

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF WAKEFIELD, NH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

*The Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood, Interim Minister*

The Reverend George Harvey, Pastor Emeritus

The Reverend Mary James, Pastor Emerita



**ANNUAL REPORTS**

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, June 22, 2025

11:30AM

**First Congregational Church of Wakefield  
United Church of Christ**

**An Opening and Affirming Church**

We publicly covenant to welcome into full life and ministry of our church all persons of all sexual orientation, gender identities, gender expressions, physical and mental abilities affirming all are created in the image of God.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

**Covenant of Congregation**

We covenant with one another to seek and respond to the Word and the Will of God. Our purpose is to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As our forebears did, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the realm of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

**Mission**

Hearing God's Call. Growing in Love and Care.

**Vision**

We believe that God is calling us to do serious leadership development work among lay members, in order for us to walk together in faith with a strong core of spiritually formed persons with leadership gifts, potential, and experience.

We believe that God is calling us to make a shift from the attitude of paying dues/taking collection to that of learning the deeper meaning of intentional giving, offering, and stewardship as the spiritual practice of growing in generosity.

We believe that God has called us, in a fully dimensional open and affirming way, to deepen our practice of children, youth, and adult Christian formation in order to provide opportunities for growth in faith, both to those who are new to the First Congregational Church of Wakefield, New Hampshire, United Church of Christ, and those who have been involved over time.

We believe that God is calling us to many forms of service and outreach, and the practice of radical hospitality in the spirit of Christ; we therefore seek to grow as faithful servants, reaching out in service and love to one another and to people beyond our congregation in the wider world.

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**Recognition of Leaders**

# ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

June 22, 2025

(In person and Zoom)

11:30am

Call to Order

Opening Devotion

Moments of Remembrance

Meeting Etiquette and Process

Approve Minutes: Annual Meeting June 30, 2024, and Congregational Membership Meetings from January 26, 2025, and May 4, 2025.

Acknowledge Receipt of Annual Ministry Reports

New Business

1. Proposed Budget for 2025-2026  
Janice Brejwo – Coordinator Ministry of Finance
2. Acceptance of Service Animals Policy

Other Business

Moments of Blessings Shared

Closing Prayer

Adjournment

**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**June 30, 2024**  
**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WAKEFIELD, NH - UCC**  
**(In person and Zoom)**

Margie Galabrun – Begin meeting by writing answer to “I thank God for the blessing of…” on a piece of paper.

George Ackerman, Judy Trepal and Nate Fogg will be our counters.

Quorum Met

No Clerk so CLA/Andrea Selig will be taking minutes from Zoom recording.

Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood offered the opening prayer and ushered in a Memorial slideshow.

Margie Galabrun reminds us that meeting is about: Listening, Respect and Consensus

Agenda Items:

- 24/25 LC Proposed Budget Vote and Capital Campaign Restricted Funds – Janice Brejwo
- Communications Reserve Funds – Frank Frazier

Attendance: 48 in person and 2 on zoom

Max/Morgan Gehring – Any questions or concerns about 6.30.23 Annual Meeting Minutes or special 11.12.23 Congregational Minutes – none, both approved

Thank you to the Ministries for the Annual Reports – all accepted.

Janice Brejwo - LC Proposed Budget runs 7.1.24-6.30.25. Work begins in Feb/Mar when ministries put together best educated guess based on historical data for the upcoming budget. There is one update since the budget was distributed. The pledge line increased from \$105K to \$112K. Projected income is now \$145,500, a \$11,300 (8.5%) increase over the 2023–2024-year budget. The total budgeted expenses increased \$6,100, (3.25%) from last year’s budget. Faith Formation and Stewardship budgets decreased; several ministries stayed the same including diaconate. The largest increase was personnel to account for CLA pay increase from \$21 to \$22 per hour at 20 hours per week. CLA rarely works 20 hours but may need more when new pastor starts. Arts budget increased for Organist salary which has not changed over the past few years. The projected gap between income and expense is \$49,320. So how can we fill this gap we ask every year? In the current year, we were fortunate to have a \$14k carryover and in Jan we took \$10K from Parsonage Fund. At this time, we anticipate another carryover into the new year. The Parsonage Fund (current balance \$219K) will only be used when needed. Any funds needed first come from appreciation with a current balance of \$35K and then principal with a current balance of \$184K.

Margie Galabrun – we are voting on final proposed budget amounts of Income \$145,550 and Expenses of \$194,870 with a Gap of \$49,320.

Nancy Dee – The Gap of \$49,320 includes fundraising of \$12K.

Connie Littlefield – we have a gap every year and somehow it works out whether it’s from carryover funds or increased pledges.

Maxi Schultz – Happy to research Go Fund Me

Margie Galabrun – Do we approve the proposed lc budget? 49 In Favor, consensus reached. Thank you, Finance Ministry, for all your work.

Janice Brejwo – In 2013 we did a Capital Campaign, and we still have restricted funds in our Outreach portion totaling \$1,105.17 which finance recommends moving to Endowment.

George Ackerman – Our Endowment Goal is \$600K and we are currently 1/3 of the way there with a balance of \$225,732. The endowment ministry will happily accept the restricted capital campaign funds.

Judy Trepal – the focus of the Endowment Ministry this year will be to set up an Endowment Fundraising Committee and we are looking for help.

George Ackerman – Thank you to everyone who has donated, and we need more ideas. The fundraising bricks are on hold because current vendor no longer available. Once Endowment goal reached, the interest will help with the yearly budget gaps.

Margie Galabrun – Confirmed Consensus to move Capital Campaign Reserve Funds to Endowment Fund.

Frank Frazier – As part of that 2013 Capital Campaign, we updated the sound system with \$40K. It was a long time ago and the equipment is aging. We've been putting money into Communications Reserve account, and it is up to \$3500. With Covid came the need for Zoom and Facebook live streaming. Our current sound system is not designed for that, and the current camera is cumbersome too. Thanks to Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood who recommended Jeff Spires who evaluated our system and prepared a proposal – which came in low.

- 1) Improve Sound with a Speaker Management System
- 2) Install a new Sound Bar/Mixer which will split the signals to improve Zoom with the addition of two new Boundary Microphones for both choir lofts. Plus, a new camera that is designed for the sanctuary will be installed over the clock. The camera automatically pans and zooms.
- 3) The new sounds system will automatically turn microphones on and off. All this ease of use will allow for more sound team volunteers.

Total proposal came in at \$4652 of which the \$3K Communications reserve will go towards plus a private donation for the remainder. Set up and re-evaluation with Jeff Spires will take place soon. Questions:

Gail Feddern – will this help with the hearing impaired?

Frank Frazier – not yet but we have to install this first and then re-evaluate how to improve the hearing impaired, probably with a wifi system.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Andrea Selig – FCCW/CLA

**CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**January 26, 2025**  
**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WAKEFIELD, NH - UCC**  
**(In person and Zoom)**

Margie Galabrun opened the meeting at 11:08 am  
Quorum met with a total of forty-nine in attendance including Zoom.  
We are here in love and respect and will try for a consensus.

Judy Trepal - Holy Cow Survey confirmed congregation was looking for a good preacher, a teacher, loving pastoral care, a leader into the future and a community catalyst. FCCW S&C has found someone, but challenge is our proposed salary of \$90K is not sufficient for a FT pastor so S&C is asking congregation to increase salary.

