

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 unconditionally. Therefore, we covenant to be an Open and Affirming congregation welcoming persons of every age, ability, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic 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.



Beloved,

Like many of you, I miss being together in person Sunday mornings in our beloved sanctuary. I will tell you a little secret, each Sunday before I settle into what has become the 1755 studio here at the Old Sloop, I slip up to the sanctuary to pray. Sitting on the steps leading up to the chancel, I look out at the pews and can see each of you there.

After eight years, I know where most of you sit. I do not need photos of you on the pews to remind me. I can see you all very clearly. It has been nine weeks since COVID-19 has sent us into living our lives physically distant from others -- sequestered at home, schooled at home, having to wear face masks in public, and, scattered but gathered in this new "zoom" world.

This is not what I envisioned ministry to be. I have always felt called to a ministry of presence -- being physically present with others; being able to anoint and

pray for those in need; holding their hand or placing my hand on their forehead while I prayed with and for them.

For me, doing “virtual worship” has been a struggle yet I must admit I have learned new ways to communicate, new ways to preach, new ways to pray for and with others. I’ve learned a new way to be present with others.

Yes, it has been an exhausting challenge, but no more so than many of you learning new ways to do what you do. There are many days I feel discouraged and frustrated and afraid. I know we are all afraid...for ourselves, our loved ones and for our communities. Each day, new questions arise while old questions go unanswered.

It is during these times that Jesus’ words sing out to me:

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Put on my yoke and learn from me. I’m gentle and humble. And you will find rest for yourselves. ³⁰ My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30 Common English Bible)

The load Jesus is talking about is the hard work of social justice. These days there seems to be much more work to do: to feed the hungry; to provide clothing assistance; to shelter those with nowhere to stay; to ensure all who need health care can receive health care.

Now, Jesus is not offering to carry our load for us. He is telling us he will carry the load with us. Just hearing those words helps me breathe easier and lightens the load I feel called to carry. With his help carrying the load with me, I know I can do it. I can face these changes, these challenges, these times of physical distancing, of zooming, of this pandemic.

Do I long to worship with you all in person? Yes of course I do. However, until that day comes, I will continue to ask Jesus to help me carry on, to carry the load with me.

One thing I have learned throughout this process to help me be more present is the need to be out in nature...to be present to all the beauty of the created world. We are taking longer walks along the shoreline. We are spending more time bird watching and less time binge-watching television and movies. Sarah has been baking a lot and I hope to learn to bake some too.

Whatever you are dealing with because of the pandemic, I encourage you to let Jesus share the walk and load with you and I urge you to be more present in your life.

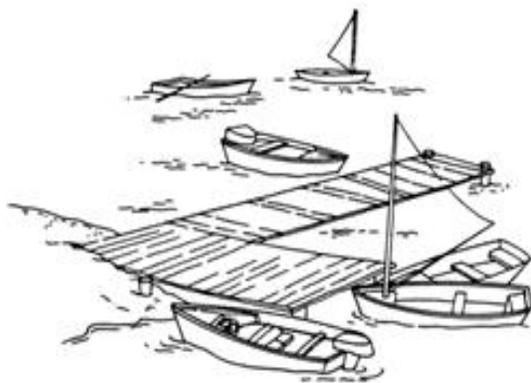
Here are a few different programs that you might find helpful.

- Wednesday afternoon storytelling, 3 pm.
- Wednesday afternoon bible study, 5 pm.

- Friday afternoon prayer service, 5 pm.
- Sunday worship live via zoom and streaming live on Facebook, 10 am.

Shalom,

Rev. Derek



The Old Sloop Landing

12 School Street
Rockport, Massachusetts
office@rockportucc.org
978.546.6638

Taking Care of our Church Family

During our lives in the time of the Coronavirus, staying at home has been the model of prevention that we all share. It is also a time as a church family that we have had to

adjust to our sanctuary being closed to us and our worship services being “zoomed” to us. We have had to find other ways to connect and be there for each other. We have needed to push ourselves to be more creative and “think out of the box” to figure out ways to support each other and lift each other up.

Together, we have had to face mutual fears that we never thought would be an issue -- being isolated, along with weekly and daily events that we took for granted. And, one of those is putting food on our tables. That is...*grocery shopping*.

