

# 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  
MAY 2023

PHONE: 603-522-3189  
WEBSITE: FCCWAKEFIELDNH.ORG  
EMAIL: CHURCHOFFICE@FCCWAKEFIELDNH.ORG

## *THE PASTOR'S PAGE*

### **“Every Morning is Easter Morning” From Pastor Larry**

“Every morning is easter from now on...” goes a line by the song of the same name by Richard Avery and Donald Marsh. We sang this as a Call to Worship on Sunday, and I have been singing the song since I first discovered it at the Greensboro, Vt. UCC church in 1984. The song sums up the essence of my own theology and that of much of our UCC tradition. We are an Easter people, and the glory, joy and impact of the Easter events and post resurrection narratives form the basis for our relationship with God and the world around us.

The post resurrection accounts found in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and in Acts and first Corinthians, are beautiful witnesses to the faith revelation of Jesus' resurrection. There are no less than ten (10) of them. They are testimonies and formative texts that lay before us the future of what it means to live a Christian life, then and now.

There are some common elements of the Gospel accounts of the post resurrection appearances.

- Mary Magdalene was among the women who discovered the empty tomb, and alone in that discovery in the Gospel of John.
- Mary Magdalene was the person whom Jesus appeared to first in the Matthew, Mark and John accounts.
- Jesus appeared often in settings over a meal and in community and invariably taught while with his disciples.
- Jesus appeared at the lakeshore, on a mountain, in the garden, in a room and along the road.
- The disciples had a difficult recognizing Jesus at first, and/or believing it was actually him.

In the post resurrection accounts Jesus points us toward the future, not the past and what happened on the cross or even at the tomb. Jesus does not re-litigate his death or the events that led to it. Rather, he announces that 1) a new day has dawned; 2) death is overcome; 3) the power of violence, anger, fear, doubt, guilt, intimidation and oppression is overcome by the redemptive power of Love; 4) we are called to relationship with God, through Jesus and his teachings and ministry and through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit; 5) the nature of our relationship with God is comprehensive, and very much includes our relationship to and with each other, and with all of God's creation, including this magnificent earth; 6) we are called to be the Beloved Community, and 7) called to be witnesses to a light that the world needs, to and for the power of Love, compassion, forgiveness, redemption, mercy, justice and equity.

We are an Easter people, and the Eastertide season is a passage through what it means to us to be a Christian, and how we will live and practice that identity. The nurture and formation of our inner faith and relationship with God coincides with the call to integrative right relationship, with God, each other, and ourselves as we move through our time in this sacred garden, we call earth. They will know we are Christians by our love, and we will sing and live “Every morning is Easter morning from now on!”

**Are you interested in membership in our church?** We welcome all people, and would love to speak with you about membership. If you are interested, please reach out Pastor Larry at [pastor@fccwakefieldnh.org](mailto:pastor@fccwakefieldnh.org) or one of our deacons. We will set up a meeting with you and answer any questions you may have. We also welcome you to a session right after the Sunday service on May 7, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. in the Parish Helpers room. We look forward to talking with you!

## Precious Time

I just returned from visiting my brother in Maryland. Lee will be 79 in May. Lee has Parkinson's. We think he has had faint symptoms for quite a while. It has only been the past year that neurological testing has confirmed the diagnosis. Lee is a Vietnam Veteran. They believe he contracted Parkinson's due to exposure to Agent Orange while serving his tour of duty. I was only 5 when he enlisted in the Navy. For the next four years, I remember watching the evening news with my parents. Walter Cronkite and other news anchors brought the first televised military conflict into our living rooms. Every time they showed bombs dropping or troops moving through the jungle I would ask if Lee was one of the soldiers.

A few years ago, he told me a story about how he was supposed to have flown on a mission, but due to a miscommunication another fellow took the flight. That plane was shot down. There were no survivors. I don't think Lee has ever gotten over the guilt associated with that result. One year, when traveling with students from Alaska to Washington DC, I was able to arrange to spend time with Lee. We met on the Mall, and walked to the various monuments and memorials. As we ventured along the Vietnam Wall, I lost sight of him. I found him up on a hill between the Wall and the Vietnam Women's Memorial. He was slightly out of breath, and as I approached him, I could tell he had been crying. He said he was so overwhelmed with grief and guilt that he had to



leave. I held him in my arms and told him, as sad as it was to see all of those names of fallen soldiers, I was glad his name was not one of them.

