

The Old Sloop's Log

A Monthly Publication of
The First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC
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.

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 un-conditionally. Therefore, we covenant to become an open and affirming congregation welcoming persons of every age, ability, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic 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.



All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. (Luke 2:3-5)

Beloved,

My strongest and deepest experiences of God's liberating love often happen when I travel to new places throughout our country and outside of the United States. Though I know God is present in my life each and every day when I travel to new places, especially ones where the native language is not English, I lean on God much more than when I'm at home in my comfort zone. Surrounded by a new environment, new people, and a different language I know that my dependence on God is natural and unavoidable.

As an adult I have been blessed to travel a good portion of this country as well as abroad to Europe, Scandinavia, Latin America, Asia, Malaysia, the Arab Peninsula, the Caribbean and Africa. For three months I lived in Kenya where I provided pastoral care to children and adults, taught Christian education classes and preached sermons. One of the many places I have not been able to travel to as of yet is the Holy Land. Three years ago Sarah was able to travel to the Holy land. When she returned she shared with me some of her thoughts and experiences. She described the land in the following way:

"In the Bible we find stories and writings that describe the landscape of the Holy Land: the hot sand, the solid stones and the life-giving cool water. The land itself hasn't changed but the buildings and people have changed. Groups of people have been exiled, kingdoms have come and gone, religious groups waged war on one another. Temples, churches and mosques were built or destroyed. Roads were moved or paved over."

The season of Advent holds the tension of traveling to and experiencing sacred geography. Joseph and Mary travel to a foreign, or at least new to them, place in preparation for the birth of Jesus. When most women might want to remain home in those final weeks, Mary must ride a donkey without the guarantee of shelter at the end of the journey. At the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Sarah and her fellow pilgrims attended an early morning church service with Holy Communion. After the service, the priests showed them the spot where they believe Mary gave birth to Jesus.

She recounted that the stones look like any other stones you might find here in Rockport and yet they, *"were more than stones."* Amidst the chaos of travelling and not finding a room, those solid stones held Joseph, Mary and Jesus. They offered the only hospitality available to this new family.

Contemplating on Sarah's experiences in the Holy Land as well as my own travel stories I'm reminded that Advent is a journey. It doesn't matter where we start or how we get there, but we do to need MOVE! We need to get up from what feels good and comfortable and walk towards the unknown despite the uncertainty and fear. During Advent we must travel to the miracle of Christmas trusting that the grace of God will travel with us over the hills and into the deep valleys of our souls. I hope we can journey together this Advent as we approach the destination of Jesus' birth.

Advent peace and Christmas blessings!

Rev. Derek

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Katie Welch and Rev. Derek have planned a few extra programs to help on your journey through Advent. We hope you will join us for at least one or all of them.

Sunday Dec. 9th at 5 pm we will be offering time and space for **Holiday Storytelling**. Come join us in Fellowship Hall for a chance to share and listen to Christmas stories from across generations.

Tuesday Dec. 18th at 7 pm, we will offer a program of; **'Remembering our Grandparents'**. We invite you to join us in the Sanctuary for a time to remember and share a little something about your grandparents. You will have a chance to write your grandparents name on a festive card to be hung on our special Ancestral tree. There will be prayers, music, and time for quiet contemplative remembrance too.

Thursday Dec. 20th at 7 pm, we will be offering a **'Blue Christmas'** service in the sanctuary.

Blue Christmas also called the Longest Night in the Western Christian tradition is a day in the Advent season marking the longest night of the year. Blue Christmas service is a time when we can, with others, acknowledge the "blue" feelings of grief or loss that we have at Christmas time and offer them to God. In this service, we will recognize that this is not a season of joy for everyone. We will

invite you to reflect on the pain, the loneliness, the sadness you may feel and to offer it all to Christ. We pray that you will find hope and comfort in knowing that you are not alone. Please join us and others for this beautiful service offered on one of the longest nights of the year.

