

STEEPLE VIEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WAKEFIELD

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION



REVEREND LARRY BRICKNER-WOOD, INTERIM MINISTER

REVEREND GEORGE HARVEY, PASTOR EMERITUS

REVEREND MARY A. JAMES, PASTOR EMERITA

OCTOBER 2024

PHONE: 603-522-3189

WEBSITE: FCCWAKEFIELDNH.ORG

EMAIL: CHURCHOFFICE@FCCWAKEFIELDNH.ORG

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

With God in the Beginning was Wisdom

"I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be." Thus begins one of the most beautiful and fascinating passages in the Bible, Proverbs 8:23-33. The passage, which I sometimes refer to as the Song of Sophia, is written in the voice of Woman Wisdom (Sophia). It notes that Woman Wisdom was with God since the beginning: "When there were no watery depths, I was given birth, when there were no springs overflowing with water; before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, before God made the world or its fields or any of the dust of the earth. I was there when God set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, when he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth."

From the beginning Woman Wisdom was there, rejoicing and delighting with God. *"Then I was the artisan at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in the whole world and delighting in the human race."* A wonderful affirmation that joy and delight were there from the beginning, intended to be shared with humanity—in other words us and our kindreds across the ages.

The passage ends with a call to get Wisdom: *"Now then, my children, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not disregard it."* Throughout Proverbs, wisdom is being imparted for how we are to live in this world, and how are to share God's grace and love with each other. Wisdom is how we live our lives in right relationship to God, to each other, and to all of creation.

For several weeks, we have been reading from some of the Wisdom Books of the Bible, especially Proverbs and the Letter of James. The Wisdom Books (Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, the Song of Songs, parts of the Psalms, the Letter of James, parts of Romans and certain parts of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke) are books that, in the words of theologian Richard Foster "root us solidly in everyday life and everyday tasks and give us a basic moral orientation to guide us in all aspects of our day-in-day-out living." Wisdom is practical instruction for how behave, and how we conduct our personal and work lives.

In these heavy and sometimes heartbreaking times, it feels instructive and beneficial to come back to Wisdom. God's Holy Wisdom can be a source of discernment, contemplation, behavioral ethics, action, and living with integrity. As the fire and fury of another election season evolves, Wisdom calls us to respond as Jesus would when confronted with anger, intimidation, persecution and hate. Our actions matter, rooted in wisdom and the discipleship of Christ, and can influence how others engage with these uncertain times.

In this election season and beyond, the Letter of James offers wise insight in its instruction to speak, act and live in compassion and love. James calls us to put our actions where our beliefs are, that world may move closer to a Beloved Community where peace, justice, balance and kindness are the rule. In what can feel like a time full of darkness and shadows, Wisdom reminds us that we, each of us, make a difference, and contribute to how healthy or unhealthy our homes, community, nation and world are. We are the Wisdom keepers, and we are called to form a human world that brings heaven on earth. After all, Wisdom has been with God since the beginning, and is meant to be lived, practiced and shared.

Rev. Larry Brickner-Wood

Indigenous Day

I know, I know it began as “Columbus Day”. October 12, 1492 was the first recording of the celebration of Columbus Day. President Benjamin Harris, in 1892, declared the observance of the 400-year anniversary of Columbus’s supposed discovery of the Americas. It wasn’t until 1934 when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, on October 12th, proclaimed Columbus Day as a National Holiday. And in 1971, the second Monday in October became a federal holiday. So, you say, “why the name change?” As much as we have simplified the 1492 exploration to a nursery rhyme, “In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue”, the actual landing of Columbus and his men resulted in the enslavement, rape and murder of the indigenous people who already lived on what we call The Bahaman Islands. Like the mainland of the United States, Native people already occupied the land before European explorers traveled to the western hemisphere.

Indigenous Peoples’ Day was introduced by President Biden in 2021. This was to honor Native Americans for their, “resilience, strength and perseverance” and “determination to preserve cultures, identities and ways of life”, even as they have faced “violence and devastation”. Indigenous Day doesn’t replace Columbus Day. It was meant to shift the focus from the historic horrors of the European invasion to the recognition of the original inhabitants of our nation.

George and I lived and taught for ten years on an Alaskan reservation/reserve. The tribe that holds sovereignty of this island and its surrounding waters were called Tsimshian. They had been reclaiming their heritage as recently as the 1970’s. Before that time, it was forbidden for them to speak their language, sing and dance to their Native songs, and celebrate their art, history and culture. We discovered a new respect for the people of Metlakatla and their history. We proclaim, with great pride, being adopted into the Killer Whale Clan (me) and the Wolf Clan (George).

