



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

PREPARED TO SERVE —SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25



“I Planted, Others Watered, but God Gives the Growth.”

Each year members of the NH Conference & our friends & affiliates come together at Pembroke Academy for a day-long event, featuring 50+ workshops offered on a variety of fascinating topics. The day includes an uplifting morning worship, breakfast, lunch, and refreshments, 30+ exhibitors, and ample opportunity for reconnecting with old friends and new alike! Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come experience the joy and inspiration that Prepared to Serve offers.

Online registration is now open. The fee is \$40 if you register by February 15. Scholarships are available and car-pooling is possible. If you are interested in learning more about this wonderful event, please contact the church office. More information and online registration can be found at

<http://www.nhcucc.org/ConferenceMinistries/PreparedToServe/>

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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FEBRUARY 2017

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FIRSTCONGREGATIONALCHURCHOFWAKEFIELDUCC

THE PASTOR'S PLACE . . .

Dear Friends,

Thank you, and bless you. You are a blessing in the world.

Thank you for the strength, grace and beauty with which you are being the church in this somewhat trying time. The work of the Holy Spirit is evident in and through your presence, prayers, and actions in the world, and in the kind care expressed to me in this time of unexpectedly long recovery. I am humbled and deeply grateful.

When the accident occurred in early December I had no idea I had sustained a significant concussion. In fact, I finished out the day at church thinking my bad headache would clear (I have learned that this is not unusual with concussions). Later that day, I realized there was a problem. My doctor and an excellent neurologist helped me understand that the symptoms of concussion can unfold over a period of time, and have referred me for specific rehab therapies of physical, occupational, and speech for the treatment of post-concussion syndrome. These therapies are underway, and will help me get back to my normal self and my usual activities. My doctors and rehab therapists are confident I will make a good recovery, but the difficult part is that it can take quite a bit of time. I am receiving these therapies at the Neuro Day Program for Concussion and Post-Concussion Syndrome at Wentworth Douglass Hospital, and the therapists are very knowledgeable and helpful. I now usually have five rehab appointments each week. I am making progress and look forward to planning a phased-in return to work as soon as my doctor allows it. I miss all of you, and the ministry! As you might guess, I find it very challenging to be away. I know, however, you are in great hands with God and one another!

Most of the time, my spirits are steady, but there are moments of frustration. On one especially discouraging and uncomfortable day, I shared my feelings with the occupational therapist. After educating me about the emotional impact of post-concussion syndrome, she said, "You are forgetting Romans 8:28!" In that verse, Paul wrote: "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." The truth of that is so very clear to me in this time. I don't believe that God wills unfortunate injuries, but I do believe that God is at work in guiding us all in learning and growing from such experiences. May we all trust that God is in the midst of it all, leading, loving, shaping, blessing, healing and guiding.

I hope to be back in your midst before too long, and am doing all I can to make that happen. Thank you, and bless you!

Grace and peace,
Mary

*We know that all things work together for good for those who love God,
who are called according to his purpose.*

Romans 8:28

TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Budget (Non-restricted): July 1, 2016 – Dec 31, 2016

General Income:	\$ 72,481.90
Additional Income Sources:	\$ 12,500.00
Expenditures:	\$ (86,625.84)
Net Income	<u>\$ (1,643.94)</u>

Checking Non-Restricted balance:	\$ 1,780.14
Checking Restricted Funds balance:	<u>\$ 5,341.83</u>
Total Checking Account balance: 12/31/16	<u>\$ 7,121.97</u>

Wow, it is 2017 already. Happy New Year! But let's take a brief look at December before we move on. The Christmas Eve Service collection which benefits the Christmas Fund collected \$1,019 this year.

Thank you to all the generous donors who gave to our annual Alternative Gifting/Giving program. It is still not too late to give another gift if you feel so inclined. Gifts received were: Heifer- \$310, Wakefield Wonders Relay for Life- \$170, The Wakefield Food Pantry-\$610 (plus \$160 from the Bell Concert proceeds) and the Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund - \$535. The Zim Team received nearly \$2,000 specifically designated gifts for Daisy Dube, FOOT and Dignify! Other money also came in for Zimbabwe that was not listed as Alt Giving money, much of which was for annual FOOT sponsorship.

