

STEEPLE VIEWS

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



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SEPTEMBER 2024

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Discipleship

Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood

Summer is fading into the subtle beauty of autumn. The scenes of a New England autumn are sometimes quiet, and often awesome in their vibrancy and breathtaking beauty. Students of various ages are heading back to school, gardens are being harvested and we begin to turn our minds to the joy of autumn and the winter that lies on its outskirts.

This can be a reflective and contemplative time. As seasons shift and our life rhythms change, we may often look for meaning in things big and small. And, no matter our own life circumstances, we live in tumultuous times, and daily does of information and media can heighten our anxiety and leave us feeling unsettled much of the time.\

Of course, it is also a political season in our nation, with national and state elections scheduled. It is a polarized and polarizing time, and emotions, opinions and deeply held belief can be the catalysts for arguments and disagreements that can damage friendships, weaken communities, hinder working relationships and divide families. Navigating the political and ideological landscape can be traumatic and anxiety producing, and leave us feeling deeply unsettled and disoriented. The joy of active participation in our democratic processes can be overshadowed by those who believe so absolutely in their perspective that they would hinder and obstruct the rights of others why may have different viewpoints,\

I think of Jesus in times like these, which in some ways, are not as different from Jesus's time as we might expect. Jesus moved through a world that was deeply oppressive, hierarchical, fearful, exploitative and severely inequitable. Speaking out against the powers and the empire could get one imprisoned, ostracized or killed. Jesus' public ministry and teachings struck right into the heart of a dysfunctional and devastated world and offered the people a choice. Continue to live in fear and trembling, or follow a path through compassion, kindness and love to the promised land of beloved community.

Jess's invitation is as timely today as it was when he lived among us as a human being. Jesus beckons us to choose a path of life, where hope, peace, joy and love are at the center, and we as disciples of Christ work together to build communities of care, service, equity, and mercy. On this path, our shining of God's love for all becomes a beacon of light for a world too often stuck in darkness. On this path, how we practice our faith is as important as what we believe. On this path, our faithfulness is a witness to a transcendent and transforming love that is more powerful than any empire, any regime, and any oppressive force that mistakes might for righteousness, and ideology as a reason for brutality.

Jesus did not come to build another earthly kingdom or empire. Rather, he came to show the world a different way. Jesus's ministry turned things upside down. Jesus Christ was and is a light to a different way that witnesses to radical love, extravagant welcome and inclusivity and a peace that surpasses human understanding. Jesus told us it would be hard work, this discipleship, but that from our faithful practice as disciples of Christ, this world will be heaven on earth, every person will know their beauty, and we will greet each as beloved kindreds across our differences. Shine on, dear disciples of Christ.

Two Fall Programs

Pastor Larry is looking for folks to participate in two initiatives that will hopefully help deepen our spiritual discipleship. One is having a few folks agree to pray through the weekly scriptures with him. That is, each Sunday, he will send you the scriptures readings for the following Sunday, and ask you to read them, pray their words into the world and to share any insights you may have gleaned that he may be able to use in the service. Sharing insights is optional, though he welcomes them. More importantly is having a group reading and praying with the scriptures and reflecting and contemplating on what may surface through your reading and prayer.

The second is looking for folks for a small group to use a model from the Faith and Lead Lab of Luther Seminary about how to practice discipleship in a deeply tense and divided electoral season. This is not a place to advocate or put forth ideological perspectives, but to listen, share and reflect on how we are called as Disciples of Christ to navigate this divisive landscape, and how we can model ways of loving acceptance, productive and ethical discourse, and building bridges rather than walls. The group will meet weekly for six weeks, and we will decide when and how to meet based on what is best for the folks who are interested in participating.

If you are interested in one or both of these, please contact Pastor Larry at pastor@fcwakefieldnh.org and 603-522-3189. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

CareGiving Support is TEN!

Our CareGiver "Community Based" Support Group is 10 years old this year. CareGiving takes place in many different ways and for many different reasons ... but that doesn't matter to this group. If you are caring about or for someone either locally or at a distance ... and are experiencing concern for a loved one's well-being, then the benefits of coming to a group like this are huge. There is wisdom, support and comfort offered. Plus, there is professional information offered in a variety of ways (guest speakers on topics like: legal matters, skilled care, home care and hospice care).

