

PKZ Pancake Breakfast

**First Congregational Church of Wakefield UCC
2718 Wakefield Road, Wakefield, NH**

The FCCW Zimbabwe Team will be preparing a delicious pancake breakfast! Traditional pancakes, with options of pumpkin, blueberry, and chocolate chip, will be served along with scrambled eggs, sausage, juice and hot beverages.

**Saturday, April 1st from 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.
The cost is \$9 per adult and \$6 for children.**

All proceeds to benefit a humanitarian shipping container to Zimbabwe.

Thank you for your support!



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

STEEPLE VIEWS

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



REVEREND LARRY BRICKNER-WOOD, INTERIM MINISTER
REVEREND GEORGE HARVEY, PASTOR EMERITUS
APRIL 2023

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Beginning Again

The wonderful move “Begin Again,” released in 2013, has a wonderful song called “Lost Stars” sung by Adam Levine and Keira Knightly, that has a chorus that sings “Are we all lost stars, trying to light up the dark?” It is a wonderful testimony to the resiliency of the human spirit, even in the midst of great disorientation and despair. The song is also a song of belonging, and the power of our collective minds, heart, spirits and actions to face even the most uncertain future.

I have been thinking about this song as I journey through Lent. Five weeks have passed, and we are moving into the grand entrance of Palm Sunday, and the joy and celebration of Jesus, the Messiah, leading a procession of beloved children of God into Jerusalem. On the other side of the city, perhaps a different kind of entrance was occurring. On the west side of Jerusalem, King Herod was entering the city in a grand procession ahead of the Passover celebration. His procession would have been full of pomp and circumstance, and all the subjects, those under Roman rule, were expected to be there to make it seem like crowds of adoring people welcomed the ruthless ruler. Jesus’ humble entrance, where no one was mandated to attend, or forced to pretend to be in awe, is in stark contrast. There, on the east side of the city, a procession of simplicity heralded a new day, a new beginning, a new way of belonging.

Of course, following Palm Sunday is Holy week, scenes of the last supper, Jesus’ betrayal and arrest by the authorities, the judgement and sentence to death, and his execution by the Roman authorities. It is a terrible time of sadness and grief, of despair and fear, of another glimmer of hope extinguished by corruption, power, arrogance and fear. The darkness that descended following Jesus’ death could have crushed the spirit of all who followed him.

We know, however, that it did not end there. A short three days later, with the morning dawn, it was discovered that Jesus has risen, that light overcame the darkness, that life triumphed over death, and that hope was born anew. Jesus’ resurrection heralded a brand new day, and fulfilled Jesus’ witness to a light that shines no matter how deep the shadows, and a love that will never be extinguished, and that shines brighter than fear, hate, violence, and oppression. Jesus the Christ is risen, and as we celebrate this blessed resurrection each year, we are invited to rise and shine into a new day, to know that we are never alone, that we are beloved children of God and that we are loved, always loved.

There is a beautiful Easter song written by Avery and Marsh called “Every Morning is Easter Morning, from now on.” Indeed, it is. Every day is an invitation to live fully into the Christ light that shines brightly in every heart, every community, and every place where Love reigns, and compassion, justice, mercy and kindness are the rule. Happy Easter to you all. Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed!

Pastor Larry

We Want to Know Your Story

Racial Justice Ministry

As you may know, we recently agreed to move forward with HolyCow! Consulting to help us plan our future. You have been selected to participate in the first step which is to conduct a congregational assessment. This assessment will provide a clear picture of who we are as a church and what directions are most important for our future. The tool we'll use is the Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT), which will provide key indicators of our congregational health along with areas of challenge and potential growth. It will help us to collect and understand the range of views that exist at First Congregational Church of Wakefield NH and the possibilities, willingness, capacity and energy for moving our ministry into the future.

If you have provided us with a CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS within the next few days, you will receive a unique web link to complete the assessment online. If you would prefer to take the assessment using a paper copy, please stop by the office, and we will provide one for you along with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

NOTE: If there is only one email address for all members of your household, it may be tempting to have one person take the survey on behalf of the family. However, please be sure your spouse and all young adults living in your home have an opportunity to complete the survey. INDIVIDUAL INPUT is key to our gaining insight into overall perceptions and experiences.

Please set aside enough time to answer all the questions. This will take about 20 to 30 minutes. ALL SURVEY RESPONSES ARE STRICKLY ANONYMOUS.