Lee is working hard at adjusting to his disease. He attends weekly boxing and Tai Chi classes. These help him with his loss of balance. He goes to the local VA where he shares in group sessions. Lee is a retired biology professor. Parkinson's has limited his ability to commune with nature, but he tries to go every morning to his favorite fishing holes. This last week we walked together across the earthen dam that led to the dock where he catches and releases blue gill or other sunfish. It brings 2 him joy. (Continued)

We rarely know when our time on earth will end. We also can't predict what condition we will be in when that time comes. All we can do is take one day at a time and carry the love of God in our hearts. Find your joy.

*Lord, be with our family and friends and hold them in the palm of your hands as they journey through their days.*

*Donna V Ackerman*

## FUNdraising!

Another SAVERS collection will commence this month with drop off dates between May 20 and June 4. See the cover of this newsletter for details on what can be donated . . .including book donations! Time to clean out those closets and bookshelves!

## Attention All Ministry Coordinators

It's that time of year again! Please start prepping your Annual Reports for our Annual Meeting taking place on June 25th! Please forward a Word Doc to me via email by May 31 to churchoffice@fccwakefieldnh.org. Thank you!

*Andrea Selig, CLA*

## How to Get Involved

The Calling & Discernment Ministry seeks to find and support members in ways in which each person's individual gifts and interests may participate in the ever evolving life of our beloved community. This enables FCCW to be a healthy place where each person belongs and contributes in ministry in a way that is meaningful.

Such commitments are not a life long proposition! People come and go on various teams in ways that work well. The participation of all makes us stronger, provides a sense of belonging, and enhances all of us!

Are you interested in being a lector once every quarter? Let C & D or Andrea know! Want to join the Music Ministry in any way? (Doesn't mean you need to sing in the choir, ring handbells, or play an instrument during worship.) Is your talent fixing things or do you like to discuss ideas? Do you enjoy helping others in big or small ways? Are administrative type activities right up your alley? (We are looking for a church clerk!) Would serving communion feel right to you?

There are so many ways to be a part of our growing, thriving, fun loving, faith filled community. I would be honored to chat with you to *just consider what might be calling you.*

*Blessings, Connie Littlefield*

## Library Hi-Light

### **The Dry Grass of August (J-F)** by Anna Jean Mayhew

In this beautifully written debut, Anna Jean Mayhew offers a riveting depiction of Southern life in the throes of segregation, what it will mean for a young girl on her way to adulthood—and for the woman who means the world to her.

On a scorching day in August 1954, thirteen-year-old Jubie Watts leaves Charlotte, North Carolina, with her family for a Florida vacation. Crammed into the Packard along with Jubie are her three siblings, her mother, and the family's black maid, Mary Luther. For as long as Jubie can remember, Mary has been there—cooking, cleaning, compensating for her father's rages and her mother's benign neglect, and loving Jubie unconditionally.

Bright and curious, Jubie takes note of the anti-integration signs they pass, and of the racial tension that builds as they journey further south. But she could never have predicted the shocking turn their trip will take. Now, in the wake of tragedy, Jubie must confront her parents' failings and limitations, decide where her own convictions lie, and make the tumultuous leap to independence . . . Source: Amazon

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

## Hazel MacBrien NS News

During the month of April we worked on letters Jj, Uu and Dd. Our sensory table was full of eggs, bunnies and chicks for Easter and then we had sand, bones, dinosaurs and eggs for dinosaur week.

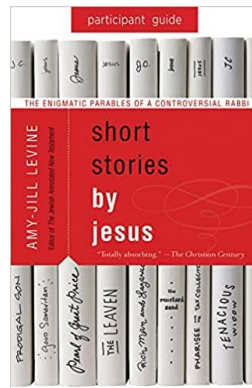
The kids had a lot of fun using jellybeans and mini erasers on 10-frames and line tracing papers. We also froze baby dinosaurs in ice and then the kids had to get them out using water and paintbrushes. Some of our art projects included rolling jellybeans in paint onto a paper egg and painting their hands and turning them into dinosaurs.

We had some beautiful warm weather and enjoyed some outdoor activities; like chalk drawing and finding cloud pictures with letters on them that they had to write on a whiteboard.

We will not have school during the last week of April for vacation, but we can't wait to come back for May!