There will be another Budget Workshop on February 2 at 5 p.m. in the large classroom. As mentioned in our last Steeple Views article, it is particularly important for each ministry to be represented, but anyone with an interest in learning about and helping with this complicated task is welcome to attend.

Janice Brejwo and Shannon Johnson, Co-Treasurers
fccwtreasurer@gmail.com

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.

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

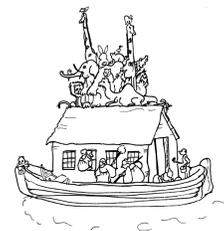
Visit our website at
www.firstcongregationalchurchnh.org



BUDGET WORKSHOP
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 5 P.M.
ALL WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE!

B&G INSIDE "WORK DAY"

This busy church needs some deep cleaning! We have several projects that can be done during weekdays and Saturdays.



If you are able to help with a project, please let CLA Julie Margolis know by calling the office and we will call you back to discuss. We will have more than one work party over the month of February. Thanks so much!

Carol Lundgren and Dalton Ostrye

CHURCH LIBRARY NEWS

Author Highlight: John R.W. Stott (1921-2011)
Stott was a prominent English clergyman and prolific author whose books have sold millions of copies around the world and in dozens of languages. In 2005 Time magazine ranked him as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. (*Source: Wikipedia)

Our library has two of his books in the Parish Helpers Library: Involvement: Being a Responsible Christian in a Non-Christian Society (R-CS) Basic Christianity (R-T)

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

A BIT OF CHURCH HISTORY

The Congregational Tradition of Church Governance
Our model of church governance emerged during the Tutor period in England. When the Pope refused to grant Henry the VIII a divorce, Henry declared himself head of the Church of England. Many groups of English Christians wanted to carry reform further. Among these groups were the Separatists who gathered to worship in secret in people's homes. They believed that worshiping as the early Christians did gave individuals a more direct relationship with God. Eventually they were forced to leave their homes for Holland and then America and were the Pilgrim fathers who founded the Congregational church. They believed that each congregation should govern its own affairs and this tradition continues in our own church today. * Source: Wikipedia

Linda Petkunas

ZIMBABWE TEAM PROJECT KUCHENGETEDZA ZVIWANIKWA (PKZ)

Have you been hearing the abbreviation PKZ and wondering what in the world that was? Project Kuchengetedza Zviwanikwa, which means Project Preserve in Shona, is a non-governmental, humanitarian organization that I helped register in Zimbabwe. It is a cleaner way to work with the Government of Zimbabwe on all of the projects we have been doing as the FCCW Z Team. The Zim government has changed their expectations about how groups operate in Zimbabwe and require a memorandum of understanding with each of the various departments of government: Ministry of Health (clinic and mobile van), Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (assisting schools), Ministry of Social Welfare (child sponsorship), Ministry of Commerce and Trade (shipping container), etc. It became clear that a direct way of working with each of these groups, as opposed to going through the UCCZ and then going through the government ministries was necessary. Hence, PKZ was established. Interestingly, all board members of the Zimbabwe PKZ are UCCZ members with me as the lone non-Zimbabwean. The PKZ Board in Zimbabwe teases me and says that I keep them organized.

It then became even more clear that we needed to have a *Friends of PKZ* organization here in New Hampshire. Friends of PKZ Trust became a reality in October and we are now our very own 501 c 3, enabling us to accept tax deductible contributions. While this is not a big deal to our church members and friends who always provide such generous support through our FCCW church books, it is a big deal for business and civic groups outside of our church community who might like to contribute but not necessarily directly to a church per se.

So, we are still the Zimbabwe Team and we are also PKZ. Our projects remain the same ó FOOT sponsorship, sister church relationship with Rufumiso, shipping container, concern for boreholes, schools, youth programs, micro finance and of course all those other issues that are brought to our attention along the way.

As of this writing I am packing my bags to return to Zimbabwe. I won't be gone too long this time as there are many networking and fundraising goals that can only be completed in the good old USA. I have cherished my time this fall among the church family. Your good thoughts and prayers are appreciated far more than you know. They become a type of protective armor as I step back into the lives of people experiencing extreme deprivation and uncertainty, yet an amazing resilience of character, love and faith.

*Blessings to you all,
Connie Littlefield*



Shipping Container goods arrive at Rufumiso!

