

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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MARCH 2017

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FIRSTCONGREGATIONALCHURCHOFWAKEFIELDUCC

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR'S HUSBAND

Dear Friends,

I miss you all! Like Mary, I have not been in church for a number of weeks and miss the church community, worship, and Mary's sermons (not that she doesn't preach at me at home!). I am looking forward to returning soon.

Mary's doctor has determined that she needs to be focused on her therapies (occupational, physical, and speech) full time now and that is what we are doing. Five sessions a week, with homework, and an additional two sessions of acupuncture. Each time, the therapists push her a little harder, and a bit further down the road to full recovery. I can attest to the fact that she works hard on this every day and is determined to get back to normal and to church as soon as she possibly can. As we all know, Mary is a doer, happiest when she is in action, and having to stand down from her active life while her injuries heal is one of the biggest challenges she has faced. She understands that this is the path she is on right now, and must live it with patience and grace.

I would not only like to express our deep gratitude for the love and support that we have felt from you all, but express my own perspective on how extraordinary it is that the church has carried on so well in coping with the sudden absence of its pastor. For a number of years I have served on our Association's Committee on Church and Ministry and am well acquainted with our neighboring churches. As the Chair of the Conference's Clergy Spouse and Partner Support Mission group I know many spouses across the state and the experiences they have within their own congregations. Many of our friends are clergy. So when I say that our Wakefield church has shown spiritual strength, resilience, and organizational health in the face of a crisis I am speaking not just as a proud member and a clergy spouse, but as someone with a larger experience and perspective in the wider church community.

It is an honor to be part of this congregation, and we both look forward to being back real soon.

Bob

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

General Income:	\$ 84,112.40
Additional Income Sources:	17,500.00
Expenditures:	<u>(100,299.26)</u>
Net Income over Expenses	<u>\$ 1,313.14</u>

Checking Non-Restricted balance:	\$ 5,001.65
Checking Restricted Funds balance:	<u>4,447.83</u>
Total Checking A/C balance: 1/31/16	<u>\$ 9,449.48</u>

January and February were busy months for the Finance Team as they worked to accumulate and compile the numbers provided by each church ministry for the Leadership Council Proposed 2017-2018 Annual Budget. There were two workshop opportunities to assist in the preparation of the budget. The first one in January was part of a Leadership Council meeting. Since, currently, Christian Outreach and Christian Education do not have coordinators; the Leadership Council prepared those portions of the new budget this year.

Unfortunately, the budget workshop held early in February to further discuss the budget and gather more information had very low attendance. The Leadership Council meeting held on Feb 19th did not have a quorum and therefore the attendees could not vote to release a Proposed Budget. The church By-Laws stipulate that the Proposed Budget for the year beginning the following July 1 needs to be provided to the congregation by the last Sunday in February. So it is down to the wire, but it will be done.

Please be sure to examine the Leadership Council Proposed 2017-2018 Budget that will be released and available on Sunday February 26th. This is your church, you do not need to wait until the Annual Meeting in June to think about or discuss the proposed budget. If you have ideas or questions, please speak to any Council member.

Janice Brejwo and Shannon Johnson, Co-Treasurers

KELSEY RODGERS LEAVING FCCW TODDLER CARE POSITION

It is with regret that we accepted Kelsey's resignation this month. Kelsey has decided to pursue a career with the United States Coast Guard. Thank you Kelsey for your tender care of our dear toddlers and all the best to you!

Dave Schweitzer, Personnel Coordinator

IN OUR CHURCH LIBRARY

God Uses Cracked Pots: A Lighthearted Look at Life's Foibles & Fears, Patsy Clairmont

Under His Wings and Other Places of Refuge, Patsy Clairmont

Patsy Clairmont's quick wit and depth of biblical knowledge combine in a powerful pint-size package. She helps you to laugh God's truths right into your heart. Her mission to provide humor and hope for healing comes from her own struggles. A recovering agoraphobic, Patsy speaks at Women of Faith conferences, addressing tens of thousands of women, and has written more than twenty-four books, including *Catching Fireflies*, *All Cracked Up*, and *I Grew Up Little*. She loves a rainy day, a good book, and a deep cushioned chair. Given a day off, she shops, solves the world's problems with a friend over lunch, and hugs the stuffing out of her two grandsons, Justin and Noah. Patsy and her husband of fifty-two years, Les, live in Tennessee.