## New Adult Faith Formation Class

Beginning in May, we will be jumping into our next study - a look at the parables by a Amy-Jill Levine: *A self-described "Yankee Jewish feminist who teaches in a predominantly Protestant divinity school in the buckle of the Bible Belt," Levine "combines historical-critical rigor, literary-critical sensitivity, and a frequent dash of humor with a commitment to eliminating anti-semitic, sexist, and homophobic theologies."*



The book we will be using as the basis of our study is entitled *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi*

Jesus was a skilled storyteller and perceptive teacher who used parables from everyday life to effectively convey his message and meaning. Life in first-century Palestine was very different from our world today, and many traditional interpretations of Jesus' stories ignore

this disparity and have often allowed anti-Semitism and misogyny to color their perspectives.

In this Bible study based on her *Short Stories by Jesus*, Amy-Jill Levine analyzes these "problems with parables" taking readers back in time to understand how their original Jewish audience understood them. With this revitalized understanding, she interprets these moving stories for the contemporary reader, showing how the parables are not just about Jesus, but are also about us—and when read rightly, still challenge and provoke us two thousand years later.

Please consider joining us for this most interesting study. We will be meeting Tuesdays at noon starting on May 9th. This study will be conducted as a hybrid class - meeting both on zoom and in person in the Fellowship Hall. Contact Julie Kessler [julielouisekessler@gmail.com](mailto:julielouisekessler@gmail.com) or 603-871-8066) if you're interested in attending or would like more information.

### SPECIAL REMINDER

The Congregational Assessment Tool Survey has been emailed! If you have not received it, please email [churchoffice@fccwakefieldnh.org](mailto:churchoffice@fccwakefieldnh.org) for the link. Please complete the survey at your earliest convenience! Thank you!

## Faith Formation Ministry

### Confirmation:

The Confirmands continue on their faith formation journey. Each was given a journal at the onset of their path to Confirmation so that they may document activities. They each have very busy activities with school and sports, but still they are involved in community activities. We are proud of them all.

George Ackerman has guided Tim through nature walks with inspirational conversations. Tim has also learned some very useful woodworking skills in George's woodworking shop.

On a Saturday morning, April 1st, Coralena, Cece and Tim helped prepare breakfast for the PKZ fundraiser, FCCW's famous Pancake Breakfast. Not only did they hone their cooking and serving skills but they also learned the importance of FCCW's mission in Zimbabwe. Getting up early and staying beyond serving time to clean up was much appreciated by all!!

Recently, Coralena and Cecelia made scrumptious breakfast for Confirmation Mentor, Evy, as she recovers from illness at home. Joined by Mentor Connie, they all had a wonderful conversation about a chapter in the Mentor's guidebook about spirituality.

### KIWIs

On, Saturday, April 22, the KIWI's helped on the Town of Wakefield's Earth Day clean-up day. The multi-generational team of 18 picked up 14 bags of litter along Wakefield Road from FCCW to the Poor People's Pub. Two of those KIWI's are also FCCW Confirmands. Thanks to you all for such great teamwork.



### Music Camp

Buddy Dee and Connie Littlefield, Coordinators, have assembled a team for Music Camp. This special week of music, crafts, and fun will be at FCCW the week of July 31- August 4. This year's theme: LOVE. More volunteers are always welcome!!

If you have not completed or renewed a background check within the last 2 years, please contact Buddy Dee. It is a very simple process and at no cost to you!!

### Dates to remember

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

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

Confirmation Retreat at Horton Center  
September 29, 2023 – October 1, 2023

\*\*The Faith Formation Ministry always welcomes your help, thoughts and suggestions. Please contact [lindalmesser@gmail.com](mailto:lindalmesser@gmail.com); at 603-781-8745.

*Linda Messer*

## Pastoral Search and Call

The FCCW Pastoral Search & Call Committee is looking for your input! The best way to do this is by completing our online Congregational Assessment Tool from Holy Cow Consulting which has been emailed. Please complete this at your earliest convenience and if you have any questions or did not receive it, please contact the Church Office at [churchoffice@fccwakefieldnh.org](mailto:churchoffice@fccwakefieldnh.org). Please note, this survey will take approximately an hour to complete, so make sure you set aside enough time. Thank you for participating in this very important survey!

*Your Pastoral Search & Call Committee,  
Titia Bozuwa, Buddy Dee, Margie Galabrun,  
Norma Gore, Joe Palmariello*

## You, the Stewards

Members and friends of FCCW-You are the Stewards of this Church. You are the ones who spread God's word by your good actions and with conviction. You are the people who (quite literally) clean the streets, march in parades, and sponsor Zimbabwe orphans; you lead by example, pray for others, and provide support. You exemplify that God is still speaking.

