

# STEEPLE VIEWS

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



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AUGUST 2023

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## *THE PASTOR'S PAGE*

### **Sharing our Stories Pastor Larry Brickner-Wood**

Jesus was a storyteller. In addition to being Messiah, Rabbi/teacher, prophet, witness, comforter and visionary, Jesus shared stories. Some of them were in the form of parables, simple stories designed to illustrate a moral or spiritual truth. Others were told in allegory or metaphor, while others were direct accounts of what Jesus had experienced. The Bible, our sacred text, is among other things, a collection of stories. The parable of the Good Samaritan in the Gospel of Luke is one wonderful example of a parable. The vivid writings of the Song of Songs are beautiful love poetry. The creation stories of the Book of Genesis are wonderful mythological accounts of God's creation. Paul's letters are wonderful testimonies, witness and narratives of an emerging community of believers. The mystical Book of Revelation is a dramatic blend of poetry, prose, myth, allegory, symbolism and prophecy. Our Bible is a book of sacred stories of depth, meaning, vision, faith and prophecy.

Stories can be powerful witnesses and inspiration for others. They can also be liberating and vehicles for release of the binding constraints of oppression and persecution. Throughout time, peoples oppressed, persecuted, enslaved and imprisoned by the powers have used stories, sometimes in the form of songs, poetry and art, to give voice to the voiceless and to keep the flames of hope burning in their communities and cultures. The long winding journey of our Jewish kindreds is one dramatic example of this phenomenon. Another are the accounts from our kindreds who are facing the hard hearted and brutal targeting and persecution of their identities and existence. We should listen to the stories of those who have been on the other side of power and the ways that has impacted their lives.

The insightful writer Kaitlin Curtice, who is from the Potawatomi Citizen Band of Oklahoma, says of the power of stories: "One of the most powerful ways change can happen is through storytelling, through a judgment free empathy for one another, for the places we've been and the hope we hold for ourselves, hope that beats in the hearts in our chests, hope that carries us from one day to the next, no matter who *our people* are." When we share our stories, we enter into sacred space with each other, and with the divine. Story sharing is sacred, and it is divine.

Kaitlin Curtice also writes in her essay "We Gather and We Shed," these powerful words: "It's why we need stories so much, to remember what we carry, to remember that we are always shedding and harvesting, shedding and harvesting, letting go and gathering in, sometimes with support, sometimes without it." We need each other's stories. We need our own stories to hold in our hearts, and to share with our beloveds who will come after we leave this earth. In the next few months, we will hear the stories of some of our beloveds and their own journeys of faith and spirit. We will have opportunities to share stories in small groups and around the table. We will share stories in one on one conversations, and in words, deeds and action. We are the people of the Story and the Dream, a dream that transforms and changes, moves mountains and makes all things new.

Our stories matter. Your story matters. In the sharing of our stories, we connect with our ancestors, inspire our peers, and light a path for the generations that will follow. Through the telling of our stories, justice reigns, peace prevails and the beautiful rainbow people of God birth heaven here on earth.

## News of Zimbabwe

We have received a handful of letters and many photos of our sponsored children. Some of the children write about their favorite subjects, their hobbies, the challenges of walking 7 km (about 4.3 miles) each way to school and getting there in time for 7 am, the need for uniforms and books, but primarily they express their gratitude that someone cares about them. Here are some excerpts:



Munashe Mtingwende is in full uniform. She is a Chipinge High School student with a beautiful smile!

"I wish to express my gratitude toward the funding I receive from you. I am now doing Form 3 and I am not struggling much with school tuition, food, and clothing thanks to you! May God bless you in abundance." (Lucia Sibiya)

"It is my pleasure to write this letter thanking you for paying my school fees. Life would have been hard for me without you. Thank you so much." (Vision Mlambo)

"I am eleven years old. I am in grade four. I am a boy. I want to thank you for remembering me. May God bless you. Thank you very much. Yours sincerely." (Valencia Chindendende)

"I am happy I am still here. I am now in Grade 2. I am doing very well. I hope to pass all my subjects. My pet is a small dog whose name is Bravo. I like him very well." (Polite Mbonyeya)

"I would like to become a lawyer. I also like to play football (soccer) at school and even at home. Football is my best and I am able to play it too much. I would again like to extend a warm thank you to your families combined together to assist poor people. You play a very pivotal role in our life. May the Lord bless you forever and ever." (Brian Bote Maecha)

I agree with Brian that sponsors play a pivotal role, changing the trajectory of lives as we have come to understand so personally with Samuel Khumbula and Blessing Sithole.