Buddy Dee - UCC Conference guidelines are higher at \$130K, FCCW's is less at \$90K, found a great candidate out of thirteen who will accept \$102K all inclusive, except for relocation amount.

Margie Galabrun - A call cannot be made until \$102K for first year's salary has been approved.

Evy Truhn - Is \$102K acceptable to candidate?

Margie Galabrun - Yes, the candidate agreed to accept a reduced salary of \$102K.

Max/Morgan Gehring - Excited and understands the figure being asked is great but the congregation is greater. S&C welcomes questions.

Titia Bozwua - Living in different times and we have no choice but to increase the salary if we want a FT paster. Let's take a leap of faith.

Joe Palmariello - The process started in Oct of 2022 and we have found a great candidate but need \$102K.

Margie Galabrun - Other option is a PT pastor.

Connie Littlefield - Well done S&C for the exciting, joyful and stressful efforts.  
Is there an anonymous gift?

Margi Galabrun - There is an probably an anonymous gift of cash but not guaranteed.  
Still have parsonage funds.

Frank Frazier - Are we offering a standard five-year commitment?

Margie Galabrun - The conference only requires a three-year commitment, but the candidate is looking for longer.

Frank Frazier - Will parsonage funds cover for three years?

Janice Brejwo - Parsonage funds is at \$205K and income is up. If we increase salary from \$90k to \$102K and all else remains the same, then \$50k/year from parsonage per year will last four years.

Linda Messer - Is the candidate ok with cut and w/ what we can do?

Margie Galabrun - Candidate needs \$102K and I do not think we'll find another FT candidate for less.

Joe Palmariello - Candidate needs \$102K which includes all. Conference guidelines are set in stone so there is not a lot of wiggle room. The candidate came down from \$138 because of and for FCCW.

Margie Galabrun - There will be no probationary period.

As a reminder, we should really only be talking about increasing the money to \$102k, not about a specific candidate.

George Ackerman - Donna and I want a FT pastor and will increase our tithe.

Judy Trepal - The candidate understands FCCW's financial situation and is ok with it.

Frank Frazier - Need to keep in mind the conference requires an annual increase of 3% each year.

Margie Galabrun - In my opinion we have two choices, move forward with a FT pastor joyfully and purposefully or withdraw and diminish. This particular candidate is a preacher, teacher, loving pastoral carer/prayer, strong social justice and not only does FCCW need them but so does the community.

Donna Ackerman - Does the candidate understand the housing situation here and is that included in \$102K?

Margie Galabrun - Yes, housing allowance included in \$102K.

Chris Feddern - Thank you, S&C, for 27 months of hard work and due diligence. Great job negotiating for a fair salary.

Cindy Eggleston - Only talking a \$12K increase or \$1K per month which is a monthly grocery bill.

Nancy Perkins - We are former members of the Methodist church that closed because they went to a PT pastor.

Gail Feddern - Why pull \$50k from parsonage each year if only need \$12K?

Margie Galabrun - Because we are already in a deficit but not up to \$50K

Joe Palmariello - \$12K per year equates to an additional \$10 per member per month.

Margie Galabrun - Does the congregation give S&C permission to offer \$102K?

Of forty-six members, all voted Yes, except one Abstention. There were zero No votes. There were also three non-members present.

Margie Galabrun and Buddy D - Clarified that once the offer is made and accepted, the candidate will come to our church for a weekend and have a Saturday Meet/Greet then preach on Sunday. Then the congregation will have the chance to vote yay or nay.

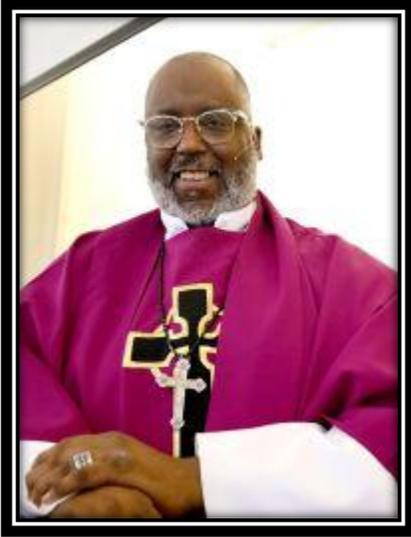
Judy Trepal - Once accepted, the candidate will send an introduction video in advance too.

Margie Galbrun - The meeting joyfully adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Andrea Selig – FCCW/CLA

**CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**May 4, 2025**  
**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WAKEFIELD, NH – UCC**

Following Candidating Sunday, it was unanimously agreed that Rev. Dr. James Mills will be the new Settled Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Wakefield, NH – UCC, beginning August 3, 2025. Please see below public announcement:



The First Congregational Church of Wakefield, NH, United Church of Christ is pleased to announce the August arrival of our new Pastor, The Rev. Dr. James L. Mills, Sr.

Rev. Mills attended Episcopal Divinity in Cambridge, MA, received his Master of Divinity from Boston University, and his Doctor of Ministry from Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, PA. His doctoral dissertation centered on returning citizens from long-term incarceration.

Rev. Mills grew up in the AME (African Methodist Episcopal Church). He came to Ministry as a 2nd career, being installed in the Transforming Word Cathedral in 1999. He began his association with the United Church of Christ (UCC) about 20 years ago through his work with The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries (TFAM). Rev. Mills wrote, “I

have come to value and respect the UCC because it tries to live what it preaches. It has a social justice lens in which it lives and breathes as I do.”

We are so excited to have Rev. Mills join us. We invite you to come, meet him, and journey with us. His first service will be on August 3rd, 10:00 am, at the First Congregational Church of Wakefield, UCC, 2718 Wakefield Road, Wakefield, NH 03872.

**Officers:**  
**Annual Report of the Interim Minister**  
**Rev. Larry Brickner Wood**  
**2024-2025**

It has been a glorious and wonderful 12 months. First and foremost, you all have a new Settled Pastor coming in July! Hallelujah! The Rev. James Mills will start his ministry with FCCW in July. What great news. I know you all will walk together in ministry well, trusting in the grace of God, the light of Jesus Christ and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to guide you.

My last day of Ministry with you will be June 30<sup>th</sup>, and my last service on June 29<sup>th</sup>. It is bittersweet! I am excited that you have called a wonderful Pastor in Rev. Mills. And I am really ready to retire!. And I will miss you all. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to be in ministry with you. It was one of the true blessings of my lifetime to have walked with you through these past 2 & ½ years. FCCW has been a wonderful place to end my full-time ministry. God is good, and I am so thankful God brought us together.

Rather than give you a specific list of things accomplished this year, I want to take a different approach. I want to leave you with some observations and affirmations based on my time with you. This feels so much better than telling you what you already know!

FCCW is a dynamic and healthy community of faith. You all have vision and wisdom and truly live into the consensus model you have developed. Your leaders are exceptional, and care deeply about the church. FCCW is active and engaged in the community, and you truly are a community church. You also have a perspective that includes the wider church and community, nation and world.

FCCW is an incredibly welcoming church. You are one of the most authentic and genuine communities of faith I have experienced. You care about each other, and you know the power of prayer. You support and help people across the age and identity spectrum, including those you have just met.

FCCW is open to change and exploring new ways of doing things. You all don't do drama, a toxic component for any organization. You know the value of collaboration and partnership. You are willing to try new things, and astute enough to know when it is time to let things go.