Thank you for your willingness to be a part of this congregational assessment and for helping to build FCCW's future. If you have questions, please contact a member of the Search and Call Team:

Joe Palmariello jpivanhoe@hotmail.com 603 522 9589

Judy Trepal trepaldavis@gmail.com 207 671 8491

Titia Bozuwa tripletulip@roadrunner.com 603 522 3398

Norma Gore normajeandg@gmail.com 603 986 7768

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Margie Galabrun balchlaker@gmail.com 603 522 6647

Buddy Dee buddy.dee1023@gmail.com 603 522 6307

In October 2018, the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ adopted the Resolution of Christian Witness in Support of New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ Congregations Awakening to Racial Justice. This landmark vote in the UCC made New Hampshire the first UCC conference to become a Racial Justice Conference. But, of course, passing this resolution is only the very beginning of the journey of our congregations becoming Racial Justice Churches. Now we embark on the holy work of living into our resolution to make the church more whole through racial justice.

The Racial Justice Mission Group (RJMG) believes that New Hampshire churches are fertile ground for this important work. As a predominantly white state, we are in a crucial position to wake up to the reality of white privilege in our churches and communities and to look more deeply into the racism embedded in the history of New England. We need to ask ourselves: what do we need to learn in order to understand racism in our society? Why are there not more people of color in the state and in our congregations? And then, what can we do about it?

As an Open and Affirming Church we should include the knowledge and practice associated with becoming a Racial Justice Church. I am calling all who would like to join the team that began this journey pre-pandemic. Following Coffee (Agape) Hour on April 2nd, we will have a brief meeting in the Fellowship Hall.

Donna V Ackerman

Church Clerk Position Open

Do you enjoy administrative details and taking notes? C & D is looking for a church clerk to take over for Annie Gehring sometime this spring or early summer. Annie is available to respond to questions regarding duties of the clerk. This position can be shared! Contact Connie Littlefield at 603-268-5445 if interested!

Confirmation Retreat at Horton Center

September 29, 2023 – October 1, 2023

Youth from New Hampshire Confirmation classes will gather for a 2-night retreat for worship, music, discussion, good food and games at Horton Center in the Fall. Put it on your calendar now!

Ages: Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9
Price: \$210 / \$180 / \$160

I Need Your Help!

In our First World athletic culture there is a sport called “endurance running,” in which people pay for the pleasure of running very long distances (typically anything over a marathon’s 26.2 miles) with regular aid stations attending to their water, food, and medical needs, and then receive a medal, buckle, or other prize, and get to pat themselves on the back and claim some bragging rights.

In Zimbabwe, “endurance” takes on a far more consequential meaning. The long distances our Zimbabwe friends walk just to supply their own water, attend school, or even receive critical medical care, are a far more worthy measure of the word. Can you imagine walking 75 miles to the hospital when you are sick, providing your own needs along the way?

On May 6th I am running an endurance race, a 24-hour loop course around White Lake in Tamworth. I will have aid stations with all the water, food, and first aid I require. I will be able to rest when I need to rest, and I can stop at any time. This is for FUN, and my life will not be harmed in any way if I simply walk away. This is not how it is in Zimbabwe, where people need to continue the race daily, just to survive. I am asking you to help me use my optional yet formidable challenge to make a difference. Your support can help sustain me through my miles, and together we can be one of their aid stations.

In the upcoming weeks I will ask you to sponsor me in my race. In addition to your financial sponsorship going directly to our church’s humanitarian aid projects in Zimbabwe, I will dedicate my laps around the lake to your specific Zimbabwe concerns, using this time to reflect on the true meaning of endurance and how by supporting each other, we lighten each other’s load. More to come! Thank you.

Mjo McCarthy

Birds, Bats, and Butterflies

The Parish Helpers will host a representative from the UNH Speaking for Wildlife Program. The “Birds, Bats & Butterflies” slide presentation highlights a dozen wildlife species commonly seen in New Hampshire. Participants will learn cool animal facts and find out about how the diverse mix of habitats in our region support species such as American woodcock, painted turtle, pileated woodpecker, wood frogs, little brown bats and other captivating creatures.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, April 13, beginning at 1 p.m. with refreshments and a brief business meeting. We will have election of officers for the 2023—2025 term. The program will begin at 1:45. All are welcome to attend.

