

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK

United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JUNETEENTH

JUNE 21, 2020

“The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.”

~ “Caged Bird,” by Maya Angelou (1928-2014)

Welcome to our digital worship! In this church we focus on the things that matter. 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.

We invite you to “check in” on the social media of your choice, let them know that you are doing church, even in these uncertain times, ask your networks for prayer requests, or otherwise bring your online self into God’s presence today.

SHARING YOUR PRAYER REQUESTS

Because of a few minutes broadcast delay, prayer concerns and celebrations to be shared during worship can be emailed to prayers@firstchurchnatick.org at any time before or during the worship service up to the Reflection.

PRELUDE

Air in D Major
Thomas Foster, piano

J.S. Bach

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Jonathan New

(Following the Re-Affirmation of our Open & Affirming Statement, we invite you to have a candle available to light as your worship leaders light the Christ Candle)

RE-AFFIRMING OUR OPEN & AFFIRMING (ONA) STATEMENT

The First Congregational Church of Natick affirms the dignity and worth of every person. We are called to express the love and welcome of Christ. We celebrate the diversity of God's creation and the gifts, talents and resources of all who strive to build a church that is faithful to God.

We, therefore, covenant to be an open and affirming congregation. We embrace and support those who experience rejection and find themselves in exile from spiritual community. We welcome people of every ability, race, culture, gender, economic circumstance, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO CELEBRATION

Siblings in Christ, as we gather in the welcome of God's love,

As we gather in the joy of our unity in Christ,

As we gather in the power of the Spirit,

Let us listen for the voice of God.

Let us worship God,

Who has spoken and still speaks to those who attend

To the roar or the whisper of the Holy One!

HYMN NO. 476

We Shall Overcome

Martin

We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome some day.

We'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we'll walk hand in hand some day.

God will see us through, God will see us through, God will see us through some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, God will see us through some day.

Truth shall make us free, truth shall make us free, truth shall make us free some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, truth shall make us free some day.

We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace, we shall live in peace some day;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall live in peace some day.

OPENING PRAYER* (TOGETHER)

From “Listen, Lord: A Prayer,” by James Weldon Johnson

*O Lord, we come this morning
Knee-bowed and body-bent
Before Thy throne of grace.*

*O Lord – this morning –
Bow our hearts beneath our knees,
And our knees in some lonesome valley.*

*We come this morning –
Like empty pitchers to a full fountain,
With no merits of our own.*

*O Lord – open up a window of heaven,
And lean out far over the battlements of glory,
And listen this morning.*

Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

(Reach your hands out in a gesture of blessing or place your hands together over your heart and bow in a sign of Namaste. Once worship is concluded, consider being in touch with someone you know to share Christ’s peace.)

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE

OFFERTORY MUSIC “Jesus Said Love One Another”

An original piece by Nate Keedy, performed by the Keedy family

SONG OF PRAISE *(Please feel free to use either traditional or inclusive language.)*

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, all heavenly hosts, Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 10:27-39

REFLECTION “Building ‘Some Day’ Today” Rev. Dr. Jonathan New

GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER

CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS OF THE CONGREGATION

A JUNETEENTH LITANY ADAPTATION of “Lift Every Voice and Sing”**

Celebration rises, up from the deep places,
finding voice in the light and air no longer denied.

***Lift every voice and sing,
sing till earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty.***

Celebration rises, not blind to the suffering, not blind to the sorrow.
Celebration comes at a cost.

***Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
yet with a steady beat have not our weary feet
come to the place for which our parents sighed.***

Celebration rises, remembering the way we have come,
the paths taken that have brought us here now to this place and time of celebration.
Celebration rises, up and up, full of remembering.

Remembering the ones led to freedom by Harriet;
Remembering lives and freedom stolen –

Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, Tony McDade,
and a long line of others before them.

***We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;
we have come treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
out from the gloomy past till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.***

Celebration rises, recognizing what has been done and left undone,
knowing there is still and yet much to do, so much further to go.

Celebration rises, naming the victories, recognizing the challenges yet ahead.

Celebration rises on voices offering unfinished praise.

***Lest our feet stray from the places,
our God where we met thee;
lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget thee;***

Celebration rises, resisting illusions,
to be embraced by the real and abiding presence of God who breaks our chains,
and sets us free for freedom, in power and love and joy.

***God of our weary years, God of our silent tears
thou who hast brought us thus far on our way;
thou who has by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.***

Celebration rises, with the power of healing wings and promise to endure.

Celebration rises, celebrating that by God’s grace,

I am because You are, You are because I am;

Celebrating that the fullness of my humanity does not diminish yours and the fullness of your humanity does not diminish mine.

*Shadowed beneath thy hand may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.*

True to who we are,

True to who we have been and who we are becoming, thanks be to God.

