

# The Old Sloop's Log

A Monthly Publication from the First Congregational Church, UCC Rockport, Massachusetts  
The Reverend Derek Van Gulden, Pastor



## 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.*



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Beloved,

I wish to take this opportunity to pass on the following message from Rev. Judy Proctor and Rev. Susie Allen from Executive Soul. They have met with the cabinet once and members of the congregation twice to help you all discern what you might do while I am on my sabbatical January, February and March of 2018. On Sunday January 8 they will meet with you all for a final time after worship.

Rev. Derek

### *Sabbatical 2018: Dreaming with God*

Do you have ideas about how this church might use its sabbatical time? Are you wondering what others might have in mind? Would you like to come together to share your thoughts with each other? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then read on!

On Sunday, January 8, 2017, we will gather with you one more time to worship, to listen, to reflect, to celebrate our work together, and to praise God's presence and leading among us. We hope you can be a part of this exciting experience of spiritual creativity!

Join us for worship at 10:00 a.m., as we share leadership with Derek, listening for the Word of God, telling foundational stories of First Congregational Church of Rockport, praying, and singing hymns of praise and thanksgiving. Following worship, we will then walk together in fellowship as we continue with a creative time of sharing, reflection and spiritual discernment that will conclude at 12:30.

Following our last gathering, we will compile the information we gathered from our three forums in a report that will be submitted to the Church Cabinet later in the month. This information will be used by the team writing the Lilly Foundation Clergy/Congregation Sabbatical Renewal Grant application.

Your sisters in Christ,

Judy Proctor and Susie Allen

## Open and Affirming Statement:

*We the members of the First Congregational Church of Rockport are called upon to love one another 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, and ethnicity 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.*

## CABINET

### MINUTES DECEMBER 18, 2016

#### Subject to Approval

The Cabinet of the First Congregational Church of Rockport, Massachusetts, UCC was called to order by Moderator Steve Lindo at 7:03pm. Rev. Derek van Gulden opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Present:** Steve Lindo, Moderator, chair, and Personnel Committee; Rev. Derek van Gulden, Pastor; Jack Reed, Trustees; Sigrid Lindo, Stewardship Committee and Music Committee; Mercy Duffill, Diaconate; Jay Reed, Treasurer of Mission Funds; and Geof Lyon, Clerk.

#### **Action, Discussion and Follow-Up Items:**

##### **Meeting minutes**

The minutes of the October 16 meeting were approved as submitted by voice vote.

##### **Annual Meeting**

The 2017 Annual Meeting will take place January 22. Because the church will be without an office manager after December 29, clerk Geof Lyon will assemble and print the annual reports. Annual reports from officers and committee chairs should be sent to [clerk@rockportucc.org](mailto:clerk@rockportucc.org) before January 1. Moderator Steve Lindo will send a reminder email to everyone expected to submit a report. Geof will prepare a call to the meeting and arrange for it to be posted and included in the Old Sloop Log and the bulletin.

There was a discussion of the paucity of treasurer's assistants, whether there is a better way to manage receivables, and whether a bylaw change is needed. The consensus was that no change is necessary. Jack Reed offered to join the corps of treasurer's assistants. He will surrender his check signing privilege to another trustee so as to maintain the separation of check signing and receivables handling.

There was a discussion of moving to a pledge allocation model in which parishioners would pledge a single amount and the congregation would approve the percentage of all pledges that is directed to each of operations, outreach, and major maintenance. It was suggested that a committee consisting of the pastor, the treasurer, and a representative from the trustees and the outreach committee recommend percentages to the congregation. Rev. Jonathan New from the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC (MACUCC) is going to visit to discuss such an allocation model, and we agreed to defer this until after his visit and discuss it again at the January 15 cabinet meeting.

##### **Office Manager Search**

Steve reported that the position has been posted online and that there have been several responses. The pastor and personnel committee will meet between Christmas and New Year's Day to review applications and decide on next steps.

##### **Executive Soul**

The final session will be January 8. Rev. Derek reported that he has spoken with Rev. Susie Allen and Rev. Judy Proctor to develop a plan for the day. Susie and Judy will participate in the worship service and transition to the after-worship session to try to broaden participation and sharpen focus. There will be a wrap-up session Tuesday evening January 17. Laurene Wessel has offered to help prepare the Lilly Foundation grant.

