

STEEPLE VIEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION



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JANUARY 2020

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

CHRISTMASTIDE-NEW YEAR-EPIPHANY

We have celebrated the birth of Christ; the 12 days of Christmas are behind us and (when you receive this copy of Steeple View) we would be receiving the Magi, the three wise men will be added to the creche on the Sunday, January 5th in preparation for the Day of Epiphany on January 6th.

The liturgical calendar keeps us moving, reminding us we always begin again. Our mantra "God is Still Speaking!" captures our attention to stop, listen and see the "Aha!" moments and begin again.

It is now 2020! We begin again *and* finish what we started. **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!**

The Church Self-Study Report (results from the Cottage Meetings and individual meetings) is scheduled to have been given to the Profile Committee to craft the Church's Profile. A few copies will be available for those who do not have email, but the report will go out to all members via email. This will complete my contact with the **Profile Committee**: Judy Trepal, Harriet Wilson and Carol Lundgren. They will reach out and gather what they need to complete their task, hopefully by March.

The Search and Call Committee: Ryan McCarthy, Linda Messer, Chuck Hodson, George Ackerman, and Julie Evenson continue their training with me in preparation for review of Clergy Candidate profiles that will arrive after the Church's Profile is approved by FCCW members and the Conference to be uploaded to the UCC Ministry Opportunities site. Once the Search and Call Committee receives their first Clergy Candidate profile to review, my contact with them ends and they enter closed/confidential sessions.

2020 is the year eyes are wide open to see, anew the possibilities God has for FCCW. Put your glasses on!

Pastor Alberta



Wakefield Meals on Wheels

Our local Meals On Wheels program is in need of additional drivers to deliver the noon time meal. You may decide to drive once a week, once a month or any numbers of days that are convenient for you.

The driving commitment time is approximately 1 hour and a half. If you wish you are welcome to team up with me, Rachel White, Dave Schweitzer or Norma Gore to become familiar with the delivery route and the clients.

This heartwarming experience is very rewarding and gratifying. Thank you for considering. Please feel free to contact me! Blessings,

Rachel White

Fellowship Café

Whether your taste preference is light, dark or in between, we've got your coffee. Feel free to check out our Café Cabinet in the Fellowship Hall. We have whole bean, drip grind and even K cups. We also have a variety of teas, as well as baking cocoa and hot cocoa mixes. If you don't see what you want, please leave a note in the cabinet or speak with Margie. The Fellowship Café is an Outreach ministry that supports small farming co-ops in various parts of the world, by buying their organic products through fair trade, and encouraging land sustainability. It's all good!

Margie Galabrun

Our Hospitality Team



If you've attended our coffee hours or other events, you are sure to have seen these smiling faces! Here's a big THANK YOU to our hospitality team members. From left to right—Laura Frye, Janet Twombly, and Rachel White!

Shepherd Program

Here's a shout out for our amazing Shepherd Program that has been operating since the 1980s. The Shepherd Program is an Outreach ministry that provides people with rides to medical appointments when they, because of a medical or physical condition, are unable to drive themselves and have no other means of transportation.

Currently we have 3 administrators and 22 drivers. All are volunteers. The program is free of charge to the riders. Sometimes the riders or their families make contributions to the church in support of the program, which allows us to offer our drivers occasional gift gas cards. This year, from January 1st through November 30th, the program has provided 99 rides totaling 3,312.5 miles (round trip).

If you're interested in helping to continue this program in some way, please speak with either Rachel White or Margie Galabrun. You will be welcomed.

Margie Galabrun

Twice a Month! CareGiver Support Group

By request, the CareGiver Self-Care Support Group will now meet the 1st and 3rd Mondays each month at 9:30 a.m. If you are a caregiver or concerned about caregiving for a loved one, you are most welcome. We meet in the Parish Helpers Room. January meetings are January 6 and January 20. For more information, contact Carol Lundgren 978 807-4041.

Carol Lundgren

The Good Grief Journey

You know that losing someone you love is one of the most challenging times of life. Routines and traditions are never the same, and you may even find yourself with no one to talk to about your grief. But it doesn't have to be that way. Having a safe space to talk about your grief with others who will support you in this difficult time is a powerful step toward creating a good grief journey.

