



Sanbornton

Belfry

Congregational Church

UCC

The Sanbornton Congregational Church, UCC, situated in Sanbornton, NH is a Church for Peace and Justice. We declare ourselves an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ, welcoming people of every race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, economic class, physical or mental ability. **All are welcome! Please join us any Sunday.**

Founded in 1771, the church has been a cornerstone of faith in this small community and the surrounding area through the generations since. We are a congregation of the United Church of Christ which was created by a merger of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed churches. Our church denominational heritage is Congregational, where congregations are independent and autonomous.



2026

MARCH

NEWSLETTER

# FROM THE MODERATOR



1771 - present

Hello Everyone,

Spring is just around the corner and I know that many of us are already thinking about spring flowers and summer vacations.

I love winter, but this season has been exceedingly wintry with plenty of snow, cold and ice. I for one am ready for a change of seasons!

The UCC Conference's Prepared to Serve was this past weekend and we had a number of people in attendance, which is fantastic! Some years we would have only one or none of our church members attend. This is truly a great way to meet people from other churches, get new ideas and to be inspired. Thanks to Sue for putting together a vendors table this year and thanks to all of those who attended and represented our church so well!

I am excited that our church will be holding another Vision meeting this spring, date and time TBA. We will continue our great work in continually updating our activities, mission and facilities to strive towards the aspirations of the group. We started out the vision meeting about 20 years ago and they were 5-year plans then. I personally prefer the 1-year model we have recently adopted as everyone becomes more engaged and changes are made in a more timely manner. Stay tuned for more details.

We are also preparing now for Easter services and activities which are only about a month away! Hard to believe! Stay tuned for more details on Easter activities as well.

Moderately speaking,

David Henderson, Church Moderator



# THE SEASON OF LENT

This church season began on Ash Wednesday on February 18th. We shared a soup and bread meal at noon, followed by a service with the imposition of ashes. Traditionally the ashes are created by burning the previous year's palm leaves and adding a bit of olive oil to the the resulting ashes. During this "beginning of Lent" service, it is customary in many religions to use these ashes to impose a "mark of the cross" upon the foreheads of the participants who wish to carry an outward visible sign of their faith during this time in the church year, leading to Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter.



## Important upcoming dates to remember:

**Daylight Savings Time - March 8th** - Set your clocks **AHEAD** by one hour, as they say "Spring Forward" (If you forget you may just get to church in time to hear the closing Hymn and the Benediction - Oh oh! (Technically we are skipping the hour from 2 am to 3 am.) In the FALL, if you forget to set your clock back to EST (Eastern Standard Time) you will arrive in time to join our CHOIR practice.

**Meals for Election Workers - March 10<sup>th</sup>** - Hospitality in our downstairs Community Room  
**One Great Hour of Sharing - March 15th** - Many UCC churches participate in asking for an extra offering to support partners worldwide with ministries that provide health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries and disaster response.

**Palm Sunday or Liturgy of the Palms - March 29th** - 10 am sanctuary service

Celebrating Jesus' triumphant but humble arrival in Jerusalem, riding on a donkey as was foretold by the prophets. People who were excited to welcome their long-awaited Messiah "King of the Jews", greeted Him waving Palm branches along His path.

**Maundy Thursday - April 2nd** - a beautiful, contemplative evening service in our sanctuary

**Good Friday - April 3rd**

**Easter - April 5th** Easter Sunday **Sunrise** Service beginning at 6:10 am

(Sunrise is approximately 6:15 am) out behind our church near our Peace Garden

Easter Sunday Service beginning at 10 am through 11 am in our Sanctuary

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

REMEMBER the old Farmer's Almanac saying: "If March comes in like a LION, it will go out like a LAMB. But if March comes in like a LAMB (with a welcome early Spring) it will probably go out like a LION" (which **might** mean an end of March WINTER STORM. So, "We are not necessarily out of the woods yet!"

So, for one more month - Please keep an eye out for:

**\* Winter Weather Church Closings Watch \***

Look for an **announcement** in your email, take a look on **our Facebook page** or **check WMUR TV** for church status on Sundays and other days with scheduled events.

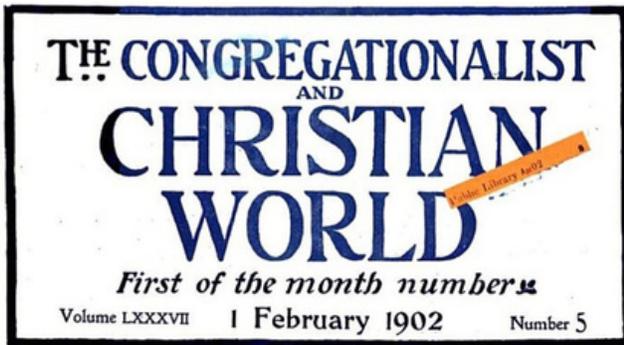
**On Sundays, our decision & announcement will be made before or by 7:30 am.**

Please check these sources for information.



