

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.



Beloved,

One of the biggest things I took away from my Sabbatical experience was the importance of Sabbath, taking down time from work and all that comes with it. During sabbatical I practiced setting aside e-mail communication, texting and Facebook. Yes I did check e-mails twice/week but intentionally kept away from it on a regular basis. It was the most freeing thing I did. I realize the important roll e-mail, texts, and many other forms of social media play in our daily lives but also felt, for me at least, that I/we have allowed it play too big a role in our lives. So during Sabbatical I did very well cutting these things out but, a few weeks ago, Sarah mentioned that I seemed to have fallen back into my hourly e-mails checks, texting and checking Facebook every evening. She reminded me of my post sabbatical goal to be very intentional about powering down, turning off and not checking e-mails on my Sabbath day. Now when I take my Sabbath day, Mondays most weeks, I read the following passage at the start of the day:

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to The Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days The Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore The Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:8-11 RSV)

Since then I have been spending a lot of time thinking and praying about the Sabbath. I know that I am not a good observer of the Sabbath. Often times I fill my Sabbath day trying to catch up on the

work from the week before. Does this sound familiar to any of you? If we are all honest I am sure it does.

Sarah mentioned two important things when she talked to me about the Sabbath:

First, that it is risky: taking a day off from all work, relaxing and enjoying God's created world in all its splendor. Who has time for that? If someone asks you how are you, most of us respond "busy!" We do not want anyone thinking we are lazy after all. But that is often how we view people who take the time to enjoy a day of leisure. Our culture almost demands that we are going 24/7. Why do we find it so hard to take some down time? I want to challenge each of you to think about what you would do with your Sabbath day? Write down a few things then try them out. For me working in the garden digging in the dirt is a good start. I go for long walks, read, or taking a nap. It's also a good time for an afternoon ice cream cone, one of my favorite things to do.

Second, Sarah said that when you take a Sabbath day you become more fully aware of God in everything and every moment. For me everything becomes sharper. I see and hear things I usually don't notice on other days. This is a wonderful gift to give yourself and one which God encourages us all to take advantage of.

My hope for all of you is that you find a way to observe the Sabbath each week. I know during the summer it is easier to do than the rest for the year, so start now. Allow yourself to rest and not work for one whole day. Carry that practice into the fall and then winter months. If you have trouble finding the time, sit down and ask God for help.

May you find true rest and the peace of God, in your Sabbath day,

May you become fully aware of the Creator, in the stillness of the day,

May your spirit and soul be refreshed by your day of rest. Amen

Blessings of rest and peace,

Rev. Derek



The Old Sloop Fair is Coming Soon!

We are busy getting ready for the 2018 Old Sloop Fair. The Fair is one of the oldest summer traditions on the North Shore and the most important fundraising event for the church.

Mark your calendars:

Rummage Sale: Saturday, July 14, 8:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

Clothes, accessories, shoes, linens, etc.

Old Sloop Fair: Friday, July 20 and Saturday, July 21, 8:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

White Elephant, Boutique, Yard Sale, Handknits, Art Mart, Jewelry, Ken's

Collection, and Snack Bar.

What can you do?

Donate!

We welcome donations that are clean and in good condition. You can drop off donations every Saturday, 8-10 a.m. and Sunday from after worship to noon. Come to the "Old Sloop Fair World Headquarters" behind the Law Building. If you need to drop off donations at a different time, please call Michelle Elwell at 978-546-3157 or the church office at 978-546-6638. Please refer to the website oldsloopfair.org or the flyer you recently received by mail for details on what we hope to receive and items we are no longer able to accept.

Sign up to help!

Contact team leaders directly, sign up in Fellowship Hall after worship, or contact the church office to be put on the "people power" list. For information on team leaders and more details, go to the Fair website, oldsloopfair.org.

Please come!

Bring your families, friends, and neighbors! The Old Sloop Fair is most fun and raises the most money for the church when there is a crowd. For the convenience of those of us who use plastic for nearly everything we buy, the Fair accepts most credit and debit cards.

See you at the Old Sloop Fair!

Cabinet

Meeting Minutes for May 20, 2018 -- Subject to Approval

The Cabinet of the First Congregational Church of Rockport, Massachusetts, UCC was called to order by Moderator Steve Lindo at 7:04PM.

