

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church - 106 Walnut St., Natick, MA 01760

December 2012

Reflections from Pastor Mark

Here follows one of my all-time favorite – and true – Christmas stories:

A few years back, Margaret and I were co-pastors of Burnside UMC in East Hartford, Connecticut. It was Advent, the Sunday on which worship included the annual Children's Christmas Pageant. The kids – our two included – were very excited and particularly because we were taking the pageant on the road to a local nursing home that afternoon, to be followed with ice cream sundaes at *Friendly's*.

The pageant was a triumph at both church and nursing home – and over their ice cream, the children chattered about how great it had been. Said one little girl with absolute sincerity:

“It was neat. The old people really liked it. And we only made that one mistake when the Wise Men came in before Jesus was born – but that was OK because the old people had never heard the story before.”

It is a charming story, both because of a child's naiveté and the “old folks” willingness to be surprised by a story they'd known for a lifetime. Beyond being charmed, we may take from this a deeply important lesson: *If we find ourselves incapable of a child's innocence at Christmas, we can at least be willing to allow that innocence to speak to our hearts once again.*

We adults too often take our life “cues” from *CNN*, *Fox News* and the *Wall Street Journal* which, likely as not, reflect the world view of political philosopher Thomas Hobbes (d. 1679), who wrote that life is “ugly and brutish.” And who can argue that there is no truth to this assessment? Count the wars and civil wars

currently being fought across the globe. Read about the disparity which exists between the obscenely rich and the poorest of the poor. Note the rising lack of interest in religion and sacrificial living in this nation. Oh yes, there is much darkness in the world. *Yet. . .*

. . . it is to this world that a child is given. It is upon people like us, surrounded by darkness, “that a great light has shone.” “And,” as St. John the Evangelist reminds us in the first chapter of his Gospel, “the darkness has not overcome it.”

A little child would understand this – not with her mind perhaps but deeply, I think, in her heart. Are we, who have lost the innocence of childhood, prepared to receive again our great hope, the Word made Flesh?

God bless us all in this season of preparation and joy!

-Pastor Mark-



REJOICE... for our Saviour is born!



Staff of Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

Pastor: Rev. Mark Goad

Admin. / Newsletter Editor: Judy Bortolotti

Deacon: Rev. Cheryln Gates

Youth Minister: Josh & Deanna Leedy-Andreozzi

Choir Director /Organist: Eric Mazonson

How to reach us:

Phone: (508) 653-1674 **Fax:** (508) 655-0587

Pastor Mark's Email: fiskpastormark@aol.com

Church/Judy's Email: fiskumc@aol.com

Cheryln's Email: deacongates@gmail.com

Josh & Deanna's Email: DandJLA@gmail.com

Eric's Email: amazonson@verizon.net

Church Website: fiskumc.org

Worship Service Participants and Nursery Volunteers for December

Greeters

Dec 2 – Nancy Swan & Elizabeth Coates
 Dec 9- Nancy Swan & Elizabeth Coates
 Dec 16 –David & Janis Cail
 Dec 23- Tom & Susan Carney
 Dec 30- Dom & Debbie Friscino



Lighting the Advent Wreath



Dec 2 - Choir
 Dec 9 - UMYF
 Dec 16- Sunday School children
 Dec 23 - UMM
 Dec 30 -UMW

Acolytes

Dec 2 – Dorothy P & Elizabeth M
 Dec 9 - Rose C.
 Dec 16- Rose C.
 Dec 23 –Sarah F.
 Dec 30 Sarah F.

Cross bearer

Kelli G.
 Ashley S.
 Matt S.
 Kevin S.
 TBD

Liturgists



Dec 2 - Rev. Cheryln Gates
 Dec 9 – Matt Scranton
 Dec 16 –Ernest Acquaaah-Harrison
 Dec 23 – Joshua Leedy-Andreozzi
 Dec 30 – Susan Carney

Communion Servers

Dec 2- Thom Townsend & Helen Hollingworth



Nursery Workers



Nursery – 9:00am

Dec 2 – Debbi F. & Jen G.
 Dec 9- Jennifer F. & Jen G.
 Dec 16 –Debbi F. & Jen G.
 Dec 23 -Jennifer F. & Jen G
 Dec 30 Debbi F. & Jen G.