#### **Officer Reports**

##### **Pastor**

Rev. Derek reported that Office Manager Lisa Vining has submitted her resignation. Her last day will be December 29.

Rev. Derek also reported on Agape Brewing Community, a non-profit organization that seeks to build a community around the brewing of beer and soda and work on social justice issues. Agape Brewing Community was founded by new church member Rev. Jamie Klopotoski. Jamie is an ordained UCC minister, and she is

moving her ministerial standing to the MACUCC Northeast Association. She needs to set up a four-way covenant that involves her, the Northeast Association, our church, and Agape Brewing Community. Jamie has written an Old Sloop Log article about Agape Brewing Community and will provide more information in future Logs.

### **Treasurer of Mission Funds**

Jay Reed asked about the disposition of offerings from the Christmas Eve candlelight service. Mercy Duffil made a motion that "all offerings exclusive of pledge envelopes from the Christmas Eve candlelight service will go to Family Promise." The motion was approved by voice vote.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Diaconate**

Mercy reported that the Diaconate has completed the Pastor's evaluation and is working with him on establishing goals for the church and providing support where needed.

#### **Trustees**

Jack Reed reported that the Treasurer projects that the church's loss for 2016 will be about \$6,000. Verizon sent a representative to inspect the church for environmental considerations. We still have not heard back from Verizon on the contract.

Despite several service calls, the heat in the Morgan Room continues to be problematic. Jack will follow up.

#### **Nominating Committee**

Jack Reed reported that slate of nominations for the annual meeting is all set.

#### **Outreach Committee**

Jay Reed reported that there will be a small residual balance in the outreach fund at the end of the year, mostly due to prepaid 2017 pledges.

#### **Stewardship Committee**

Sigi Lindo reported that the results of the pledge campaign have been very good. She suggests that we study what might be behind the improvement from past years. Sigi said there was a need for an additional member of the Music committee, as Bonnie Barish has resigned. Sigi also stated that she had requested an additional member for Stewardship. The music committee is working on getting a new member and Sigi is working on identifying a person for Stewardship.

#### **Christian Education Committee**

Rev. Derek reported that the Christian Education committee intends to be intentional about using the Log and social media to let the congregation know what they are doing. Rev. Derek would like to get some young people to go to the upcoming General Synod in Baltimore, and five youth have expressed an interest. Rev. Derek would like to see the church fund the youth group projects so they do not have to fundraise. There will be an intergenerational Cathedral on the Common January 15.

#### **Music Committee**

Sigi reported that the organ repair is being deferred until after the sanctuary work is completed. Discussion of a jazz festival or brunch continues. Tony Beadle of Rockport Music reported that new artistic director Barry Shiffman is interested in additional performance spaces and would like to visit the church December 29. A 50-voice youth choir from Texas is coming July 5.

### **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, the Cabinet adjourned at 9:18pm. The next meeting of the Cabinet will be January 15 at 7:00pm.

Subject to Cabinet approval: Geof Lyon, Clerk of the Church

**STEWARDSHIP****JANUARY 2017****Together, We are a Family**

Together, we have committed to support our church's ministries, mission and major maintenance to an unprecedented dollar level. There is still a pledge or two coming in each week, but, as this is prepared, I'm happy to report the amount pledged is significantly ahead of previous years:

Operations:	66 pledges for a total of \$132,481.79
Outreach:	39 pledges for a total of \$23,461.50
Major Maintenance:	32 pledges for a total of \$14,060.50
Coffee House:	1 pledge for \$996.00
Children's Music:	1 pledge for \$1,200.00

If you haven't yet pledged but want to, you may use the pledge cards and return envelopes in each pew in the sanctuary, or contact Sigi Lindo from the Stewardship (978-546-6587 or [sigilindo@gmail.com](mailto:sigilindo@gmail.com)) committee for a pledge packet.

Stewardship is grateful for the support we have received during the pledge campaign. Ken Perry, Louisa Cassadei-Johnson, Kyle Picardo, Rhiannon Hurst, Josh Fuller, and Joe and Karen Chambers gave powerful, personal witnessing talks on stewardship. Geof Lyon, Fred Witte and Charlie Bracket, crunched the numbers and Jack Reed regularly spoke to us about the status of pledging and what was needed. Pastor Derek's moving sermons helped us think about giving as an act of faith. Finally, each of you who pledged reached into your heart and your pocket on behalf of our Old Sloop's ministries. Thank you all for your generosity of spirit and finances.

