



**Yard
Sale!**

JOIN US SATURDAY

AUGUST 29th

8:00 AM to 1:00 PM

**Baked Goods, Quality Clothing & Accessories,
Books, Puzzles, Toys, Household Items,
Antique/Vintage Items, Select Indoor/Outdoor
Furniture, Outdoor/Camping Items & More!**

There's Something for Everyone!

The First Congregational Church

2718 Wakefield Road, Wakefield, NH

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

SEPTEMBER 2026

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Rev. Dr. James L. Mills, Sr.

Welcome to September. I am thrilled to share my thoughts with you once more. Amid a challenging journey of knee surgery and recovery, I have been reminded of the non-linear nature of progress—with its ups, downs, forward strides, and steps back. This reflection resonates deeply as I navigate my recovery journey and think about our collective life together, serving as a source of encouragement for you and me.

The truth is anybody can be a Christian and sing songs and hymns when the sun shines. Giving God "amens" doesn't take much faith when all your bills are paid. You don't have to be strong in the faith to shout Hallelujah when everything is well in your life. But when the bottom falls out in your life, when sickness comes, when trials and difficulties make their presence known, this is when our faith kicks in to remind us in no uncertain terms: *"God is a very present help in the time of trouble."*

This message is directed at those enduring tough times and trying to stay afloat amidst challenges. Despite showing up with a smile, the weight of life's burdens can be overwhelming. Despite prayers and seeking solace in faith, the road may seem long and arduous. While the immediate resolution may not be in sight, the good news remains - God is aware of our struggles and has already paved the way forward. Just as Moses led the Israelites through the parted Red Sea, God had already provided the solution before we even reached our own metaphorical Red Sea. By trusting in the divine plan and remaining steadfast in faith, we can navigate through challenges with the assurance of God's presence and guidance.

You will get through this!

"Humble yourself therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." 1st Peter 5:6-7

More Service Auction Highlights

Julie Kessler--oh my gosh! I can't wait for the next service auction (do I have more jobs in mind!) ... I got 2 dynamite ladies (Connie Mollica Littlefield and Ann Bilo-deau) giving me three hours of their time to make my windows sparkle! Best money I've ever spent!!

Andrea Costello--I made a batch of whoopie pies for the Fogg family July 4th weekend. Isn't it nice to be doing things for each other!

Annie Gehring--I enjoyed a yummy apple crumble from Joan and 2 more to go! The Gehring crew had a great afternoon with the Schweitzer's at their beach with pizza, drinks, ice cream, and boat ride. Great memories were created! Golf at Lake Forest was also a fun family time, Nico and Mateo enjoyed using the different ball and hitting it over water obstacles! More to come!

Jean Miccolo--Paul and I had a wonderful time with the Fogg family at the Portland Sea Dogs game! We got to know the whole family better and enjoyed a fantastic game — the Sea Dogs won in an amazing finish complete with fireworks!

Nancy Dee—My Book Club (which includes Connie, Ann & Annie) got to enjoy Julie's Mexican dinner, complete with 7-layer dip, chili, a taco bar, a pitcher of Margaritas! And Modelo beer. And then dessert was Joan's peach blueberry pie! It was all fantastic and our hosts didn't have to cook!

Evelyn Truhn--I had a wonderful time getting to know Deb and Bert Noyes while painting. I was in my happy place! Bert's been coming to church every Sunday since the auction.

Buddy Dee—Doug Richards hosted a "beach day" on a cool, cloudy Saturday. But he kept the fire pit going strong. Nate, Debbie & Kaylee, Annie, Nancy & I enjoyed a dinner of burgers, dogs, and salads. Don and Pat Richards were invited guests and they contributed a "tip" for the auction. Lots of great conversations around the fire. Dougie's girls, Jill & Chrissy stopped in to visit and we got to meet Charlotte, Doug's great-granddaughter. What a cut-

All That Glitters . .

