STEEPLE VIEWS



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

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FIRSTCONGREGATIONALCHURCHOFWAKEFIELDUCC

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

"My Mom Lu and I"

My Mom, Luverne Michelson, was born the 4th of 8 children. She was intelligent, beautiful, persistent and a seeker of truth. My feelings for Mom were varied at different times in my life. I wish to be open about both positive and negative times, knowing that some of you can relate—and because it shows transformation is possible!

As a little girl in elementary school, I loved it when Mom came to visit. I was proud of everything about her. Her apple pies, whole wheat bread and cabbage rolls were unmatched. And, at church, she sang an incredible soprano! Mom loved to laugh, especially with her 3 sisters when we got to go to the farm! We kids would laugh too—at them, as we enjoyed how funny they were.

When Mom "was able" to laugh, oh, did that ease things at home. There was often lots of tension between Mom and Dad; they often argued. You see, both of my parents were from homes where their European immigrant fathers were extremely critical. This produced angry wives and anxious kids. Dad loved to make us all laugh and it often eased the tension. It was the salve that likely held my folks together for 40 years until Dad died suddenly of a heart attack. Their combustible relationship caused Mom immense pain and for years, she turned to me emotionally. We now know that when a child has to act like a parent to their own parent, it's unhealthy for both. Kids lose freedom to be kids and become depressed and overly responsible.

Enter dementia. From 2012 to 2017, I devoted most of my time to caring for Mom. Even during interim ministry in Wyoming, I traveled to Denver nearly every week to be with her.

I THANK GOD for that time with Mom and for the kindness of my brother Tim and MB my sis-in-law and choral members, George and Betty Luce who took me in. Nothing brought me more joy than taking Mom to St. Andrews Episcopal where Tim is choirmaster. Mom would sing pitch perfect delighting us all--including the choir.

In the last years of her dementia, Mom and I held hands for hours as we watched movies on her bed together. We forged a profoundly loving relationship. Hmm, "forged". Good word. Forging is shaping something new, strong and beautiful through fire and persistence despite pain.

Have you "forged" relationships, too? They are invaluable. Oh, and about folks with dementia—they Always know LOVE.

Always. Amen.

Pastor Tere

Hazel MacBrien Nursery School News

As we finish up the month of April and get ready for vacation, we celebrated 100 days in school on the 22nd! The children did a 100-piece puzzle, made a 100-piece trail mix, did 100 exercises and took 100 steps around the building. We finished our day writing and drawing in our journal what we would buy with \$100.

The children are enjoying some outdoor play time in the side yard. Our favorite games are: What time is it Mister Fox? and Duck, Duck, Goose.

We still have a few spots left in our three-year-old class and a waiting list for our fours in the Fall. If you know of any three-year-olds looking for preschool please spread the word!

We are also very excited to participate in Wakefield's annual Pride Day celebration on May 15th. We will have a float in the parade and as a fundraiser we also will have a couple of games for the children to play .

HMNS is having a spaghetti dinner fundraiser at Cindy's Place on Wednesday May 26th from 4-7. We will have take out and dine in. Hope to see you there!

Soft/ Goods/ Clothing FUNdraiser

We will have our next collection this month! Drop off your bagged donations at the church on **Saturday**, **May 1 from 10 to noon**, **and Saturday**, **May 8 from 10 to 1 p.m.** Items we can accept include — Clothing & Shoes, Men's, Women's, Children's, Hats, Mittens, Scarves, Ties, Nylons, Socks, Underwear. Soft household items such as Bedding, Towels, etc. regardless of condition are also acceptable. **Please bag your items in plastic bags and securely tie them.** (13-gallon kitchen bags work very well.)

As Marie Condo preaches, let's pass on those things that do not bring us joy! We earn funds for the church while unloading unwanted items from our wardrobes! It's a win-win!