Today is a Good Day to go From Grieving to Living

Connection * Healing * Meaning

Patti Schmoock

Email: patti@fromgrievingtolive.com

Phone: 603-491-0474

Please text first, if possible

Join us every second Wednesday of the month at 11 am and 7 pm in the Parish Helpers room

What is a Charitable IRA Deduction?

Have you already reached the age (currently 70 ½ years) when you are required to take a Minimum Required Distribution (MRD) from your IRA?

A Charitable IRA Deduction is a special provision allowing a taxpayer to transfer an amount up to \$100,000 annually from their IRA accounts directly to a qualifying charity. (Yes, our beloved church is a qualifying charity, but you already knew that!) The distribution will count toward the taxpayer's yearly Minimum Required Distribution and will not be treated as taxable income. You do not have to itemize on your tax return to gain this tax benefit. This can be a win-win situation for both you and the recipient of your generosity.

In order to take advantage of this tax benefit, the distribution must be made directly to the charity from the IRA custodian. Our very capable assistant Treasurer, Julie Kessler, will provide you with a donation letter to keep with your tax papers.

If this sounds like something you would like to investigate, your financial/tax advisor or IRA custodian will be able to answer your questions and give you directions on how to proceed.

Happy New Year from your Finance Ministry!

Joy of Baptism



We welcome into the family of our Christian community the infant son of Brigitte and Pablo Lobato. Mateo is the Grandson of Annie Gehring, Godson of Austin (Max) Gehring, and grandfather Bob Gehring. Pastor Alberta blessed and baptized this precious child on December 29. His big brother, Nico, was baptized here two years ago. The family lives in the UK.

Parish Helpers



Thirty-one Parish Helpers gathered for our annual Christmas Luncheon and Yankee Swap. A good time was had by all! Our next meeting is on Thursday, January 9th, at 1 p.m. Our speaker is attorney Casey O'Kane whom you can "Ask Anything (Within Reason)!" Our hosts are Laura Parsons, Jill Mullen and Jo-Anne Perks. No one signed up for Devotions, so if you are willing to do that, please contact me and let me know! As always, all women are welcome to join the Parish Helpers. Come along and bring a friend!

Carol Jeffery

Loving Hearts and Earth Angels A New Way to Connect

Deacon Evy Truhn is beginning a new form of outreach: "Loving Hearts and Earth Angels Ministry". Watch for the launch mid-January. It is sure to be an important way to keep in touch with church friends who are physically not able to attend church for worship or activities. It's a way to reach out and bring God's grace. Matthew 25:36 says: "I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me." Do you know of someone who would welcome a card, a call, a visit? Please let Evy know (truhne@gmail.com). The invitation to BE an "Earth Angel" is open to all!

Evy Truhn

Hazel MacBrien Nursery School

December was a short school month for us with 2 snow days, a delayed opening and now school vacation. But, we managed to get in some fun holiday activities. I hope you enjoyed the bells that the children did which were hung in fellowship hall. We made snowman ornaments for our grown-ups. We also baked and decorated gingerbread men cookies (yum, delicious). We had a special visit from Santa. Reverend Dave came with his guitar. We sang Christmas Carols to Santa and our grown-ups. We hope you all had a great Christmas. We wish you a happy and healthy New Year.

HMNS

Happy Birthday, Jesus!



On December 22 we were surprised at Coffee Hour with a beautifully decorated fellowship hall and a birthday cake to celebrate Jesus' birthday! Coralena, CeCe, Julia, and McAuley planned the entire celebration as a gift for the congregation. Tyler Alie, Clark Davis, and Tim and Julia McCarthy helped decorate the Hall with help from grown-up elves, Dave and Ginny Schweitzer. And to make it even more festive, we had a surprise visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Everyone had fun taking photos with Santa, decorating ornaments, and eating cake. Thank you to Gina Golden and Denine Foulks in helping the children get it all together! For more photos, check our Facebook page.

Welcome to Conversation Group

Conversation Group was introduced several years ago by our dear sister, Jan Fairchild, and was designed for women who were aged 60 and over. Through guided conversation, those who attended had the opportunity to get to know each other on a more personal and meaningful level than they had in the past. There were two groups of 8 – 12 women. Later age restrictions were lifted, more participants joined and the two groups became one. Then Jan moved away ☐

Many moons later, we are now a strong group again. We recently met twice at the home of Jan Brejwo. Our last gathering was a group of 12 women, and we shared our past Christmas experiences with each other. An interesting conclusion was the question of, if you had one Christmas to relive, which would it be?"