The Jewelry table at the PH Village Fair did very well! Ginny is looking to replenish our stock in preparation for the Harvest Fair this fall. So, check your jewelry boxes and see what you might have that can be donated to the cause! If you have any questions, you can contact Ginny at 603-522-9593.

The Parish Helpers Presents

Traditional Matryoshka Nested Doll Making Interactive and beautifully illustrated presentation

Thursday, September 10th at 1:00pm



This beautifully illustrated interactive presentation by award-winning artist, scholar and educator, Marina Forbes, will feature the history of Matryoshka nested doll making. Using a fully illustrated show and numerous exhibits, including examples of her own work and from her extensive collection, Forbes will examine the tapestry of the rich folk tradition and symbolism of the doll's appearance and the interesting link between doll making and other traditional art forms. There will be a quick stop at the 1900 World Fair in Paris that made nested dolls and Fabergé eggs famous followed by an exciting illustrated tour of a working doll-making factory in rural Siberia, depicting the various stages in the doll making process. The presentation will conclude with a glorious show of hundreds of examples of the finest Matryoshka artwork.

***Presenter Marina Forbes** is a lecturer, historian, award-winning artist and master iconographer who has lectured extensively on traditional arts, history and the rich tapestry of traditional culture. She is licensed with the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, and is featured on the New Hampshire Humanities Council Roster as a speaker on Arts, History and Culture as well as NH Council on the Arts Rosters for Arts in Education and Traditional Arts. Each year, Marina leads her cultural tours to Eastern Europe where she regularly updates her scholarship, gathering photos and documents, visiting craft factories, GULAG sites and monasteries, and interviewing journalists, political figures and scholars on the current state of affairs. Marina has a distinctive ability to generate energy and enthusiasm in the audience and to bring the rich fabric of traditional art and folklore to life for children of all ages through memorable and thought-provoking programs.*

This program is brought to us by NH Humanities and is **free and open to the public.**

News From Zimbabwe

Daisy Dube Children's Village Cottage Update

As our good friend and builder Maxwell Makuyana has been recovering from some type of respiratory issue, Moses Taremba and his wife (name unknown to me!), an electrician and plumbing team, have been laying the electrical cables and receptacles throughout the children's home. We expect Maxwell's team to resume very soon and put in windows, doors, and ceiling tiles. This is very exciting progress being made!

Sponsorship Program - Term 3 starts September 8th

Did you know we currently have 36 sponsored students attending school in Zimbabwe? Two are in ECD, 17 are in primary school, and 12 are in high school in a total of 23 different schools. *(We also have two college students who are funded differently and a third who recently graduated!)*

Each term it is necessary to wire approx. \$4350 to cover the tuition costs, school supplies, and cover the cost of uniforms—especially with growth spurts! (Those pesky 7th grade, Form 3 and A Level national, mandatory exams cost extra.) And imagine Vranter, our PKZ Director, trying to drive to different locations, catch up with the students, headmasters, and teachers and pay the bursars at each school. Not easy! Sometimes he can get photos, other times he relies on the headmaster or a teacher to send a photo because the location is remote or the student has been dismissed before he arrives.

Someone asked me today, "What would have happened to these kids without sponsorship?" The answer: increased multi-generational poverty and marginalization, low paying, informal labor, more vulnerability to exploitation and becoming street kids, higher likelihood of sexual assault and teen pregnancy or of an underage child being given to an older man in an "early marriage," particularly in rural areas. Sponsorship changes the trajectory of these young lives and provides a sense of dignity, stability, confidence and lays a foundation for future success.

Peter's Medical Update



Some of you are aware that Peter Mughadhayi, age 14, came to the attention of PKZ due to extreme neglect and disability resulting in an inability to walk. Vranter coordinated medical intervention and a daily home health care worker to address some of Peter's needs. Another organization facilitated an assessment at a private hospital in Harare, where PKZ paid for blood work and additional medication. Peter has been discharged and PKZ will resume the home health care and follow up doctor visits as required. The future remains uncertain however, Vranter will be working on a better living environment and whatever rehabilitation can be provided to improve Peter's mobility.