The group meets on the first and third Monday monthly at church, Parish Helpers Room, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. All conversations are confidential. Many printed resources are available as well. Support conversations are facilitated by a trained advocate.

Carol Lundgren

Dining With Friends

All were invited any many came to the church and friends second invitational dinner! It was another big hit. The dinner was coordinated by the Men's Fellowship and held at Tumbledown Farm to Fork restaurant. It was a time of great fellowship and wonderful food. We had folks of all ages attend and we had friends join us from as far away as Zimbabwe. In total, we had 49 people gathered for the dinner.

During the dinner, Elizabeth Fogg talked to me about the monthly gatherings that use to occur at the church, under the name of Pairs and Spares. Folks from the church and community gathered for a pot luck dinner the second Wednesday of each month. They would all bring their own eating utensils and an item of food to share. That got me thinking about the possibility of starting something like that up again. We certainly could hold more people in our own fellowship hall and it would be less expensive. If you like the idea and would be willing to help move this idea forward, please contact me.

George Ackerman

Let's Visit Horton Center

Would you like to visit Horton Center this month? I have permission to lead a group of folks up to the mountain! Yesterday I had a zoom meeting with Tivvi Pare, the Horton Center Executive Director. We talked about getting a Men's Fellowship Retreat back on the summer schedule and she is extremely excited. The schedule should be made by the time you read this and I will have more to share about that soon. During our conversation, we agreed that many people would love to go to Horton Center to see it for the first time, or just see it again. So, I was given permission to bring you to camp for the day!!

We can sit on the porch and look at Mount Madison, have a picnic lunch, ring the bell, walk up to Chapel rock, see the facilities, check out Pinkham Ledge and more if you want, or only one of the above. The camp is available to us September 23-26 and 30-3. I would like to hear from you, if you would like to go. Let me know what days might work for you and what activities you might be willing to join in. If we have a large number, I am willing to go more than once. So, think about joining me on the mountain, a thin place.

Peace, George Ackerman

Join us for our September Drum Circle
Wednesday, September 25, at 5:00 p.m.
in the Fellowship Hall.

Saying Goodbye and God Bless



Longtime member of our church (she was married at FCCW!), Janet Twombly was honored at coffee hour on August 18. A lifelong resident of Wakefield, Janet is moving to West Virginia with her son and daughter in law. She was active in the church and Parish Helpers, and most recently as one of our gracious hostesses at coffee hour every week. She was presented with a prayer shawl from the Prayer Shawl Ministry by Priscilla Frothingham and Harriet Wilson. Good luck, Janet—we will miss you!

The Parish Helpers

The next Parish Helpers meeting will be held on Thursday, September 8, at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our guest speaker will be George Ackerman who will give us a presentation on his hike on the Appalachian Trail. The presentation is open to anyone who would like to come. Our meeting begins at 1 p.m. and the presentation should begin about 1:45 p.m. after the regular monthly meeting.

In other news, our Village Fair was a big success! All totaled for the day (including the Treasure Shop), we took in over \$3,600. Many, many thanks to all who helped in all sorts of ways to make it happen. Ginny and I appreciate the fantastic participation from the Parish Helpers and other church friends!

Carol Jeffery

Welcome New Members

Nancy Perkins is a native of Wakefield. She attended Paul School, Spaulding High School, and UNH, and earned a Bachelors and master's degree in Elementary Education. Nancy taught 4th-6th grades at Governor Wentworth School District in Ossipee and Effingham for 20 years and retired in 2021.

Jeff grew up in Farmington where he attended school and then went to college at Franklin Pierce College majoring in computer science. He went to work at one of Textron's automotive parts divisions and after receiving his Computer Science degree, began his present IT job at Prime Buchholz and Associates in Portsmouth.

They have a family with two boys Justin and Troy who are now 41 and 36. They both participated in SCAMP with Miss Eggleston! They live respectively in Brooklyn NY, and Salt Lake City, UT. Justin has made his career in theater and puppetry. Troy is a Physical Therapist and is married and has a 2-year-old son, Elliot. He and his wife Zoe are expecting twins in October. Quite exciting!! Nancy and Jeff bought property on Lovell Lake and built and moved into their new home on Ryan Street in May. Welcome Nancy and Jeff!



