



STEEPLE VIEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE . . .

LET THE RESURRECTION BE

Clergy people are often asked if they believe personally in the bodily Resurrection of Jesus. Most clergy have times of wrestling mightily with such concepts, and times of doubt and struggle, just as lay folk do. And this is a tough one. How could this have happened—this Resurrection?

One great thing about answering such questions is that there comes a time when one realizes that whatever happened, happened—and whatever any of us might think about it does not and cannot change the facts on the ground. God is who God is (see Exodus 3: 14a) and an individual's personal thoughts and opinions will not change God's transcendent, loving, steadfast nature. It is clear that when we do not and cannot allow ourselves to believe, we deny ourselves some wonderfully transcendent, loving, and steadfast positive consequences of belief. And it is utterly certain that something extraordinary happened after Jesus' crucifixion. The texts are very compelling, to say the least. Who would risk the absurdity of telling such a tale?

What would happen if we all dared to let our belief fly, uncaged, wild and free? What would it mean for our lives to believe that things we find to be impossible are indeed possible with / for God? What do we risk to let ourselves truly rest in the promises of God, and to taste the joy and grace that can come from such an exuberant "yes?"

May every fresh green blade of grass, every colorful crocus blossom breaking through the cold hard earth, every scent of warmer spring-scented air riding on a colder current, lead us to dare to believe that the God who seeks to liberate us from our greatest limitations and liabilities as human beings really did accomplish the Resurrection, to show us for all time that sin, death, and destruction never have the last word. Let us try out the Resurrection belief that we are called to rise above our tendencies toward the despair of believing that we can never live in peace, that poverty and misery must always be part of our world, and that we cannot protect our planet. Resurrection belief embraces the notion that those things we regard as the darkest certainties are not certainties at all—because with trust in God's vision and call to us to build a just and peaceful world, and with God's equipping grace, we can break through dark certainties into life-giving new scenarios.

Do we believe in the Resurrection of Jesus? Let us! Do we struggle with this doctrine? Of course—a mature faith always struggles. Can we give into believing it anyhow, without understanding it fully? Oh, yes, let's! Let us set a wild faith free, and see what God can do with us!

Blessings and peace,
Mary

*God said to Moses, "I am who I am."
Exodus 3: 14a*

SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION AT PTS

Rev. Mary James, Margie Galabrun and Jan Fairchild presented “*Progress Report: Second Year of Unleashing Spiritual Gifts with New Structure*” at this year’s Prepared to Serve conference. We provided a review of the factors that prompted our church to explore a new way of “doing church organization”; a comparison of our two Ministry Fairs; and the fruits and challenges of the new structure. The 18 enthusiastic attendees participated in an excellent conversation about Mission, Vision and the Identification of Spiritual Gifts as the foundation and ongoing standard for church organization.

The report highlighted the critical importance of communication. We must be constantly vigilant to ongoing education and information about how our new structure works. We have many excellent communication tools, including our church website and Facebook groups as well as Steeple Views, Sunday bulletins and email. Personal conversations are invaluable for clarifying information and inviting people to participate in the Ministries of the Church. Several attendees expressed appreciation for the presentation, asked if we could establish an email group for more frequent sharing of information, and encouraged us to return next year for another report.

- Jan Fairchild

SHOPPER SHUTTLE TO ROCHESTER

Since April 2011 COAST has operated the North Bus, a volunteer-driven minibus that brings residents of Wakefield, Middleton, Milton, Farmington, New Durham, and Brookfield to Rochester for shopping and social services. The North Bus is open to the public, with priority given to the elderly and disabled. Riders are picked up at their homes and brought to a predetermined set of destinations. Generally, the North Bus passengers visit Walmart, Market Basket, and occasionally the Lilac Mall or the Rochester Community Center.

To register as a North Bus rider, just call 1-855-736-4287, Monday – Friday, 9am – 3pm. The North Bus is wheelchair accessible and will pick you at your home. The fare

For further information about what you read in this newsletter, please email the editor at steepleviews@gmail.com or call the church office. We’ll be happy to help!



www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofWakefieldUCC

is \$2.50 each direction. Riders can pay when they board the bus or buy a discounted punch pass.

COAST is also recruiting additional volunteers to help keep the North Bus running. The bus is driven by volunteers who drive 1 -3 shifts each month. No CDL is required, but COAST will provide some training on driving the 12-passenger minibus. The service is offered Tuesday – Friday and drivers start at the Milton DOT yard at around 8:00 a.m. and finish in the early afternoon.