Donating Options

Donating to our church is quick and easy with online payment through PayPal or Debit or Credit Card. Click here to make an online donation. Donate Online. You will be given the option to pay by PayPal or Credit or Debit card. There you can pay your pledge, make a donation to the Endowment Fund, to One Great Hour of Sharing, or any of our Missions.

Church Library News

Weird Church: Welcome to the 21st Century by P. Nixon & B. Estock

In the post-Christendom era, the institutional church just isn't what it used to be. But don't give up hope for the future of faith. Weird Church offers church leaders a clear vision of what's coming next, so long as they're willing to live into a few critical shifts. Utilizing Spiral Dynamics as a means of framing the current changes in North American culture, Nixon and Estock give a thrilling forecast of where the church is going as we race toward the midcentury.

This book was recommended by Rev. Tere and is presently on the Mobile Shelving Unit in Fellowship Hall. Source: Pilgrim Press/UCC

Linda Petkunas, Librarian

Calling and Discernment

Announcing the following opportunities to serve in our church! We seek:

Delegates

Delegates represent FCCW at the NH Conference Annual General Meeting held in October, at the Carroll Strafford Association Meeting (usually held 2x a year) and at special events as desired. These events include ordinations, installations and other celebrations held by churches in our local association. Delegates get a glimpse into the "Wider Church" settings. It is always an enjoyable, educative, and interesting social network of church minded people. We are allotted up to five delegates, one of whom is a youth member (under 25), and our pastor. So delegates are part of a group of six! Please let any member of C & D know if you are interested and we can provide more information and respond to questions.

Archivist

The archivist (or a team of two or more) take responsibility for the care, management, and preservation of church historical data. This may involve scanning photos, management of documents and care of items donated to and used by the church from the past. What a gift for future generations of the FCCW community!

Linda Petkunas has worked diligently in this role for some time and will be retiring from the position on June 30th. She is a valuable resource for someone seeking more information about what an archivist does. C & D has the utmost thanks and appreciation for her service.

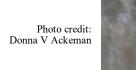
If you would like more information, please contact any of the following: Connie Littlefield, Margie Galabrun, Donna Ackerman, Julie Evenson, Harriet Wilson, Janice Brewjo, and Linda Messer.

Mother

Mother Nature is a fickle creature. One day I'm in shorts and a tank top basking in warm spring sunshine, the next I'm in sweats and a hoodie watching wet snow cover my gardens. Ecclesiastes 3 tells us "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven". The joy that spring brings to our thawing hearts can be seen in the acrobatic dance bluebirds display as they engage in the selection of a new nesting spot. Their electric blue streaking across the lawn giving question as to if you really saw something. The vibrant red of the cardinal can be seen perched high in the budding trees like a beacon of what is to come. Goldfinch, in their neon yellow trimmed in black, leaves me in awe. Robins, who I once thought migrated only to find out that they don't, suddenly appear in droves on lawns and fields. Each vying for that delicious treat just under the surface. As I watch the comical turkeys chasing each other in carousel fashion around the trees, I'm not sure who is chasing who. The toms flare their tail feathers, puff up their chests and drag their wings in a colorful dance giving credence to Darwin's survival theory. The young jakes remind me of the teenage boys I once taught. They came to class in their best "cool" clothes, their hair styled just so, sharing the fragrance of colon that they have not yet figured out what is the correct amount to apply.

This merry-go-round of life is amazing yet challenging. As we enter the final month of spring and pay homage to the various assortment of mothers in our lives, let us not forget the one who sustains us the most, Mother Nature. It is her fragile cycles that are straining to maintain balance against oppressive human behavior. Genesis 1:1 says, "God, in the beginning created the heavens and the earth". It is our responsibility to steward His creation. Spring brings us Hope. Hope for new beginnings. Hope for the return to Church. Mother Nature is Hope. As we prepare for the bountiful seasons ahead, let us remember to take care of the most precious mother of all. The one we are here to protect. The one that reminds us that for everything there is a season.

