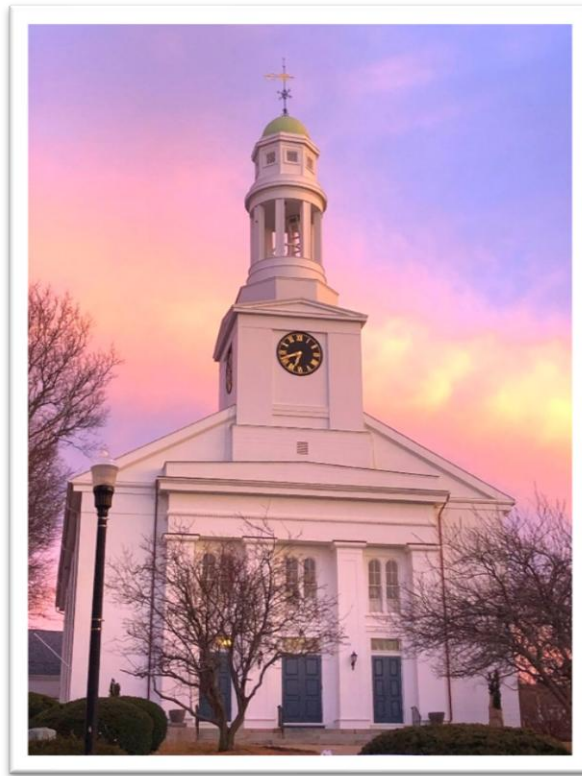


The First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC

12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA

Sunday, August 23, 2026

13th Sunday after Pentecost



*The First Congregational Church of Rockport is an
Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ.
Whoever you are and wherever you are on your journey of faith,
you are welcome here for an hour or a lifetime.*

About Us

Our Covenant

We, the members of this congregation welcome you with gladness into our lives. We renew our covenant of faith and offer you our support, encouragement and love to the end that all of us may grow in the boundless mercy of God. By loving and being loved, forgiving and being forgiven, serving and being served, let us go forward together with courage as Christ's disciples, glorifying God by being fully alive.

Our Open and Affirming Statement

We, the members of The First Congregational Church of Rockport are called upon to love each other as God loves us, freely and unconditionally. Therefore, we covenant to become an Open and Affirming congregation, welcoming persons of every age, ability, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, nationality, ethnicity and immigration status into full membership and participation in our community life and ministry. We embrace and support those who experience rejection and exile from spiritual community and commit ourselves to the struggle against injustice.

Serving the Church

The Congregation, Ministers
Rev. Dr. James Olson, Interim Pastor
Dr. Philip Swanson, Music Director
Kristina Martin, Associate Music Director
Dr. Gillian Hurst Section Leader, Soloist
Kaitlyn Welch, Director of Faith Formation
Annette Mackin, Office Manager
Phil Bynarowicz, Church Sexton
Daniel Chase, Tech. Person

Contact information

978/546-6638
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12 School St., Rockport, Mass.
01966
www.oldsloop.org
Pastor Office Hours: Thursday and
Friday 10-noon
Church Office Hours
Wed., Thurs. Fri. 9:00 am – noon
and 1:00 to 3:00 pm



Welcome to our Sanctuary! Hearing devices are on a rack by the main entrance, cushions are available in the last pew. Please be at home and comfortable here!

Welcome to parents of young children: Relax! There are worship carts available with coloring, books, fidgets, sensory items etc. to use during the summer months. God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress those wiggles in God's house. Consider sitting toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to engage. Quietly explain the parts of the service and actions of the pastor, musicians, and leaders. Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn behavior by mimicking you. If you have to leave the Sanctuary with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

Order of Worship

GATHERING

Prelude Psalm 23 The Lord is My Shepherd

A. Dvorak

Welcome

The Rev.Dr.James J. Olson

Announcements

Call to Worship

One: The body is a unit, though it is made of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body.

All: So it is with Christ.

One: For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-and given one Spirit to drink.

All: Let us worship God in Spirit and in truth.

*** Hymn #68** God Is Truly With Us (Black Hymnal)

Prayer of Invocation

Lucy Fales Evans

One: We thank you, living God, that in Christ Jesus you have built a house not made with hands, a people among whom you live. We thank you that you have called us and that we now belong to you. We come now, longing to know the touch of your Spirit, that we may be encouraged to serve you in the world. Come to us that we may recognize you and sing your praise; through the grace of Jesus Christ,

All: Amen.