# FROM THE CHURCH HISTORIAN

The son of Sanbornton Congregational's own Pastor J. Newton Perrin, Porter Perrin, made the news back in February of 1902



Porter Gale Perrin, (age about 7 years) appeared in the February 1st, 1902 edition of "The Congregationalist and Christian World" back in 1902. The article describes young boy, Porter, as being the local mail delivery boy for his neighborhood. Porter explained that, although "there are 3 routes in town", his area "still gets its mail from the Post Office, as I bring it for ourselves and some of the neighbors, they just call me 'Rural Free Delivery' . . ." Although difficult to see, the writer points out that there is apparently a copy of "The Congregationalist" visible in young Porter's mail delivery bag!



(p.s. Justus Newton Perrin, Jr. was our 7th pastor at Sanbornton Congregational and led the church for better than 16 years!)

Submitted by Karey Caldwell, Church Historian

(for re-publication in the March 2026 Belfry Newsletter)  
Sanbornton Congregational Church, United Church of Christ



# STEWARDSHIP FOR LENT . . .



The season of Lent, for many, can be kind of like approaching a half glass of water saying “Oh, the glass is half gone, almost empty” vs “Oh, the glass is half full, still plenty of water left to quench my thirst.”

Many approach the season of Lent by trying to decide what they are willing to “give up” or sacrifice until Easter. What item will be enough of a sacrifice to be meaningful to God? If we choose something that is easy to give up, we might feel guilty over choosing something that does not require a real effort on our part to do without.

What if we approached the season of Lent, not as giving up that half glass of precious water, but instead embracing the glass of water as a connection to life? What if we approached Lent like weeding a garden so it will thrive? What if the season of Lent gave us the opportunity to be Good Stewards to ourselves, “weeding out” the stuff we don’t need, the stuff that weighs us down, the stuff that stresses us out? Most of us like to think of ourselves as good stewards when it comes to taking care of the church, or our church family, our own family, or our neighbors in need. Perhaps being good stewards of ourselves would be to make for ourselves a “sabbatical time”. Treat ourselves to a renewal of self, by clearing our minds and lives of the things that tend to make our lives chaotic. Channel our thoughts and focus on God. What a glorious thing it would be if we could be a messenger, through our understanding of the reasons for Jesus’ life here on earth and our actions out there in the communities where we live and can show forth. Let’s get ourselves ready for the renewal we can experience as we approach Easter.

Isaiah foretold the coming of John the Baptist, who would be the “preparer” for the coming Christ and His message. John’s role was to keep focusing people NOT on himself, but rather on the Lord, Jesus Christ and His message of forgiveness, peace and love for everyone.

As we prepare for the celebration of probably one of the most important events in the history of humankind, remember that the focus is not on what we “give up” but how much room we make in our hearts, our minds and in our lives for God. Make room to embrace the teachings of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, God’s greatest sacrifice . . . His greatest GIFT to us. Through the strengthening Stewardship of self, the gift(s) we will be able to give back, will be making ourselves better Stewards to the life of our church, our church family, our own families and the people in our community.

Faithfully submitted, Marg Whedon

# MARCH'S FULL CROW MOON



"Genesis 1:14 - And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.."

Native American tribes often used moon phases and cycles to keep track of the seasons and gave a unique name to each recurring full moon. The full moon names were used to identify the entire month during which each occurred.

Although many Native American Tribes gave distinct names to the full moon, the Algonquin tribes had perhaps the greatest effect on the early European settlers in America, and the settlers adopted the Native tribe's habit of naming the moons, even inventing some of their own names.

On **March 3rd** we will see the **Full Crow Moon**, also known as the Worm Moon and the Sap Moon. To the settlers, it was also known as the Lenten Moon, and was considered to be the last full Moon of winter. Called the Crow Moon for the cawing crows, it signals the end of winter. As the earth thaws, worms start to appear; and it marks the time when maple sap begins to flow.

## **Be sure to catch the Total Lunar Eclipse!**

The only lunar eclipse of 2026 visible from North America, this is being called the "Blood Moon", but it's not really blood red-colored; it's more of a coppery orange. In Eastern Daylight Time, the Full Moon begins to enter Earth's shadow at 4:52 A.M. The total phase (when the Moon is fully immersed in Earth's shadow) will start at 6:08 A.M. Get up early and check it out!

**The Spring Equinox on March 20th**, when both day and night are at equal length, reminds us to find our own inner balance. New life and prosperity are blooming during this time. Pray for emotional and physical healing, for yourself and others. Let the moonlight bring you a balance of light and dark, and see the truth in your life however much it may hurt; then let the Lord bring your breakthrough!





Our church was well represented at this event last year and we had several in attendance this year too! It was held on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**. This conference, held at Pembroke Academy, helps those who attend, come home with a fresh outlook and new ideas to encourage church growth and some ideas for personal growth as well.