Donna V Ackerman



Fellowship Café



Why does our church support Equal Exchange Cooperative? In a nutshell, because they help and support small growers all over the world become more independent and better able to support their families, grow healthy product, and help to save the planet (but that requires a longer explanation). During Covid our Fellowship Café cabinet has been somewhat neglected. We still have stock and I am asking you to help us empty the café so we can start with nice fresh product when we get back to church. I will deliver locally if you can't pick it up yourself. Call or email Margie 522-6647, balchlaker@gmail.com

Here's what we have:

Congo, Full city medium roast (our only WHOLE BEAN coffee right now) 16 oz \$10

Mama Tierra, LIGHT BREW, 16 oz \$10

Mind Body Soul, Organic, Full City medium roast, 12 oz \$7.50

Love Buzz, Organic, Vienna Roast, 12 oz \$7.60 (yummy medium-dark roast)

DECAF, Organic, Full City medium roast, 12 oz \$8.50 Single Serve Breakfast Blend, Organic, 12 cups, \$7

Single Serve Decaf, Organic, 12 cups \$7 TEA, Irish Breakfast, Organic, 20 bags, \$3.50

TEA, Green Tea, Organic, Decaf, 20 bags, \$3.00

TEA, Peppermint, Organic, Decaf, 20 bags, \$3.00

TEA, English Breakfast, Organic, 20 bags, \$3.50

TEA, English Breakfast, Organic, Decaf, 20 bags, \$3.00

Margie Galabrun

Kudos to the Worship Production Team

Many thanks to the team that spends so much of their time bringing us online Sunday Worship —ever trying new ways to enhance the experience of being together while we are apart. Thank you to Max, Ashley, Quincy, Nate, Frank, Pastor Tere, Cindy E. and Carol J. Tune in to our next worship service and see the new improved view from our recently purchased camera! Very nice!

News of Zimbabwe

Our team has made great strides with the Early Childhood Education classroom at Madhuku Village. The concrete floor -- hand mixed and spread as there are no machines in the village-- and the outside "plastering" is now complete. The community members are ecstatic. They see this classroom as real development as preschoolers, kindergarteners and even Grade 1 students can attend within the large space. The teachers and children no longer have to be concerned when it rains since the roof has been added since they last attended. Various supplies of chairs, early reading books, construction paper, learning toys, crayons, pencils, puzzles and more have made this a wonderful place to be. Although we still need to raise funds to have the inside walls plastered, Mutape (meaning Village Head) Madhuku and community members would like it to become a library and a place of learning for adults in the evenings. How cool is that?

More good news! Samuel Khumbula has been offered significant scholarship to enable him to attend Keene State College this fall to study physics! We were looking at bigger places which were much further away because we didn't think state schools could accommodate international students with financial aid awards. The Keene State blessing came serendipitously through an informal conversation with some ladies who live in Keene. We are in the process of securing housing in a local home and Sam is eligible to work 20 hours a week on a student visa while in school and 40 hours a week during the summer. This enables Sam to meet the financial gap and the availability of family life is a perfect environment for him to make the transition. Once the admissions documentation has been completed we will be applying for a student visa and booking a flight for Sam to begin this amazing academic adventure! Some kind of informal fundraising to offset airfare and "Send Sam to College" will be in the works!

Members of FCCW joined NH churches in a vibrant video welcome for Rev. John Matiza for his installation as the new president of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. Vaccinations are slowly being rolled out in Zimbabwe as they are experiencing a third surge.

We have appreciated the many donations already of clothing, shoes, athletic supplies, books and more for the fall 2021 container. We are accepting donations, packing, invoicing and storing items now. We will be looking for the ever appreciated jars of peanut butter, medical supplies, sewing material, etc. to add to boxes. An updated wish list will be circulated via email and will be on our church website. Many more New Hampshire churches have signed on to participate in the fall 2021 shipping container as more people have become vaccinated.

Thanks so much for your continued interest and support of all things Zimbabwe!

Connie Littlefield



A small group of kids are learning outside while they wait for the



PKZ Director Vrante Mahlupeko is checking out the exterior cement work!

