

**The First Congregational Church
of Rockport, UCC
12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA
January 4, 2026
Three Kings Day Sunday**



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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12 School St Rockport, MA 01966

Office Hours Wed., Thurs., Fri. 9-2

978-546-6638

www.oldsloop.org



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 Noels

Claude Balbastre

Welcome

Rev. Derek

Hymn* 143 (Red Hymnal) We Three Kings of Orient Are

Call to Worship:

One: Arise! Shine! Your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you!

Women: We have seen the star in the east, and we are following.

Men: We have remembered God's wonder and promise, and we are worshiping.

All: We have come not to get presents, but to give them!

One: Lift up your eyes and look around; God's people now gather together, to open our hearts and sing out our praise.

All: The mystery of God's wonder and grace is here: Come, let us adore!

Mission Moment

Outreach

Jay Reed

Prayer of Invocation

Jim Schell

Radiant and Revealing God, you dwell not in temples or thrones but among us— in caravans of mercy, in the faces of those returning home, in the shimmering abundance of the sea. You are the star that stirs our seeking, the Presence that refuses to be hidden, the Word made flesh in neighbor and stranger alike.

As we gather, let your justice take root in our hearts, your joy rise on our lips, your compassion steady our hands, and your peace settle upon this world you so dearly love. Lift our eyes, O Holy One, so that we may see as you see—creation radiant, humanity restored, and your dwelling now among us. Amen.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Holy God, all things came into being through you. You enlighten our lives. Ignite a hunger and thirst for righteousness, justice, and truth in us. Spark compassion in our hearts. Make us a righteous branch in the vineyard. In the name of Jesus and hope of restoration, we pray. Amen.

Words of Grace

Beloved, trust that the grace of God has appeared, bringing new life to all. Receive the gifts of grace and mercy from the Compassionate One who recognizes your repentance, comes to you in your weakness, offers strength for transformation, provides encouragement for repair, and grants forgiveness for sin.

Passing the Peace

We Listen for God's Word

Scripture Isaiah 60:1-6; Matt 2:1-12

Jim Schell

Sermon Look Up

Rev. Derek

Solo The Kings

Peter Cornelius

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

We Respond to God's Word

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

Doxology

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Communion Hymn Come to the Table of Grace (Insert)

Celebration of Holy Communion (insert)

Solo The Moon Shines Bright traditional tune

We Take God's Light into the World

Hymn* 164 Arise, Your Light Is Come

Benediction Rev. Derek

Postlude Noel Suisse Daquin

Our Soloist today Gillian Hurst

Today's Worship Service Helpers

Ushers Susan Lillis and Kevin McDonough

Liturgist Jim Schell

***We continue to enjoy the Poinsettias in the Chancel
during all Twelve Days of Christmas!***



CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING

The First Congregational Church of Rockport

The 272nd Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Rockport, Massachusetts will be held on Sunday, January 25, 2025 commencing at 11:00 AM, to consider and act upon the following:

- 1. Reports of the Church Officers and Committees.*
- 2. The report of the Nominating Committee and the election of Church Officers and Committee Members.*
- 3. The Annual Budget proposed by the Board of Trustees.*
- 4. Any other business that may be brought legally before the meeting.*

Because of ongoing health concerns, this will be a hybrid meeting. Instructions for how to participate remotely will be distributed shortly.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan G. Lillis

Clerk of the Church, clerk@oldsloop.org, 978-546-6638



CALENDAR OF EVENTS Jan 4-11, 2026

Sunday, Jan. 4	10:00 am	Worship Service, Holy Communion No Sunday School
.	2:00 pm	AA Women's Group
Monday, Jan 5	Office Open 10-2	
	Informal coffee at 9am	Bracketts/Brothers Brew all welcome.
	3:45-6	CAYC Rehearsal Fellowship Hall
Tuesday, Jan 6	Office Open 10-2	
	11:00 am	Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)
	7:00 pm	Al-Anon (Morgan Room)
Wednesday, Jan 7	Church Office -Open 9-2	
Thursday, Jan 8	Church Office Open 9-2	
	4-5:30	Old Sloop Youth Group
Friday, Jan 9	Church Office Open 9-2	
	4:00 pm	Prayer service on Zoom
Saturday, Jan 10		
	8:30 am	AA meeting (Fellowship Hall)
Sunday, Jan 11	10:00 am	Worship Service
	10:15	Old Sloop Youth Sunday School
		Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall after worship hosted by the Ushers Committee.
		Outreach Meets in Morgan Room
	2:00 pm	AA Women's Group