LENTEN DISCUSSION SERIES

Please join me in a Lenten journey. I am reviving the before church coffee discussion group. (Maybe we can even think of a new name for that.) There are a couple of booklets that look quite interesting to me. One is the Still Speaking Writers Group Lenten Devotional, always a good choice. And the other is entitled, Plenty of Room: A Lenten Bible Study Based on African American Spirituals. If you are interested in journeying together, please let me know and we will choose the material together. Margie 522-6647 or balchlaker@gmail.com

Margie Galabrun

PARISH HELPERS

The next Parish Helpers meeting will be held on Thursday, February 9, at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Due to circumstances beyond our control, the planned program for this meeting had to be cancelled.

Instead, we are bringing back the "Silent Auction". It has been years since we had one and we wonder why not ó it is so much fun! So, all you have to do is bring an item for the auction. This can be a brand-new item or a nearly new, gently-used item that someone would like to bid on. We will make secret bids on the items and when the bidding is over, the item will be awarded to the person who had the highest bid. We are not talking high-priced items ó some things will sell for only a couple dollars. So check your stash at home and see what you can contribute for the sale. The proceeds of the auction go into the Sunshine Fund to help pay for cards and postage! Oh, yes. Don't forget to bring your wallets! See you there!!

This month's hostesses are Marie Hebb, Denine Foulks and Jill Mullen. Devotions by Jan Fairchild.

Carol Jeffery

STONE WALLS AND CHURCHES

Stone walls are woven into the fabrics of our New Hampshire landscape. They wind and curve along most country roads. They may be long and wide, tumbled and imperfect or they may be new and square. They come in all shapes and sizes. At one time they had very distinct and useful purposes—keeping herds or flocks of animals in, making room for our planted crops, and marking our property lines.

While they still accomplish some of these things, now they are more regarded with an eye of appreciation and respect; stoic reminders of our history that we hold tight to as they retain not only property lines but also stories of our past absorbed into their cracks and crevices almost making them living things in our eyes.

Not unlike a stone wall, the white-steeped churches so familiar to us are part of that same landscape. They are architecturally beautiful and we know they hold many stories—of the past. Now they may be landmarks for giving directions—take a left at the big white church on the corner—for instance. They may be an aggravation for those who don't want to reduce their speed, a place where old people meet, and they may even be avoided with the impression of cultism.

The years pass by and the times change. Our stone walls, our churches, our brick and mortar grow weaker; their purpose questioned. Sometimes it feels that only those who stay within these walls of stone or timber know the true strength and feel the power of the stories. If we do not ask other stones to join us to help tend our wall, if we do not ask other stained glass windows to illuminate our church with their colorful light, then we run the risk of becoming tumbled down and irrelevant in the very landscape we love. Isn't that sad and so unfortunate?

And so it is time to strengthen our purpose, to go out and tell our stories outside of these walls with love, interest, reverence and respect. To not only stand in welcome at the doors but venture into the community with love and invitation. We should be relevant to all—young and old, churched and unchurched, those worn and weary, rich or poor, to those with conviction and those with doubt, to those who have lost hope. Together may we venture forward in the spirit of Christian love, vitality and invitation!

Humbly,

*Chris Feddern,
Stewardship Ministry and
Vitality Team*

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL UCC ONA CELEBRATION

Honoring 25 years of commitment to diversity and Plymouth Congregational UCC's pride of being the first Open and Affirming UCC church in New Hampshire and further honoring all NH Churches with the same commitment.

In Praise of Diversity An Art Exhibit

Saturday, April 29, 2017 to June 30, 2017
Viewing when church office is open and by arrangement.

Call for Entries

Opening Reception: Saturday, April 29, 4:30 p.m.
Followed by a late supper for the artists

Deadline for Entry: April 1, 2017

Eligibility: One submission from each ONA church in New Hampshire

Artwork Specifications: All art must be in presentation form, (framed when called for,) wired to receive the hook of our hanging system. No saw-tooth hangers.

Entry fee: none

Jury: We will hang as many as space allows. Remember that these will be hung in the sanctuary so please be discrete and used good taste for a diverse viewing population.

SHEPHERD PROGRAM IN NEED OF DRIVERS

The Shepherd Program is a wonderful ministry that provides people in the Wakefield & Brookfield area with rides to medical appointments when they are unable to drive themselves or have no other means of transportation. Request must be medical in nature and not financial. The first Congregational Church of Wakefield sponsors this program; however, we are in desperate need of more drives. If you could occasionally drive someone to a medical appointment, please let us know. Certificate of Insurance is required. It's a need. It's a mission. For information, please call the church office at 522.3189.