If you are interested in being a volunteer driver, please call Jeff Donald at COAST at (603) 743-5777 ext. 120 or

THE POWER OF CHANGE

The Power of Change jug is always ready to receive purse or pocket change. Jug drop your coins into the jug whenever you pass through the narthex. Thank you for participating in this all-congregation opportunity to educate young Liberty Shanguro in Zimbabwe.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Operating Budget (Non-restricted): July 1, 2012 – January 31, 2013

Income:	\$ 84,968.05
Expenditures:	<u>\$ 79,040.67</u>
Net Income (Loss)	<u>\$ 5,927.38</u>

Restricted Funds balance as of January 31, 2013: \$1,878.89

At the end of January, as you can see above, our income over expense for the year was nearly \$6,000. This is hopeful as we head towards March – the month that always seems to be the toughest for the church from a financial perspective.

Shorty, you will be receiving the Leadership Council Proposed budget for our next fiscal year. It will appear a little different than in previous years as we continue to adapt to the new structure. Please read and consider both the narrative and numeric versions. Pam Frazier, Harriet Wilson, Carol Lundgren and I look forward to answering questions and addressing concerns from church members. If we do not know the answer, we will find it or connect you with the person who can assist you. Just as with everything involved with the running of the church, if you do not speak up, nobody will know of your concerns. Look forward to hearing from you.

Janice Brejwo, Treasurer
jbrejwo@roadrunner.com

SABBATICAL, WHAT IS IT?

Sabbatical (from Latin *sabbaticus*, from Greek *sabbatikos*, from Hebrew *shabbat*, i.e., Sabbath, literally a "ceasing") is a rest from work, or a hiatus, often lasting from two months to a year. Sabbatical is connected with the last day of Creation when God rested. (Genesis 2:3) God both models and commands Sabbath rest for his people. "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8-11)

Jesus affirmed the importance of rest saying, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27-28) The Biblical example of Jesus' own frequent withdrawal to a quiet place to meditate, pray and be renewed is a model. In His ministry, the constant demands of people led Jesus to step away on a regular basis (wheatridge.org).

A Sabbatical is NOT a vacation. Normally during a Sabbatical a person engages in research, rest, study and / or travel. Our own Reverend Mary will be taking a Sabbatical this coming August through October. During her time of absence we will take pleasure in having Reverend Albert Mhururu (pronounced ma-ru-ru with "long" u's) from Zimbabwe as our Minister. Reverend Mhururu is excited about teaching, preaching, and learning during his stay. He and Reverend Mary will be conducting the church service together on the first Sunday before Mary's Sabbatical and also on the last Sunday following her return. This will be a wonderful representation of the Passing of the Pulpit so to speak.

The Diaconate is very much aware of how this kind of change within our church causes some people to get a little anxious. No worries. We are a strong, spiritual congregation that consists of individuals with many talents. And with Reverend Mhururu assisting us we will be just fine. But before we get too wrapped up in our own fears concerning the time away from our beloved Reverend Mary, let's look at it through the eyes of love. Mary will have a wonderful opportunity to rejuvenate herself physically, mentally and spiritually. If you think she is dynamic now (and I do) then wait until she returns following her Sabbatical. It is like being recharged. Mary has planned a detailed schedule of her Sabbatical that she will present to the congregation by the end of April. More information concerning Mary's time away and Reverend Mhururu's time with us will follow in future venues. Until then let's keep all of this in our prayers and relish the joy in providing what is recommended by the UCC guidelines, as well as our contractual obligations, this time of "ceasing" or Sabbatical in which Mary richly deserves.

Your Sister in Christ,
Donna V Ackerman Ed.D.
Deacon

SERMONS ONLINE

Inclement weather has caused worship service cancellations recently. If you are missing your weekly dose of inspiration from Rev. Mary's sermon, you can find some online at the church website. Go to fccwakefieldnh.org and click on the Sermons page. You can also find the Steeple Views right there whenever you want to access it, as well as information on upcoming events.