Christmas Eve Services:

5pm A Christmas Eve service by youth for youth, their families and anyone else who wishes to join us.

8pm Christmas Eve Candle Light service with special music & biblical storytelling.



Looking For Committee Members

The Flower Committee is seeking a volunteer for the month of January. This volunteer would find people to donate flowers for the altar for the Sundays in January. Please contact Sue Herron for information (978-546-2082, susherr8@gmail.com).

The Board of Ushers is seeking an Usher Captain for March. The Usher Captain would be responsible for finding ushers for Sunday services in March. Please contact Celene Lyon for Information (508-284-8762, celenelyon@comcast.net).

CABINET

MEETING MINUTES November 18, 2018

Subject to Approval

The Cabinet of the First Congregational Church of Rockport - UCC was called to order by Geof Lyon, Moderator Pro Tem at 7:00PM in the Morgan Room.

Present: Geof Lyon, Clerk; Elizabeth Rice-Smith, Historian and Membership Committee; Bruce Coates, Treasurer; Stephen Kalaghan, Christian Outreach Committee; and Susan Herron, Diaconate.

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Rice-Smith led us in prayer to open the meeting.

1. ACTION, DISCUSSION, AND FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

Minutes: The minutes of the October 21, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted, by unanimous voice vote.

By-Law Discussion: Geof Lyon reported that the By-Law Committee accepted and revised suggestions made for clarity with a new draft, dated 11/16/18. Members of this By-Law Committee are Peter Goodwin, Joseph Chambers, and Steve Lindo. In response to that revision, the cabinet discussed the proposed bylaw changes at last night's meeting and had the following suggestions:

In paragraph 2 of section VIII.4: Treasurer, we suggest that the original language that clearly allows multiple paid treasurer's assistants be restored: **The treasurer may appoint paid employees of the**

church as assistants with the approval of the employees' supervisors.

In section IX.1: Organization (of the cabinet), we suggest the following changes: The Church Cabinet shall be composed of the officers of the church plus a representative of each board and **permanent committee within the church listed in Article X Section 1A.**

In section X.1G: Term Limits, we suggest that the following sentence be appended: **Term lengths and term limits may be suspended by a three-fourths vote of the church members present and voting at an annual meeting.**

We discussed section X.1H: Youth Members at length. This section discusses how youth members affect quorum requirements for committees, but we were uncomfortable that there is no mention of quorum requirements for committees anywhere else in the bylaws. Some of us felt that quorum requirements were unnecessary for committees, that there was therefore no reason to describe how youth members affect a quorum, and that we should just omit this section. Others felt that quorum requirements were important. The folks holding to the latter view suggest that this section be titled "Quorum Requirements" and that the sentence "Fifty percent of the board or committee membership present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum for said meeting." precede the sentence about youth members in the version sent.

2. OLD BUSINESS:

2018-2019 Budget. The Trustees will meet on November 26, 2018 to discuss the budget and we will have more information at that time.

CORI Checks. CORI checks have been completed and will be reviewed by Rev. Derek, Katie Welsh, and a member from the Personnel Committee.

The Hanging of Photos of the Revs. James Fletcher and Sharon Goss. The photos have been framed, but they have not yet been hung. Liz Rice-Smith will ask Regina Reis, Church Administrator, if she is able to arrange for this. The List of Ministers also needs to be updated. As Historian, Liz Rice-Smith will also provide an updated list for framing. Rev. Derek has been asked to provide a photo so that he can be represented on the Foyer Wall, too.

3. NEW BUSINESS:

An invitation to contribute support for the immigration/refugee LGBTQ Asylum Program work with Pastor Judy at Hadwen Park Congregational Church - UCC in Worcester, MA will be included in The Log and Sunday Bulletins, with appreciation to Lee Williams for his inspiring words and story during worship today.