Carol Jeffery

Notes from the Second Floor

Greetings folks from the second floor office! Thank you all for your kind, generous and gracious welcome! Many thanks to the wonderful and effective Andrea Selig, our Congregational Life Administrator, for making the entry and transition so seamless and easy. I invite you to come visit me. My usual plan is to be in the office, in addition to Sundays, on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. I will be in the office at a minimum from 9-12 on those days, and most of the afternoons excepting visits and appointments that take me out of the office. I will usually work remotely on Thursdays as that is typically the day I am finalizing work on the sermon and the coming worship service. Please feel to stop by, or even better, call the church office at 603-522-3189 or email me at pastor@fccwakefieldnh.org. I am glad to meet you here, at your home or workplace, or over a cup of tea/coffee or a meal out and about!

I am also looking to try a weekly gathering over lunch starting on May 3rd. We can meet and chat on any topic, and I will always bring something for us to reflect on if the conversation needs some prompting. If you have interest in trying this, let me know!

Happy Easter one and all!

Rev. Larry

Hazel MacBrien Nursery School News

March brought us some crazy weather which was appropriate for March comes in like a lion and out like a lamb. Our 3-year-olds made lambs out of paper plates and our fours made lions. We hung them up on our classroom bulletin board. March also brings St. Patrick’s Day, leprechauns, lots of green and gold fun. The leprechaun stopped by school and left his green footprints in our classroom and a yummy gold oreos for all the kids! We painted shamrocks making them green by squishing yellow and blue paint together, we used gold coins to represent 10-frames and families sent in green snacks for our green food day celebration.

We welcomed Spring on Monday, March 20th, and we are hoping for flowers and butterflies to make an appearance soon! We are doing activities with eggs for the last week. Some of the fun things we are planning are finding which egg the chick is hiding under, building egg towers with eggs and playdough and guessing what animal is inside the egg using rhyming words. Our letters this month were Kk and Gg, and numbers 3 and 6. Here’s hoping March goes out like a lamb!!

Thank you to everyone for their continued support. It is greatly appreciated!

No fooling . . . The **Pancake Breakfast** is coming up on Saturday—April 1st from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Enjoy a hearty breakfast while supporting our Zimbabwe missions!

Unity. Peace. Purpose.

Though this may sound altruistic, deep down I think we would all like to see a united and peaceful world. On a smaller scale, unity and peace within our communities and nation seems out of reach at times, but still many of us tirelessly (or perhaps with great weariness) strive for a world in which security, a sense of belonging and mutual acceptance is attainable.

We are not the only good and giving people—thank God—but we ascertain to be people of action. One thing that we take seriously, yet also welcome with a joyous heart, is the opportunity to be empathetic; to help ease someone's suffering as best we can, to be there in the good times and the hard. The ministries and missions of FCCW exemplify our beliefs in the forms of action—such as the Men's Fellowship Group, The Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund, Prayer Shawl Ministry, F.O.O.T Friends of Orphan's Trust Zimbabwe, Shepherd's Program, Parish Helpers and many more.

These actions—our purpose—are done in the spirit of faith and love. Sometimes they are natural & easy, and other times done with concentrated effort, but always with intention, as we commit to make our corner of the world a better place—to bring comfort and maybe even joy to those around us.

In the vein of Stewardship, we ask that you continue to support FCCW so we may continue to minister—not only to ourselves—but to others in our own neighborhood and the far side of the world.

Blessings from the Stewardship Ministry
Chris Feddern, Judy Trepal, Sally Kratt, and Paul Allen

Mjo's Pit Crew, Cheerleaders, and Well-Wishers

Mjo (MarthaJo McCarthy) will be participating in an all-day/all-night endurance event at White Lake on Saturday, May 6th! Want to cheer Wonder Woman and Wonder Buttercup on? See Connie Littlefield or Judy Trepal to let them know what time you could be present. Would love to have significant coverage throughout the day/evening to show support for her heart, soul, and endurance!

Author Highlight: Dr. Kirk Byron Jones

A professor for over twenty-five years, Dr. Jones has served as Director of the Kelsey-Owens Black Ministries Program and Kelsey-Owens Professor at Andover Newton Theological School. Currently an adjunct professor of social ethics, preaching, and pastoral ministry at Andover Newton Theological School, Dr. Jones serves as guest preacher and teacher at churches, schools and conferences throughout the United States.. Source: Amazon

Our library has these books his has written:

- * “Holy Play: The Joyful Adventure of Releasing Your Divine Purpose” (S-J)
- * “Morning B.R.E.W” (J-G)
- * “Addicted to Hurry: Spiritual Strategies for Slowing Down” (S-J)

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

How Can We Help?



