

# 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

SEPTEMBER 2023

PHONE: 603-522-3189

WEBSITE: FCCWAKEFIELDNH.ORG

EMAIL: CHURCHOFFICE@FCCWAKEFIELDNH.ORG

## ***THE PASTOR'S PAGE***

### **Who Do You Say that I Am?**

Jesus asks this question of his disciples in a passage from the Gospel of Matthew that we read on August 27, 2023 (Mt. 16:13-20) and is also found in the Gospels of Luke (Lk. 9:18-20) and Mark (Mk. 8:27-29). He asked it right after he had asked the disciples who “the people say that he is, with a variety of answers grounded in Jewish biblical tradition. Jesus asks who others say that he is, then gets right to the heart of the matter: “who do **you** say that I am?”

At our wonderful Music Camp the first week of August, we had some wonderful exchanges during the storytelling times. One day, after the story and parable of the Lost Sheep, one of the campers noted that the man in the stained glass window had found the lost sheep! True, indeed! Two days later, after the story of the woman declared to be a sinner, a camper asked “is that Jesus in the window or is it God?” A brilliant question indeed! What would your answer to that question be?

I like to think that throughout the week of music camp, the answer to the question of who Jesus is came through loud and clear. As volunteers cared for, ministered, taught and mentored the campers and each other, Jesus' presence was felt. Watching the campers show such loving kindness to each other, God's love was clearly in the room. The presence of Jesus was abundantly experienced by all, even if there were no words to truly describe that! Jesus was love throughout this beautiful week in this sacred space and place.

A former First Church of Wakefield pastor, Rev. Rick Russell, used to ask Members in Discernment in the UCC this question: “who is Jesus for you now.” He would ask it every time one of us would come before the Committee on Church and Ministry. Rick never had a specific answer in his mind, but a sincere interest in who Jesus was for us on our spiritual journeys. I still ask this question of our Members in Discernment, and gently listen to the diversity of replies.

Christians are sometimes known for their proselytizing and firm certainty of how and why someone else should accept Jesus. Fair enough. A more compelling question for me, however, is who is Jesus for me? Though the answers to that may change and evolve over time, and often generate even more questions, it is a question fundamental to our faith and central to who we are as a people of God and disciples of Christ. My claim to be a disciple of Christ is informed and enhanced by my wrestling with Jesus' question: “Larry, who do you say that I am?” Who do you say that Jesus is? Who is Jesus for you now? Where and how do you experience Jesus in your life?

Who do you say that I am?  
The question lingers in the air  
Between all of the ways we hold  
Onto our faith in fragile times.  
As I wait for others to share their replies,  
I turn and see Jesus staring straight at me.  
Who do **you** say that I am?

Shalom, Pastor Larry

## PKZ Team News



Our 2023 shipping container is currently on a cargo ship in the Atlantic on its 2-month (or more) journey to Beira Mozambique!

Here are the stats:

23 churches/non profit organizations donated 1073 boxes/items weighing 23,360 lbs.

Our largest categories were school supplies (238 boxes), clothing (219 boxes), books (131 boxes) and medical supplies (119 boxes). Rounding out the mix were bedding, athletic supplies, bicycles, shoes, tools, toys, yarn, household supplies, bedding, personal care items (think toothpaste, toothbrushes, sanitary products and more) office supplies, sewing supplies and music supplies and equipment. One church sent hand bells and hand chimes to their partner!

We had an amazing crew of adult and student volunteers, with 33 members of Spaulding's football and girl's soccer teams making this the fastest loading EVER!

Extraordinarily proud of the greater Wakefield FCCW and the Spaulding High communities for all of the amazing donations. Thank you for consuming all of those pancakes which made this endeavor a reality!

You are a blessing to the people of Zimbabwe!

*Connie Littlefield*

For more information on articles you read in the Steeple Views, contact the editor at [steepleviews@gmail.com](mailto:steepleviews@gmail.com) or call the church office at 603-522-3189.