ELVES IN THE HOUSE!

It's true. The Sanctuary chandelier sparkles once again—thanks to Nate Fogg, Seth Fogg and Dalton Ostrye! The main bathroom is newly painted thanks to Royal Doughty! CLA Julie Margolis has a freshly painted office—thanks to Royal, Dalton, Connie Littlefield and Julie and other important assistance by Rob Nelson and Seth! That old/broken furniture is OUT and NEW furniture is IN. The office is looking great! Such a lot of Elves in our congregation!!! B&G Ministry is grateful and appreciative!

Carol Lundgren

SUNDAY SCHOOL ROCK STARS!



February 5th brings a new lesson of Bible verses that tell about love. Heart to Heart cards will be made for members in our church family who have difficulty getting out and about. Rock Stars will also make a large Heart-shaped card holder for their own Valentine cards.

On February 19 we will have a No-rehearsal play and then have juice and a snack. This should be fun!

For the next two months Denine will be in Texas helping ðpregnant with twinsö daughter. This is designed to help her three older ðgrandkidsö and son-in-law as well. SO, our church ðkidsö will need help those months too. Colleen Nicastro is the co-teacher every first Sunday of the month. Colleen will need and appreciate another person to be with her. The third Sunday will need two people to carry on a Sunday school project.

ALL lessons are already planned and complete and have notes written. Lesson packets are made up and most all craft supplies and samples of the craft are in place. There are a couple of Sundays that would require getting things together. Those are listed on the front of the packet. Are any of the following of interest to you?

March 5th—A second look at the symbols of the trinity. A shamrock is another symbol of the trinity. Make two St. Paddy's Day shamrock crafts.

March 19th—Put on a No-Rehearsal Skit. No props really necessary. After the skit enjoy juice and a snack while thinking and talking about it.

April 2nd—The lesson is all about Passover. Set up a small sampling of what would be served at a Passover meal. There is information about what each food symbolizes. The craft is a small banner depicting the door of homes that meant the spirit would pass over that home. There is a list of the ðingredientsö for food the sampling of a Passover meal that is easy and fast.

April 15th—There is a tentative plan for an Easter egg hunt. This would require getting plastic eggs, filling them and hiding them. Perhaps a small group would have fun doing this project. If desired, there are nice Christian themed baskets that can be purchased (Oriental Trading Company). A page is already printed out with Easter scripture verses. These verses can be cut into strips and added to the candy or treat in the plastic egg.

If you can help with any of these activities, please contact Julie in the office at 522-3189.

Denine Foulks

WAKEFIELD PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY CELEBRATES 7TH ANNIVERSARY

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet on Thursday, February 23. Please join us at 10:00 am in the Parish Helpers Room. We will have refreshments and share memories of our seven years of meeting, making prayer shawls and prayer squares and sharing prayer concerns. We are always available to share info about our ministry, provide instructions and yarn for the shawls. If you would like to learn more about prayer shawls, please come and celebrate with us!

Jan Fairchild

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR COFFEE HOUR

We all enjoy spending time with friends at Coffee Hour and thanks to Rachel White and Janet Twombly who, more often than not, make sure the coffee is on and served and things are cleaned up afterwards. Please consider volunteering to take over one of our ðLoaves and Fishesö coffee hours. No special skills required! Make the coffee and serve, or volunteer to do the dishes. Contributions to the food table are welcome every weekö whatever and whenever you feel moved to share with our church family! There is a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall or talk to Rachel at coffee hour or call her at 520-2316.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Seeking support while coping with grief can be very healing. We offer an open Bereavement Support Group every three weeks. It is a very friendly, caring group! Pastor Mary facilitates the conversation, maintaining a caring, safe, confidential space for sharing. All who are walking the journey of grief are welcome to take part. Our next meeting will take place here on Thursday, February 16 at 11:00. Please call the office for more information.