**Sign up for Amazon Smile!**

The checks from Amazon Smile get larger each time! If you are one of those using Amazon Smile when you buy online, thank you! If you haven't signed up yet, please do so. If we all participate, the returns could be significant.

Go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) and follow the instructions. Pick First Congregational Church of Rockport as your charity. Thanks for making that extra little effort!

**CHRISTIAN OUTREACH COMMITTEE****MINUTES DECEMBER 11, 2016**

Present: Jay Reed, Derek VanGulden, Wendy Woodbury, Stephen Kalaghan, Marjorie Schell, and Sarah Mowitt.

Jay Reed opened the meeting at 11:40 with a prayer adapted from Saint Anselm.

**Treasurer's Report:** The balance at the end of November was \$6,651, with disbursements made during the month to the Massachusetts Conference (UCC), to the UCC Christmas Fund, to Wellspring and to Church World Service. By the end of December, all donations that were budgeted for the year will have been made. There is an adequate balance in the Pastor's Fund. Each December, the Rotary club sends \$200 to \$300 for this fund.

Jonathan New, the Minister for Stewardship and Finance for the Massachusetts Conference, will be meeting with the Trustees to discuss a new system for submitting payments to the Conference and also an alternative method for budgeting our church's funds in a unified budget.

Jay will provide a proposed budget for 2017 to members of the committee for consideration before the annual report is prepared. Members expressed support for adding an item to the budget to provide help to the Refugee Immigration Ministry. It was suggested that contributions which have been budgeted (\$700) for Andover Newton Seminary in the past be divided for two new areas in the future because Andover Newton has closed. The Refugee Immigration Ministry would receive \$300 and the North East Association (Massachusetts Conference of the UCC) would receive \$400 to be given as grants to Members in Discernment as they work towards ordination. In this way we would continue to support people who wish to become ordained ministers.

**Pot Luck:** Approximately 30 attended dinner last week and received a full turkey dinner. Church members are providing more elements of the meals. Sharing the kitchen among many users presents difficulties in keeping areas clean and the refrigerator space available.

**Holiday Store:** Two large bags of toys were taken to Wellspring house for the holiday store.

**Open Door Holiday Basket program:** Church members continue to donate turkey dinners for Cape Ann families.

**Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM):** The husband of the currently supported family is being driven to work in Peabody and from work to home in Beverly by volunteers from the North Shore cluster of churches. The cluster of churches that support the family looks forward to a declining degree of support over the next several months as the family is increasingly able to cover expenses. The Ministry is considering initiating support for a refugee Syrian family that have two children, one with muscular dystrophy.

**Nominating Committee:** Three new people have agreed to serve on the Outreach Committee.

**Action Lunches:** Sandwiches were made on the 29th. At the end of March we will make sandwiches once again.

**Family Promise:** We will host families again starting on Sunday, February 5.

**Pastor's Report:** Derek Van Gulden suggested that we might celebrate the tenth anniversary of our becoming an O & A church by looking at what we have done so far and where we might go from here. He also proposed that we undertake discussions about racial justice with training that is available from the UCC. Derek reported that Wendy Vander Hart, the Associate Conference Minister of the Northeast Conference (Massachusetts Association), has offered to talk with us about refugee issues.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25. The next meeting will be on **January 8, 2017.**

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Mowitt



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



### MINUTES NOVEMBER 13, 2016

In attendance: Mindy, Katie, Michelle, Anthony, and Jonathan.

The following items were discussed:

1. November 20 Pie Bake.
2. December 3 Christmas Bazaar.
3. January 15 Common Cathedral.
4. Monadnock Mountain retreat.
5. Heifer International Retreat in Rutland, MA.
6. Story Matters.
7. The Next Meeting: Sunday, December 11 at 9 am.