History is a fluid concept. Its accuracy is dependent upon the author or storyteller. We can acknowledge two things at once. Yes, the exploration of many European countries to the Americas was a phenomenal feat considering the lack of knowledge as to what lay before them. Was the earth flat? Were there great sea monsters lying in wait to swallow them up, ships and all? Those myths were dispelled, and scientific discoveries were recorded. And we can celebrate the original cultures that existed in the Americas for centuries before European exploration. History’s truth and accuracy can be a hard pill to swallow, but to disclaim it, or to whitewash it because it is too harsh dishonors all people involved. So, while you are enjoying a day off from work, or not, maybe you can take a moment and search the origins of one of our many Native cultures. Knowledge reduces the anxiety associated with change. Happy Indigenous Day!

Welcome New Members

Ken and Gloria Ballinger moved to Wakefield on the last day of 2020 from Kennett Square, PA, a small suburban town 45 minutes west of Philadelphia. They soon joined the Wakefield Lions Club and the First Congregational Church of Rochester, solely because the larger community choir, the Granite State Choral Society (GSCS), practiced there.



Thanks to Joe and Anne Palmariello, they visited First Church of Wakefield this past April and immediately felt drawn to such a welcoming church family. They transferred their church memberships in July 2024 and quickly joined the Cindy Eggleston chancel choir!

Last December, active in both the Lions Club and GSCS, Ken and Gloria helped to organize a holiday choral concert at the town hall opera house in Wakefield. Plans are underway for the second annual event this December.

Gloria enjoyed a career in veterinary medicine and is now enjoying retirement and service in this community. Ken continues to work from home in a biotech company based in Delaware as well as serving the community. They live on Sandy Pond in East Wakefield.

The Parish Helpers

Happy Fall to our amazing Parish Helpers. We were treated to a very exciting speaker at our September meeting! Yes! Our very one and only George Ackerman sharing with us his Appalachian Trail Adventures. What an educational and courageous experience for George to share with us. No takers for his spring final 471-mile trek. Our prayers go with you George!

We were honored to present Vranite with a check for \$1,000 to take home with him to Zimbabwe to use wherever needed.

Our October speaker is Sandy Ouellette! She will share with us her love of art through painting and crafts. Hope to see you October 10th at 1pm!

**New! Chair Yoga to begin again on
Wednesdays at 10 a.m.**

Hazel MacBrien Nursery School News

We are so excited to be back at school! The kids are too!! We started off September with getting to know our new 3-year-old class. Using playdough and shaving cream, coloring a crayon for our "Welcome to our pack" bulletin board and free painting a leaf for our school family tree. Our afternoon class was so they were excited to come back and see their friends! They explored with playdough, shaving cream and parquetry blocks. For their family tree leaf, they used tissue paper pieces and glued them to the leaf. We also practiced tracing their names and they drew a picture of themselves on the first day for their journals.

The second week we worked on number 1. The morning class used mini acorn erasers on a paper to follow a path from an acorn to a squirrel, played a musical squirrel color game, did a feltboard story "Fall Monster Takes a Walk and used cars to trace a rectangle shape. The afternoon class worked on cutting, did a 1 cent penny flip tally game, a squirrel roll a die 10-frame activity and used a cork to stamp paint a squirrel for our fall bulletin board. This week our sensory table was filled with pluffle, a really cool rubbery substance. It comes in a lot of different colors and the kids had a blast holding it and molding it into whatever they could imagine.

The next week we introduced letter Ll and did a lot with leaves. The morning class made a leaf collage, used laminated colored leaves to group by size; small medium large, used leaf stickers to decorate a paper tree and played shape monster muncher. Our fours class played a shape game by walking around the classroom to music. When the music stopped, they picked up the laminated colored squirrel they were standing on, flipped it over and named the shape they saw on the back. We did a number tower activity using unifix cubes and they practiced writing letter Ll on whiteboards. Both classes enjoyed exploring in our kinetic sand sensory table this week. We added cups, spoons, plates and colorful people manipulatives.

During the last week of September, we worked on letter Aa for acorns. The threes used acorns to roller paint an acorn picture to put on our fall bulletin board, we rolled a die and fed a "squirrel" that many acorns and they used dot markers to paint an acorn.

