

February 2025

# Sanbornton Congregational Church Belfry



Happy February!

## *From The Moderator*

Winter is in full swing and our church continues to stay very busy!

We just had a very successful Annual Meeting last week where a new budget was approved unanimously, and the nominating committee report was accepted. In particular, I want to thank Karey, Kim, Brendan, Clif, Josh, Sue and Reverend Slater whose cooperative efforts enabled us to have a very smooth hybrid meeting that was both collaborative and engaging.

During that meeting when we reviewed the budget, it was mentioned that the Church Council has asked our Moderator (me) to conduct reviews for all of our staff in the month of February. Many of our staff have never received a review and raises are certainly over-due in this environment of rising costs. These reviews will be interactive and I look forward to feedback from our staff about the things that they really like or new suggestions that they would like for us to consider. As all of us know, our church would not be in the great position that we are currently in without our outstanding and dedicated staff! I am also seeking feedback from all of our parishioners on anything that you would like me to share during these reviews. Please let me know by February 8th if you have any feedback that you would like to share.

The Nominating Committee Report, which is an organization chart, is included in this issue of the Belfry. Note that we still have a few vacancies and we are looking for volunteers for Local Outreach (i.e. food collections and Got Lunch) as well as National / International Outreach (Ukama and UCC Conference initiatives.) We are also still looking for one more Delegate to the conference, so let me know if anyone has any interest or questions.

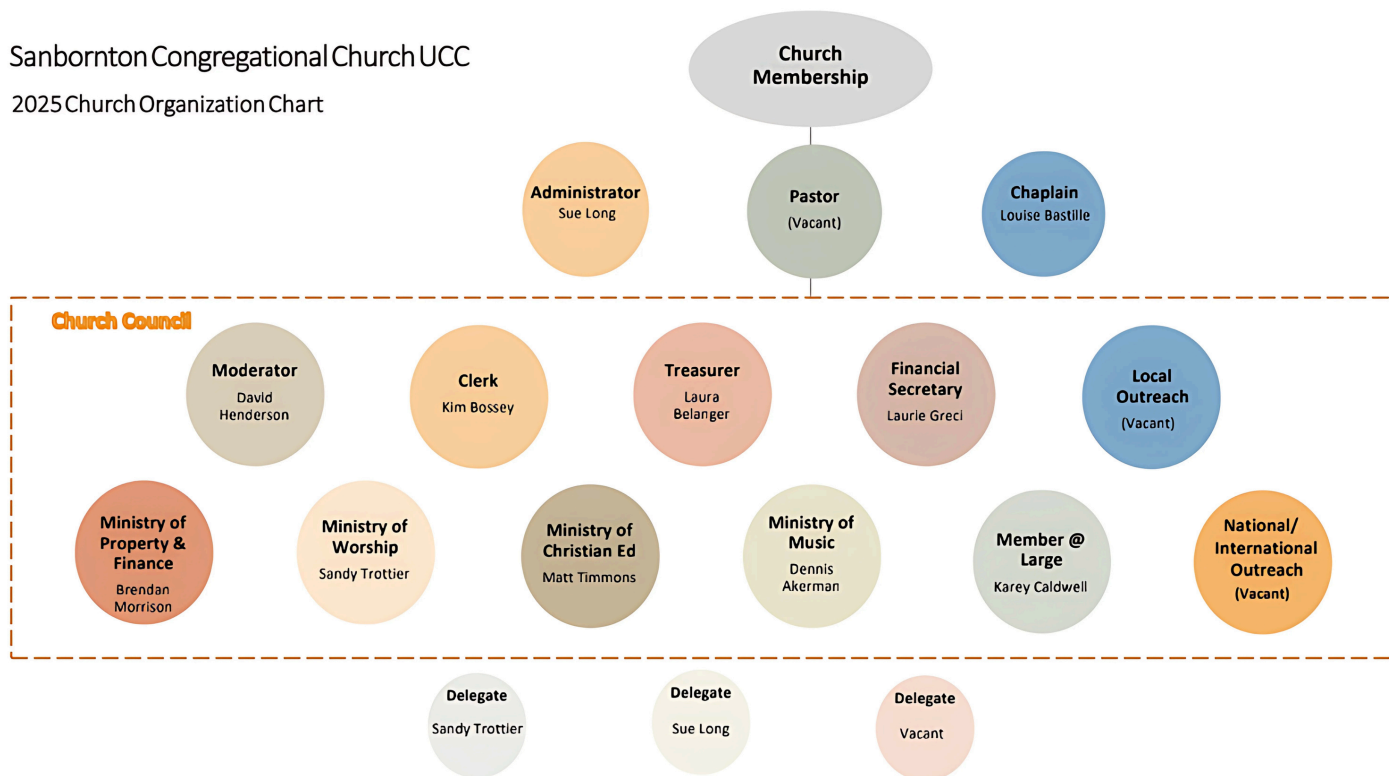
Next weekend we are holding our Vision 2026 planning session (with a virtual option) in the Undercroft of the church on Saturday, February 8th at 9am. We will be reviewing the progress we made on goals that we set last year as well as drafting updated goals for the next year. Be sure and join us as we brainstorm ideas for the next year. Everyone will be provided with stickers again where they can vote for their favorite ideas, and we will then work on those ideas with the most votes over the next year. We will also leave the charts on the walls for an extra day so that if someone cannot make the Saturday meeting, they can still vote for their favorite ideas the following Sunday during Coffee hour.