Our Zim Friends

Swimming, fishing, kayaking, Hampton Beach, Poor People's Pub, mini golf, go cart rides and arcade games, concert at Meadowbrook, Rev. Larry's sermons and his jokes, Milton Mills outdoor education day, FCCW worship, drumming, more swimming, games with friends, walking the rail trail, tubing, pot luck dinner activities, dancing, cake (lots of it), shopping, Ackerman campaign signs, BBQs, daily ice cream, Village Players performance, gathering with church families in their homes, boat rides, ax throwing, darts and playing pool, more games with friends, working out with Bo (including sauna and ice baths), yard sale activities, corn hole and hoverboards, Tumbledown with Men's Fellowship (with restaurant games!) more fishing and swimming, Ogunquit Beach, kite flying, Lone Oak, playgrounds, drumming circle, eating with chopsticks, hiking with George, dancing (lots of dancing), swimming pools, 250th birthday activities -- Governor's train, PPP scavenger hunts, bounce house, delicious food, face painting, stick and hoop games, church strawberry shortcake, concert and more dancing, first time FIREWORKS, and tours of the fire station and the police departments.

What did our Zim friends enjoy the most?

Spending time with YOU and the love shared. Thank you for helping Vrante and Trevor Mahlupeko Jambaya make so many meaningful memories!

Connie Littlefield



The Yard Sale



Another wonderful yard sale is in the books! Beautiful weather, lots of wonderful volunteers, friendly vibes, and happy, smiling customers helped us raise approx. \$3200 which go toward our church's budget. Deep thanks and appreciation to all who donated goods, those who picked up the heavy stuff, those who set up and stage "the merch" and all who greet the community with FCCW smiles and good spirits.

Brush Off Those Hiking Boots!

A hike for all ages is being planned! Following coffee hour on September 8th we will be taking a hike up Moose Mountain in Brookfield. All are welcome! We will be going up the left side ski trail, often used for sledging, with Mjo McCarthy as our leader.

Some will be going all the way to the top; others will go as far as their knees (or hips) allow. Still others might enjoy what we hope will be a fine September day at the bottom of the slope.

Please bring water and a sandwich. Additional snacks will be provided. We will gather in fellowship hall and caravan over to the hike. You can also meet us at the base lodge at Moose Mountain at 11:45.

Please see Alison Hayford, Connie Littlefield or Mjo McCarthy for further information or contact the office.

Connie Littlefield

Attention Stamp Aficionados!

Please contact CLA Andrea Selig at 603-522-3189 or FUNdraising Coordinator, Julie Kessler, if you or anyone you know can help value collector stamps that were donated to FCCW. Thank you!



Julie Kessler

Celebrations!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

21 Scott & Kathy Frothingham

Fall SAVERS Collection!

Our next trip down to SAVERS will be on Monday, Sept 30, - meeting there at 11:00. We need drivers! (and a trailer or two would be wonderful!) If you can help, please contact Julie Kessler.

Just in time for your fall clean out! Check those drawers and closets and bag 'em up!

Donation drop off days and times are:

Saturday, Sept 14 10-12; Sunday, Sept 15 11-12
Saturday, Sept 21 10-12; Sunday, Sept 22 11-12
Saturday, Sept 28 10-12; Sunday, Sept 29 11-12

FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN

We believe that prayer is powerful! During this time of transition in our church, let us pray for the Diaconate, the Search Committee, the Officers, Ministry Coordinators, and Leadership Council for their thoughtful deliberations in guiding 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 Elizabeth F; family and friends of Gilman P; family and friends of Mary Ann Fountain, Marie H and family; Titia and family; Nancy B; Connie's sister-in-law Sarah; ; Bob L; Sue L; Arlene L; Cindy E; Michael T; Chrissy B.

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.



Forgiving Yourself: Why You Must, How You Can (S-G)

According to the authors Robert and Jeannette Lauer, forgiving yourself can be the most difficult kind of forgiveness to practice, yet not forgiving yourself can be corrosive to your well-being. Self-forgiveness is the natural corollary to God's forgiveness. The main focus of this book is the steps we can take to allow God's forgiveness into our lives and relationships. Filled with stories, examples, and encouragement, it dispels some common myths about self-forgiveness. The Lauers pave the way for the reality that self-forgiveness is an act of love toward yourself and show how to rid yourself of destructive and unwarranted anger and guilt in order to restore your sense of self-worth as a child of God.