[www.facebook.com/  
FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC](http://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC)

Visit our website at  
[www.firstcongregationalchurchnh.org](http://www.firstcongregationalchurchnh.org)

## The Dreaded Pledge Drive

Anyone who has watched PBS or listened to public radio is familiar with the dreaded pledge drive when your favorite program is interrupted with appeals for your financial support. The fact of the matter is, though, that these appeals are necessary to keep the programming we enjoy on the air. We could say that the same thing applies with keeping our Church going.

By now you know that there is an initiative to build an Endowment Fund for the church. For many of us a large one-time donation may be difficult to swing financially. But how about \$10 or \$20 a month? Now, that doesn't seem so bad . . . about the amount it costs for a few ice coffees at Dunkin' ! Think of it as being a sustaining member of FCCW and pledge \$10 or \$20 (or any amount comfortable for you)! It's simple to set up on the church website and your donation will be received a little at a time, month after month. You can change or even cancel (we hope not) at any time.

Here's how to do it! I've done it and it's wicked easy and now I can sleep easy knowing I've done my part in helping to sustain FCCW.

*Carol Jeffery*

### Act Now—and have your donation matched!

A generous donor will match any **Online Recurring Endowment Donations** set up in the months of July and August. This match is \$1,000.

- 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 donors match of up to \$1,000.

If you have questions, reach out to either Judy Trepal at [trepaldavis@gmail.com](mailto:trepaldavis@gmail.com) or George Ackerman at [gea5775@yahoo.com](mailto:gea5775@yahoo.com)

*Thank you for your support!*

## Find Your Joy

Let me share with you how many times I have started to play an instrument, just to put it aside. Oh dang, I lost count. I'm not sure what makes me do that. I have attempted various other achievements, mostly academic. I can sit in front of a computer and compose vignettes like these. I can conduct research towards writing a doctoral thesis, which I completed after five years in 2010. I wrote a young adult book, which I misplaced, and hope to find again. In the physical realm, I walked for three days averaging 20 miles per day in Boston's Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer walk. But when it comes to playing an instrument, I flounder.

Music is my joy. I am always listening to music. I have had people comment on how I am always singing. My parents and five siblings were singers. I make fun of the fact that when we got together it was like the Von Trapp family from the Sound of Music. Singing comes easy to me. If I can hear the song, and it's in my range, I can sing it. I consider myself a mimic. Although I am terrified of singing solo, something I am working on. But when it comes to playing an instrument, I hit a wall. I have three times tried playing the guitar. First as a young girl. My daddy bought me a pawn shop acoustic guitar, and even paid for lessons. But we moved and I had to leave it all behind. I tried the guitar again as a young adult, but it did not last. My latest attempt at guitar playing was in the early 2000's. Some of you remember how that ended with me passing it along to another who could actually play something. I have an electric piano/keyboard sitting just to the left of me. Occasionally I sit down and pluck out a song. Most of what I play comes from my ability to hear the notes and then repeat them. I do not read music. I can tell when my voice is going up or down on the scale, but I don't know what the notes are. Maybe it's laziness. Or maybe it's just how my brain works.

One thing I have discovered is that the ukulele seems to be my grand achievement. Now I'm not ready to play a concert, or even in front of the congregation, but I have found my joy. I'm not sure if it's because there are only four strings instead of six, or if it's the availability of picking it up at anytime, anywhere and practicing. I just enjoy attempting to play. Strumming the ukulele takes rhythm, something I can't seem to do while singing. So why play if I can't sing, right? But finger picking seems to mesh well with my singing and my brain. For whatever reason it's less complicated.

As we walk through this remarkable life God has given us, we may start and stop several things, whether mental or physical. The point is to never stop trying. Continue to search for your joy. Who knows what next chapter in life may come your way. God did not give up on humankind. She carried us through the Eden phase, the Patriarchal phase, The Gospel phase, and the New Testament phase. She is still carrying us today. She wants us to find our joy, even if it's in the little things, like a ukulele.

