

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 . . .

PEOPLE OF PRESENT PRESENCE, PEOPLE OF HOPE

I once heard someone offer a criticism of the notion of hope, citing the idea that if we are always focused on hope, we are not fully rooted in the present. Hope, the person said, is preoccupied with the future, rather than grounded in the here and now. Reflecting upon the core messages of Christianity, it seems to me that we as followers of Jesus must have a foot firmly planted in the present *and* in hope for the future. Jesus has called us to be robustly present in the here and now to love God, to care for one another, and to care for God's creation. Jesus has also called us to have hope, and to continue cooperating with God's vision of a world that is just and peaceful for all people. We are called to stay faithfully engaged in the present, and to remain hopeful about the future.

Given the preponderance of dismal news reports, it can be very challenging to stay engaged in hopeful ways. It is daunting indeed to ponder the deterioration of relations with Russia, the situation in the Middle East, the evil determination of terrorists to harm any who do not think and believe the way they do, and worries about climate change and its implications. Yet it goes to the very core of our identities as people of faith to stand firmly in the present, stare of all this in the face, and continually bring the responses of hope, peace, love, and caring everywhere we go, every day. No matter how bad the news gets, we always have this God-instilled capacity to express caring and hope. As tempting as hopelessness and cynicism can be, God has promised to always give us the strength to be people of presence in the present, filled with hope.

There is so much we can do to influence things in the direction of love: we can pray; we can lend a helping hand; we can give funds, time and energy to organizations that work for peace and justice; we can write our government officials and urge them to do all they can for peace, the care of the poor, and the care of creation; we can live in environmentally sound and energy saving ways; we can bring open and peaceful hearts with us wherever we go.

Jesus has promised us his peace, and has promised us to give us the words we need in difficult situations. God has promised us strength, and the ability to run without becoming weary in the face of great difficulties. Let us resolve to be a hopeful people, firmly committed to a peaceful, loving present, while living ever more deeply out of an attitude and posture of hope—for the sake of generations to come, and for the sake of all of God's creatures.

Blessings and peace,
Mary

*...those who wait for the Lord
shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.*

Isaiah 40: 31

AUTHOR HIGHLIGHT: MITCH ALBOM

Mitch Albom writes fictional and non-fictional stories based on the people who have touched his life. Examining their lives and the impact they had on him led him to explore the relationship between heaven and earth. Below are the books he's written which are available in our library's collection with the codes related to the subject areas where they are shelved:

The Five People You Meet in Heaven (J-F)

For One More Day (J-F)

Have a Little Faith (S-O)

Tuesdays with Morrie (S-O)

*Linda Petkunas,
Church Librarian*

CIRCLE 228 IS NOW CIRCLE 229

On Monday, September 22, our church reached a milestone! That date was the 229th anniversary of our founding. So Circle 228, which was established as part of our 225th anniversary celebration, is now Circle 229.

Please check out the newly decorated and updated bulletin board in Fellowship Hall (by the kitchen) for ways **YOU** can contribute to the smooth running of our beloved church. There are tags listing ways to help – everything from giving someone a hug or a smile, through donating a book of stamps, a ream of copy paper, a package of toilet paper, or flowers to decorate the altar, to volunteering to clean the bathrooms or the sanctuary, or visiting our shut-ins. And if you'd like to contribute in a way that's not listed, go right ahead! Everything we volunteer to give is something we don't have to buy – which leaves us more money for Outreach or special programs.

What is your gift to share?

Harriet Wilson

PARISH HELPERS NEWS

Eighteen Parish Helpers enjoyed a delicious luncheon and tea at the Silver Fountain Inn and Tea Parlor on September 11. As an added bonus, we were invited to tour the historic inn after lunch!

The next Parish Helpers meeting will be held on Thursday, October 9, at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Marcia and Chuck Hodsdon will join us again this year, this time presenting a program on their travels in China. As always, we welcome all the women of the church or the community to join the Parish Helpers! Please join us!

