

# 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.

# Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 25, 2025

You're braver than you believe,  
stronger than you seem,  
and smarter than you think.  
- Christopher Robin (Karl Geurs and Carter Crocker)

## PRELUDE

Morning Has Broken  
Elaine Smith-Purcell, piano

arr. by Anna Laura Page

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Heather Seiche

One: We are smart people. We know what's going on.

**All: God, open our minds to your love.**

One: We've been to school. We read the papers.

**All: God, open our minds to your love.**

One: We've made our decisions. We've come to conclusions.

**All: God, open our minds to your love.**

One: Maybe, for just a few minutes, we can surrender our certainty.

**All: God, open our minds to your love. Amen.**

## \* OPENING HYMN 98 *God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale*

Roeder

God of the sparrow,  
God of the whale,  
God of the swirling stars;  
How does the creature say Awe?  
How does the creature say Praise?

God of the earthquake,  
God of the storm,  
God of the trumpet blast;  
How does the creature cry Woe?  
How does the creature cry Save?

God of the rainbow,  
God of the cross,  
God of the empty grave;  
How does the creature say Grace?  
How does the creature say Thanks?

God of the hungry,  
God of the sick,  
God of the prodigal;  
How does the creature say Care?  
How does the creature say Life?

God of the neighbor,  
God of the foe,  
God of the pruning hook;  
How does the creature say Love?  
How does the creature say Peace?

God of the ages,  
God near at hand,  
God of the loving heart:  
How do your children say Joy?  
How do your children say Home?

## **CENTERING PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS**

Creator 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,  
and 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 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 watching from home!*

One: God's peace be with you.

**All: And also with you!**

**\* SONG OF CELEBRATION**

*Sanctuary*

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary

Pure and holy, tried and true

And with thanksgiving

I'll be a living

Sanctuary for You

**SCRIPTURE**

Luke 24:44-53

**WORD FOR ALL AGES**

**MUSICAL RESPONSE**

**READING**

*Stay: A Blessing for Ascension Day* by Jan Richardson

**REFLECTION**

Stay In The City

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

**MUSICAL RESPONSE**

**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 230**

*Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song*

Bridegroom

Like the murmur of the dove's song,  
like the challenge of her flight,  
like the vigor of the wind's rush,  
like the new flame's eager might:  
come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ's body,  
to the branches of the Vine,  
to the church in faith assembled,  
to our midst as gift and sign:  
come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division,  
with the ceaseless voice of prayer,  
with the pow'r to love and witness,  
with the peace beyond compare:  
come, Holy Spirit, come.

**BLESSING**

**POSTLUDE**

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart  
Elaine Smith-Purcell, organ

Mark Hayes  
arr. by Marvin Gaspard

# Calendar for May. 25 – June. 1, 2025

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

Sun, May 25	9:00AM	<i>Adult Faith Group</i>
	10:30AM	<i>Worship with Rev. Cindy in the sanctuary</i>
	11:30AM	<i>Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour in Vestry</i>
Mon, May 26		<i>Memorial Day holiday; church office closed</i>
Wed, May 28	NOON	<i>Mid-Week Connection, Zoom <a href="https://ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek">ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek</a></i>
Thurs, May 29	7:00PM	<i>Centering Prayer Circle via Zoom</i>
Sun, June 1	9:00AM	<i>Adult Faith Group</i>
	10:30AM	<i>Worship with Rev. John Weagraff in the sanctuary</i>
	11:30AM	<i>Post-Worship Fellowship: Coffee Hour in Vestry</i>

**TODAY, SUNDAY, MAY 25**

## THANKS TO OUR COFFEE HOUR HOST THIS WEEK:

Simone Gill & Felix Alvarez!

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

FCCN offers scholarships for students who are pursuing studies at institutions of learning beyond the high school level. See your recent LINK email or contact the church office at [admin@fccnatick.org](mailto:admin@fccnatick.org) to receive an application.

**Deadline: June 1, 2025.**

## SING TOGETHER: AMERICA ERA TOUR

### Intergenerational musical collaboration

Sunday, June 8 at 4pm, Common Street Spiritual Center, 13 Common St., Natick  
Join our own Lorraine Oakes and all her friends for a wonderful free concert with students from Natick High choir.