Donna Akerman

## Treasurer's Report

The Annual Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 is finished and is posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please take a moment to look it over and if you have any questions at all, just ask any member of the Finance Ministry—Janice Brejwo, Julie Kessler, Mary Bernier, Harriet Wilson or me. We also hope to see you at the next Pot Luck Dinner on September 7, for more discussion about the search for our next settled Pastor. We are tweaking the numbers, in line with the discussion at the last Dinner, and will have hand-outs that you can take home and study. It's a lot to consider, with a lot of moving parts. This is a very important decision concerning the future of our beloved Church. Please come if you can. Dinner at 5 p.m., Discussion at 6 p.m. The food at the last one was so delicious (and there was dessert!)

*Nancy Dee, Treasurer*

## NH Conference Annual Meeting

FCCW delegates and friends have an opportunity to join other churches across NH on October 21st for a day of transformation and unity at the 222nd Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ.

The theme is 'Turning the Tables,' based on Matthew 21:12-16. This is an opportunity to represent our church, *"engage with dynamic speakers, and shape the future of our community together."*

The event is held at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord and includes a delicious continental breakfast and lunch. Registration begins September 5th. Fees for delegates are covered by FCCW. If you would like to be a delegate, please see Connie, Margie or Andrea.

*Connie Littlefield*

## Church Library

We all realize that our church needs new members to survive these times. Here are some books in the Parish Helpers section of our library that could give us new ideas. They are all in the Church Life subject area.

Assimilating New Members by C. Lane  
Deep & Wide: Hospitality and the Faithful Church by S. Clapp  
Get Their Name by B. Farr  
Just Walk Across the Room by B. Hybels  
Patterns for Parish Development by C. Hahn (Ed.)

*Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian*

## Music Camp Wrap Up

A big thank you to all of you who made this year's Music Camp an outstanding success. We achieved our goal of bringing our Church to the Community, spreading God's word and love through music.

Some stats: We had 24 sign-ups, with an average daily attendance of 21. Grades 1 to grade 8 were represented: 9 played Percussion, 9 Ukeleles, and 6 handbells. We had a budget of \$300 plus a \$150 in donations. We spent \$167 on snacks leaving a balance of \$283. We should replace the old worn-out banner with a new one.

Volunteers: We had 21 people sign up to help and we estimate the staff gave more than **300 hours** planning, running the Camp, and the Sunday service. I know it is many more hours than this. A special thank you to Rev. Larry for his work on Camp this year and a big shout out to our CLA Andrea. She was a huge help with online registration, name tags, background checks and anything else we asked of her. We can't forget Blessing Sithole who did everything we asked of him and much more. New this year was former Campers Julia Alie and Julia McCarthy as Group guides, They brought joy, hope and peace to the campers and the staff.

Our Sunday service on August 6th was well attended with many families of the campers there. There were 15 campers attended which is 71% of the daily attendance. It was wonderful meeting many of our new **friends** downstairs for coffee hour.

A wrap up meeting will be held sometime in September, however please if you have an idea to make next year's Camp better let us know by email and we will include it **for** the meeting agenda.

*Blessings and Thank You  
Buddy, Connie, & Evy*

## Help Needed

The Sound Team could use some help in monitoring the sound system and the Zoom/ Facebook Link for our Sunday service. We will train you. No weekly commitment, but on an as-needed basis. If you are interested, please contact Carol Jeffery—carol.jeffery@gmail.com. at carol.jeffery@gmail.com.

## Parish Helpers

As we move into September, we can look back to a wonderful, busy Parish Helpers summer. Sure, we had some (by some, I mean a lot) of rain, but it did not rain on our picnic—or on our Village Fair! And it did not rain on Yard Sale day—which turned out to be a busy day at the Treasure Shop as well. Thank you to all the Parish Helpers and friends who helped make our summer events successful.

The Treasure Shop remains open through September, possibly longer depending on the weather. We need help staffing the shop, so please see Rachel or come by and sign up to help!

Our September meeting will be low-key, with a business meeting and time for fun and socializing. So see you on Thursday, September 14 at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall!

*Carol Jeffery*

### The Treasure Shop

Find your treasures while you can—the Treasure Shop remains open on Wednesdays and Saturdays through September.