ADVENT REFLECTIONS

One of the most beloved seasons of our liturgical year is that of Advent, the time of preparing our hearts once again to welcome the reality of the infant Jesus, God in-the-flesh, come to live among us and teach us how to live and how to love. In the hope of spiritually enriching this blessed season for all among us, I would love to have us put together a booklet of Advent reflections and devotions ---from all of you who feel moved to submit something. What does the season of Advent mean to you? How do we prepare our hearts for Christmas? How do we "wrap our minds" around the arrival of the infant Jesus, or, even more to the point, our hearts? Please share an original essay, prayer, poem, photograph, drawing, song with your fellow pilgrims, and submit it by October 31 to Pastor Mary at fccwpastor@gmail.com. Please put "Advent Reflection" in the subject line. It must be your original work. Thank you so much!

SAVE THE DATE!



"Christmas at Wakefield Corner" will be held on December 13 and promises to be a fun-filled, community-binding, festive start to the Holiday season! Featuring music, dinner at the Inn, and a few surprises along the way, the event will also offer you a chance to learn more about the history of Wake-

field Corner, its architecture and stories.

In coordination with the Heritage Commission and Wakefield Inn, FCCW is enthusiastically planning this year's event! Would you like to help? It promises to be both enjoyable & rewarding! If you can volunteer, even for an hour or two, that would be great. You could—

- Decorate (the church, the village, some venues)
- Help with parking
- Be a docent / guide / host
- Be a caroler
- Play music

A sign up sheet will be posted in the Narthex if you'd like to help or you can talk to: Chris Feddern, Carol Lundgren, Pam Frazier, Deb Smiley, Evelyn Truhn, or Pam Wiggin. Seek them out—the more the merrier!

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.

CHURCH HISTORY MOMENT

Profile of Our First Pastor
Rev. Asa Piper (1757-1835)

Rev. Piper was born and raised in Acton, MA, the youngest of six children. His great-grandfather emigrated from England during the reign of Charles the First (1625-1649) and settled in Ipswich, MA. Asa outlived both of his wives. His first wife, Mary, died in 1802 and his second wife, Sarah, died in 1827. He had five children, two sons and three daughters.

Rev. Piper studied divinity at Harvard College and graduated in 1778. He was ordained as our pastor in 1785 and served for nearly 50 years until his death. He was described as man of much force, character and deep piety whose judgment was sound and opinions correct on the questions of the day.

Source: Through the Open Doors of the First Congregational Church by Marjorie G.H. Banks

Linda Petkunas/Archivist

HEARTFELT THANKS

It's hard to find words adequate to express our gratitude for the "send off" you all gave us on September 7. It was touching, joyous, fun (and humbling) to see, hear and feel the warm sentiments streaming towards us. We have never had such an experience and were overwhelmed.

We are still talking about the "shout outs" of how you remember us, the signed heart necklaces the kids made, the choice of hymns---especially Mary's re-write of "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" and the extra verse about sailing in the closing hymn—and her words from the pulpit and the floor. We were showered with love during that service and will never forget it.

The pot-luck was special, too. It was a feast of food and fellowship, with so many of you sharing remembrances of our time with the church and wishing us fond (sometimes humorous---you know who you are, Paul Carlson!) farewells. The cards were great, too, especially when Sofia sat next to me and helped open and read them. Then there was that extraordinary cake, Penny's special gift.

I will always remember that Titia and Dave, wounded though they were, made sure they were there to wish us well. There were hugs and kisses from so many I can't name them all, but Berit reminded me of her being the

first church member we met, and I barely survived Curt's bear hug as we left the party.

We joked with many of you about not being able to get rid of bad family members, and we do not intend to become strangers. We will come back for visits---as I said, Kennebunkport isn't the back side of the moon---and we expect to have you visit us, too. In fact, Evelyn and Barry will come to Cape Porpoise on our first weekend there and we hope they will just be the beginning.

Susie wants to share some "Heart-Thumping Memories". Thanks to Jan Stanley and the bell choir for playing my composition "Rejoice." I can't explain the exhilarating pleasure of playing the organ with bells or playing *in* bells with the organ as anyone at Penny and Wes' wedding in August could see! I was honored to hear Alisa Eaton sing my "Shepherd's Blessing" a couple of years ago, and I look forward to it with Rebecca Ellis this Christmas season. And thank you, Julia McCarthy, my "angel" last Christmas, for your sweet words which inspired my newest Christmas song, "So...So..." Music within worship is at its best when it moves us spiritually, emotionally, even physically. I am grateful for so many toe-tapping, heart-racing experiences.