Holy and righteous God, you created us in your image.

Grant us grace to contend fearlessly against evil and to make no peace with oppression.

*Help us, like those of generations before us
who resisted the evil of slavery and human bondage in any form
and any manner of oppression.*

Help us to use our freedoms

to bring justice among people and nations everywhere.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

HYMN NO. 481*

Lift Every Voice and Sing

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.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our people sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
God who has brought us thus far on the way;
God, who by glorious might, led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met you;
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget you;
Shadowed beneath your hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.

BLESSING

*About James Weldon Johnson – Many people are surprised to learn that "Lift Every Voice and Sing" was first written as a poem. Created by James Weldon Johnson, it was performed for the first time by 500 school children in celebration of President Lincoln's Birthday on February 12, 1900 in Jacksonville, FL. The poem was set to music by Johnson's brother, John Rosamond Johnson, and soon adopted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as its official song. Today "Lift Every Voice and Sing" is one of the most cherished songs of the African American Civil Rights Movement and is often referred to as the Black National Anthem. James Weldon Johnson, born in Florida in 1871, was a national organizer for the NAACP and an author of poetry and nonfiction. He also wrote several poetry collections and novels, often exploring racial identity and the African American folk tradition.

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Livestreamed & Recorded Worship

In consideration of the safety of our worship leaders and to demonstrate that everyone should avoid going out into public unless absolutely necessary our worship leaders will continue leading worship from their homes for the foreseeable future. ***During this time, livestreamed and local access cable broadcasting of worship at the usual Sunday 10:30 a.m. worship time will continue as usual.***

Worship is at the very center of our life together as a congregation, as well as being at the heart of our call to proclaim and embody the good news of Jesus in the world. Church leaders remain committed to ensuring that we can do that well. Thanks in advance for your patience and understanding as we seek to do what is best for our worship leaders and right for our community while remaining a church that gives high priority to worship together as the Body of Christ. If you have feedback for our worship leaders please contact Jonathan at pastor@firstchurchnatick.org. We appreciate your input!

Post Worship Fellowship

11:30AM – 12:30 PM, on Zoom following livestream worship

Join us for an informal virtual gathering where we can greet one another, and – if the spirit strikes us – talk about the day's worship experience.

Follow this link for the videocall: <https://zoom.us/j/314817921> or,

To join by phone: call in at (929) 205-6099, then enter 314817921# (and don't forget the # at the end!).

NOTE: Please be patient for the arrival of your Zoom host since he may still be transitioning from recording the service at 11:30!

YOU ARE INVITED - ALL-CHURCH ZOOM CONVERSATION!

You are invited to join in a congregation-wide Zoom call Sunday, June 28, immediately following worship (with an alternative date of Tuesday, June 30, 7:00 p.m. for those who can't make it on the 28th). By now you should have received a letter from the FCC Coordinating Council letting you know that it had unanimously decided not to resume in-person worship until at least the end of the summer. The letter outlines the considerations and rationale for this decision. However, we also want to offer the opportunity for anyone in our church community to hear more, offer feedback, and think together about how we'll continue to be church during this time. The Zoom link for this conversation will be the usual link for post-worship fellowship time which we will make available next week.

We hope you'll plan to join together for this special conversation on June 28 and, if not, on June 30. Until then, know that live streamed and local access cable broadcast will continue at 10:30 a.m. Sunday mornings throughout the summer. We will also continue to record worship that you can access through our church website. DVDs are also available through the church office. See you on June 28!

CALENDAR FOR JUNE 21, 2020 - JUNE 28, 2020

Sunday, June 21	10:30 AM	Virtual Worship will be live streamed on Pegasus.
	11:30 AM	Post Worship Fellowship via Zoom
	2:00 PM	Virtual Worship service will be available on the church website.
Wednesday, June 24	12:00 PM	Mid-week Connection via Zoom
Thursday, June 25	11:00 AM	Mindful Meditation
Saturday, June 27	11:00 AM	FCN Book Club via Zoom
Sunday, June 28	10:30 AM	Virtual Worship will be live streamed on Pegasus.
	11:30 AM	Post Worship All-Church Zoom Conversation!
	2:00 PM	Virtual Worship service will be available on the church website.

Together, We're Making A Difference!

Our church is responding to the current health crisis in innovative ways, by continuing to gather on Sundays in live-streamed worship, and being in fellowship and shared ministry through videoconferencing. Now we're also exploring how to further live into our identity as Natick's *Digital* Front Porch. Far from putting our mission on hold, this is the time when Spirit-led people can tend the spirits of others in our community feeling anxious and isolated. There's never been a more important time to proclaim and embody the Good News of God's abiding love given to us by Jesus!