GUILT FREE CHOCOLATE

Here's another reason why chocolate is good. Equal Exchange has improved the foil wrap surrounding their delicious chocolate bars with a more environmentally friendly wrap made of compostable tree pulp. If you haven't tried one of these yummy treats, you may not know what you're missing. Here's what Equal Exchange says about their chocolate:

Our Fair Trade and Organic chocolate bars are a delicious treat that support small-scale farmers and their families. The bars combine famous Swiss standards in chocolate making with cocoa from the farmer co-operatives CONACADO, in the Dominican Republic, COCABO, in Panama, CACVRA, in Peru, and Fortaleza del Valle co-operative in Ecuador; fairly traded organic sugar from co-operatives in Paraguay; and fairly traded vanilla from Madagascar. The bars are made from pure ingredients - you'll taste the difference!



AND FOR ALL OF YOU K-CUP USERS

We get it. It's so easy to just fill the travel mug and hit the road. But in a recent conversation with Equal Exchange, I learned that there are two major reasons why they are not offering K-Cups. First, they continue to maintain that it is more environmentally friendly to use less packaging. Second, there is a rather costly patent royalty which would have to be paid, which would lessen the profit margin available for the small farmers.

So, go ahead and use your K-Cups when it's convenient, but remember to stock a bag of our wonderful organic, fair trade coffee for those times when you're going to brew a pot.

Margie Galabrun

Celebrations!

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 John Shaffer	15 Gemma Golden
3 Linda Currin	17 Jean-Michel Galabrun
3 Ken Ellis	17 Jan Stanley
4 Charlie Bowen	18 Kayla Leyare
5 Deb Smiley	19 Vivian Chick
6 Angela Brown	20 Leona Vittum
7 Peggy Leighton	21 Laura Jacobson
8 Nathan Fogg	24 Michelle Garland
8 Marlena Livingston	29 Elizabeth MacRury
9 Richard Peckham	29 Nathan Wilson
11 Andrew Hughes	31 Katy Hagy
14 Penny Cotreau	

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

4 Stephen & Lauree Royle
25 Warren & Marjorie Berg

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Connie B.	George B.
Paul T.	Art W.
Dot R.	Cathy K.
Jo W.	Mackenzie M.
Julia W.	Vivian C.
Tom and Barbara T.	

Our global neighbors in places where there is great strife.
Our servicemen and women
Our friends in Rufumiso, Zimbabwe
Residents of the Nursing Homes and Retirement
Communities in our area

LOOKING AHEAD TO APRIL

1st: Mission 4/ 1 Earth begins
1st—7th: Pastor's Study Leave
7th: Deadline for Wholehearted Giving Commitment for annual Church budget
13th: Structure Check-In: Potluck open to all at the Ackerman's at noon
14th: Communion Sunday (Rev. Mary away on the 7th)
14th: Chili Cook-Off
21st: Spiritual Life and Faith Formation Team

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

We will gather on Maundy Thursday (March 28th) at 7 p.m. for a Service of Tenebrae, a powerful and moving service of prayer, song, Holy Communion, and gradually extinguishing lights as we make the journey of Jesus' final Passover week with him. This service is most suitable for children 12 years of age and up. We hope many will be able to join us for this time of worship; some say that this is their favorite service of the church year.

Our ecumenical clergy group will lead worship together on Good Friday (March 29th) at noon at the Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist. We will share meditations on the seven last words of Jesus. Please plan to attend this special time of ecumenical worship---something new we are doing together with our sister churches this year.


FORMER PRESIDENT OF UCC ZIMBABWE TO VISIT

The Rochester First Congregational Church will host a visit with Reverend Matuvhunye, former president of the UCC churches in Zimbabwe. Reverend Matuvhunye has just completed eight years of service as president of the UCC in Zimbabwe and has been honored by Global Ministries with a three-month sabbatical in the US.

We will welcome him **Wednesday March 26** for a light supper beginning at 6:30 p.m. followed by a time of sharing and questions. This is a good opportunity for the Carroll-Strafford churches to find out more about our partnership with the UCCZimbabwe churches, especially those who have sister-churches. For more information and reservation, please call First Church in Rochester at 332-1121 or email firstucc@myfairpoint.net. Please be prepared to make a generous gift to our Ukama/Partnership. We look forward to spending time in fellowship with you.