Present: Steve Lindo, Moderator, chair, and Personnel Committee; Rev. Derek van Gulden, Pastor; Sigrid Lindo, Stewardship Committee and Music Committee; Sue Herron, Diaconate; Walter Vining, Trustees; Stephen Kalaghan, Christian Outreach Committee; Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Rice Smith, Historian and Membership Committee; Bruce Coates, Treasurer; and Geof Lyon, Clerk and recording secretary.

Rev. Derek led us in prayer to open the meeting:

Action, Discussion and Follow-Up Items:

Meeting minutes: The minutes of the April 15 meeting were approved as submitted by voice vote.

It was noted that two matters documented in the minutes changed after the meeting. Classic Caterers did not end up catering the Sabbatical celebration event. Also, Jack Reed's presentation about the history of the church was moved to the library because of the large crowd that is expected to attend.

Steeple: Walter Vining reported that a meeting about the steeple was held Friday to make sure everyone is on the same page as the steeplejacks complete their work and Verizon begins theirs. In

attendance were engineers, contractors, and others representing American Steeple and Tower, Verizon, Dewberry Engineering, Structure Consulting Group, Structures North, Steeplecom, Diamond Communications, Cooper and Associates, and the church. Many coordination details were worked out and documented. Excavation for the shed will begin May 21. Verizon will coordinate with American Steeple and Tower to hoist the antennae and transmitters up to the bell deck and then into the lantern.

Rainbow Day School: Walter reported that he has received a certificate of liability insurance coverage from Rainbow Day School. He will send a copy to the church's insurance agent to make sure it meets the requirements for the church's insurance. Walter will request a certificate of Worker's Compensation Coverage from Rainbow Day School.

Christian Education Staffing and Restructuring: Rev. Derek reported that Debbie Allen, Consultant for Christian Education and Youth Ministry for the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC, will meet with representatives of the church the evening of May 22. She will help the church work out what our community needs with regard to Christian Education.

Old Sloop Fair: Sigi reported that the department chairs are all set, but overall signups remain weak. Trifolds aimed at encouraging donations and volunteering were sent to parishioners. Rev. Derek suggests we place the trifolds where people can pick them up. He will mention the fair from the pulpit.

Old Business

Nominating Committee: the nominating committee has not yet met and organized.

Pastor photos: Liz Rice-Smith reported that we have gotten digital photos from interim ministers Rev. Sharon Goss and Rev. Jim Fletcher. Rev. Fletcher's photo is not a head shot. Liz will investigate whether it can be cropped and resized to better resemble the composition of the other photos on the wall. It was observed that we do not have a photo of Rev. van Gulden either.

CORI checks: Rev. Derek reported that the CORI checks have begun. Regina will visit committee meetings and schedule some evening hours to complete them.

Bylaw review: Steve Lindo will contact the members of last year's bylaw review committee and ask them to revive the effort.

New Business

Rev. Derek requested approval to ask the congregation if there are people who would like to serve as church delegates for Mass Conference meetings, councils, and Synod. The request was approved.

Geof Lyon reported that an experiment is under way with the sanctuary sound system. He has replaced some of the components of the built-in system in the music office with equipment that was retired from coffeehouse use because it is too unwieldy to set up and break down. This system allows us much finer control of individual microphones and of the different outputs that feed the sanctuary loudspeakers, the chancel loudspeakers, and the assistive listening systems. The new system can also be used to make high-quality recordings of sermons or, eventually, of entire services, possibly to be synchronized with video. The disadvantage of this system is that with so much more that can be

adjusted, it isn't practical for the untrained to adjust anything. Several attendees reported that they thought the system sounded better over the past few weeks since the experiment began.

Liz reminded us that we need to plan dedications for the donated painting for the narthex, for the retired bell, and for the steeple itself. These will probably wait until fall. Rev. Derek also showed us a beautiful image of the church painted on an oar that was painted (and donated!) by Gloucester artist Sam Nigro. We agreed that we should find a prominent place to display it, too.

Officer Reports

Treasurer: Bruce Coates distributed year to date Operating and Cash and Investment summaries. We are running a deficit, but it is much smaller than the budgeted deficit. Bruce reminded us that month-to-month results depend on the timing of income and expense items that will adjust over the year. Sue Herron asked about reporting for Living Memorial Fund contributions. Geof promised to look into the issues and report back to the Diaconate.

Historian: Liz Rice Smith reported that the bell plaque has been mounted, and the Artifact Committee will begin work on other artifacts. Liz has contributed a history section to the cookbook, and she helped Jack Reed with his presentation about church history. She would like to attend the Meetinghouse Conference at Deerfield in June and sought permission to pay for it from the History Fund. Permission was granted.

Committee Reports

Trustees: Walter reported that the Trustees have formed a Safety Committee to consider the issues raised by Rockport Police Lieutenant Mark Schmink during his visit. The Trustees are also developing a Critical Incident Policy. The Trustees are concerned about building security and remind everyone to make sure the doors are locked and closed tightly when they leave or, if there are other people still in the building, to speak with them to make sure they know to lock up.

Stewardship Committee: Sigi warned that the terms are ending for almost everyone on the committee. She observed that it is almost time for a new Our Ministries book and asked that everyone take photos.

Music Committee: Sigi observed that a Jazz Brunch is being planned to follow worship the day after the Old Sloop Fair in July. The Music Committee has had no involvement in this.

Membership Committee: Liz Rice Smith reported that the next discernment/reflection series will begin in the fall. The Film Series has been well attended.

Personnel Committee: Steve Lindo reported that the Personnel Committee is working on an updated Personnel Manual.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51PM.

Date of Next Cabinet Meeting:

The cabinet will next meet in the Morgan Room at 7:00PM on June 17. Geof Lyon will be away, and the chair will seek a substitute recording secretary.

Respectfully submitted,
Geof Lyon, Clerk
SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Diaconate

Meeting Minutes for Sunday, May 20, 2018, 12:00 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE

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

Minutes of our April meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

Next Communion worship:

On **June 3, 2018**. Janice and Barbara will prep. Karen Mercy, Deb and Sue will help serve. Deb will order new cups and dispenser for the juice. Bread and juice are 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 will be talking with Cabinet and Nominating Committee to find representatives from FCC Rockport to represent our church at the North East Association for the Massachusetts conference.
- Rev. Derek also seeking from the Cabinet financial support for Rev. Sue while seeking UCC standing.

Updates:

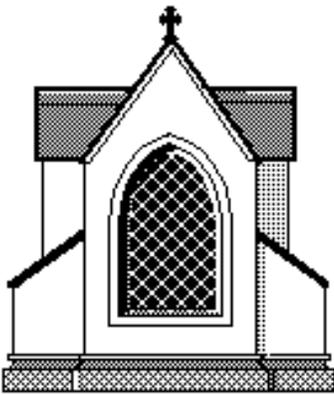
- Living Memorial fund thank you notes- Janice showed a few examples, a design was chosen, adding a signature line and requesting production.
- Parament Book- Karen continues to collect data and should have some more pictures shortly.
- Baptismal Font- Karen emailed Bill Elwell. They are meeting in June to discuss where to move it.
- Refrigerator- Karen emailed Wendy Woodbury to write up a proposal with some options.
- Glass on Communion Table- Barbara will look at possible recut of glass or cost of a plexiglass replacement.
- Storage cabinet- The hutch that stores Usher supplies has a problem with the lock. Jim Schell will look at it.
- Evaluation Process- Sue Herron is gathering job description for Rev. Derek so we can move forward.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Roles of Deacons:** Mercy working on update. Deacons agreed to look it over and work on it at next meeting.
- **Cabinet Invite: LMF issues** – Looking to invite all Cabinet treasurer people to discuss a set procedure needed to track all LMF monies, thank you note needs.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM **NEXT MEETING** – Sunday, **March 11** at 11:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted, *Karen Chambers, secretary*



Stewardship

June 2018

Shea's April Dinner a Successful Fundraiser for the Old Sloop

Approximately 50 Old Sloop friends gathered at Shea's Riverside in Essex on April 13 for delicious food, a beautiful Essex River view, and good fellowship with church friends. Shea's contribution of 10% of the entire evening's proceeds and the share of the 50:50 raffle totaled close to \$500 for the benefit of the church. We will announce the date for the fall dinner soon. Thanks to all who came. Any suggestions for a different venue? Let the Stewardship Committee know.

Sign up for Amazon Smile!

The checks from Amazon Smile are providing a small, steady income. 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 every time we order from Amazon, the returns could be significant. Go to www.smile.amazon.com and follow the instructions. Pick First Congregational Church of Rockport as your charity. Thanks for making that extra effort!



Christian Education Youth Ministry News

June Calendar

Sunday, June 3	10:15	Last Sunday School
	5:00 – 7:00 pm	Youth Group
Sunday June 10	10:00	Youth Service
	5:00 – 7:00 pm	Youth Cookout at the Hale's



Christian Outreach Committee

Meeting minutes, May 27, 2018

Present: Charlie Brackett, Darlene Spittle, Steve Kalaghan, Wendy Woodbury, Marge Schell, Karen Coffin, Pastor van Gulden, Jay Reed.

Meeting began at 11:40 am with a Lakota prayer from the hymnal.

There is a \$6000 balance in the treasury at the end of April. Disbursements included an honorarium to Open Door after Julie laFontaine's address to the congregation. Of note, since Lifebridge will merge with Grace Center at the end of June, the church donates to all three Lifebridge affiliates, including River House in Beverly.

There is a healthy balance in the Pastor's Fund to date.

We will assemble lunch bags for the Action homeless shelter in Gloucester on Tuesday of this week. This is an outreach of Cape Ann Interfaith Commission.

The church served about 30 guests at Open Door on May 5. I need to ask for a vegetarian casserole for our next outing, August 11. Thanks to all of the volunteers. Our guests appreciate our meals and are quite vocal about it.

After a brief discussion, we committed to North Shore Pride Parade in Salem on June 23 at noon. Participating organizations are asked to register at the event at 40A Congress St at 11 am. The walk is about one-half mile.

Pastor Derek has heard from churches represented by Cape Ann Clergy group, so perhaps we won't march alone.

Refugee Immigration Ministry holds its Refugee Walk at Lake Quannapowitt in Wakefield on Sunday, June 24, at 4pm. I will ask members of the congregation and the community to sponsor me. Others from the church are encouraged to walk, also.

We hosted one family for the Family Promise homelessness program last week. Our guests said they would like to return to visit us some day. I told them I hope they will do that. We wish them well. Family Promise North Shore Boston has scheduled a coordinators meeting in June that includes volunteers for both host and support churches.

Mark Woodbury has printed invitations to our Wednesday potlucks so we can attract more guests, and committee members said they would disseminate them around town. Thanks to Mark and the committee for that. Lately we average 25 to 30 guests. We will suspend potlucks for July as usual.

Pastor Derek asked our opinion about displaying a Shower of Stoles exhibit sometime in the fall. Shower of Stoles commemorates clergy and lay advocacy for LGBTQ justice. There would be a display of liturgical stoles in the sanctuary for about a month. We discussed including inspirational speakers during that period.

Meeting ended about 12:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted, James Reed

Imponderables/An Open Discussion Group

Every week during worship following the prayer of confession we sing an 'Assurance of Pardon.' It is our way of ensuring each other that no matter what we have done God forgives us. Do you ever question this? Does it make you wonder how someone who commits a particular violent crime can be forgiven? What about our own ability to forgive others? What does this mean in light of scripture which seems at times filled with violence? I know I struggle with these questions and with others as well. Maybe you do not struggle with these questions, but have others that worship, the bible, and everyday life bring up. If you are interested please let Rev. Derek know and we will start meeting when and where works best for all.

Each week we will meet and talk about those things in church, scripture and our lives which we have questions about. Each week will be a different topic brought forward by the group. Some examples might be faith, free will, sin, and evil. I invite you to bring your ideas and thoughts to this open forum. Together let us enter into respectful dialogue, sharing, listening and helping each other move forward on our faith journeys.

Weekly Church Events

WEDNESDAY NIGHT
POTLUCK DINNER
All are Welcome
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.



THURSDAY MORNING
BOOK GROUP
MORGAN CONFERENCE ROOM
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.



June 3	Jay Reed and Derek van Gulden
June 10	Jack Reed and Steve Lindo
June 17	Wendy and Mark Woodbury
June 24	Rick Kasten and Kathleen Morgan

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 May

Ushers

May 6 Karen and Joe Chambers
 May 13 Karen and Joe Chambers
 May 20 Kate Desmond and Helen Raney
 May 27 Kate Desmond and Helen Raney

Readers

May 6 Bob Cannon
 May 13 Jack Reed
 May 20 Sue Herron
 May 27 John Coonley



CHURCH DIRECTORY

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The Old Sloop's Log

Susan Lillis, Editor

Regina Reis, Contributing 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.
until June 3, 2018,
resuming in September.

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