FCCW is a community that rolls up its sleeves and gets it done. You are pragmatic and practical and have good common sense. You are good stewards of the church and God's resources. You are curious and supportive, and you have a wonderful array of diverse gifts throughout the church community. And, you have a wonderful sense of humor!

I have enjoyed working with the Leadership Council and the various ministries. I have worked most closely with Diaconate, a team of smart, compassionate and spirit-led people. I also have worked closely with the Search and Call team, a group of amazingly dedicated individuals who stayed with it and guided the process to a positive conclusion. The Zimbabwe Partnership is one of a kind and accomplishes so much. The Finance Team are superb stewards of the church's financial resources, and care deeply about the present and future of the church. The Building and Grounds Team is the

same, and clever and creative folks. Safe Church, Calling and Discernment, Personnel and Faith Formation are led by caring individuals who practice a lived faith every day. The Parish Helpers and Men's group are some of the strongest and most effective that I have seen. The Music and Arts team is creative and supportive and do an absolutely amazing job with Music Camp. Music Camp, by the way, is one of the best offerings and outreaches to children and youth that I have seen. The Hazel McBrien school and their teachers are excellent, and I have enjoyed my opportunities to interact with them.

FCCW has a small but mighty staff. Andrea Selig is one of the most professional, efficient, effective and delightful people that I have worked with. She makes anyone look good and has been a joy work alongside. Cindy is a deep thinker of wisdom and spirit, a gifted musical wonder and so faithfully serves the church. She does a great job directing the choir and has been a pleasure to work with. Our custodian Laura does a first-rate job. And though we don't pay them, Kevin as the Bell Choir Director and Buddy as our guitarist greatly enhance the musical offerings at FCCW.

Peace be with each of you as you move into the future here at FCCW. I will truly miss you all.

Throughout my time here I have been involved with poetry groups though I rarely share them outside the groups. However, it seemed fitting to leave you with a poem inspired by the 13<sup>th</sup> century Persian poet Rumi, and this loving community that welcomed me in.

***“WHERE JESUS LIVES, THE GREAT-HEARTED GATHER.  
WE ARE A DOOR THAT'S NEVER LOCKED.  
IF YOU ARE SUFFERING ANI will miss you all. Y KIND OF PAIN,  
STAY NEAR THIS DOOR. OPEN IT.***

***Jelaluddin Balkhi, aka Rumi.***

**Jesus lives here  
In the smiling faces that find you  
the moment you enter.  
The warm embraces of friends, family and folks  
who just found their way in.  
In the sacred spaces where your heart can slow;  
In acts of service and kindness, generosity and gratitude,  
Jesus lives here.**

**The Holy Spirit lives here.  
In open hearts that welcome change  
and embrace the good work of those who came before.  
In the prayers that flow out from sanctuary, song and home,  
and from the healing grace of disciples who believe in their power.  
In the vision that shines hope into the future,  
and light into the darkness.  
In the courage of those who guide into the future**

**The Holy Spirit lives here.**

**God lives here.**

**In the Agape that flows like water.**

**In the wisdom shared across centuries  
and gently passed on to those to come.**

**In the community of believers who search for every sheep.**

**In the gathered community who know their faith  
can move mountains.**

**God lives here.**

**Grace lives here.**

**Hope lives here.**

**Joy lives here.**

**Love lives here.**

**Jesus. Lives. here.**

Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood,  
Intentional Interim Minister

**Officers:  
Annual Report of the Co-Moderators  
2024-2025**

The duty of the co- Moderators is to preside at all Membership and Leadership Council meetings. We are also ex-officio members of the other ministries and hear updates from those ministries through various reports and Leadership Council gatherings. Our main objectives are to ensure that everyone in the congregation has an opportunity to have a voice and is given the space to be heard. We've worked diligently at teaching ourselves and the members to listen more attentively to what others are saying, and to seek consensus through discussion. It's quite humbling to be part of such an amazing and talented congregation. Spiritual gifts abound.

It is a concern that no one has stepped forward to fill the open positions in our structure. We are missing a Clerk (an Officer position), a Coordinator of the Ministry of Faith Formation, and a Coordinator of the Ministry of Stewardship. It's possible that those titles seem too imposing, but the duties are truly not. We named them as such *to "claim all forms of work and play in the life of the Church as ministries rather than tasks"* (excerpt from our Bylaws, Article VII). There is much help offered through interdisciplinary support through other Ministries and from our Congregational Life Administrator, Andrea Selig.

This past year, Morgan Gehring stepped away from the co-Moderator position due to her busy time constraints. We will miss her but happily welcome Judy Trepal to that position. We are looking forward to a great year at FCCW, UCC.

Margie Galabrun, Co-Moderator

**Officers:  
Annual Report of the Clerk  
2024-2025**

The annual year report is for July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025

**Number of Active Members: 105**

**Death of Members\*: 1**

Elizabeth Fogg\*

**Death of Friends of Church: 3**

Mary Ann Fountain

Maureen McCarthy

Nancy Drew

**Marriages: 0**

**Baptisms: 1**

McAuley Alie

**Confirmations: 0**

**New Members 8**

Paul Burbank

Patty Burbank

Alison Hayford

Jim Hayford

Betsy McDougal

Evan McDougal

Gary Peresada

Joan Peresada

**Moved to Inactive by Deacons: 3**

**Removed by Member Request: 1**

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrea Selig

FCCW CLA

**Officers:  
Annual Report of the Treasurer  
2024-2025**

Per the bylaws, the complete financial year report will be available in August.

## **Annual Report of Leadership Council: 2024-2025**

It's always a pleasure to report on the work of the Ministry of Leadership Council. The Leadership Council consists of the Officers of the Church and the coordinators of each of our Ministries and includes a representative of the Parish Helpers. The Leadership Council acts as the body of the church between duly called meetings of the Congregation and always acts with the entire congregation in mind.

At monthly gatherings of the Leadership Council, we review previous council minutes, accept monthly reports from the Treasurer and the Pastor, and act on items of business that arise between meetings. It's also a time when we share information between Ministries. Our meetings are normally held on the 2nd Sunday of each month in the Fellowship Hall following our worship service and a brief time of fellowship. All are welcome to attend either in person or via Zoom. If you are not currently being notified of the meetings, please contact [balchlaker@gmail.com](mailto:balchlaker@gmail.com) to have your name added to our email list.

I'm very much looking forward to discovering what the Spirit will call us to be as a church in the coming years.

Margie Galabrun, co-moderator

**Leadership Council:**  
**Annual Report of the Endowment Governance Committee**  
**2024-2025**

We have made progress over this year with the endowment fund. Even though little effort in building the fund occurred this year, we have seen growth in our investments and as a result interest gained.

George Ackerman

**Leadership Council:  
Annual Report of the FUNdraising Team  
2024-2025**

Thanks to the many, many people who do so much for our church, we had a successful fundraising year. The August yard sale brought in \$3225; followed by a Savers run in September, \$965. October saw a very nice Harvest Fair to the tune of \$4329! Souper Bowl in February set a record with 22 soups, and a total of \$1659. The Election Day Bake Sale at Town Hall raised \$550. And the Pride Day Cookie Walk was \$360! Online sales brought in another \$515. We set a budget of \$12,000 for this 2024-25 fiscal year, and with the spring Savers Run in June, we will meet that goal. Well done, church family!