Ellen Lankhorst

MARCH 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER	2
3 Worship and Holy Communion Church School 10 am Budget Discussion After Worship	4 Choir 6 p.m.	5 Bible Study 12 noon Fundraising Brainstorming Session 6 p.m.	6 Fundraising Brainstorming Session—10 a.m. Diaconate Meeting 4:30	7 Scrabble 10 a.m.. Weight Watchers—5:30 String Band Beg.—6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m	8	9
10 Worship and Church School— 10 a.m. Coffee Hour 11 a.m.	11 Choir 6 p.m.	12 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer 4 p.m.	13	14 Parish Helpers 1 p.m. Calling and Discernment 4 p.m. Weight Watchers— 5:30 p.m. String Band Beg.—6 Mixed —7 p.m.	15	16
17 Worship and Church School 10 a.m. Leadership Council Meets After Church	18 Choir 6 p.m.	19 Scrabble 10 a.m. Bible Study 12 noon	20 Monthly Clergy Luncheon PPP—12 noon Ready to Learn Gathering 4—5:30	21 Weight Watchers—5:30 String Band Beg.—6 p.m. Mixed—7 p.m.	22	23
24 PALM SUNDAY Worship and Church School— 10 a.m. Coffee Hour 11 a.m.	25 Choir 6 p.m.	26 Bible Study 12 noon Centering Prayer 4 p.m.	27	28 MAUNDY THURSDAY Prayers Shawl 10 a.m. Weight Watchers— 5:30 p.m. Service of Tenebrae 7 p.m.	29 GOOD FRIDAY Ecumenical Service Noon @ St. John the Baptist	30 HOLY SATURDAY
31 EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP 10 a.m.						

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Whole-hearted Giving Stewardship Drive

March 3- April 7 -

What's in a name? For the last few years we have used "Intentional Giving" to describe our Stewardship program. It's a good name – to be intentional and thought-filled in making an important decision like this. How is "Wholehearted Giving" different? Perhaps it isn't so different, but it calls us to examine our hearts, not just our minds, when pledging support to the good works God is doing through the people of this Church. So, be intentional, but make sure your "whole heart" is in the process of discerning your pledge for the coming year. We will dedicate pledges on April 7th. We really do count on each other to carry out God's work and that means time, talent and yes, your annual pledge.

Fundraising ... A Conversation - Tuesday, March 5 at 6 p.m. and Wednesday, March 6 at 10 a.m.

It's time to make a plan – how will First Congregational Church create meaningful fund raising opportunities for the next year, while sharing hospitality and God's love in the community? Please plan to come to either the evening session or morning session to explore this important topic in the life of our church. Hope to see you and all ideas welcome.

UCC Mission 4/1 Earth FCCW, Are you ready?

For 50 days, from April 1 to May 19 the United Church of Christ will engage in this mission to benefit planet earth environmentally, locally and globally. The goal is ambitious, but doable when UCC churches each take part. It means: 1 MILLION HOURS of engaged earth care, 100,000 TREES planted locally and globally and 100,000 LETTERS of environmental advocacy. To learn more, visit <http://www.ucc.org/earth/>. Be thinking of ways YOU can make a difference! If you have specific ideas that one of our Ministry Teams can consider, please call a Ministry Coordinator.

Carol Lundgren

SAVE THE DATE

Gear up for Vacation Bible School July 29 through August 2, 2013. Corral your friends and head on over for a good old fashioned Western Round-Up!

LENTEN PROGRAM FOR PARISH HELPERS

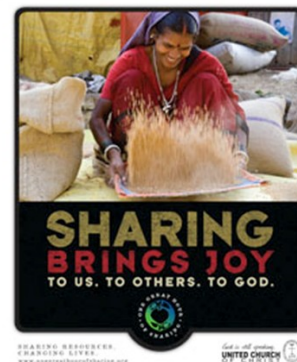
The Parish Helpers will meet again on March 14 at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Rev. Mary will give a Lenten Program. Remember that all women are welcome to attend the Parish Helpers. Come along and bring a friend!

One Great Hour of Sharing

Last year One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) provided services for thousands of people around the world including the United States. Here are some examples of how your contribution to this ministry changed lives:

- Food production programs assisted many countries where famine is a serious problem
- Training was available through YMCA and YWCA programs helping young men and women to become community leaders
- Women found their voice through empowerment programs which gave them skills to improve their economic situations
- Families and communities hit by natural disasters like Hurricane Sandy, flooding in North Dakota, tornadoes in Missouri and North Carolina received help to rebuild lives and communities

Through OGHS the needs of 138 countries were addressed in 2012. The theme for 2013: *Sharing Brings Joy* is the final year of a three year series. In 2 Corinthians 9: 6-15 Paul's letter reminds us of the importance of being generous and helping to supply the needs of others. When we give without regard for one's race, religion, or nationality God and the church are credited with each act of service. We will be collecting during church services on March 10, 2013. Look for the envelopes available in the bulletins for your opportunity to help others in need.