I am looking forward to another great year at our church as we continue to grow and remain supportive and active in our local, National and International communities!

Faithfully,

David Henderson, Church Moderator

Sanbornton Congregational Church UCC  
2025 Church Organization Chart



## Save the Dates!

- Saturday, February 8, 2025 - Vision 2026 meeting in the Undercroft and on-line
- Saturday, February 22, 2025 - [Prepared to Serve at Pembroke Academy](#)
- Sunday, March 16, 2025 - Merrimack Association Thanksgiving and Celebration hosted at Sanbornton Congregational Church at 2 pm
- Ash Wednesday - March 5, 2025
- Palm Sunday - April 13, 2025
- Easter - April 20, 2025

## *News From The New Hampshire Conference*

### **NEWS from Horton Center**

Are you READY for summer 2025?! - NEW Adult Program Offerings!

We are feeling excited for all that is to come this year at Horton Center. With expanded offerings for adults, we are confident that everyone can find a session that excites them!

[Check out the list below and learn more at hortoncenter.org](http://hortoncenter.org)

- Wilderness First Aid (June 7-8) - a two-day WFA certification course, meals and housing available
- Open House (June 15th) - enjoy worship, camp tours, activities and more as we kick off our 2025 season!
- Peace, Faith & Rejuvenation (July 31-August 3) adult women's retreat
- Men's Fellowship Retreat (August 11-14) back for the first time in several years!
- Ministries and Mission Groups Weekend (August 22-24) members of NH UCC Ministries and Mission Groups will gather for time to connect and enjoy the mt.
- Family and Friends Weekend (August 29-September 1) calling all families and friends for a weekend full of all the camp fun and joy you're looking for!
- Work in Progress Weekend (September 5-6)- this weekend includes two retreats: "Yoga and Meditation on the Mountain" and "Peaceful Quilting" - regardless of what you sign up for you're welcome to pick and choose activities being offered by either session! Craft, stretch, breathe, reconnect, and enjoy the beauty of Horton Center!

### **Prepared to Serve**

Registration is Open for Prepared to Serve for a short while longer! Classes fill up, so check out the Course Guide, sign up to attend, and keep up with the latest details on the [Prepared to Serve Event Page](#)

# What is



## OCWM BASIC SUPPORT

Provides funding from congregations for Conferences and the national ministries of the United Church of Christ (Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, General Ministries, and Pension Boards).

## UCC SPECIAL MISSION OFFERINGS

Part of OCWM, these four offerings sponsor vital ministries that bring hope to people in the U.S. and around the world.

### Neighbors in Need

#### First Sunday in October

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants.

### One Great Hour of Sharing

#### Fourth Sunday of Lent

The United Church of Christ responds to humanitarian and development needs in the world. Gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing® carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. Through our work with local churches, conferences, international partners and organizations, One Great Hour of Sharing provides sources of clean water, food, education, health care, small business micro-credit loans, advocacy, resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, emergency relief and rehabilitation as well as disaster preparedness and response.

### The Christmas Fund

#### Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties.

### Strengthen the Church

#### Pentecost

The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.

## *From the Historian*

Last month I shared with you something a little different than my usual article - an email sent to me by Ann Knott, some 10 years ago. As promised, here's Part 2 of: *\*THE CHILDREN'S BIBLE IN A NUTSHELL\**

*Another important Bible guy is Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh's people. These plagues included frogs, mice, lice, bowels, and no cable.*

*God fed the Israel Lights every day with manicotti. Then he gave them His Top Ten Commandments. These include: don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance, or covet your neighbor's stuff.*

*Oh, yeah, I just thought of one more: Humor thy father and thy mother.*

*One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua who was the first Bible guy to use spies. Joshua fought the battle of Geritol and the fence fell over on the town.*

