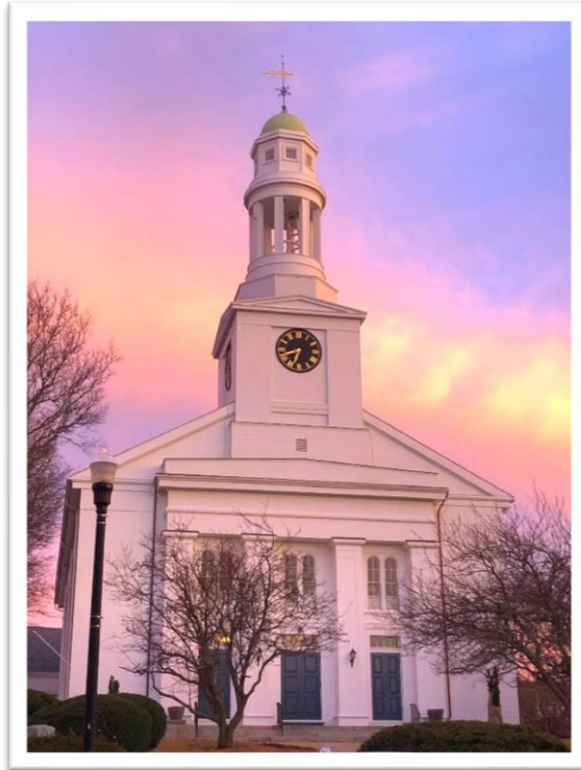


The First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC

12 School Street ~ Rockport, MA

July 26, 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
Dr. Gillian Hurst Section Leader, Soloist
Kaitlyn Welch, Director of Faith Formation
Annette Mackin, Office Manager
Phil Bynarowicz, Church Sexton
Daniel Chase, Tech. Person

Contact information

978/546-6638
office@oldsloop.org
12 School St., Rockport, Mass. 01966
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

We Gather as God's People

Prelude Come, God Creator, Holy Spirit J.S. Bach

Welcome Elsa Tranfaglia

Hymn* #1 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise.

Announcements

Call to Worship

Psalm 119:129-136 (adapted)

Leader: Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore our souls keep them.

People: The unfolding of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

Leader: We open our mouths and pant, Lord, longing for Your commands. Turn to us and have mercy, as You always do to those who love Your name.

People: Direct our footsteps according to Your word; let no sin rule over us.

Leader: Deliver us from oppression, and make Your face shine upon Your servants so that we may learn Your decrees.

People: Streams of tears flow from our eyes when Your ways are forgotten and Your laws are not obeyed.

Leader: Come, let us worship our God whose Word is our light and our salvation.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (Unison)

Loving and Unfolding God, we invite your presence into our worship today. We acknowledge that we do not always know how or what to pray but Your Holy Spirit meets us in our human frailty and translates our deepest sighs into the language of grace. We rest in the assurance that You are intimately at work in all things, guiding our personal transformation and our collective pursuit of justice. Help us to open our hearts to Your liberating Spirit, and align our lives with Your purposes of compassion, healing, and peace. Empower us to be instruments of this unbreakable love in a hurting world. Be present now in us, through us and with us. Amen.

Words of Grace Elsa Tranfaglia

Passing the Peace

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you,

All: And also with you. Let us gather to be stirred into action. May we accept the invitation to be co-creators, as God's Kingdom takes root, grows, and blossoms across the world.

We Listen for God's Word

Scripture Romans 8:26-39 Matthew 13:24-30,36-43 Mercy Duffill

Sermon More Parables

Elsa Tranfaglia

Hymn* #476 My Life Flows On (How Can I Keep from Singing)

We Respond to God's Word

Prayers of the People

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

Offertory

Doxology*

Prayer of Dedication (offered in unison)

Steadfast God, you search our hearts and know our needs even when we struggle to find the words. In your mercy, you strengthen us in our weakness and bind us together in love that cannot be broken. As we bring these gifts today, may they bear witness to your enduring promise: that nothing—not hardship, nor fear, nor even death itself—can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus. Bless these offerings, that they may bring hope to the weary, peace to the troubled, and joy to the hearts of your people. Through Christ, our Redeemer and Companion, we pray. Amen.

