

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.

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 21, 2024

When it is all, finally,
Too much,
I climb into my car,
Roll the windows up,
And somewhere between
Backing out of the driveway
And rounding the corner,
I let out a yell
That would topple Manhattan.
How do you pray?

Margaret L. Mitchell

PRELUDE

Prelude

Léon Boëllmann

Thomas Foster, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bill Ramage

One: When we're lost in the valley –

All: God is with us.

One: When the night seems endless –

All: God is with us.

One: When enemies surround us –

All: God is with us.

One: All the days of our life –

All: God is with us.

One: We worship to remember –

All: God is with us. Amen.

Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead,
Find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:
Clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see
All the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is the friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, touches base,
Making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun,
Raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,
Let our loves and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain:
There's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,
In the Spirit's lively scheming there is always room to spare!

CENTERING PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS*

O Divine Parent, Giver of Life,
whose presence is holiness,
may our hearts be in you.
Transform the world
according to your delight,
that all earth may become a holy place.
Give us each moment that moment's breath.
Give us your gift of forgiveness,
that receiving it deeply we may give it freely.
Transform our desires,
and free us from evil powers;
for all creation, and all power, and all beauty
are yours, now and forever. Amen. *

* Steve Garnaas-Holmes

* **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 participating 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.

CHOIR ANTHEM

Shepherd Psalm

Dana Mengel

Senior Choir; Thomas Foster, director

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 23

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

READING

Psalm 23

REFLECTION

Shirley, Goodness, and Mercy

MUSICAL RESPONSE

GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

ALLELUIA

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

*** 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 401** *Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound* New Britain

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved and set me free!
I once was lost; but now am found; was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

My God has promised good to me, whose word my hope secures;
God will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Presto

Handel

Calendar for April 21 - 28, 2024

- Sunday, Apr. 21** 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: FCC Trustees (John Gentry) in Chat Rm (#116)
~ NOON *Learn Tai Chi* (Tom Foster, ongoing) in Vestry
- Tues., April 23** 7:00 PM *ONA Meeting* in Vestry
- Wed., April 24** NOON *Mid-Week Connection*, Zoom ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek
- Thurs., April 25** 7:00 PM *Prayer Circle* via Zoom (ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle)
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal
- Saturday, Apr. 27** Various *Earth Day All Around Natick (4/27-28)* see EcoNatick.org
8:00 AM *ONA Flags to Bags* in the Chat Room (rm 116)
10:00 AM *FCC Family Hike* at Elm Bank
10:00 AM *Electric Vehicles Buyers Guide* in Vestry
2:00 PM *Family Kayaking* at Dug Pond
- Sunday, Apr. 28** 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
~ NOON *Learn Tai Chi* (Tom Foster, ongoing) in Vestry
2:00 PM *What's An Aquifer?* trail walk on the CRT

Events: TODAY

Thanks to our Coffee Hour hosts, Simone & Felix Gill-Alvarez!

They are sharing beef patties, pine tarts, and Cafe Bustelo/Pilon (coffees) from Guyana and Puerto Rico. *Hosts needed for May 12, 24 and most of June.* Contact sharonkirby3@gmail.com.

Coffee Chat: Advanced Giving Strategies w/FCC Trustees

Sunday, April 21, after worship in the classroom

Please join the FCC Trustees for a ranging discussion of financial topics and brainstorming session on advanced giving strategies. This is intended to be an open conversation about our planned series of events in 2024 focused on more sophisticated ways to support our church's ministries. The Trustees need your voice to guide them to the topics that you want to learn.

Learn Tai Chi (with Tom Foster)

Sundays, beginning April 21, after coffee hour in the Vestry

Tai Chi is a traditional Chinese mind-body exercise that almost anyone can do. This “moving meditation” relieves pain, improves balance, and reduces stress. Tom Foster will teach the simplest version, Yang-style 24 Form, on Sundays in the Vestry after Coffee hour, starting 4/21.

Upcoming Events: Earth Day weekend (4/27-28)



Earth Day All Around Natick

April 27-28, many events around Natick

Below are a few of the events around Natick that FCC folks are involved with.

A listing of dozens of events around town can be found at www.econatick.org/actions/3562.

A Buyer's Guide to Environmentally Friendly Cars: Hybrid, Electric, and Plug-in Hybrid (with Sharon Kirby)

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

A beautiful hike along the bank of the Charles River. RSVP to Sarallyn for meet-up details.

Family Kayaking at Dug Pond

Saturday, April 27th, 2-3:30 pm

Celebrate Earth Day on the water. Join us for a paddle at Dug Pond in Natick. RSVP Sarallyn.

"What's an Aquifer? Walk and Learn to Protect our Water

Sunday, April 28, 2:00-3:30 pm; CRT parking area on Mechanic St.*

Join a local hydrogeologist (Sarah Hanna) for a 2.5-mile walk (round trip) along the Cochituate Rail Trail and learn about the aquifers that supply our water system, as well as ways we can work together to protect our water. *Meet at the Cochituate Rail Trail parking area on Mechanic St.

Upcoming Events: On the Horizon

FCC Yard Sale – volunteers needed

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.**

Drop Off Times for Church Yard Sale Items

Sun. April 28th	9-10 am, and after worship.
Wed. May 1st	4-8 pm
Thur. May 2nd	4-8 pm
Fri. May 3rd	4-6 pm



Or Call Gail Martin 617-283-9180 to arrange another time.

Family Promise Walk to End Homelessness

Sunday, May 5, 1 pm starting at Natick High School

Join/support our team, *FCC Natick Walks the Walk*, as the raise awareness and funds for families struggling with housing insecurity in Metrowest. A 2.3 mile walk around Natick, with food, vendors, and music along the way. Donate at ucc.fccnatick.org/FPwalk.



Family Kayaking 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.

FCC Fall Retreat

Friday, Nov. 1 - Sunday, Nov. 3, Cape Cod

There will be a family-friendly FCC retreat the weekend of Nov. 1-3 at the Craigville Retreat Center on Cape Cod. FCC needs to reserve the space now. If you are interested, contact Sarallyn ASAP. (Some 20 people have done so to date, and space is limited, so don't delay.)

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	Abigal 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

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry
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Grace Seiche

Outreach Minister

Rev. Dr. John Weagraff

Financial Assistant

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Custodians

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