NEXT CAREGIVER SELF-CARE SUPPORT MEETING

Monday, February 6th at 10 a.m. in the Parish Helpers Room. Please feel free to extend an invitation to anyone you know who may be providing care in any way to a loved one. Are you providing care for a loved one at home, or in residential care close by or far away? You are welcome to join this supportive group which meets on the first Monday of each month. Your loved one needs you to be at your best and YOU need you to be mentally and physically healthy. We share information, insight, advice and encouragement. The group meetings are free and open to all caregivers.

Celebrations!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1	Barbara Cawlina	17	Ryan Dee
2	Bob James	19	Lisa Robinson
2	Marilou MacLean	23	Alisa Eaton
3	Kenneth Crew	24	Curt Cook
3	Maureen Steer	24	Barry Lockard
6	Sue Lynn	25	Cheyenne Boggs
10	Rev Peter Foss	25	Arlene Leyare
11	Rob Lundgren	25	Sid Silcocks
12	Peter Connell	25	Kristin Weeks
12	David Haag	25	Rose Zacher
12	Ryan McCarthy	26	Martha Charnock
13	Susan Tamilio	26	Evelyn Truhn
14	Marion Blomster	27	Charlie Bilodeau
14	Ann Gehring	27	Tom Weeks.
15	Nicky Mercer	28	David Fairchild
16	Chris Bozuwa	28	Emma Royle
16	Evelyn Truhn	28	Stephen Silcocks

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Paul & Agnes Carlson (1946)
- 10 Joe & Jan Brejwo (1973)
- 14 Lance & Marilou MacLean

IN HONOR AND CELEBRATION OF PAMELA FRAZIER

The Wakefield Congregational Church gratefully acknowledges the many donations from the family and friends of Pam Frazier to our church's Memorial Fund.

There were also several gifts given to honor Pam through Alternative Gift Giving; FOOT, Daisy Dube, and the Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund.

All these gifts are deeply appreciated in celebration of Pam's life.

Gail Feddern, Diaconate

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.	Jan F.
Tom and Barbara T.	Donald L.
George B.	George J.
Mackenzie M.	Sid S.
Marcia	Marcia H.
Marsha A.	Parker V.

AND FOR:

Our global neighbors in places where there is great strife.

Our servicemen and women

Our friends at Rufumiso Church, Zimbabwe

Residents of the Nursing Homes and Retirement

Communities in our area

Thank You

Dear Church Family,

Joe and I want to express our sincere appreciation for the cards, calls, hugs, kind words and many prayers on the recent passing of my mother. You have touched our hearts. It makes it easier knowing so many people care. We have a wonderful church family and we are grateful.

Blessings, *Janice and Joe Brejwo*

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU TO ALL

Your generosity has been a blessing to many! The Alternative Gift Giving this Christmas season helped fund the following programs: Heifer International, Wakefield Food Pantry, Wakefield Wonders (American Cancer Society Relay for Life), the Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund, FOOT (Friends of Orphan Trust), Daisy Dube Children's Home, and Project Dignity!.

Wow! Are you impressed? I am! Our church family donated to many worthy projects that will benefit so many people. Thank you to all who made this possible

God bless you!

Gail Feddern, Deacon

FEBRUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Scrabble 10 a.m. Diaconate Meeting 4 p.m.	2 Budget Workshop 5 p.m. All Welcome! Community String Band 6:30 p.m.	3	4
5 5th Sunday after the Epiphany Worship and Church School 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	6 Caregivers' Support Group 10 a.m.—11 a.m.	7 Bible Study 12 noon Choir Practice 6 p.m.	8 Pairs and Spares 6 p.m.	9 Parish Helpers 1 p.m. Community String Band 6:30 p.m.	10	11
12 6th Sunday after The Epiphany Family Sunday Worship —10 a.m. Coffee Hour	13	14 Bible Study 12 noon Choir Practice 6 p.m.	15	16 Bereavement Support Group 11 a.m. Community String Band 6:30 p.m.	17	18
19 7th Sunday after The Epiphany Worship and Church School 10 am Coffee Hour	20	21 Scrabble - 10 a.m. Bible Study 12 noon Choir Practice 6 p.m.	22	23 Prayer Shawl Ministry 7th Anniversary 10 a.m. Community String Band	24	25 Prepared To Serve at Pembroke Academy
26 Last Sunday after the Epiphany Worship 10 am Coffee Hour	27	28 Bible Study 12 noon Choir Practice 6 p.m.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">March 1st—Ash Wednesday</div>			