Nursery – 10:30am

Scott & Jennifer F.
 Crystal M. & Pat P.
 Sarah G. & Heather O.
 Janis C. & Carol S.
 Crystal M & Pat P.

Stewardship Update - Thank You!

Thank you to all who participated in Consecration Sunday and our Celebration Luncheon. It was a very special weekend to celebrate our commitments to God, our community, and all the ministries which make Fisk a special place.

Thank you to our District Superintendent, Reverend Rene Perez, our own Pastor Mark, and other speakers who shared messages of commitment, generosity, giving to God first, and giving as a family value. We renewed our understanding of stewardship as spiritual, of generously giving back to the Lord, and growing our levels of generosity.

The results are still coming in, but we are excited to share with you these preliminary results of our important campaign:

- More of you are giving, making commitments to the Lord,
- More of you are increasing your commitments,
- More resources will be contributed to support ministries than last year.

If, by chance, you have been touched by the messages of generosity and commitment, and not yet taken the opportunity to complete a Commitment Card, check your mail for the pledge card sent, or call the office, or call Sherry. Your generosity is important to Fisk...and important to you. Thank you. Bless you.

Members of Finance Committee, which includes representatives from other committees at Fisk:

Michael Bruns (Chair), Pastor Mark Goad, Debi Henry (Lay Leader), Thom Townsend (Chair-Admin Board), David Cail (Treasurer), Sherry Culver (Financial Secretary), Tom Carney (Trustees), Ernest Acquaaah-Harrison (SPRC), Greg Dickinson, Larry Drolet, Jen Garrant, Dave Longworth.



Advent Opportunities



Sunday, December 2nd

4:00pm – Advent Workshop

Sunday, December 9th

8:30am - UMM Breakfast at Gourmet Decisions followed by a Communion Service at Fisk (meet at Fisk @ 8:00am to carpool)



Saturday, December 15th

6:00pm – A Night in Bethlehem

Christmas Eve Service
Monday, December 24th



Join us for Christmas Eve Worship at
7:30pm



2013



Order Poinsettias for the Christmas Altar Now

Place your order now with The Altar Guild for one or more red or white poinsettias at \$9 each to be placed In Honor of or In Memory of those you wish to remember in this special way at Christmas.

The poinsettias will be arranged on the altar for the Christmas Service on Sunday, December 23rd and for Christmas Eve service on Monday, December 24th. Please take your plant after one of those services. If you leave your plant at the church after December 24th, it will be delivered to someone on the Fisk Fellowship of Concern.

Members of the Altar Guild will be collecting orders and money in Whipple Hall following worship, **December 2nd, 9th and 16th**, or you may mail or deliver your check and order in an envelope to the church office marked to the attention of: The Altar Guild.

The total order must be to the Florist by December 17th

(Please clip and return this form with your order)

I/We would like to place a red or white poinsettia on the Christmas Altar

_____ In Honor of

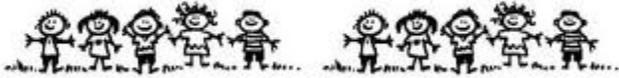
_____ In Memory of

By _____

Please word exactly as you wish it to appear in the bulletin.

Thank you!
Linnea Fisher, Blanche Ciccarelli, Lois Potter & Nancy Swan
Altar Guild

Christmas Decorating Party!



Saturday, December 1

10:00 am



Time to get our church all dressed up for the Advent season and Christmas! Come and help make our sanctuary beautiful.

For more information or to help decorate,

please contact

Betsy Lindsey, Chairperson, Worship Commission.!