Your church, in its quest to always be mindful of keeping its members safe and spiritually nourished, has maybe come up with an innovative way to keep you healthy and physically nourished too.

Reducing the stress of grocery shopping

The idea is to greatly limit your need to visit the grocery store. Many of you have expressed the procrastination and restraint in heading to shop and stock up for food...waiting in line...being exposed to others...and facing the absence of product on the shelves. It doesn't matter how old you are. This is a fear that we have all expressed or suppressed. And, we are mindful to even think of letting our guards down in the future.

One thing we may have all learned is that being prepared is what helps us feel better and less stressed. And, looking out for one another and being connected helps all of us feel stronger and supported.

To support this feeling of preparedness for the year to come, the Old Sloop is setting up a way for you all to acquire needed produce, some dairy products, bread and pastries, and maybe even eggs. We can certainly build on this to find resources for meat, fish, and poultry in the very near future...especially fish, since it is swimming just a stone's throw away from the church. And, you will be able to pick up your groceries at the new “Old Sloop Landing” located at the former day school at 12 School Street.

Who will be providing your groceries?

After much research, we discovered Holden Produce Company located in Chelsea, which has provided produce and other products to restaurants and nursing homes in the area. For more than 20 years, Holden Fruit & Produce has been a family-owned and operated business. Today, they have a warehouse and processing facility just outside the New England Produce Center where they pull their products to distribute to customers. New England Produce Center states that its primary objective is to supply the highest quality fresh fruits and vegetables along with agriculturally related items, to wholesalers, retailers and food service customers serving the more than eight million people located in an area bounded by Connecticut in the South, to the Canadian border

in the North, and all the Maritime Provinces of Canada in the East, to Albany, N.Y., in the West.

Holden Produce Direct -- the company's residential program -- has agreed to make one large delivery for us -- as a group -- to 12 School Street, eliminating the need for a minimum purchase and any delivery charges. As church members, you will make your own individual selections on the Holden Produce Direct website and pay directly with your credit card. **The delivery address is: The First Congregational Church of Rockport, 12 School Street, Rockport. And, indicate that you are part of "The Old Sloop."** To check out their diverse offerings, feel free to visit the website at **Holden Produce Direct (www.holdenproduce.com)**. Bread and pastries, eggs and some dairy will be provided by another resource...*more information to come later*. Holden Produce Direct encourages input to enhance their current list of selections. If there is something you would like, but it is missing from their list, just let them know. If they can, they will try to find it for the next time.

When to order and pick up your groceries

Starting Wednesday, May 6, Holden will be making their deliveries to us every first and third Wednesday of the month. They will deliver sometime in the morning and then, you can pick up your orders in the afternoon that same day. Those who work during the day will be able to make arrangements for pick-up late day/early evening on your way home from work.

You will have to put in your order by the Monday before the Wednesday deliveries. So, mark your calendars accordingly...**and have your order in by noon on Monday, May 18 for the next delivery on Wednesday, May 20.**

Your order will be marked and ready for pick-up. A schedule for pick-up will be staggered alphabetically by last name throughout the day. (*See attached instructions.*) If there is a delay in the delivery, you will be notified via email.

Several church members have already volunteered to make deliveries to those who cannot come in person to pick up their orders.

Pick-up at The Old Sloop Landing is at the window of the former day school at 12 School Street. You will park on School Street. There will be a table right outside the window for you to receive your order. If necessary, a volunteer will be available to assist you to your car with your order. A cart will also be available for heavy loads.

There will be no contact and wearing your masks is mandatory. Your packaged order will be cleaned down when first received by the shipper.

Always looking for input

We hope that creating “The Old Sloop Landing” will ease some of the burden and stress of what has become our everyday lives. Please let us know how it is working for you once you have tried it. We encourage you to please try it at least once, if it is possible.

If you have other resources that you would like us to look into to add to the offerings at the Old Sloop Landing, please let us know.

God bless you all and we hope you take advantage and enjoy The Old Sloop Landing.

Instructions for Ordering and Pick-up of groceries

Important: Pick-up days are the first and third WEDNESDAY of each month

Orders must be in by the Monday – by noon -- before your pick-up day

- 1.) Go to: **holdenproduce.com** On Holden’s “home” page, you will see an orange button, that looks like this:

Home Delivery now Available with Holden Produce Direct!

