

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), as well as the legacy of the Natick Praying Indians, 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.

If you change the way you look at things,
the things you look at change.

~ Wayne Dyer

PRELUDE

Peids en l'Air

Peter Warlock

Thomas Foster, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP*

* Guest liturgy by Randal Divinski
Randal Divinski

One: On our own, the world can beat us down.

All: May this be the day we come together.

One: We are separated by closed media bubbles.

All: May this be the day we come together.

One: Or by who we love, how we look, what we can afford.

All: May this be the day we come together.

One: With so much shouting it is hard to listen.

All: May this be the day we come together.

* OPENING HYMN 520

Restless Weaver

Beach Spring

Restless Weaver, ever spinning threads of justice and shalom;
Dreaming patterns of creation where all creatures find a home;
Gathering up life's varied fibers every texture, every hue:
Grant us your creative vision. With us weave your world anew.

Where earth's fragile web is raveling, help us mend each broken strand.
Bless our urgent, bold endeavors, cleansing water, air, and land.
Through the Spirit's inspiration offering health where once was pain
Strengthen us to be the stewards of your world knit whole again. ...

When our violent lust for power ends in lives abused and torn,
From compassion's sturdy fabric fashion hope and trust reborn.
Where injustice rules as tyrant, give us courage, God, to dare
live our dreams of transformation. Make our lives incarnate prayer.

Restless Weaver, still conceiving new life now and yet to be
Binding all your vast creation in one living tapestry:
You have called us to be weavers. Let your love guide all we do.
With your reign of peace our pattern, we will weave your world anew.

CENTERING PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS*

Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven,
The hallowing of your name echo
through the universe!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and
freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power
that is love, now and forever. Amen.

** New Zealand Book
of Common 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 participating from home!

One: God's peace be with you.

All: **And also with you!**

* SONG OF CELEBRATION

God's hands are your hands. God's hands are my hands.
God's hands are our hands, working together.
God's hands are your hands. God's hands are my hands.
God's hands are our hands, working for love.

CHOIR ANTHEM

One Church, One Faith

Keith Getty

Senior Choir; Thomas Foster, director

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 7:24-30

WORD FOR ALL AGES

MUSICAL RESPONSE

After the Word for All Ages, children (age 3 – grade 6) depart for a special Rally Day Art Project, exploring our fall theme of *Building Beloved Community*. Parents may accompany children and return to worship once they are settled.

READING

New Day's Lyric

by Amanda Gorman

REFLECTION

Unschooling

MUSICAL RESPONSE

GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

ALLELUIA

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

As the plates are passed from person to person, we share our financial gifts. Even if we are not adding money to the plate, we offer thoughts of gratitude. As you hold the plate, you might breathe deeply and pray, "May all the earth be healthy and whole."

*** SONG OF PRAISE**

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done.
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*** SENDING HYMN 396**

Strong, Gentle Children

Twilight

Strong, gentle children, God made you beautiful,
gave you the wisdom and power you need;
speak in the stillness all you are looking for;
live out your calling to love and to lead.

Strong, hurting children, angry and terrified,
open the secrets your life has concealed;
though you are wounded, know you are not to blame;
cry out your story till truth is revealed.

Strong, knowing children, utter your cry aloud,
honor the wisdom God gave you at birth;
speak to your elders till they have heard your voice;
sing out your vision of healing on earth.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

March from 'Scipio'

G.F. Handel

The **special flowers on the altar** are from the Helen A. H. Rogers Fund, in memory of Helen's father, Harrison Harwood, and mother, Adeline G. Harwood. With gratitude to Taylor Purvis and her mom, Tracy, for sharing their floral design talents!

Calendar for Sept. 15 – Oct. 6, 2024

- Sunday, Sept. 15**
Rally Day!
- 9:00 AM *Adult Faith Group* – Contemplation and Action
 - 10:30 AM *Worship* with Rev. Cindy
 - 10:45 AM *Children’s Rally Day Art Project*
 - 11:30 AM *Rally Day Fellowship: BBQ* in the tent
Signs of Love (11:30-2:00 pm) at Christ Lutheran
 - 5:00 PM *Crosswalk Youth Group* (at St. Paul’s)
- Wed., Sept. 18** NOON *Mid-Week Connection*, Zoom ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek
- Thurs., Sept. 19** 7:00 PM *Prayer Circle* via Zoom (ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle)
- Sunday, Sept. 22**
New Members
- 9:00 AM *Adult Faith Group* – Contemplation and Action
 - 10:30 AM *Worship* with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary
 - 10:45 AM *Godly Play and Connect*
 - 11:30 AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry

Today

Rally Day BBQ!

