

STEEPLE VIEWS



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

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MARCH 2022

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Reverend Dr. Tere Krueger

An Awesome Lent

When I was in high school in Grand Rapids, Michigan, I was a preacher's kid in a denomination that did NOT observe Ash Wednesday or Lent. I heard friends ask each other, *What are you giving up for Lent?* Because I wasn't curious enough—and believing “my church/denomination” was superior—I assumed whatever this lent-thing was, it just wasn't important. UGH!

Now, I see Lent as a wonderful opportunity to support one's “better angels”. And, it does NOT have to be “dark” as we examine our inner landscape. It's a time to ask God, “What needs healing in me? Am I sick of any of the ways I think or feel? Show me how to transform my life, God.” The 40 day season of Lent provides a good opportunity to establish a new practice, discipline, way of thinking, break a habit, create a new one, get support to tackle an addiction. I have a radical idea. What if we decided to Give Up Negative Thoughts and Feelings for Lent?! One huge negative thought form is worry. ***WORRYING is a way of praying for the worst outcome!***

CRAZY behavior, right?! Worry is based on the LIE that we are alone—because God IS with us, ha, even With-IN us. As God's child, what if we imagine our inner worrier—as if it is a young part of us? Thank it for its input because it's trying to protect us in the way it has learned. Then, we “hold” that part, with our Compassionate Adult who dissolves the worry.

What if we were to practice this visualization every day during Lent? What if it freed us to see more Spirit-led moments, and moments where God is working?

Our thoughts can move from: *I'm worried about ____ who is sick -> I see ____ healed in God's Light.* Now THAT is a Powerful Prayer!

There is a charming little book *Pollyanna*, written by New Hampshire author Eleanor Porter. In it, this poor little girl who had asked the mission society for a doll, sadly receives crutches instead. Seeing her pain, her father asks her to play a special game with him. “*Think of something for which you can be “GLAD” in this situation, Pollyanna. Just think. You don't need these crutches because your legs are strong! Isn't that wonderful?*”

He teaches her to play the “glad game” that gives even “negative” things in her life a joyful twist in perception. In incident after incident, she kindly but persistently offers new “gladnesses” to people who are stuck in bitterness and infirmity. This spiritual outlook brings them new life.

Hmm. Choosing Gratitude is a fresh interpretation of “Pollyannaish” vs. seeing it only as denial--isn't it? *Dear God. Help us through the dark, tough moments. Enable us to give up our crutches of worry as we see Your nearness. Empower us to more often, use our legs of faith. Amen. Because You love us.*

Souper Bowl Soups! Another FUNdraising Success!

This has now become an annual event - one focused on selling individual servings of soups, chilis and chowders (in 16 oz containers) for \$5 each. Once again, we offered up a wonderful selection of soups - a selection that resulted in the making of 216 containers of deliciousness. This gave us a grand total of \$1080 - a record high for this FUNdraiser! It's with much appreciation that we thank our fabulous cooks: Harriet Wilson, Nancy Dee, Tracey Kolb, Carol Jeffery, Carol Lundgren, Connie Littlefield, Jo Szirbik, Donna & George Ackerman, Ginny Schweitzer, Julie Evenson, Evy Truhn, Sally Kratt, Margie Galabrun, John Griffin, Julie Kessler.

Julie Kessler



Note From the Finance Ministry

This is a gentle reminder that while we depend on your generosity to run the important work of the church, we cannot accept donations that are intended to be passed along to a specific individual. This is against the rules of the IRS, and (in the extreme) could be considered money laundering. We admit that this has happened in the not too distant past, but, now we know better and must abide by the rules. We hope you will understand our position, but if you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact any member of Finance.

Co-Treasurers: Nancy Dee, Norma Gore

Assistant Treasurer: Julie Kessler

Janice Breywo, Mary Bernier, Harriet Wilson

As We Enter into the Season of Lent

We are invited to St. John the Baptist's Pancake Supper at 5:00 p.m. on **Shrove Tuesday** (aka Mardi Gras or Fat Tuesday) March 1st. Please call our Church Office at 522-3189 for a reservation to this meal. Rev. DeSalvo assures us that there is plenty of space to be safe and masks are still required to keep our germs to ourselves—other than when you're taking a bite.

