

STEEPLE VIEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION



REV. DR. JAMES L. MILLS, SR., PASTOR

REVEREND GEORGE HARVEY, PASTOR EMERITUS

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AUGUST 2025

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The Pastor's Page

Rev. Dr. James L. Mills, Sr.

As an avid history buff, the study of history is vital for comprehending our present circumstances and envisioning our future. The future often appears daunting and unattainable, leading us to question our abilities and prospects. A well-known adage states that "it's better to be lucky than good." I'm sure we've all said this at some point in our lives.

Events of recent weeks and months in our nation have undoubtedly been tumultuous, prompting a collective reevaluation of our priorities and hopes, from devastating floods to bills passed whose purposeful intention or at the very least unintended consequences serves to help the well-connected and well-off. In these moments of uncertainty, we must pause and breathe, grounding ourselves in faith. Our hope endures, rooted firmly in Jesus despite the chaos and noise. As we navigate these challenges, we must recognize that we are moving toward a future inclusive of all, for **"the arc of the moral universe is long, but it still bends toward justice."** This notion reminds me of the legacy of Harriet Tubman, whose extraordinary courage and determination in leading the Underground Railroad serve as a powerful reminder of our capacity for progress.

Tubman is often depicted carrying a shotgun, not merely as a defense against slave catchers but as a symbol of her unwavering commitment to the freedom of those she led. Her resolute declaration that any attempt to turn back would be **"over their dead body"** encapsulates her fierce dedication to liberating others from the shackles of bondage. She refused to allow fear or complacency to hinder the march toward a better future; her leadership exemplifies the necessity of resoluteness in the face of adversity.

Today, we face contrary winds while sensing a divine movement within our spirits. The prospect of reverting to past unproductive habits, harmful social constructs, and toxic theologies is anathema to our collective goal of being one church, one people, leading with love, undergirded by justice, and committed to freedom for all people. My heart swells with optimism as I recognize many within our faith community who can envision a brighter future and are willing to roll up their sleeves and do the work to bring about what MLK called **"The Beloved Community."** Tubman understood that some would cling to the security of their chains over the promise of opportunity.

I pray God shows us (FCCW) our opportunities and grants us the courage and fortitude to seize them!

Zim News

There are a few phrases spoken in Zimbabwe that are fitting right now.... "I fall short of words..." and "I am humbled..." Or how about a phrase I have used to a few people this past week, "I am a puddle right now."

As I have opened your donations that have come unexpectedly in the mail, or by Venmo and Zelle, or via Julie's treasurer's report, I am actually more than a puddle, I am full fledged sobbing. I mean, I am a mature adult who should be used to the love, compassion and generosity of this congregation, our community and friends from afar by now, right? Yet there I am sitting at my mailbox, or in my driveway, or at the kitchen counter, opening letters from people with tears streaming reading "Hope this can help a little..." and "Sorry you had a fire. I hope you feel better soon." (From a 3 year old!) and "Glad I am in the position to give back now." (From a young adult who is making her way in the world.) Each and every donation is a testament of your caring and compassion for people most of you have never met. This is very powerful for me. And I love you all for it.

PKZ is committed to the rebuilding process. Information is being gathered on what it will take to erect the recommended four bedroom, family style cottages. (Building costs are much, much lower in Zim than in the USA.) We have raised more than \$9,000 thus far, with \$3,100.00 raised in the special Sunday collection on July 20th. Others both within the church and from afar have pledged their support when a building plan is in place.



In other news, newly graduated Samuel Kumbula is in Zimbabwe to renew his student visa and visit family and friends he has not seen in four long years before he begins his PhD program at UNH in a few weeks.

You may recall the story of how Sam was just 11 when he became the head of household for his brothers: then 8 year old Joshua who is now in South Africa and 5 year old Tanaka. *Don't you love that "Professor Sam" dressed in a suit and tie to meet Tanaka after so many years? Tanaka is now taller than Sam! He is the one to the right in his school uniform.*

Because we like to dream big, **wouldn't it be nice to have one more mission trip to Zim to do some building?** We started 20 years ago in 2005 by carrying rocks and digging the foundation for our sister church, Rufumiso. We were six women who didn't have a clue what we were doing but we could sing some Motown and show some love. We know people with skills who actually DO know what they are doing! Worth considering....