ORDER NOW

- 2.) Click on the “Order Now” button and it will bring you into Holden Produce Direct where you will see a selection of produce and some dairy products, etc.
- 3.) Scroll down to where it says “Sign In.” For your first order, you will be joining. All orders thereafter, you just sign in with your email address. You will also be assigned an account number.
- 4.) The website is very user-friendly. Proceed to do your shopping and follow the prompts.
- 5.) When you check out, be sure to use the following **address for delivery:**
First Congregational Church of Rockport
12 School Street, Rockport, MA 01966
- 6.) In the “Comments” put: **The Old Sloop**
- 7.) In the “Coupon Code” type: **HOLDENDIRECT10**

(All caps, no spaces)

8.) For total purchase is below \$50, we are working out the access issues.

** If you should have problems ordering, have your order ready and call **Jen at Holden at: 617/889-2204**. She is very helpful. She is working with her IT people to make this easier for us in the future.

9.) Schedule for pick-up on the first and third **Wednesday afternoons** of the month.

<u>Time for Pick-up</u>	<u>Last names</u>
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm	A to F
2:30 pm to 3:30 pm	G to N
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm	O to Z

If you have to pick up your groceries after work or you have a conflict, just let the church office know by calling 978-546-6638 or email at office@rockportucc.org ahead of time and make arrangements to pick up after 5 pm Wednesday.



CABINET

MEETING MINUTES APRIL 19, 2020

Subject to Approval

Special note: this meeting was held during the Covid 19 pandemic while social distancing kept the members of the cabinet from being physically together. Cabinet members attended from their homes using a video conferencing facility. The March cabinet meeting had been canceled because of the pandemic.

Present: Jack Reed, Moderator, chair, and Christian Education Committee; Rev. Derek van Gulden, Pastor; Bruce Coates, Treasurer; Lou Cannon, Personnel Committee; Bob Cannon, Music Committee; Bonnie Gray, Trustees; Camilla Ayers, Diaconate; Stephen Kalaghan, Christian Outreach Committee; Jim Schell, Membership Committee; Joe Chambers; Liz Rice-Smith, Historian; and Geof Lyon, Clerk and recording secretary.

Handouts (sent by email before meeting): Agenda, Draft Minutes of Cabinet Meeting February 23, Year-to-Date Operating Summary and Cash and Investment Summary for March 31, 2020; Online/Recorded Church Services.

Action, Discussion, and Follow-up Items

Declaration of a quorum, approval of minutes.

Moderator Jack Reed observed that a quorum was present. He called the meeting to order at 7:03PM. Rev. Derek van Gulden led the assembly in prayer.

The minutes of the February 23 meeting were reviewed. Regarding the Committee Organization table, Bob Cannon pointed out that he and Sigi are co-chairs of the Music Committee. Bob: also pointed out that the matter of the questionnaire about locking doors resides with the Trustees, not the Critical Incident Committee. Regarding the Christian Education/Faith Formation issue, Lou Cannon pointed out that the cabinet recommended that the personnel committee discuss the recommendation with the CE Committee. The minutes were approved as amended by voice vote.

Vibrant Faith

Rev. Derek reported that he had participated in an online interview with the person running the program. He said we are exactly the type of church they are looking for, and we were subsequently accepted. They are looking at changing the structure of the program. The first full-day workshop will be in August. We need a team of six people, two of whom will be Derek and Katie.

Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program

Bruce Coates reported the good news that the church was approved for a Paycheck Protection Program loan, and we have received \$37,800, two and a half times our average monthly payroll. This is a forgivable loan, meaning we should not have to pay it back if we fully comply with the terms of the program. Rev. Derek reminded us that the money is for salaries and benefits and utilities.

Financials to date

Bruce referred to the financial summaries he had distributed by email. He pointed out that we are ahead of budget by \$17,700. Pledges are ahead by \$2,300. Operating expenses are down by \$9,000. Snow removal, heating oil, and utilities are all down with the mild winter and the nearly empty building. The major maintenance fund has \$25,000 in the checking account that was donated for steeple lighting and the new website. Investments are down but not too bad. The Cook fund is still above \$200,000 (the amount of the original principal) even though we have taken money out every quarter.

