

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 . . .

RESURRECTION HOPE: GOD'S "NORMAL"

Joyful Eastertide to all!

At our inaugural Pub Grub and Soul Food event in March, our topic for discussion was where is the hope in today's world? Given all the tragic and terrible things going on in our world, the racial strife in our nation, and the relentless cycle of bad news, I felt pretty certain ahead of time that there would be a lot of cynicism expressed that night. It was a surprise and very refreshing to experience just the opposite, even as we all acknowledged the sobering realities. Most who attended had a hopeful outlook, and expressed a sense that a world at peace and an earth cared for by its human inhabitants are still things worth working toward. There was lamentation, for sure, but there was also talk of possibility. When asked about their own sources of hope, participants mentioned faith in God more than once. As Christians, we can celebrate the gift of enduring hope as a lasting effect of deep faith. God in Christ instills this hope into our hearts. We can joyfully proclaim in Eastertide the Good News that the Resurrection is God's normal.

Given that Resurrection is God's normal mode, can we embrace it, too, and make it our own? Can we dare to ask ourselves Resurrection questions and answer them in a hopeful way?

Here are some good Resurrection questions for each of us to carry into our daily prayer lives in Eastertide:

- What fresh goodness can live anew in my life, with God's help?
- What loving practices will I allow to thrive in my daily life, in God's care?
- What hopeful endeavors can I begin, with God's encouragement?

The Risen Christ shows us that it is never too late for redemption, never too late for transformation, and that there is nothing so hopeless that God's grace cannot bring revival. Though the winter may be long, though the evening news may try our souls and cause us to quake, though the suffering in the world is immense, none of it is beyond hope. The life of the world calls to us for the lavish sharing of our own gifts, talents, and prayers in Resurrection hope, in partnership with and in obedience to our loving God. While cynicism is a logical response, in giving into it we are in danger of making it the new normal. To that danger, we boldly proclaim: Christ is risen! Risen indeed!

Let us rejoice in Resurrection hope, God's normal, and our normal, as an Easter people!
Alleluia!

Blessings and peace,
Mary

Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here.....

Mark 16: 6

This year **Easter Sunday will be a Family Sunday!** This means that on Easter we will include children in the whole worship service. We will therefore not have Family Sunday on April 12th, though it would normally be on that second Sunday. We will offer Church School on the 12th. It is a wonderful thing for all ages to worship together on Easter! We will have special quiet sanctuary activities for the children to keep happily occupied during the service.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Rev. Esther Vodola 1911-2007

Rev. Vodola, the pastor of our church from 1967-1977, was a woman ahead of her time. She was a Connecticut native who graduated from Union Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1948. Esther attended the March on Washington in 1963 and heard Rev. Dr. Luther King's "I Have a Dream" and was also at the Riverside Church in New York City when he declared his opposition to the Vietnam War. During her lengthy career she pastored churches in New York and New Hampshire and was the Moderator of the New Hampshire UCC Conference from 1979-1980. A friend described her as an activist, a scholar, and a mystic who kept up with current theological issues well into her nineties and as one who fasted and prayed every Saturday for her beloved church.

Source: <http://www.ctucc.org>

Linda Petkunas

LIBRARY AUTHOR HIGHLIGHT: BRUCE LARSON

Rev. Bruce Larson was a Presbyterian minister who served churches in New York, Illinois, California and Oregon. He helped pioneer church movements that emphasized relationships and small groups. These books he wrote are available in our church libraries:

Living Beyond Our Fears (J-G)

My Creator, My Friend: The Genesis of a Relationship (R-T)

No Longer Strangers (S-J)

Presence: Finding God When You've Lost Your Way (S-J)

There's a Lot More to Health Than Not Being Sick (J-H)

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

FOR YOUR INFORMATION—Copies of the draft minutes of the most recent Leadership Council meeting are available to be picked up on the table in the back of the sanctuary. You may also request an electronic copy by emailing the church office at fccwakefieldnh@gmail.com.

INTENTIONAL GIVING DECISION MAKING TIME!

Your personal packet of information is ready! Please plan to pick yours up at church soon. We will mail copies to folks who live at a distance but it will help reduce postage costs if you get yours when you are at church. Please return your pledge card BEFORE May 3rd. Your pledge decision is confidential. Thank you kindly!

IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN, but so worth the effort!

Kermit the famous frog from Sesame Street sings "It's not easy being green, it's the color of the world." Right now, in the deepness of a New England winter, we long to SEE green, but do we long to BE green in our behaviors towards our beloved planet? Here at church we try hard to recycle paper and plastic. We do our best to keep the heat down to 55 degrees in areas of the church that are not in use. Lights are off and doors closed when we leave a room. We are studying ways to limit heat loss through windows. We have vowed not to use Styrofoam products. It's not easy being green, but we ardently try. All suggestions are welcome for ways we can do more. Share your ideas with the Stewardship Ministry!

CIRCLE 229 – WAITING FOR YOU!

Please check out the many new tags on the CIRCLE 229 board in Fellowship Hall. There you will find ideas of items your church needs. Most ideas are small, practical, easy to find and affordable! Toilet paper, trash bags, paper towels, soap pumps, copy paper, gift cards to Staples, Rite Aid, Hannaford or these are just some examples. There are non-financial ways you can participate as well: becoming a Good Shepherd volunteer driver, a friendly visitor (see Rev. Mary). Take a tag, won't you please? Bless you!

Carol Lundgren

Stewardship Ministry Coordinator

S.C.A.M.P.

Sanbornville Citizens for the Advancement of Musical Programs (SCAMP) is producing an original 2-act musical comedy called "What Disney NEVER Wanted You to Know" at the Wakefield Opera House. The dates and times of the show are on April 17 and 18 at 7 PM and April 19 at 4 PM. The story is based on Disney characters and their hidden talents (secrets), and stars young people, aged 12-20, from the Wakefield area. This will be SCAMP's 38th production and should not be missed. Tickets are \$5.00, general admission and \$4.00 for Seniors and Students, and are available at the door or by calling 522-9414 for advance reserved seating.

INTENTIONAL GIVING

In the world of the Stewardship Ministry, it's Intentional Giving Time! Packets rich with detail about our church's finances and the ministry goals for the coming year are ready for you. This is a very exciting time. We are a generous people! We are a practical people, too. So, let's talk! Let's share in the conversation about dollars and sense/cents (pun intended). Let's demystify the spread sheet! Let's celebrate who we are and plan where we are headed!

To that end, Stewardship and Finance Ministries, together with Rev. Mary, invite you to one of TWO opportunities that are being offered to talk about the financial planning of your church and the coming fiscal year (July 1, 2015 thru June 30, 2016). Please join us at one of these events, both taking place on Wednesdays.

**April 29 Luncheon from 12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.
Homemade Soups, Beverage and Dessert Provided
or
You may wish to attend the
Pot Luck Supper from 6:00- 7:30 p.m.**

**Please RSVP to Donna in the office by April 25th.
522-3189**

**Let her know which time frame you will attend and if
attending the Pot Luck
please bring a main dish to share.**

Carol Lundgren,

I LOVE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR CHURCH

I love what's happening in our church. That's what Rev. Mary recently said in one of our conversations and I feel so much the same. We've recently had several opportunities to gather and have meaningful conversation with one another.

There was the re-Lent group, and the Ecumenical dinner/movie I AM. Pub Grub and Soul Food has also become Ecumenical and continues to meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month to discuss the Great Questions. Also, the noon Bible Study group has begun a new curriculum entitled "Experiencing the Bible Again for the First Time".

There is room at the table at each of these on-going events. Please join us - all are welcome.

*Margie Galabrun, Coordinator
Ministry of Christian Ed*

JAZZY PROGRAM AT THE PARISH HELPERS!

(Our February meeting was cancelled but Lori Dobbins has agreed to come to our April meeting to present her program to our group. I hope all will do their best to be there and welcome her!)

At the April Parish Helpers meeting, we will welcome Lori Dobbins of the University of New Hampshire. Lori will lecture about improvisation in jazz and why the balance between composed music and improvised music is different in different styles of jazz and why collective improvisation (several players improvising simultaneously) was a common feature of New Orleans style jazz, but rarely used in big band music. She will compare the New Orleans style jazz of Louis Armstrong with swing jazz (aka big band jazz) music of Duke Ellington. She will discuss some of the origins of jazz, which are largely based on improvisation.