God bless you for the many ways in which you provide love, care and compassion for the vulnerable in Zimbabwe!

Connie Littlefield

Adult Faith Formation

As we say goodbye to summer, let's also welcome fall and all the beauty it has to share! Let's also welcome back Faith Formation! We will be starting again the Tuesday after Labor Day - September 8.

Faith Formation classes meet regularly on Tuesdays at Noon – typically in the Parish Helpers Room. Our gatherings are hybrid - in-person at church with a Zoom option.

Our Faith Formation classes Have become informal discussions based on devotionals (four or five per week). These devotionals will be pulled from a variety of sources, packaged in a word file, and sent for your reading pleasure each week. In addition, I would be happy to include any devotional favorite you may stumble on!

For more information or if you'd like to join the class, please contact Julie Kessler (julielouisekessler@gmail.com or call 603-871-8066)

Where is God Calling Me?

Where is God calling me? It's a question worth asking. For me, the answer came somewhat unexpectedly: I believe I am called to be a helper. It may not sound lofty, but it fits. If you know me, you may be nodding in agreement—or perhaps rolling your eyes!

I believe we are a church full of helpers—and it shows. Look around: our arms are open in welcome. Here, everyone can serve in a way that feels meaningful, whether coordinating a ministry, joining one, or simply listening for a need. It takes care, coordination, organization, and compassion to truly “be church.”

It feels like family because it is our church family. We are truly blessed. Color me grateful!

Carol Lundgren

Parish Helpers

Thank you, dear Parish Helpers for all the effort you put into a successful Village Fair in August. This long-standing tradition carries on!

September 10th at 1 p.m. we will have a special program made possible for us by a grant from New Hampshire Humanities. See the write up elsewhere in this issue for details. The program is open to the public and you are encouraged to invite your friends!

Remember that the Treasure Shop is still open in September and sign up to help out!

Carol Jeffery

The Ministry of the Arts



Seated: Cindy Eggleston, Beverly Woods, Standing: Buddy Dee, Guitarist, Rachel White, Donna Ackerman and Kevin Connell, Bell Choir Director

The Arts and Music Ministry is grateful to the members of the congregation for their support. Our Church always looks beautiful thanks to dedication of Rachel White. Her seasonal changes are a gift as our Church year unfolds. Rachel's artistic ability inside and outside adds beauty and meaning to our worship and fellowship.

In the year since Rev has joined us, more music and glory to God is celebrated than ever before. This year we celebrated Cindy Eggleston's forty-year anniversary as organist of our church. We dedicated the Choir loft in her honor for her countless hours of preparation for church services, commitment to the Choir, and assisting with Bell Choir. The children of Wakefield know her through SCAMP and her years of teaching. Thank you, Cindy, for your willingness to share your gifts. We welcomed a new organist, Beverly Woods, to share the workload and to give Cindy a well-deserved break from time to time. Beverly is truly a musical artist who plays many instruments and has blessed us with special music. Donna and I feel blessed to be able to lead this ministry for the joy that the Arts, Flowers and Music brings to our beloved Church.

Buddy Dee

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard

During September, we'll collect food for the Wakefield Food Pantry. They especially need shelf-stable milk, protein bars, snack bars, cereal, and cat and dog food—pets need to be fed, too!

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Working Together To Save The Monarch*

"According to the most recent monarch [Species Status Assessment](#), by 2080 the probability of extinction for eastern monarchs ranges from 56 to 74% and the probability of extinction for western monarchs is greater than 95%. Threats to the species include the loss and degradation of breeding, migratory and overwintering habitat, exposure to insecticides and the effects of climate change.



As the premiere conservation agency in the United States, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has the responsibility to ensure that the monarch migration phenomenon continues. It's going to take everyone – from government agencies to individuals to ensure a future filled with monarchs. You can do your part for monarchs in your backyard, in your back forty and along every back road.

We're "all in" on monarch conservation. And we can't do it alone. We're focused on increasing monarch habitat on the lands we manage and engaging with all partners on monarch conservation, including Tribes, state and federal agencies and conservation groups.