Submitted by JEL

### JANUARY CALENDAR

Sunday, January 1	10:00	No Sunday School
	5:00 – 7:00	NO Youth Group
Monday, January 2	2:30 – 5:30	NO Build a Bridge
Sunday, January 8	9:00	C.E. Meeting
	10:00	Sunday School
	5:00 – 7:00	Youth Group
Monday, January 9	2:30 – 5:30	Build a Bridge
Sunday, January 15	10:00	CATHEDRAL ON THE COMMON
	5:00 – 7:00	NO Youth Group (Rev. MLK birthday celebration)
Monday, January 16	2:30 – 5:30	NO Build a Bridge
Sunday, January 22	10:00	Sunday School
	5:00 – 7:00	Youth Group
Monday, January 23	2:30 – 5:00	Build a Bridge
Sunday, January 29	10:00	Sunday School
	5:00 – 7:00	Youth Group
Monday, January 30	2:30 – 5:00	Build a Bridge

### MULTIGENERATIONAL CATHEDRAL ON THE COMMON!

On Sunday, January 15th our church will be attending cathedral on the common. We will make sandwiches and head into Boston to serve lunch and worship with the homeless in Boston.

If you would like to either help donate food items or head into Boston with us please let Katie know! Both adults and kids invited!

### A WORD ABOUT SUNDAY SCHOOL

We live in constant change, that change is happening and affecting churches and the way Sunday school is offered across the denominations nationwide. As Teachers and Leaders we spend a lot of time researching the latest trends and curriculums being offered. Many families do not attend Sunday

Morning worship on a regular basis. Many are committed to sports scheduled on Sundays. Today's Sunday schools do not offer classes for each grade, most are one or two large multi-grade classes. The most popular is a rotational method, classes focus on the different learning styles each week. Our children's church (grades k-6) just finished a 6 week rotation focusing on the Lord's prayer. We cooked, made art projects, did science experiments, played games, told stories and reenacted a drama, along with hearing the prayer in multiple languages. Each of these units focused on elements of or the entire prayer. The children are excited to see what comes next! Our children live in a world of multi media, Sunday school curriculums are designed to meet them in the world in which they live. We are changing with the times, to meet the needs of all the children who join us each week. So, needless to say "it's not your parents' Sunday school" anymore. It belongs to the children of this generation and it is changing and growing as they are.

To stay updated with our weekly activities like us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/FccRockportMaChristianEdPage/> or follow us on Instagram @FCCRyouth

Blessings, Katie

---

### **BAKE TABLE THANK YOU**

We want to thank all who contributed to the bake table: baking for the table, donating financially, sending others our way, buying from the table, stopping by to say hello, and even considering if time and circumstances allowed you to take part. We received about \$560.00 and are pleased. All baked goods were sold!

With great appreciation,  
Sue Morris and Barbara

---

### **CHRISTMAS THANK YOU**

Thanks to all who contributed to Wellspring Holiday Store this Christmas season. The Outreach Committee took two large plastic bags full of toys and gifts to Wellspring House in time for their ministry to financially stressed Cape Ann families.

Thanks also to those who donated holiday dinners to Cape Ann residents through Open Door's Holiday Basket Program. We helped Open Door with many hundreds of dollars of donated meals to low income members of the community.

### **THE OPEN DOOR**

Since its inception, this food services organization has been the recipient of donations from First Congregational Church, thanks to your pledge to Outreach. The Open Door strives to relieve the impact of hunger in the community, serving residents of Gloucester, Rockport, Ipswich, Essex, and Manchester. It is the product of two agencies that focus on the same population.

Cape Ann Food Pantry began after the February, 1978 blizzard. Our church's Outreach Committee initiated the effort with inspiration from Joan Borton, our former pastor's wife. Outreach responded to a need to provide emergency supplies for food-stressed community residents, and the agency was originally called Cape Ann Food Bank. Open Door itself began in 1983 with help from Wellspring House in Gloucester, which responded to a need for prepared meals and companionship in Gloucester. Open Door and Cape Ann Food Pantry merged in 1986. Now known as The Open Door, the organization presents a variety of food related resources for Cape Ann.

The Open Door serves free dinners five days a week at its facility on Emerson Avenue in Gloucester. It supplies free emergency groceries for income-qualified residents of their service area, partnering with Shaw's

Supermarket, Crosby's Marketplace, Trader Joe's, Stop and Shop, Appleton Farms, Gorton's, and Greater Boston Food Bank, among others. It collaborates with Gloucester's Action Homeless Shelter, Trinity Congregational Church's Harvest Meals, North Shore Health Project, Grace Center, and the Chill Zone, contributing food for meals prepared for clients at those facilities.

The Open Door helps clients with Food Stamp eligibility. It operates Second Glance, a thrift store which includes a furniture annex. It has a Senior Market, a supplemental nutrition program for the elderly. It has a Mobile Market with free fruits and vegetables at ten locations in the area. In the summer, it serves free meals to children at 10 locations on Cape Ann.