Donna Ackerman

LENTEN BOOK STUDY SESSIONS

Please join us to discuss *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brenne Brown, a wonderful book with much wise and practical insight into what the author calls "Wholehearted Living." Dr. Brown studies human vulnerability and human connection, and the relationship between the two. Her writing is very engaging, down-to-earth, poignant, and often humorous. We will meet twice to discuss the book: Sunday morning March 3 and March 10 at 8:45, ending in time for our choir members to get to choir practice. The book is available in local bookstores and at amazon.com. Mary will lead the discussion--let's learn and share together!

FOOT SPONSORSHIPS

Thank you, wonderful FOOT sponsors for making such a profound difference in the life of 26 of our 29 sponsored children. It isn't easy to step up and provide a gift toward sponsorship when there are so many demands on limited charitable giving dollars. Even with the amazing generosity of this loving congregation -- and friends outside this congregation -- I am unable to crunch the numbers enough to cover three of our children. One of them is Nyasha Gwaranda, who is in Grade 4 at Chinaa Primary School. Isn't this picture of her with the Primary School headmaster adorable? She gave us a great big smile, a big deal for this shy little girl. Ann, Maggie and I would learn during this meeting that just two weeks prior her chronically ill mother had died. Nyasha is being cared for by her big sister, Tendai, who is in grade 10 at Chinaa High School and is sponsored through FOOT. Reason Muyambo is a grade 5 student at Dzika Elementary. He, too, has a big smile and is a handsome boy who works hard and has a good attitude despite the fact that he has lost both of his parents.

Previous sponsors for Reason, Nyasha, and another FOOT child, Naume, are unable to renew their sponsor-

ship at this time. I am putting the word out about these three lovely children because I believe in the work of The Spirit. Perhaps someone in our congregation knows of someone who might like to become a sponsor or someone who may be interested in making a one time gift to assist in our quest to provide school fees, a uniform, and food for these special children.

Mashuma (thank you) and Mwari aukukomborei (God bless you!)

Connie Littlefield



Reason



Nyasha

EASTER FLOWERS

Easter will be upon us soon and once again we will be decorating our sanctuary with flowers, including tulips, daffodils and lilies. All plants can be purchased in memory of or in honor of loved ones. They will be yours to take home after Easter service and planted in your gardens as a lasting remembrance.

Please use this form or pick up form at Church and return it with check made payable to FCCW to either the church office or in the Visual and Decorative Arts box in the narthex. Orders must be returned by **March 10th** or the cost for lilies will increase and there is no guarantee of availability for the bulb plants.

Choices are: 6 1/2" bulb plants - tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths for \$7.00 each; 6" Easter lily (1 stem) for \$9.00 each and 8" Easter lily (2 stems) at \$14.00 each. Please contact Deborah Smiley @ smiley.deborah@gmail.com or 569-2867 if you have any questions

OF PLANTS _____ EASTER LILIES--1 stem @ \$9.00 each

OF PLANTS _____ EASTER LILIES—2 stem @ \$14.00 each

OF PLANTS _____ DAFFODILS @ \$7.00 each

OF PLANTS _____ TULIPS @ \$7.00 each

OF PLANTS _____ HYACINTHS @ \$7.00 each

IN MEMORY / IN HONOR _____

Plant(s) Donated by _____



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



HOLY WEEK
 EVENTS
 MARCH 24—31
 SEE PAGE
 4 & 5 FOR
 DETAILS

MARCH LECTIONARY

March 3—Third Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 55:1-9
 Psalm 63:1-8
 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
 Luke 13:1-9

March 10—Fourth Sunday in Lent

Joshua 5:9-12
 Psalm 32
 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
 Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32



March 17—Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21
 Psalm 126
 Philippians 3:4b-14
 John 12:1-8

March 24—Palm/Passion Sunday

Liturgy of the Palms:
 Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
 Luke 19:28-40

March 31—Easter

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 65:17-25
 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 or Acts 10:34-43
 John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12