We will gather as usual at 1 p.m. for refreshments and business meeting. And the presentation will begin at 2 p.m. Hope you'll join us for this interesting program. The program is open to the public, and all are welcome.

Carol Jeffery

CHURCH SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

We thank all Church school volunteers on behalf of the children of the FCCW. I am now scheduling Church school teachers and helpers for April, May & June. Please check your schedules for April 12, 19, 26; May 3, 17, 24, 31 and June 7, 21, 28 and call me at 522-5150 if you are available to teach or help. Thank you.

Mary Beth Cook

HELP NEEDED

Want to help more with Sunday Services? Be a part of our new Digital Ministry? Have a great seat high above the Sanctuary? Get to learn how to operate one of the coolest audio visual systems in our area? Then you should join our Sound Team! Please reach out to Dalton, Frank, or Nate we will be more than happy to give you a quick look at what we do and how you can help.

Frank Frazier



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

CITY REACH

We will be participating in the Common Cathedral Boston City Reach Program this year. This is an opportunity for our youth and adults to learn about homelessness from people who have experienced it, or may be still experiencing it. We will be offering hospitality, food, and clothing to those in need. This year's event will take place on April 10th and 11th. The participants will interact with other church groups and share stories, prayers and fun. They will hear first-hand recollections of despair and recovery from individuals that have struggled with life's challenges and are working daily toward making their lives better. Saturday will find the groups sorting clothing and toiletries as they prepare for the guests. They will fellowship and serve with others as they go out into the streets of Boston distributing food, clothing and prayers.

What our City Reach sojourners need from the congregation are the following:

- Backpacks, tote bags, fanny packs, small suitcases with wheels
- Travel-sized toiletries (soap, shampoo, deodorant, Chap stick, tooth brushes, disposable razors, tampons) No aftershave or mouthwash containing alcohol
- New white socks
- New underwear (80% of the guests are men)
- Sleeping bags and blankets

Used Clothing: (please make sure they are clean and not too used)

- Nylon Jackets and pants, ponchos, raincoats
- Sweat shirts and sweat pants
- Sweaters
- T-shirts, long sleeved and short sleeved
- Jeans and casual khaki pants
- Waterproof boots, comfortable shoes, and sneakers
- Hats, waterproof gloves, coats
- Belts

Items that should not be donated are:

- Children's clothing, dress clothes, slippers, bathrobes and pajamas

The majority of the people we will be serving are men, so large sizes, (XL, XXL, and XXXL) are in demand.

You can start collecting these items and dropping them off at the church. Please, I cannot stress enough that the

used items you donate should be the quality that you yourself would be willing to wear. Clothing covered with animal hair, soiled or torn should NOT be donated.

Thank You!

Donna V Ackerman, Outreach Coordinator

VISUAL AND DECORATIVE ARTS MINISTRY



On March 1st the Visual and Decorative Arts Ministry met with Rev. Mary to discuss the church calendar and how our ministry might help decorate the sanctuary for different occasions.

Jan Stanley volunteered to make shamrocks that were used for the March 15th St. Patrick's Day celebration. On March 22nd the sanctuary was decorated by flowers that were donated by Paul and Agnes Carlson. They called Deborah to say that they had brought home a beautiful arrangement that was given in memory of Paul's brother who had passed away. The arrangement provided enough flowers for a vase full of roses, daisies and chrysanthemums, as well as 6 small vase arrangements for the windows. We all were able to appreciate their generosity and they helped to make our sanctuary quite lovely during this Lenten season.

On Sunday, April 19, to help celebrate the 45th anniversary of Earth Day we are planning a photography presentation by a local nature photographer and hopefully a slide show presentation as well. The month of May brings multiple opportunities including Mother's Day, May 10, Pentecost Sunday, May 24, and Memorial Day, May 31.

June will hopefully bring flowers blooming in our gardens. Please consider donating some of your blooms for decorating any Sunday. Any and all contributions are most welcome. We're willing to pick, pick up and arrange flowers all spring and summer long!!! Please call Deborah Smiley at 569-2867 or Rachel White at 522-2063.

*Yours in beauty and celebration,
Deborah Smiley*

For more information on articles you read in the Steeple Views, contact the editor at steepleviews@gmail.com or call the church office at 603-522-3189.