Geof Lyon reported exciting news that a new youth music event was held in Fellowship Hall last Saturday evening. The events were initiated and planned by the youth, a group called Rockport Harmony, made up of local middle and high school students, with Geof and Celene Lyon providing support to make their gigs work. There were about ten youth performing, with 35+ attendees. Video clips from these events are posted on Facebook. A great start! Geof and Celene will hold a debriefing meeting with them. It was noted that this news will be notable for Rev. Sue Koehler-Arsenault, who

is researching/consulting with and for this congregation re: vision and plan for our Christian Education ministry.

4. OFFICER REPORTS

Pastor. On Vacation.

Moderator. On Vacation.

Treasurer. Bruce Coates, Treasurer, reported that as of October 31, 2018, the expenses were less than the Budget Year-To-Date and better than where we were last year; however, there are outstanding expenses not received so that can change. It was also reported that the church has a new and much needed copying machine; the retired machine made 600,000+ copies! At present, the Pastor's Fund is low, at \$488.00, so there is a need to ask for additional donations, now that we are going into the winter season with requests for heating assistance and other seasonal needs.

Historian. Rev. Elizabeth Rice-Smith reported that the Steeple Reconstruction Exhibit in the sanctuary since July 2017 will be taken down before the first Sunday in Advent. Many people have viewed and spoken about their appreciation of being able to read the narrative, view large photos depicting the steeple as well as skyline changes, and touch the steeple and weather vane artifacts in this exhibit.

She is also working with Bill Elwell to arrange for the safe hanging of the Robert Williams "Cupola on the Green" painting which was donated by the artist and his wife in honor of the Old Sloop Steeple Restoration project. This painting has been framed to be included as part of the congregation's history collections, was blessed during Worship on the Sunday of our celebration on The Green, and will be hung in the Narthex during December, then retired until Spring, when it will be hung each year during the three seasons without freezing weather.

Clerk. Serving as Moderator pro-tem for this meeting.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Diaconate. Susan Herron reported that the Deacons are moving ahead with the pastor evaluation using the *Marks of the Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers in the United Church of Christ* format. Criteria to be considered are as follows: exhibiting a spiritual foundation and ongoing practice, strengthening inter- and intra- personal assets, building transformational leadership skills, nurturing UCC identity, participating in theological praxis, working together for justice and mercy, caring for all creation, and energizing sacred stories and traditions.

Using this tool, Rev. Derek has completed his self-evaluation with a letter grade and explanations for his grade. Each Deacon will fill it out with our assessment and discuss the results at the next meeting on December 2, 2018. The Deacons voted to reduce the number of Deacons from eight to seven. They did not express any concerns about recommended changes to the By-Laws, though two members have not yet responded.

Christian Outreach. Stephen Kalaghan reported that this committee did not express any concerns about recommended By-Law changes.

The Social Justice Task Force of this committee has composed some recommended revisions to the congregation's Open and Affirming Statement that they would like to propose at Annual Meeting. The recommended changes clarify and strengthen our affirmation of immigrants and refugees. No action was taken in this regard at tonight's meeting. Recommended changes to the ONA statement are given, as follows:

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 **be** 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 **refugees, those seeking asylum, and** those who experience rejection and exile from spiritual community and **we** commit ourselves to the struggle against injustice.

It was unanimously voted that loose offering monies from the afternoon service on Christmas Eve would be given for Youth Ministries and loose offering monies from the evening service on Christmas Eve would be given to support Family Promise.

The Old Sloop Fleet. Liz Rice-Smith reported that all the Fleet crews have been actively responding to many varied needs in the life of the congregation. Meals are being provided. Visits are being made. Cards and Notes are being sent, Rides are being offered. Beautiful Flowers are shared. Many Acts of Kindness are extended! On December 16th, a Caroling Group will convene after Worship with the help of Marcia Myers to bring Christmas cheer to our people (as well as many others!) Den Mar, Sea Coast, and folks at home who enjoy music and a visit. The Old Sloop Fleet is a ministry coordinated with Rev. Derek and the Diaconate.