## SUMMER EVENTS

### CHARLES RIVER ROTARY CLUB ICE CREAM FUNDRAISER

**Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 11:30am-3:00pm on the Natick Common**

This will be the 12th Scoopapalooza; raising funds to support local non profits including FCCN. **\*Volunteers are needed from 9:00am-4:00pm to help with setup, ticket tables, scooping ice cream, tear down and cleanup.** Please contact Hank Szretter ([hank@crrclub.org](mailto:hank@crrclub.org)) or June Szretter ([junesz@mac.com](mailto:junesz@mac.com)) for more information and to sign up.

### SNEUCC (Central MA Association-United Church of Christ)

**Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1:05 PM, at Polar Park, Worcester, Deadline: July 3rd**

Member Churches are invited to a WOO SOX Game against Scranton for an individual cost of only \$35 per ticket! We will have our own space on the Triple Decker Garden, which includes a 2 hour buffet. To reserve tickets please email Bob Kersting at [treasurercentralmaassn@gmail.com](mailto:treasurercentralmaassn@gmail.com) Please include your name, contact information and number of tickets. A confirmation email will follow. On the day of the game, tickets will be held at Will Call in your name. If you have any questions, email Bob Kersting at above email or call 774-452-0137.

### FCCN BOOK GROUP: *The Walk* by Richard Paul Evans

**Sunday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, Chat Room, after worship (Note: audiobook-4 hours)**

Please join us for lunch and discussion on the book, *The Walk*. Gretchen will lead the discussion. All are invited whether you've read the book or not! **Lunch offered.**

**RSVP to [admin@fccnatick.org](mailto:admin@fccnatick.org)**

# 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	Tanya
Chris Stefanatos	Lois and Pam Dotter	Steve & Deb Evers
Kenny Hoffman	Katie	Amy Hollister
Susan & Bob	Char Hannon	Virginia Fenton
Angela	Irene & Walter	The Family and Friends of Janet Collins
Joel	Charles	Family & friends of Richard Farrar
Debbie Collins	Shirley Lilly	Friends & Family of Tommy Zack
Jeanna B.	Aunt Gwen	Friends & Family of Kathleen Grant
Aunt Kathy	Robin and Laura	Amy Appleyard and family,
Eric	Uncle Al & Aunt Deb	<i>(following the loss of her father, Dennis)</i>
Sarah Kazim	Paul S.	Tammy, daughter Ashley & Veronica
Joan Person	Don & Heather C.	Declan and his parents Beth & Kenny
Brian J.	Mary Cerreto	Myriam's brother Alex
Beverly Newell	Connie Sullivan	Mary Anderson
Anna Hayes	Phil Jennings	Peg & Charlie Ostrander
John Sullivan	Faye Bishop	Frankie Notarbartolo
Ronnie	Tommy Hannon	Melissa & Tiffany Wallace
Jane Hall	Paul	Ann & George Schmidt
Jenna Hayes	Anne	Charles Gobron
Abby Robbins	Molly	Audra, Nate & Rowan Mackey
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	Doug Shirley	The people of Santa Maria Tzeja
Dorothy Young	Diane	Angels of Hope in Uganda
Jennie Lynch	Madhu Gupta	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 [ljchampion17@gmail.com](mailto:ljchampion17@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 *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](mailto:revcindyfccn@gmail.com)  
508-653-0971

## **Interim Music Director**

Elaine Smith-Purcell  
[music@fccnatick.org](mailto:music@fccnatick.org)

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

Sarallyn Keller  
[sarallyn@fccnatick.org](mailto:sarallyn@fccnatick.org)  
508-740-3134

## **Sunday Nursery Staff**

Grace Seiche

## **Outreach Minister**

Rev. Dr. John Weagraff

## **Church Office**

Colleen King, Office Administrator  
[admin@fccnatick.org](mailto:admin@fccnatick.org)  
508-653-0971

## **Financial Assistant**

Cynthia Hamwey

**FCCnatick.org**