Again, heartfelt thanks for a memorable day. You have been our church family for these last ten years, and you will be missed.

Bill and Susie Goodwin

ECUMENICAL COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

It will be our joy and privilege to host the Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service this year. This special time of worship, music and fellowship will take place on Monday, November 24th at 7 p.m. We are grateful to our Organist and Choir Director Cindy Eggleston for sharing her talents with us that evening, and to our choir who, very likely, will be singing. We are open to other musical offerings; please let Mary know if you have an appropriate musical piece you'd like to share. As the hosting Pastor, I encourage robust participation from our church community.

Please mark your calendars and come to worship with your Methodist, Episcopalian, Catholic, American Baptist, Nazarene, and other UCC neighbors!

NEWS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Hello Everyone!! I'm so excited to be back with my Wakefield family and looking forward to exploring the possibilities of this new adventure. I want to thank you for yet another wonderfully warm welcome at the pot luck dinner we shared together this past week. I along with my sons, Stephen-age 15 and Matthew-age 11 had a great time visiting with everyone there. I also received many messages and notes welcoming me back. While I am seeing many familiar faces, I'm excited to get to know the people I have not had the chance to meet. As we start this new journey together I thought it might be helpful to reintroduce myself with some information you might not know about me that pertains to this particular job.

I was born and raised in Rochester and spent several summers in Milton. My father's family has a long history in Milton. The community center in Milton is named the "Emma Ramsay Community Center" after my beloved grandmother, who spent all of her 102 years in Milton and two generations before her. I have a commitment to the people of this area and New Hampshire as I have proudly served them as a New Hampshire State Trooper for 18 years, having also worked at the Rochester Police Department for almost four years prior to that and I served in the United States Air Force for 5 years as a member of the Security Police Squadron. One of my positions within the N.H.S.P. was as the NH D.A.R.E. Facilitator and the Facilitator of the Northern New England D.A.R.E. Officer Training Team where we trained officers from all over the country to enter the classrooms and teach. I was also a Master Mentor for D.A.R.E. America, where I was one of twenty people in the country who helped write curriculum and some of those lessons are now being taught in almost 50 countries. I was also a presenter for the D.A.R.E. International Training Conferences for several years. I have been in a classroom for 20 years. This is not to say that I know everything and will have all the answers. I will have a steep learning curve coming into this ministry and making my way through some of the challenges, so bear with me as I get started!

I would also like to touch on what this new position is and what the church's vision is for this position. I have been hired for 10 hours a week. The first priority is to work with church members in what Rev. Mary and I have started calling the "pace car model." This model means that I am not the church school superintendent. The church school will fall under my umbrella of responsibility, but my job is to empower the church members to take charge. My job will be to train teachers and facilitate some ideas and to guide. Our first goal as a church family is to find and train some teachers. We need one person,

perhaps someone who is ready to assist Margie and make a phone call or two each week to coordinate the teachers. We are looking for someone who would keep an eye on supplies. Margie has been working so hard and charging forward (thank you Margie!), but she (we) can't do it alone, we need your help. Without teachers we will not have a church school and our children look forward to it.

Once things are flowing with the church school, which right now will take the majority of the ten hours a week to work on, the next step can be taken. With this pace car model, the idea is for me to get the group trained and self-sustaining and then to pull off out of the way. I will not disappear and it will be an ongoing process, but then I can move to the second item in line of priorities set forth by all of you.

The second priority is to set up some programs for learners of all ages. Book studies, activities for teens, activities for families, which will lead to phase three and that is reaching out into our surrounding community to let them know we are here and everyone is welcome. This will be a work in progress and at least for the better part of the first year, I will still be working my full time job and thus not here many Sundays. Rest assured that I am with you in spirit and working faithfully behind the scenes.

I welcome your comments and have set up an email account for you to reach me, which will go directly to my phone maureenfccw@gmail.com.

HARVEST FAIR IS COMING!



Hope you will join us for this year's Harvest Fair on Saturday November 15, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. We will have lots of vendors of crafts, jewelry, handmade doll clothes, maple products, potatoes, garlic and much more.

