

## Holy Week Schedule

- April 2 - Maundy Thursday Service – 6 p.m.
- April 3 - Good Friday—Sanctuary will be open for prayer and reflection—12 to 3 p.m.
- April 5- Easter Sunday Worship—10 a.m.

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



# STEEPLE VIEWS

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



REVEREND DR. JAMES L. MILLS, SR., PASTOR  
REVEREND GEORGE HARVEY, PASTOR EMERITUS  
REVEREND MARY A. JAMES, PASTOR EMERITA  
APRIL 2026

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## THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Rev. Dr. James L. Mills, Sr.

Our worship and prayer at FCCW are grounded in love, the power and strength of unity, and the sustaining gift of grace. We hold fast to the conviction that God has poured out an overflowing measure of grace to help us navigate these chaotic times, and that assurance shapes how we gather, worship, and support one another. In those shared moments of prayer and song, we are reminded that the power of divine love is at work—guiding, upholding, and giving us hope even when the path ahead seems unclear.

Reflecting on grace fills us with gratitude and awe; it often arrives when resolution feels impossible and circumstances seem insurmountable. Divine grace comforts and humbles, encouraging us to notice the small, unexpected mercies around us—like a stranger paying for your coffee at Dunkin'—and to let those moments kindle a desire to pay kindness forward. Such gestures reveal our interconnectedness and inspire us to extend compassion to others and to ourselves, reinforcing the truth that grace is meant to move through us into the world.

Grace also reshapes how we respond to frustration and friction, calling us to let go of petty resentments and to choose patience, understanding, and forgiveness. When we give and serve cheerfully—without expecting reward—we free ourselves from bitterness and cultivate deeper harmony within our community. By extending grace to others and practicing self-compassion, we become instruments of peace and unity, living out the generous spirit that sustains FCCW and points toward a more compassionate, resilient world.

## Notes from Zimbabwe



Photo:: George, and his bag of goodies, with our sponsored student Valencia at Matione Primary School.

George and I are back from our mission trip to Zimbabwe and have settled back to life in Wakefield. Rainy season was very mild while we were there and the unpredictable and often very hot weather certainly didn't stop us from visiting 10 schools and seeing 21 of our 30 sponsored students.

George taught science lessons at High Achievers Academy in Chipinge where Trevor is a Form 1 student and also at Mt. Selinda High School where some of our Daisy Dube students attend. George's fun, participatory based lessons were a big hit. He was a celebrity and Trevor was delighted with his minor celebrity status just from knowing George. Molly and Karen from Minnesota were fantastic travel companions and they, with George, were affectionately referred to as the three science nerds.

The 4<sup>th</sup> cottage was just getting off the ground – delayed by rainy season and administrative bureaucracy – so we witnessed the method of pegging of the structure, the exact 90 cm deep digging of the trenches for the foundation, and how manual labor got through the remnants of the old foundation. The cottages will comprise the newly named “Daisy Dube Children's Village” and they are beautiful. The team had the opportunity to paint the parsonage at Rufumiso, a home the 2012 FCCW mission team started. It is now beautifully painted inside and out and the pastor and members at Rufumiso are thrilled. Vranté presented George with chicken feet for lunch, an honor bestowed upon an elder.

We distributed dresses, school supplies, medical supplies, bought uniforms & books, paid for exams and other expenses, and left funding for some important projects aimed at taking care of children, covering medical expenses, food security for elders and formula for infants, renovations at Mt Selinda Hospital and a chicken project at Mbire Primary which will enable the school to pay for a new roof! A trip through beautiful Chimanimani with waterfalls and gorgeous views, a

game drive in Humani with giraffe, zebra, eland, kudu, impala, warthogs and birds galore, a visit to a bird sanctuary, the extraordinary sunrises and sunsets and the evening sky were enjoyed by all.

The attendance at Blessing's grandmother's funeral was a cultural experience that was quite emotional yet ultimately very joyful and vibrant.

The people we met along the way, seeing old friends and new, the unbelievable hospitality, and the bonds of friendships created added to the depth and richness of our experience. (It could have been the card game called SWIPE and George's endless bag of lollipops, too.) Thank you to all who contributed to make this all happen. Our partnerships thrive in Zimbabwe because of you.

*Connie Littlefield*

## Anatomical Gift Donor

At sixteen years old, when I received my driver's license, I'm not sure which I was more excited about; having my license or indicating that I was an organ donor. It intrigued me to think that I might be able to share my eyes, or heart, or anything that might help someone else after I passed. Of course, at sixteen everything was working just fine. Now at sixty-nine things are beginning to have some glitches, and who knows what my body parts will be like in another twenty or so years.