You are a blessing to the youth of Zimbabwe!  
Connie Littlefield

## Endowment Matching Opportunity

A generous donor will match any Online Recurring Endowment Donations set up in the months of July and August. This match is \$1,000.00!!

The recurring match can be made online (see below) or by emailing or chatting with Assistant Treasurer, Julie Kessler — [julielouisekessler@gmail.com](mailto:julielouisekessler@gmail.com).

- Go to the FCCW website at [fccwakefieldnh.org](http://fccwakefieldnh.org)
- Scroll down and click on the yellow DONATE button
- Enter your monthly contribution amount
- Select Endowment (which is already selected by default)
- Click on "Make this a monthly contribution"
- Set up your preferred payment method

No amount is too small so set up your recurring donations to help support our Endowment Fund and receive our donor's match of up to \$1,000.

*Judy Trepal*

*(Ed. Note: I tried this. It takes just minutes to set up and is an easy way to donate to the Endowment Fund over time! C.J.)*

## Music Camp

It's not too late to sign your children up for FCCW's Summer Music Camp—July 31 to August 4th. Email the office at ChurchOffice [@fccwakefieldnh.org](mailto:@fccwakefieldnh.org) or call 603-522-3189 for an online registration form.

## Generous Library Book Donations

Carol Lundgren recently donated about 20 wonderful books to our church library. Carol, thank you so much from all of us. Here are a few of them:

[Why Be Good](#) by B. Sherman (S-J)

[Say Yes to Grace](#) by K.B. Jones (S-J)

[Restoring Faith](#) by F. Church (ed.) (R-F)

[Recovery from Loss](#) by L. Tagliaferre & G. Harbaugh (J-AD)

Her donations are now either on the mobile shelving unit in Fellowship Hall or shelved according to their subject.

*Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian*

# Celebrations!

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

2 Phillip Twombly	14 Matt Mooers
4 Chris James	15 Amanda Crew
4 Madeline Johnson	15 Shannon Johnson
5 Douglas Ball	17 Nancy Jacobson
5 Richard Messer	19 Stephanie Ballard
6 Shane Caplette	23 Matthew Boggs
8 Rebecca Ellis	24 Dick Wilson
8 Julie Evenson	28 Debbie (Caplette) Soucey
9 Harriet Wilson	29 Anastasia St Pierre
11 Cassandra Ball	
14 Dan James	

## AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

19 Bob & Denine Faulks
20 David & Sharon Tinkham
21 George & Jo Szirbik
22 Royal & Carole Doughty

*Thank  
You*

Rob and I are so grateful to **George Ackerman** for the installation of permanent grab bars in our bathroom. We've had to do a number of adaptations to our house for safe maneuvering and these grab bars are functional and even attractive! We've made a donation to the Men's Fellowship for all the work George and so many others do for church friends and the community! Bless you!

*Carol and Rob Lundgren*

Dick and I thank you with our whole hearts for all your prayers and best wishes for our daughter Rachel as she recovers from her double organ transplant. She is doing very well – no signs of rejection - and hopes to be back in her home the first weekend in August. God bless you all!

*Harriet and Dick Wilson*

## 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:**

**Bob L; Rachel Wi; Todd W; Dave and Charlotte L; Sue L; Arlene L; Cindy E; Carol J's Family; Chrissy, Maryann, and Michael**



**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 to learn of the passing of Isa Cann on April 9, 2023.

Isa was a frequent visitor and participant in our congregation. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends during this difficult time. You can read her obituary here—[Obituary](#).

St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Sanbornville is holding their annual EpiscoGolf Raffle to raise funds for local children's charities. To find out how to participate, click [here](#).

