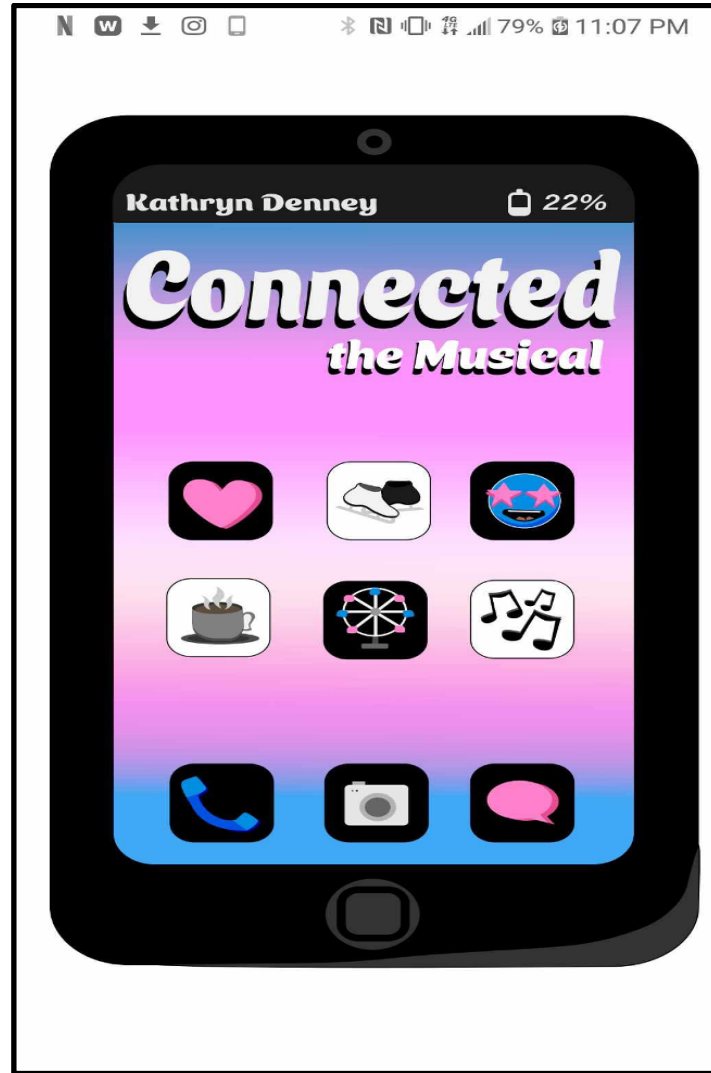


# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK

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.

# Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

February 23, 2025

Being transgender is not just a medical transition. ...  
[It's about] discovering who you are,  
living your life authentically,  
loving yourself,  
and spreading that love towards other people  
and accepting one another.  
– Jazz Jennings

## PRELUDE

*You're Gonna Fly*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Jeannine Keedy

One: Remember how God sees you –

**All: I am fearfully and wonderfully made!**

One: No matter what anyone says –

**All: I am fearfully and wonderfully made!**

One: Hear it, believe it, live it –

**All: I am fearfully and wonderfully made! Amen!**

## \* OPENING HYMN

*Sing a New World Into Being*

Sing a new world into being, sound a bold and hopeful theme.  
Find a tune for silent yearnings, lend your voice and dare to dream.  
Dream a church where all who worship find their lives and loves belong.  
Sing a new world into being, sing as Christ inspires your song.

Sing a new world into being, where each gender class and race.  
Brings its rainbow gifts and colors to God's limitless embrace.  
Where the lines that once divided form instead the ties that bind.  
Sing a new world into being, Risk transforming heart and mind.

Sing a new world into being, where the homeless find a home.  
Where no children ever hunger, but are filled with God's shalom.  
Where all people work for justice, where all hate and vengeance cease.  
Sing a new world into being, raise the harmonies of peace.

Sing a new world into being, Join the ancient prophets' cry.  
For a time of health and plenty, when all tears have been wiped dry.  
When compassion flows like waters, pouring balm for all who grieve.  
Sing a new world into being, live the promise you believe.

### **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.

### **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 and Sing (first verse)*

The Black National Anthem

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.

**ANTHEM**

*Magic Wand*

**SCRIPTURE READING**

*Psalm 139, excerpts*

**WORD FOR ALL AGES**

**MUSICAL RESPONSE**

**READING**

*We Remain* by Rev. M. Jade Kaiser  
(Following the passing of more anti-trans legislation...)

**REFLECTION**

Kathryn Denney

**MUSICAL RESPONSE**

*My Pride and Joy*

**RECEIVING NEW MEMBER**

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 journey,

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.

**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 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 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**

*Bursting With Pride*  
{see insert on next page}

### **BLESSING**

### **POSTLUDE**

\*New Zealand Book of Common Prayer

### Bursting with Pride text

**Verse One:** The closet was small and suffocating, but your dream was big, and intoxicating.  
The closet was small and incarcerating, but you came out light, and liberating!

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are as follows:

System 1:  
Vocal: You can't think straight, and I'm bur-sting with pride! For  
Piano: You can't think straight, and I'm bur-sting with pride! For

System 2 (starts with a measure rest of 4):  
Vocal: so ma-ny years. you had\_ to hide.. You had to lie, and you  
Piano: so ma ny years, you had to hide. You had to lie, and you

System 3 (starts with a measure rest of 7):  
Vocal: had to try, but I'm mar - ching with you by your side!  
Piano: had to try, but I'm mar - ching with you by your side!