The fours rolled a die and put that many acorns on a 10-frame, cut scraps of brown paper to glue onto a paper acorn and explored with playdough and plastic acorns. Our sensory table was still filled with kinetic sand but this week we added plastic-colored leaves and colorful animal manipulatives.

Jen Brackett

Thanks to the Men's Fellowship from the Wakefield Food Pantry

The Wakefield Food Pantry would like to thank Paul Allen and Brian Shipley from the Men's Group for volunteering to construct a cover for our new mini-split to protect it from falling snow this winter. What a great community we live with so many people that volunteer hours of their time. Thank you!

Marilou MacLean



Men's Fellowship: Brian Shipley & Paul Allen



News from Zimbabwe

Vrante was able to hand carry this year's allotment of \$250 that FCCW budgets to support the work at Rufumiso UCCZ. Our Z Team began the work on their church parsonage beginning in the summer of 2014. Here is the response from Rev. Farai Mtisi, the Rufumiso pastor who began his tenure in January 2024.

Dear Friends,

I hope the people of the Wakefield Church are doing well.

We are grateful and acknowledge receipt of the money you sent to us. It came at such a time as we were trying to make ends meet. We have already purchased interior doors and locks and as well ordered window panes. We shall fix (install) both the doors and the window panes on our own. We shall send a full report with photos through Mr. F. Sithole, head deacon. I am very glad that our prayers to have the parsonage done by the end of year 2024 will be a dream come true. We shall continue to include you in our prayers just like you do to us. Kindly pass our regards to our brothers and sisters there.

In Christ's service,
Rev Farai Mtisi
Rufumiso UCCZ Church Minister

Connie Littlefield



Rev. Mtisi in front of the Rufumiso parsonage

Penny Sale Planning

It's time to start planning for the Penny Sale at the Harvest Fair on November 9. Once again, it is gift cards only. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!" So, do you have any gift cards in your wallet (or junk drawer) that you will not use? I'll be happy to take them off your hands. Do you have a favorite restaurant or local business that you frequent a lot? Could you ask them to donate a card? Any amount will do nicely. I just ask that you let me know who you plan to ask so we don't duplicate. After speaking with Beth Hayes last year, I also plan to ask those businesses that don't actually sell stuff to sponsor a gift card. Realtors, Insurance companies, builders, plumbers, etc. If you have a suggestion or connection, please let me know. And, of course, you can also purchase a card and donate to the Penny Sale. Many thanks, Nancy Dee nancy.dee2018@gmail.com or text 603-315-7919.

Jillian Currier Begins Year Long Service with AmeriCorps!

Let's all support Jillian as she joins AmeriCorps for a year of service in Washington State to help with environmental activities! Cards of encouragement can be sent to: Jillian Currier, 8012 5th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115.

For those curious about AmeriCorps, it is the federal agency for national service and volunteerism. AmeriCorps provides opportunities for Americans of all backgrounds to serve their country, address the nation's most pressing challenges, and improve lives and communities. The mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. We invite individuals to serve alongside each other for the betterment of every community. AmeriCorps sends people power and funding to communities across the country. Disaster response, opioid crisis, education – these are just a few of the causes where AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers have stepped up to strengthen their community. To learn more go to <https://americorps.gov/about>



L to R: Mwandi Sithole, Mrs. Makuku, Treasurer, High Deacon F. Sithole, and Vrante Mahlupeko

**Join us for a Drum Circle
on Wednesday,
October 23, at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall with Rev. Larry!**

Celebrations!

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

12 Sally Kratt	21 Ellen Lankhost
13 Debbie Fogg	23 Buddy Dee
15 Maureen Bridgett Szirbik	24 Cameron Cook
15 JoAnn Owen	26 Laura Frye
19 Brian Shipley	26 Connie Twombly
20 Bill Goodwin	30 George Frothingham

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

7 Tom & Jan Stanley
8 George & Priscilla Frothingham
8 Tom & Lynn Weeks
9 Mark and Julie Evenson
10 Russell & Sharon Baldwin
13 Chuck & Joanne Dolbear
17 Alfred & Tammy Canney
20 John & Lynn Shaffer
23 Ron & Rachel White

Annual Meeting Delegates

Our NH Conference annual meeting delegates for 2024 are George Ackerman, Max Gehring, Linda Petkunas, Joe Palmariello and Jo Szirbik. Along with Rev. Larry, the delegates will enjoy a lovely day at Geneva Point, located on the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee, and network with other delegates from UCC churches across NH on Saturday Oct. 26th. We look forward to hearing their insights!

