

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.

Not many years ago,
it was access to information and movement
that seemed our greatest luxury,
nowadays it is often freedom from information,
the chance to sit still,
that feels like the ultimate prize.

- Pico Iyer

PRELUDE *Idyll / Intermezzo, Op. 39, nos. 7, 9* Edward MacDowell
David Owens, piano

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP Ric Ripley

One: When the world is full of violence and war,

All: We will turn toward justice, hope and love.

One: When life seems scary and painful,

All: We will turn toward justice, hope and love.

One: When we are tempted to point fingers and blame,

All: We will turn toward justice, hope and love.

One: Because God's children desperately needs us –

All: We will turn toward justice, hope and love. Amen.

*** OPENING HYMN 54** *For the Beauty of the Earth* Dix

For the beauty of the earth, for the splendor of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For each perfect gift of thine unto us so freely given,
graces, human and divine, flowers of earth and buds of heaven,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

CENTERING PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS*

* By Steve Garnaas-Holmes

O Life-Giver at the heart of all Being,
holy is your presence.
May your Empire of grace replace our own,
and your delight be fulfilled,
as this world becomes heaven.
Give us our sustenance, one breath at a time,
and make us completely forgiving of ourselves and others.
Save us from the weakness of our will,
and deliver us from the power of evil.
For all Being is yours; all power is yours; all glory is yours,
in this moment,
in eternity. Amen.

*** 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 375: *Weave*]

Weave, weave, weave us together.
Weave us together in unity and love.
Weave, weave, weave us together.
Weave us together, together in love.

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 46

WORD FOR ALL AGES

READING

Blessing in the Chaos

by Jan Richardson

MUSICAL RESPONSE

No Sunday School today.

REFLECTION

In the Midst

MUSICAL RESPONSE

GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

ALLELUIA

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

Psalm

Gordon Young

* **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 537**

God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand

National Hymn

God of the ages, whose almighty hand
leads forth in beauty all the starry band
of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,
our grateful songs before thy throne arise.

Thy love divine hath led us in the past;
in this free land with thee our lot is cast;
be thou our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay,
thy word our law, thy paths our chosen way.

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
be thy strong arm our ever sure defense;
thy true religion in our hearts increase;
thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh thy people on life's toilsome way;
lead us from night to never-ending day;
fill all our lives with love and grace divine,
and glory, laud, and praise be ever thine.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Fantasy on Foundation

Alice Jordan

Special Thanks to David Owens for Today's Music

Today's piano and organ music is performed by David Owens. He is sitting in for Music Director Thomas Foster, who is taking some well-deserved time off.

No Children's Programming Today

No *Godly Play* or *Connect* classes today. The nursery is open but unstaffed.

Calendar for May 26 – June 2, 2024

- Sunday, May 26** 9:00 AM *Adult Faith Group* – Contemplation and Action
10:30 AM *Worship* led by Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry
No *Godly Play* or *Connect*. Nursery open but unstaffed.
11:30 AM *Post-Worship Fellowship*: Coffee Hour in Vestry
~ No *Tai Chi* this week
- Monday, May 27** Church Office Closed for Memorial Day
- Wed., May 29** NOON *Mid-Week Connection*, Zoom ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek
- Thurs., May 30** 7:00 PM *Prayer Circle* via Zoom (ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle)
- Saturday, June 1** 9:30 AM *Guatemala Partners Farm-a-thon*
- Sunday, June 2** 9:00 AM *Adult Faith Group* – Contemplation and Action
Communion 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 Hour Chat: Nick Jennings on Community Resources
~ NOON *Tai Chi* (w/Tom Foster) in Vestry

Thanks to Sharon & Ric for Sunday's coffee hour. Hosts needed June 2, 16, 23, and 30.

No *Tai Chi* class today. (Class will resume next week).

Events: Next Weekend

Guatemala Partnership Farm-a-thon

Saturday, June 1, 2024, 9 am - noon.

Join volunteers from FCC Natick and the Congregational Church of Needham. Participants raise pledges supporting their work at Natick Community Organic Farm on Saturday, June 1 from 9 am - noon. All funds support education and development in Santa María Tzejá. It's a great way to celebrate our earth and support friends globally and locally. To register or learn more, contact Jeff Clausen. You can also participate by sponsoring a worker.

