An Open and Affirming Congregation
**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*  
**DECEMBER 24, 2021**  

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

*Why does this story never wear out?*
*The sheen of it all – is a star, silver and a pine, green*
*For the heart of a child asking a story*
*The red and hungry, red and hankering heart*
*Calling for cross-lights of silver and green.*

~ Carl Sandburg, from “Silver Star”

**PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP FROM HOME**

This Christmas Eve service is all about the Light - God’s, Christ’s, and ours! Therefore, we invite you to have some candles ready for use during our worship. We’ll be relighting the Advent Candles early in our service and we encourage you to have four candles to do so along with our worship leaders. You should have a fifth candle to light at the time of Sharing the Light, just before the singing of *Silent Night*.

**WELCOME TO OUR 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 change any portion of tonight’s service to language in which you feel included. Our purpose is to welcome all into God’s presence and worship God in wholeness.

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

**PRELUDE**  
*Silent Night*  
Thomas Foster, piano  
arr. Ola Gjeilo

**WELCOME**  
Rev. Dr. Jonathan New
CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

ENTERING INTO CHRISTMAS -
THIS, TONIGHT, IS THE MEETING PLACE  Sarallyn Keller and Rev. Dr. Jonathan New

RELIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

CHORAL RESPONSE  
See Amid the Winter’s Snow  John Goss
Beth Canterbury, soprano
Sarallyn Keller, alto
Benjamin Kaplan, tenor
Randy Divinski, bass

UNISON PRAYER

Holy One, we thank you for the glimpse of heaven on earth in the faces and the light of those around us. Even in the midst of fear, of challenge, of struggle – even when our view is obscured by clouds of doubt, you have ignited the flame of hope, love, joy, and peace within us. Let us glow with its brilliance from the inside out. Amen.

HYMN No. 132 (vss. 1-4)  
O Come, All Ye Faithful  Adeste Fidles

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore adore him, O come, let us adore adore him,
O come, let us adore adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore adore him, O come, let us adore adore him,
O come, let us adore adore him, Christ the Lord!

Child for us sinners poor and in the manger,
we would embrace thee with love and awe;
who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?
O come, let us adore adore him, O come, let us adore adore him,
O come, let us adore adore him, Christ the Lord!
Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning,
    Jesus to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Eternal, now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore adore him, O come, let us adore adore him,
O come, let us adore adore him, Christ the Lord!

**OPENING PRAYER (TOGETHER)**

Sarallyn Keller

Holy One, take us into that night long ago, and in our imagination let us marvel at the holy child, worship on bended knee, and sing along with angels. Let us behold the tender care of Mary and the watchful care of Joseph. Let us be blessed by the gaze of the Christ child. When we leave this place, may we leave like the shepherds, singing and praising you, for Christ is born again and again, born to set us free, born to give us hope, born to change the world. Let it happen again and again. Amen.

**THE LIGHT REVEALED**

**PROPHETIC LESSON**

Isaiah 9:2-7

**Hymn No. 149 (vss. 1 & 5)**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* Carol

*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,*
*from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold;*
*“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven great news we bring.”*
*The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.*

*For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,*
*when with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold,*
*when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,*
*and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.*

**THE LIGHT RECEIVED**

**SECOND LESSON**

Luke 2:1-4

**Hymn No. 151 (vss. 1 & 4)**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem* St. Louis

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!*
*Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;*
*Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;*
*The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*
O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

**Third Lesson**  
Luke 2:5-7

**Hymn No. 153 (vss. 1 & 2)**  
*What Child Is This*  
*Greensleeves*

What child is this, who laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:  
Haste, haste to bring him praise, the babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies the child in manger bare where ox and ass are feeding?  
Give heed, draw near, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:  
Haste, haste to bring him praise, the babe, the son of Mary.

**Fourth Lesson**  
Luke 2:8-14

**Hymn No. 137 (vss. 1 & 3)**  
*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*  
*Mendelssohn*

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! The herald angels sing “Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise all souls on earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing “Glory to the newborn King!”

