

# 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.

# Second Day of Advent

December 8, 2024

Let every heart prepare him room.

-Joy to the World

**PRELUDE** Meditation on '*Veni, veni, Emmanuel*' Rebecca Groom Te Velde  
Thomas Foster, organ

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

**CALL TO WORSHIP** Kirsten McDonough

One: When all around us there is noise and chaos,

**All: May there be room for Peace in our hearts.**

One: When we get sucked in to comparing ourselves to others.

**All: May there be room for Peace in our hearts.**

One: When our mind gets stuck on “woulda, shoulda, coulda”

**All: May there be room for Peace in our hearts.**

One: Let’s clear out space to welcome the Living God –

**All: May there be room for Peace in our hearts. Amen.**

\* **OPENING HYMN 611** *Hope Is a Star* Moon Beams

Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
leading us on till the morning is bright.

When God is a child there’s joy in our song.

The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none will be afraid.

Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,  
giving a promise of safety and worth.

When God is a child there’s joy in our song.

The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none will be afraid.

Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,  
telling the world that the Savior is born.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none will be afraid.

Love is a flame that burns in our heart,  
Jesus has come and will never depart.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none will be afraid.

### **LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH: PEACE**

Tiffany and Andrew Walther

#### **SUNG RESPONSE** (Hymn No. 611 verse. 2, *Hope is a Star*)

Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,  
giving a promise of safety and worth.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none will be afraid.

### **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** *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* Rejoice, Rejoice

Awake! Awake and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.  
sing out your joy, for Jesus is born, behold! the Child of our longing.  
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,  
to open wide the heavenly door, and lives now inside us forever.

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

Luke 2:1-7

## **MUSICAL RESPONSE**

### **PAGEANT**

*Bed, Bethlehem & Beyond*

## **MUSICAL RESPONSE**

### **GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER**

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

#### **JOYS AND CONCERNS**

#### **PASTORAL PRAYER**

#### **PRAYER OF JESUS**

Our 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.

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.

#### **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 160**    *Go, Tell It On the Mountain*    Go, Tell It On the Mountain

**Refrain:**

*Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!*

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

**refrain**

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our savior's birth.

**refrain**

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

**refrain**

**BLESSING**

**POSTLUDE**            *'Prepare thyself, Zion'* from the Christmas Oratorio            J.S. Bach

# Calendar for Dec. 8 – Dec. 15, 2024

More at [fccnatick.org/events](https://fccnatick.org/events)

- Sunday, Dec. 8**      9:30AM *Annual Bring a Friend Holiday Breakfast* in the Vestry.  
10:30AM *Christmas Pageant* in the sanctuary  
11:30 AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry
- Wed., Dec. 11**      12:00 PM *Midweek Connection & Prayer* via Zoom
- Fri., Dec. 13**      7:30PM *Sound & Spirit Holiday Concert* in the Sanctuary
- Sat., Dec. 14**      3:00 PM *Sound & Spirit Holiday Concert* in the Sanctuary
- Sunday, Dec. 15**    9: 00 AM *Adult Faith Group*  
10:30AM *Worship w/ Rev. Cindy* in the sanctuary  
10:30AM *Godly Play and Connect*  
11:30 AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry  
5:00PM *Annual Interfaith Community Vigil* on the front porch

Thanks to Coffee Hour hosts Doug and Sara Hanna

## TODAY

### Annual Bring A Friend Holiday Breakfast

**Sun. Dec. 8, 9:30-10:30am**

Join the FCC community for our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bring-a-Friend Holiday Breakfast. Sample the bagels, baked goods, fruit and yogurt, quiche and our now famous hot chocolate bar.

### Christmas Pageant

**Sun. Dec. 8, 10:30 am in the sanctuary**

### Christmas Poinsettias

**Place your order TODAY after worship**

Order a poinsettia to remember a loved one or to celebrate a blessing! Following worship on Dec. 22nd, poinsettias will be delivered to those in our church family unable to be with us for worship. Look for Flower Ministry volunteers in the Vestry as you leave worship (or contact the church office). Give them the dedication you want printed in the 12/22 bulletin. Donate any amount.