Nancy Dee & Julie Kessler

**Leadership Council:  
Annual Report of the Honorary Sage  
2024-2025**

Our church is about to enter a new era after a long period of uncertainty and change. In December 2018, Rev. Mary James retired having served as our settled pastor for eleven years. In the period between then and now, we saw many different faces in the pulpit. We welcomed two interim ministers and one part-time minister. A great debt is owed the hard-working members of the Diaconate who provided continuity even at times when we had no minister at all.

This coming mid-July, we will welcome a full-time settled pastor, Rev. James Mills, who hails from Pennsylvania and has already been enthusiastically welcomed by the congregation during his visit in early May.

Looking back on this period of change and challenges, I marvel at the resilience of our congregation. It was not an easy time, what with a Pandemic to cope with as well as the lack of continuity in our religious leadership. However, on the bright side, we were extremely lucky with access to great talent in the form of two gifted interim ministers, a hardworking Leadership Council and, as mentioned above, the Diaconate.

Looking forward, I have faith in the future. In spite of our daunting challenges, attendance remained steady and even grew. There is a palpable spirit of giving and helping one another. Some significant decisions were made, like choosing a full-time ministry and an increased pastoral salary.

We now have an opportunity to blow a fresh wind through our church. Hopefully, that wind will bring new blood, because there is no escaping the fact that our membership is aging. This is a contemporary phenomenon. People of all walks of life are not drawn to the institution of CHURCH as a way of LIFE the way their grandparents were. The minds of youth and young adults alike are occupied by the vigorous pursuit of sports, the omni-present social media on the internet, and contentious worldly matters. It is a daunting task to break through this modern mindset. But our Wakefield congregation has decided to gamble on the future with all its available resources to bring the next generation into its circle of Christian love and spirituality. We offer our faith, our compassion, our goodwill and our worldly assets.

At almost 93, I remain an optimist. As your "Sage," I beg you all to remain committed to the task of bringing our beloved FCCW into the future, even as that future may not completely mirror what and how we have been in the past. Desired growth necessarily comes with change. But what will never change is the foundation of who we profess to be: disciples of Christ. Onward Christian soldiers!!!!

Respectfully submitted,  
Titia Bozuwa

**Leadership Council:  
Annual Report of the Safe Church Team (Ad Hoc Group)  
2024-2025**

Members of Safe Church for this period are: Buddy Dee, Nate Fogg, Jim Hayford, and Carol Lundgren. This group also has a group of Advisors: Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood, Building & Grounds George Ackerman, Co-moderators Margie Galabrun and Max Gehring, Tech Advisor Alan Bernier, Deacon Josephine Szirbik, Finance Liaison Nancy Dee.

Safe Church is an “ad hoc” group formed several years ago by Leadership Council to work in concert with Building and Grounds.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Lundgren

**Annual Report of Ministry of the Arts:  
Annual Report of the Visual Arts  
2024-2025**

Flowers enhance our quality of life and evoke positive emotions that provide hope and love. My goal was to showcase arrangements on the alter tables for our Sunday worship services.

For the Christmas holiday season, our sanctuary was decorated with window wreaths, garlands, bows and 24 radiant poinsettias. This celebratory display created a festive and colorful atmosphere.

For our Easter celebration, palms were waived, and 26 lovely daffodils, tulips, lilies and pansies filled the alter. Our church family purchased the plants in memory or in honor of loved ones.

Outside a variety of vibrant annuals were planted in the containers. This presentation created a welcoming greeting. Flowers are a sign of God's delight and grace.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rachel White

**Ministry of the Arts:  
Annual Report of the Musical Arts  
2024-2025**

The beauty of our Church is not only the people who attend, it's also the music and floral displays. We are lucky to have our beloved Cindy Eggleston and Rachel White handle these tasks wonderfully.

Cindy has been a guiding force for our Church's music for many years. This past year has seen an increase in the choir membership and Cindy's choice of music for the choir and her leadership is outstanding.

Rachel has handled the weekly flowers with caring and sensitivity to the changing season. The flowers for Easter and Christmas are always a treat. The outside flower boxes and barrels show her caring and use of local plants.

Truely Cindy and Rachel show us all God's beauty in sound, smell and sight. Thank you for all that you give to the Church

Respectfully Submitted,  
Donna V Ackerman  
Buddy Dee

## Annual Report of Ministry of Building and Grounds 2024-2025

This year we spent a fair amount of money on the furnace and fire safety. The four smoke alarms were replaced after they triggered three false alarms. The smoke detectors were old and it had been suggested that they be replaced anyway. As it turned out, there was a loose wire on the fire alarm pull station by the front door. Once that was found and tightened, we did not have another false fire alarm.

I became aware that the fire alarm pull stations in the church were recalled over ten years ago. The switch inside this model was found to stick, resulting in no emergency alarm being sent even after the handle was pulled. So, all the pull stations were replaced as well as the lock box outside the front door. The lockbox outside the front door holds the keys which give the emergency personnel access to the building in case of an emergency. The keys were used and replaced after the second false fire alarm. However, they could not open the box during the third alarm, and no one was at the church. Fortunately, one of our members was driving by when this occurred. She stopped just in time to open the front door; the fireman already had an axe in his hand and was just about to chop his way in. The bundle of keys that ultimately caused the box to get stuck closed, were replaced by two master keys and the new box is a little larger. This will prevent that situation from happening again.

The furnace had work done on it this year. The liner in the firebox was replaced as well as the fuel pump. A new part was also installed, called a tiger's tail. This part captures air in the fuel line before it reaches the furnace. It also allows the fuel pump to work under less pressure, resulting in longer life for the pump. The furnace shut down three times over the past winter. Once was due to the fuel pump breaking and a second time due to air in the line. The third problem has not been fixed yet. We have an automatic shut-off thermometer attached to the furnace. If the outside temperature reaches 75 degrees, the furnace shuts off. This control mechanism shut off the heat to the church during our winter months once. After that we installed a heat sensitive device to give us a warning if the temperature in the sanctuary dropped below a certain temperature. That worked great once, giving us a heads up that the furnace had stopped working. After that it gave us several false alarms, resulting in late night trips to the church that were not necessary. We still have work to do on this problem.

George Ackerman

## Annual Report of Ministry of Calling and Discernment Ministry 2024-2025

We are deeply grateful for the many ways members and friends of FCCW contribute to the vitality of our beloved congregation. So many have stepped forward to serve—as lectors and greeters, through Parish Helpers, Men’s Fellowship, choir and bell choir, and by participating in various ministries and activities.

Some commitments are short-term, like helping with Music Camp or volunteering at the yard sale. Others are longer-lasting. That’s the beauty of our ministries: you offer what you can, when you can. Every act of service strengthens our church community.

It is a joy to witness how people continue to give of themselves—and in doing so, help the church flourish.

At the same time, we recognize a few ongoing opportunities where help is especially needed:

- Calling and Discernment
- Clerk
- Historian/Archivist
- Faith Formation Coordinator
- Youth Engagement

This is an exciting and hope-filled time in the life of our church. There’s always room for new ideas, fresh energy, and adventurous vision. We’d love to hear from you!