Old Sloop Fair

Jack indicated that it is doubtful we will be able to have a fair this year. There will almost certainly still be Covid 19 restrictions in place. Stalwarts Michelle Elwell and Anne Kistner cannot participate. He suggested we take a break and decide where we want to go with the fair. Jim Schell made a motion that the fair be put off until it is appropriate and safe. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.

Director of Christian Education and Faith Formation

Lou reported that the Personnel Committee discussed offering the position to Katie Welch with the Christian Education committee. Rev. Derek will discuss the matter with Katie.

Streaming Services

Geof Lyon reported that the online services we have offered during the pandemic have been very well received. For the April 12 Easter service there were 91 Zoom participants, many of which represented more than one person. 272 people engaged with the video on Facebook, of whom 138 reacted, commented, or shared the video. By comparison, there were 145 in attendance for Easter 2019. For the April 19 service earlier that day, there were 61 Zoom participants. 228 people had engaged with the Facebook video as of mid-afternoon, of whom 35 reacted, commented, or shared the video. The services are also shown on cable TV channel 67. We are reaching people that we do not reach with in-person worship services. This suggests that we should consider continuing to stream services after we are back in the building. Jim and Geof have been investigating how this might be done, and Geof referred to the document

Online/Recorded Church Services. The document proposes a solution that would involve four cameras and more microphones and would support both live streaming and recording services. The estimated cost is \$2,600. Jim presented the idea to the Diaconate at their meeting earlier that day, and they approved this expenditure from the Living Memorial fund. Geof warned that doing this successfully would require that one person operate the equipment from the music office during the service. He also pointed out that the cameras and microphones, although small and relatively inconspicuous, are not invisible. Several attendees spoke in favor of the plan. Bruce made a motion that we move forward with the streaming proposal. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.

New Business

Camilla Ayers reported that the Diaconate discussed summer worship times. She reminded us that services began at 9:00 last summer. Several attendees reported hearing objections to the earlier time.

Officer Reports

Pastor

Rev. Derek reported that all is well. People are taking part in more activities during this time of social distancing than they usually do. He continues to visit people, speaking to them through a window or open door. Katie is conducting online youth activities that are well attended, including some young people who grew up in the church and are away at college. The church keeps them together. People need their faith. People are checking us out. Other pastors report the same. Former parishioners report that the online services make them feel like part of the church again, and parishioners who are away enjoy being able to stay in contact.

Historian

Liz Rice Smith reported that due to significant life changes and postponements during the pandemic, she is having to modify or postpone many of our plans to highlight the 400th anniversary of the arrival of our Congregational/Pilgrim/Separatist forebears in North America. She will post opportunities for study, reflection, worship, virtual field trips, and commemorative acknowledgement via email messages, the church Facebook page, and the Old Sloop Log. She is also collecting and preserving documentation of the church's activities during the pandemic, focusing attention on the impact on our ministry, life of worship, and local/global circumstances.

Committee Reports

Diaconate

Camilla reported that she has become aware of the struggles of people who are older and alone. It is difficult to order groceries online or to ask someone else to shop. We need to keep these people in mind.

Trustees

Bonnie Gray reported that a Pella representative looked at the Waring Building windows but that Pella technicians are not working now. Bill Elwell's hopes to replace the three doors while his business is closed for the pandemic. He needs Rev. Derek's permission to be at the building. Lead paint consultant Ron Peik inspected the façade and gave us a report. The gutter cleaning has been done. Walter Vining is getting an estimate for leaf guards. Ethan Tanson will thatch and rake the lawn. Bonnie spoke with Bob Cannon about the door-locking questionnaire. They think people will not be interested now and we should wait for the virus to pass. Verizon was to install additional equipment and increase the rent they pay us as of the beginning of March. Walter will check with Verizon about this.

Christian Outreach Committee

Stephen Kalaghan reported that the Outreach Committee met by email. The treasury is doing well. They have asked Rockport High School to select scholarship recipients. They are sending money to Family Promise because they are keeping guests at the day center. They are donating money to Action for sandwiches.