And, on the following day, **Ash Wednesday**, March 2nd at 5:00 p.m., we are coordinating a service with St. John's! Again, please call our Church office so we can keep track of the numbers.

TEAM SYNERGY Planning Update

Thank you for your patience! Team Synergy is working on the details of a congregation-wide conversation. We had hoped to be ready to do this on March 5th, but ... we need to reschedule it for a later date in the Spring. It's going to be great and you will have your own invitation. In the meantime, please ponder what church means to you, how you feel the Holy Spirit moves within you, how well you feel connected (or not so much) to each generation worshipping together.

Remembering our Vision Statement: *Hearing God's Call. Growing in Love and Care.*

Hazel MacBrien Nursery School News

Even though February is our shortest month, it's a busy month with some fun celebrations. We started off the month with Groundhog Day. The kids colored groundhogs and predicted if he would see his shadow or not. Well as you know; we are getting 6 more weeks of winter! We worked on letters Xx, Hh and Vv. On the 14th the afternoon class and on the 15th the morning class exchanged valentine cards and had our party snack. The kids found heart shaped bracelets, jewel rings, plastic heart boxes and red gems in the sensory table. We ended the month with our winter break. Looking forward to more fun in March!

In Loving Memory Of -

Elizabeth Heinlein—Maurice Hatch—Peggy Richards

The Diaconate gratefully acknowledges donations received from friends of Elizabeth (Zib), Maurice Hatch, and Peggy Richards to the Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund (FDDF). Donations help to make our community outreach possible.

Gail Feddern, Deacon

Fat Tuesday

“How was school today, Clair?” Mama asked as she passed the fresh baked bread at the dinner table.

“Oh, you know, same old, same old.” Clair replied, taking a piece, and smelling it’s warm, yeasty aroma.

“You mean to tell me”, Mama exclaimed while slathering butter on her piece of bread, “that you aren’t learning anything new at school?”

“Well, Mr. Hatcher, my social studies teacher is having us research Fat Tuesday.”

“Ahh, that will be something you can get your teeth into”, Mama said with a teasing glint in her eye.

“What do you mean?” Clair asked.

“You’ll find out”, Mama said continuing to pass the various components of the evening meal.

Clair gave her mother a sideways glance exclaiming, “That’s very mysterious Mama”.

“Yes, and so is Fat Tuesday”.

Later that evening, in her bedroom, Clair sat down in front of her laptop and began her research.

She woke the next morning a little sleep deprived due to her late-night fact gathering. She quickly showered and dressed. As she descended the stairs she hesitated at the bottom, breathing deeply the sweet maple smells emanating from the kitchen. She entered the room finding her mother standing in front of the stove, flipping pancakes in the air like a top-chef. Clair looked at the table where she spied a huge plate of lopsidedly stacked pancakes. Warm maple syrup smells filled the air with a sweet sugary fragrance.

“Oh, I get it”, Clair said. “You already knew what Fat Tuesday was all about”.

“Well, I hope you discovered that it is more than just about pancakes”, Mama chuckled.

“That I did” Clair said as she settled herself down to the table. “Fat Tuesday is also called ‘Shrove Tuesday’. It’s the last day before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent” she said stuffing in her mouth another bite of melt-in-your-mouth pancake.

“The original definition of Shrove Tuesday was called Shrovetide which means carnival,” Clair said, wiping her mouth on her napkin.

“In New Orleans, they celebrate Fat Tuesday with Mardi Gras, a festival with parades and music. But what’s really cool is that the whole pancake thing is because they have to give up something for Lent and that originally were food sources like, milk, eggs and fat or butter. They could not have these items for many days, and they would spoil if not eaten,” Clair said, smiling at her mother and popping another bite of pancake.

Mama sat down at the table and lifted a couple of pancakes for herself. “Sounds like you had a successful night of research. But is there more to this story than pancakes and carnivals?” asked Mama.

“Oh yes”, exclaimed Clair. “There is Lent itself. This is associated with the 40 days that Christ spent fasting in the wilderness before He started His ministry. Today, Christians and Catholics in particular, experience Lent as a kind of atonement or recognition of simplicity and self-control. That’s why they try to give something up,” Clair beamed at her mother.

“I bet Mr. Hatcher will be very pleased with your report,” Mama said with a proud look on her face.

