

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.

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

February 2, 2025

When people are starving,
sometimes the only way they see God is in a loaf of bread.
- Rev. David Schoen

PRELUDE

Bist du bei mir
Elaine Smith-Purcell, organ

J.S. Bach

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sharon Kirby

One: When we forget who we are –

All: God calls us back to love.

One: When we forget why we're here –

All: God calls us back to love.

One: When we forget what we're doing –

All: God calls us back to love.

One: Right here, and right now –

All: God calls us back to love.

* OPENING HYMN NO. 314

As We Gather at Your Table

Beach Spring

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's vict'ry known.

Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.

Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.

CENTERING 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

Lift Every Voice

Lift every voice and sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty;
let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.

CHOIR ANTHEM In Remembrance of Me Ragan Courhey and Buryl Red
Senior Choir, Elaine Smith-Purcell, Director

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 71:1-6 by Nan C. Merrill

WORD FOR ALL AGES

MUSICAL RESPONSE

REFLECTION

MUSICAL RESPONSE

COMMUNION

Joys And Concerns

Invitation To The Feast

Telling The Story

Communion Prayer And The 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.

Sharing The Bread And Cup

Thanksgiving Prayer

Alleluia

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE

Offering Invitation

Offertory

Elaine Smith-Purcell, 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 Hundred

Prayer of Thanksgiving*** SENDING HYMN NO. 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**

Lift up your voices

by Chester Nordman

Calendar for Feb. 2 – Feb. 9, 2025

More at fccnatick.org/events

- Sun., Feb. 2** 9:00AM *Adult Faith Group*
10:30AM *Worship* with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary
All Day *Fundraising Lunch* (Pilgrimage) in Vestry/Kitchen
11:30AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry
12:00PM Annual Meeting in the Vestry
5:00PM *Crosswalk Youth Group* in the Vestry
- Wed., Feb. 4** NOON *Mid-Week Connection, Zoom* ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek
7:00PM *Pub Theology* in the Parlor
- Thurs., Feb. 5** 7:00PM *Centering Prayer Circle* via Zoom
- Sat., Feb 8** 2:00PM *Family Event: Let's Play Games in the Vestry*
- Sun., Feb. 9** 9:00AM *Adult Faith Group*
10:30AM *Worship* with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary
11:30AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour* in Vestry
11:30AM *Coffee Hour Chat: Daniel's Table* in Chat Room #116
1:00PM *Crosswalk Youth Group* in the Vestry

TODAY

This morning, we welcome Elaine Purcell-Smith as our guest musician.

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.

Crosswalk Youth

Sun., February 2 at 5pm in the Vestry

THIS WEEK

Pub Theology

Sun., February 5 at Noon in the Parlor

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).

ONGOING thru FEB 9th

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.

NEXT SUNDAY

Harmony Grove Music Ensemble

Sun., February 9 at 10:30am in the Sanctuary

Join us in worship and enjoy the musical stylings of Willie Sordillo, Zoe Kahne and the rest of their ensemble.

Coffee Hour Chat

Sun., February 9 at 11:45am in the Chat Room #116

Featuring Daniel’s Table.

Crosswalk Youth Group

Sun., February 9 at 1:00pm in the Vestry

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.

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

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry
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Director of Spiritual Vitality and Congregational Care

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Minister of Music

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Sunday Nursery Staff

Grace Seiche

Outreach Minister

Rev. Dr. John Weagraff

Financial Assistant

Cynthia Hamwey

FCCnatick.org