

# 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 in Lent

March 9, 2025

I have learned that human beings are, fundamentally,  
deeply relational beings with an innate yearning to be known.

To be seen, imperfect and striving.

To find our way through the forest, together.

- *the amen effect*, Sharon Brous

## PRELUDE

*Prelude in C* (Joseph Barnby)

Elaine Smith-Purcell

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Natasha McLaughlin

One: Leave your to do lists and worries.

**All: Come into this house of prayer.**

One: Leave your judgments and biases.

**All: Come into this house of prayer.**

One: Leave your loneliness and separation.

**All: Come into this house of prayer.**

One: Your soul needs rest and refuge

**All: Come into this house of prayer. Amen.**

## \* OPENING HYMN 67

*God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens*

Hyfrydol

God, who stretched the spangled heavens infinite in time and place,  
Flung the suns in burning radiance through the silent fields of space;  
We, your children, in your likeness, share inventive powers with you;  
Great Creator, still creating, show us what we yet may do.

We have ventured worlds undreamed of since the childhood of our race;  
Known the ecstasy of winging through untraveled realms of space;  
Probed the secrets of the atom, yielding unimagined power,  
Facing us with life's destruction or our most triumphant hour.

As each far horizon beckons, may it challenge us anew,  
Children of creative purpose, serving others, honoring you.  
May our dreams prove rich with promise, each endeavor, well begun;  
Great Creator, give us guidance till our goals and yours are one.

## STATEMENT OF FAITH\*

We believe the day is coming  
when God's grace will change the human heart,  
and we will live as one with every living thing.

We believe the day is coming  
when Christ's compassion will fill the earth,  
and no one will do harm, be hurt, or feel alone.

We believe the day is coming  
when the Spirit's freedom will unbind our souls,  
and we will live generous lives for each other  
with a joy no circumstance can alter.

We believe the day is coming,  
and we wait and work for it with steadfast hope,  
for God has promised it, and God is faithful.

## 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 41      *Amen We Praise Your Name O God*

Amen, we praise your name, O God. (Sing amen!) (2X)

Amen, amen. Amen, amen.

Amen, we praise your name, O God

## CHOIR ANTHEM

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

Senior Choir, Elaine Smith-Purcell, director

## SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 4:1-13

## WORD FOR ALL AGES

## MUSICAL RESPONSE

After *Word for All Ages*, 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**

*Rend Your Heart*

*by Jan Richardson*

**REFLECTION**

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

**MUSICAL RESPONSE**

**GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER**

**JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS**

\*\*Inhale: I can grieve in the wilderness

Exhale: I will not look away from suffering

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.

**RESPONSE**

*Nada te turbe* (Nothing can trouble)

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten,

Those who seek God shall never go wanting.

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten,

God alone fills us.

**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 427**      *My Life Flows On*      How Can I Keep from Singing

My life flows on in endless song; above earth's lamentation,  
I hear the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging.  
Since Love is Lord of heav'n and earth, how can I keep from singing?

Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing.  
It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?  
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging.  
Since Love is Lord of heav'n and earth, how can I keep from singing?

What though my joys and comforts die? I know my Savior's living.  
What though the darkness gather round? Songs in the night he's giving.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging.  
Since Love is Lord of heav'n and earth, how can I keep from singing?

The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing!  
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing?  
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging.  
Since Love is Lord of heav'n and earth, how can I keep from singing?

## BLESSING

## POSTLUDE

During Lent, we will use resources from gifted writers:

\*A Statement of Faith by Rev. J. Mary Luti.

\*\*Pastoral prayers will include breath meditations by Cole Arthur Riley in Black Liturgies.

# Calendar for Mar. 9 – Mar. 16, 2025

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

- Sun, Mar. 9**                    9:00AM *Adult Faith Group*  
10:30AM *Worship with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary*  
11:30AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour in Vestry*  
11:45AM *Coffee Chat: FCC Immigration Response in Chat Room 116*
- Wed, Mar. 12**                    NOON *Mid-Week Connection, Zoom [ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek](https://ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek)*  
7:00PM *Soul Sabbatical 2025: The Amen Effect in the Parlor*  
7:00PM *Building & Grounds Meeting in Chat Room 116 or via zoom*
- Thurs, Mar. 13**                    7:00PM *Centering Prayer Circle via Zoom*
- Sat, Mar. 15**                    1:00PM *WV Work Camp Fundraiser Dinner Prep in the Kitchen*  
5:00-7:00PM *WV Work Camp Fundraiser Dinner in the Vestry or Take-Out*
- Sun, Mar. 16**                    9:00AM *Adult Faith Group*  
10:30AM *Worship with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary*  
11:30AM *Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour in Vestry*  
11:45AM *Coffee Chat: Daniel's Table in Chat Room 116*

**This Sunday's coffee hour hosts: Gail Martin & Carolyn Williams**

## TODAY, SUNDAY MAR. 9

### ASHES OFFERED THIS MORNING

This morning, we will offer ashes to those in person as a sign of the invisible pain we often bear.

