

**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

office@oldsloop.org

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

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 Himml, 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, 978-546-6638

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



CALENDAR OF EVENTS Jan 11-18, 2026

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
 11:00 am 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