There will be a Christmas room, gently used books, CDs and DVDs, pies, baked goods, and a delicious lunch will be available. This will be the last chance to buy raffle tickets for the Parish Helpers "Friends of Florence" Quilt, the mink Teddy Bear and the American Girl Doll and Wardrobe as the winning tickets will be drawn at 2 p.m. What a FUN way to start your holiday shopping early!

We'll be looking for help to make this fundraising event a success. Please consider helping out by baking pies, cooking chili or chowder, and/ or helping to set up, clean up, or work at the Fair. If you can help, please let me know. Thanks!

Pam Frazier

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY

I know that we have just got our mums out and the pumpkins are appearing. We have yet to celebrate All Hallows' Eve, but Thanksgiving and then Advent will be here sooner than we think.

Given that we are having an ecumenical service at the church on November 24th and that the 1st Sunday of Advent is November 30th, I am already thinking of when we can do the 'Hanging of the Greens'. [Note: I will not be available over the Thanksgiving weekend and I imagine others have similar situations]. Reverend Mary has suggested we could have minimal decorations for that 1st Sunday, including the Advent Wreath and then decorate more for the 2nd Sunday.

I am looking at having a small luncheon on Saturday, December 6th that would culminate in our decorating the church. This date has yet to be confirmed so just consider penciling in that date. I'd make a soup and people who wanted to attend could bring a whole sandwich and share half with the group. Maybe someone would be willing to make some cookies or brownies for dessert?? I would like as many young people to help in the decorating as we have 1 – 2 trees to decorate and room for other ideas.

Since we will also be participating in the Christmas in the Village event again this year on December 13th, I would plan to have the poinsettias available for either the 6th or later that week. So you will be hearing more about ordering those in the near future.

As always I am open for any and all ideas and suggestions related to decorations that help in making our church a welcoming place for all who may come to worship.

*Deborah Smiley,
Coordinator for Visual and Decorative Arts.*

DUST OFF THAT OLD GUITAR

. . . or mandolin, or banjo, or drum, or flute, or ??? OR . . . have you always wanted to learn to play an acoustic string instrument? You are warmly invited to come and join in the fun on Thursday nights at 7 with Community String Band! This is an encouraging and gentle environment in which you can learn to play great tunes with other people. The cost for each session is \$15....where else can you find a music lesson and group session for such a great price? Hope to see you there.

A HOME FOR NELLY

Bless you: Connie, Ann, Maggie, Christy, Sara and Rev. Mutsumbei.



Dear Church Family: When Connie, Ann and three intrepid young women went to Zimbabwe in July and August, they had three projects to work on: To build a home for the minister at our sister church at Rufimiso, to dig a well to provide much needed water for the Dzika community and to build a home for Nelly Mundeta.

This third effort is one I can scarcely speak about without tears of gratefulness. My sister, Elizabeth, who passed away in November 2012, had been a 20+ year pen pal friend to Nelly, whom she never met, but whom missionaries had connected when Nelly was a child. In the summer of 2012, Connie kindly found Nelly and delivered the tender news of my sister's illness. Rev. Mutsumbei was part of that meeting and when he went home during the summer of 2013, he checked on Nelly and discovered that her home had been destroyed by a cyclone and she was living with family in very tight quarters.

Elizabeth's church group: The Women's Association of the Amherst (NH) Congregational Church responded with love to Rev. Mutsumbei's idea to build Nelly a new two-room home . . . and sent a check so that Connie could



make it happen! Other family and friends of Elizabeth also sent money and now her home can be furnished with what she needs. Confined to a wheelchair, Nelly is dependent on family for assistance and forever grateful to her "Family in America".

See, miracles do happen . . . but sometimes God needs us to initiate them. Thank you God for inspiring hearts to care and give.

Carol Lundgren

Celebrations!