With heartfelt thanks to all who have served this past year and to those continuing in service: *we grow stronger because of you.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Connie Littlefield

*On behalf of :*  
Margie Galabrun, Janice Brejwo, Harriet Wilson

## **Annual Report of Ministry of Christian Outreach and Wider Church 2024-2025**

We are a 5 for 5 giving church. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to donate to:

- Our Church's Wider Mission: \$8,500
- Christmas Fund: \$831
- One Great Hour of Sharing: \$1,927
- Neighbors in Need: \$826
- Strengthen the Church: \$387

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Bilodeau & Connie Littlefield

**Ministry of Christian Outreach and Wider Church:  
Annual Report of the Fellowship Cafe  
2024-2025**

Many years ago, our church voted to support Equal Exchange, a worker owned cooperative in Massachusetts that helps to establish and support small farming cooperatives in various parts of the world. We also wanted to help small farmers around the world, to do what we could to protect land from deforestation and chemical abuse, and to buy and enjoy healthy, organic products for ourselves and our families. Thus, our Fellowship Café came not being.

History should never be forgotten. The cabinet in the Fellowship Hall was built by Curt Carr, the glass doors were fashioned by Parker Vanderhoof from glass recovered from the old Parsonage, and final staining was accomplished by Jean-Michel and Margie Galabrun (only because Parker insisted that no one should ask for help without also participating). I call that a true cooperative effort. Please support it.

Prices are on each item – we operate on the honor system - simply leave money in the basket.

Fellowship Café remains an excellent cause and a wonderful outreach.

Margie Galabrun

**Ministry of Christian Outreach and Wider Church:  
Annual Report of the Shepherd Program  
2024-2025**

The Shepherd Program is a long-standing outreach program that has been operating for over 40 years. It was designed to provide rides to medical appointments for people who, due to medical reasons, are unable to drive themselves.

When a person needs a ride, they call the church office and speak with Andrea Selig, our Congregational Life Administrator. Andrea forwards the ride request to both Rachel White and Jean Miccolo who assign a driver and confirm that with the rider. Often an additional reminder and confirmation is required because some just need that little bit of additional help.

We currently have 18 active drivers. This past year those faithful 18 have driven 3,929.50 miles offering 81 rides to 14 people. These statistics speak of a community with NO public transportation, and we can meet only the smallest percentage of assistance that is needed.

It's a joy and an honor to serve this program.

Margie Galabrun

**Ministry of Christian Outreach and Wider Church:  
Annual Report of the Zimbabwe Team  
Project Kuchengetedza Zviwanikwa  
2024-2025**

- **The Humani Medical Clinic** renovation continued throughout 2024 to the present. New doors and windows, a complete painting job inside and out, and the installation of a cement ramp for those who cannot use stairs has been completed. In December 2024, PKZ installed a borehole with deep appreciation to the unexpected, generous benefactors who made this possible. A solar pump system (solar panels, inverter, etc.) is currently and plumbing is in the works!
- **Medical Outreach** continues to be a huge effort via medications, assistance with x-rays, hospital stays, medical appointments and one-on-one care. PKZ assisted multiple people with serious illnesses including leg wounds, infections, pneumonia, tuberculosis, complications with high blood pressure and surgeries.
- **Student Sponsorship** through PKZ and Friends of Orphan Trust (FOOT) are coordinated under the umbrella of PKZ. Currently 37 students are enrolled in primary, secondary, vocational and college programs. We have two Zimbabwean college students in New Hampshire and one studying in India! This program is only possible due to the unwavering support and generosity of our sponsors. School fees continue to increase due to the ever-declining Zimbabwean economy and lack of a stable monetary system.
- **The Supplemental Food Program** for the children at the Daisy Dube Children's Home continues. Monthly deliveries of a variety of sources of protein, rice, vegetables, juice, cooking oil, sweets and lunch box treats made their way to Mt. Selinda. Special thanks to the generosity of the Original Church of Wrentham, MA, and members of the First Congregational Church of Wakefield for their support for this program.
- Additionally, the **Men's Fellowship** of the First Congregational Church provided funding for the Daisy Dube children to obtain school uniforms, shoes, socks, underwear, school sweaters and track suits, umbrellas, backpacks and a variety of school supplies with their very compassionate and generous donation. They also provide support for PKZ director Vranté Mahlupeko and have made an extraordinary donation to the humanitarian shipping container, not once but twice, easing the financial burden. (God bless this group of dedicated men!)
- **Humanitarian Shipping Container**: PKZ distributed Algebra and Geometry books from the previous container to Chibwe High School and Diamond Academy. These books – in pristine condition – were donated by Spaulding High School. Clothing, shoes, tools, household supplies, school supplies, desks and medical supplies have also been distributed in many areas throughout Zimbabwe. Supplies for the current container is well underway scheduled for loading August 2025! FCCW's contributions of pain relievers and medical supplies, clothing, shoes, tools, bicycles, sewing machines, books, washable/reusable sanitary pads and more have been simply outstanding.
- **Special Distributions**: The PKZ team delivered Haakas breast pumps to women in Harare and Chipinge District. This previously unknown item became a game changer for Zimbabwean women who no longer needed to fear how their infants would take nourishment when breast feeding mothers needed to be away from home.

- 2024 was a time of drought throughout Zimbabwe. PKZ Director Vranthe Mahlupeko was able to provide three food security distributions of mealie meal and other items, impacting 142 families.
- ***Special Events:*** We held two pancake breakfasts in the past year to offset expenses for the shipping container and for funding for exams for our sponsored students. Mjo McCarthy completed another extraordinary 24-hour White Lake Endurance Run in May running 64 miles and raised at least \$2000 for the Humani Clinic endeavor. A Zimbabwean Cultural Night for the greater Wakefield community was held last August. Vranthe and Trevor Mahlupeko provided insight into Shona culture through stories, music, drumming, dancing and Zimbabwean food.

It is the compassion and generosity of each of you who believe in this work which makes all of these projects a reality. You are a blessing, and we thank you for being part of this incredible network empowering and changing lives.

In deepest appreciation,  
Connie Littlefield

*On behalf of:*

Ann Bilodeau, Chris Feddern, Donna Ackerman, Jo Szirbik, Nancy Dee, Evy Truhn, Annie Gehring,  
Susan Raban, Julie Evenson, Mjo McCarthy, Andrea Costello, Brian Shipley, Rachel White

## Annual Report of Ministry of Communications 2024-2025

The Communication Ministry is charged with overseeing an open flow of information for and about our Church and its Ministries within the congregation and the community. (Bylaws of the FCCW) Avenues of communication include:

**Steeple Views:** The Steeple Views newsletter is published monthly with most copies (approximately 150), sent by email. A small number is printed and mailed. We encourage people to sign up for emailed copies to save the costs of paper and postage. Steeple Views is available on the church website as well. Many thanks to editor, Carol Jeffery, and to the Ministry Coordinators who provide material for the newsletter each month. Thanks to CLA Andrea Selig for coordinating the printing and mailing of hard copies. If you have internet access and are not yet receiving the Steeple Views by email, please email me at [steepleviews@gmail.com](mailto:steepleviews@gmail.com) and you will be added to the email distribution list. If you have a change of email or snail mail address, please let us know.

**E-mail updates:** Although technically it's a function of the church office (not the Communications Ministry) – there is a fine line there – I'd like to acknowledge CLA Andrea's role in sending out email updates of church activities and for keeping us current with very creative "FCCW Happenings" notices every week.