All in all, The Open Door is a tremendous resource to low income individuals, evolved from an idea conceived in our church.

### **RIVER HOUSE**

Pledges to Outreach help First Congregational Church donate to River House, an emergency shelter for homeless men in Beverly. It aims to return the homeless to lives of self-sufficiency.

River House offers a safe place to sleep, breakfast and supper for up to 34 guests. Staff help guests find jobs, permanent housing, medical care and other benefits. One floor of the building is designed with five rental rooms and an adjoining common area. Tenants receive case management services for goal planning and life management skills, mental health and relapse prevention treatment, and legal assistance referrals.

### **MASSACHUSETTS COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

First Congregational Church of Rockport makes charitable donations with your pledge to Outreach. One of the oldest church donations is to the Massachusetts Council of Churches, a network of denominations in the Commonwealth united in the conviction that, together, we better express our witness to churches, to the public through the political process, and to neighbors of other faiths.

Mass Council member denominations include the United Church of Christ (Massachusetts Conference), as well as the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Evangelical Lutheran Church (New England Synod), American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, United Methodist Church (New England Conference), the Unitarian Universalist Society, and many more.

The Mass Council believes in healing that which divides us as a "reconciling witness to a fractured world". The Council formed from institutions like the Sunday School Association and the Sabbath Protection League. The Council adds The Mass Federation of Churches to its roots, but it formed under its current name in 1933 and at that time, said "The purpose of the Council shall be to further cooperation between Christian churches of Massachusetts."

Currently the Council sponsors a workshop for clergy and church leaders to address addiction issues with congregation and community. In November, 2015, the Council wrote an open letter to Governor Baker regarding the Syrian Refugee Crisis. In October, 2016, the Council issued a guide to the Massachusetts State ballot questions. In June, 2016, the Council offered a prayer after the attack in Orlando, Florida. On November 13, 2016, they offered a Service of Healing and Transformation at Trinity Church, Copley Square.

### **NORTH SHORE HEALTH PROJECT**

Located on Center Street in Gloucester, North Shore Health Project serves those with HIV/Aids or Hepatitis C. They employ case management, clinical support services, education and peer support. North Shore Health Project has been the recipient of charitable donations from First Congregational Church for over a decade.

## Advent for Agape

By Rev. Jamie Green Klopotoski

Something you may not know about me is that I am not a very patient person. I hate waiting in lines. Slow internet connections make my blood boil. I go out of my way to drive the route with the least amount of traffic lights. Because waiting stinks. There's actually this great episode of South Park called "Go God Go" where Eric Cartman cannot wait for the new Nintendo Wii to come out in 3 weeks. The episode begins with Cartman pacing back and forth in front of the store at the mall muttering, "Come on...come on!!" He is so frustrated. He can't sleep at night, he can't function. He tells his mom that it's like "waiting for Christmas...times a thousand."

Waiting for Christmas. You know, there's a word for that. It's called "Advent". And the season of Advent is all about waiting. The word "Advent" is a version of the Latin word meaning "coming." The 4 weeks before Christmas is called the Advent season because Christians are waiting for the coming of the Messiah (Jesus) to be born on Christmas. I love celebrating Advent—the Advent calendars (often with a little piece of chocolate for each day leading up to Christmas), lighting the candles on the Advent wreath, one for each Sunday, for hope, love, peace, and joy. The season of Advent is a season of anticipation, of expecting, of preparation, of hoping, of wanting, of waiting. That's something we can all celebrate.

Because, really, aren't we all waiting for something?

Waiting for a new beginning, for a closing or an end.

Waiting for a promise or a hope.

Waiting for some kind of salvation from a bad experience.

Waiting for rescue from a damaging relationship.

Waiting for the end of loneliness.

Waiting for a world which can know justice.

Waiting for a lasting peace.

Waiting for a day when people no longer have to flee their country in order to stay alive. Waiting for a day when people of all religions, all nationalities, all race, all genders, all orientations, are treated with love, dignity, and respect. Waiting for a day when no more unarmed black boys are shot dead by police. Waiting for a day when mass shootings are no longer the norm. Waiting for a day when violence is no longer the answer to brokenness.

Oh how we wait.

And oh, how this waiting stinks.

Waiting can be discouraging. Demoralizing. Waiting can bring depression, paralysis, denial, hopelessness, a turning off, or giving up.

