

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



NEW MEMBER SUNDAY!

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.

New Member Sunday

September 22, 2024

Neighbor is not a geographic term.

It is a moral concept.

~ *Joachim Prinz*, during the March on Washington

PRELUDE "*Allemande*" from *French Suite in E No. 4 in flat major, BWV 815* J.S. Bach
Thomas Foster, piano

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP* Pam Weagraff

One: We've come from different streets, different towns, different states.

All: How good it is when we worship together as one!

One: We've come from different backgrounds, different traditions,
different beliefs.

All: How good it is when we worship together as one!

One: We've come from different experiences, different hopes,
different expectations.

All: How good it is when we worship together as one!

One: God calls, onsite or online. Not to be the same, but to be together.

All: How good it is when we worship together as one!

* **OPENING HYMN 7** *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* Beach Spring

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, every blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Source of grace and fount of blessing, all who live in thee are thine;
Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the happy chorus which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us, joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.

CENTERING PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS*

O Divine Parent, Giver of Life,
whose presence is holiness,
may our hearts be in you.

** Steve Garnaas-Holmes*

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.

*** 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*

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

Draw the Circle Wide

Mark A. Miller

Senior Choir; Thomas Foster, director

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 133:1-3

RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS

Promise of the congregation:

We welcome you with joy into the membership of this congregation.

We embrace your gifts, your needs, your dreams.

**We know your presence and participation
will change the shape of this body
and help it grow in new ways.**

**We will support you in your journeys,
affirm you in your ministries,
and surround you with our compassion and care.**

**We pray that all of us,
united in faith and community,
may grow in our knowledge of God
and our love for one another.**

MUSICAL RESPONSE

After Receiving New Members, children (age 3 – grade 6) depart for Sunday School (Godly Play & Connect). Parents may accompany children and return to worship once they are settled.

READING

Small Kindnesses

by Danusha Laméris

REFLECTION

Bless Their Hearts

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 485 *Bless Now, O God, the Journey* Bred Dina Vida Vingar

Bless now, O God the journey that all your people make,
the path through noise and silence, the way of give and take.
The trail is found in desert and winds the mountain round,
then leads beside still waters, the road where faith is found.

Bless all of us, your pilgrims, who share this winding way,
whose hope burns through the terrors, whose love sustains the day.
We yearn for holy freedom while often we are bound.
Together we are seeking the road where faith is found.

Divine Eternal Lover, you meet us on the road.
We wait for lands of promise where milk and honey flow.
But waiting not for places, you meet us all around.
Our covenant is written on roads, as faith is found.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Six Ecossaises in E flat major, WoO 83

Beethoven

Calendar for Sept. 22 – Oct. 5, 2024

- 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
 - 5:00 PM *Crosswalk Youth Group*, at St. Paul's
- Wed., Sept. 25** NOON *Mid-Week Connection*, Zoom ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek
- Thurs., Sept. 26**
- 12:30 PM *Lunch Bunch* in the Vestry
 - 7:00 PM *Prayer Circle* via Zoom (ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle)
- Sunday, Sept. 29**
- 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
 - 5:00 PM *Where Can We Live in Peace? Migrant Crisis* documentary - in the Sanctuary
- Saturday, Oct. 5** 7:00 PM *Festive-All Concert Community Celebration* in Sanctuary

Today

Welcome New Members!

Sunday, September 22nd during worship

This morning, we welcome eight new members at FCC Natick. It is a joy to covenant with Felix Alvarez, Simone Gill, Karen Maki, Natasha McLaughlin, Tim McLaughlin, Taylor Purvis, Cindy Worthington-Berry, and Paul Worthington-Berry.

The Opioid Project: *Changing Perceptions through Art and Storytelling.*

Sept. 1 - 22, FCC sanctuary – FINAL DAY

These artworks and stories were created in memory of loved ones lost to opioids or in honor of others in recovery. Each piece includes written/audio stories reflecting on opioids and lives lost.

FCC Diaper Drive to support *A Place to Turn*

September 8th - 22nd – FINAL DAY

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.”

Thanks to Coffee Hour hosts,
Wayne & Jeanette Szretter!

This Week

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.

On the Horizon

Knitting Circle Meet-up

Monday, Sept 30 @ 7 pm in the Hayes Parlor

RSVP to Saralyn if you are interested.

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.

Family Promise Support Week

October 7-13

Family Promise Metrowest (FPM) could not do the work they do without the support of volunteers. Volunteer opportunities include:

- Provide dinners, groceries or gift cards for shelter guests
- Support the Keeping the Promise event (10/24/24) by
 - being an event committee member to help design a fun and memorable event.
 - helping collect auction items or sponsors.
- Offer individual ESL instruction or help translate documents
- Support Center/Shelter Upkeep (from gardens to minor maintenance).
- Coordinate a donation drive.
- Invite FPM representatives to an event so they can present about FPM's work and how others can get involved.
- Promote Family Promise on Social Media. Work with their communications team to help get the word out about the work and impact of FPM

Reach out to Chris Gentry (jcmsgentry@gmail.com) for more information.

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.

Natick Historical Society Field Trip

Sunday, Oct. 20, 12:30 pm

FCC Natick has a complicated history. Join us for a personal and meaningful field trip to the Natick Historical Society. This excursion is part of our Open and Affirming anniversary.

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

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