Connie Littlefield

Faith Formation

Reminder that the Faith Formation Classes are on a break for the summer. See you in September!

Happy News from Finance Team

We are very excited to share with you that the pledge numbers for the new fiscal year budget (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026) are 25% higher than last year's budget! This is great news for a lot of reasons, but especially because the additional pledges will significantly reduce the "gap" between our income and expenses. Three cheers for all of us ☐ We are developing a new comparative pledge chart to post on the Finance bulletin board in August. Keep a look out for this updated, colorful bar chart.

~ Your Finance Team

FUNdraising

I know it's early, but summer seems to be flying by! The Harvest Fair will be here before you know it. The Penny Sale has been a huge fundraiser every year and so I'm again asking for gift cards. The silver lining of COVID was discovering a Penny Sale made up entirely of gift cards! We had such a great variety last year, and I'm hoping to repeat it this year. Just be on the lookout and THANK YOU. And don't forget, retailers have budgets for just this kind of thing. Don't be afraid to ask for a donation.

The Annual Church Yard Sale is Coming!

Saturday, August 23rd

8 AM – 1 PM

Yes, our wonderful, hectic, often chaotic, much anticipated annual yard sale is right around the corner and WE NEED YOU! We have several “departments” that require your helping hand, your creative touch and definitely your no longer wanted good, clean, unique and wonderful items that need a new home!

So where would you like to lend your talents? Here are some choices:

How about the bake sale selling yummy items with coffee/tea? Picture cute little card tables in a shaded area by the fence on the nursery school side! Ann Bilodeau has some ideas!

Is it grilling hotdogs and hamburgers? We hope to have an area that offers hotdogs, hamburgers, a bag of chips and a drink as a nice package meal for our hungry shoppers! We can just smell those burgers now! This could be near or behind the fence the Men's group erected! We can create a nice little cafe!

The main sales area? You could help Jo Szirbik and others set up and price an array of eclectic items you didn't know you couldn't live without on tables that go from the parking lot across the front that formerly contained furniture? Those unable to be priced could be find there way into a “Make An Offer location!”

The Sanctuary clothing and some soft goods store? Nancy Dee needs help sorting clothing by type!

What about Julie Kessler's “Cool Things Boutique.” Julie needs really cool stuff, I mean really cool stuff to fill this very popular offering in the Parish Helpers room. What do you have in your house that would fit the definition that you no longer need or want?

Putting up the Yard Sale signs in specific locations in Town. We can tell you where! Just need a strong hammer or mallet to get it into the ground.

Setting up on Thursday and Friday, August 21 and 22nd and helping us clean up after the sale on August 23rd.

Friends, we will be accepting donations at the church Wednesday & Thursday from 9:00 am. - noon and throughout the day on Friday from 9:00 – 5:00. We are unable to accept any donations on the day of the yard sale and we are not accepting any large pieces of furniture. When in doubt about a donation, please call!

The yard sale is one of our largest fundraisers. We rely on many hands to make this a huge success! Let's make this our best year ever! I look forward to hearing from you.

Connie
603-268-5445

Titia Bozuwa's Writings

Titia and her husband Gerard (Gijs) came to Wakefield in 1957. Gijs was a medical doctor in this community from 1958 until his retirement in 1994. In her book, “Wings of Change,” Titia recounts their transition from a more structured culture in Holland to a rural New Hampshire community.

“In the Shadow of the Cathedral” tells her readers what it was like to grow up in Holland during World War II under Nazi occupation. Staying focused on the cathedral reminded her of the sacred amid the chaos of war.

“The Emperor's Guest” gives a riveting account of her husband Gerard's World War II experiences. He and his family lived in Java (also known as the Dutch East Indies) which was occupied by the Japanese. At age 17 he was interned in a men's camp for three years where he suffered beatings, illness and hunger.