Parish Helpers Luncheon

The Parish Helpers will hold their annual meeting and Luncheon on Thursday, May 13, at 12 noon. The luncheon will take place at the Wakefield Inn.. Chef Christina will offer a limited menu and we will have separate checks. Due to Covid-19 protocols we will be limited to 25 persons so first-come, first-served. Masks are required when not seated at your table.

Please contact Elizabeth Fogg at 522–5116 or Ginny Schweitzer at 522-9593 to reserve your seat.

Our meeting will include the installation of officers for the 2021-2023 term: Elected at our April Zoom meeting are Ginny Schwetizer, President; Carol Jeffery, 1st Vice President; Ann Bilodeau, 2nd Vice President; Linda Petkunas, Secretary; Jo-Anne Perks, Treasurer; Rachel White, Assistant Treasurer; and Directors: Elizabeth Fogg, Elizabeth Heinlein, and Marie Hebb.

What time is it? Pledge Decision-Making Time!



How perfect to insert a picture here of the beautiful grandfather clock from our FIRST minister, the Rev. Asa Piper! For 235 years members of this church have annually pondered and prayed about their financial pledge. NOW is the time for each member of this Church Family to consider what we feel called to give over the coming year. Please fill out and return the pledge card as soon as you can! If you already have, bless you! We will dedicate pledges on Pentecost Sunday, May 23rd. Together in generosity, so much is accomplished by this church family. Our fiscal year begins again July 1st.

Carol Lundgren, Stewardship Ministry

Thoughts from Stewardship -- For You!

Our Stewardship Moment for May is about Social Justice. During the month of April the news was dominated by social justice issues. The trial of Derek Chauvin, protests and hope, and of course lots of messaging from our politicians. It is both easy and hard to 'pick a side" here. It is difficult to get a true picture of what is going on no matter where you get your news. Yet, it is clear that something is going on and has been for a very long time. Our Church has an active Social Justice team and we urge you to reach out to them for more information on what a small but dedicated group of folks like us can do to have an impact. Call the office if you wish to engage in this team.

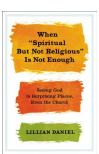
Our Stewardship message is simply this — we feel Jesus requires us, as stewards of the Church, to not simply sit on the sidelines when we see social injustice happening around us. Rather we are moved by the Holy Spirit to act as best we can. It might be as simple as taking the time to say a prayer; to gently broach the subject with family and friends who may feel too removed from injustices to voice concerns; it may be getting more active with our Church's Social Justice team. Whatever is right for you is what is right. Doing nothing and looking away is not what Jesus taught us to do as stewards. Follow your hearts and pray about injustice - no matter where it is happening.

Frank Frazier, Stewardship Ministry

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our combined pledge commitment. In this way we are "Hearing God's Call". Growing in Love and Care.

A New Faith Formation Class!



Our next class will tentatively start on Tuesday, May 11th at 12:00. We will be using the book "When Spiritual, But Not Religious Is Not Enough" by Lillian Daniel as the basis of our study. This book lends itself to a six session class. The following is a brief description of the book:

"The phrase "I'm spiritual but not religious" has become a cliché. It's easy to find God amid the convenience of self-styled spirituality -- but is it possible (and more worthwhile) to search for God through religion?

Minister and celebrated author Lillian Daniel gives a new spin on church with stories of what a life of faith can really be: weird, wondrous, and well worth trying. From a rock-and-roller sexton to a BB gun-toting grandma, a church service attended by animals to a group of unlikely theologians at Sing Sing, Daniel shows us a portrait of church that is flawed, fallible -- and deeply faithful. With poignant reflections and sly wit, Daniel invites all of us to step out of ourselves, dare to become a community, and encounter a God greater than we could ever invent.

Humorous and sincere, this is a book about people finding God in the most unexpected of places: prisons, airports, yoga classes, committee meetings, and, strangest of all, right there in church."

