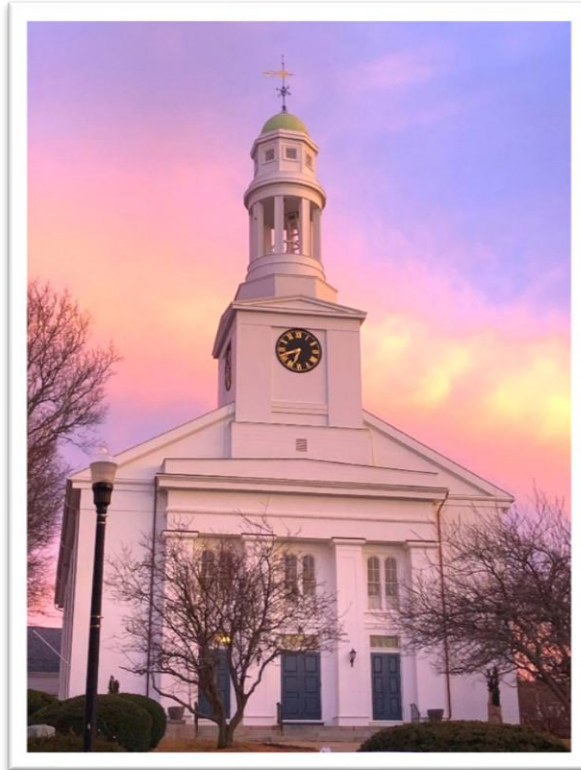


**The First Congregational Church  
of Rockport, UCC**

**12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA**

**June 7, 2026**



*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  
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**

*This morning we embark on a series of 3 sermons that, together, could be titled, "What We Learned along the Way". They'll be focused on this transitional time as the Old Sloop gets ready to take a new tack, heading from a familiar place to a new, richly-imagined but still unknown place – into a new season in your long history. We'll look for guidance and companionship in the journey of the ancient Hebrew people from Egypt to their place of promise – focusing on 3 moments in the book of Exodus that distill important lessons we might do well to carry with us as we go. Each of these 3 stories from Exodus will be paired with a text from the gospel of Matthew - so that we can take to heart the company of Jesus along the way. For those who like to read ahead:*

***June 7 - Exodus 3:1-15 and Matthew 16:13-17, 21-25 – sermon, Who Am I?***

***June 14 - Exodus 17:1-17 and Matthew 5:1-16 – sermon, Are You There?***

***June 21 - Exodus 32:1-20 and Matthew 22:15-22 – sermon, Devices and Desires***

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

**Prelude** Lord, Keep Us Steadfast

Johann Walter

**Welcome**

Rev. Rick Spalding

**Hymn\*** #18 Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer

## **Announcements**

**Call to Worship** (adapted from Isaiah 61:1...11)

One: The Spirit of the LORD is on us, because the LORD has anointed us to proclaim good news to the poor,

**All: God has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, to comfort all who mourn,**

One: to bestow on those who grieve a crown of beauty instead of ashes, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

**All: They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of God's own splendor.**

One: For thus says the Lord: "I love justice – and in faithfulness I will make an everlasting covenant with my people."

**All: I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in God - who has clothed me with garments of salvation. For as the soil of the garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.**

### **Prayer of Invocation**

Sue Bowers

You are present with us, Holy God, in this storied place and these centered moments.

May we be present to you: willing to risk, hoping to find, ready to think, able to love, eager to serve. Speak to us, O God. We are listening.

### **Prayer for Transformation and New Life (in unison)**

**Loving God – You have not waited for us to find our way to you; in Jesus you have met us along the way of this journey. We have limped or stumbled along some of that way; we labor and are heavy laden. Take from us, we pray, the burdens that impede our sound passage through this life: the memories of hurts given or received that still bind us, the fear and confusion that limit our compassion. We rejoice in meeting you here again, together, in these moments of hopeful prayer and heartfelt praise. Heal us, we pray, with the**

**balm of gratitude, and nourish us with food for thought and action - that we may be on the way where you would have us go – Amen.**