*Quoted from Amazon.com

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

A BIT OF CHURCH HISTORY

Notable Congregationalists from History:

- John Quincy Adams - sixth president of the United States
- Calvin Coolidge - 30th President of the United States and first honorary moderator of the Congregational Christian Churches
- Samuel Adams - early American statesman
- Hubert Humphrey - Vice-President of the United States, 1965-1969
- David Livingstone - missionary and explorer
- John Milton - poet
- Harriet Beecher Stowe - abolitionist, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

*Source: Wikipedia

Linda Petkunas

COFFEE HOUR ASSISTANCE NEEDED

A sign up sheet has been placed on the serving table. Please help us with the serving of coffee and tea and with the clean up process. We appreciate your help and thank you!

Blessings, Rachel White and Janet Twombly

A LETTER FROM CONNIE

Dear Friends,

This is rainy season in Zimbabwe. It begins in November/December and can last until April. In the past several years there has been very little to no rain resulting in years of drought and an inability to access adequate water in local rivers or from working boreholes. This year the water works are on! Initially, everyone was thrilled. They planted and planted and planted but now, kind of like the snow I am hearing about in New Hampshire, people are saying "Enough already!" The rain is drowning crops, causing terrible destruction of roads already in sad/bad shape, damage to homes, and has brought on an increase in mosquitoes, and with mosquitoes comes malaria. As they say, "Eish!" or "Mai wee!" ("Mai wee" sounds like "my way" and can either mean "my mother" or "oh my God!") So Zimbabwe, with all of its mixed blessings, is dealing with area flooding and an increase in disease. I have also learned that rainy season means you need mud guards or what I call fenders-- on the bicycles. Who knew that so many of the bicycles we sent on the shipping container don't have these handy dandy fenders to prevent clothes from becoming mud spattered and ruined. Three of the Daisy Dube boys have to travel 6-7 km to secondary school. As motivation I stipulated that as long as they do well in school and demonstrate good behavior they can have a bicycle to ride to school. Unacceptable work and/or behavior means they walk. So I find myself learning all about bicycle parts as we buy replacement tires, 2nd hand bike seats or brakes, and more. The high school boys are thrilled to have bicycles.

Nothing and I mean nothing seems to get thrown away. A friend needed a new "gear box" for her Honda Fit which broke down near my place. Sure enough, someone locally happened to have one and they replaced what looks like an engine to me on the side of the road and the old gear box is now sitting in my yard. Eish! Mai wee! An unexpected lawn ornament for me and a working car for my dear friend, Mrs. Matsairere.

Our friend Joseph Sibuya is happy with the rain and is expecting a bumper crop of corn and beans. Joseph has become a farmer extraordinaire, a second career after being released by the UCCZ after 34 years as a Special Projects Officer. He expects to harvest 20 tons of corn. The beleaguered UCCZ head office is now under extreme stress for not having paid the electric bill at Mt. Selinda Hospital and other locations to the tune of \$162,000. That's quite a bill and no doubt has taken a few years to accrue. But church members, while shocked by the lack of leadership business management, soldier on and they have faith that all will be well with God's help.

Rufumiso Church members were delighted with the boxes from the shipping container. Within 24 hours of receiving the goods, they held a distribution for the church and the six preaching points. Various members sent me photos by text with thanks and love and appreciation. They want the FCCW to know how much they appreciate the effort and appreciate being remembered. Now that the church is fully constructed, painted and looking beautiful or a project we began in 2005 Rufumiso will

hold a formal dedication likely in June. Don't be surprised when an invitation to attend the gala is sent to Wakefield Church members!

The PKZ Team continues to push for the necessary approvals from Zim government officials for the medical clinic. We have requested approval from the Ministry of Health, who sends us to the Rural District Council in Chiredzi, some 3 ½ hours from Mt. Selinda. The Chiredzi Rural District Council officials send us to the Provincial Administrator in Masvingo, another 3-4 hours away. We submit everything with a big smile on our faces and when they say they will get back to you in a week or so, your heart sinks because you know it will be many, many weeks despite all their heartfelt congratulations for coming up with such a wonderful project. Then you hear that the government isn't moving on approvals for clinics in any kind of hurry because they have no money to assign doctors and nurses. Doctors, who are paid by the government, have recently gone on strike for higher wages. Many nurses have been cut and are "seated at home" because the government doesn't have the money to pay them. Same with teachers. And so it goes!