You can find this book on Amazon - Paperback: \$15.88; Kindle version: \$1.99. Please let Julie Kessler know if you're interested in attending (via Zoom) - email <u>julielouisekessler@gmail.com</u> or call 603-871-8066.

Julie Kessler

From the Assistant Treasurer

Interim pledge reports will be sent out in May - if you pledge and haven't received your report by the last week of May, please be sure to get in touch with Julie Kessler at julielouisekessler@gmail.com or 603-871-8066. Note that the report will represent your giving through the end of April; that is, any pledge money that comes in after April 30th will not be reflected in the report.

Julie Kessler

Memorial Bricks Reminder

If you haven't purchased a Memorial Brick yet for the Endowment Fund, now would be a good time. The bricks are being made and laid soon! You can find the order form on our website: https://www.fccwakefieldnh.org/fundraising/

A Wonderful Conversation

A short while ago we were asked by another UCC church to join them in conversation. We had both recently lost beloved, long-term ministers, and had both just passed through an interim period. We had already hired our new minister while they were still searching. They were interested in our Profile, our model of Structure, our Endowment Campaign, and our Stewardship programs. This conversation could certainly go without mention, except that during our talk we were asked about our congregations' participation, and I find this to be where our church is especially unique. We believe we have 100% participation among our members.

There is something quite engaging about our church, and we believe everyone does what they can, when they can, to help maintain and safeguard for future generations. We are not a church where people drop in once in a while and leave feeling unattached. Everyone is welcome. Everyone is needed. Everyone is invited to offer their Spiritual Gifts (talents and energy), and they do. We are truly a family of faithful who worship together, who care for one another, who strive to do good work, and who are constantly seeking to understand what God is calling us to do next. I am so thankful to be a part of this congregation, and I am thankful for every one of you.

Margie Galabrun, Moderator

Coming Soon—A Sweet FUNdraiser!

We are planning an online bake sale offering a selection of home-baked cookies, pies and fudge. We'll be looking for bakers and buyers! Like the Souper Sunday Soup Sale, we will be asking for preorders via email and/or phone and expect prepayment via check or online. Stay tuned for more info. If you are willing to bake, please contact Julie K at julielouisekessler@gmail.com or 871-8066.

The FUNdraising Team

Request for Child and Teen Clothing

There is critical need of clothing items for the children of Zimbabwe. If you or someone you know have clothes to donate, please put them aside for Zimbabwe. There will be a collection for the Fall shipping container. Contact Connie Littlefield.

MAY 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
POURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Online Worship and Communion Via Zoom and Facebook Live 10 a.m.	Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30	4	Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room Diaconate Mtg Via Zoom 2 p.m.	6 Community String Band Via Zoom— 6:30 pm	7	8
9 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER MOTHER'S DAY Online Worship Via Zoom and Facebook Live 10 a.m.	10	11 Faith Formation Study Via Zoom Noon	Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room Leadership Council Zoom 4 p.m.	Parish Helpers Luncheon—noon Racial Justice Discussion Group via Zoom 4:30 Community String Band Via Zoom— 6:30 pm	14	15
16 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Online Worship Via Zoom and Facebook Live 10 a.m.	17 Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30	18 Faith Formation Study Via Zoom Noon	Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room	20 Community String Band Via Zoom— 6:30 pm	21	22
PENTECOST SUNDAY STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY Online Worship Via Zoom and Facebook Live 10 a.m.	24	25 Faith Formation Study Via Zoom Noon	26 Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room	Prayer Shawl Ministry 10 a.m. Community String Band Via Zoom— 6:30 pm	28	29
30 FIRST SUNDAY OF PENTECOST Online Worship Via Zoom and Facebook Live 10 a.m.	31 MEMORIAL DAY					



May Birthdays

- 3 Sarah Connell 5 Emma Dolbear 7 Dalton Ostrye
- 8 Scott Mercer 9 Maurice Hatch
- 10 Sophia Moran 11 Sharon Baldwin
- 11 Patricia Martin 11 Wavne Robinson
- 13 Nicholas Gatchell
- 14 Elizabeth Fogg