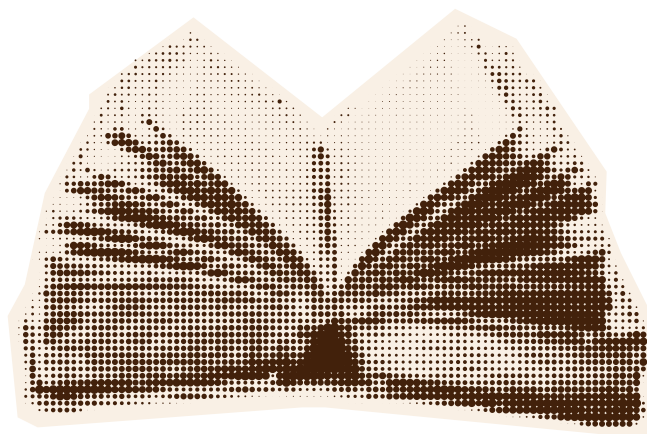
*After Joshua came David. He got to be king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon who had about 300 wives and 500 porcupines. My teacher says he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me.*

*After Solomon there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a big whale and then barfed up on the shore.*

*There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them.*

*\*Stay tuned for the final segment in next month's Belfry!*

Submitted by Karey Caldwell



# The 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 unique names to each recurring full moon. These full moon names were used to identify the entire month during which each occurred. The Algonquin tribes had a great effect on the early European settlers in America, and the settlers adopted their habit of naming the moons. They even invented some of their own moon names that have been passed down through time.

## **February Full Moon - "The Snow Moon" Feb. 12th**

Since the heaviest snow usually falls during this month, native tribes of the north and east most often called February's full Moon the Full Snow Moon. Some tribes also referred to this Moon as the Full Hunger Moon, since harsh weather conditions in their areas made hunting very difficult. Other names for this moon are Trapper's Moon, Budding Moon, Bony Moon, Little Famine Moon, Moon of The Raccoon, Moon When Trees Pop, Moon of Ice and Storm Moon.

**The planetary party will continue in February** as Venus blazes at its brightest for the year after sunset, then Mars and Jupiter will rule the night amid the menagerie of bright winter stars! Check out <https://www.almanac.com/night-sky-february> for all the details of this month's night sky events!

Submitted by Karey Caldwell



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Just like the popular phrase “God is Still Speaking”, we are still thinking about Stewardship. Stewardship isn’t just about paying the bills and / or balancing the budget, although those things are certainly important, because without ensuring a solid base, how can we hope to reach out and help others? If we know we are falling a bit short of our financial goals, yes, our brains engage in money talk. Sometimes, however, it is more meaningful (and ultimately more productive) to think about how we shall contribute from a heartfelt point of view.

Throughout our faith journey, we are extended many invitations. From the invitation to make our confession of faith, to the invitation to care for a sick neighbor, to invitations to contribute money toward this cause or that, to the invitation to bring food to the next church event, our lives, in a community of faith, is full of invitations. During this coming year, our church community needs to be intentional about how we respond to the variety of invitations we receive and how those invitations spur us along in our faith development.

Jesus invites us to bring all that we are and all that we have when we become a follower and a disciple of Christ. It is a journey through the disciplines of study, worship, prayer, service, and generosity, strengthening us in becoming powerful agents for the good that God is doing in our communities and the world.

The world is broken and hurting and we are called to proclaim that God IS Still Speaking healing words. We can be agents of grace, if we are generous in our response to the invitations that are presented to us. Your prayers, your participation and your contributions whether they be monetary or volunteer acts of work or kindness; these are keys to helping us advance further on the pathway of Stewardship (loving care for our church, its people and the community beyond), Discipleship (walking in a path that reflects God’s wishes, ways, thinking and action) and Leaving a Legacy (preserving a good history, and teaching its importance then and now to the next generation), These, in turn, help ensure that goodness or Godness carries on in the world . . . or in places like our small but great old New England church, that thus far continues to thrive and reach out to serve the community, hopefully for generations to come. May we respond accordingly so that, as we are told in the Book of Acts, “there was not a needy person among them.”

This past weekend, on Saturday, we paid tribute to and celebrated the life of David Hart, a long-time member of our church family. We saw and heard from children and grandchildren who had the privilege of sharing with us, and we with them, the Love and the Legacy that their father and grandfather, Dave left, not only for them in their lives, but also for his fellow parishioners here in our church.

May we continue to build upon, maintain, and leave a legacy in this 1771 “old New England” church for generations to come, through love, volunteerism, hard work, a pledge of our financial support . . . and our faith, in walking the pathway God intended.

Marg Whedon for Stewardship