“Yea, but I bet he would rather have some of these delicious pancakes,” Clair giggled.

Donna V Ackerman

Music Camp Is Back Again This Year!

SAVE THE DATE — August 1st - 5th 2022

We need volunteers!! No experience needed
If you want to have a truly wonderful experience, volunteer for music camp. You'll have fun and the kids are THE BEST! If you're interested please call one of us.

Evy 516 967 7168; Patricia 603 522 8225
Buddy 603 522 6307

Where Are We Today?

On behalf of the Stewardship Ministry, we want to say THANK YOU! The Congregation and Friends are so committed to using their gifts of TIME, TALENT and TREASURE that we have been able to thrive in this 2nd year under Covid-19 constraints. Evidence of faithfulness abounds. People are checking in on one another, the Prayer Chain is active and mighty, the Prayer Shawl group just blessed and distributed several new shawls, a brand new Youth Group has been successfully launched with lots of enthusiastic young people, in-person worship is growing and online worship is too, the Sound Team has handled several challenges and thanks you for your patience! Rev. Tere brings the Holy Spirit into Gospel dramatic interpretations every Sunday! Bible Study is vibrant. Spirit Conversations with the Rev are on-going. Sunday services feature music in the form of recordings of the choir, Cindy E. and Jan and others. Take heart! We are in a good and holy place. Pass it on!

*Carol Lundgren and Frank Frazier
Stewardship Ministry*

News of Zimbabwe

Thank you ever so much for your continuing support of vulnerable youth through Friends of Orphan Trust led by Joseph Sibiya and Project Kuchengetedza Zviwanikwa (PKZ) led by Vrante Mahlupeko. We currently have 42 children under sponsorship, many supported by FCCW members and friends.

Joseph has been sending updated photos of the FOOT children and a message about the improvements at Dzika, a rural, isolated village near the UCCZ mission of Chikore. Some of the PKZ/Z Team's earlier projects involved rebuilding Dzika Primary School classroom by classroom, bringing electricity to the village in order to retain teachers, coordinating an income generating project of goats and chickens for orphans and child headed households, rebuilding the most treacherous parts of the only road going into Dzika so a drilling rig could pass through, drilling a new borehole and renovating two existing ones and consistent allocations of clothing, school and medical supplies via the shipping containers.



Joseph writes: "Standing on a solid FOOT foundation, Dzika is no longer the same. There are now three boreholes. There is plenty of water supply. Right at the site of our borehole there is now a nutrition garden which accommodates almost all residents. Some donors are now able to get to Dzika using the road that you financed. Gadaufe Road (*ed note: literally means 'drive it and die'*) was never used by big and long trucks for decades until you helped

FOOT to make it. Water is pumped from another borehole to Dzika school into water tanks and supplies the garden with sufficient water using solar as a source of power. You can see how FOOT impacted the Dzika community and others who come for the garden. We feel great as a successful team."

We appreciate every bit of the support that comes our way that enables our programs to continue.

God bless you, Connie Littlefield



Youth Group Update

The youth group had a beautiful afternoon of smiles, blue skies and lots of laughter! They grabbed their tubes and sleds and headed over to Moose Mtn. for a few hours. From 2nd graders all the way up to 8th graders, we had a total of 18 youth enjoying their time together and building memories!

They are already excited for our next event on Sunday March 6th when we will travel over to Gunstock in Gilford and attend the 9:00 a.m. worship service outside at the base of the ski mountain. After the service there will be a winter hike for those who would like to. For any adventurous church-goers out there that would like to go on a hike with the youth or just enjoy a unique worship experience outside, please feel free to join us on Sunday March 6th :-)

Gina
gmgsm615@gmail.com

Safe Spaces is Looking for You!

We are calling together all interested folks to talk about what it means to have a SAFE SPACES team at Church. Formed by Leadership Council in 2018 there are many resources that can be accessed to make church a safer environment for all. From video doorbells, to better exterior lighting, to better interior hall-way lighting and much more to benefit all who meet and worship at church. Please contact Brian Shipley by email if you wish to learn more: bwshipley3@verizon.net.

**Easter Flower orders are due by
March 15.**

See order form on cover of this newsletter.

