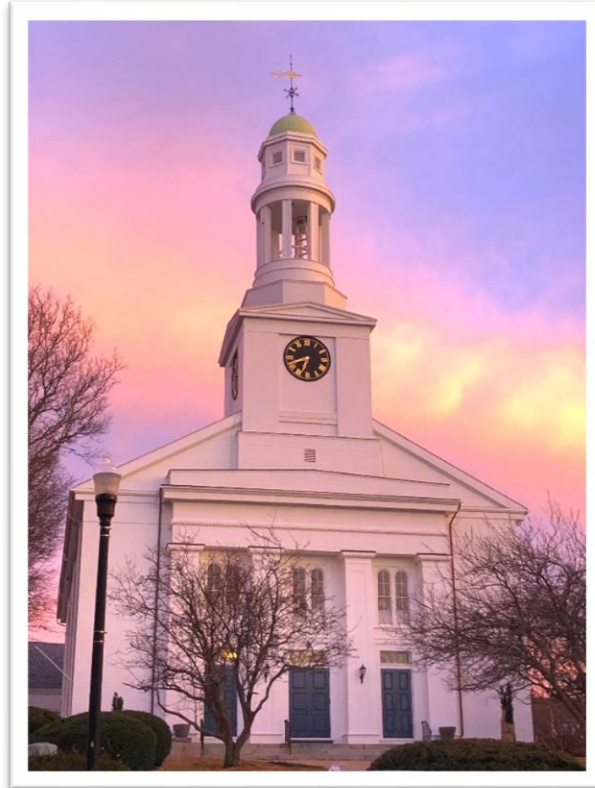


**The First Congregational Church  
of Rockport, UCC**

**12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA**

**April 5, 2026 Easter Sunday**



***He is risen!***

*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  
The Rev. Derek van Gulden, Pastor  
Dr. Philip Swanson, Music Director  
Kristina Martin, Associate Music Director  
Kaitlyn Welch, Director of Faith Formation  
Annette Mackin, Office Manager  
Phil Bynarowicz, Church Sexton  
Daniel Chase, Tech. Person

### **Contact information**

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

**Office Hours**  
Wed., Thurs. Fri.  
9:00 am – 2:00 pm  
Closed Monday & Tuesdays

*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!*

*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.*

## **Order of Worship**

### **We Gather as God's People**

**Prelude** Air a Italien / Rejouissance from Suite in A minor G.P. Telemann

**Introit** Loving Kindness ..Henry Purcell

soloist: Gillian Hurst

**Welcome**

Rev. Derek van Gulden

One: He is risen!

**Many: He is risen, indeed!**

**Hymn\*** #233 Christ the Lord is Risen Today

**Call to Worship (inspired by Psalm 118)**

One: O give thanks to the Holy One, for God is good; God's love abides, endures, and prevails forever!

**Many: Alleluia! The resurrection life comes to us. Christ is risen!**

One: In distress, I call. In grief, I cry. In despair, I come. The Holy One answers. The Holy One comforts. The Holy One comes.

**Many: Alleluia! The resurrection life comes to us. Christ is risen!**

One: God, my refuge and confidence, surrounds me with strength and victory! Exalt God's holy name!

**Many: Alleluia! The resurrection life comes to us. Christ is risen!**

## **Prayer of Invocation**

Sue Bowers

Holy One, just as they came to the tomb to honor you on that early Easter morning, we gather to praise you this day. May our alleluias resound in adoration and shared joy that you are risen and we share in the promise of new life. May we encounter your glory in this assembled community as we follow you from the empty tomb into the possibilities that await. Amen.

**Song** Lord of the Dance

## **Prayer for Transformation and New Life**

Holy Love, in every ending, there is a beginning. In the same way, beginnings signal an end. May the promise of new life enable us to end the things that do not serve us, to end the attitudes that do not honor you, and to end the ways in which we are complacent and complicit in the world. Grant us grace when the realities of life overwhelm, threaten to consume us, and mire us in the past. For the newness of life, we pray. Have mercy on us, Holy One. Amen.

## **Words of Grace**

Beloved, Jesus is risen. The Holy One is yet alive, and therefore, doing a new thing. Receive the grace of God that requires no resurrection to rise to meet us in our weakness. Embrace the grace of God to move forward boldly in new life. Hold fast to the grace of God to guide you in living the resurrected life.

## **Passing the Peace**

**Music** Sing and Rejoice

R. Robinson

Youth musicians & Chancel Choir

**We Listen for God's Word**

**Scripture** Psalm 107, Mark 16:1-8

Sue Bowers

**Sermon** In our end is our beginning.

Rev. Derek

**Choral Anthem** O Sons and Daughters

H. Walford Davies

## Prayers of the People

### **The Lord's Prayer** (*The New Zealand Book of Common Prayer*)

Eternal Spirit Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all. Loving God, in whom is heaven. The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the earth! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

### **Response #769 Hear Our Prayer**

Musical notation for the response "Hear Our Prayer". The notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The lyrics are: "Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God; in - cline your ear to us, and grant us your peace."