We need your generous support of our shared ministry during this time when the offering plate isn't being passed during in-person worship. The average congregation receives only 16% of its household contributions from mailed, online, or auto-bill paid giving. Most comes through the offering plate. We're pleased that 63% of our giving is now coming in alternative ways. But, while this is a terrific shift, it still means that we're only seeing about two-thirds of our regular giving from church members and friends. If you haven't done so already, here's how you can shift your in-person offering plate giving to other giving means:

- Mailing in donations to: 2 East Central Street, Natick, MA, 01760.
- Making one-time or recurring gifts online through our church website and its secure giving platform: <http://firstchurchnatick.org/give-online>.
- Setting up auto-bill pay with your bank (usually be done online), just the same way you would for paying utility bills.
- Considering making at least some portion of your contribution earlier in the year if you are an annual or semi-annual giver.

The world needs what FCC Natick can be and do, particularly in this time that is challenging all of us in unprecedented ways. Thanks for doing your part to make sure we can keep our unique and vibrant ministry going at just the moment it's needed most!

PRAYER LIST

Liam Schmitt	Family & Friends of Mike Keedy	Grace Osgood
Isabella	Family & Friends of Bruce Wharton	Brad Sticklely
Rick	Family & Friends of Bob McDonald	Chris Gobron
Stephen	Family & Friends of Jack Gobron	Richard Keller
David	Family & Friends of Fernando Morales	Heidi Burger
Irene	Gonzalez	Ed Kinley
Juan Mercado	Family & Friends of Jeff Holgate	Bob Steen
Gerry Carlson	Family & Friends of Charlotte Figi	Joan Hayes
Carolyn Kennan	Family & Friends of Robert Nason	Natalie Friend
Jack Gobron	Family & Friends of Dr. Jeff Bolton	Connie Sullivan
Jenna Hayes	Family & Friends of Betty Hollis	Chris Starks
Brad Jennings	Family & Friends of Juan Mercado	Barbara Dickson
Abby Robbins	The Rodriguez Cruz family	Carolyn Sarbello
Jennifer	Peter Sinesi & his family	Cheryl Gowdy
Jane Hall	Michelle, Catherine & Noah	Barbara Bidwell
Regan Lynch	Ellen, Jim & daughter	Jayne Hayes
Brian	Jen M. & family	Kim Palmer
Ronnie	Bryan & his unit	Grandma Pat
Kathy	Lily Dreher & her family	Peter McKinney
Allison	Shirley & her family	Miriam's Mom
Susan	Evelyn & her family	Tiffany Spigarolo
Patrick	Judge Shelley Joseph	Carolyn Aycock
Oliver	Jean, Kathy & Paul Joyce	Alice Bridinger
Alex	Chris Leigh Manuell	Mary Cerreto
Emmett	Audra, Nate & Rowan Mackey	Faye Bishop
Mitch	Sari, Andrew & Tyler	Pam Dotter
Polina	Jose & family	Paul Ladd
Amelia	Yandow family	John Sullivan
Jean-Paul	Marcy Bailey-Adams	Gerry Granfors
Randall D.	Sibyl Waterman Haley	Char Hannon
Karen	John & Kay Hartman	Mickey Nieman
Bonnie & George	Mary & Jim Howard	Don O'Meara
Hailey	The people of Santa Maria Tzeja	Elizabeth Godrick
John	All those struggling with substances	Mark & Patty
Don Peterson	All those waiting at the border	Christopher Gobron
Nicholas	Health Care Workers	Amanda Sinesi
Carole	Minimum Wage Workers	Mo Carriker
Kiara	People feeling Isolated and Separated	Eric Carriker
Amanda	People living at home in Difficult Situations	Keith Jennings
Aphrodite Hoge	People searching for a Place to Live	Juan Mercado
Canasta Solidaria	The families and loved ones who have passed	Donna Shermerhorn
Bill Ladd	due to the pandemic	

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Reverend Dr. Jonathan New

Interim Minister

802-498-4713

pastor@FirstChurchNatick.org

The Reverend Dr. John Weagraff

Outreach Minister

Sarallyn Keller

Director of Spiritual Vitality & Congregational Care

508-740-3134

sarallyn@FirstChurchNatick.org

Peg Waters

Office Administrator

peg@FirstChurchNatick.org

Thomas Foster

Minister of Music

Teresa Iodice

Preschool Director

508-655-2171

preschool@FirstChurchNatick.org

Michelle May

Financial Assistant

financefcc@FirstChurchNatick.org

Alex Villarejo

Custodian

alex@FirstChurchNatick.org

2 East Central Street, Natick, MA 01760

508-653-0971

[*admin@FirstChurchNatick.org*](mailto:admin@FirstChurchNatick.org)