Growing in Faith – A Reflection by Linda Messer

I've received the Daily Devotionals from the UCC website since late 2016, shortly after I became a member of FCCW. Around that same time, I started using an online journal called Penzu. Often one of the devotionals would 'inspire' me to write so Penzu seemed like the perfect place to put my thoughts 'on paper'. I just wrote my feelings, not considering grammar, sentence structure spelling, etc. Just what was in my heart.

What I didn't know early on was that on a random, yearly anniversary of what I had written, the app would send me an email reminder of my entry. I find that when I reread my 'old self' stuff, sometimes a year or more later, I have absolutely no recollection of what I had written. But it is reassuring and satisfying because I can really appreciate how much FCCW's adult Faith Formation group has helped me to grow in spirit and faith.

In 2018, after reading Mary Luti's Lenten devotional "But Who" on February 24th, I had written my thoughts about it which I've shared below. Now it seems wonderfully humbling for me to read what I believed 4 years ago!! I thought then I had figured out everything I needed to know about faith and religion. But obviously, I had not...not everything!. And that's the beauty of faith. It is always evolving!

"Everyone's wondering who Jesus is" begins Ms. Luti's piece. And for so many, still, the question is fresh. Is he God? A prophet? A teacher with an amazing gift? The answer for me is all of the above and so much more.

I learned the historical story of Jesus only later in life. And, having always believed in only one God, I never questioned who Jesus really was. I've always explained the Trinity in this childlike way: God was the Creator of all things who came to earth as Jesus and sent all his messages to humans in the form of the Holy Spirit. Simple.... Not quite! But therein lies the 'Mystery' of faith. This 'mystery' is why my faith is so vibrant, so living, so day to day with renewed experiences of God in my life. So real. Wanting to know more, keeps me questioning with a sustained awareness that God may present at any time, any place for any reason, in any form.

I did not always feel so connected to God. I did not always really 'know' Him/Jesus in the true sense of a 'believer'. That is why Ms. Luti's words "I'm convinced he always knows me" resonates so strongly with

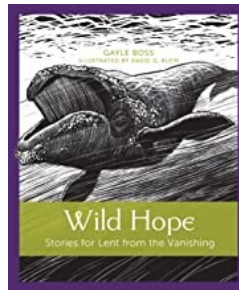
me. I now believe what God's 'saving grace' means is this: God has been, is now and will ALWAYS be with me and He knows my name.

My Prayer:

Dear God, your saving grace is what has guided and saved me always. Forgive me for the times that I did not ask for your help or even think I needed it. You knew, You were there and You unconditionally loved.

Linda Messer

Faith Formation Lenten Study



On March 8th, we will begin our weekly Lenten walk using the Lenten study entitled "Wild Hope: Stories for Lent from the Vanishing" by Gayle Boss. This is the same author that gave us our Advent study ("All Creation Waits") - a study that was both profound and beautifully written.

A synopsis of this study: *Pangolins and polar bears, olms, lemurs, and leopards. We share this beautiful blue-green globe with creatures magnificent, delicate, intricate—and now vanishing at a faster rate than at any other time in Earth's history. Spend Lent with twenty-five of these wild ones. Vivid descriptions of their lives will fill readers with wonder—and grief at what they suffer on a planet shaped by human choices. Their stories thaw our stiff hearts and wake us to greater compassion—which is what Lent, meaning "springtime," has always been for. These stories also wake in us a wild hope that from all this death and ruin, something new could rise. The promise of Lent is that something new will rise. In fact, as these stories also attest, our hope, though wild, is not impossible and is already loose in the world.*

Our class will meet via Zoom every Tuesday at noon. Please contact Julie Kessler (julielouisekessler@gmail.com or 603-871-8066) if you're interested in attending.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church
March 1 at 5 p.m.

Ash Wednesday Service
St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church
March 2 at 5 p.m.

Celebrations!

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 John Shaffer	17 Jean-Michel Galabrun
5 Deb Smiley	17 Jan Stanley
8 Nathan Fogg	18 Kayla Leyare
8 Marlena Livingston	22 John Duplinsky
9 Richard Peckham	22 Laura Parsons
11 Wendy DeCroteau	24 Michelle Garland
11 Andrew Hughes	29 Nathan Wilson
14 Penny Huckins	31 Katy Hagy
15 Gemma Golden Stanek	

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

4 Stephen & Lauree Royle
19 Ron & Sally Kratt

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.