These books and others she wrote will be displayed on the mobile shelving unit in Fellowship Hall.

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

Quilt Raffle

The Parish Helpers are continuing their 100+ year tradition of quilt making. This year's quilt is named “Summer on the Pond” and is a generous queen size. Tickets are available now at \$5 each or 3 for \$10. The quilt will be displayed at the Village Fair on August 9th. And the drawing will take place in November at the conclusion of the Harvest Fair.



AUGUST 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2 Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon
3 8th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Worship and Communion with Rev. Mills—10 a.m. Coffee Hour	4 Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m. Choir 5:30	5	6 Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	7 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	8	9 Treasure Shop Open 9 to 1 p.m. VILLAGE FAIR 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
10 8th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	11 Choir 5:30	12 Ukulele Club 6—7:30 p.m.	13 Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	14 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	15	16 Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon
17 9th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour'= LC Meeting	18 Caregiver's Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m. Choir 5:30	19	20 Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	21 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	22	23 YARD SALE 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon
24 10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Book signing 1:30	25 Choir 5:30	26 Ukulele Club 6—7:30 p.m.	27 Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	28 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	29	30 Treasure Shop Open 9 to noon
31 11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	Welcome, Rev! Save the date—Sunday, September 7th, following the worship service. We will celebrate our new settled Pastor, Rev with a reception across the street at Titia's. More details via email and/ or the September Steeple Views.					

Welcome Paul and Patty!



Paul and Patty Burbank have been married for 45 years. They lived in York, Maine for 37 years before moving to their retirement home in Sanbornville in 2019. They have three children (two boys and a girl) and seven grandchildren.'

Paul has worked in management positions in manufacturing for 47 years with his last position, before retirement, being in North Berwick at Hussey seating. Patty worked as an RN in several area hospitals in the recovery room, the operating room and as a RN case manager.

They enjoy family gatherings on Great East Lake, friends, traveling, and the church and associated activities as parish helpers and the men's group. Besides these activities Paul stays busy renovating their house and Patty enjoys reading, scrapbooking, and baking.

Parish Helpers!

Village Fair is coming quickly! And all Parish Helpers are asked to help in making this year's fair a big success.

We will need COOKIES—for the Cookie Walk. Please make a generous amount. They should be about 2—3 inches and be fairly sturdy and not gooey, please!

We will need PIES! BREADS! And other favorites for the Bake Sale Table (no cookies, obviously!)

We will need CANDY! For our new-this-year Candy Shoppe. It'll be a sweet-lover's dream day!

Be sure to tell all your friends about the Fair!

The Treasure Shop

The Treasure Shop is going strong! Remember—our new hours this summer are Wednesday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. We get new merchandise on a regular basis. Come and see what treasures await you!

Parish Helpers! We are scheduling Treasure Shop workers through August and September. Be sure to stop in and sign up for a few shifts to help out!

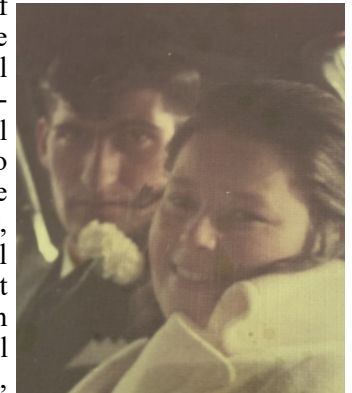
Meet Celia Randall



Dear FCCW Family, I was raised in Kingston, Mass. My family attended St. Joseph's Catholic Church, where I began singing with the all-men's choir at the ripe old age of four. I have been singing in a church choir wherever my life has taken me. I was the music director at St. Anthony's in Sanbornville until coming to FCCW

I married Bill Randall of Duxbury, Mass. and we were blessed with four beautiful daughters. Our first, Kathleen, skipped our material world to be born directly into God's Universe. Our three adult daughters are Becky, and twins Gina and Beth. All are singers. Our happiest family times were spent in the north Maine woods. Bill was a brick and stone mason, an artist in that medium. I

was a school bus driver for 35 years, now retired. For the last 10 years I drove the Brookfield route, retired, and then came back for five more years to cover a special needs van route. My girls and I lost Bill, our treasure and the balance within our family, in 2013 to the scourge that is Cancer. We are all still trying to put ourselves back together. Although I am still Catholic at my core, I am so happy to have found this church, having left behind the parts of Catholic tradition that have failed me. Here I feel surrounded by a community of people who support me and align with my belief system. Thank you all for accepting who I am, a work in progress. In Faith, Celia (Santterre) Randall



Breads and Pies and Quiches, Oh My!