CONNIE'S NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE

GREAT NEWS! We have a new soccer team comprised of boys from the Daisy Dube Children's Home. Some terrific adults at Mt. Selinda High School responded to my plea for opportunities for fun, athletics and mentorship as the children don't have consistent male role models. So I am delighted to announce the newly formed FC DAISY DUBE SPORTS ACADEMY. And the team needs YOU! The boys are playing without formal jerseys and without any soccer shoes. The majority are playing barefoot. This is ok for practice but one of the goals is for them to compete with other teams locally where shirts and shoes are needed.

Can you assist? Do you know someone in the athletic footwear industry who might like to sponsor some shoes for these deserving young boys? We can get jerseys for approx. \$10 each but the shoes are a challenge. The boys are soooooo excited. They make sure they are not late to practice, they are learning new drills and ball handling skills, and the coach reports that they are extremely respectful, fully participatory and very enthusiastic. YAY! Not only future soccer stars but fine young men in the making!

Bits and pieces of Zim life:

I used a very nice bus recently (think C & J quality) when the conductor asked one of the passengers to offer a prayer before we departed. Can you see this happening on the trip to the airport via C & J? The same conductor thoughtfully offered "an incentive" at the border (approx. \$50) to the Zim Revenue Authority (Zimra) official who was checking people's parcels. The conductor saved us approximately 3 hours of bag searches for anything a passenger may not have declared at customs. Said conductor then asked the passengers for donations to defray the cost of "the incentive." More than one way to skin a cat as they say!

I am taking the Daisy Dube kids to various churches in the Chipinge area so that the children will be more visible within the UCCZ community. We went to Chipinge Gaza Extension where Joseph and Daisy Sibiywa worship and where Rev. Fakarai, formerly at Rufumiso, has been called. Afterwards Daisy made sadza for the 9 unexpected guests. Joseph was bragging a bit and telling me what a good sadza cook he is and took over the preparation from Daisy while explaining the techniques. Within moments of Daisy leaving the kitchen he yelled out, "Daisy, where are you going?" Ha! It seems he felt less secure in his cooking when she was not present! The kids were sooooo good, not just well behaved but so respectful, that after eating they not only washed the dishes but swept and washed the floors!

Each week I hear from the caretakers that we are out of mealie-meal to make sadza, or we have no vegetables to prepare or we are out of baby formula or some other necessary item. And of course they look to me and say, "Connie, what are you going to do about it?" Just when I think I can no longer pull any rabbits out of a hat, something unexpected happens. A well wisher will drop off boxes of goods. A team of ZIMRA officials came with a huge donation of food, soap, and other needed items. (Yes, the same folks noted above at the border.) Local businesses donate loaves of bread. And the folks around Mt. Selinda? They just say, "God blesses us. God will provide."

Connie Littlefield



LIBERTY'S EDUCATION FUND

Thanks to these coins, a young man, who has no living parents, goes to school. What a blessing. Spare change won't weigh you down if you drop it in the Liberty jug in the Narthex and it will definitely LIFT him up. \$25/month is sent to the FOOT (Friends of Orphans Trust) each month! Connie and Ann have provided an updated photo of Liberty. A young teenager now "with important plans for his future in Zimbabwe, Liberty is ever grateful. Our reach is far and good!

Carol Lundgren, Stewardship Ministry

The Interact Club at Spaulding will once again sponsor a decathlon to raise money for Zimbabwe missions on Sunday, April 19, at 2:00 p.m. at the Spaulding High gymnasium.

If you would like to participate in any way, please contact Donna Ackerman.

Celebrations!

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Rob Nelson | 17 Aimee Ball |
| 4 Karen Hagy | 19 Jo Szirbik |
| 4 Jean Lloyd | 20 Susan Jacobson |
| 4 Julia McCarthy | 20 Raenya Morann |
| 7 David Albro | 21 Amanda Boggs |
| 7 Barbara Burkham | 23 Ciera Rose Dee |
| 10 Kristin Galabrun | 23 Natalee Royle |
| 11 Michael Crew | 24 Ann Eaton |
| 11 Michael Weeks | 24 Molly James |
| 12 Darlene Clements | 26 Sarah Kinville |
| 13 Persis Hildebrandt | 28 Dawson Cotreau |
| 14 Agnes Carlson | 28 Madison Cotreau |
| 14 Elizabeth Heinlein | 28 Del Littlefield |
| 14 Adam Szirbik | 29 Lauree Royle |
| 15 Ginny Schweitzer | |

