

The First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC

12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA

Sunday, September 6, 2026

15th Sunday after Pentecost



*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
Rev. Dr. James Olson, Interim 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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Pastor Office Hours: Thursday and
Friday 10-noon
Church Office Hours
Wed., Thurs. Fri. 9:00 am – noon
and 1:00 to 3:00 pm



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!

Welcome to parents of young children: Relax! There are worship carts available with coloring, books, fidgets, sensory items etc. to use during the summer months. God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress those wiggles in God's house. Consider sitting toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to engage. Quietly explain the parts of the service and actions of the pastor, musicians, and leaders. Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn behavior by mimicking you. If you have to leave the Sanctuary with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

Order of Worship

GATHERING

Prelude Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ (In Thee Alone O Christ, my Lord)
J. Pachelbel

Welcome and Announcements

* **Hymn #70** God is Here! (Black Hymnal)

Call to Worship - Ps. 149:1-4 (alt.)

One: Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song,
God's praise in the assembly of the faithful.

All: Let Israel be glad in its Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.

One: Let us praise God's name with dancing, making melody with
tambourine and lyre.

All: For the LORD takes pleasure in the people; and adorns the humble with victory.

Prayer of Invocation

Elsa Tranfaglia

One: Holy God, you call us to righteousness and light.
Teach us the undivided law of love, that we may love your children

even as you do, love you with all our will and strength, and find our freedom in this blessed service, taught to us in word and deed by Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Confession and Absolution

One: We are called to examine our faithfulness to God's covenant with us. God, in whose presence we gather, promises us grace and pardon when we acknowledge our weakness and failures. Let us confess our faults before almighty God.

All: Eternal God, whose Word is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path, we recognize and confess that we have failed to respond fully to your gracious presence in our lives. Through Jesus Christ, you have offered us new life, fulfillment, and the freedom and joy to serve you. We confess that we are captive to sin, that our sin binds us with false pride, and that the wrong we do is made worse by the good we leave undone. Reconcile us to you and to all people. God of mercy, forgive all our sin and strengthen us anew for life as you intend it; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

One: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether; the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel; that in Jesus Christ, we are loved and forgiven.

Peace

One: As a sign of our reconciliation with God and with one another, turn and greet each other. The peace of the Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

WORD

Scripture Romans 13:8-11 Matthew 18:15-20

Elsa Tranfaglia

Sermon

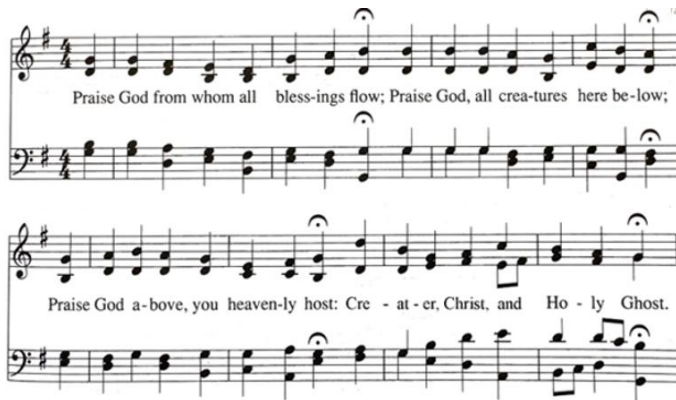
Prayers of the People



Offering

Offertory

* Doxology



Prayer of Dedication

One: Gracious God, we return to you just some of what you have first given us. We thank you for the ability to give. Bless these gifts, and bless us, that our offering may be used to further your work in the world. Amen.

COMMUNION

* **Hymn #331** "Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life (Black Hymnal)

Invitation

One: Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week, Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, and on that same day sat at the table with two disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

All: This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and gather about Christ's table.

One: This table is for all who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

Communion Prayer

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 God Most High.

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

One: We give you thanks, Holy One therefore, with the entire company of saints in heaven and on earth, we worship and glorify you God Most Holy, saying...

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!**

One: For in the night of betrayal...
Great is the Mystery of our faith.

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

One: Holy one, show forth among us to you, eternal God, now and forever, Amen. And now, we are bold to pray:

All: 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

One: The gifts of God, for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

Communion Solo Adoro te devote (Truth Whom We Adore)
Plainsong Melody

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ's body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the Good News of your love, and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain and unsettled world, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

SENDING AND DEPARTING

* **Hymn** #532 Come, Labor On (Black Hymnal)

* **Benediction**

Postlude Nulla in Mundo Pax

A. Vivaldi

Today's Service Helpers

Liturgist Elsa Tranfaglia

Ushers Linda and Steve Rowell

Soloist Gillian Hurst

*The altar flowers are given in loving memory of
Madeline J. Barkley and her son,
Cmdr. Lawrence W. Steele, (ret.)
and his daughter-in-law Shirley L. Steele,
wife of Lawrence C. Steele,
From the family of Larry and Diane Steele*



*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.*