

**The First Congregational Church  
of Rockport, UCC  
12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA  
January 11, 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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12 School St Rockport, MA 01966

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

978-546-6638

[www.oldloop.org](http://www.oldloop.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**

### **Welcome**

Rev. Derek

### **Hymn #154 Go Tell it on the Mountain**

### **Call to Worship**

One God is Good

**All: All the Time,**

One: All the Time,

**All: God is Good**

**All: Because that is God's nature!**

### **Announcements**

### **Stewardship Moment**

Jack Reed

### **Prayer of Invocation**

Rev. Derek

Fountain of life, we thank you that you have come among us in Jesus Christ. We pray that Jesus' words will change our lives. Settle with us today and bless us with the 'Peace which surpasses all understand. Amen.

### **Prayer of Transformation and New Life**

Gracious God, we confess that too often we live as though we are fearful, not faithful. When we encounter the waters of chaos and confusion, we don't easily pass through them, but we obsess about

the height of the water instead of the sight of the other side. You promised to walk through the rivers with us. Help us believe. And help our unbelief. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

## Words of Grace

God does not turn us away when we falter. We are, instead, taken in and given sanctuary so that we may revive in God's tender mercy. God will be our shelter while we rest, as well as when we are ready, once again, to rise up. Thanks be to God!

## Passing of the Peace

## Music

## We Listen for God's Word

Scripture Psalm 23; Matthew 11:28-30 Rev. Derek

**Sermon** Finding Hope Rev. Derek

## Prayers of the People

## **The Lord's Prayer** Traditional Response #769 Hear Our Prayer

## We Respond to God's Word

## Offering

## Doxology

## Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

## We Take God's Light into the World

**Hymn # 160 hark the Herald Angels Sing**

**Benediction**

Rev. Derek

**Postlude**

***Join us for Coffee Hour after the service  
hosted by the Ushers Committee***

### **Today's Worship Service Helpers**

**Ushers** Susan Lillis and Kevin McDonough

**Liturgist** Rev. Derek

The flowers on the altar this morning  
are given to invite prayer in support of our  
Cabinet's efforts to describe a  
mission/vision statement  
for our congregation.



### **Candy Bar Bingo!**

*The Faith Formation committee is going to hold an Intergenerational Candy Bar Bingo activity immediately following worship on Sunday, February 1st. All are welcome to join, a great opportunity to invite someone new to church! All that is required is a candy bar or two for your bingo cards. (The more candy bars you bring in, the more cards you get to increase your chance of winning!)*

***Diapers Needed for the Open Door Please donate any size diapers including adult in our collection box in the 12 School St. Lobby.***

***The Nominating Committee is still looking for people to serve on the Diaconate, Membership, and Flower committees beginning in January 2026. Giving your time and talent is an important form of stewardship upon which the Church relies. If interested, please send an email to nomcom@oldsloop.org or reach out to any one of the members of the Nominating Committee, who are Geof Lyon, Lucy Fales Evans, Barbara Reed, Wendy Woodbury, Katie Welch, Susan Himm, and Laurie McKenna. Thank you.***

## **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](mailto:clerk@oldsloop.org), 978-546-6638*

***\*The Trustees and Treasurer will host a review of the new budget for 2026 on Sunday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> 11am.***



## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS Jan 11-18, 2026**

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Sunday, Jan. 11 10:00 am Worship Service  
10:15 am Old Sloop Youth Faith Formation  
    Coffee Hour after the service hosted by the Ushers Committee  
11:30am Outreach (Morgan Room)  
2:00 pm AA Women's Group (Morgan Room)

Monday, Jan 12 Office Open 10-2  
    Informal coffee at 9am Bracketts/Brothers Brew all welcome.  
3:45-6 pm CAYC Rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)  
6:30 pm Orchestra (Fellowship Hall)  
7:00 pm Trustees meet online

Tuesday, 13 Office Open 10-2  
11:00 am Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)  
7:00 pm Al-Anon ( Morgan Room)

Wednesday, Jan 14 Church Office -Open 9-2  
9:15 am Yoga (Fellowship Hall)  
1:30 pm Chime Rehearsal (Morgan Room)  
3:00 pm Storytelling Zoom  
5:00 pm Bible Study Zoom

Thursday, Jan 15 Church Office Open 9-2  
9:30 am Book Group (Morgan Room)  
4-5:30 Old Sloop Youth Group

Friday, Jan 16 Church Office Open 9-2  
4:00 pm Prayer service on Zoom

Saturday, Jan 17  
8:30 am AA meeting (Fellowship Hall)

Sunday, Jan 18  
10:00 am Worship Service  
10:15 Old Sloop Youth Faith Formation  
    Budget Review meeting in preparation for the  
    2026 Annual Meeting  
2:00 pm AA Women's Group (Morgan Room)  
7:00 pm Cabinet meets online