Membership. Liz Rice-Smith reported activity re: the 8:30AM Sunday Morning Gatherings in the Morgan Room for sharing, discerning, and reflecting on church membership. All are welcome, including members of longstanding, doubters and the curious, as well as any wishing to explore what it might mean to them to become a member of this congregation and the wider United Church of Christ. Notable that it often takes time to contemplate this important decision to enter into the covenant of membership. Liz reported that these gatherings give such a clear sense of how much so many people LOVE this church. There are many reasons that bring people to our Old Sloop congregation, whether or not they join.

Membership Committee's *Team for the Welcoming Ministry of Hospitality* is actively involved in its work of recruiting participants and coordinating for/supporting the Coffee Hour Hospitality efforts. More than 100 people are actively taking part in this ministry, and we are hoping that 6 - 10 more people will step forward to participate. Coffee Hour hospitality time is a vibrant ministry of our church life together, especially appreciated for opportunities afforded in welcoming visitors and newcomers. Plans are also "in the works" for the 13th Annual Old Sloop Potluck and Film Series, now known as our Eastertide Old Sloop Film Series, held on Thursday evenings. Recommendations for screenings need to be made to Wendy Woodbury or Liz Rice-Smith by December 31, 2018.

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34PM.

DATE OF NEXT CABINET MEETING.

Sunday, December 16, 2018. 7:00PM. Morgan Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rice-Smith and Susan Herron

DIACONATE**MEETING MINUTES November 4, 2018**

Present: Janice Ramsden, Debbie Welch, Barbara Reed, Karen Chambers, Sue Herron, Jim Schell, Kate Desmond, Mercy Duffill and Rev. Derek Van Gulden

Minutes of our October meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved

Next Communion worship:

On **December 2, 2018;** Mercy and Janice will prep. Karen, Barbara, Janice and Kate will help serve. Mercy will bring the bread; the juice is all set. All contribute to clean up.

ONGOING BUSINESS**Pastor's report:**

- Rev. Derek reported on individuals and families he has met with and updated their wellbeing status.
- Rev. Derek is taking the week of Thanksgiving off.
- The 11/25/2018 service will be led by the Chaplin from Beverly Hospital.
- Rev. Derek is planning music and Advent services with Christina and Phil.
- Communion idea presented with having families bring in small tables from their homes.

Updates:

- Parament Book- Karen is formatting pictures to create book
- Baptismal Font- on hold, awaiting email confirmation.
- Evaluation Process- Rev. Derek brought his self-evaluation in and we discussed how to read and review it with the Marks of the Faithful Book the Deacons all have a copy. Deacons will review his information and come together with their evaluation based on our thoughts and his work. We will create measurable goals based on the process and using the book which is UCC created.
- Roles of Deacons- Mercy is working on updates.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Nominating Committee:** Janice has offered to stay another term, Debbie is stepping down and no one is needed as by law changes now ask for 7 instead of 8 Deacons.

The meeting adjourned at 1 PM **NEXT MEETING** – Sunday, **December 2, 2018** at 11:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted *Karen Chambers, secretary*

TRUSTEES

MEETING MINUTES November 12, 2018

Trustee Meeting – called to order at 7:01PM. Reverend Derek opened the meeting with a prayer.

Present: Bill Elwell; Bruce Coates; Walter Vining; Paul Hurst; Mark Jurewicz; Rev. Derek van Gulden; Bonnie Gray; Geof Lyon, Building Study Committee.

Absent: Chip Kistner; Kevin Love

- **Minutes:** Minutes from the October 15, 2018 meeting were reviewed and approved.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Bruce presented the Treasurer's Report noting that net income at this point is \$18,755 ahead of the budget. The report was approved as submitted as was a motion to fund up to \$1,000 from the MacLean-Hooper Fund for processing expenses related to Rev Sue's Privilege to Call.
- **Monthly Reviews:**
 - Bank Statements:** Not completed. Walter will review by next meeting.
 - PEX Statements:** Bonnie reported the October statement was not ready for review.