## Full-time or Part-time Minister?

On Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, 37 people gathered in the Fellowship Hall for a good old fashioned potluck meal, and to begin the conversation of whether to hire a full-time or part-time minister. Ministry of Finance members Janice Breywo and Mary Bernier presented an overview of our church's financial position, and then provided projections for both full-time and part-time scenarios.

The discussion was helpful. People listened to each other. Everyone wants what is best for our church and coming together to talk about it is healthy.

We agreed that evening that we would meet again to continue the conversation, and the date was set for **Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM.** So, please come for a wonderful potluck meal, and come for conversation. Be a part of this very important step into our future.

*Margie Galabrun*

## Music Camp: Not Just for the Young

I have always loved music. I love to sing, play the piano, strum the ukulele. But truth be told, I can't do any of these things very well or at all. You'd think that being the child of professional musicians, I would have some inherent musical ability. Unfortunately not! But even without gifted 'artsy' talent, Music Camp was the place to be July 31 to August 4 this summer. The kids AND the adults rocked it!!

As music played during the drop-off time, kids would methodically take their seats and immediately start singing with Miss Connie. Many of the kids remembered songs from previous years and requested to sing them over and over. By the end of the week we were singing those songs in our sleep. (OK, at least I was!!)

Rev Larry told stories to the kids that were inspiring and engaging to us all. They were parables that we may have heard before, but they were told with such expertise and love that these kids and we adults will remember those moments for a long time.

Other moments were equally impressive. Seeing the once 'young campers' now grown into the leaders of groups and proficient helpers was uplifting. The music created by handbells and boom-whackers played by novice musicians who practiced until perfect was inspiring. Young musicians keeping time with drums, shakers and tambourines required rhythm techniques that not all of us can master. The magic of how children (some never had held a ukulele before) were playing songs using multiple chords after only four lessons...incredible!! These kids nailed it all!

The week was filled with laughter, fun, games of all kinds; surprising instruments crafted from tape, cardboard rolls, paper plates, glue, ribbon and beans. They had memorized and recited a scripture verse using American Sign Language. On the first day of camp the kids had been divided into three groups by interest and age: Joy, Hope and Peace. By day five, it was apparent the Holy Spirit had a hand in those monikers long before being assigned during MC planning sessions.

But a favorite activity took place each day in Fellowship Hall during the 30 minutes between morning instruction and afternoon games and crafts: Snack time! The suspense of what the snack of the day would be was the highlight for many. No one was ever disappointed! Fellowship Hall was where it was happening: conversation, connections, caring, sharing, friendships. Not just for the children, but for adults too.

fellowship in the true sense of what that word can mean: cementing community.

For young and old alike, this was a week of confidence building, moving beyond one's comfort zone, love of music regardless of talent, spontaneity, bonding and friendships. And most of all, LOVE! For all these things we give thanks to the ever-present Holy Spirit, God...and the Son. Yes, now forever in my heart known as 'that guy up there' holding the lost sheep. ♡

*Linda Messer*



## Yard Sale Success!

I understand we brought in close to \$4300 at the yard sale! This year's successful event was the result of your donations, your participation, and the hard work of ever faithful volunteers! Thank you to Brian Shipley, Donna and George Ackerman, Ann Bilodeau, Ron Kratt, Chris Feddern, Kevin Connell, Margie, Jean-Michel and Marc Galabrun (and Sam!), Jan and Joe Brewjo, Anne Palmariello, Nancy Dee, Julie Kessler, Amy Marshall, Mark and Linda Walter, Linda Messer, Evelyn Truhne, Carol Lundgren, Linda Laroche, Alison Hartford, Vrante and Trevor Mahlupeko, Rob Nelson, Titia Bozuwa, Coralena and CeCe Meroski and to all our marvelous bakers who donated such delicious goodies. You all are simply the best! And I am still dreaming of reaching the \$5000 mark, so maybe yard sale 2024?

*Connie Littlefield*

## CareGivers -- Meeting on Labor Day!

Yes, that's right -- CareGivers don't get a day off, even on Labor Day. And we purposefully agreed to meet on the holiday because ... typically there are more people around to be present for our loved ones! So, if you know of someone who would benefit or if that someone is YOU, please come to the Parish Helper's Room on Monday, September 7th. We meet from 9:30-10:30 ... you will be warmly welcomed ... any first and third Monday of the year (unless we are in the midst of a snowstorm or hurricane—you understand! If you have questions, please contact Carol Lundgren at 978 807-4041.