Monarch butterflies are known for their impressive long-distance migration and large clusters they form while overwintering in Mexico and coastal California. Once abundant, monarch butterfly populations have been steadily declining since the mid-1990s due to several threats. At the above website, you can find information about how you can help monarchs, contribute to their habitat and find resources and assistance to help guide your actions."

So many environmental problems we face today seem incredibly daunting, but we have to start somewhere! In that effort, I'm dedicating a portion of my side yard to support the monarch butterflies and am requesting milkweed seed pods. If you have any milkweed plants with pods on your property or see any in public areas that can be collected safely (and legally!), I'd appreciate the help! Keeping them in a paper bag in a dry area will ensure their viability. Ripe seed pods (soft and starting to brown) can be left on the landing heading up to the church office on the table. Thank you in advance for helping me to hopefully revive the monarch population in our neighborhood!



Andrea Selig/FCCW CLA

**Excerpt from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website: <https://www.fws.gov/our-work/pollinators/save-monarch>*

Outreach Ministry

The Outreach Committee received a disheartening letter from Arezoo Mostafavi, who has been detained at Richwood Correctional Center for the past 20 months. Arezoo's husband, Seyedamin Tabatabaei, is being detained in Oklahoma.

Arezoo writes, "For 20 months we have been in prison/detention. During this time, our husbands have made many efforts, but it has been ineffective. It has been a long time since we have been able to see our husbands even via video call, which is one of the biggest hardships here. Our last effort is to correspond with the senators of our husbands' state to transfer us to where our husbands are, because mentally we desperately need our husbands. Nowhere in the world are couples separated like this. Out of fear for our lives, we left our country and sought refuge here, but right now we are in the worst psychological state.

If we were in our own country, dying would be much better than the gradual death in these immigration prisons. We haven't committed any crime; we just sought refuge here. No one can even for a moment imagine how, being far from our husbands and our families, we have endured 20 months. I have developed high blood pressure and take nerve medication. My friend (Mahsa) has a specific autoimmune disease (PLC) and severe skin allergies, because the living conditions here, along with 125 people, are not suitable at all. My husband (Seyedamin) has developed a thyroid condition and also has high blood pressure. Our living conditions here have become harder since the day Pastor Ruzana left here. All of our friends have left here and we are left alone. My country, Iran, is in a very bad situation, and for a long time we have had no news from our families because it is not possible to contact them and we don't have internet.

At the bottom of the letter, I am adding the names of friends who live in similar conditions with us, along with their husbands' names, because I am sure there are people around you who are interested in supporting refugees like us, but are unaware of our situation. Thank you for your support and affection." Arezoo Mostafavi

Beth Fox assisted Arezoo by drafting a letter to the senator in OK. That senator indicated they only respond to constituents of their state.

This feels a bit hopeless under the current government policy. I am including the names and addresses given to us so that those who are moved to write may do so. Please pray for a resolution to this situation!

Connie Littlefield

Arezoo Mostafavi
A - 221391268
180 Pine Bayou Circle
Monroe, LA 71202

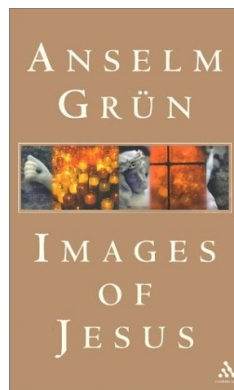
Seyedamin Tabatabaei (Arezoo's husband)
A-221391269
Diamondback Correctional Facility
1000 E Diamondback Road
NA
Watonga, OK 73772

Mahsa Dehzad Hamedani (The friend with the autoimmune disease)
A - 221388158
Richwood Correctional Center
180 Pine Bayou Circle
Monroe, LA 71202

Pouria Nazari (Mahsa's husband)
A-221388136
Northwest Ice Processing Center
1623 E J Street , Suite 2
NA
Tacoma, WA 98421