Candlelight Service



Christmas
Eve
Worship

Christmas Eve fast approaches and we joyfully anticipate a beautiful Candlelight Service at 7:30 pm which will include wonderful music, a story time for children and the lighting of candles. It will be a lovely experience, reminiscent for many of us of the Christmas Eve services of our childhood. Come and celebrate the birth in Bethlehem.

From Missions

Missions is serving dinner at St. Paul's Open Door on **Thursday, December 27th**. We meet there at 5 to prepare and serve dinner to the guests. Please join us for this wonderful opportunity to serve our neighbors. Bring your kids, it's a nice service activity for families. Look for the menu in the weekly bulletin and see Heather Oluwole and Michelle Drolet for more information.

Coats for Kids is ongoing through the first week of January. Bring us your used coats, all ages, in good condition. We will deliver them to Anton,s cleaners for dry cleaning and distribution. Thank you!

Laily Lines From Our Lay Leader **"Mary wrapped a present to the world!"**



TWENTY QUESTIONS! "Bearing gifts we travel afar" is part of what Christmas Carol? What does Alvin want for Christmas? Which ocean is Christmas Island in? What is the meaning of gold? Frankincense? Myrrh? Who was Good King Wenceslas? How much younger was Jesus than his cousin, John the Baptist? Where is Christ when the magi come to visit him? In what Gospel do we find the magnificat? In the Gospel of Luke, why was Jesus born in Bethlehem? Christ was laid in a manger. What is a manger? What decoration is on the top of your Christmas tree? When is it considered lucky to eat mince pies? Who was the first President to decorate the White House Christmas Tree? Which movie appears on television more times than any other holiday movie? In what Christmas Carol do you hear the line "With a voice as big as the sea."

CHURCH LEADER TRAINING! The General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) of The United Methodist Church is offering several webinars in January. If you are a new member of a committee, or are interested in attending any of these, they are held at 7:30 p.m. on the dates listed. Stewardship and Finance is on 1/10. 1/15 – SPRC. 1/17 – Lay Leader. 1/22 – Board of Trustees. 1/29 – Administrative Board. 1/31 – Lay Leadership.

MAYNARD UMC CHRISTMAS CHOIR PROGRAM! You are invited to attend on Sunday, December 16 at 7 p.m. This is a service of lessons and carols. Maynard's UMC Choir will be joined with members from St. Matthews UMC and St. Bridget Catholic Church. Flute music and the Choir-chime Choir will also be heard. There is parking in the municipal lot across from the arts theatre and the church which is located at 2 Summer Street in Maynard. Refreshments follow this evening of music.



HUMAN RIGHTS DAY December 10th. The work of love embraces the work of seeking justice for everyone, everywhere, whatever their circumstance. To do justice is to advance the cause of human rights for all. Prayer: We pray for the leaders of this nation and all nations, that your spirit of wisdom would guide them in upholding the dignity and human rights of each person. God, as you call us to love our neighbor, give us wisdom and courage to respect the human rights of every person. Amen.

CHRISTMAS MOVIE! You bring the tissues, I'll bring the popcorn! "The Heart of Christmas" is 1 hour and 27 minutes. A true story about the Locke's who are devastated when they learn their young son, Dax, has cancer. But with courage, determination and faith, they give Dax a one last Christmas, even if it is in October. This is a family Christian movie and it will be shown in the Youth Room – on *Saturday, December 8th at 1 p.m.*



MERRY CHRISTMAS! "With their ears, the shepherds heard the glorious proclamation that a Savior was born. With their eyes, they looked upon the Word who became flesh and dwelt among them. With their hearts, they rejoiced in the gift of God's amazing love." May *your* Christmas and New Year be filled with His amazing love! Luke 2:11