But good news awaits! We have received generous funding that will allow us to establish a borehole in Angus Village, a community where women and girls walk unbelievable distances to fetch water. Local leaders are thrilled and have approved the borehole. In the coming months PKZ will install and hand over the borehole to the community so the whole process of the maze of government approvals is not necessary. I think I hope I pray! See you all very soon!

Blessings, Connie Littlefield



School and classroom photos near Angus Village



Celebrations!

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 John Shaffer	15 Gemma Golden
3 Ken Ellis	Stanek
5 Deb Smiley	17 Jean-Michel Galabrun
6 Angela Brown	17 Jan Stanley
8 Nathan Fogg	18 Kayla Leyare
8 Marlena Livingston	20 Leona Vittum
9 Richard Peckham	24 Michelle Garland
11 Andrew Hughes	29 Nathan Wilson
14 Penny Huckins	31 Katy Hagy

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 John and Shirley Stevens (60 yrs)
- 4 Stephen and Lauree Royle

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.	



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

THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO

On Sunday January 29 members of FCCW and Our Vitality Team presented Wakefield's Transfer Station Team with its Community Service Award for outstanding service to the communities of Wakefield and Brookfield. Dave Schweitzer of the FCCW Vitality Team presented them with Sharon Lafond's caricatures of each of them with signatures of grateful FCCW church members along with framed certificates honoring their service to the town.



Recipients included (l-r) Walter (Skip) Knight, who retired on January 30 after 26+ years of dedicated service, Supervisor Warren Winn, Mike Soucy, and Leroy Adams.

Dave Schweitzer, Vitality Team

OUR CONDOLENCES

We were saddened by the recent passing of Parker Vanderhoof who passed away peacefully in the presence of his family on January 26, 2017. Our condolences to his family and friends. He will be missed. A memorial service was held at our church on February 4th.

Thank you

Dear Church Family,

We want to thank you for the outpouring love and support you have given us at this time of Parker's passing. Your kind words and prayers have been a great comfort to us all.

Blessings and love, Donna and Family

FOUND!

Dishes, bowls, platters and baskets ... waiting to be claimed by owners. Please pick up yours in the Fellowship Hall kitchen. Unclaimed items will be donated to the Treasure Shop!

MARCH 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 ASH WEDNESDAY Scrabble -10 a.m. Diaconate Meeting 4 p.m.	2 Bereavement Support 11 a.m. Community String Band 6:30 p.m.	3	4
5 1st Sunday of Lent Worship and Church School 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Bells—6 p.m.	6 Caregivers' Support Group 10 a.m.—11 a.m. Choir Practice 6 p.m.	7 Bible Study 12 noon	8 Calling and Discernment Meeting—4 p.m. Pairs and Spares 6 p.m.	9 Parish Helpers 1 p.m. Community String Band 6:30 p.m.	10	11
12 2nd Sunday of Lent Family Sunday Worship —10 a.m. Coffee Hour Bells—6 p.m.	13 Choir Practice 6 p.m.	14 Bible Study 12 noon	15	16	17	18
19 3rd Sunday of Lent Worship and Church School 10 am Coffee Hour Bells—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. Bereavement Support 11 a.m. Community String Band 6:30 p.m.	24	25
26 4th Sunday of Lent Worship 10 am Coffee Hour Bells—6 p.m.	27 Choir Practice 6 p.m.	28 Bible Study 12 noon	29	30	31	

INTERACT DECATHLON

It's that time again for the Spaulding High School Interact Club to hold its annual fun-filled decathlon as we raise money for our friends in Zimbabwe. In the past, we have worked toward drilling a borehole (well), repairing a school, and improving a medical clinic. Our focus this year is to provide people with a more convenient water carrying system. They are called Hippo Rollers.

Most women and young girls walk many miles and hours carrying 5 gallon buckets of water on their heads to take care of the household chores of cooking and cleaning as well as drinking. The Hippo Roller can be easily pulled or pushed over the same distance in a much shorter amount of time. In addition, the carrying capacity of the Hippo Roller is 35 gallons.

This simple and innovative system provides not only convenience, but also time. This time saving device is so important in allowing young girls to be able to attend school as to opposed to traveling through dangerous conditions toting water for the family.



Our goal is to raise \$1,000. To do that we need either teams of energetic inspiring folks of all ages to create a team of 10 participants, or generous sponsorship of existing teams already established. Each team member has an entry fee of \$10.00 with a team fee of \$100.00. We hope to have at least 10 teams allowing us to reach our \$1,000.00 goal. Each Hippo Roller cost \$125.00, so by reaching our goal we could purchase eight Hippo Rollers.

The decathlon events include fun relay style activities like; the 3-legged race, hula-hoop extravaganza, and a hockey shoot-out. All events are held in fun with minimal competition. Winning teams receive hand-made, with love, trophies. Our very own Jillian Currier is a Co-President of the Interact Club and will be building a team of her own. If you want to join her team, or help contribute toward the entry fees, any donation would be graciously accepted. Our club is a community service club that has helped people and organizations locally, within the state, nationally and internationally. We offer our services, time and abundance in order that others may have a better life.

Please help us in our endeavors to assist the women and girls of Zimbabwe in providing them a healthy, efficient and time saving method of gathering water.

Donna V Ackerman

GOOD YEAR TO BE A SNOWBIRD!

Some winters have more snow than others. Welcome to 2017! Although we're in good shape compared to the West, we still had our fair share, for sure. Fortunately whether you're in New Hampshire, South Carolina, Arizona or Florida, the internet and all its capabilities allow us to communicate and share information like we're just a stone's throw away.

From our website www.fccwakefieldnh.org you can see some of our latest pictures, newsletters, copies of sermons, and information on our ministries. You can also listen to some Bell Choir music! If you haven't visited our website it is a good place to check out.

Also, whether you are in NH or any other state we all still have the privilege to financially support our church easier than ever! Simply go to our website www.fccwakefieldnh.org. On the right hand side you will see the title "Support our Church" and right under that it says "Donate Now" in green. Once you click on the "Donate Now" button you will be directed to a page where you can create your own secure login and password. Once you've set this up, in the future you can quickly and securely login in.

DONATE NOW

Now you're all set up and ready to go! You have the options to contribute to the General Fund, Memorial Gifts, to Outreach Missions or make a Pledge payment online. You can make a one-time payment or set up for automatic, recurring donations. Awesome! Thank you Internet!

However you may decide to make a donation, contribution or pledge whether in the Offering Plate, in the mail or online we sincerely and prayerfully thank you for your support which enables us to Be, to accomplish our missions and be relevant to our community and world.

With appreciation,

Chris Feddern, Stewardship

DIACONATE UPDATE

Deep thanks to all corners of our FCCW church family and ministerial colleague community for gathering together to carry on while dear Mary recovers from her serious concussion.

Mary's amazing ministry foundation roots have provided the skills, energy and spirituality since her head injury in early December. Our Deacons have spearheaded sourcing ministers among Mary's close colleagues like Larry Brickner-Wood, Gayle Murphy and Maureen Steer.

The entire FCCW church family has been sending prayers daily for Mary's recovery as well as filling in along the many facets of our outreach ministries in the community and the world.

*Jo Szirbik and Ginny Schweitzer,
Diaconate Co-Coordinator*

WAKEFIELD WONDERS/RELAY FOR LIFE OF LAKE WINNIPESAUKEE

First of all, thank you to all the "Alternative Gifters" for your generous donations to fight cancer. We very much appreciate it. Our first fundraiser was a resounding success! Our fellowship hall was filled with painters of all ages, with amazing abilities. The winter scenes you painted were spectacular! We will be doing another paint class on April 30th. Subject is yet to be determined, but I will advertise it as soon as I know. We have another fundraiser in the works. We will raffle two tickets to an upcoming concert to be held at Meadowbrook in Gilford on June 16, 2017 "Four Voices" Joan Baez, Mary Chapin Carpenter, & the Indigo Girls!!!! All team members will have tickets available very soon. \$10.00 per ticket or 3 tickets for \$20.00. Current team members are Jan & David Fairchild, Carol Lundgren, Jan Stanley, Evy Truhn, and Jeanne Baker. There's always room for more, if you'd like to join us, go to www.RelayForLife.org/lakewinnipесаukееnh.

Nancy Dee, Team Captain

CPR COURSE OFFERED IN WAKEFIELD

There are openings available in the next SOLO First Aid & CPR course being held at the Wakefield Parks & Recreation Center! What peace of mind it would be to have a few members in the congregation to be CPR Certified!