FCC Scholarship Applications

applications are due June 1

Church scholarships for undergraduate/graduate education: Get the form at ucc.fccnatick.org/scholarship or from the office. Scholarships will be awarded on June 9.

Coffee Hour Chat: Nick Jennings on Community Resources

Sunday, June 2nd 11:30 am in the Chat Room

Nick will tell us about 3 vital community resources for those facing challenging circumstances: the **Metrowest Free Medical Program**; the **South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC)**; and the **Metrowest Care Connection**.

Learning Tai Chi (with Tom Foster)

Sunday, June 2nd 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, in the Vestry after Coffee hour.

Events: On the Horizon

Porch Theology

Wednesday, June 5th @ 7 pm at the Bergeron/Divinski home.

Fun, conversation, munchies (BYOB) in Deede & Randy’s back yard. Contact Sarallyn to RSVP.

FCC at Natick Nights

Thursday, June 6th 5-8 pm

Welcome Team has organized an activity – Big Bubbles and Sidewalk Chalk on our lawn. They will also offer a tour of our sanctuary. To help with this fun event, please contact Sharon Kirby.

Meet “Nile”, the Inflatable Humpback Whale

Saturday, June 8, 1:00-3:00 pm in the Vestry (30 minute time slots)

Join us for this unique experience as you are invited **INSIDE** the belly of the whale! During your half-hour visit inside Nile, you’ll learn about these majestic creatures, how to protect whales, and about the crucial role whales play in our ecosystem. Outside of the whale will be interactive exhibits and hands-on activities. This program is appropriate for ages 5+.



This is a timed-entry ticketed (\$4) event. Tickets can be purchased with venmo, ~~EventBrite~~ (sold out), or in-person after worship at FCC (starting 5/19). QR for details or ucc.fccnatick.org/whale.

Over half the Whale-mobile tickets are already sold! Reserve your tickets now by emailing fcc_events@fccnatick.org. Specify # of tickets and the time (30 minute slots at 1:00, 1:30, 2:00, or 2:30 pm). Parents wishing to accompany their child (age 5+) must also have a ticket.

Boston Pride Parade, FCC Delegation

Saturday, June 8, leave Natick around 9 am. Details TBD

Join us to express your pride and/or solidarity. Carpooling, leaving Natick ~9 am and returning around 1 pm. Contact Carolyn Williams for more info.

Charity Dinner Theater benefitting Mass. Debt Relief Fdn.

Saturday, June 8 · 7 – 9 pm at the Natick Community/Senior Center

Pop-Up Dinner Theater with four original ten minute plays, amazing food catered by L'Avvocato Italian Catering, and a silent auction. All to benefit local legal aid charity Massachusetts Debt Relief Foundation (MDRF), which helps low income families recover from financial hardship with free expert legal representation. \$75 Dinner & Plays, \$35 for Plays only. Questions: richardravosa@gmail.com or 617-308-5744.



Dinner Benefitting World Central Kitchen

Saturday, June 15th, 5-8 pm at Plymouth Church in Framingham

Edwards and Plymouth Churches invite you to a community meal to highlight the good work of World Central Kitchen. Sign up ASAP.



National Institute on Theology and Disability conference

June 17-20, 2024 at Boston College (in person and virtual)

This conference brings together top theologians, teachers, faith leaders, community members and others with a shared desire to investigate the lived reality of disability in the context of faith and theology. Attendees will learn ways to welcome people across the full spectrum of ability and disability, and to discover ways to overcome the differences that might otherwise limit our capacity to work, share and learn together within faith communities. Full, partial, daily and reduced student registration is available. See [The Link](#) for more info on the conference.

An anonymous donor will provide a scholarship for a member of FCCN to attend and to develop leadership in this area - just [reach out to Rev. Cindy](#).

Scoopapaloosa Ice Cream Festival

June 22, 11:30 am - 3 pm on the Common

All Proceeds benefit Charles River Rotary Club's important Youth Scholarship Programs as well as local and international non-profits! *Volunteers are needed* to help with setup and breakdown and scooping ice cream. Please contact Hank or June Szretter (hank@crrclub.org).

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.

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

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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Director of Spiritual Vitality and Congregational Care

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Minister of Music

Thomas Foster

Sunday Nursery Staff

Grace Seiche

Outreach Minister

Rev. Dr. John Weagraff

Financial Assistant

Cynthia Hamwey

Custodians

Galba & Marlene Carvalho