**Fifth Lesson**  
Luke 2:15-20
Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come adore on bended knee Christ,
the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

SIXTH LESSON

John 1:1-5, 14

ANTHEM

Wexford Carol
Beth Canterbury, soprano
Traditional Irish Carol
arr. Richard Walters

MEDITATION

“Behold, The Light”
Rev. Dr. Jonathan New

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

UNISON PRAYER

We thank you, God, that the time of waiting and preparing is over and that the light of Christ shines so very clearly tonight. We thank you for your gift of Jesus Christ to the entire world. We thank you that Christ’s coming makes hope, peace, joy, and love possible for every person in every nation. Encourage us to do our part to bring goodwill and peace to our families, our churches, our neighborhoods, and the world. May our joy be full and our hearts rejoice, for the world will never be the same again. Amen.
The Light Reflected

Offertory Music

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam
arr. Thomas Foster

(Our Christmas Eve offering will benefit two area local organizations doing important work: Daniel’s Table and Immigrant Family Services Institute (IFSI-USA). Please use the QR code below to make an on-line Christmas Eve contribution.)

*Song of Praise*

Praise God whose dawn transfigures night,
Whose Daystar shines for us on high,
Whose Spirit brings into our sight
The Light which to our world draws nigh. Amen

*Prayer of Thanksgiving*

Sharing the Light

Rev. Dr. Jonathan New

*Hymn No. 142*

Silent Night

Stille Nacht

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent Night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the savior is born! Christ, the savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love’s pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Christmas Eve Prayer & Proclamation

Rev. Dr. Jonathan New
Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns:
let earth her songs employ;
let fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Christ rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

*Blessing*

**Postlude**

*On Christmas Night*  
Sussex Carol;  
arr. Edwin T. Childs

*All who are able are invited to stand*

**Post Worship Fellowship**

*Shortly after the Service, on Zoom following livestream worship*  
Join us for a short time of fellowship and sharing the Light of Christ this Christmas Eve immediately following our worship service!  
Join Zoom Meeting [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/86454776853](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/86454776853)  
Follow this link for the videocall:  
or,  
**To join by phone:** call in at (929) 205-6099, then enter 864 5477 6853 (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 live-streaming the worship.
Based in Framingham, the mission of **Daniel’s Table** is to create food security through nutrition and education as the catalyst to empower individuals and families to reach their full potential. It achieves this mission through innovative programming, service conducted with compassion and dignity, and education that is respectful of culture and diversity.

Based in Mattapan, the mission of **IFSI-USA – Immigrant Family Services Institute, Inc.** – is to expedite the successful integration of recent immigrants into the social and economic fabric of the United States with justice and dignity. Focusing on children first, our offering will help the earthquake relief effort in Haiti as well as support recent immigrants from Haiti and elsewhere.

Use your camera to open QR code to donate on-line!
Poinsettia Dedications

In memory of Edward "Ned" Seddon - beloved husband and father

Love, Barbara and Ned

Thank God for Shawn & Jean, Gregory & Gabriela

Jean and Bob Sniffin

In loving memory of Ron DeVincent & family members

Brightie DeVincent

Let there be peace on Earth – Merry Christmas!

Sharon and Ric

Praying for healing and coming together in our country - Peace on Earth!

Fusaro - Shaughnessy Family

To family and loving friends

The Evers Family

Celebrating this joyous time and thinking of all who are with us in spirit

Mindy and Peter Hoge

In honor of friends and family past, present and future

The Seiche Family

Merry Christmas to all!

The Hanna Family

We are celebrating Arthur Joseph Williams who joined our family on June 29, 2021. Proud Grandmothers!

Gail Martin and Carolyn Cheever

In honor of so many fond memories of Pamela Brown Meehan

With deep appreciation and thanks to the awesome Capital Campaign Steering Team

Gail Martin and Doug Hanna

With love, joy, and Hope!

The Foley Family
Poinsettia Dedications

In loving memory of Richard Sr. and Richard Jr. Hayes
Anna Hayes

In memory of Dick Macfarlane, we miss you everyday, we love you forever
Linda, Jen, Brian and families

In loving memory of my dear husband, Lawrence, and my great son, John, you were both taken way too soon and I miss you both a whole lot.
Myrna Bartlett

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

In celebration & gratitude for loves ones and friends, remembered and present always
Wayne and Jeanette Szretter

Merry Christmas & Blessed New Year!

Remembering Barbara & Olin Hayes with love at Christmas time and always
The Gobron Family

For the lives of Dick, Ruth, and James whose generosity, humor and love lives on
Beth Canterbury

Merry Christmas & Peace to all!
Hank and June Szretter
Livestreamed & Recorded Worship for Christmas Eve –
PEGASUS CHANNELS HAVE CHANGED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

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.

*Livestreamed and live local access cable broadcast of worship will continue on a different channel for Christmas Eve.*

*Click here for the live stream for Christmas Eve.*

Natick Local Access

**CHANNELS**
- Comcast 8
- Verizon 30
- RCN 13

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!