We Take God's Light into the World

Hymn * #(insert) Pass It On by Kurt Kaiser

Benediction

Postlude

Litanies

Jehan Alain

Today's Service Helpers

Liturgist Mercy Duffill

Usher The Hurst Family

The altar flowers this morning are in appreciation for the tireless work of those who supported The Old Sloop Fair



**GET READY FOR THE FIFTH ANNUAL
“Christmas in July Re-gifting Auction”
To benefit the Old Sloop Fleet
Today after worship in the Sanctuary
Donna Schwenk ~ auctioneer**

**Also July Birthdays coffee hour in the
sanctuary.**

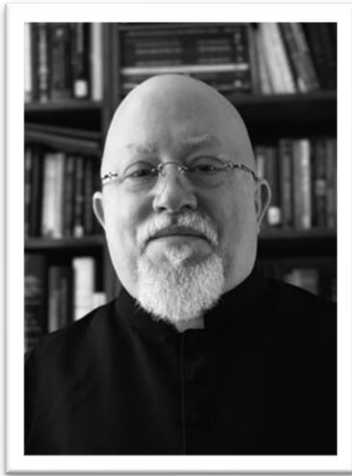
Rev. Elsa Marshall Tranfaglia

***Rev. Elsa is a United Church of Christ
Commissioned Minister of Christian Education
and Faith Formation from 2001 to the present.
She earned her Master of Arts degree at
Princeton Theological Seminary in Christian
Education and Formation. Authorized for
ministry by the National UCC, she holds***



ministerial standing in the Northeast Association of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ. Having recently served on the Board of the Northeast Association of the UCC, she is about to begin a new term as member of the NEA Committee on Ministerial Formation. At Old Sloop, she is now serving as Deacon.

Welcoming Interim Pastor the Rev. James Olson, Sunday, Aug. 2!!



Rev. Olson says “I am thrilled to be coming to walk with Old Sloop for a time, as you consider the possibilities of the future. My hope is that we will have a joyful year of discovery, self-examination, and planning that will set you up well to select your next settled pastor.”

Rev. Jim was raised in Randolph at First Congregational Church, UCC. He is a graduate of Maine Maritime Academy, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, and Boston University School of Theology. He has also studied at Regent’s Park College, Oxford, UK. He has been a settled parish pastor, and an interim minister; a university chaplain an Associate Dean, and an Associate Conference Minister in the Illinois Conference of the UCC.

Please join us for worship on Sunday, August 2 10:00am to welcome Rev. Jim to our pulpit. The service will feature a welcoming choir and brass musicians!



at

CALENDAR July 26-Aug. 2, 2026

Sunday, July 26 10:00 am Sunday Service Elsa Tranfaglia
After worship Christmas In July Re-Gift Auction for the Old Sloop
Fleet Also, July Birthdays Coffee hour in the Sanctuary

2:00 pm Women's AA Group (Morgan Room)

Monday, July 27 Office Closed

6:00-7:30 pm M. Downs Strings Rehearsal (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, June 28 Office Closed

11:00 am Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 pm Al-Anon (Morgan Room)

Wednesday, July 29 Office Open 9am -2pm

9:15 am Yoga (Fellowship Hall)

3:00 pm Storytelling

5:00 pm Bible Study Zoom

Thursday, July 30 Office Open 9 am-2 pm

9:30 am Book Group (Morgan Room)

Friday, July 31 Office Open 9 am-2 pm

4:00 pm Prayer Service – Zoom

6:00 -7:30 Rockport Brown Bag Discussion (Fellowship H.)

Saturday, August 1 8:30 am AA meeting- (Fellowship Hall)

10:00 am – 1:00 pm Vacation Bible School Decoration Day (FH)

Volunteers welcome, call Katie Welch 978-290-3427

Sunday, August 2 10:00 am Sunday Service and Holy Communion
with Interim Pastor Rev. James Olson

2:00 pm Women's AA Group (Morgan Room)