But I think the advent season can help us to learn how to wait differently. To wait actively and with hope. This is still a lesson that I am trying to learn every year. Because I am the kind of person who just gives up if I feel like I can't do something. Instead of waiting actively with hope, I wait impatiently in despair. Especially this year, especially right now... as I work toward my dream of opening Agape Brewing Community. I know that I cannot plant a church overnight. I know that I cannot raise all the money I need in a day. I know that this is going to take time. But sometimes the wait seems overwhelming and the actualization of the dream seems impossible. So I just give up. I can't stand the wait. I stop trying, because I am afraid. I'm afraid to admit that I might be giving up on my dream. I'm afraid that I can't keep waiting. I'm afraid that my hope has died.

Maybe you have dead hopes in your life too. Maybe you were hoping to have some changes happen in your life, maybe you made an important New Year's resolution 12 months ago, maybe you make the same once each year, but year after year it doesn't seem to change and you struggle and you've got to admit it, you don't even

expect a change anymore. Maybe you've hoped for peace and harmony in your family, but now you have gotten to the point that you are just willing to live with discord because you have hope for nothing more. It might be in your career, where you were hoping things would be better or that you would be at a different place and it's just not working out that way. Maybe the news just seems so depressing that you can no longer see a better world in the future. Sometimes, even for me the eternal optimist, hopes just die.

But Advent can help us keep our hopes alive. I love that the season of Advent coincides with the Winter Solstice. It reminds us that the darkness does not last forever. The light does come. I can always see the light in the darkness in hindsight (there's another great South Park episode with Captain Hindsight... but I digress). I can rarely, if ever, see the light while in the midst of the darkness. When I'm in the thick of it all, down in the deepest darkest pit of despair, I can never see the way out. But when I look back, I see that the light was there all the time. So what I need to work on is seeing the light, feeling the hope, even when things are at their worst.

So... where to begin? What can be the first step to begin again on this journey towards light and hope?

First... We can be thankful for even the littlest things we have done while we wait in the darkness. It's really easy to be a negative Nancy and give up on my dream because Agape Brewing Community isn't open yet... it's a lot harder to be thankful for and proud of all the little steps I have accomplished this year. I am thankful for the hundreds of people who have generously donated money to our cause. I am thankful for our weekly gatherings. I am thankful for our delicious beer recipes, our logos, our social media presence, our website. I am thankful for the churches which have opened their doors to me to lead workshops about beer and spirituality.

And so, with thankfulness and gratitude in my heart, I will wait. I will wait for Agape Brewing Community to become a reality, and I will wait in hope by celebrating the small things I have already done, and accomplishing more small things every day.

The prophet Isaiah in the Hebrew bible spoke about waiting for a child to come to save Israel and bring peace. He said: "The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them." This passage is read in many Christian churches during advent. I think it's perfect. It reminds me to have hope.

So tis the season of Advent for all of us. Because as we wait for a better world for ourselves and for others, as we wait for our goals and dreams to be realized, as we wait for a new world, a beloved community, a way of living that defies the racist, violent systems that destroy lives in our country and our world, as we wait, Advent teaches me not to despair, not to give up, not to lose hope. I celebrate Advent to remind myself to wait with hope. I hope you can too. Amen.

---

## UPCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

### CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING

#### **The First Congregational Church of Rockport**

The 263rd Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC, will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2017, commencing at 12 noon to act upon the following:

1. To hear the report of the Nominating Committee and to elect Church Officers and Committee Members;
2. To hear and act upon the Annual Budget proposed by the Board of Trustees;
3. To act on any other business that may be brought legally before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Geof Lyon, Clerk of the Church

## ANOTHER ARTY PARTY

Dear Artists and Friends of the Arts,

By Arts I mean all the arts: writing, painting, composing music, crafts, and other forms.

Our second arty party will be held on Friday evening, January 13 at 7 PM. This gathering is not a talent show but rather an exploration of creativity. Last year we focused on artistic process. This year the dimension of creativity that we will explore is inspiration. The question to address is: What aesthetic, spiritual or emotional experience inspired your painting, poem, photograph, musical composition or other art form? Your work might immediately follow your experience as for example seeing a sunset and having to paint it right away. Or perhaps you had an experience as a child that launched your artistic life and you have a current piece of work to share. I think daughter Amy will talk about an experience at age three and then show you something current. Last year I did not speak in order to save time for others. Some people wished I had spoken. I am thankful for their encouragement so will read a poem based on both recent and past experiences of beauty.