**Verse Two:** The cage was wrapped in iron bars. The colors of the rainbow seemed so far.  
The cage was square and the bars so straight, but you came out strong and you bent the gate!

### CHORUS

**Verse Three:** Now you are shouting your name out from the rooftops,  
You're a a music machine that machine that makes the beat drop,  
You're singing bluebird high in the sky, You're a rising star, and I think that I know why.

**BRIDGE:** Open your heart and feel our love. You are worthy and you are enough!

### CHORUS

**CODA:** There's no need to hide, cause I'm marching with you by your side! I'm  
bursting with pride!

# Calendar for Feb. 23 – Mar. 2, 2025

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

## This Sunday's coffee hour hosts: the Hanna Family!

**Thanks to everyone** who contributed to the Christmas Offering on Christmas Eve last year, the Outreach Team, on behalf of FCC Natick, **donated \$2,809.47 to the MetroWest Free Medical Program.** For over 17 years, the MetroWest Free Medical Program has provided immediate health-related care and connections to individuals in our community who are underinsured and uninsured.

### TODAY

#### **“Connected, the Musical”**

Join us for a special worship service this Sunday as we welcome the creator of “Connected, the Musical,” Kathryn Denney. “Connected” shares the journey of Gabriel, a young person coming to understand they are transgender, and sharing that with family and friends. We will hear songs from the musical shared by Kathryn and other talented artists. **Join us for this uplifting service, and those in person are invited to a Coffee Chat with Kathryn and the singers.** Thanks to Deede Bergeron for introducing us to Kathryn!

#### **Welcome New Member!**

This morning, we welcome new member Karen Hodges. Karen is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She serves as an intentional transitional minister, which means she needs a “permanent” church home. We welcome her this morning, between interim engagements.

Karen’s background spans roles in medical and technical illustration and medical technologist specializing in hematology and blood banking. She studied at institutions like UMass Lowell, Tufts Museum School, Northeastern and Andover Newton Theological School. Integral to her formation was an internship at the First Congregational Church of Natick. Married to Michael for over 24 years, they support their daughters and families Taylor and Jon in Massachusetts and Laurel and Andrew, and their children Archie and Magnolia in Maine, cherishing the connections that enrich their lives.

### NEXT WEEK

#### **Knitting Circle**

**Mon., February 24 at 7:00pm in the Parlor**

#### **Building & Grounds Monthly Meeting**

**Wed., February 26 at 7:00pm in the Parlor**

### INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK: FEB 26 – MAR 4

**Interfaith Opening “Know Your Neighbor” @ Christ Lutheran Church,**  
Feb. 26, 7:00-8:00PM



## INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK: FEB 26 – MAR 4

### Interfaith Pub Theology (Eliot Church) @ 7 South Bottle & Kitchen

Feb. 27, 7:00-9:00PM, registration by phone: [508-653-2244](tel:508-653-2244) or Sign-Up Genius @

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084AA4AE2CA6F94-54666998-pubtheology#/>

### Interfaith Shabbat & Dinner @ Temple Israel

Feb 28, registration required: phone: **508-650-3521** or

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc2XWBpx9JL65Wk16EaJ2qjRR\\_8goRsluhbEzx7uOU3dbFPKw/viewform?usp=header](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc2XWBpx9JL65Wk16EaJ2qjRR_8goRsluhbEzx7uOU3dbFPKw/viewform?usp=header)

### Interfaith Breakfast & Mission Project @ Fiske Memorial Methodist

Mar. 1, registration required, phone: **508-653-1674**

### Interfaith Bonhoeffer Documentary Screen @ Christ Lutheran Church

Mar. 1, 7:00-8:30PM

### Interfaith Mardi Gras Parade & Celebration @ First Congregational Church of Natick & St. Paul's Episcopal

Mar. 2, 1:00-3:00pm with Harmony Grove

### Interfaith Iftar @ Common Street Spiritual Center

Mar. 3, 5:00-8:00PM, RSVP welcomed at email [info@commonstreet.org](mailto:info@commonstreet.org)

### Interfaith Music Celebration @ Hartford St. Presbyterian

Mar. 4, 7:00-9:00PM

## ON THE HORIZON

### Terrific Turtles Live Animal Program

Sat., March 22, 1:00-2:00 pm

**\$5.00 p.p. advance ticket sales only**

Tickets must be purchased in advanced and may be purchased by:

•Venmo, email [fcc\\_events@firstchurchnatick.org](mailto:fcc_events@firstchurchnatick.org)

•[Eventbrite](#) tickets (fees apply)

### Installment of Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

Sun., March 23 at 3:00pm in the Sanctuary & Vestry

### Professor Bugman presents the Anthropod Petting Zoo Live Animal Program

**TWO SHOWS! Sat., April 5, 1:00-2:00pm & 2:15-3:15pm**

**\$5.00 p.p. advance ticket sales only. Tickets must be purchased in advanced and may be purchased by:**

•Venmo, email [fcc\\_events@firstchurchnatick.org](mailto:fcc_events@firstchurchnatick.org)

•[Eventbrite](#) tickets (fees apply)

# 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).

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](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 *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  
revcindyfccn@gmail.com  
508-653-0971

### Director of Spiritual Vitality and Congregational Care

Sarallyn Keller  
sarallyn@fccnatick.org  
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### Church Office

Colleen King, Office Administrator  
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508-653-0971

### Interim Music Director

Elaine Smith-Purcell  
music@fccnatick.org

### Sunday Nursery Staff

Grace Seiche

### Outreach Minister

Rev. Dr. John Weagraff

### Financial Assistant

Cynthia Hamwey

**FCCnatick.org**