Please join us. Our next gathering will be in the Parish Helpers room in the church on Monday, January 13th at 1 PM. If anyone has a recommendation for a conversation topic, please contact either Margie (balchlaker@gmail.com) or Patty Golden (goldenpj@gmail.com)

FCCW Men's Fellowship 2019 Annual Report

2019 was the first full year of operation for our FCCW Men's Fellowship Group. We have about 20 active members with more joining us every month and we dedicate ourselves to fellowship and serving our members in need along with community folks needing help of all kinds.

During 2019 we have raised enough funds to purchase new night lights for our FCCW Bell Choir, new strong yet portable tables for fellowship hall, provide \$1500 in youth scholarships for the UCC Horton Center Mountaintop Camp and mulch for the grounds surrounding the church. We also painted the interior of a needy member's home, provided fall yard work for elderly members, raised funds doing yard work in the community, grilled dogs/burgers to raise funds during the yard sale, made safety repairs to elderly members homes and the Interim Pastors' residence.

On Memorial Day we placed new American flags on the graves of all the war veterans buried in Lovell Cemetery. We have linked with the Sunday School Rock Star kids through music with Buddy Dee leading our musical talents singing with them during church services. We've also bought the Sunday School an electronic keyboard for expanding their musical program in the curriculum and for musical pageants they perform.

The Men's' Fellowship meets both at the Pub's Back Room and at members' homes for good food, fellowship and service within the church and greater Wakefield Community. Please join us during our monthly meetings on the second Thursday of the month. George Ackerman presides over the business meetings, Paul Allen is our Treasurer and Ron Kratt is our recording secretary.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Schweitzer



Zimbabwe Mission Projects!

Thank you, thank you, thank you to the many generous people who supported Zim projects through the Alternative Giving program. Your support will enable us to buy more sanitary pads, continue support of our sponsored kids, and continue the effort to provide adequate protein to the 20 children residing at the Daisy Dube Home. You are truly a blessing!

Exciting news! The refreshed and revitalized--meaning no issues-- container project is on for 2020. YAY! This WILL be refreshing and revitalizing for all who have been patiently storing items and boxes on our behalf for the past three years. This will be a smaller effort, with fewer outside groups involved, and thus easier to manage. We are tentatively looking at May for a shipping date but will confirm in the coming months! A brief "wish list" of needed items will be generated soon.

In order to make the container a reality, the PKZ Team needs to flip some pancakes. The next Pancake Breakfast will be held on **Saturday, February 1st** from 7:30 – 10:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. You know the drill – a variety of delicious pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, muffins, juice and hot beverages for \$8.00 per person or \$25 for a family of four. Kids under 5 eat free!

But wait, there's more exciting news! A travel team to Zimbabwe is under consideration for July 2020. It has been four years since the last mission trip and we are changing up the elements to include a possible side trip to Victoria Falls in addition to the work camps at Rufumiso, Mt. Selinda, and one of the PKZ project sites. If you are interested, please contact me so that an informational session can be arranged. (No commitment necessary, just info!) The NH Conference is also planning a trip to Zimbabwe in August 2020. If more of a visitation experience is to your liking, we can pass on the necessary information and application.



This is Passmore Shanguro, Grade 2 at Dzika Primary. He is our newest sponsored child. His father was killed in South Africa.

Connie Littlefield

Matching Funds Opportunity for Zimbabwe

An amazing opportunity has come our way. A very generous member of our church has offered to **match any donations made to Zimbabwe Mission projects in January up to \$1,000.00!** Wow, wow, WOW! If you have previously given, thank you ever so much. If you have been considering giving but haven't yet, this is an opportunity to make your donation grow! Proceeds will go toward child sponsorship, finishing the Early Childhood Education Classroom in Madhuku Village, and the humanitarian shipping container effort for 2020.

God bless this donor and God bless all who might consider.