Presentations should be five minutes. Brevity zooms to essence. Please let Rev. Derek know if you wish to participate. Church Office: 978-546-6638. Or let me know at 978-546-2697 or [shnrchace@aol.com](mailto:shnrchace@aol.com) In addition to signing up to participate, I welcome your e-mail or phone calls if you have questions or concerns. It is best to call me before noon or after three because I am prone to fatigue and sudden headaches mid day. Thank you for your understanding. I look forward to learning more about you and your sources of inspiration.

Yours in the Arts,

Sharon

## OLD SLOOP COFFEEHOUSE UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

### Saturday, January 7 at 7:30 PM – Connor Garvey and Putnam Smith



Connor Garvey and Putnam Smith are award-winning performers from Portland, Maine who are frequent collaborators and good friends. This co-bill concert will make you feel the warmth of a community of friends getting together to share some songs.

Connor Garvey has the amiable presence of an entertainer, the lyrical depth of a poet, and the enchantment of a storyteller. Garvey leaves audiences uplifted and inspired. The Portland Press Herald says the way Connor delivers his positive message proves you can be optimistic and self-aware without being boring. His unique sandy tenor and masterful blend of rhythm and melody draw comparisons to Paul Simon and contemporaries Josh Ritter and Jason Mraz.



Putnam Smith could be an old-world troubadour fresh from the 19th century. After all, he lives in a log cabin, plays his grandfather's banjo, and prints up the jackets to his CDs on an antique letterpress. Yet this rootsy multi-instrumentalist songwriter (he also writes and performs on guitar, mandolin, fretless banjo, and piano), steeped as he is in Appalachian traditions, is very much a storyteller for the modern age.

Tickets for this concert can be purchased in advance for \$10 from the coffeehouse web site at [oldsloopcoffeehouse.org](http://oldsloopcoffeehouse.org), at Toad Hall Bookstore in Rockport, at The Bookstore in Gloucester, and at coffee hour following worship on Sunday, January 1. The suggested donation at the door is \$12 for adults, \$8 for those 65 and older, \$5 for those younger than 18, and \$24 for a family.

## WEEKLY CHURCH EVENTS

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT  
POTLUCK DINNER  
ALL ARE WELCOME**



**THURSDAY MORNING  
BOOK GROUP  
9:30 AM to 10:30 AM  
MORGAN CONFERENCE ROOM**



The fellowship hour schedule for January will be announced:



If there are any questions or concerns or if you would like to be a part of our fellowship hour by baking or hosting please contact Liz-Rice Smith or Wendy Woodbury.

### WITH GRATITUDE FOR OUR CHURCH SERVANTS

**For December:**

**Readers**

Jack Reed  
Louisa Casadei  
Johnson  
Mary Cresse

**Ushers**

Elizabeth Rice  
Smith  
Laurel Juthe  
Mary Cresse



## CHURCH DIRECTORY

### CONTACT US AT:

First Congregational Church of Rockport  
 12 School Street  
 Rockport, Massachusetts 01966  
 Phone # 1-978-546-6638  
 Email – [office@rockportucc.org](mailto:office@rockportucc.org)  
 Website – [www.rockportucc.org](http://www.rockportucc.org)

**During non- business hours Rev. Derek van Gulden can be reached at: (508) 818-0616 or**

**[revdvan@yahoo.com](mailto:revdvan@yahoo.com)**

LOG EDITING INFORMATION    EDITOR: SUSAN LILLIS

SUBMIT ARTICLES TO:

[oldslooplog@rockportucc.org](mailto:oldslooplog@rockportucc.org)

**ALL ARTICLES ARE DUE ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> OF EACH MONTH**

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

TUES. – THURS.  
 8:30AM – 1:30PM

### SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:15 AM – 11:00AM

NURSERY CARE IS PROVIDED

### CHURCH STAFF

PASTOR

Rev. Derek van Gulden

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Dr. Phil Swanson

YOUTH CHOIR DIRECTOR

Kristina Martin

OFFICE MANAGER

vacant

SEXTON

Phillip Bynarowicz

CHRISTIAN ED. DIRECTOR

Melynda Picardo

ASSISTANT YOUTH DIRECTOR

Katie Welch