**NOTE:** If you do not place your orders and dedications by next Sunday (12/15), please contact the church office directly no later than the deadline of Tuesday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **ADVENT & DECEMBER EVENTS**

### **Sound & Spirit: “Voices of the Season” Holiday Concert**

**Fri. Dec. 13, 7:30pm and Sat., Dec. 14, 3pm**

Join the Sound & Spirit intergenerational choir for some holiday spirit Tickets are available at their website at [www.soundandspirit.net](http://www.soundandspirit.net)

### **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Interfaith Community Vigil**

**Sun. Dec. 15, 5-6pm**

The evening will include music, testimony, interfaith prayer, inspirational speaking and a candlelight vigil. A meeting hosted by The Journey Bereavement Group will follow. All are welcome.

### **Lunch Bunch**

**Thurs. Dec. 19, 12:30pm in the Vestry**

### **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

**Tues., December 24, 7 PM in the Sanctuary**

A service with candles and carols.

### **New Year Brunch/Communion Service**

**Sun., December 29, 10:30 AM in the Vestry**

### **Epiphany Worship-combined with area churches**

**Sun., January 5, 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary**



# 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](mailto:prayers@fccnatick.org).

Chris Stefanatos	The McLaren Family	The friends and family of Jacqui Leferink
Kenny Hoffman	Lois and Pam Dotter	Declan and his parents Beth and Kenny
Susan & Bob	Katie	Family & Friends of Noah Lynch
Angela	Char Hannon	Family & Friends of Mary Connolly
Joel	Irene & Walter	Family & Friends of Tom Tannar
Debbie Collins	Charles	Peg & Charlie Ostrander
Jeanna B.	John Lilly	The Levesque Family
Aunt Kathy	Aunt Gwen	Tanya
Eric	Robin and Laura	Frankie Notarbartolo
Sarah Kazim	Uncle Al & Aunt Deb	Melissa and Tiffany Wallace
Joan Person	Paul S.	Ann and George Schmidt
Brian J.	Don & Heather C.	Charles Gobron
Beverly Newell	Mary Cerreto	Richard Conway
Anna Hayes	Connie Sullivan	Abigail Brewer
John Sullivan	Phil Jennings	Doug & Barbara Shirley
Ronnie	Faye Bishop	Audra, Nate & Rowan Mackey
Jane Hall	Tommy Hannon	Alice Bridinger
Jenna Hayes	Paul	Pat & Jane Conaway
Abby Robbins	Anne	Peace for the world and in everyone's day
Natalie Friend	Molly	All immigrant families seeking justice
Jayne Hayes	Evelyn and Family	The people of Ukraine & Russia
Myriam's Mom	Mike McCormick	The people of Santa Maria Tzeja
Robbins Family	Malfrid Abrahamsen	Angels of Hope in Uganda
Jackie Snizek	Bob Brown	Overdose victims
Dorothy Young		

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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://ucc.fccnatick.org/worship-video)).

**Calendar, News, and Program information at [FCCnatick.org](http://FCCnatick.org).**

# 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 *Prayground* 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  
revcindyfccn@gmail.com  
508-653-0971

## **Director of Spiritual Vitality and Congregational Care**

Sarallyn Keller  
sarallyn@fccnatick.org  
508-740-3134

## **Church Office**

Colleen King, Office Administrator  
admin@fccnatick.org  
508-653-0971

## **Minister of Music**

Thomas Foster  
music@fccnatick.org

## **Sunday Nursery Staff**

Grace Seiche

## **Outreach Minister**

Rev. Dr. John Weagraff

## **Financial Assistant**

Cynthia Hamwey

# **FCCnatick.org**