Old Business:

- **Capital Campaign Projects** – review of projects.
 - Steeple Project – Bob Levesque has agreed to provide a final “punch list” of items that need to be completed. It was noted that the bell rope has not been replaced and needs to be prior to the Christmas Pageant. It was also noted that the clocked stopped working. Walter reset the ground fault receptacle and will monitor.
 - Organ Repair – Completed.
 - Sanctuary Ceiling Paint – No update.
 - Front Façade Paint – No update.
 - Other Capital Campaign Projects – Not discussed.
- **Verizon** - Contract with SteepleCom was located for Trustees to review. Bill will review first. Concrete pad has been poured for shed.
- **Steeple Lighting** - Geof and Rick Kasten have been working with lighting designer Johnathan Weaver. They will continue to try out various lighting options.
- **Sound System updates** - Geof reported the work has been completed. Final invoice of \$2,798 was approved.
- **Garage Roof** - Completed. Awaiting final invoice.
- **Parsonage Repairs** - Walter will work on garage repairs. Bill has made temporary repair to bulkhead but it will eventually need to be rebuilt. Refrigerator has been replaced. Derek will contact Bruce Rowell regarding bathroom electrical repairs.
- **Critical Incident Committee** –

- Exit Door Replacement – Concern was expressed regarding the door replacement, especially the kitchen door. Walter will follow up with Seaside Glass regarding estimates.
- Day School Door Crash Bar – These doors continue to be found locked after day school hours.
- **Office Printer** – According to Eastern Copy the existing printer has made over 600,000 copies and is in need of replacement. They recommended a slightly used (28,000 copies) printer for \$4,595 which is about half the cost of a brand-new printer. The maintenance contract will remain unchanged. Trustees approved unanimously.
- **Fire Extinguishers** – A letter from Northshore Fire explaining compatibility of ABC extinguishers with the fire suppression system over the stove proved to create even more confusion. Walter will contact them for clarification. Arranging a walkthrough with the Rockport Fire Department was also suggested.
- **2019 Budget** – A special meeting to discuss the budget has been scheduled for Monday, November 26. Trustees are expected to review the spreadsheet that was emailed by Bruce prior to the meeting and provide input.
- **Comcast** – It is unclear if switching internet service will affect the phone lines used for the fire alarm and elevator alarm. Regina will be asked to contact those involved to clarify.

New Business:

- **Electricity Supplier** – Due to a variable rate contract the cost per kilowatt hour has increased dramatically over the past year. A change was made to a lower 3 year fixed rate.
- **Serve Safe** – There is only 1 known person within the church who is Serve Safe certified. Derek is arranging a Saturday class with Paul Franklin.
- **AED** – New pads have been obtained. Derek is researching with the company regarding battery replacement and their recommended inspection frequency.
- **CPR Class** – Derek is investigating the possibility of offering a CPR class with the local EMTs.
- **Investment Committee** – Paul identified the need for a new chair and will see if Jack Reed is willing to take over. Subsequent email indicated Jack is willing to chair the committee.
- **Storm Windows** – It was noted the storm windows need to be installed. Derek will ask Phil to follow up.
- **Sprinkler/Alarm System Inspections** – Geof will determine when the annual inspections are due.

A copy of this report will be forwarded to the editor of The Old Sloop Log. There being no further business, the Board of Trustees adjourned at 8:50pm.

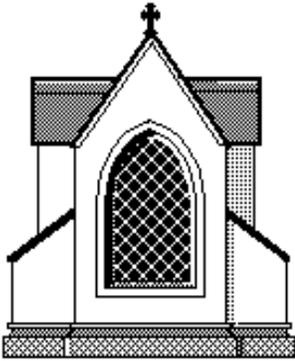
The next scheduled meeting of The Trustees is: Monday, December 10, 2018.

