

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK

United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 17, 2020

*“If a spiritual community only points back to where it has been
or if it only digs in its heels where it is now, it is a dead end or a parking lot, not a way.”
~ Brian D. McLaren*

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

Sonata, K. 570: II. Adagio
Thomas Foster, Piano

W.A. Mozart

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Jonathan New

(Following the Announcements, we invite you to have a candle available to light as your worship leaders light the Christ Candle)

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO CELEBRATION

Sarabeth Guptill

Children of God, arise!

Lift your hearts, lift your eyes, lift your voices.

For the living, moving Spirit of God has called us together –

In witness, in celebration, in struggle.

Siblings in Christ, reach out toward each other!

Our God reaches out toward us!

Let us worship God!

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.*

*Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.*

*To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.*

*Thou reignest in glory, thou dwellest in light,
Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.*

OPENING PRAYER (TOGETHER)

*We are always in your presence,
Loving God — in our waking up and in our lying down;
in our walks in the woods or our videoconferencing with coworkers;
in simple conversation or quiet rest;
in new schemes and old daydreams;
when we gather physically or worship at a distance
digitally.*

*You are always close at hand though we may struggle to find you.
We claim you as our Holy Parent, and we your offspring give you
praise that you do not remain unknown to us.
Make your Living Spirit known to us in this hour,
that we might be refreshed for our ministry of sharing your Good News
with all those who do not yet know you.
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.)

TIME FOR CHILDREN

OFFERING OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

OFFERTORY*Allemande in E-flat*

J.S. Bach

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****HYMN NO. 414***This is a Day of New Beginnings*
Beth Canterbury, Soloist

Dronfield

*This is a day of new beginnings, time to remember and move on,
Time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that's gone.**For by the life and death of Jesus, love's mighty Spirit, now as then,
Can make for us a world of diff'rence as faith and hope are born again.**Then let us, with the Spirit's daring, step from the past and leave behind
Our disappointment, guilt and grieving, seeking new paths, and sure to find.**Christ is alive, and goes before us to show and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings – our God is making all things new.***SCRIPTURE READING***Acts 17:22-31 & I Corinthians 9:19-27***REFLECTION***"Knowing (and Making Known) the
Unknown God"*

Rev. Dr. Jonathan New

GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER**CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS OF THE CONGREGATION****THE MORNING PRAYER****THE LORD'S PRAYER (TOGETHER)***Our Father, 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.*

*Lord, dismiss us with your blessing; fill our hearts with joy and peace;
Let us each, your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace:
Oh, refresh us, oh, refresh us, traveling through this wilderness.*

*Thanks we give and adoration for the gospel's joyful sound;
May the fruits of your salvation in our hearts and lives abound:
Ever faithful, ever faithful to the truth may we be found.*

*So that when your love shall call us, Savior, from the world away,
Fear and death shall not appall us, glad your summons to obey:
May we ever, may we ever reign with you in endless day.*

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Sonata, K. 570: III Allegretto

W.A. Mozart

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!

NEW - Mid-Week Connection and Prayer - Wednesdays at Noon

We hope you'll join Jonathan and others on Wednesdays for a noontime Zoom call to stay connected and pray together. Join these approximately 30-minute sessions for a quick virtual meet-up and check-in, to share prayer requests, and to be in prayer with one another.

Join by computer, iPad, or smartphone with video:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85369077103>

Join by phone with audio only:

Dial 1-929-205-6099, then enter 85369077103# when prompted

CALENDAR FOR MAY 17, 2020 - MAY 24, 2020

- Sunday, May 17**
- 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.
 - 5:00PM Jr. Youth Group via Zoom
 - 7:00PM Sr. Youth Group via Zoom
- Wednesday, May 20**
- 12:00PM Mid-Week Connection and Prayer
- Saturday, May 23**
- 9:00AM Coordinating Council Retreat
- Sunday, May 24**
- 10:30 AM Virtual Worship will be live streamed on Pegasus.
 - 11:30 AM Post Worship Fellowship Zoom Call
 - 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	Peter Sinesi & his family	Carolyn Sarbello
Jennifer	Michelle, Catherine & Noah	Cheryl Gowdy
Jane Hall	Ellen, Jim & daughter	Barbara Bidwell
Regan Lynch	Jen M. & family	Jayne Hayes
Brian	Bryan & his unit	Kim Palmer
Ronnie	Lily Dreher & her family	Grandma Pat
Kathy	Shirley & her family	Peter McKinney
Allison	Evelyn & her family	Miriam's Mom
Susan	Judge Shelley Joseph	Tiffany Spigarolo
Patrick	Jean, Kathy & Paul Joyce	Carolyn Aycock
Oliver	Chris Leigh Manuell	Alice Bridinger
Alex	Audra, Nate & Rowan Mackey	Mary Cerreto
Emmett	Sari, Andrew & Tyler	Faye Bishop
Mitch	Jose & family	Pam Dotter
Polina	Yandow family	Paul Ladd
Amelia	Marcy Bailey-Adams	John Sullivan
Jean-Paul	Sibyl Waterman Haley	Gerry Granfors
Randall D.	John & Kay Hartman	Char Hannon
Karen	Mary & Jim Howard	Mickey Nieman
Bonnie & George	The people of Santa Maria Tzeja	Don O'Meara
Hailey	All those struggling with substances	Stuart
John	All those waiting at the border	Elizabeth Godrick
Don Peterson	Health Care Workers	Mark & Patty
Nicholas	Minimum Wage Workers	Christopher Gobron
Carole	People feeling Isolated and Separated	Amanda Sinesi
Kiara	People living at home in Difficult Situations	Mo Carriker
Amanda	People searching for a Place to Live	Eric Carriker
Aphrodite Hoge	The families and loved ones who have passed	Keith Jennings
Canasta Solidaria	due to the pandemic	Juan Mercado

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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