By now you should have received a Stewardship packet entitled 'Unity, Peace, Purpose'—either by hand or mail. Included within is a Pledge card. Please do prayerfully consider a monetary pledge to help support our church and its missions and return it to the church via mail, by placing it in the offering plate, or by emailing our Assistant Treasurer with your donation pledge at [fccwassistanttreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fccwassistanttreasurer@gmail.com)

We are grateful for your pledge of support and donations,

*Chris, Judy, Sally, Paul  
Stewardship Ministry*

## PKZ—Zimbabwe News

We have noteworthy activities happening all around us! First, Blessing Sithole had a wonderful interview at the US Embassy earlier in April and is bound for the USA in July! We will waste no time putting Blessing's talents to good use as he will be assisting throughout the week for Music Camp and spending time in Wakefield before he transitions to Keene State College. Sam can't wait to be reunited with Blessing! (*Many have asked if Blessing and Sam are related; they are not, just brothers of the heart.*) I, also, can't wait for Blessing to arrive so that you can meet another amazing young man.



Pictured here are Blessing & Sam, visiting Rufumiso UCCZ, Save River, Birchenough Bridge

**Martha Jo McCarthy** is running a 24 endurance event on Saturday, May 6 which will take place at White Lake State Park. We are encouraging people to attend throughout the day in order to cheer on and

support her amazing endeavor. All proceeds will benefit Zimbabwe missions. Truly, MJo is a 'Wonder Woman' and will be running with Buttercup, her equally wonderful canine side-kick.

Items for the humanitarian shipping container are adding up! ***We will be accepting donations through July 1st unless we exceed the amount we can effectively ship.*** Please leave your items in a box or bag at the church and let me or Ann Bilodeau know so that we can sort and invoice. Your donated items are an immeasurable gift to so many.

*Gratefully, Connie Littlefield*

## Parish Helpers Luncheon

Our Annual Luncheon and Installation of Officers will be held at that Poor People's Pub on Thursday, May 11 at 12 noon. If you haven't already signed up, please contact Rachel White. Hope to see you there!

## Pledge Challenge!

**Men's Fellowship Group** will be donating \$10 per every pledge received by May 21, up to \$500! So, if we receive 50 pledges by May 21, that will be an additional \$500 for the Church!

What a clever and encouraging challenge to us all to get our pledges in early. Thank you to the Men's Fellowship Group for their generosity, and thank you ALL!

## Who Would You Like to Invite?

We will be sending 'Unity, Peace, Purpose' mailers to members of our community. It is similar to the Stewardship packet you have received but with an invitation to join us for worship, in person or online. It also gives them an opportunity to make a donation, receive Steepleviews, and to request a ride to worship services. We are able to send 50 packets at this time (maybe more in the future). How do you choose 50 names of a town of 5000? Now is your chance to consider 'everyone you've ever wanted to invite to church but were afraid to ask'! If you'd like, please send us 1, 2 or more names and addresses and we will be pleased to send this invitation to them.

Please email names to [cfedder1@gmail.com](mailto:cfedder1@gmail.com) and include 'Invitation' in the subject line.

*Chris, Judy, Sally, Paul—Stewardship Ministry*

## Our Church Rocks!

Wakefield Pride Day will be held on Saturday, May 20th. We want to display that "FCCW ROCKS" by showing the many, many ways in which we interact and support the local community. There will be two tables -- one table with Music Camp info and our FCCW mission/outreach and another table with a "Cookie Walk," a fundraiser to benefit our general budget. Cookies of all types will be needed and greatly appreciated. A variety of cookies works well as people pick and choose from the array while we fill up a bag of delicious treats for them.

There's more! FCCW wants to be a vibrant presence in the parade! The Ukulele Club will be participating, we will be carrying banners to represent our beloved church and small signs which demonstrate the many aspects of ministry, and colorful BOOMWHACKERS to gather attention and make some joyful noise!

We need you! Can you help set up or take down tables and canopies? Make a batch or two of cookies or serve at the cookie table? Help hold one of the two banners? (Five people needed here!) Carry a small sign? With a BOOMWHACKER? (Light and easy, we promise!) And later continue the tradition of heading to the PPP for a lobster roll or other goodie and perhaps an adult beverage....

To join the fun, please see Connie Littlefield, Ann Bilodeau, Anne Palmariello, Donna Ackerman or Jo Szirbik!