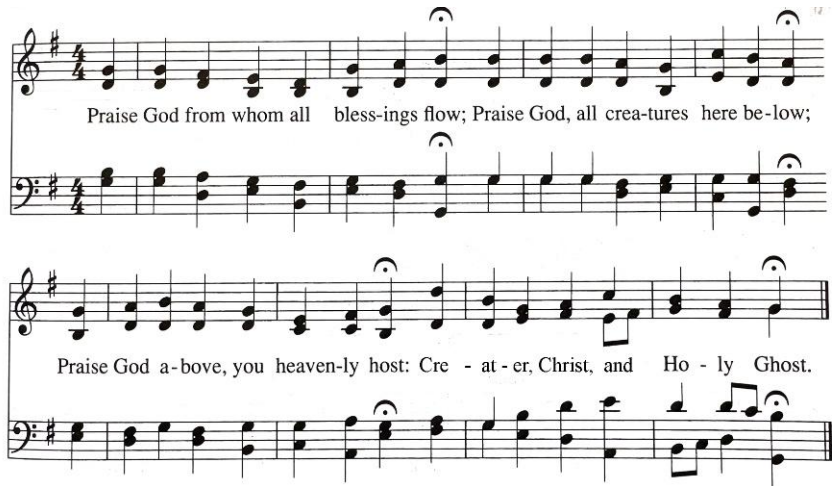
**Music** I Weep Because They Have Taken My Lord Away F. Mendelssohn  
Duet Kristina Martin and Gillian Hurst

## We Respond to God's Word

**Offertory** Andante from Sonata for Flute and Continuo J. S. Bach

*Our offering this Easter goes to The Open Door. "The mission of The Open Door is to alleviate the impact of hunger in our community."*

### Doxology



Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here be-low;

Praise God a-bove, you heaven-ly host: Cre - at - er, Christ, and Ho - ly Ghost.

### Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

#### We Take God's Light into the World

**Hymn\* #240** Jesus Christ is Risen Today

### Benediction

"Promise me that you'll give faith a fighting chance, And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance... I hope you dance!"

And may the Loving God, Risen Christ, and Dancing Spirit fill you with all you need for the days ahead. And all God's people said, "**Amen!**"

*Lyrics from singer Lee Ann Womack*

**Postlude** Allegro from Sonata for Flute

G. F. Handel

**Guest musicians** Stephanie Stathos, flute; Stephen Smith, cello.

***Please join us for the Coffee Hour after the Service in Fellowship Hall hosted by the Old Sloop Fleet.***

**Today's Worship Service Helpers**

**Liturgist** Sue Bowers

**Ushers** Jay and Barbara Reed



*Please see the Easter Flower Dedications insert in today's Bulletin*

**Congregation Pot Luck**  
**April 7th at 6pm in Fellowship Hall**  
*Continuing our monthly potluck dinner on the first Tuesday of each month.*



*You may re-heat your dish in the church kitchen. Please provide a label with your dish listing main ingredients.*

***Old Sloop Presents*** [oldslooppresents.org](http://oldslooppresents.org)  
***Sat Apr. 18: Antje Duvekot and David Berkeley***  
***Sat May 2 Abbie Gardner, Jenna Nicholls opens***  
Your Old Sloop Fleet has a new Birthdays Greetings Crew!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS April 5 to 12, 2026

- Sunday, April 5     **Easter Sunday**  
6:00 am     Ecumenical Sunrise Service at Good Harbor Beach  
10:00 am     Easter Sunday Service Youth in the service.  
Coffee Hour after the service hosted by the Old Sloop Fleet
- Monday, April 6     **Office Closed**
- Tuesday, April 7     **Office Closed**  
11:00 am     Tai Chi (Fellowship Hal)  
7:00 pm     Al-Anon ( Morgan Room)  
7:00 pm     Membership Committee (Zoom)
- Wednesday, April 8     **Church Office Open 9-2**  
9:15 am     Yoga (Fellowship Hall)  
3:00 pm     Storytelling Zoom  
5:00 pm     Bible Study Zoom  
7:30 pm     Choir Rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)
- Thursday, April 9     **Church Office Open 9 am-2 pm**  
9:30 am     Book Group (Morgan Rm)  
4-5:30 pm     Youth Group
- Friday, April 10     **Church Office Open 9 am-2pm**  
4:00 pm     Prayer Service – Zoom
- Saturday, April 11  
8:30 am     AA meeting- (Fellowship Hall)
- Sunday, April 12     10:00     Sunday Service  
10:15     Old Sloop Youth Faith Formation  
Coffee Hour after the service hosted by the Cabinet  
1:00     Deacons meeting

April 26th ~ Pastor Derek Blessing and Sendoff

April 26 is our **Final Service with Rev. Derek** After worship we will have a Gathering Meal to honor and thank Pastor Derek with his family, friends and special guests. Hosted by the Old Sloop Congregation.