Please keep in prayer: Bob and Mary J, Carol J's Niece Chrissy, Lyn S, Ryan S, Sue L's Daughter Cindy, Brandon & family, Wendy D, Aaron J., Rob L., Arlene L., Josiah S., Kris W, Family of Peggy Richards, Family of Jean LLOYD

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.

In Heartfelt Gratitude

The **Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund** has been fortunate to have your support over the past twenty years. You have made it possible for the Diaconate of FCCW to reach out and support many people of all ages, all with a wide variety of needs.

How is it possible to keep this Fund solvent each year? This is done by donations only. Donations made throughout the year and through Alternative Gift Giving during the holiday season by loving friends/members of the church, family, and the very generous Parish Helpers.

Three memorial gifts were also received to celebrate the lives of Elizabeth Heinlein, Maurice Hatch, and Peggy Richards. The Diaconate would like to Thank You for providing the means to help others in our church and local community.

Gail Feddern, Diaconate

(If emergency assistance is needed, please call our CLA, Andrea Selig at the church office, (522-3189) or e-mail churchoffice@fccwakefield.org. Andrea will direct you to the minister or co-chairs of the Diaconate.)

Prayer for peace in Ukraine

Holy and Gracious God

We pray for the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia; for their countries and their leaders.

We pray for all those who are afraid; that your everlasting arms hold them in this time of great fear.

We pray for all those who have the power over life and death; that they will choose for all people life, and life in all its fullness.

We pray for those who choose war; that they will remember that you direct your people to turn our swords into ploughshares and seek for peace.

We pray for leaders on the world stage; that they are inspired by the wisdom and courage of Christ.

Above all, Lord, today we pray for peace for Ukraine.

And we ask this in the name of your blessed Son.

Lord have mercy. Amen

(Prayer borrowed from the Methodist Church of England, www.methodist.org.uk)

MARCH 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Adult Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 p.m.—1 p.m. Spirit Discovery Group—2:30 FAT TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER 5 p.m. at St. John's Choir 5:30	2 ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE AT St. John's 5 p.m.	3 Diaconate Meeting 3 p.m.	4	5
6 1st Sunday of Lent Worship and Holy Communion 10 a.m. In-person or On Zoom/Facebook	7 Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m.	8 Adult Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 p.m.—1 p.m. Spirit Discovery Group—2:30 Choir 5:30	9 Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room Leadership Council Meeting via Zoom 4:45 p.m.	10	11	12
13 2nd Sunday of Lent Worship at 10 a.m. In-person or On Zoom/Facebook Daylight Saving Time Begins	14 Pi Day	15 Adult Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 p.m.—1 p.m. Spirit Discovery Group—2:30 Choir 5:30 Easter Flower Orders Due	16 Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room	17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18	19
20 3rd Sunday of Lent Worship at 10 a.m. In-person or On Zoom/Facebook FIRST DAY OF SPRING!	21 Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m.	22 Adult Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 p.m.—1 p.m. Spirit Discovery Group—2:30 Choir 5:30	23 Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room	24 Prayer Shawl Ministry 10 a.m.—11:30	25	26
27 4th Sunday of Lent Worship at 10 a.m. In-person or On Zoom/Facebook	28	29 Adult Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 p.m.—1 p.m. Spirit Discovery Group—2:30 Choir 5:30	30 Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Parish Helpers Room	31		

EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM

Spring is in the air as we are about to enter into the Easter Season. It is time to order lilies, tulips, and daffodils for our altar! Plants may be purchased in honor of or in memory of loved ones. **The deadline for placing your order is on March 15th.** After Easter service on April 17th, the plants will be ready to be taken home and can be planted in your gardens for a lasting remembrance. Please complete the order form and return it with your check payable to the First Congregational Church of Wakefield. You may leave it in the CLA mailbox. Please feel free to contact Rachel White with questions @ 603-520-2316 .

FLOWERS for EASTER SUNDAY, April 17, 2022



OF PLANTS _____ EASTER LILIES @\$13.95 EACH

OF PLANTS _____ DAFFODILS @ \$10.50 EACH

OF PLANTS _____ TULIPS @ \$10.50 EACH



IN MEMORY OF: _____

OR

IN HONOR OF: _____

PLANTS DONATED BY: _____



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