**The Sound Team (aka Tech Team)** provides audio and visual support for in-person worship in the sanctuary as well as online worship. Our Sunday services can be viewed via Zoom, Facebook Live or in-person. Once broadcasted on FB Live, the videos can be found on our church FB page and can be accessed anytime. They can also be found on our YouTube Channel at [FCCW YouTube](#). Leadership Council meetings, other ministries, and congregational meetings can meet in a hybrid model in person or via Zoom utilizing the OWL (Zoom enhancement equipment). Many thanks to Nate Fogg who can be found in the "sound booth" most Sundays along with Kaylee Fogg and to the other team members Morgan Gehring, Barry Truhn, and Frank Frazier. Thanks to the behind-the-scenes help from Mjo McCarthy and Alan Bernier. Thank you all!

In the past 12 months we did a major upgrade to our audio visual "sound system" at Church. With the advice and help of a great sound engineer recommended by Pastor Larry we replaced our very old "desk" the main component of the sound system with a new one that is much easier to operate and is better suited for our needs. We also replaced some additional equipment to provide better viewing and listening experience for folks on Zoom. The other major upgrade was a new camera mounted in the back of sanctuary that can be controlled by the same person on the sound desk. We no longer need a separate camera person using the portable camera on a tripod leaning out the window from the sound booth. The new sound system has automatic feedback blockers that catch most of the feedback and has again improved our overall quality.

We still have an issue with handheld microphones not picking up prayer concerns when people do not hold them correctly. Also, we are looking for additional microphones to pick up the Choir and the Bell Choir for better sound for the folks on zoom. Lastly, thanks to several wonderful donations we are in the home stretch of installing a system that will mean the sound directly to folks who use hearing aids or have ear buds they can use. This system will also include headsets for folks without hearing aids. (Thank you, Frank Frazier, for the sound team update summary.)

**Website:** The church website is [fccwakefieldnh.org](http://fccwakefieldnh.org). It's an excellent source of information about our

church. It is kept current with events and links to worship by Carol Jeffery with technical support by Frank Frazier and Martha Jo McCarthy. You can find information about church history, by-laws, and annual reports as well as current and past Steeple Views and information about upcoming events. Donations can be made through the website as well.

**Social Media:** Our **Facebook** page

([www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC](http://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC)) is a great way to share photos and keep up with church happenings. It is accessible to our over 600 followers and to the public. We also use the **FCCW Connections** group feature for sharing and for planning among members of the group. It is a closed group and not visible to the public. If you wish to be part of the group, search FCCW Connections and ask to join. Thank you to Pastor Larry for frequently posting on social media!

The Facebook group, **Wakefield Wonder and Grace: Church on the Web** offers inspiring messages and has over 120 followers. [www.facebook.com/groups/WakefieldWonderandGrace](http://www.facebook.com/groups/WakefieldWonderandGrace). If you have a Facebook account, you can request to join the group. Thank you to Donna Ackerman, Ann Bilodeau, Connie Littlefield, and Carol Lundgren for administering the group!

Respectfully submitted, Carol Jeffery  
Communications Ministry Coordinator

## **Annual Report of Ministry the Diaconate 2024-2025**

This report covers the year from **July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025**. Diaconate members during the period were Jo Szirbik, Gail Feddern, Harriet Wilson, Ginny Schweitzer, Evy Truhn, Julie Evenson, Anne Palmariello, Ken Ballinger, and Donna Ackerman. Jo & Ginny serve as co-coordinators.

Rev Larry Brickner-Wood has served as our interim pastor during this year as the Search and Call Team has searched for and found a new settled pastor. Our blessings and thanks to the Search and Call Team of Judy Trepal, Titia Bozuwa, Joe Palmariello, Buddy Dee, and Margie Galabrun. We are very grateful for Rev Larry's guidance, leadership, and general good humor during this time! When Rev Larry was away, we were led in worship by Donna Ackerman, and Rev Pam Maden. Guest sermons were provided by Julie Evenson, Evy Truhn, Rev Gordon Rankin (Conference Minister), Connie Littlefield, and Judy Trepal. Rev James Mills begins his ministry with us in July, and we are very excited to welcome him!

The deacons continue to reach out to all our members and friends offering support, a friendly ear, and prayer. The prayer chain remains very active, via both email and text. (See separate report.)

The Diaconate administers the Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund with Rev Larry. The April 30, 2025, the balance in that fund was \$5,818.20. We received donations this year totaling \$4,616.54 (**THANK YOU EVERYONE**) and have provided \$6,401.55 in assistance so far during 2024 – 2025; these payments covered such things as gas cards, food, medical supplies, and utilities. Assistance is offered primarily to our members and friends in Wakefield and Brookfield, and to our parishioners in other communities. We are fortunate to be able to access the George A Wentworth Trust for the needs of women in Brookfield and Wakefield.

Over the past year, we have assisted during regular and special worship services and funerals/memorial services, as well as the reception of new members. We hope to receive additional new members before June 30.

Blessings to this congregation!

Harriet Wilson, Diaconate Recorder  
Ginny Schweitzer and Jo Szirbik, co-coordinators

**Ministry of the Diaconate:  
Annual Report of the Caregivers Support Group  
2024-2025**

CareGiver Self-Care Support - Year Eleven!

Sponsored by FCCW, this group has been active for eleven years and is still going strong. From a few members at the beginning (2014) we now often have 10-15 folks attend. Our meetings are on the 1st and 3rd Mondays every month in the Parish Helpers Room. The hours have been extended and are now from 9:30-11:00 a.m. A Zoom link is also available. Caregiving "takes a village". We are part of that village at least emotionally!

There are tender moments and there is joy and lighted heartedness. Meetings are free and always confidential. It is an honor to facilitate these times of sharing and growing our knowledge and experiences -- we help each other navigate health journeys for our loved ones.

Facilitator, Carol Lundgren

**Ministry of the Diaconate:  
Annual Report of the Prayer Chain  
2024-2025**

The purpose of the prayer chain is to create immediate intercessory prayer for anyone in need. We have a very active email and text process through which we share the requests/needs for prayer. If you feel a need for prayer for yourself or others, please email Harriet Wilson ([dhwilson39@gmail.com](mailto:dhwilson39@gmail.com)) and she will forward your request to the rest of the group.

All prayer requests are kept strictly confidential, and no one is put on the prayer chain without their permission. This prayer power is available to anyone and everyone – you need not be a member of this congregation.

Thanks to all our prayer chain members! Bless you for being part of this important outreach. We currently have 3 praying members on the email portion of the chain, and at least 12 on the text portion. That's a lot of prayer power!

If you would like to join the prayer chain, please contact the Coordinator, Harriet Wilson ([dhwilson39@gmail.com](mailto:dhwilson39@gmail.com)). We'd love to have you! You may join either the e-mail or text members (or both). Just let Harriet know your email address and/or cell number.

Harriet Wilson

# Ministry of Faith Formation: Annual Report of the Adult Faith Formation 2024-2025

## Annual Report for Adult Faith Formation – Tuesday, Noon Class

The 2024-2025 church year has seen us work through numerous studies, including:

Starting in the fall, we decided to pick up with our informal discussions based on a random set of devotionals (four or five per week). These devotionals were pulled from a variety of sources, packaged in a word file, and sent weekly a couple days prior to Tuesday's class. In addition, I happily included devotionals that any class participants may have stumbled on.