### WELCOME INTERIM MUSIC DIRECTOR

The Music Ministry Transition Team is delighted to welcome Elaine Smith-Purcell as FCC Natick's Interim Music Director! Folks were introduced to her on Feb. 2, when she filled in for one Sunday. We are so pleased to be able to work with her over the next few months. Her talent and skill at the keyboard and in choral leadership will provide stability for the choir and Sunday morning worship. We'll continue to welcome musical guests like Harmony Grove as well. Any questions, please see Rev. Cindy or Beth Canterbury.

### FCCN DIRECTORY UPDATE

**\*Directory clipboards will be located on tables outside the Vestry elevator lobby; outside the Sanctuary elevator lobby, and outside the Sanctuary in the Narthex.**

The church directory needs updating and we need your help! Please review one of the (3) printed directories. The deadline is **Sun, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Please checkmark if your info is correct or write in any corrections in the directory. Note: If you do not see your name listed, please notify the church office at [admin@fccnatick.org](mailto:admin@fccnatick.org).

## TODAY, SUNDAY MAR. 9

### COFFEE CHAT: FCCN IMMIGRATION RESPONSE

March 9, after worship, Chat Room

Learn a bit about the current state of immigration in the US, and reflect on how this impacts religious communities, as well as how FCC Natick might respond.

## THIS WEEK

### SOUL SABBATICAL 2025: THE AMEN EFFECT:

#### A LENTEN JOURNEY TO MEND OUR BROKEN HEARTS & WORLD

Wednesdays: March 12 – April 9, 7:00-8:30pm

You are invited to join our small group gatherings on Wednesday evenings during Lent this year. We will meet 5 times with our small group and do daily devotional work on our own for 45 days to strengthen our individual understanding of these issues and to enrich the group discussions.

#### **You will need a few resources for this Soul Sabbatical:**

- The book *The Amen Effect* by Sharon Brous (*copyright 2024, Penguin Random House*)
- \*books available at Ten Trees Bookstore on Main Street
- Soul Sabbatical Participant Guide (*see Sarallyn if you need a guide*)
- A journal to write your reflections (optional)
- A candle, if you wish

Each week will have the same rhythm. We will use a variety of prayer practices to dig deeper into the idea that life is better when we travel together. That the connections we have with one another are essential to live and thrive as whole persons. We hope that you will consider joining us on this journey of discovery. Contact Sarallyn to register for the Soul Sabbatical. Even if you are unable to join us for the small group gatherings, you can pick up a copy of the Lenten materials and participate in these spiritual practices at home.

### WEST VIRGINIA WORK CAMP FUNDRAISER DINNER

FCCN Vestry (Dine In) or To-Go meals from kitchen

Saturday, March 15, 5:00-7:00pm

Chicken or Eggplant Parmesan (GF available):

(Pasta w/ Sauce, Salad & Garlic Bread) \$15

**Deadline for ordering: Wed., March 12.**

Please place your order online at: <https://forms.gle/utQudz5q7fPgrwHLA>

If you are not able to go online, please contact the church office with your order at (508) 653-0971 and leave a message.

## NEXT WEEK

### COFFEE CHAT: DANIEL'S TABLE

March 16, after worship, Chat Room

Learn a bit about the current state of immigration in the US, and reflect on how this impacts religious communities, as well as how FCC Natick might respond.

## ON THE HORIZON

### TERRIFIC TURTLES LIVE ANIMAL PROGRAM

Sat., March 22, 1:00-2:00 pm ~ \$5.00 p.p.

advance ticket sales only

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

or [Eventbrite](#) tickets (fees apply)

### 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. •

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

or •[Eventbrite](#) tickets (fees apply)

### FCCN BOOK GROUP:

**Book:** *29 Gifts: How a Month of Giving Can Change Your Life* by Cami Walker

**Sunday, April 6, after worship ~ RSVP to [admin@fccnatick.org](mailto:admin@fccnatick.org)**

**Light lunch provided and discussion of our book led by Kirsten McDonough.**

After a devastating MS diagnosis, one woman shares her inspirational journey in gratitude and generosity--in this New York Times bestseller. At age thirty-five, Cami Walker was burdened by an intensified struggle with multiple sclerosis, a chronic neurological disease that left her debilitated and depressed. Then she received an uncommon "prescription" from South African healer Mbali Creazzo: Give away 29 gifts in 29 days.

29 Gifts is the insightful story of the author's life change as she embraces and reflects on the naturally reciprocal process of giving. Many of Walker's gifts were simple--a phone call, spare change, a Kleenex. Yet the acts were transformative. By Day 29, not only had Walker's health and happiness improved, but she had also created a worldwide giving movement. 29 Gifts shows how a simple, daily practice of altruism can dramatically alter your outlook on the world.

*This short book is readily available at the library and is a paperback and all other formats- kindle/audiobook is 6 ½ hours.*

# 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: please 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  
508-740-3134

### Church Office

Colleen King, Office Administrator  
admin@fccnatick.org  
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**