Wakefield Parks & Recreation
SOLO First Aid & CPR Course
Saturday, March 25th
CPR: 9AM - 11AM \$35.00 Per Person
First Aid: 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM \$60.00 Per Person
Ages 12 & Adult
Pre-registration required.
Phone: 522-9977
Email: alysa@wakefieldrec.com

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 meetings will take place at the church on Thursday, March 2 and March 23 at 11:00. Please call the office for more information.

A NEW APPROACH TO OUR DONATION REPORTING

In an attempt to streamline the process of reporting what individuals have given to the church, we're going to modify how and when we generate giving reports. Going forward, we will continue to automatically do a year-end report for tax purposes. This will represent all donations that were made to the church during the course of the tax year and will be sent out some time in January of the following year. How you receive this report is up to you - via email, postal mail or hand-delivered at church.

At any time, should you desire a mid-term report - either of all your donations made in the current tax year or your pledge status for the church's current fiscal year thus far - I will be happy to generate said report and deliver to you however you like. Just give me a call at [603-871-8066](tel:603-871-8066), email at julielouisekessler@gmail.com or drop a note in the Assistant Treasurer's mail box.

Julie Kessler

KEEPING TRACK OF ALL YOU GIVE

Starting immediately, if you give a non-monetary donation to the church - referred to as an "In-Kind" donation, we will enter it in our giving database and it will become another donation item in your year-end report. This is to better serve you in tracking what you've given to the church plus it helps us better understand monies the church didn't have to spend because of the generous donations from so many of you!

Several points on this new tracking:

- Examples of In-Kind donations include: book of stamps, Home Depot gift card, can of paint, office supplies, etc.
- To facilitate the entry of this information, you just need to fill out an In-Kind donation form (found in the back of the church or you can just ask me for a copy) and return to the Assistant Treasurer mailbox.
- We are so very sorry, but, donated professional services cannot be included for tax purposes. I would be happy to enter in our database, though, just so we understand what our costs could have been had you not volunteered your time.

Please direct any questions to Julie Kessler at julielouisekessler@gmail.com or phone 603-871-8066.

Julie Kessler



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LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

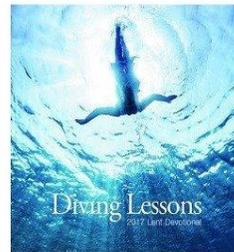
Please consider joining us for a 6-week Lenten study on Tuesdays from 12 - 1. The study is entitled: "Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus". This study will start the on the first Tuesday of Lent - March 7th.

The following is a description of the study:

Central to the Christian faith is a man who denies all our pre-conceived notions about what God should look like. Joining his movement will mean coming to terms with the real Jesus, the rebel Jesus. Jesus didn't come to start a religion. The rebel Jesus came with a renegade gospel to start a revolution. You and I are invited to be a part. In Renegade Gospel, pastor and author Mike Slaughter presents Jesus and his challenging message to inspire us during Lent, Easter, and through the year. The six sessions include: "Discovering the Rebel Jesus", "Revolutionary Lifestyle", "The Most Important Question You Will Ever Have to Answer", "Seeing Jesus Today", "The Way of the Cross", "Resurrection".

The class materials consist of an accompanying book and a short DVD-based commentary used in each class. If you're interested in the book (not a necessary requirement for taking the class), the cost is \$10 (plus shipping). Contact Julie Kessler at julielouisekessler@gmail.com or call: [603-871-8066](tel:603-871-8066) Julie know if you'd like to attend - and if you'd like a book.

LENTEN DISCUSSION GROUP



Please join us on Sunday mornings beginning on the first Sunday of Lent, March 5th, at 9 a.m. for coffee and discussion. Location will be posted in the church. We'll be reading daily devotions from the Stillspeaking Writers' Group, Diving Lessons, and will talk about those readings as we gather. The books are in. Please pick one up at

church or contact the church office.

PARISH HELPERS MEETING MARCH 9TH

At our March meeting, we will learn how reading poetry to seniors at Sugar Hill Assisted Living turned into a writing project and a book entitled Other Voices, Other Lives. Barbara Bald and Beth Fox will share their journey with seniors and entertain you with stories and poems, some about people you know well. Their work has been well-received around the state.

As always, all women are welcome to join us at our monthly meetings. See you at 1 p.m. on March 9th!