Walter Vining

Chair, Board of Trustees

Mark Jurewicz

Recording Secretary



Stewardship

December 2018

Stewardship Campaign

The Stewardship Committee is grateful to everyone who made the annual pledge campaign, *Giving from Abundance, Living the Love of Jesus*, a success. Our witnessing stewards, Jack Reed, Jonathan Lilja, Lou Cannon, Jillian Osmond, and Emma Ward inspired us to prayerfully consider why we value

The Old Sloop and what we can give to support its many ministries. To those of you who have pledged, thank you. If you have not yet pledged but plan to, please submit your pledge cards as soon as possible to help the Trustees plan for the 2019 budget. If you have not pledged before, please consider a first time pledge, no matter the amount. We will begin to report the results of the campaign Sunday, December 2.

Although Thanksgiving has now gone by and Advent is about to begin, remember that expressing gratitude literally makes us feel better! Research shows that something as simple as writing down three things you're grateful for every day or writing a thank you note to someone significantly increases your level of optimism and feeling of well-being.

Sign up for Amazon Smile!

With the season of Christmas shopping online coming into full swing, remember to sign up for Amazon Smile! December purchases will make a significant impact on our quarterly check. Sign up before you start your holiday shopping by going to www.smile.amazon.com and follow the instructions. Please pick First Congregational Church of Rockport as your charity. Questions? Contact Sigi Lindo at 978-546-6587 or sigilindo@gmail.com

Have you bought Rockport Cooks yet?

Have you bought Rockport Cooks yet? A beautiful new collection of recipes from family and friends of the Old Sloop was published in July. It combines iconic Rockport photography with delicious favorites of many parishioners and church friends. Cookbooks will be on sale at the Christmas Fair on December 1 along with the usual gifts, crafts, and holiday greens. You can also contact Marcia Myers at cliffnevis@aol.com, Sigi Lindo at sigilindo@gmail.com, or Regina Reiss at office@rockportucc.org for copies for yourself and friends. The price is \$18. Net proceeds will be donated to the Steeple Fund.





Christian Education

Youth Ministry News

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Saturday, December 1	7:30 – 2:00	Christmas Bazaar: All proceeds raised by Youth Group go to Encounter Weekend
Sunday, December 2	10:00	Communion Sunday
	5:00 – 7:00	Youth Group
Sunday, December 9	9:00	CE Meeting
	10:15	Sunday School: Shepard on a Search
	5:00 – 7:00	Youth Group: Christmas Sweater Party!
Thursday, December 14	4:00 – 7:00	Caroling UU Church (Meet at FCCR 3:45)
Sunday, December 16	10:15	Sunday School: "The Star" movie
	5:00 – 7:00	No Youth Group
		Confirmation trip: Black Nativity in Boston
Sunday, December 23	10:15	No Sunday School
	5:00 – 7:00	No Youth Group
Monday, December 24	4:00	Family Christmas Eve service
Sunday, December 30th	10:15	No Sunday School
	5:00 – 7:00	No Youth Group

TRAVEL

We are booked for Encounter Weekend January 18th-20th (MLK weekend). An \$80 deposit secures your spot! <https://monadnockchristianministries.org/encounter/>.

Also, this year we are looking to go to the UCC's general synod in Milwaukee, Wisconsin being held June 21st-25th. <https://monadnockchristianministries.org/encounter/>.

Be blessed!

Katie



Christian Outreach Committee

Meeting minutes, November 18, 2018

Attending: Karen Coffin, Wendy Woodbury, Steve Kalaghan, Diane Westman, Jay Reed
Meeting began at 11:35 with a prayer: "Holy parent, you are with us from the dawn of new beginnings through the ragged edge of night..."

The treasury balance is adequate. The pastor's fund balance is unknown. Jay will speak to Bruce Coates, church treasurer, about not receiving account statements.

Jay asked for help with the campaign for the Christmas Fund, which begins next Sunday, 11/25. Jay will be away that weekend.