The Parish Helpers' famous bake table will be back again this year, but we need your help to make it successful. We are looking for bakers to make pies of any kind, 9 inch and 5 inch. Pie pans of both sizes will be provided. Quiches of any type, will be gladly accepted. Sweet breads (i.e. banana, blueberry, etc.) regular size and small, as well as yeast breads are always a nice addition to our bake table. We know you will be creative and come up with some great baked treats. Your items can be dropped off on Friday, August 8th after 3 p.m. Thank you, in advance, for being so supportive. Happy Baking!

Jo Szirbik and Evy Truhn

Celebrations!

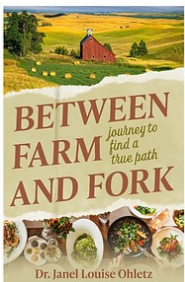
AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

2	Phillip Twombly	14	Matt Mooers
4	Chris James	15	Amanda Crew
4	Madeline Johnson	15	Shannon Johnson
5	Douglas Ball	17	Nancy Jacobson
5	Richard Messer	19	Stephanie Ballard
6	Shane Caplette	23	Matthew Boggs
8	Rebecca Ellis	28	Debbie (Caplette) Soucey
8	Julie Evenson	29	Anastasia St Pierre
9	Harriet Wilson	30	Ken Ballinger
11	Cassandra Ball		
14	Dan James		

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

20	David & Sharon Tinkham
21	George & Jo Szirbik
22	Royal & Carole Doughty
30	Jim and Allison Hayward

Book Reading and Signing—August 24



The Trustees of the Wakefield Public Library will be hosting a book reading and signing by Janel Ohletz, Ph.D. (former owner of the Wakefield Inn) on August 24 at 1:30. The reading will be done in our Sanctuary and a book signing and reception will follow at the Wakefield Public Library. Her book titled, “Between Farm and Fork: Journey to Find A True Path,” is Janel's memoir including growing up on a farm in NH, chef and owner of the Wakefield Inn, a devastating divorce, financial hardship and even a serious health crisis. It's the story of how she survived it all and found herself and her way to her current life. The book is currently available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. Visit her website: <https://www.ohletzgrow.com>

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN

We believe that prayer is powerful! During this time of transition in our church, let us pray for the Diaconate, the Officers, and Leadership Council for their thoughtful guidance in moving 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:

The Family of Arlene Leyare; Maryann and Family; Rev (Rev. James Mills); Harriet Wilson and Family; Anne and Joe P; the Landry Family; Gerald B; Lois B; Sara E; Nancy B; Cindy E; Our sister church in Zimbabwe, Rufumiso UCCZ

The 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) All prayer requests are kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with the express permission of the people involved.



We are saddened by the passing of Arlene Ruth Leyare on July 17, 2025 after a long battle with illness. Her complete obituary can be seen here: [Arlene obituary](#). Please keep Arlene's family in your prayers.



To our wonderful church family –We are overwhelmed by the outpouring of sympathy, love, support, cards, and hugs that we have received since Dick's passing, and by the attendance at both the visiting hours and the Celebration of his Life. This journey has been a difficult one and you all have provided so much care to us over the past few months. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts! With love from

Harriet, Nathan, Julie, and Rachel

2718 WAKEFIELD ROAD, WAKEFIELD, NH
(ACROSS FROM THE WAKEFIELD INN)
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
SPONSORED BY THE PARISH HELPERS
9 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

Village Fair
AND FAMOUS
COOKIE WALK



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