

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.

First Sunday after Epiphany

January 12, 2025

Courage does not always roar.
Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day
saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.'
-Mary Anne Radmacher

PRELUDE Suite in E Major Handel

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP Lane McDonough

* **OPENING HYMN No. 18** *Praise to the Living God* Diademata

Praise to the living God, the God of love and light,
Whose words brought forth the myriad suns and set the worlds in flight;
Whose infinite design, which we but dimly see,
Pervades all nature, making all a cosmic unity.

Praise to the living God, from whom all things derive,
Whose Spirit formed upon this sphere the first faint seeds of life;
Who caused them to evolve, unwitting, toward God's goal,
Till humankind stood on the earth, as living, thinking souls.

Praise to the living God, who knows our joy and pain,
Who shares with us our common life, the sacred and profane.
God toils where'er we toil, in home and mart and mill;
And deep within the human heart God leads us forward still.

Praise to the living God, around, within, above,
Beyond the grasp of human mind, but whom we know as love.
In these tumultuous days, so full of hope and strife,
May we bear witness to the Way, O Source and Goal of life.

CENTERING PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS*

O Love that is so clear and present in the life of Jesus
and his relationship with the oppressed,

Holy is your manifestation.

May your love spread so that we may
one day see what creation was created to be.

May you sustain us as we work for justice
and help us remember that the struggle is long
and the costs are often high.

May you inspire us to be patient as we encounter resistance
and remind us of the holiness of all people.

May you help us continue to raise up the voices of the oppressed
despite often strong opposition from the powerful.

For you will continue to overcome time and time again
until one day all people will realize your power
and you will have to overcome no more. 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 Jesus the Light of the World

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, Jesus, the light of the world;
Glory to the Christ-child bring, Jesus, the light of the world.

We will follow the light, beautiful light,
come where the dewdrops of mercy are bright;
Shine all around us by day and by night,
Jesus, the light of the world.

CHOIR ANTHEM

Do Not Fear, For You are Mine
Senior Choir; Thomas Foster, director

David Lantz III

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 43:1-7

WORD FOR ALL AGES

MUSICAL RESPONSE

READING

"A Blessing for Risk-Takers and Failures" by Robin Tanner

REFLECTION

Fail Forward

MUSICAL RESPONSE

GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

ALLELUIA

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

Tom Foster, organ

As the plates are passed from person to person, we share our financial gifts.
Even if we are not adding money to the place, 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 Hundreth

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

* **SENDING HYMN No. 376** Help Us Accept Each Other (AURELIA TUNE *Hymn 388*)

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
Teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
We are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
We struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
To love them as we find them or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
In living situations to do the truth in love;
To practice your acceptance, until we know by heart
The table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
Who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and bread,
We need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;
Renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us, make us one!

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Suite in E Major: Courante

Handel

*by Kate Dalton

Calendar for Jan. 12 – Jan. 19, 2025

More at fccnatick.org/events

- Sun., Jan 12** 9:00AM *Adult Faith Group*
10:30AM *Worship* with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary
10:45AM *Godly Play and Connect*
11:30AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry
11:30AM *Welcome Lunch* in Chat Room 116
1:00PM *Caring Coalition* in Chat Room 117
- Wed., Jan. 15** NOON *Mid-Week Connection, Zoom* ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek
7:00PM *FCC Coordinating Council* in the Vestry
- Thurs., Jan. 16** 12:30PM *Lunch Bunch* in the Vestry
7:00PM *Centering Prayer Circle, Zoom* ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle
- Sat., Jan. 18** 5:00PM- *West Virginia Work Camp Fundraiser Dinner* in the Vestry:
7:00PM Lasagna, Salad & Garlic Bread; gluten free available
- Sun., Jan. 19** 9:00AM *Adult Faith Group*
10:30AM *Worship* with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary
11:30AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry
5:00PM *Crosswalk Youth Group* in the Vestry

TODAY

Thanks to Coffee Hour hosts,
Jeff & Robin Clausen!

FCCN Welcome Lunch

Sun., January 12 after worship in Chat Room 116

“New” folks at FCC Natick are invited! Especially for folks who have been attending FCCN for a year or less, this is a great chance to meet folks, share thoughts, and get questions answered. We’ll provide the food, the fun, and childcare! Please contact Rev. Cindy to RSVP or with any questions revcindyfccn@gmail.com

FCCN Souper Bowl 2025 Food Drive (friendly competition thru Feb. 9)

YouGiveGoods will deliver goods to “A Place to Turn” after the food drive.

Shop for products at <https://ucc.fccnatick.org/souperbowl2025>

Penguin Team: South of Rt 135. **Polar Bear Team:** North of Rt. 135.

THIS WEEK

FCCN Lunch Bunch

Thurs., January 16, at 12:30PM in the Vestry

Bring your own brown bag lunch. We'll provide munchies, drinks, and dessert.

West Virginia Work Camp Fundraiser Dinner

Sat., January 18th from 5:00-7:00 PM

Meat or Vegetarian Lasagna (gluten free option available) w/ Salad and Garlic Bread

\$15 per person. Deadline for orders: Wed. Jan. 15th. Go online to order at:

<https://ucc.fccnatick.org/lasagna>

NEXT WEEK

FCCN Book Group

Sun., January 19, after worship at Amy's house.

Join us for this informal, friendly gathering with lunch and catching up and talking about our book pick: **The Serviceberry: Abundance and**

Reciprocity in the Natural World by Kimmerer (non-fiction). For more

info about directions to the meeting location and to RSVP, please contact the church office at admin@fccnatick.org

FCCN Open Door Meal

Mon., January 20, at the Natick Elks.

To help out with the meal, please go to sign up link

<https://ucc.fccnatick.org/opendoor>

20th Annual Natick Community Celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King

Mon., January 20, 9:00 AM @ Natick High School Auditorium

Program begins at 10am. Keynote by Jemele & Amy Adams.

FCCN Movie Screening: Luca

Sat., January 25, 4-6PM in the Vestry

Come join the fun; for kids and adults of all ages! Snacks will be provided.

FCCN Budget Info Session

Sun., January 26, after worship, classroom

Join members of the Finance Team for a review of the proposed congregational budget, to be voted on at our congregational meeting on Feb. 2. We will be proposing a budget relying on a larger draw from the endowment than we would like. We see so many good signs of growth and progress at FCCN, but we are also aware that expenses are outpacing income. Your understanding and input are some of our most valuable resources! So come learn, ask questions, and be more prepared for annual meeting.

FCCN Annual Meeting

Sun., February 2 at Noon in the Vestry

Come for a delicious lunch and vote on the 2025 budget and other church business. RSVP to save your seat! We need a quorum of 50 members.

FCCN “*Let’s Play Games!*” Family Event

Sat., February 8, 2-4PM in the Vestry

Bring your own games or play someone else’s! Snacks will be provided.

City Reach Clothing Collection Drop-Off (DEADLINE EXTENDED)

***drop off donations in the Vestry by February 9**

Items needed: Socks, Underwear, Coats, Sweatshirts, T-shirts, Jeans, Bags, Backpacks, Blankets, Sleeping Bags, Toiletries, (No children’s clothes, please).

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.

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

Calendar, News, and Program information at 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 *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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