Connie Littlefield

To the World – Joy and Peace

Our fifth annual Christmas Bell Concert is now behind us. The countless hours of rehearsals, preparations and organizational efforts, as well as the angst, exhaustion, and anxiety were worth it all. Our strong group bond and common purpose was the driving force. We were thrilled to see our sanctuary filled for both performances with people enjoying and engaged in the musical presentations. Our intent was to ring in the Spirit of Christmas. We rang songs of joy and peace and took a quick trip around the world with a few international Christmas selections.

Many thanks go to all those involved in making this concert another huge success: the ringers, the instrumentalists, vocalists, dancers, the narrators and sound team, the production organizers, the volunteers offering hospitality and parking assistance, the ticket makers and takers, the decorators and the movers and shakers. Heartfelt thanks to all of you. What a fantastic FCCW community effort! Once again, prayers were answered and the weather cooperated. Concert day is truly one of my favorite days of the year.

Financially it was our best year, raising almost \$3700 for the General Fund, The Arts Ministry, and the Gafney Library. God willing, the tradition will continue.

Jan Stanley

Call for Sunday School Curriculum Teachers

Do you aspire to teach our Rock Stars how to "love like God" with compassion and goodwill? The Faith Formation Ministry is looking for passionate people to teach a new and simple curriculum that we will be bringing to Sunday School this winter and spring. This curriculum is titled "Learning to Love like God" and only requires people who are willing to follow the curriculum - no previous knowledge is needed! **There will be a meeting on January 15 at 6 p.m. to organize and experience the curriculum.** Contact Max Gehring with anything, especially if you want to view the curriculum.

Max can be reached at 603-998-0349
or maxen3rgy@gmail.com

WINTER WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations due to bad weather will be posted on:

WMUR Channel 9
WCSH Channel 6, and on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC/>

Library Corner

Christianity, Society & the World (R-CS)
Location: Parish Helpers Room

What are the pressing issues of the times we live in? As Christians, how do we deal with them? This subject area addresses these concerns. Here are some of the books you can find there:

[Cry of the Oppressed: History & Hope of the Human Rights Revolution](#)

[God's Lost Children: The Shocking Story of America's Homeless Kids](#)

[Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life](#)

[Involvement: Being a Responsible Christian in a Non-Christian Society](#)

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

Welcome New Members



Please extend the warm hand of welcome and friendship to our newest members who joined the church on December 29, 2019. What a blessing! Left to right are: Joe Gore, Norma Gore, Bonnie Hines, Ashley Chamberlain, Roger Ward, Jr., and Janet (Phillips) Ward

PayPal Donations

You can now donate to our church through PayPal on our website. Look for the "Donate" button on the home page. Options are there to donate to our General Fund as well as the Endowment Fund and other ministries.
<https://www.fccwakefieldnh.org/>

Looking for Lectors

Lectors read the scriptures on Sunday. There is a Lector Services List of open dates in the Fellowship Hall where you can sign up. Julie Margolis will confirm with you the week of the service as a reminder and will share the scripture readings in advance so you may look these over and have time to be comfortable with the readings. You can easily look up the scriptures at <https://www.biblegateway.com/>, be sure to filter for the New Revised Standard Version.

NH CPR- Heartsaver CPR/AED Training Saturday, January 11th at 10am

When: Saturday, January 11th at 10 A.M.
Snowdate: Saturday, February 8, 10 A.M.

Where: First Congregational Church of Wakefield

Course Cost: \$25 per individual

Pre-Registration Required: Contact the FCCW church office to register, 603-522-3189 or fccwakefieldnh@gmail.com. Provide full name, address, phone and email address. Must register with church office prior to the class. If class fills, we will schedule another class.

Form of Payment Accepted: Cash or check made payable to Heather Powers. *Please pay the day of class.*

**American Heart Association
Certified Instructor:** Heather Powers

Heartsaver CPR/AED Training:
<https://www.nhcpr.com/training-programs/american-heart-association/heartsaver-cpr-aed-aha>

Course Content: Adult, child and infant CPR and AED use. It includes adult, child and infant choking. Manikins are used.

Course Format: Classroom-based (instructor and video, with skills conducted throughout)

Course Length: 2.5 +/- hours

Minimum class size: We will not cancel a class due to a minimum class size. We will hold the class even if only one student enrolls.

