

**The First Congregational Church
of Rockport, UCC
12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA
February 8, 2026**



The First Congregational Church of Rockport, “The Old Sloop,” 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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Office Hours Wed., Thurs., Fri. 9-2

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Order of Worship

**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.**

We Gather as God's People

Prelude Prelude on "Nettleton" (Come Thou Fount) Robert Robinson

Welcome Rev. Derek

Hymn* #421 We Gather Together

Announcements

Mission Moment Youth Faith Formation

Call to Worship

Leader: Shout it out—no holding back!

People: **There is truth that needs to be spoken.**

Leader: Let the people rise and hear it.

People: **We are listening. We stand ready.**

Leader: Let our voices be heard.

Prayer of Invocation Rick Kasten

Nourishing God, we give you thanks for the physical and spiritual food that sustains us. Open our eyes to the light of possibilities, even when the day ahead holds difficulties. Be with us, near us, beside us. In the name of the Prince of Peace, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Calling Presence, who knows our hidden places, we admit that we have not always chosen the path that frees. We have stayed silent when truth asked for our voice; we have protected our comfort when compassion asked for our hands; we have waited for others to do the work you entrusted to us. Loosen our resistance, lift the habits that keep us from seeing one another clearly, and break the patterns that bind us to what harms. Let this moment mark a turning—a turning toward your justice, a turning toward your tenderness, a turning toward the shared life you imagine for us. In your grace, make us new. Amen.

Words of Grace

Passing of the Peace

Communion Hymn #332 As We Gather at Your Table

Service of Holy Communion

Youth leave for Faith Formation.

We Listen for God's Word

Scripture Isaiah 58:1-9a; Matthew 5:13-20

Rick Kasten

Sermon Let your voice be heard.

Rev. Derek

Choral Anthem "Bread of the World" trad. Scottish/arr. Alan Bullard

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father our 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, now and forever. Amen.

Response #769 Hear Our Prayer

Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God; incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

We Respond to God's Word

Offering

Doxology

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

We Take God's Light into the World

Hymn # 501 We Are Dancing Sarah's Circle

Benediction

Rev. Derek

Postlude Toccata in E minor

Johann Pachelbel

All welcome to coffee hour in Fellowship Hall hosted by the Music Committee. Play Candy Bingo with the Faith Formation Committee during the coffee hour.

Today's Worship Service Helpers

Ushers Linda Kluge and Laurie McKenna

Liturgist Rick Kasten

*The Altar Flowers today are given
by Amy Seabrook and dedicated to
the memory of joyful Wahyu Prapto.*



Coming to Old Sloop Presents

RUNA

Fri Mar. 13: RUNA

RUNA breathes fresh life into traditional Celtic music by digging into the songs and tunes to find the universal thread that binds past to present.

Antje Duvekot and David Berkeley

Sat Apr. 18: Antje Duvekot and David Berkeley

Two outstanding singer-songwriters, a New Englander originally from Germany and a traveler from New Mexico

Abbie Gardner

Sat May 2: Abbie Gardner – Jenna Nicholls opens

“Not only a first-rate Dobro player but a songwriter to be reckoned with.”

–John Platt, WFUV

The Black Feathers

Sat May 30: The Black Feathers – Nora Meier opens

“The Black Feathers could well be Britain’s answer to Gillian Welch and Dave Rawlings” – Flying Shoes



SURELY!

a Musical Celebration

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life...

~

*Musicians from the First Congregational Church of Rockport,
along with others from neighboring congregations,
will present an eclectic program of vocal and instrumental works,
including a series of spoken reflections and vocal arrangements
based on the 23rd Psalm.*

*Followed by a resplendent display of edibles
by the Old Sloop's culinary artists!*

~

*In gratitude for music,
for our vibrant Cape Ann community,
and for the 14-year stewardship
of Reverend Derek Van Gulden
at the Old Sloop*

Sunday, March 8, 4:00 pm.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS Feb. 8-15, 2026

Sunday, Feb. 8	10:00 am	Worship Service, Holy Communion
	10:15 am	Old Sloop Youth Faith Formation
	2:00 pm	AA Women's Group (Morgan Room)
	3:00 pm	Rockport Music Classical Concert
Monday, Feb. 9		Office Closed
	3:45 pm	CAYC rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)
	6:00 pm	Orchestra rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)
	7:00 pm	Trustees Meet online
Tuesday, Feb. 10		Office Closed
	11:00 am	Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)
	7:00 pm	Al-Anon (Morgan Room)
Wednesday, Feb. 11		Church Office Open 9-2 (Yoga class returns Mar. 11)
	3:00 pm	Storytelling Zoom
	5:00 pm	Bible Study Zoom
	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)
Thursday, Feb. 12		Church Office Open 9-2
	9:30 am	Book Group (Morgan Room)
	4-5:30 pm	Old Sloop Youth
Friday, Feb. 13		Church Office Open 9-2
	4:00 pm	Prayer service on Zoom
	6:00 pm	Community Discussion (Brown bag) Fellowship Hall
Saturday, Feb. 14		
	8:30 am	AA meeting (Fellowship Hall)
Sunday, Feb. 15		10 am. Worship Service
	2:00 pm	AA Women's Group (Morgan Room)
	2:30 pm	Pastor service at Oceanside