FCCW ROCKS!

# Celebrations!

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 3 Sarah Connell      | 17 George Ackerman Jr.  |
| 5 Emma Dolbear       | 17 Bridgette Gehring    |
| 7 Dalton Ostrye      | 18 Lance MacLean        |
| 8 Scott Mercer       | 19 Cindy Eggleston      |
| 10 Sophia Moran      | 22 Peg Bridges          |
| 11 Sharon Baldwin    | 23 Marc Galabrun        |
| 11 Patricia Martin   | 23 Lynn Shaffer         |
| 11 Wayne Robinson    | 28 Luke Evenson         |
| 13 Nicholas Gatchell | 29 Scott Twombly        |
| 14 Elizabeth Fogg    | 31 Brittany Frothingham |
| 14 Scott Frothingham |                         |

## MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 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

Dear Parish Helpers!  
Thank you for the heart warming surprise birthday celebration! What a fun way to bring in the "BIG 80" surrounded by such wonderful caring and loving friends. I feel so honored to be a part of this sisterhood.  
Love and Hugs, Ginny

*Thank you*

## Easter Flowers



I wish to express my gratitude to many of our Church family friends for providing our sanctuary with the beautiful spring plants. The joy of flowers are a simple delight and a gentle reminder of our God's Grace shining upon us.

*Blessings, Rachel*

## 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](mailto:dhwilson39@gmail.com)) All prayer requests are kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with the express permission of the people involved.

WITH DEEPEST  
*sympathy*

We are saddened by the passing of Glenna and Dick Nelson's son, **David Nelson**, who passed away peacefully on Saturday, April 8. A Memorial Service will be held for David on Saturday, May 6th at our church.

Please keep Glenna and her family in your prayers during this difficult time.

## Memorial Service



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.

# MAY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Faith Formation 12 noon  Choir 5:30	<b>3</b> Scrabble Group 1–3 p.m.  Diaconate Meeting	<b>4</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Grief Support Group 11 a.m.  Memorial Service For David Nelson 2 p.m.
<b>7</b> <b>5th Sunday of EASTER</b> Worship and Communion 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour  New Members Meeting—11:30	<b>8</b> Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.	<b>9</b> Faith Formation 12 noon  Choir 5:30  Ukulele Club 6–7:30 p.m.	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Chair Yoga 10:30  Parish Helpers Luncheon 12 Noon Poor People's Pub	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Grief Support Group 11 a.m.  Memorial Service for Patricia Golden 11 a.m.
<b>14</b> <b>6th Sunday of EASTER</b> <b>Mother's Day</b> Worship - 10 a.m.  Welcoming New Members  Coffee Hour	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Prayer Shawl Ministry 10 a.m.  Faith Formation 12 noon  Choir 5:30	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <b>WAKEFIELD PRIDE DAY</b>  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.  SAVERS Collection 2 to 3 p.m.
<b>21</b> <b>7th Sunday of EASTER</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour  SAVERS Collection 11:30–12:30	<b>22</b> Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.	<b>23</b> Faith Formation 12 noon  Choir 5:30  Ukulele Club 6–7:30 p.m.	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Grief Support Group 11 a.m.  SAVERS Collection 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
<b>28</b> <b>PENTECOST SUNDAY</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour  SAVERS Collection 11:30–12:30	<b>29'</b> <b>MEMORIAL DAY</b>	<b>30</b> Faith Formation 12 noon  Choir 5:30	<b>31</b>	<p><b>Looking ahead to June</b></p> <p>June 4—Stewardship Sunday</p> <p>June 25 — Annual Meeting</p>		

\*\*\***FCCW**  **savers** SHOP. REUSE. REIMAGINE. **Donation Drive**\*\*\*

**SPRING CLOSET (AND BOOKSHELF) CLEANOUT TIME!**

Remember that we take bagged soft items including but not limited to:  
clothing, footwear, accessories, bedding, towels, etc.

Also accepting boxed books!

Donations will be accepted at the church on the following days:

*Saturday May 20<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:00 & Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup> from 11:30-12:30*

*Saturday May 27<sup>th</sup> from 10:00-12:00 & Sunday May 28<sup>th</sup> from 11:30-12:30*

*Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10:00-12:00 & Sunday June 4<sup>th</sup> from 11:30-12:30*

All donations will help support the First Congregational Church of Wakefield  
2718 Wakefield Road, Wakefield, NH 03872.

*Thank You for your generous donations!*



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