A little over five years ago I started researching about being an anatomical donor. As a retired educator, I thought how cool would it be to teach even after I'm gone? My heart has always been in teaching and giving. Recently, when I shared with my primary physician that I was a donor, he said, “Thank you”. And then told me that when he was in medical school the ratio of students to cadavers was 5 to 1. Today it's 10 to 1. I understand that many may feel uncomfortable considering something like becoming a donor. It's not for everyone. But let me share what I have learned about anatomical gifting.

I carry a card from the Boston University School of Medicine and one from the Dartmouth Geisei School of Medicine. I have been accepted into both programs. There are forms online for each medical school as well as links providing answers to questions like, “How long will my body be at the school?”, and “For what reason would my body not be accepted?” Basic steps to become a donor include locating a program, registering, signing and witnessing, and receiving conformation. The Dartmouth and Boston schools are free and provide transportation of the body, cremation, and returning of cremated remains to the family. George is also wanting to apply as an anatomical donor. If you have questions or are just curious, let's talk at coffee hour.

## Shipping Container Update!

The humanitarian shipping container has arrived! It was a long, challenging scenario from start to finish but now the container misbehavior is in the rear view window and the items aboard – athletic and school supplies, medical supplies, tools, sewing and household supplies, shoes, bicycles, school furniture and more -- have been delivered to all the intended humanitarian and religious groups to disburse.

Items were received with tremendous JOY! Rev. Charles Kanda, pastor of Rufumiso UCCZ, sent two videos, [one in which he shows representatives from the various preaching points, receiving books, clothing, shoes, medical supplies and some peanut butter](#). He extends his thanks and appreciation to Rev. Mills and to the members and friends of FCCW Church for, as he notes, “what was done for them as the Rufumiso Church.”



[The second video is of a group of women singing in new choir robes](#). Sally Kratt worked with her friends of the North Conway UCC to facilitate the donation of the robes. In Zimbabwe, this is huge! Having robes – aka, a uniform – not only provides utmost respect and honor but also allows them to participate in choir competitions, a fun activity which takes place regionally among the churches. These two videos are posted on Facebook using the links in this article. Enjoy and feel the direct connection of our long time partnership.

Blessings to all,  
Connie

## Keeping the FUN in FUNdraising

Several years ago, FCCW held a Service Auction fundraiser. This was a huge success and loads of fun. But, of course, that also means a lot of work for it to be successful. That’s where you all come in—I’m talking to the members and friends of our beloved church.

I’ll bet you’re wondering, just what is a service auction, right? So here are the basics: People (that’s you) donate a service, typically something you like to do, such as baking a loaf of bread once a month for a certain length of time, or maybe weeding a garden, or how about yard work for a morning or a couple of hours, or a kayak or canoe tour of your lake, or a sunset cruise on your lake, or a lobster dinner in your back yard, or a barbeque. Are you getting any ideas? If you’re a dog lover, perhaps you could dog sit for a day or two. If you like to paint, I’ll bet someone might have a job for you! How about guitar or ukulele lessons? Obviously, I could keep going, but I think you’ve probably figured it out.

These things need to be established and publicized. Once all that is done, we will have a set time to meet in the Fellowship Hall, and then the fun begins. People will bid on their favorite items and the winning bidder will then sign a contract with the donor and set up delivery of the item won. We are hoping to have the event in June, so hopefully the outdoor activities can be completed over the summer. Or it could even be a snowmobile ride, or cross country skiing in the winter. The only limit is your imagination, the more creative, the better!

**If you decide to donate a service, please contact Nancy Dee (nancy.dee2018@gmail.com) or Julie Kessle (julielouisekessler@gmail.com) by May 1st and we’ll get you on the list! Thanks so much.**

*Nancy Dee*

## Parish Helpers

Thank you again to our member, Carol Lundgren, for the very informative presentation at our March Meeting. If you were unable to attend, you can review a printout of her talk here—[The Elephant in the Room](#).

At our next gathering, we will have a brief business meeting to vote on the budget for the coming year (details were shared at the March meeting). We will welcome Connie Littlefield and George Ackerman who recently returned from their travels to Zimbabwe. I’m sure their talk will be informative and entertaining.

You’ll be able to sign up for our annual meeting and luncheon on May 14th. Once again, we will have it at the Knotty Pine Restaurant at 12 noon.