WORD

Scripture Romans 12:1-8 Matthew 16:13-20

Lucy Fales Evans

Sermon

Rev. Olson

* **Hymn #404** Take My Life and Let It Be (Red Hymnal)

RESPONSE

Prayers of the People

All: Our Father and Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

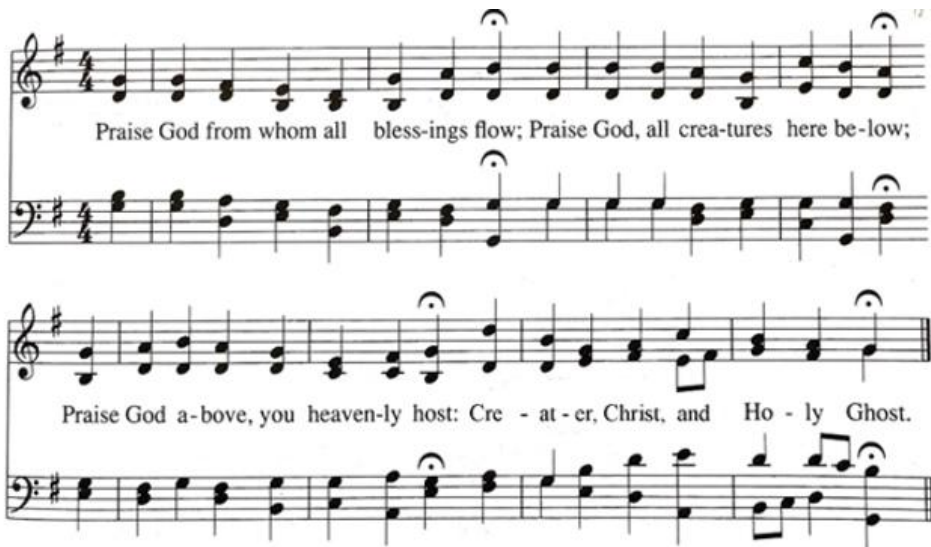


Offering

One: Through Christ let us continually praise God and share what we have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Offertory

* Doxology



Prayer of Dedication

One: Blessed are you, God of all creation; through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

All: Blessed be God forever. Amen.

SENDING AND DEPARTING

* **Hymn #306** The Church of Christ in Every Age (Black Hymnal)

* **Benediction**

Postlude Solo TBA

Today's Service Helpers

Liturgist Lucy Fales Evans

Usher Amy Seabrook

Tenor Soloist Antanas Meilus

*Altar flowers dedication this morning~
They will always be close in heart and mind
as our family continues to miss them with
every passing year ~ my middle brother,
David Babson and his wife, Val,
and my twin, William Warren Babson Jr.
given by Tom Babson, the youngest brother,
and their sister, Jill.*



Congregational Library and Archives

<https://congregationallibrary.org/membership>

14 Beacon St Boston

Visit us to explore over 400 years of Congregational history.

Rev. Dr. Liz Rice Smith, our church Historian, encourages church members to explore the Congregational Archives especially those of you interested in year round educational opportunities. Visit 14 Beacon St. in person in Boston or participate in online webinars

Summer is a great time to catch-up on videos you missed over the previous year. Revisit Dr. Lori Rogers-Stokes talk on her book, *Gathered Into a Church: Indigenous-English Congregationalism in Woodland New England*.

You can also explore over 100 videos from past talks, discussions, and events anytime. The Congregational story is about ordinary people doing extraordinary things, beginning with the seventeenth-century puritans, continuing in the activism of nineteenth-century abolitionists and social reformers, and seen in the work modern-day Congregational churches devote toward creating a just and open society. Available on our YouTube channel.

We acknowledge that the land we live on and the water that surrounds us were inhabited by the Pawtucket peoples, members of the Wabanaki Confederacy.

CALENDAR ~ August 23-30, 2026

Sunday, August 23 10:00 am Sunday Service
 2:00 pm Women's AA Group (Morgan Room)
 Outreach Com. Meets after Worship

Monday, August 24 Office Closed
 6:00-7:30 pm M. Downs Strings Rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, August 25 Office Closed
 11:00 am Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)
 7:00 pm Al-Anon (Morgan Room)

Wednesday, August 26 Office Open 9-noon and 1-3pm
 9:15 am Yoga (Fellowship Hall)
 3:00 pm Storytelling
 5:00 pm Bible Study Zoom

Thursday, August 27 Office Open 9-noon and 1-3pm
 9:30 am Book Group (Morgan Room)

Friday, August 28 Office Office Open 9-noon and 1-3pm
 1:00 pm Rise n Chime (Morgan Room)
 4:00 pm Prayer Service – Zoom

Saturday, August 29 8:30 am AA meeting- (Fellowship Hall)

Sunday, August 30 10:00 am Sunday Service
 2:00 pm Women's AA Group (Morgan Room)

*Please note that the first choir rehearsal will be Sept 9th.

**Youth Faith Formation begins on Sept. 13th with the "Blessing of the Backpacks"