Come December, we took a break from our weekly devotional discussions to jump into our Advent studies. These were based on two devotionals to help prepare our hearts and minds for the joyous birth of Christ. They included:

### #1 -- The Carols of Christmas: Daily Advent Devotions Volume 2:

*"The Carols of Christmas is a heart-warming devotional inspired by some of the most beloved Christmas carols of all time. Inside, you'll enjoy a fresh glimpse of some of the same joyful and nostalgic melodies you sing every year now set to personal reflections in this 28-day devotional journey."*

The carols included "Silent Night", "Joy to the World", "O Come All Ye Faithful", and "The First Noel". We discovered intriguing stories and thought-provoking details like who wrote the carol; what was going on in their life that perhaps inspired the hymn; and how has God used this hymn throughout time.

### #2 -- UCC's StillSpeaking Advent Devotional: Mess in the Messiah.

As we typically do for Advent and Lenten studies, we started the class with the "main" study – in this case, **Carols of Christmas** devotions and at end of class discussed whatever **Mess in the Messiah** devotionals that spoke to us that week.

Our Advent study continued into the first week of January at which point we decided to pick up with the weekly set of random devotions.

This took us to Lent where we opted for a double-duty study that included:

### #1 – SALT Lift Up Your Voice: Singing Through Lent and Easter

A brief description: *" This Lenten season, why not take the Christian musical treasury as your guide, this sacred art, thousands of years old, in which big ideas and beautiful melodies come together?*

*In this devotional, each week, biblical texts and beloved songs inspire practices you can try yourself, with your family or friends, or with your congregation. As the days lengthen, the birds will sing – and so will we, strengthening our spirits, praying twice, and joining in with creation's symphony of sorrow and joy, anguish and comfort, death and new life."*

And indeed, we sang (and listened) our way through Lent using a very diverse set of hymns and songs that touched us in so many different ways.

## **#2 -- UCC's StillSpeaking Lenten Devotional: Go Deep.**

Once again, we looked to UCC's StillSpeaking Writers for their ever popular, ever meaningful Lenten Devotional. This year's was entitled – **Go Deep**.

At the end of Lent, we opted to pick up with our weekly discussions of a variety of devotions. And then for the month of June, we turned to the SALT offerings – this time focusing on **Summer Days** – a four-week study that uses the poetry of Mary Oliver to *“help us connect with [summer], savoring its delights, valuing its treasures, and reveling in what she calls summer’s “luminous sprawl of gifts.” Think of that sprawl as a sabbath for the year as a whole: not the resurrections of spring or the harvests of autumn, but the joyful, restful moments in between. Moments we all are made for.”*

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Kessler

**Ministry of Faith Formation:  
Annual Report of Youth Faith Formation  
2024-2025**

There is no report as we are in active search for a coordinator.

**Ministry of Faith Formation:  
Annual Report of Youth Group (KIWI - Kids in Wakefield Interacting)  
2024-2025**

Currently not meeting.

**Ministry of Faith Formation:  
Annual Report of Wakefield Adult Youth group (the WAY)  
2024-2025**

The Wakefield Adult Youth group (the WAY) invited and welcomed all to our faith formation study entitled “Anatomy of a Christian” and met throughout the summer and into the fall.

Morgan Gehring

**Ministry of Faith Formation:  
Annual Report of the Mary Cox Memorial and Children's Libraries  
2024-2025**

Regular contributions to SteepleViews were submitted highlighting authors and books included in our collections and they were promoted on the mobile shelving unit in Fellowship Hall. Some new books were purchased, and members of our congregation donated some as well.

The children's library has been inventoried, and the listing is being edited.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Petkunas

**Ministry of Faith Formation:  
Annual Report of Music Camp  
2024-2025**

Another successful Music Camp is in the books. A big thank you to our Church family, our great volunteers, Rev. Larry and Andrea. A shoutout to Nate Fogg who at the last minute helped to teach us the use of our sound system. The theme this year was KINDESS, it became part of our music but there were too many examples of kindness throughout the week to count. Very minor problems have been reported from registration, kids' games, arts and crafts, snack and the music lessons. The Sunday service was well attended, and the kids played their hearts out, wonderful job by all.

Music Camp had 29 kids from first grade to ninth. We had 21 volunteers that worked hard throughout the week. Our budget of \$300 with \$97 spent on new percussion instruments, snack cost was FULLY donated so there is about \$200 that could be spent for next year's Camp.

We accomplished getting God's word thru music to the kids of this area of the 29 that attended only 7 are members of our Church. Connie has been talking with some of the parents of doing things with the Camp kids through the year. This would be great! Thanks again to anyone who helped Make Music Camp a great success.

Blessings,

Donna Ackerman

Connie Littlefield

Buddy Dee

## **Annual Report of Ministry of Finance and Memorial Gifts 2024-2025**

Another active year for the Ministry of Finance has come and gone so quickly. We are fortunate none of our team have decided to move on. In many ways, things don't change much from year to year. Perhaps this report should just say "see previous annual report"! It might appear that we are a rather boring ministry but be assured we are never bored on Finance. If one task is completed, another is always around the corner

Our monthly meetings, held on ZOOM, are a necessary component of our work. It is a time to catch up as well as share an interchange of ideas about how to carry out current financial activities and what we need to do in the coming months. A Building and Grounds rep (usually Ron Kratt), Rev Larry and Ken Ballinger (Endowment) came to many if not most meetings. Other members from Search and Call, Stewardship, Personnel and Endowment attended during the year as well. We couldn't do the church's business without everyone working together.

Some of the other things we did this year besides fun monthly meetings:

1. Day-to-day financial activities carried out by our competent treasurers.
2. Updated procedures to keep up with changes and we even wrote a few new ones.
3. Monitored our short-term CD's at Profile and our investments at United Church Funds.
4. Produced colorful charts which are displayed on the Fellowship Hall Bulletin Board along with the Treasurer's Monthly Report and other financial items of interest to the church. Check them out!
5. Provided assistance, when asked, to the Leadership Council and other ministries, gaining valuable insight in the process. This includes compiling the LC Annual Proposed Budget.

The Leadership Council 2025-2026 Proposed Budget and Summary will be distributed shortly after Pledge Dedication Sunday on June 8. We urge all Church members to take a little time to review and think about the budget in preparation for the discussion that will take place at the Annual Meeting on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Your voice is welcome and needed.

A quick reminder if you have not yet submitted your 2025-26 pledge – You can send it by email to Julie at [fccwassistanttreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fccwassistanttreasurer@gmail.com), put it in the Sunday offering plate or mail it to the church to the attention of the assistant treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Bernier, Finance Clerk  
Janice Brejwo, Coordinator  
Nancy Dee, Treasurer  
Julie Kessler, Assistant Treasurer  
Harriet Wilson, Church Office Liaison

**Annual Report of Ministry of Historian/Archivist:  
2024-2025**

There is no report as we are in active search for an Archivist.

## **Annual Report of Ministry of Personnel: 2024-2025**

The Personnel Committee now comprises of:

Joe Palmariello  
Ken Ballinger  
Gloria Ballinger

Our office leader, Andrea, excels in multitasking, running all aspects of the office as well as doing so much for all of the many groups of the church. She supports our minister Larry and does it efficiently and always with a smile. We are grateful for her hard work and feel blessed to have her.

Respectfully,  
Joe Palmariello  
Personnel Coordinator

## **Annual Report of Ministry of Stewardship: 2024-2025**

This year Pastor Larry, Leadership Council, and members of FCCW worked together on all aspects of the Ministry including financial planning and delivering personal messages from the Pulpit. The coordination and devotion of so many is well recognized and appreciated!