More and more people are attending our coffee hours these days. What a wonderful way to meet newcomers and to catch up with our church family. Our dedicated Hospitality Team of Rachel White, Laura Frye, and Janet Twombly (above) are there every week preparing the coffee and the table laden with goodies for us to enjoy!

What can we do to help out and show our appreciation? We can bring goodies for the table! As you know, over the past few years, we have gone to a “potluck” type of coffee hour. People just show up with something for the table. Sometimes there’s a lot and sometimes not so much. Please consider bringing an item for the table from time to time. Baked goods are nice, but so are store-bought cookies. We’ve had everything from popcorn to Brian’s famous chocolate cake, fruit, cheese, and even candy! No need to sign up ahead

We also need helpers to clean up. Please sign up in advance so Rachel can plan on taking a “day off”. Many hands make light work! I’m sure our hospitality team will be much obliged!

Carol Jeffery

Faith Formation Ministry

It's no trouble for me to repeat the same things to you because they will help keep you on track. – Philippians 3:1a (CEB)

Sometimes before I write an article for Steeple Views I'll start with a prayer asking for words of inspiration. Or, I read a random, days-old UCC Devotional or Daily Scripture that I've bypassed in my email inbox. And more often than not I very clearly receive an answer to my prayer request. It feels almost like I've read the words that I needed to hear at the exact, right moment. Is that God speaking to me? I don't know, but it sure feels comforting to think that it is.

There is no doubt we all need reminders to keep us on track. Isn't that why we keep our calendars on our phones, or sticky notes all over our computers? Isn't that why we have to tell our kids 3 or more times to clean up their rooms? Or why we set a daily alarm to remind us to take the same exact medication we take every day? (I know I am not the only one!) Today I 'heard', "Say it again, it's OK." I am sure that's why my SV messages sometimes are very repetitive. Dates to remember, help needed, future plans. But isn't that how we educate and minister to each other? Lovingly say it more than once, even three or four times. So no apologies....at least this time. ☐

FF News and reminders:

Thank you to our Confirmand, Tim McCarthy, for attending the most recent Leadership Council Meeting. Having him there was an inspiration and a tangible example of hope for a wonderful FCCW future. Thank you to George Ackerman for guiding Tim through the Confirmation process. Hopefully, next month another Confirmand!

The FF Ministry has great Leaders for the various areas of the FF ministry: Adult FF, Music Camp, Kiwis, and Library. BUT, it is **important** that we identify a Leader who will work specifically with the younger-aged children. If you are a parent, grandparent, former FF educator or simply one who cares deeply about our young FCCW community, please let us know. You will have the support of many.

I believe FCCW's Ministry of Faith Formation's overall goal should be to create a FF Ministry Team that will consider creative ideas which include sound objectives, motivational activities, and simplified implementation for ongoing growth and community engagement. All are welcome to join this team.

Even if you are new to FCCW, or know someone who is thinking about church or perhaps someone with a unique vision of FF and would like to share it, please contact me at linda1messer@gmail.com, or leave a message at 603-781-8745 or with our CLA, Andrea at 603-522-3189

ALL adults who work with children at FCCW must have a completed background check on file in the FCCW office. Please see Buddy Dee or CLA Andrea for the forms. FCCW is responsible for the cost of the background check.

Linda Messer

Faith Formation Dates For Your Calendar

Music Camp: July 31 - August 4, 2023

Horton Center Open House: June 17, 11 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Horton Center Summer Camp Registration
NOW OPEN <https://hortoncenter.org/summer-camp-sessions/>

Confirmation Retreat at Horton Center: September 29 - October 1, 2023

The NH Conference Earth Day Art Contest "For The Beauty of the Earth".



The Environmental Justice Mission Group will welcome entries in four age groups, using any medium, to express the artist's understanding of the beauty of creation and how it moves us. Entries may be scanned and sent to robert.grabill@ccdcucc.org by **APRIL 15**. Contest winners will be displayed throughout the Conference, at Horton Center, and at the NH Conference Office. There will be awards in several categories in all age groups.

Registration is Open for Horton Center

It's time to sign up for camp! Read the summer schedule and find camp sessions for people of all ages to attend!