Today, after worship in the tent (and Vestry)

Worship at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary, with Rev. Cindy. Sunday School (Godly Play and Connect). Afterwards, a BBQ (burgers & dogs) replaces coffee hour. Rally Day celebrates a new church year. Families enroll children and youth in a church programs.

Pride, Trans, and Mental Health Flags “upcycled” into bags!

On sale after worship, while limited supply lasts

These flags flown at FCCN have been transformed – by stitchers, pinners, and ironers – into bags. The market totes are sold out, but smaller zippered bags (\$15) are still available. Proceeds support FCCN and ONA justice work. Cash, check or Venmo. Questions? See Carolyn Williams.

Signs of Love at Christ Lutheran

Today, Sunday, Sept. 15th, 11:30 am – 2 pm

After the Rally Day BBQ, head over to Christ Lutheran Church (113 Union St.) with a hand-held sign “of love”. This is a celebration of the love and support our churches received after the vandalism in late June.

The Opioid Project

Sept. 1 - 22, FCC sanctuary

Changing Perceptions through Art and Storytelling. These artworks and stories were created in memory of loved ones lost to opioids and in honor of others in recovery. Each piece of art includes written/audio stories, opening up the dialogue about opioids and the lives lost.

FCC Diaper Drive to support *A Place to Turn*

September 8th - 22nd

3,000 families in Natick/Framingham struggle to afford diapers. The Outreach Team has a diaper drop off area in the lobby between the Vestry and elevator. The most needed sizes are 4, 5, and 6. You may donate online via www.aplacetoturn-natick.org, designated for “The Diaper Project.”

This Week

FCC hosts Open Door

Monday, Sept. 16, 4:30 pm at the Elks Club

Open Door provides a free community meal every Monday at the Natick Elks Club. On Sept. 16, FCC folks will prepare a meatloaf dinner. Food prep at 4:30 pm, meal served at 5:30 pm, cleaned up by 6:30 pm. To participate, contact Kirstin at kirstenmcd26a@gmail.com.

Join FCC Natick

Sunday, September 22nd during worship

We will be welcoming new members at FCC Natick during worship on Sept. 22! Membership is open to anyone who wants to formalize their covenant with the congregation. Membership is required for some leadership positions, and to vote at congregational meetings. You don't need to be a member to fully participate in worship, serve on most ministry teams, contribute financially, or share your thoughts in a congregational meeting. If you'd like to learn more about membership, and consider joining the church on Sept. 22, please contact Rev. Cindy at revcindyfcen@gmail.com or the church office.

On the Horizon

Lunch Bunch

Thursday, September 26th at 12:30 pm in the Vestry

Lunch Bunch is on the *fourth Thursday this month* (instead of the third). Also, it will start a half hour later (12:30 pm) going forward. There are drinks, snacks, and stories to share.

Where Can We Live in Peace? The Migrant Crisis [film]

Sunday, Sept. 29, 5-7 pm, in the sanctuary

Join award-winning filmmaker Judy Jackson for a screening of her latest film, “Where Can We Live in Peace?”, with a discussion after. The documentary humanizes the struggle and dangers migrants face. QR code reserves your spot. This event is jointly sponsored by the FCC Natick, the Congregational Church of Needham, and the non-profit Partners for Guatemala Education.



Stories from the Southern Border

Sun, Sep 29 – Sun, Oct 20, 2024, on display in the Sanctuary

“Stories from the Southern Border,” a traveling photography exhibit Natick resident and artist Rolf Larson. He shares portraits and stories of those who live near the border: undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, and immigrant advocates.

Festive-All Concert Community Celebration

Saturday, October 5th at 7 pm in the sanctuary

Strings, piano, dance, cabaret – and more! – in a community space that now blends historical architecture and welcoming innovation. Performers from Walnut Hill, Greater Boston School of Dance, the Robinwood Ensemble, Unfinished Cabaret, and musicians from FCC Natick will fill the sanctuary with music and movement. Reception to follow. Freewill offering supports future events and the MetroWest Free Medical Program.

FCC Bookgroup

Sunday, October 13th after worship

Join with other book lovers to discuss books, this time *The Women: A Novel* by Kristin Hannah. This novel follows a nurse in Vietnam with her eye-opening experiences there, her return home, and the battles she faced. Lunch will be offered. Please RSVP to Sharon Kirby.

Concert and Dinner to benefit West Virginia Workcamp

Saturday, October 19, 2024, All Saints Church - Chelmsford

Save the date for a special night! Singer/songwriter Keith Larsen, a crew chief at Cabell-Lincoln Workcamp, will perform with his colleague Parker MacDonell. Dinner at 5 pm, concert at 7 pm. Tickets on sale soon! Dinner and show, \$25 (reservations required). Show only, \$15.

NEW: The “Love Is Louder” bulletin board in the Vestry (see bulletin front cover) displays the many letters of support we received after the hate-vandalism in late July.

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.

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