Source: Abe Books

Linda Petkunas, Church Librarian

SEPTEMBER 2024

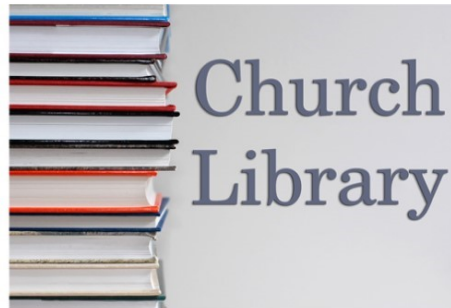
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>15th Sunday After PENTE-COST Worship—10 a.m.</p> <p>Coffee Hour</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Caregiver Self-Care Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Choir 5:30</p> 	<p>3</p> <p>Faith Formation 12 Noon</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p> <p>Diaconate Meeting 5 p.m.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 1 p.m. –5 p.m.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p>
<p>8</p> <p>16th Sunday After PENTE-COST Worship—10 a.m.</p> <p>Coffee Hour</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Choir 5:30</p> <p>The WAY Meeting 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Faith Formation 12 Noon</p> <p>Ukelele Club 6 p.m.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p> 	<p>12</p> <p>End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.</p> <p>Parish Helpers Meeting & Program 1 p.m.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 1 p.m. –5 p.m.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p> <p>SAVERS COLLECTION 10 a.m. -noon</p>
<p>15</p> <p>17th Sunday After PENTE-COST Worship—10 a.m.</p> <p>Coffee Hour</p> <p>SAVERS COLLECTION 11 a.m.—noon</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Caregiver Self-Care Support Group 9:30—10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Choir 5:30</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Prayer Shawl 10 a.m.</p> <p>Faith Formation 12 Noon</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p>	<p>19</p> <p>End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 1 p.m. –5 p.m.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p> <p>SAVERS COLLECTION 10 a.m. -noon</p>
<p>22</p> <p>18th Sunday After PENTE-COST Worship—10 a.m.</p> <p>Coffee Hour</p> <p>SAVERS COLLECTION 11 a.m.—noon</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Choir 5:30</p> <p>The WAY Meeting 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Faith Formation 12 Noon</p> <p>Ukelele Club 6 p.m.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p> <p>Drum Circle 5 p.m.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 1 p.m. –5 p.m.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.—12 noon</p> <p>SAVERS COLLECTION 10 a.m. -noon</p>
<p>29</p> <p>19th Sunday After PENTE-COST Worship—10 a.m.</p> <p>Coffee Hour</p> <p>SAVERS COLLECTION 11 a.m.—noon</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Choir 5:30</p> <p>SAVERS DELIVERY</p>					

Have you visited the Church Library recently???

There are many great resources found on these shelves: novels by local artists, fun books for kids, previous studies by adult FF, devotionals, videos and books on religion and spirituality.

Our dedicated church librarian Linda Pekunas, keeps the books orderly and up to date!

Books are located on the bookshelves in the Parish Helpers Room and at the back of Fellowship Hall. Most books may be borrowed for enjoyment at home by simply signing them out!



Churchart.com

The WAY

The Wakefield Adult Youth group (the WAY) invites and welcomes all to our faith formation study entitled "Anatomy of a Christian," which will take place on the following Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Helpers Room:

- July 29th
- August 26th
- September 9th
- September 23rd

Please contact Max Gehring if interested! MaxTheGiraffe@protonmail.com

PKZ Medical Supply Collection

The next time you have a medical appointment would you consider asking your medical practitioners or medical contacts if they have no longer used items or equipment to donate? In the past we have received a blood warming machine and lab supplies, a hospital bed, surgical tools, a huge variety of obstetric supplies when Huggins Hospital closed their maternity wing, and boxes of surgical gowns, masks, latex gloves, hospital sheets and dental supplies. Medical facilities are very generous when they know it goes to a good cause. Thank you, Connie Littlefield





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