[Link here for schedules](https://hortoncenter.org/summer-camp-sessions/)
<https://hortoncenter.org/summer-camp-sessions/>

Celebrations!

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Dean & Colleen Nicastrò
- 5 Rick & Cindy Denver
- 15 Bill & Susie Goodwin
- 15 Anders & Nancy Jacobson
- 22 Carol & Rob Lundgren
- 23 Dana & Julie Margolis
- 23 Scott & Nicky Mercer
- 25 Nathan & Deb Fogg

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Rob Nelson | 20 Susan Jacobson |
| 4 Karen Hagy | 20 Raenya Morann |
| 4 Julia McCarthy | 21 Amanda Boggs |
| 6 Jo-Anne Perks | 23 Ciera Rose Dee |
| 10 Kristin Galabrun | 23 Natalee Royle |
| 11 Michael Crew | 24 Ann Eaton |
| 11 Linda Turner | 24 Molly James |
| 11 Michael Weeks | 26 Sarah Kinville |
| 12 Darlene Clements | 28 Dawson Cotreau |
| 14 Adam Szirbik | 28 Madison Cotreau |
| 15 Ginny Schweitzer | 28 Del Littlefield |
| 17 Aimee Ball | 29 Lauree Royle |
| 19 Jo Szirbik | 30 Linda Messer |



On behalf of the hospitality team of Janet, Laura and Rachel, we wish to express our gratitude to all of the coffee hour attendees who provide us with delightful baked treats. Fellowship time allows us to reconnect and share our thoughts and strengthen our friendships. Cheese and Fruit are always appreciated as well!

Blessings, Rachel

In Loving Memory

The Diaconate received two memorial donations to honor and celebrate the lives of Patty Golden and Pam Ciavarrà. Donations to the Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund (FDDF) help to make our community outreach possible. With grateful hearts, *the Diaconate*

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN

We believe that prayer is powerful! During this time of transition in our church, let us pray for our church leaders—the Diaconate who work tirelessly carrying on duties of worship leadership and pulpit supply. For the Search Committee, the Officers, Ministry Coordinators, and Leadership Council for their thoughtful deliberations in guiding our church onward.

And as always, please keep in your prayers all those who suffer in any way in mind, body and spirit,

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 pray for:

Todd W., Evy, Molly Rose, the family of Patricia G.; Dave and Charlotte L.; Laura F; Sue L; Arlene L; Wendy D & Alberta W; Carol J's Family; Chrissy, Maryann, and Michael; Joan C; Don S., Cindy E., Glenna, Chuck H.



FCCW 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.

A Memorial Service



for our dear friend Patricia Golden will be held at our church on May 13 at 11:00 a.m., followed by a Parish Helper's Reception. Please continue to pray for family and friends during this difficult time.

Food Pantry April Collection

Cold Cereal
Shelf Stable Milk

New Office Hours

Beginning in April, the new office hours for our CLA, Andrea, will be Mondays to Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 12. p.m.

APRIL 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Pancake Breakfast 8—11 a.m. Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
2 Palm/ Passion Sunday Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	3 Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m.	4 Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 noon Choir 5:30	5 Scrabble Group 1—3 p.m. Diaconate Meeting	6 Chair Yoga 10:30 Parish Helpers Room Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service 7 p.m.	7 Good Friday Service of Prayer, Reflection, Silence 12 noon Sanctuary Open 12—3:30 p.m. Good Friday Service—St. John's 5 p.m.	8 Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
9 EASTER SUNDAY Worship and Holy Communion 10 a.m.	10 Easter Monday	11 Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 noon Choir 5:30 Ukulele Club 6—7:30 p.m.	12	13 Chair Yoga 10:30 Parish Helpers Room Parish Helpers Meeting—1 p.m.	14	15 Grief Support Group 11 a.m. Art Contest Deadline
16 2nd Sunday of Easter Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	17 Patriot's Day Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m.	18 Prayer Shawl Ministry 10 a.m. Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 noon Choir 5:30	19	20 Chair Yoga 10:30 Parish Helpers Room	21	22 EARTH DAY Road Clean Up in Wakefield Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
23 3rd Sunday of Easter Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	24	25 Faith Formation Via Zoom 12 noon Choir 5:30 Ukulele Club	26 Administrative Professionals Day	27 Chair Yoga 10:30 Parish Helpers Room	28	29 Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
30 4th Sunday of Easter Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour						