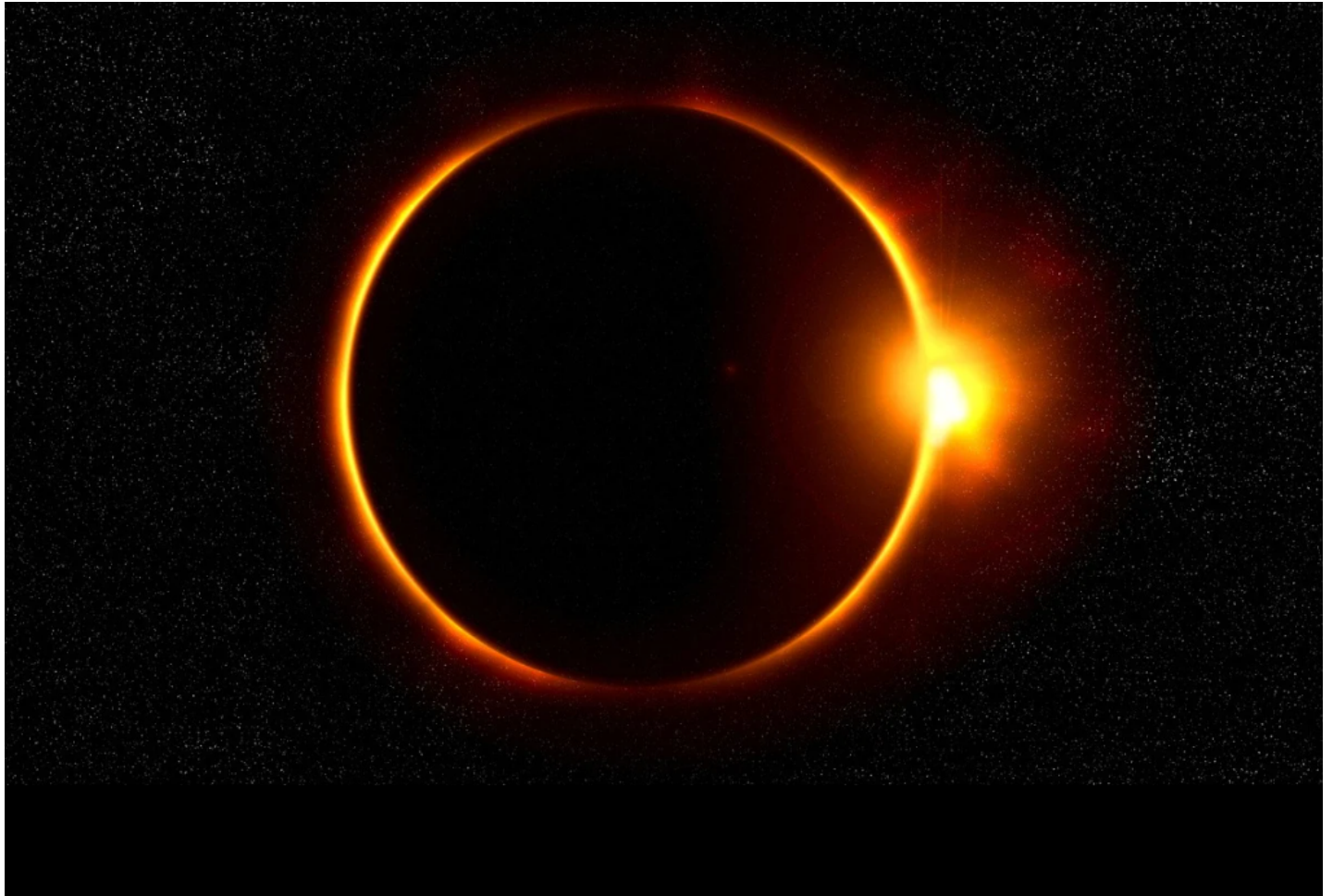


FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Land Acknowledgement

We gather, acknowledging the land we are on, the rocks and waters of this land, the plants and animals of this land, the air we share.

We also acknowledge the original people of this land, including the Nipmuc, Pawtucket, and Massa-adchu-es-et People(s), and all those who have walked on this land before us, as well as our own ancestors.

We remember ourselves as part of a web extending back in time, forward in time, and in every direction in time.



Welcome To Worship at FCC Natick!

It doesn't matter to us if you grew up in a church or never set foot in one before. You matter to us. We welcome you as you are, because we believe that we are all embraced by God's inclusive and extravagant love.

As a congregation, we strive to practice radical inclusivity and extravagant hospitality. When we gather for worship, we want everyone to have access, to be comfortable, and feel welcomed.

If you are new here, we invite you to introduce yourself to the pastor, and fill out the card in the *Welcome Newcomers* brochure and place it in the offering plate so that we can extend a more personal welcome!

To help you worship with comfort and meaning:

- We invite you to change any portion of today's service to language in which you feel included. We welcome all into God's presence and worship God in wholeness.
- **Large Print Bibles and worship bulletins** are available from the ushers. The bulletin is also available in digital form using the weekly QR code.
- **Noise cancelling headphones** are available from the ushers.
- ***Listening Everywhere*** app is supported. (Download to a smartphone, bring headphones.)

Childcare for infants through age 3 is available. There is a video link to the sanctuary for parents who wish to stay with their child. There is a changing station in the nursery.

- **Verbal cues** are used along with the bulletin text to direct the congregation. For instance, "Please rise in body or in spirit."
- Our building is **handicap accessible**. This includes handicap parking spaces, a handicap entrance near the lot, an all-floors handicap elevator, and handicap restrooms on 2 floors.
- There is a **gender-neutral bathroom** on the second floor.
- There is an **Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)** on the wall on the ground floor elevator lobby. When turned on, it provides step-by-step instructions.
- **Narcan** doses are available via the ushers or the church office.

We realize that our best intentions and efforts may sometimes fall short. Please let us know if there is anything else we can do. Speak to an usher or drop a note in a collection plate.

Second Sunday of Easter

April 7, 2024

There must be a unity deeper than the area of conflict.

This unity is God.

Back of all the outcry against evil, back of all protests,
is the assumption that rejects the ultimate character of evil.

~ *Howard Thurman*, *Meditations of the Heart*.

PRELUDE

Partita No. 1 in B-flat: (iv) Sarabande

J.S. Bach

David Owen, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Linda Michel

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sharon Kirby

One: Christ is risen.

All: Christ is risen, indeed.

One: God is alive.

All: Renewal is all around us.

One: Hope is alive.

All: There are signs everywhere.

One: Love is alive.

All: Death does not have the final word

One: Joy is alive.

All: With our whole being, let us sing our praise and thanks

* OPENING HYMN 111

When Morning Gilds the Skies

Laudes Domini

When morning gilds the skies, my heart awaking cries:

May Jesus Christ be praised!

Alike at work and prayer, I joyfully declare:

May Jesus Christ be praised! ...

The night becomes as day, when from the heart we say:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!
The grace of God is near when this sweet chant we hear:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!

Discordant humankind, in this your concord find:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let all the Earth around ring joyous with the sound:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!

To God the Word on high, the hosts of angels cry:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let mortals, too, up-raise their voice in hymns of praise:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!

In heaven's eternal bliss the loveliest strain is this:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let air, and sea, and sky from depth to height reply:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!

Be this, while life is mine, my canticle divine:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!
Be this the eternal song through all the ages long:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!

CENTERING PRAYER

*** SHARING GOD'S PEACE**

*In person we rise to greet each other with a wave, bow or a high five.
And we send God's peace to those watching from home!*

One: God's peace be with you.

All: **And also with you!**

*** SONG OF CELEBRATION**

(Hymn 40: *Halle, Halle, Halleluja*)

Halle, Halle Halle-luja.
Halle, Halle Halle-luja.
Halle, Halle Halle-luja.
Halleluja. Halleluja.

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 133

WORD FOR ALL AGES

Children (aged 3 – grade 6) depart for Sunday School (Godly Play & Connect) after the Word for All Ages. Parents may accompany children and return to worship once they are settled. After worship, parents may enjoy a cup of coffee and adult conversation, then pick up their children in the classroom at 11:45 am.

MUSICAL RESPONSE**SCRIPTURE READING**

Acts 4:32-37

REFLECTION*No Longer but Not Yet*

Rev. Linda Michel

MUSICAL RESPONSE**CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION****JOYS AND CONCERNS****INVITATION TO THE FEAST****TELLING THE STORY****COMMUNION PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS**

Creator God, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP**THANKSGIVING PRAYER****ALLELUIA****OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE****OFFERING INVITATION****OFFERTORY** *Chorale Prelude, Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen*

J. Brahms

*** SONG OF PRAISE**

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above all heavenly hosts:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*** SENDING HYMN 376**

Help Us Accept Each Other

Beck

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
Teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
We are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
We struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
To love them as we find them or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
In living situations to do the truth in love;
To practice your acceptance, until we know by heart
The table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
Who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and bread,
We need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;
Renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us, make us one!

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Chorale Prelude on Kirken den er Gammelt Hus

Austin Lovelace

Our Guest Preacher this morning is Rev. Linda Michel

Since retirement Reverend Linda has been an active member of United Congregational Church in Worcester, UCC, and the Worcester Branch of the NAACP. She also sits on the Board of Worcester Area Mission Society and the Massachusetts Central Association. She and her husband Bob are most grateful to be living in a beautiful and diverse neighborhood in Worcester that is close to Elm Park and downtown. They are blessed that their family lives close by.

Calendar for April 7 - 14, 2024

**Sunday, Apr. 7
Communion**

9:00 AM *Adult Faith Group* – Contemplation and Action
10:30 AM *Worship* led by guest preacher Rev. Linda Michel
10:45 AM *Godly Play and Connect*
11:30 AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry
3:00 PM *Family Open Skate* at Chase Arena

Wed., April 10

NOON *Mid-Week Connection*, Zoom ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek
7:30 PM Vestry Theology

Thurs., April 11

7:00 PM *Prayer Circle* via Zoom (ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle)

Sunday, Apr. 14

9:00 AM *Adult Faith Group* – Contemplation and Action
10:30 AM *Worship* led by Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry
10:45 AM *Godly Play and Connect*
11:30 AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry
Coffee Chat: Refugee Resettlement w/JFS in Classroom

Upcoming Events: This Week

Family Open Skate – TODAY!

Sun., April 7th, 3-4:30 pm, Chase Arena

Meet at the Arena. Rent skates or bring your own. RSVP to Sarallyn so she brings enough snacks.

Flags to Bags ONA project

Sat., April 13th, 9 am – 2 pm in Vestry.

Do you like to sew? Help us upcycle old ONA flags into cool new bags. We will be sewing under the tutelage of Helen Bellomo of *Helen's Handbags*. Bring your own sewing machine if you have one and/or other sewing accoutrements. Like a good, old-fashioned sewing circle.

Coffee Hour Chat: Refugee Resettlement (JFS)

Sunday, April 14th, after worship in the classroom

Jewish Family Services of Metrowest (JFS) provides social, health, and community services, including immigrant and resettlement services. JFS has served families from South America, the Middle East, Ukraine, and Haiti. **Lino Covarrubias**, CEO of JFS of Metrowest, will talk with us about what was done to support a record number of new arrivals during 2023 and what services JFS continues offering to new arrivals while growing partnerships to offer housing, language classes, job training, and other supports to the immigrant and refugee community.

Thanks to this week's Coffee Hour Hosts, **Jeff and Robin Clausen**. Can you host in May and June? Sharonkirby3@gmail.com

Vestry Theology

Wednesday, April 10th 7:30 pm in the Vestry

Join us for fun conversation, munchies, and a beverage (BYOB). Topic: “Our Favorite Movies”.

Upcoming Events: This Month

A Buyer's Guide to Environmentally Friendly Cars: Hybrid, Electric, and Plug-in Hybrid

Saturday, April 27, 10 - 11 am in the FCC Vestry

Part of Earth Day and ECO Natick. In the FCCN Vestry. Open to all, free. Looking for an Environmentally Friendly Car? Join us for this 20-minute presentation followed by Q&A with various (EV, PHEV, Hybrid) car owners. We will cover car costs, car comparisons and the range of Hybrids, Electric Vehicles and Plug-In Electric Vehicles. There are lots of choices and incentives available! This overview is a great first step on your journey. Presenter's cars will also be in the church parking lot to view (VW ID.4; Volvo PHEV).

Family Hike at Elm Bank

Saturday, April 27, 10 am

Start Earth Day in Natick with a beautiful hike along the bank of the Charles River. RSVP to Sarallyn for meet-up details.

Upcoming Events: Save The Date

FCC Yard Sale

Saturday, May 4th, 9 am – 2 pm on the church lawn

The Outreach team is holding a yard sale! **We need volunteers** (adults and youth) to come out in force to assist with collecting items, selling on May 4, and clean up! Feel free to sign up for multiple time slots. Outreach Members who are organizing the Sale will be present during all shifts start to finish! This is a very fun intergenerational church event! Questions call, text or email Gail Martin 617-283-9180, pgail1975@gmail.com. **Sign up: ucc.fccnatick.org/yardsale.**



Family Kayak at Lake Cochituate

Saturday, May 18th, time TBD

Join us for a paddle on Lake Cochituate. Bring your own kayak or rent one at the shore on Route 30. RSVP to Sarallyn for meet up details.

PRAYER LIST

Sharing Your Prayer Requests. Prayer concerns and celebrations to be shared during worship can be done so verbally (raise your hand to be recognized) or in writing (use provided notecards) or emailed to prayers@fccnatick.org.

Sue Mascioli	Char Hannon	Irene & Walter
Joel	Charles	Friends and Family of Mary French
Debbie Collins	John Lilly	Friends and Family of Doug Duncan
Jeanna B.	Tony Parkes	Aunt Gwen
Aunt Kathy	Robin and Laura	Melissa and Tiffany Wallace
The Lewis Family	Tom Hamm	Ann and George Schmidt
Nathan Duarte	Mark Stunkel	Charles Gobron
Eric	Noah & Jennie Lynch	Susan Eck and family
Deb Evers	Karin Garcia's fiance	Richard Conway
Sarah Kazim	Uncle A1 & Aunt Deb	Friends & Family of Michael Connolly
Joan Person	Jack Mulloy	Abigail Brewer
Brian J.	Paul S.	Hillaree and family
Beverly Newell	Don & Heather C.	Friends & Family of John Hartman
Anna Hayes	Mary Cerreto	Doug & Barbara Shirley
John Sullivan	Connie Sullivan	Mary Connolly
Ronnie	Phil Jennings	Audra, Nate & Rowan Mackey
Jane Hall	Faye Bishop	Alice Bridinger
Jenna Hayes	Tommy Hannon	Pat & Jane Conaway
Abby Robbins	Paul	Peace for the world and in everyone's day
Natalie Friend	Anne	Disaster victims in Maui, Morocco, Libya
Jayne Hayes	Molly	All immigrant families seeking justice
Myriam's Mom	Johnson Family	The people of Ukraine & Russia
Robbins Family	Evelyn and Family	The people of Santa Maria Tzeja
Jackie Snizek	Mike McCormick	Angels of Hope in Uganda
Mark Sullivan	Malfrid Abrahamsen	Overdose victims

The prayer list is updated periodically. If you find a name has been rotated off the list for whom you would like continuing prayers, please contact Prayer List Coordinator Linda Champion at lchampion17@gmail.com or the office at 508-653-0971. Also, if a known issue has been resolved, please let us know. Thank you to all for your care and prayers.

Welcome To Worship at FCC Natick!

Offering. Every week we practice the spiritual discipline of generosity by sharing our financial resources. We call this the Offering. We offer multiple ways to give. In person we pass the plate through the congregation, where donations by cash and check are welcome. By mail, checks may be sent to the church office. Online (get there using the *QR code* or by visiting ucc.fccnatick.org/give), you may give using a credit card. But if this is your first time with us, please consider yourself our guest and just pass the plate along. If you'd like to learn more about money at FCCN, please see the pastor.



Communion. We usually celebrate communion on the first Sunday of the month. Folks online are invited to have a bit of food and drink handy. In person, we serve communion in several different ways, so the worship leader will instruct you. Our communion table is open to all who find meaning there, regardless of age, membership, or belief.

Photography/Videography Policy. Sunday worship is livestreamed via local cable access. In addition, we occasionally take video or photography during worship and elsewhere on the church property. By your presence, you grant FCCN unrestricted rights to use and publish, transmit, or telecast images that may be taken of you for use in communication related to the church. Please contact the church office (508-653-0971 or admin@fccnatick.org) with questions or concerns.

Name Tags. Please consider wearing a **name tag** – and a pronoun pin! Nametags are on the board in the elevator lobby (ground floor) and upper vestibule of the Sanctuary. If you don't yet have a nametag or are missing yours, make a note on the sheet and one will be on the lobby board next week. We want our church to be a place where everyone knows your name!

The LINK e-Newsletter. The LINK is emailed to subscribers every Tuesday and Friday. Please subscribe to the LINK, to stay in the loop. The Community LINK goes out Tuesdays (with happenings in Natick beyond the church). The Worship LINK goes out Fridays (and is more focused on the goings on in the congregation and that Sunday's service). It's free to subscribe: use the QR code or go to ucc.fccnatick.org/subscribe.



Hybrid Worship. Many folks worship from home, at least from time to time. Join us live online (ucc.fccnatick.org/livestream). Natick residents can join us through local access cable (Comcast Xfinity 22, Verizon Fios 29, RCN 03). You can also find worship recordings on our website (ucc.fccnatick.org/worship-video).

Welcome To Worship at FCC Natick!

Open and Affirming. FCCN is an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation, affirming the dignity and worth of every person. We welcome everyone into full participation, including people of every ability, race, culture, gender, economic circumstance, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.

Denominational Affiliation: FCCN is a member of the **United Church of Christ**, a liberal Protestant denomination within the Christian tradition. It offers for reflection a traditional Statement of Faith, yet values the individual's right and ability to prayerfully and thoughtfully determine what to believe regarding the Bible, God, creation, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, etc. The UCC values outreach and justice work. It seeks to be inclusive. Authority is held by members of the local congregation, not the church's pastor or national staff.

Children and youth. Children and youth are always welcome in our worship services. The *Playground* down front has a great view and quiet activities. Midway through worship, children ages 3 through grade six are invited to join in for Sunday School: preschoolers through kids in grade 3 explore sacred story through the *Godly Play* curriculum, and youth in grades 4 through 6 participate in our *Connect* program. If they wish, parents may accompany their child to the classroom, then return to the Sanctuary. Parents are encouraged to attend coffee hour after worship, then pick up their child from their classroom at 11:45 am. (Staffed *nursery care* is also available near the sanctuary throughout the service: ask an usher for directions or information.)

First Congregational Church of Natick (FCCN) Staff

Pastor

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Grace Seiche

Outreach Minister

Rev. Dr. John Weagraff

Financial Assistant

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Custodians

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