 Jean-Michel
3 Ken Ellis	Galabrun
4 Charlie Bowen	17 Jan Stanley
5 Deb Smiley	18 Kayla Leyare
6 Angela Brown	20 Leona Vittum
7 Peggy Leighton	21 Laura Jacobson
8 Nathan Fogg	24 Michelle Garland
8 Marlena Livingston	29 Elizabeth MacRury
9 Richard Peckham	29 Nathan Wilson
11 Andrew Hughes	31 Katy Hagy
14 Penny Cotreau	

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

4 Stephen & Lauree Royle
25 Warren & Marjorie Berg

THANK YOU, WENDY

I invite the congregation to join me in thanking Wendy Dee for her service as Church School Director this past fall and winter. Wendy brought wonderful energy and enthusiasm to the position, and faithfully served the church through her love and dedication to our children. Wendy, we are so pleased that you were called to work with us in this capacity, and we wish you well in whatever comes next for you. Thank you. *Margie Galabrun*

SUMMER CAMP OPPORTUNITY

WOW! UCC Summer Camp opportunities abound for children and adults of all ages this summer at beautiful Horton Center! Funding assistance may also be available for those in need of it. Please talk with Mary if you are interested in learning more.

PARISH HELPERS

The Parish Helpers will meet on March 13 for a special program by Rev. Mary James. All women of the church and community are welcome to attend and/ or become members! Please join at 1 p.m. on March 13.



FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Paul T.	David M.
Dot R.	Florence M.
Jo W.	Curt C.
Julia W.	Marcia
Tom and Barbara T.	Penny C.
George B.	Wesley H.
Art W.	Serena H.
Cathy K.	Ryan R.
Mackenzie M.	Harold
Beth M.	

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

CONFIRMATION CLASS FORMING

What a joy to announce that a Confirmation Group is forming! Young folk in grades 8-12 and their parents are invited to gather with Mary on March 9th after spending a few minutes at coffee hour to grab a snack and chat. We will put together an approach that works for all the youth and families involved. Please let Mary know if you plan to attend, or are interested but can't make it that day. You can contact her at fccwpastor@gmail.com.

TEACHERS NEEDED

Would you like to get to know the children a little better? Here's a wonderful way: Consider taking a turn or two in leading our children through their church school lessons. It takes a little planning time, maybe an hour or two, but the lesson material is well designed for volunteer teachers and everything is provided for you. The rewards are amazing! You'll be paid in smiles and enthusiastic chatter. You might even find a little person sitting next to you in worship or at coffee hour. How can it get better than that? Please contact Margie Galabrun to schedule your turn.

Margie Galabrun

MARCH 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Worship And Holy Communion 10 a.m. Bells Practice 6 p.m.	3 Choir 6 p.m.	4 Bible Study 12 noon	5 Ash Wednesday Service 6 p.m.	6 Scrabble 10 a.m. Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	7 Junior Girl Scouts Lock In	8 Junior Girl Scouts Lock In
9 LOFT - 8:45 a.m. Family Sunday Worship And Welcoming New Members 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Girl Scouts 1—4 p.m. Bells Practice 6 p.m.	10 Choir 6 p.m.	11 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer 4 p.m.	12 Deacons Meeting 4:00 Pairs and Spares 6 p.m.	13 Parish Helpers— 1 p.m. Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	14	15
16 LOFT - 8:45 a.m. Worship and Church School— 10 a.m. Irish Music Sunday Bells Practice 6 p.m.	17 Choir 6 p.m.	18 Scrabble 10 a.m.	19 Steeple Views Deadline	20 Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	21	22 Z Team Pancake Breakfast 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.
23 LOFT - 8:45 a.m. Worship and Church School— 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Bell Practice 6 p.m.	24 Choir 6 p.m.	25 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer 4 p.m.	26	27 Prayer Shawls 10 a.m. Community String Band Beg— 6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	28 Cadette Girl Scouts Lock In	29
30 LOFT - 8:45 a.m. Worship and Church School—10 a.m. Decathlon 2 p.m. Bell Practice 6 p.m.	31 Choir 6 p.m.					



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



ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE
MARCH 5
6 P.M.

MARCH LECTIONARY

Sunday, March 2

Last Sunday after Epiphany

Exodus 24:12-18

Psalm 2 or Psalm 99

2 Peter 1:16-21

Matthew 17:1-9

Sunday, March 16

Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalm 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9

Sunday, March 9

First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Psalm 32

Romans 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11



Sunday, March 23

Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42

Sunday, March 30

Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalm 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41