Maximum class size: 10 (If more are interested we can create another class date and time to be offered)

Certification: Upon completion of this course, students receive an American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR/AED e-Card via email. e-Cards are valid for two years. e-Cards are issued 1-2 business days after course completion

Celebrations!

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

3 Donald Silcocks	18 Eric Boggs
4 Austin "Max" Gehring	19 George Szirbik
4 Caitlin Koukal	20 Gail Leyare
Howes	22 Susan Raban
6 Penny Grover	23 Jill Mullen
7 Donna Ackerman	24 Sid Girardin
9 Rachel Wilson	25 Aileen Koukal
12 Jillian Currier	25 Martha Jo McCarthy
15 Lindsay Baldwin	28 Samantha Michalsky
16 Carole Doughty	28 Erin Seaboyer
16 Robert Chadbourne	29 Timothy McCarthy
	30 John Hebb

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

12 Richard & Diana Peckham
16 Jeff & Valerie Ward

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN



We are a community that believes that prayer is powerful! Please keep in your prayers all those who suffer in any way in mind, body and spirit, as well as those who by virtue of their service are far from home or in harm's way. We ask also your prayers for peace in our world, for the health and integrity of our democracy, and for the flourishing of the work of our community of faith.

Prayer Chain: Through phone calls, emails and text messages, we are able to increase our prayer power for "immediate intercessory prayer" for the concerns of our congregation and friends. If you would like to be a member of the prayer chain, or have a prayer request, please get in touch with Harriet Wilson (dhwilson39@gmail.com)



We are saddened by the passing of our dear friend, Berit Johannessen, who passed away on December 8 at the age of 94. Berit was a long-time member of our church. She was active in the choir, the Parish Helpers and in the Prayer Shawl Ministry. A service for Berit will be held at our church in the spring. Her obituary can be read here: https://www.conwaydailysun.com/community/obituaries/obituary-berit-johannessen/article_d323965e-1b6c-11ea-bc84-4b3f66b79545.html



Thank you so much for the outpouring of blessings I have received following the passing of my sister Mary. To be honest I'm not sure if it has truly hit me, but your love, support, and prayers have helped me to adjust. The Spiritual hug that this church provides is a healing balm and I am fortunate to be among such loving and caring people.

*Your Sister in Christ,
Donna V Ackerman*

A LITTLE LIGHT . . . A LITTLE HOPE

When times get tough, your generous donations to the Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund provide the means to assist individuals and families within our church and local community who may need temporary emergency financial assistance. The Fund was established for this purpose and it is administered by the Pastor and the Diaconate, FCCW, with an emphasis on discretion and protection of privacy. Any requests for financial assistance please call the Church at 603-522-3189 for further information.

**WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF
THIS FUND.
TOGETHER WE CAN PROVIDE
A LITTLE LIGHT . . . A LITTLE HOPE**

Gail Feddern

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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JANUARY 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	3	4
5 Second Sunday After Christmas Worship And Holy Communion 10 a.m.	6 The Epiphany Caregivers' Support Group 9:30 - 10:30 am Choir Practice 5 p.m.	7 Faith Formation Study -Noon	8 Bereavement Group 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.	9 Parish Helpers 1 pm Community String Band 6:30 pm	10	11 Jr. Bells 9 a.m. HeartSavers CPR/ AED Training 10 a.m.
12 First Sunday After Epiphany Worship 10 a.m.	13 Conversation Group 1 p.m. Parish Helpers Room Choir Practice 5 p.m.	14 Scrabble 10 am Faith Formation Study -Noon	15 Church School Volunteers Meeting 6 p.m.	16 Community String Band 6:30 pm	17	18 Jr. Bells 9 a.m.
19 Second Sunday After Epiphany Worship 10 a.m. Leadership Council Meeting	20 Martin Luther King Day Caregivers' Support Group 9:30 - 10:30 am Choir Practice 5 p.m.	21 Faith Formation Study -Noon	22	23 Prayer Shawl Ministry 10 a.m. Community String Band 6:30 pm	24	25 Jr. Bells 9 a.m.
26 Third Sunday After Epiphany Worship 10 a.m.	27 Choir Practice 5 p.m.	28 Faith Formation Study -Noon	29	30 Community String Band 6:30 pm	31	



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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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