Each person can participate in up to FOUR workshops and lunch was included. From our church, Mary Ruth Scott, Sue Long, Marg Whedon, Phoebe Timmons, Rev. Louise Bastille, Cliff Mills and Donald Gilbert attended several different workshops and gave coverage at our information and vendors table.

We met new friends from other churches as well as several we already knew from previous conferences. We will be introducing some of the things we learned about as the year progresses.

## A GRANT FOR GOTLUNCH! SANBORNTON

For the past couple of years, we have been fortunate enough to receive a modest financial grant from the Greater Lakes Region Children's Fund. This Fund holds multiple fund raisers throughout the year and then the proceeds are distributed annually to qualified non-profit organizations specifically formed to benefit children in the Lakes Region. You probably have heard that, by far, their largest fund raiser has been "Pub Mania" through Patrick's Pub in Gilford, NH. Throughout the year the restaurant holds multiple fund raisers all to benefit the Lakes Region Children's Fund. For instance, for 2025, Patrick's Pub raised a whopping \$401,477 which contributed to an unbelievable 2025 Lakes Region Children's Fund amount of \$8883,023!! This amount, less expenses, would then be awarded for 2026 To qualify, any non-profits wishing to be eligible for a grant amount for the following year must complete a fairly comprehensive application and submit by November 1st . Our dedicated GotLunch! Sanbornton Committee (Mary Ruth Scott, Susan Bayer, Debi Gray, Sandy Trottier and Brendan Morrison) completed and submitted the application for 2026. This week, we were notified that Got Lunch – Sanbornton was awarded \$3,000! At their Awards Celebration, Brendan attended and accepted our check! *As a recap, for 2025, Got Lunch Sanbornton delivered 1965 meals, and our volunteers drove over 1,200 miles to deliver them. Additionally, at Christmas, we presented each child a Gift Certificate as a special treat from Got Lunch – Sanbornton. Overall, our annual expenses to provide these meals over the Summer totals close to \$7,000.*



All expenditures come from grants and donations with no amount coming from Sanbornton Congregational Church.

# MUSICAL NOTES



Our choir has already begun to sing some beautiful music for LENT. Our choir director, Dennis, and our organist, Laura have recently welcomed a new choir member, Christina. She is going to be singing in the Tenor section, and has sung previously as an Alto.

“Those who sing to the Lord, pray twice.” If you like to sing, the commitment involved in our church choir is a 1-hour choir practice almost every Thursday evening and come an hour early for church on Sundays for a ½ hr. warm-up practice before the service. Our choir is “off duty” during the summer months and invites contributors of special music of many different styles to enhance our summer services. Just E-mail our church administrator at: [administrator@uccsanbornton.org](mailto:administrator@uccsanbornton.org) if you might like to add some of your music to our summer services or would like to try singing in our choir. Our choir director & organist offer some of the best vocal and musical training you could hope for !!!

## PLEASE JOIN US



**Easter Sunrise Service** starting at 6:10 am  
Gathering just before sunrise for prayer, guitar and singing, and the joy of sunrise, in our Peace Garden, directly behind Sanbornton Congregational Church, UCC  
Easter Morning ~ April 5th

**In the sanctuary, our Easter Morning Service begins at 10 am with beautiful organ music.** Want to know more about us? Or for those who can not attend in-person or missed a service and wish to re-watch our Sunday celebration - scan a QR below to visit any of these options.

Read our history, listen to our organ, keep up to date on events and re-watch a service.



[www.uccsanbornton.org](http://www.uccsanbornton.org)



[www.facebook.com/sanborntonuccchurch](https://www.facebook.com/sanborntonuccchurch)



[www.youtube.com/@SanborntonCongregationalChurch](https://www.youtube.com/@SanborntonCongregationalChurch)

Our offering plate is not only a place for financial contributions, but also a place where many folks have donated a book or a roll of stamps. These stamp donations have made it possible for us to continue to send our paper bulletins to folks who can't come to church in-person and even to those who we haven't seen in a while. Thank you for making this kind of connection and outreach possible! If you would like to help with this in any way or if you want to be added to the snail-mail list, just let us know!

Call and leave a message at church  
(603-286-3018) or  
send an email to  
adminstrator@uccsanbornton.org



Spring is just around the corner.  
These Cardinals are making plans to  
carry on the circle of life.



This little male Downey Woodpecker  
was braving the recent BLIZZARD  
to get some suet and berries



← From this to this



Soon, very soon , hopefully.

### A Note From Your **Belfry** Editor:

Whether it be news that you'd like to share about recent happenings OR announce news about upcoming events we truly appreciate any article that you submit. For our APRIL 2026 Newsletter, **please** send your articles to us on or before **MARCH 25<sup>th</sup>**.

Your articles may be emailed to: **adminstrator@uccsanbornton.org**

OR open up the google link sent to you by Sue & insert them there OR email to me directly with attachments : **margaretwhedon9@gmail.com** for the Belfry.

*Anticipating Spring - It's gettin warmer. Marg Whedon*