We have begun to campaign for Wellspring Holiday Store. We have already received a donation. The store begins December 8, and Wellspring says the deadline for delivering donated gifts is December 6.

We have completed our last Family Promise host week for 2018. We are reminded that homeless families are stressed, and families develop a variety of coping mechanisms, functional and otherwise. Our next host week begins March 10.

We served at Open Door on Nov 3. All went well on a night when some also served at Coffee House. Jay asked committee members to remind him that we are asked to offer a vegetarian meal also on Open Door night.

Steve says he will ask cabinet to approve donation of the loose offering at the Christmas Eve candlelight service to Family Promise North Shore Boston.

Jay and Barbara will attend the Refugee Immigration Ministry's International Dinner in Watertown on 11/18. This is one of a few major fundraisers for the organization. RIM, located in Malden, has been resettling refugees and asylum seekers since the 1980's.

Reverend Sue asked us to approve the creation of a subcommittee that focuses on social justice matters. This Social Justice Task Force has been meeting monthly since August and organized the church's response to the government's policy toward immigrants and asylum seekers. That included a film and discussion of the separation of parents and children at the Southern border, mailing supplies to two churches in Arizona that minister to immigrants, and

donating cash to one. It included offering rides to the polls in November. It included a donation to the LGBT Asylum Ministry of the Hadwen Park Church, UCC, in Worcester.

Acknowledging that many committee members were absent, those who attended agreed that the Task Force be approved as an Outreach subcommittee.

The church cabinet asked that we approve the amendments to church bylaws revised in November. Aside from eliminating redundancies, the revision decreases the required number of committee members in each committee by one. We approved that amendment with little discussion.

Jay thanked the committee for making the Church World Service cleanup bucket. That bucket is completed. Jay estimates the cost of the bucket and its contents to be over \$100.

Soon we need to think about our 2019 budget- whether it should stay roughly the same or decrease. We didn't discuss our next meeting date, but I propose we attempt to meet on December 16 (I may need to be away on the ninth). Let me know if that is acceptable to you.

Respectfully submitted, James Reed

Christmas Fund 2018

The Outreach Committee asks the congregation to remember our retired pastors and others employed by the United Church of Christ with your offering to the Christmas Fund. This special offering helps the pension boards of the UCC (1) supplement pensions for lower income clergy, lay employees, and surviving spouses, providing assistance for food, utilities, and medical expenses- in 2017, 425 persons (2) subsidize health insurance costs for 210 retirees in 2017 (3) send Christmas "thank you" gift checks to retirees- last year, 477 persons (4) grant funds to active and retired clergy and lay employees who have suffered unexpected emergencies, 384 persons in 2017. That number includes hurricane relief to 347 clergy in Texas and Florida.

Many UCC clergy and other UCC shepherds have little to nothing to sustain them in retirement or in emergencies. Their incomes and their retirement benefits mirror the location where they worked. This offering enables the pension boards to say to those who have spent their lives shepherding all of us, "We remember and cherish your years of service." Please help with your offering to the Christmas Fund.



Our third Arty Party will take place
on January 12 at 7 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Any form of art is welcomed. Paintings, photographs, poetry, crafts, needlework, musical compositions, you name it. This year we have a festive theme....

"Something Old, Something New,
Something Borrowed, Something Blue."

You might wish to compare something you did 20 years ago with something recent or in other words old and new. Perhaps you have a painting or photograph of ocean blues.

Maybe your art is in some ways derivative or features a borrowed theme.

I do hope that presentations will be short—5 to 7 minutes.

For the first Arty Party we focused on the creative process. Last year, we addressed the question that theologian Georgia Harkness asked; "What calls forth your work?"

So now it is time to Party on.

Hope you can come. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to email or phone me. Cheers, Sharon.