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Ann Hatch | 21 Clara Clark |
| 3 Allie Herman | 21 Ellen Lankhorst |
| 4 Michael Frothingham | 24 Cameron Cook |
| 6 Robin Kent Osborn | 25 Benjamin Boggs |
| 9 Parker Vanderhoof | 26 Larry Koukal |
| 11 Gisela Haag | 26 Connie Twombly |
| 13 Debbie Fogg | 28 Alfred Canney |
| 13 Caren Kachoris | 29 James Connell |
| 13 Eric Mercer | 29 Diana Peckham |
| 19 Austin Dolbear | 30 Paul Carlson |
| 20 Bill Goodwin | 30 George Frothingham |

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

| |
|----------------------------------|
| 3 Jeff & Stephanie Ballard |
| 7 Tom & Jan Stanley |
| 8 George & Priscilla Frothingham |
| 8 Tom & Lynn Weeks |
| 9 Mark and Julie Evenson |
| 9 Dick & Glenna Nelson (1948) |
| 10 Russell & Sharon Baldwin |
| 13 Chuck & Joanne Dolbear |
| 17 Alfred & Tammy Canney |
| 20 Richard & Rose Zacher |
| 20 John & Lynn Shaffer |
| 23 Ron & Rachel White |



A heartfelt THANK YOU to all who paid a visit, sent well-wishing cards and brought delicious food during the rehab period of my hip surgery. Gijs and I felt enveloped by our church's warmth and compassion.

I am not completely back on my feet yet, but the experts say I am ahead of the healing curve. In a few weeks I hope to be back in the pews!

Titia Bozuwa

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

We ask your continued prayers and support for those members of our church and wider community who are ill, or who suffer in mind, body, or spirit, and for their families

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Paul T. | David M. |
| Dot R. | Curt C. |
| Tom and Barbara T. | Marcia |
| George B. | Harold |
| Art W. | Paul and Agnes C. |
| Mackenzie M. | Marsha A. |
| Beth M. | Jan F. |

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

CENTERING PRAYER

Do you find yourself longing for a stronger connection with God, and some moments set aside for deep and encouraging prayer? Centering Prayer sessions will once again be offered in our Parish Helpers Room; this month we will meet on October 14th and 28th at 4 p.m. The session lasts 30 to 45 minutes, and involves a sharing of prayer concerns and celebrations, along with some guided meditative and prayerful time. Participants find it grounding, comforting, and encouraging. Questions? Call or email Pastor Mary at fccwpastor@gmail.com or 522-3189.

TUESDAY NOON BIBLE STUDY

Did you know that there are a number of gospels that did not make it into the canon of scripture? We have decided to look at some of those, beginning with the *Gospel of Mary*. Please join us in the large classroom downstairs on most Tuesdays at noon. Check the calendar in this issue of Steeple Views and the weekly "News from the Pews" for dates. Feel free to bring your lunch!

OCTOBER 2014

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | | 1 Scrabble 10 a.m. Deacons Meeting 4 p.m. | 2 Community String Band 6 p.m. Beginner 7 p.m. Mixed | 3 Confirmation Retreat | 4 Confirmation Retreat |
| 5 World Communion Sunday Worship And Holy Communion 10 a.m. Church School Bells Practice 6 p.m. | 6 Choir Practice 6 p.m. | 7 Bible Study 12 noon | 8 Confirmation Group 4-6 p.m. Pairs and Spares 6 p.m. | 9 Parish Helpers 1 p.m. Community String Band 6 p.m. Beginner 7 p.m. Mixed | 10 | 11 |
| 12 Family Sunday Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Bells Practice 6 p.m. | 13 Columbus Day/ Indigenous Peoples' Day Office Closed Choir Practice 6 p.m. | 14 Centering Prayer 4 p.m. | 15 Confirmation Group 4-6 p.m. | 16 Community String Band 6 p.m. Beginner 7 p.m. Mixed | 17 | 18 |
| 19 Worship 10 a.m. Church School Bells Practice 6 p.m. | 20 Choir Practice 6 p.m. | 21 Scrabble 10 a.m. Bible Study 12 noon | 22 | 23 Prayer Shawls 10 a.m. Community String Band 6 p.m. Beginner 7 p.m. Mixed | 24 | 25 NH Conference Annual Meeting |
| 26 Worship 10 a.m. Church School Coffee Hour Bells Practice 6 p.m. | 27 Choir Practice 6 p.m. | 28 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer 4 p.m. | 29 | 30 Community String Band 6 p.m. Beginner 7 p.m. Mixed | 31 Reformation/ Reconciliation Day | |



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD
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SAVE THE DATES!



November 15
Harvest Fair
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December 13
Christmas in the Village
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