# SEPTEMBER

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	<p>Join us for Coffee Hours following our Sunday Service. Thank you to our hosts—Laura Frye, Janet Twombly, and Rachel White</p>				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>3</b> <b>14th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship and Communion 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour	<b>4</b> <b>LABOR DAY</b>  Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.	<b>5</b> Choir 5:30	<b>6</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Scrabble Group 1–3 p.m.  Diaconate Meeting	<b>7</b> Chair Yoga 10:30  Potluck Supper 5 p.m.  Discussion 6 p.m.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>10</b> <b>15th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Choir 5:30  Ukulele Club 6–7:30 p.m.	<b>13</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12 Treasure Shop Open 9–12	<b>14</b> Chair Yoga 10:30  Parish Helpers Meeting 1 p.m.	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  SAVERS Collection 10 a.m.—noon  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>17</b> <b>16th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour  SAVERS Collection 11:30–12:30  Leadership Meeting	<b>18</b> Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.	<b>19</b> Choir 5:30	<b>20</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12	<b>21</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  SAVERS Collection 10 a.m.—noon  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.
<b>24</b> <b>17th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour  SAVERS Collection 11:30–12:30	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Choir 5:30  Ukulele Club 6–7:30 p.m.	<b>27</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12	<b>28</b> Chair Yoga 10:30	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> Treasure Shop Open 9–12  Grief Support Group 11 a.m.

# Celebrations!

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Christine Feddern	18 Sara Denver
8 Susan Girardin	18 Sarah Duplinsky
8 Lora Stanley	18 Margie Galabrun
10 Meaghan Connell	19 Eric Perkins
10 Rachel White	19 Sharon Theiling
11 Mark Evenson	24 Connor Nelson
11 Ken Jeffery	24 Dorothy Letellier
12 Cindy Denver	25 Joe Brejwo
12 Priscilla Frothingham	26 Rebecca Mooers
14 David Schweitzer	28 Edie Garland
16 Russell Baldwin	30 Janice Brejwo
16 MacKenzie Robinson	

## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

21 Scott & Kathy Frothingham

*Thank  
You*

The Stewardship Ministry would like to express its humble thanks to everyone who has pledged their support to the church and its missions. We graciously accept your pledged financial support as well as your gifts of time and of your many and varied talents.

As of June 30, we had received pledged donations in the amount of 103k and we are happy to say additional pledges have been received since then which brings the amount to 110k.

Stewardship will continue to celebrate our message of 'Unity and Peace as our Purpose' throughout this upcoming year as we dedicate ourselves to do the work of God and to being loving and caring Stewards of this Church.

With love and in peace,

*Chris, Judy, Sally and Paul  
Stewardship*

## 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:**

**Harriet W; the family of Todd Woods, Bob L; Rachel Wi; 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*

## Peace for Todd Woods

On August 10th our dear nephew, Todd, was lifted up to heaven. We were NOT ready, but he was. For the last 7+ months you have been praying for Todd. As his extended family, we felt that support and love. Rob and I, and his Mom, Linda, and brothers Steve and Ken, are forever grateful. It was a short life (49 years only) and he was brave and positive throughout six serious medical events over his lifetime. But he always said: "Life is Good". And he meant it! Be at peace dear Todd. You are so loved.

*Carol and Rob Lundgren.*

## \*\*\*FCCW Savers Donation Drive\*\*\*

*Now is a great time to once again clean out those closets as you make the switch from summer to cooler weather clothes!* Remember that we take bagged (kitchen size bags work well) soft items including (but not limited to) clothing, sheets, towels, purses, footwear, blankets, etc.

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

**Saturday, Sept 16th 10:00 - 12:00 & Sunday Sept 17th 11:30 - 12:30**

**Saturday, Sept 23rd 10:00 - 12:00 & Sunday Sept 24th 11:30 - 12:30**

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



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