978-546-2697

shmrchace@aol.com

Old Sloop Coffeehouse Upcoming Performances: SOLD OUT

Saturday, December 8 at 7:30PM – An Old Sloop Christmas with Chelsea Berry

Old Sloop Coffeehouse will present An Old Sloop Christmas with Chelsea Berry, December 8. Chris + Joe will open the concert.



Chelsea will lead a celebration of the Christmas season with a performance in the church sanctuary. She will perform Christmas music as well as some of her own wonderful songs. Special guests will add to the festivities.

Chelsea is a singer-songwriter with the edge, power, and finesse of legends. Her presence has been described by listeners as "compelling... she draws the entire house into her world like moths to a flame." As a vocalist and performer, she evokes the style of artists such as Cheryl Crow, Eva Cassidy, KD Lang, and Melissa Etheridge. Born and raised in Alaska, she now makes her home in NYC.

Chris + Joe (Chris Langathianos and Joe Wilkins), a Cape Ann-based duo with deep roots in the Greater Boston music scene, are known for their tight harmonies, thoughtful songs, and engaging banter. Joe is a multi-instrumentalist, expert songwriter, and vocalist. Chris is a producer and vocalist. Together they capture audiences with their easy, melodic style and diverse, yet approachable sets.



It's Poinsettia Time!

It is time to start thinking about the beautiful poinsettias, which will augment our worship experiences on December 23, and Christmas Eve. You can help in two specific ways:

1. Donate a poinsettia in honor of or in memory of a special person. Starting Sunday Dec. 2 and until Sunday, Dec. 16, the Flower Committee will be accepting donations for Christmas poinsettias. Check out their table in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour. If you would prefer to mail your donation directly to the office, keep in mind that there is a *deadline of December 16*. Make all checks payable to 'First Congregational Church of Rockport' and put 'Flower Fund' in the check memo. Please include the names of those you would like to honor or remember.
2. If you know of someone who would like a little Christmas cheer in the form of a poinsettia, please contact Celene Lyon. Help with delivery may be needed after church on Dec. 23. Please use this form when making your donation. Thank you!

IN MEMORY OF _____

IN HONOR OF _____

GIVEN BY _____

Please use this form to sign up after service or mail it to the church office: FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 12 SCHOOL STREET, ROCKPORT, MA 01966

Weekly Church Events

WEDNESDAY NIGHT
POTLUCK DINNER

Wednesdays at 5 pm



POTLUCK DINNER

THURSDAY MORNING
BOOK GROUP

MORGAN CONFERENCE ROOM

9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.



The Fellowship Hour Schedule for November

November 4	Mercy Duffill and Liz Rice-Smith
November 11	Diane Westman and Joe Chambers
November 18	Celene and Geof Lyon
November 25	Michelle Coates

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 November

Ushers

- November 4 Darlene Spittle & Kathie McCarthy
- November 11 Kathie McCarthy & Dick Douglas
- November 18 Sue Herron & Kathie McCarthy
- November 25 Cathy Cahill & Kathie McCarthy

Readers

- November 4 Louisa Casadei-Johnson
- November 11 Lou Cannon
- November 18 Peter Goodwin
- November 25 Liz Rice-Smith



CHURCH DIRECTORY

First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC

12 School Street
Rockport, Massachusetts 01966

Phone: (978) 546-6638

Email: office@rockportucc.org

Website: www.rockportucc.org

During non-business hours:

Rev. Derek van Gulden can be reached at (508) 818-0616 or revdvan@yahoo.com

The Old Sloop's Log

Susan Lillis, Editor

Please submit articles to:
oldslooplog@rockportucc.org

**** All articles are due on the
18th of each month. ****

Church Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday
9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Sunday Worship Service

Nursery Care is available

Sunday School

10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Church Staff

Pastor

Rev. Derek van Gulden

Office Manager

Regina Reis

Music Director

Dr. Phil Swanson

Youth Choir Director

Kristina Martin

Youth director and Interim Christian ed. director

Kaitlyn Welch

Sexton

Phil Bynarowicz