Old Sloop Fleet

Liz reported that the fleet is quietly busy with lots of cards and calls and window visits. There is some helping with food, but the virus presents some complicated issues. There are many acts of kindness.

Christian Education

Rev. Derek reported that Katie has been working with the young families. There are five families and nine children. The youth group is preparing something for online worship.

Membership Committee

Jim reported that the information panels are on hold during social distancing. People are working on video stuff. Sigi is working on Practices of Faith submissions for the Old Sloop Log.

Liz reported that the Team for the Welcoming Ministry of Hospitality will not be able to offer the film series at the church this year. They will post something on the church Facebook Page inviting people to post trailers or movies that reflect the Easter spirit.

Music Committee

Bob reported that the Music Committee is interested in conducting a survey to assess what kind of music people would like. They are looking to involve more youth in the music ministry. The committee had agreed to have monthly meetings but moving to Zoom is complicated.

Personnel Committee

Lou observed that Kristina is in a new position and we hope that Katie soon will be. She suggests that we find a way to celebrate.

Date of Next Cabinet Meeting:

The Cabinet will next meet in the Morgan Room at 7:00PM on May 17.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:16PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Geof Lyon, Clerk

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL



TRUSTEES

MEETING MINUTES MARCH 9, 2020

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

Present: Bruce Coates, Treasurer; Mark Jurewicz; Bonnie Gray; Walter Vining; Kevin Love; Chip Kistner; Rev. Derek van Gulden; Geof Lyon & Jim Schell, Building Study Committee

Absent: Bill Elwell

- **Minutes:** Minutes from the February 10, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Bruce presented the Treasurer's Report.
- **Monthly Reviews:**
Bank Statements: January & February not reviewed.

PEX Statements: Bonnie reviewed and noted 1 missing receipt for trash bags and 2 other questionable items that she will review with the Office Manager.

Old Business:

- **Building Study Committee (BSC) Update –**
 - **Sanctuary Ceiling Paint** – Spot painting of the ceiling and painting of the cornice, the front wall and the center section of the west wall has been completed.
 - **Pella Window Repairs** – A representative from Pella inspected the broken windows in the Law House and provided a proposal for repairs and installation of window screens. Trustees reviewed and approved.
 - **Drain Pans in attic** – waiting for response from Bob Levesque.
 - **Broken Balusters** – No update.
 - **Front Façade Painting** – BSC recommended hiring a lead paint consultant to evaluate lead abatement. Trustees approved up to \$1,000.
- **Exit Door Replacement** – No update.
- **Steeple Lighting Thank You Letter** – No update.
- **Critical Incident Committee (CIC) Update** – Armed Intruder/Active Shooter presentation by Chief John Horvath, Assistant Chief Mark Schmink and Sargent Dan Mahoney of the Rockport Police Department was held on 2/27. Approximately 30 members of the congregation including representatives from church staff, the Cabinet, Diaconate, Trustees, CIC, BSC, Outreach, Membership Committees as well as coordinators of Ushers, Coffee House, Pot Luck, Choir, Family Promise. The presentation generated questions/discussions related to door security, increasing awareness of evacuation options, assisting children & members of the congregation with limited mobility and developing procedures for warnings of imminent danger. Feedback from participants was favorable. Police praised the church for the progress forming a safety committee to develop policies and address safety and security issues.
- **Door Security** – Trustees discussed many options regarding security including re-keying exterior doors, identifying a single entrance plan, security cameras/monitors, assigning responsibility for locking and checking doors following events, methods for “latecomers” to gain access and improving interior door security. All agreed major committees, coordinators of events and members of the congregation should have an opportunity to provide input. Derek will reach out to the conference for guidance.
- **Rental Space** – Rockport Music is interested in rehearsal space and storage space. Rev. Derek will follow up with Tony Beadle. There may also be interest utilizing the space for adult day care.
- **Gutter Cleaning** – Walter has verified insurance coverage for Northshore Gutters in Peabody. Gutters are scheduled to be cleaned Friday 3/20.
- **Solar Panels** – When this was considered in the past the only cost saving would be lower electric bill as the church would not receive the tax benefit. New legislation is

pending that may alter that. Derek will review information from Bill Tobin and the Cape Ann Solar Project.