**Words of Grace**

Rev. Spalding

**Passing the Peace** Leader: The peace of Christ be with you,  
**Response:** and also with you.

### **We Listen for God's Word**

**Scripture** Exodus 3:1-15 Matthew 16:13-17, 21-25 Sue Bowers

**Sermon** Who Am I? Rev. Rick Spalding

**Choral Anthem** Whom Have I Jane Marshall

*text: Psalms 73:25, 26 (RSV)*

*Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing in the earth that I desire beside thee.*

*My heart and my flesh may fail, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.*

### **We Respond to God's Word**

**Prayers of the People**

**Offertory**

**Doxology**

**Prayer of Dedication**

God of abundant compassion – here, in this sanctuary we love, we have offered you these gifts gleaned from the substance of our living. Give us courage and conviction to follow these gifts out into the world which, in the strong company of Jesus, we are still learning to love – in his name, for his sake. Amen.

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**Hymn #332 - "As We Gather at Your Table"**

**Invitation to the Table**

**The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving  
(beginning with - )**

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

**(The prayer continues until it concludes with - )**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father and 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, for ever and ever. Amen**

**Words of Institution**

**The Sharing of the Feast**

**Communion Anthem    O Taste and See                    R. Vaughan Williams**

**Concluding Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)**

**O God, we thank you for uniting us here in the body of Christ,  
and in this shared meal, nourishing us with joy and hope.  
Grant that, in days to come,**

our lips which have sung your praise may speak your truth;  
our eyes which have seen your love may look with compassion  
on the world;

our ears which have heard your call may listen for the cries of  
need around us;

our hands which have held this bread and cup may be active in  
your service – all in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

Hymn \* #360 - Thuma Mina

### Benediction

Postlude Fantasia in G (excerpt)

J.S. Bach

### Today's Service Helpers

Liturgist Sue Bowers

Ushers Jack and Evelyn Reed

*Altar Flowers Dedication*

*Happy Pride from the Chambers family.*

*"Accept no one's definition of your life; define  
yourself." -Harvey Fierstein*



**The Old Sloop Fair.** July 10 and 11~ 9 am Starting July 5th, right after the worship service, the sanctuary will be available to store items for sale during the fair. If you need help getting your items to the church, Jack Reed and Jim Schell can help. **Boutique** – Louisa Casadei-Johnson and Susan Lillis **Bake Table** - Barbara Sachs ~ **Musicians** - Madeleine Down **Jewelry** - Celene Lyon ~ **Barbeque** - Steve Rowell ~ **Art** - Bonnie Gray **Tools and Yard Sale** - Rick Kasten, Laurie McKenna, and Jim Schell **Kids Fair** - Amy Seabrook ~ **Pottery** - Sarah Mowitt ~ **Knitted Goods** - Camilla Ayers

## CALENDAR June 7-14, 2026

Sunday, June 7 10:00 am Sunday Service Rev. Rick Spalding  
Coffee hour lite ~ Common Cathedral sandwich making, Fellowship Hall  
2:00 pm Women's AA group (Morgan Room)

Monday, June 8 Office Closed  
6:00-7:30 pm M. Downs Strings Rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, June 9 Office Closed  
11:00 am Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)  
7:00 pm Al-Anon (Morgan Room)

Wednesday, June 10 Church Office Open 9am -2pm  
9:15 am Yoga (Fellowship Hall)  
11:00 am Memorial service for Betsy Stickel, Reception Fellowship Hall  
3:00 pm Storytelling Zoom  
5:00 pm Bible Study Zoom  
7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)

Thursday, June 11 Church Office Open 9 am-2 pm  
9:30 am Book Group (Morgan Room)

Friday, June 12 Church Office Open 9 am-2pm  
4:00 pm Prayer Service – Zoom

Saturday, June 13 8:30 am AA meeting- (Fellowship Hall)

Sunday, June 14 10:00 am Sunday Service Rev. Richard Spalding  
Coffee Hour Hosted by the Choir  
2:00 pm Women's AA group (Morgan Room)

**Rev. Rick Spalding**, is a (retired) pastor in the Presbyterian Church (USA) who has held Dual Standing in several U.C.C. Associations. He studied at Yale Divinity School, Union Theological Seminary (NYC) and Hartford Seminary and served congregations in Albany, NY, New York City, and Boston before being called into the heart of his career as Chaplain at Williams College in Williamstown, MA. More bio on the web page, [oldsloop.org](https://oldsloop.org)