**SIGN UP HERE FOR HOSTING COFFEE HOUR AND THE WORSHIP TEAM!**

Ever wonder how someone gets to read the Scripture on Sunday morning? Or how to serve communion or be an usher? Would you be able to come 30 minutes early and help set up the sanctuary for worship? All you have to do is volunteer! Sign up at [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b48acaf2cabf85-worship](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b48acaf2cabf85-worship) or scan this QR code.
# Prayer List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Group</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deb P.</td>
<td>Alice Bridinger</td>
<td>Friends &amp; Family of Ashish Patel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eileen</td>
<td>Barbara Dickson</td>
<td>Friends &amp; Family of Alva Chapin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Beverly Newell</td>
<td>Friends &amp; Family of Marcel Nadeau</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liz</td>
<td>Carolyn Sarbello</td>
<td>Friends &amp; Family of Lincoln Ladd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andi</td>
<td>Chris Starks</td>
<td>Friends &amp; Family of Dick Ladd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>David McKinney</td>
<td>Friends &amp; Family of Jack Dowd</td>
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<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Grace Osgood</td>
<td>Recipients of Ashish Patel’s donated organs &amp; their families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lorna</td>
<td>Gerry Granfors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicholas</td>
<td>Heidi Burger</td>
<td>Elizabeth, Patrick and their unborn son</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oliver</td>
<td>Jackie Snizek</td>
<td>The Bennati/Snizek Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randall D.</td>
<td>Jayne Hayes</td>
<td>The Pomfret Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Jim Leece</td>
<td>The Carelli Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronnie</td>
<td>Joan Hayes</td>
<td>Michelle, Catherine &amp; Noah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Hall</td>
<td>Josh Stackhouse</td>
<td>Jen M. &amp; family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denise Palmer</td>
<td>Keith Jennings</td>
<td>Evelyn &amp; her family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grandma Pat</td>
<td>Lynne Parker</td>
<td>Jean &amp; Paul Joyce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenna Hayes</td>
<td>Mary Cerreto</td>
<td>Audra, Nate &amp; Rowan Mackey</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Sullivan</td>
<td>Natalie Friend</td>
<td>Marcy Bailey Adams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judy Hamdi</td>
<td>Pam Dotter</td>
<td>John &amp; Kay Hartman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liam Schmitt</td>
<td>Palma Casadio</td>
<td>Char &amp; Tommy Hannon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Crouch</td>
<td>Pat Conaway</td>
<td>Brian &amp; Silvia Blackman</td>
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<td>Mark &amp; Patty</td>
<td>Paul Ladd</td>
<td>Donna Shermerhorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abby Robbins</td>
<td>Roger Hanson</td>
<td>Audra Teague Mackey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna Hayes</td>
<td>Susan Hassett</td>
<td>Malfrid Abrahamsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Myers</td>
<td>Janet and Don</td>
<td>The People of Haiti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Ladd</td>
<td>Peterson</td>
<td>The people of Santa Maria Tzeja</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catie Siggins</td>
<td>Tiffany Spigarolo</td>
<td>Health care and frontline service workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Gobron</td>
<td>Chuck Roberson</td>
<td>Educators and students of all ages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed Kinley</td>
<td>Connie Sullivan</td>
<td>Those seeking asylum and safe places to live</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faye Bishop</td>
<td>Aphrodite Hoge</td>
<td>Alzheimer's patients, families, &amp; caregivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tim Ferrell</td>
<td>Becky Sherman</td>
<td>All who struggle with physical &amp; emotional challenges</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Miriam's Mom</td>
<td>Prayers support and encouragement for estranged families to find peace and reunification especially during the holidays and to start rebuilding relationships.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tim &amp; his family</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The prayer list is updated periodically. If you find that a name has been rotated off the list for whom you would like the continuing prayers of the community, please contact the office at admin@firstchurchnatick.org or Prayer List Coordinator Linda Champion at lchampion17@gmail.com. Also, if a known issue has been resolved, thank you for communicating the news to us so that the prayer list can be a current reflection of this vital ministry. Thank you to all for your care and prayers.
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK
(First Church 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

Saralynn Keller
Director of Spiritual Vitality & Congregational Care
508-740-3134
saralynn@FirstChurchNatick.org

Peg Waters
Office Administrator
peg@FirstChurchNatick.org

Thomas Foster
Minister of Music

Alex Villarejo
Custodian
alex@FirstChurchNatick.org

Grace Seiche
Sunday Nursery Staff

2 East Central Street, Natick, MA 01760
508-653-0971
admin@FirstChurchNatick.org
fccfinance@FirstChurchNatick.org