New Business:

- **AA Rental April, May, June** – Due to construction at the Baptist Church the AA group will be displaced for 3 months. They are requesting to rent space in fellowship hall/sanctuary 4 days a week (Monday, Tuesday Thursday & Friday) for \$200/month. Trustees approved.
- **Church Mutual Insurance** – Policy needs to be renewed. Chip will review the policy. Walt noted the former day school space needs to be added back to the policy.
- **Parsonage Issues** – Derek requested the outside light be replaced and possibly a smoke detector relocated. He will contact Bruce Rowell.

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 8:35pm.

The next scheduled meeting of the Trustees will be Monday, April 13, 2020.

Walter Vining

Mark Jurewicz

Chair, Board of Trustees

Recording Secretary

TRUSTEES

MEETING MINUTES APRIL 13, 2020 - Held Via Zoom

Trustee Meeting – called to order at 7:06 PM. Rev. Derek opened the meeting with a prayer.

Present: Bruce Coates, Treasurer; Bill Elwell; Mark Jurewicz; Bonnie Gray; Walter Vining; Kevin Love; Chip Kistner; Rev. Derek van Gulden; Geof Lyon, Building Study Committee

Absent: None

- **Minutes:** Minutes from the March 9, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Bruce presented the Treasurer's Report and noted the net income is over budget due to increased pledge amounts (mainly due to 1 major donation) and decreased operating expenses. It was also noted the monthly Verizon payment had not increased as expected. Walt will follow up with Tom Moylan.
- **Monthly Reviews:**
 - Bank Statements:** Not reviewed.
 - PEX Statements:** Not reviewed.

Old Business:

- **Building Study Committee (BSC) Update** –
 - **Pella Window Repairs** – Repairs are on hold due to the virus.

- **Drain Pans in attic** – Still no response from Bob Levesque. Geof will contact him.
- **Broken Balusters** – Walt will follow up.
- **Front Façade Painting** – Awaiting information from Ron Peik from Alpine Environmental that can be used to develop an RFP to solicit bids.
- **Parsonage Garage** – Due to financial uncertainty and the chance this project could become more expensive than anticipated it was decided to delay.
- **Exit Door Replacement** – Will hopefully be completed later in April.
- **Steeple Lighting Thank You Letter** – Walt will draft and send to group for review.
- **Church Mutual Insurance** – A copy of the current policy was not available. Walt/Chip will locate and review.
- **Door Security** – Bill noted 2 exterior doors were found unsecured. A door security plan developed by Geof was reviewed by the Trustees as well as the BSC. The detailed plan addresses many security issues utilizing either standard door locks or keyless smart-locks through several scenarios that could be implemented in stages. Trustees were asked to research facility security companies and to consider/identify various security issues for when the buildings are empty, partially full and full. It was suggested that Earl's Lock Shop may provide input regarding lock types. Bonnie will follow up with Bob Canon regarding the survey he developed.
- **Gutter Cleaning** – Both gutters have been cleaned. The company recommended that leaf guards be installed. Walt will ask them for an estimate.
- **Solar Panels** – No update. Derek will follow up with Bill Tobin.

New Business:

- **Lawn Care** – Ethan cleared brush from behind fence overlooking the playground area. Jim Schell cleared the areas between Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary. Installation of landscape fabric and crushed stone would prevent regrowth. Due to social distancing concerns it was decided not to schedule a "raking/yard clean-up day." Bill will thatch the yard and Ethan will be hired to rake and clean-up.
- **Cares Act Funding** – Following guidelines published by the Small Business Administration (SBA) \$38,748 has been applied for through the Pay Check Protection Program. The application has been approved by the Institution for Savings and is now pending SBA approval. The funds would be used to maintain payroll for the church employees.

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 8:13pm.

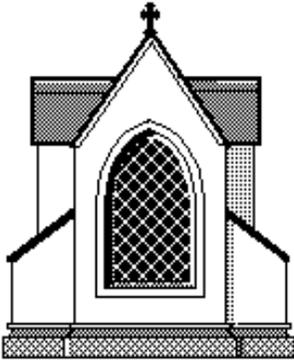
The next scheduled meeting of the Trustees will be Monday, May 11, 2020.