- 14 Scott Frothingham
- George Ackerman Jr.
- 17 Bridgette Gehring
- 18 Lance MacLean
- 19 Cindy Eggleston
- 22 Peg Bridges
- 23 Marc Galabrun
- 23 Lynn Shaffer
- 28 Luke Evenson
- 29 Scott Twombley
- 31 Brittany Frothingham

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- Barry & Evelyn Truhn
- 13 Charlie & Ann Bilodeau
- 18 David & Gisela Haag
- 24 Chip & Karen Hagy
- 29 Rob & Kelly Druge
- 30 Richard & Linda Messer
- 31 Dick & Harriet Wilson

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 term have 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.

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

John—Healing Chrissy—Breast cancer Donna and family—Loss of Bob

Prayer Chain: Through 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 have a prayer request, please email Harriet Wilson (dhwilson39@gmail.com) All prayer requests are kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with the express permission of the people involved.



We are saddened by the passing of our dear friend, Lois Royle, on Easter Sunday, April 4. Our deepest sympathy goes out to her husband, Norman, and their family. You can read Lois's obituary here:

https://www.peasleefuneralhome.com/obituary/loisrovle

A Powerful Health Practice Idea

Are you sitting down? Good! Now close your eyes for a moment!

Really, it's not a trick. Did you do it? Yea! Thank you for trusting!

This time when you close your eyes, take a long slow breath in ... hold it

for a few seconds and then breathe out - all the way out. How was that?

Try this little exercise whenever you are feeling stressed/ anxious. Thank

our loving-always-present God for air to breathe, lungs to fill, peace to reign.

Virtual Worship

Following the guidance of the UN Conference UCC, we continue to gather via Zoom for our Sunday Worship. We'd love to see you there. The Zoom link is posted on our website homepage. It is a recurring event, so the link does not change weekly. Link and bulletin are here: Www.fccwakefieldnh.org

We also broadcast on Facebook Live. For easy access to Facebook Live, go the link below. You do not need a Facebook account to see the video:

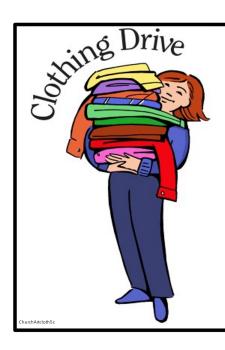
https://www.facebook.com/ FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC

Mask Up!

When we return to in-person worship, masks will continue to be required. In anticipation of this and of other future times when we gather, it will be nice to wear these church logo masks. A quantity was made by our dear friend, Dalton. Each one has a hidden pocket which holds a removable/washable filter. They are \$10 per mask. Our youth will receive masks at no cost. If you

would like to purchase one or more masks, please send a check or cash to FCCW, noting # of masks on the memo portion. You can also pay online through our website. Choose "Facemasks" under drop-down menu. Click here: Pay online. We'll be sure to get the mask to you.





Our next soft goods collection is coming in May!

Saturday May 1st, from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday May 8th, from 10 a.m. to Noon

Spring is a great time to go through your drawers and closets and weed out those clothing items in sellable condition that you no longer have use for. In addition to satisfaction of purging, we get the added bonus of having helped raise funds for our church! Items we can accept include — Clothing & Shoes, Men's, Women's, Children's, Hats, Mittens, Scarves, Ties, Nylons, Socks, Underwear. Soft household items such as Bedding, Towels, etc. regardless of condition are also acceptable. Please bag your items in plastic bags and securelytie them. (13-gallon kitchen bags work very well.

There will be a crew at the church collecting your bags on Saturday, May 1st, from 10 a.m. to noon and Saturday, May 8th, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

This has been a very successful **FUNdraiser**in the past – let's see if we can do it again!



First Congregational Church Of Wakefield United Church Of Christ 2718 Wakefield Road Sanbornville, NH 03872