Mina Pourgholi
A-221394679
Richwood Correctional Center
180 Pine Bayou Circle
Monroe, LA 71202

Library Hi-Light



"Images of Jesus" (B-J)
by Anselm Grün

This is an entirely fresh and original book about Jesus, the Jesus of devotion, the Jesus within. Here are 50 images of Jesus, each a chapter of the book. There is a need to get away from clichés and see what Jesus really means for people today. After a brief account of Jesus and his times, the author introduces the book and how to read it. Some of the pictures of Jesus are surprising--Jesus the drop out, the vagabond, the one who refuses power, the family therapist and the exorcist. Grün has a rare gift of simple communication, of bringing Jesus alive to modern men and women. The style is simple and direct and psychologically in tune with our times.
Source: www.goodreads.com

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

Celebrations!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Christine Feddern	17 Cyndy Dow
8 Susan Girardin	18 Sarah Duplinsky
10 Rachel White	18 Margie Galabrun
11 Mark Evenson	19 Eric Perkins
11 Ken Jeffery	19 Sharon Theiling
12 Priscilla Frothingham	24 Connor Nelson
14 David Schweitzer	25 Joe Brejwo
16 Russell Baldwin	28 Edie Garland
16 MacKenzie Robinson	30 Janice Brejwo

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

21 Scott & Kathy Frothingham

Sunday School Returns!

Some of our children met with Rev on May 13th. The gathering was entitled "Pizza and Uno with Rev". MollyRose, Calvin, Emmett, Jim Hayford and Jo Szirbik (deacon rep), met with Rev. Fun was had by ALL! We found out how competitive Rev really was! From this meeting, it was determined that the children wanted Sunday School to return. They decided on Sunday School being held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, beginning on Sunday, September 27th. Whenever there is a 5th Sunday in a month, Rev will involve the children in the service, possibly calling it "Fifth Sunday Shenanigans". Sunday School will be open to children ages 8-12. Please call the office at 603-522-3189 to register your child, or contact me, Jo Szirbik, by email joszibik@gmail.com

If you would like to volunteer to teach, please call the office or contact me as well. Let's welcome our children back. They have been missed!

Jo Szirbik, Deacon Rep.

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:

Rev; Nancy P's brother and sister in law, Paul and Carol; Pat A; Celia R; Priscilla F; the Galabrun; Jan S; John S; 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) All prayer requests are kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with the express permission of the people involved.

Caring for God's Creation: A Styrofoam-Free Church

As people of faith, we are called to be good stewards of God's creation. In that spirit, our church takes a simple but meaningful step: **we do not use Styrofoam products at church or at church-sponsored events.** Styrofoam is difficult to recycle and can remain in the environment for many years. By choosing reusable, compostable, or recyclable alternatives, we can reduce waste and demonstrate our commitment to caring for the world God has entrusted to us.

We ask everyone to help by avoiding Styrofoam cups, plates, bowls, takeout containers, and other Styrofoam products when participating in church activities.

This is a small change that can make a big difference. Thank you for your understanding, cooperation, and commitment to caring for God's creation.

Together, let us put our faith into action—one simple choice at a time.

Chat GPT

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	3 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	4	5 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon
6 Sunday Worship And Communion 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	7 Caregivers Support Group 9:30—10:30 Choir 5:30	8 Adult Faith Formation 12 noon. Ukulele Club—6 p.m.	9 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	10 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	11	12 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon
13 Sunday Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour	14 Choir 5:30	15 Adult Faith Formation 12 noon.	16 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	17 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m. Parish Helpers 1 p.m.	18	19 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon
20 Sunday Worship 10 a.m. Coffee Hour Leadership Meeting	21 Caregivers Support Group 9:30—10:30 Choir 5:30	22 Adult Faith Formation 12 noon. Ukulele Club—6 p.m.	23 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	24 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	25	26 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon
27 Sunday Worship 10 a.m. Sunday School Begins! Coffee Hour	28 Choir 5:30	29 Adult Faith Formation 12 noon.	30 Treasure Shop 9 to Noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.			