Walter Vining

Chair, Board of Trustees

Mark Jurewicz

Recording Secretary



Stewardship Committee

STEWARDSHIP MAY 2020

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." 1Peter 4:10

Like many of you, I suspect, I've been spending a lot of time online, Zooming and Googling, going to virtual yoga and church and writers group. As part of the Stewardship Committee, I've been thinking about what we can do while we are all hunkered down, at least six feet away from each other. Our committee has, of course, put our restaurant fundraisers on the back burner and who knows what The Old Sloop Fair will look like when July rolls around. So I decided to turn to Google and remind myself what Stewardship means. I learned that there are at least 46 mentions of it in the Bible. I also learned for the first time about "the four Ts of stewardship: time, talent, temple, and treasure." Remember, I was raised Catholic, so I know Catechism better than the Bible.

The simplicity of the verse from Peter spoke to me. Whatever gift we have received, share it with those we are able to reach. Continue to cook nice meals for your family, write letters and make phone calls to distant friends and relatives, support the Open Door Food Pantry with a small check instead of a casserole.

The church team that puts together our Sunday Zoom worship has certainly found ways to use their time and talents during the Covid Crisis. We appreciate and benefit from their labors of love. The words, music and original videos are just what we need to start off our Sundays.

The Stewardship Committee meets tomorrow where we will discuss ways to make online giving easier in the coming months. Dan Bing from our committee has reached out to Geof Lyon and Bruce Coates for input on this project and we will keep you posted. Fortunately, most of you supporters are still honoring your pledges by simply putting a check in the mail, and that's just fine, too.

Stay safe and healthy. Let's pray we are further down the curve by the time next month's Log is published.

Louisa Casadei-Johnson for the Stewardship Committee

MEETING MINUTES May 7, 2020

In attendance: Louisa Casadei-Johnson, Kathie McCarthy, Joe Chambers, Dan Bing and Rev. Derek. The ZOOM meeting began at 6:06 pm.

Minutes reviewed and approved with changes noted by Louisa.

Louisa mentioned that pledges have been coming in and according to Geof we are at 100% fulfillment.

- Fish Shack Fundraiser was discussed about the appropriateness of a fundraiser this year and it was decided to not do anything in the near future.
- Online pledging
 - Increase of virtual attendants means opportunity for online offerings
 - Louisa speak briefly at service on opportunity
 - We don't want to change habits of current people who send check
 - Louisa will announce during an upcoming service about a 'Virtual Offering Plate'
 - Dan will work with Geof on creating a link that Derek will include in the Service announcement email.
 - New Website will include more prominent offering opportunity.
- Louisa will discuss with Derek when to revisit Narrative Budget and how it may change due to Covid.
- Keeping Stewardship Alive was discussed. We agree that the idea of virtual gettogethers in small groups of 5/6 could provide opportunity for fellowship. Derek discussed recent feedback on the services, bible study, etc. that have been taking place online. Louisa will reach out to put plan in motion.
- Next meeting: June 11 at 6.

Membership Committee

Practices of Faith in the United Church of Christ

The Membership Committee is continuing to offer a writing on one of twelve practices of faith in the United Church of Christ. This month, we offer the UCC's discussion of scripture. We hope that considering these will stimulate your thinking about your faith and the First Congregational Church of Rockport (FCCR). We invite you to read the following, whether you are new to the church or have been here a long time.

Practices in Faith – Ministry

Members and friends of the FCCR are acquainted with “Our Ministries”, which shows, in pictures, pie charts, and prose the many ministries of the Old Sloop. The following is a publication of the United Church of Christ, lightly edited to reflect the practices of the First Congregational Church of Rockport.

The United church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and society.
UCC Constitution, 1997, Article IV, paragraph 17

What is ministry?

Ministry takes many forms and is the vocation of all who are baptized. We can minister as we give and as we receive. We minister as we offer prayers for others and as we receive the gift of others' prayers for us. We return our gifts from God by offering time, money, skill, compassion, acceptance and presence. We minister through meditation and Bible study as well as action. Our daily work can be ministry. We can minister in a way that touches one person or we can minister through change that reaches many.