We do pray to call a dedicated coordinator/team for this vital mission for this upcoming year as we welcome our Faith-Filled Future! As FCCW welcomes a new pastor and looks to a vibrant future, we are called to love, give, and grow together; deepening our faith, serving our community, and continuing to be a place where love and hope abides.

FCCW's Ministry of Stewardship helps to inspire giving of time, talent, and treasure; oversee and conduct the annual giving campaign; and promote and maintain an awareness of earth stewardship. Our gifts are reflected in many ways: through the many missions that we promote within our church and community and beyond our borders; by donating to the Endowment Fund; by remembering the Church in your Trust or Will; and by supporting the church financially with your annual giving pledge.

We offer thanks to those who offer their time and talents and monetary blessings throughout the year.

Christine Feddern  
On behalf of the Leadership Council

## Annual Report of The Parish Helpers 2024-2025

It was 1899 when a brilliant group of women in Wakefield decided to name their community group Parish Helpers as well as to incorporate their group. Some would say the rest is history but we're here to say that we have carried on the heritage of women's fellowship and community service tradition for 126 years.

The purpose of Parish Helpers is to offer the local area women the opportunity to cultivate the spirit of Christ in every area of human endeavor beginning with our lives and reaching out into our homes, communities and wider world to make it better in all ways God intends.

We offer areas of support and financial assistance to our FCCW church its mission locally and around the world. We hold receptions for church families who have lost family members and celebrate them. We participate in local events like Pride Day and operate a very successful Treasure Shop in Wakefield's historic first town hall during the summer months. Customers are delighted to peruse our shelves for hard-to-find items of all kinds!

We had an amazing year at the Treasure Shop. Because of the success, we were able to present the church with a \$10,000 donation towards the new minister's salary. We are truly blessed.

This year we conducted a full schedule of monthly meetings. We hold the meetings on the second Thursday of the month featuring yummy desserts, catching up on the news, conducting a brief business meeting and then enjoying a variety of guest speakers who enlighten us on many topics of interest to all.

We also run a Parish Helpers Fair each summer and invite vendors of all kinds to join us with a table for a small fee. The fairs are very successful and attract large numbers of interested folks who are also delighted with the food fare we offer from the kitchen.

Where does our hard-earned money go?!?

We offer a variety of areas of generous support and financial assistance to over 20 areas:

Choir Bells  
Floral Decorations  
Kitchen Supplies  
Annual Pledge to the FCCW General Fund  
Feddern Diaconate Discretionary Fund  
FCCW Parish Helper's Scholarship  
FCCW Music Fund  
FCCW Flower Fund  
FCCW HC Camp Fund  
FCCW Cox Memorial Library  
UCC One Great Hour of Sharing  
Zimbabwe School Sponsorship (FOOT)  
Wakefield Library

Gafney Library  
Lakes Region Humane Society  
White Horse Addiction Center  
NH Women's Fellowship  
Meals-On-Wheels  
Wakefield Food Pantry  
Veterans of the Cross  
United Campus Ministry  
Wakefield Secret Santa  
Wakefield/Acton Watershed Alliance  
FCCW Music Camp  
Emergency Fund

This year's Officers include:

President: Ginny Schweitzer

Vice President: Carol Jeffery

Secretary: Jill Mullen

Treasurer: Andrea Costello

Asst. Treasurer: Rachel White

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Donna Ackerman

Board Members: Connie Littlefield, Priscilla Frothingham, Jo Szirbik

Auditor: Janice Brejwo

*Respectfully Submitted, Ginny Schweitzer*

## Annual Report of the Search and Call Committee 2024-2025

A bit of history: Our first meeting was held in December of 2022 and we immediately recognized that we needed to answer two important questions:

1. Does the congregation prefer a full-time or a part-time minister?
2. What does the membership seek in a new minister and how does it see the future of our church?

In order to answer the first question a congregational meeting was held. The congregation decided it wanted to have a full-time, settled pastor.

To answer the second question, we hired a consulting firm with an intriguing name: Holy Cow! to assess the direction our membership wanted to take the church in. The response to the questionnaire was enthusiastic and gave our committee the needed input for creating a PROFILE that could be posted on the NH Conference's website to attract candidates.

It took a year of concentrated effort to turn the questionnaire's responses into definitive statements about who we are as a congregation, what our goals are and what we expect of a new minister. It must be said here that our interim minister, Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood, was of tremendous help.

We also needed to gather up-to-date information about Wakefield, its population size, statistics about income, education availability, etc. etc.

The response to the Profile, once it was posted on the first of January 2024, was gratifying. Eight candidates responded in the first months of that year. We read their profiles, watched their sermons online and interviewed five of them on ZOOM. We extended a call to one candidate in July. In our Profile we had stated that we would try to follow the guidelines of the NH Conference, as stated on their website. However, when that formula was applied, it did not work out for the candidate we had called. It was decided to take our PROFILE off the NH Conference website to re-evaluate how we presented the financial commitment we could make.

The Profile was returned to the NH Conference website by the first of January 2025. It brought us three new candidates. We interviewed two of them over ZOOM. One of them was Rev. James Mills.

As you all know, "REV", as he prefers to be called, answered our invitation to come to Wakefield on May 1st, 2025. Over his 5-day visit he met with the diaconate, toured Wakefield, attended the Pancake Breakfast for Zimbabwe and the Spaghetti and Meatballs Dinner hosted by the Men's Group, preached and was voted by the congregation to be our next settled pastor. Wow...things clicked, and we are most excited and feel blessed that the wait was worth it.

Since this visit REV has submitted his resignation to Wentz UCC in Pennsylvania, has secured an apartment in Rochester and is packing up and heading north to join us in mid-July.

Looking forward to our future together with REV!

Titia, Joe, Margie, Buddy, Morgan, and Judy

## **Annual Report of the Pastoral Evaluation and Review Team (PERT) 2024-2025**

FCCW is pleased to introduce the formation of the new Pastoral Evaluation Review Team aka PERT. The purpose of PERT is to assist the Pastor in being the most effective possible for our church by providing clergy evaluation and review for growth and development in ministry. PERT will strive to assist the Pastor to effectively achieve his/her/their goals in the ministry of the church and to truthfully and respectfully communicate mutual expectations to both the Pastor and the Congregation.

Members of PERT include Frank Frazier, Ginny Schweitzer and Chris Feddern.

## **Recognition of Church Leaders 2024-2025**

### **Officers:**

Interim Pastor	The Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood
Clerk	Open
Moderator	Margie Galabrun and Judy Trepal
Treasurer	Nancy Dee
Asst. Treasurer	Julie Kessler

### **Ministry Coordinators**

Buildings & Grounds	George Ackerman
Calling & Discernment	Connie Littlefield
Christian Outreach	Ann Bilodeau
Communication	Carol Jeffery
Diaconate	Jo Szirbik and Ginny Schweitzer
Faith Formation	Open
Finance	Janice Brejwo
Historian/Archivist	Open
Stewardship	Open
Personnel	Jo Palmariello
The Arts	Rachel White, Buddy Dee and Donna Ackerman

### **Parish Helpers**

#### **Sage**

Ginny Schweitzer

Titia Bozuwa

#### **Pastor Emeritus**

The Rev. George Harvey

#### **Pastor Emerita**

The Rev. Mary James