Congregational Synergy Potluck

Mark your calendars for our next all church potluck dinner on Thursday, October 17th @ 5:30 p.m. This is a congregational synergy event where all members and friends are invited to gather, enjoy great food and fellowship, and share ideas and a vision for our beloved FCCW. Bring a dish to share but if that isn't convenient, just come. There is always a lot of food and your unique presence is what is most important!

Connie Littlefield

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.



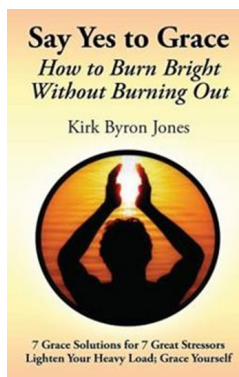
Please pray for Elizabeth F, Nancy B, Richard W, Bob L, Sue L, Cindy E, Carol J's Family: Chrissy B, Michael T & Connie's sister-in-law Sarah.

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.

Library Corner

Many are living on the frazzled edge: overstretched, overbooked, and about to snap. This book offers solutions for stress.

1. Fatigue - Learn to Rest.
2. Low Self-Esteem - Live from Acceptance not for Acceptance.
3. Disappointment - Loosen Strings to Needs and Expectations.
4. Hurry - Live at a Sacred Pace.
5. Worry - Claim Your Inner Calm.
6. Unhappiness - Balance Aspiration with Contentment.
7. Fear - Believe in God Beyond "God."




In a warm hearted, compassionate, and supportive book, bestselling author, Dr. Jones, offers liberating ideas and life-changing practices that will help readers balance rigor with respite, performance with pause, and human grit with God's grace.

Source: Amazon

Linda Petkunas

OCTOBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Faith Formation 12 Noon	2 Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.— 12 noon NEW! Chair Yoga 10 a.m. Diaconate Meeting 5 p.m.	3 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	4	5 Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.— 12 noon
6 20th Sunday After PENTE- COST & World Communion Sunday Worship—10 a.m. Coffee Hour	7 Caregiver Self-Care Support Group 9:30 a.m. Choir 5:30 p.m.	8 Faith Formation 12 Noon Ukelele Club 6 p.m.	9 Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.— 12 noon Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	10 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m. Parish Helpers Meeting & Pro- gram 1 p.m.	11	12 LAST DAY OF SEASON for Treasure Shop Open 9 a.m.— 12 noon
13 21st Sunday After PENTE- COST Worship—10 a.m. Coffee Hour Leadership Coun- cil Meeting 11:30	14 Choir 5:30 p.m. 	15 Prayer Shawl 10 a.m. Faith Formation 12 Noon	16 Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	17 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m. Congregational Synergy Pot Luck Supper 5:30 p.m.	18	19 PKZ Pancake Breakfast 8 a.m.—11 a.m.
20 22nd Sunday After PENTE- COST Worship—10 a.m. Coffee Hour	21 Caregiver Self-Care Support Group 9:30 a.m. Choir 5:30 p.m.	22 Faith Formation 12 Noon Ukelele Club 6 p.m.	23 Chair Yoga 10 a.m. Drum Circle 5 p.m.	24 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.	25	26
27 23rd Sunday After PENTE- COST Worship—10 a.m. Coffee Hour	28 Choir 5:30 p.m.	29 Faith Formation 12 Noon	30 Chair Yoga 10 a.m.	31 End 68 Hours of Hunger Volunteer Meeting 10 a.m.		



October 6th is World Communion Sunday. On that day, churches and communities around the world celebrate communion together, and we celebrate the many ways that we celebrate this sacred ritual and sacrament. We will have communion that Sunday, and we invite you to bring a loaf of your favorite bread, home baked or store bought, and we will display these and then donate them to those in need. Be sure to have your favorite bread wrapped, labeled as to what it is and ingredients possible. This is one way we can bring the light of Christ out into the world and celebrate the bread of life for all people!

Fall Pancake Breakfast

**First Congregational Church of Wakefield UCC
2718 Wakefield Road, Wakefield, NH**



The FCCW Zimbabwe Team will be preparing a delicious pancake breakfast! Traditional pancakes, with options of pumpkin, blueberry, and chocolate chip, will be served along with scrambled eggs, sausage, juice and hot beverages.

Saturday, October 19th, 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.
The cost is \$9 per adult and \$6 for children.

All proceeds to benefit a humanitarian shipping container to Zimbabwe.



Thank you for
your support!



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