We have clear guidelines for outreach ministry in Matthew 25. When we graciously give food, drink and clothes to people in need; welcome the stranger; and visit the sick and those in prison, in our neighborhoods or in a faraway place through our monetary gifts, we are ministering. We go about these ministries in different ways. Ministry happens in the mutuality between giving and receiving. Some do specific outreach such as Habitat for Humanity or volunteer at the food pantry, while others work to affect governmental and corporate policies. Some study to learn and make changes.

What are gifts for our ministry?

God, the Holy Spirit, blesses us all with a variety of gifts. All members are called to discover, with the help of the church community, the gifts we have received and to use them for the building up of the body of Christ, the church, and for service to the world to which the church is sent. Our gifts may be sharing the Gospel in word and deed, healing, praying, teaching and learning, serving, guiding and following, and inspiring. (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Faith and Order Paper No. 111. World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1982*)

While all Christians are called to pray, read the Bible, and work for justice, different situations call for differing gifts. Some we develop in our work life and bring to the church; others we develop through our spiritual life and bring to the school yard, office, factory, nursing home room or wherever we may be. You may learn more about spiritual gifts from Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and Ephesians 4:11-12.

What is the role and work of ordained ministers?

While the whole church and every member are called to ministry, some individuals have a particular call from God, recognized by the community of faith, for leadership within the church. These individuals, who prepare for ordained ministry and demonstrate skill and knowledge for it, are ordained to ministry of and for the whole church in all places and for their lifetime. The primary responsibility of the ordained ministry is to strengthen the body of Christ, the church, by embodying and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to all; nurturing and empowering the gathered Church through worship and sacraments, fellowship and mutual care, education and spiritual formation; acting in the world through deeds of justice and lovingkindness. Clergy minister through many roles including pastors, pastoral counselors, educators, missionaries, chaplains, and denominational staff.

The United Church of Christ focuses on the ministry of the whole people of God and on Jesus' ministry and biblical texts that encourage equality of all people. Through ordination, the United Church of Christ recognizes and celebrates the call of people to ministry without regard to human differences.

Are there other authorized ministries?

For a variety of reasons, there are instances when an Ordained Minister is not available to represent and serve the Church. In such circumstances, an Association of the United Church of Christ may identify one of its lay members as having gifts and graces appropriate for that ministry setting, as well as a call from God, and grant them Lay Ministerial Standing. Lay Ministerial Standing is a temporary, accountable covenantal relationship among the Association, the individual member, and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ. Lay Ministers are, for a season, charged with particular roles and tasks in which they are in service to or on behalf of a particular congregation as representative servants of the United Church of Christ. During a Lay Minister's service, the Local Church, the Lay Minister, and the Association Committee on Ministry should be in discernment together as to whether the Lay Minister's call by the Holy Spirit is to a life of ministerial leadership as an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ.

How can I discover my gifts for ministry?

You may be feeling that God is calling you to a particular ministry, or you may be unsure about your gifts for ministry. Since it is the role of the church to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service, you are encouraged to speak to your pastor or a trusted member of your community of faith. God has blessed you with multiple gifts for ministry and as you share these gifts in community you will experience a deeper connection with God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit.



Christian Education

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND FAITH FORMATION

Welcome to the world of virtual ministry! As we are adapting, we have created some new ways to connect on line. We started of the “stay at home” with an on line scavenger hunt and various games to keep us occupied during this time.

Our new schedule, via zoom, is as follows:

Sunday nights @ 7 pm. (Not Memorial Day Weekend.) Youth Group check-in.

Grades 6 – 12.

Tuesday/Thursday nights @ 7 pm. Trivia Game Nights (All ages welcome)

Wednesday nights @ 7:30 pm. Young Adult check-in (High school grads, college students and college grads welcome)

Wednesday night Bible Study @ 5 pm via Zoom with Katie and Derek.

If anyone is interested in joining, please email me and I will get you the zoom links.

Katie Welch, Youth Director

Welchkaitlyn9@gmailcom



Weekly Church Events Via Zoom

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON STORY TELLING

3:00 p.m.



WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY

5:00 p.m.



THURSDAY MORNING BOOK GROUP

10:00 a.m.



FRIDAY AFTERNOON PRAYER SERVICE

5:00 p.m.



SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP LIVE VIA ZOOM AND FACEBOOK

10:00 A.M.



CHURCH DIRECTORY

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