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Rick & Cindy Denver
- 15 Bill & Susie Goodwin
- 15 Anders & Nancy Jacobson
- 22 Carol & Rob Lundgren
- 23 Scott & Nicky Mercer
- 25 Nathan & Debbie Fogg
- 28 Frank & Pam Frazier

SUNDAY MOVE

Many thanks to all the hands on deck on Sunday, March 22. Catherine Zirpolo of Wakefield, NH had previously contacted Dave & Ginny Schweitzer to let them know that she was moving and asked if the Treasure Shop and the Church Yard Sale might benefit from her packed boxes, toys & furniture? The answer was -yesø and what we thought would be a mere 27 boxes easily multiplied! Five trucks, one van and two cars later the moving caravan was packed and enroute to storage.

Thank you to all who helped including George Ackerman, Kevin Connell, Curt & Mary Cook, Jeff and Pam Dugas, Seth Fogg, Carol Lundgren, Dalton Ostrye, Rachel White & Joe Williams. Also, thanks to Gail Feddern to offer her garage for storage, Dave & Ginny and of course, Catherine Zirpolo.

Stay tuned for step two of this adventure to bring these items back out of storage & into the Treasure Shop and onto the Church yard to be re-purposed!

Many hands,

Chris Feddern

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

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Dot R. | Marcia |
| Tom and Barbara T. | Marsha A. |
| George B. | Jan F. |
| Art W. | Donald L. |
| Mackenzie M. | George J. |
| Beth M. | Ginny S. |
| Curt C. | John H. |

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

THANK YOU NOTES

We are pleased to announce that our son John is now cancer free. We especially want to thank our church friends for your prayers and many kindnesses during a very difficult time. We are so grateful for everyone's support.

Marcia and Chuck Hodsdon



Thanks for the expressions of sympathy.

The cards, notes, hugs, and phone calls from the Church Family have meant so much.

Elizabeth Fogg and Family

APRIL 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Scrabble 10 a.m.	2 Maundy Thursday Service of Tenebrae 7 p.m.	3 Good Friday Service at St. John's 12 noon	4
5 Easter Sunday  Family Worship and Holy Communion 10 a.m.	6 Choir Practice 6 p.m.	7 Bible Study 12 noon	8 Spiritual Gifts 10–11 a.m. Pairs and Spares 6 p.m. Pub Grub and Soul Food PPP- 6–7:30 p.m.	9 Bereavement Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers 1 p.m. Community String Band- 7 p.m.	10	11
12 Worship and Church School 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Team Synergy Meeting Bells—6 p.m.	13 Choir Practice 6 p.m.	14 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer— 4 p.m. Spiritual Gifts 6:30–8 p.m.	15 Deacons Meeting 4 p.m.	16 Calling and Discernment 4 p.m. Community String Band 7 p.m.	17	18
19 Worship and Church School 10 a.m. Decathlon 2 p.m. Bells—6 p.m.	20 Rev. Mary Study Leave this week Choir Practice 6 p.m.	21 Scrabble 10 a.m.	22 Earth Day  45 th Anniversary	23 Prayer Shawl Ministry 10–11:30 a.m. Community String Band 7 p.m.	24	25
26 Worship and Church School— 10 a.m. Bells—6 p.m.	27 Choir Practice 6 p.m.	28 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer 4 p.m.	29 Spiritual Gifts 10–11:30 a.m. Food, Fellowship and Deep Conversation 12 Noon Or 6 p.m.	30		



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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EASTER SUNDAY
FAMILY WORSHIP

APRIL 5
10 A.M.

COMING EVENTS

- April 2^o Maundy Thursday Service of Tenebrae
- April 3^o Good Friday Service at Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist
- April 5^o Easter Sunday Worship Service
- April 8^o Pub Grub and Soul Food, Poor People's Pub
- April 10 and 11^o City Reach
- April 12^o Team Synergy Meeting after church
- April 29^o Food, Fellowship and Deep Conversation
- May 17^o Leadership Council
- May 31^o Ministry Fair
- June 14^o Annual Meeting of the Congregation