*Carol Jeffery*

# Celebrations!

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1 Rob Nelson	15 Ginny Schweitzer
4 Karen Hagy	17 Calvin Hayford
4 Julia McCarthy	19 Jo Szirbik
10 Kristin Galabrun	24 Ann Eaton
11 Michael Crew	24 Molly James
11 Linda Turner	28 Dawson Cotreau
11 Michael Weeks	28 Madison Cotreau
12 Darlene Clements	30 Linda Messer
14 Adam Szirbik	

## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

5 Rick & Cindy Denver
6 Joe and Anne Palmariello
15 Bill & Susie Goodwin
22 Carol & Rob Lundgren
23 Dana & Julie Margolis
25 Nathan & Deb Fogg

## Starting Point

Connie Littlefield and I recently visited Starting Point in Conway, an agency that provides services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, stalking and human trafficking all free and confidential. They have offices in Conway and Ossipee serving all of Carroll County and maintain one of the 11 shelters in New Hampshire. They have eleven paid staff not including volunteers with a 24-hour emergency and support line. Their services include emergency shelter, court advocates, ongoing support with empowerment and living skills so these individuals are prepared to reenter society fully able to take care of themselves. Part of their mission is education including going to elementary schools grades 4-8, including the Paul School. A significant number of their clients are from Wakefield. They are grant funded and always in need of monetary and personal care product donations. If you are in need or know someone who is in need, the-24 hour support line is 800 336 3795 or more information at [www.startingpointnh.org](http://www.startingpointnh.org)

*Andrea Costello, Outreach Ministry*

## FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN

We believe that prayer is powerful!

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:

Maryann D; Susan D; Tom T; Sarah M; Brian T; Gerald B; Lois B; Nancy B; Cindy E; Our sister church in Zimbabwe, Rufumiso UCCZ; Pastor Ruzana and the Louisiana detainees.

**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.

## Anchored in Love and Faith: Our Journey Together

The **Stewardship Ministry** is a beautiful and fulfilling ministry and we thank you all for the love, commitment, and discipleship you demonstrate--not just in church on Sundays, but throughout the year. Stewardship is the embodiment of love and appreciation and reflects our care for God, the church, our families, our neighbors, the earth, and ourselves. While this care may at times feel joyful, obligatory, or even challenging, it remains a central expression of who we are and how we live our faith.

**Members of the 2026 Stewardship Team—Chris Feddern, Ken Ballinger, Carol Lundgren, Judy Trepal, and Rev. Dr. James Mills**—are actively preparing FCCW’s annual pledge campaign. Through thoughtful reflection on our faith and the experiences that shape us both individually and as a congregation, we hope to inspire members and friends alike to look ahead to our collective future with purpose and love.

We invite each of you to prayerfully consider how you may contribute your time, talents, and resources as we move forward together. By making these commitments, we will strive to strengthen the foundation of our church and extend Christ’s message of love and light both within this Congregation and throughout the wider community. We look forward to sharing with you messages of love, reflection and inspiration.

*Chris Feddern*

# APRIL 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> Chair Yoga 10 a.m.  Diaconate Meeting 5 p.m.	<b>2</b> <b>MAUNDY            THURSDAY</b>  End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.  <b>Maundy            Thursday            Service at 6 p.m.</b>	<b>3</b> <b>GOOD            FRIDAY</b>  Sanctuary Open for prayer <i>And reflection</i> 12–3 p.m.	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> <b>EASTER            SUNDAY</b> Worship and Communion 10 a.m.  NO Coffee Hour	<b>6</b> Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.  Choir 5:30	<b>7</b> Faith Formation 12 noon	<b>8</b> Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	<b>9</b> End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.  Outreach Meeting 12 noon  Parish Helpers Meeting 1 p.m.  BPLOA Meeting 6 p.m.	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> <b>2nd SUNDAY OF            EASTER</b>  Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Faith Formation 12 noon	<b>15</b> Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	<b>16</b> End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.  Bible Study with Rev 5:30	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> <b>3RD SUNDAY OF            EASTER</b>  Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour  Leadership Council	<b>20</b> Caregiver's Support Group 9:30–10:30 a.m.  Finance Meeting 1 p.m.  Choir 5:30	<b>21</b> Faith Formation 12 noon	<b>22</b> Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	<b>23</b> End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> <b>4TH SUNDAY OF            EASTER</b>  Worship 10 a.m.  Coffee Hour	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Faith Formation 12 noon	<b>29</b> Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	<b>30</b>		