# AUGUST 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> Choir 5:30	<b>2</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Scrabble Group 1–3 p.m.  Diaconate Meeting	<b>3</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>Summer Music Camp — All Week — 9 to 12</b>						
<b>6</b> <b>The Transfiguration</b> Worship and Communion 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour	<b>7</b> Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.	<b>8</b> Choir 5:30  Ukulele Club 6–7:30 p.m.	<b>9</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12	<b>10</b> Chair Yoga 10:30  NO Parish Helpers Meeting this month	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <b>VILLAGE FAIR</b> 9–2 p.m.  Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>13</b> <b>11th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Prayer Shawl Ministry—10 a.m.  Choir 5:30	<b>16</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12	<b>17</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>20</b> <b>12th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour  <b>Leadership Council</b> Meeting after coffee	<b>21</b> Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.	<b>22</b> Choir 5:30  Ukulele Club 6–7:30 p.m.	<b>23</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12	<b>24</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <b>YARD SALE</b> <b>8 a.m. – 1 p.m.</b>  Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>27</b> <b>13th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Choir 5:30	<b>30</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12	<b>31</b> Chair Yoga 10:30		

## Yard Sale Time!

The FCCW yard sale will be held on Saturday, August 26 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. As usual we will have the "Cool Boutique" in the Parish Helpers room, a clothing for sale in the sanctuary, a bake sale in the front, large items on the front lawn, a 'Make me an Offer' section that offers up unusual pieces at bargain prices, and an array of items we just can't seem to live without in the side parking lot. Are there things around your home that would be just perfect for the yard sale?

Volunteers are always needed! Would you be willing to help set up the day before or help put away items at the end of the day? This is a significant fundraiser for our general fund and your help and participation is appreciated! Please spread the word and invite friends!

*Connie Littlefield*

## Calling and Discernment

Please welcome Anne Palmariello as our newest member of Diaconate! Thanks so much, Anne, for your willingness to serve.

Are your gifts and interests a match for the position of church clerk? This once a month responsibility includes taking minutes at Leadership Council meetings.

Is being a part of the Safety Team or Faith Formation or Personnel or Outreach Ministries something you might like to hear more about? Are you interested in music, drama or decorative arts? Buildings and Grounds is a busy ministry that could always use more hands, too!

C & D seeks to encourage members and friends to find a niche in our beloved church community. Let us know if we can assist you in that process!

*Your Calling and Discernment Ministry:  
Connie Littlefield, Margie Galabrun, Jan Brewjo, and  
Harriet Wilson*

## Help Needed

The Communications Ministry/ Sound Team is seeking persons to learn how to use the church sound system and run the Zoom/ Facebook Link for our Sunday worship. If you are interested, please contact Carol Jeffery at [carol.jeffery@gmail.com](mailto:carol.jeffery@gmail.com).

## Coming Soon! The Village Fair and Cookie Walk!



On August 12, the Parish Helpers will hold their annual Village Fair and now-famous Cookie Walk. They'll be Vendors, Crafters, a Bake Sale, Cookies, Lunch and our annual Quilt raffle. This year's quilt is queen size.



They are also raffling a beautiful hand-braided rug made by Catherine Britton. It is 3' x 5'. Thank you for your donation, Catherine! It is magnificent. Tickets for either item are \$5 each or 3 for \$10.

## Cookies, Breads and Pie! Oh my!

The Parish Helpers Fair is coming up on August 12—including a bake sale table as well as our Famous Cookie Walk! And we need **YOUR HELP!** We welcome contributions from all—not only Parish Helpers!

Please consider adding to our baked good offerings by making some cookies or pies (or both). Sweet and yeast breads are also good sellers! Drop off will be the afternoon before (Friday, the 11th) or morning of the Fair! Thank you!

## General Synod Wrap Up

General Synod 34 has officially concluded, marking the beginning of a time for action. During this Synod, 13 resolutions of witness, 1 bylaws change, and the election of a new GMP, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, took place. While some votes were more contentious than others, all of them hold relevance for our church in the coming years.

It is crucial to bear in mind that the resolutions passed by the greater body at General Synod are intended to speak to churches, not on their behalf. Under this structure, it is the responsibility of each individual church to adopt and act upon these resolutions. We earnestly urge you to invest time in studying these documents and facilitate discussions to determine their applicability to you and your church. For a general overview of the Synod you can find articles on [UCC News](#). For a list of the revised resolutions you can go to the [General Synod Website](#). Once the official amended resolutions are ready you will be able to find them at <https://uccresolutions.org> To get in contact with our New Hampshire delegates please contact Gordon Rankin at [grankin@nhcucc.org](mailto:grankin@nhcucc.org)



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