***His Blessings, My Prayers,
Debi Henry***

Hurricane Sandy Giving

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar has asked churches in the conference to remember the victims of Hurricane Sandy with a special offering this week. To that end, we are reminded that many in the Mid-Atlantic have lost services, homes and in some cases, employment. The bishop has suggested gifts be made to the *Greater New Jersey Conference Hurricane Relief Fund*. Checks may be made out to that fund or to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief). The church treasurer will forward your gifts to the appropriate agency.



coffee Hour

Coffee Hour is held every Sunday following the 10:30 a.m. worship service in Whipple Hall. Members of the congregation are all welcome to join one another in a time of fellowship as some light refreshments and coffee are served. Our Evangelism Commission is responsible for Coffee Hour and they supply paper goods, coffee, advice, information and other needed supplies. They need your assistance each week with set-up, providing goodies, serving and clean-up. If you can help on a Sunday, please contact Pat Price or sign-up on the sheet located on the Evangelism bulletin board outside Whipple Hall.

**Fisk Step-Up Kids – Grades 3-5
Fisk Pop-Up Kids – Pre K-Grade 2**

LOCK-IN!

**SUNDAY – DECEMBER 2nd
12:00 p. m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Lunch, Games, Movie, Craft, Christmas Cookie Making
and Discussions as you are "Locked In" the church for
four hours before the Family Advent Workshop!!**

The latest Newsletter from the Pellitier's (mission to Zimbabwe) is here! Please check their newsletter out on the **Missions bulletin board**
We encourage your continued prayer support!



Members of the Fisk community are invited to be angels!

Beginning December 2nd, select an angel from the tree at the back of the sanctuary and purchase the gift listed for a child or adult in the Natick community. Return it by Sunday December 16th so that it may be distributed by the Natick Service Council or MIHN in time for Christmas.



Advent Scripture Readings



First Week of Advent – December 2, 2012

Sunday: Matthew 25:1-13
Monday: Luke 20:1-8
Tuesday: Luke 20:9-18
Wednesday: Luke 20:19-26
Thursday: Luke 20:27-40
Friday: Luke 20:41 – 21:4
Saturday: Luke 21:5-19

Second Week of Advent – December 9, 2012

Sunday: Luke 7:28-35
Monday: Luke 21: 20-28
Tuesday: Luke 21:29-38
Wednesday: John 7:53 – 8:1
Thursday: Luke 22: 1-13
Friday: Luke 22:14-30
Saturday: Luke 22: 31-38

Third Week of Advent – December 16, 2012

Sunday: John 3:22-30
Monday: Luke 22:39-53
Tuesday: Luke 22:54-69
Wednesday: Mark 1:1-8
Thursday: Matthew 3:1-12
Friday: Matthew 11:2-15
Saturday: Luke 3:15-20

Fourth Week of Advent – December 23, 2012

Sunday: John 3:16-21
Monday: Luke 1:67-80



Take your family back into time on the night of the first nativity. Walk down the streets of Bethlehem, visit shopkeepers, make crafts. Visit Mary and Joseph in the manger!
This is a unique Christmas experience for the whole family! Everyone is welcome to join in and take part in this special night! It's our Christmas gift to you.

Join us for

A Night in Bethlehem

Saturday, December 15th

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Pre-register by December 12th.

(508) 653-1674 fiskumc@aol.com

Registration forms are in the literature racks, at the back of the sanctuary or it can be downloaded at

www.fiskumc.org



From the Financial Secretary ...



If you regularly contribute to ministry at Fisk, you probably have a giving number that is used to track your financial gifts. For many of you this also means that there is a set of offering envelopes available for you to use. Offering Envelopes for 2013 will be available to pick up starting on Sunday, December 16th. If you do not see a set of envelopes for your name and you would like to use them, please contact me and I will get a set to you. Envelopes not picked up will be mailed to those who use envelopes.

For those of you who do not use offering envelopes - **Please note your giving number on your check.** This simple notation helps our Sunday morning tellers properly record your gifts to ministry. You may also have your gift mailed directly to Fisk from your bank using an on-line bill pay system. Just be sure to have the giving number added to the check.

New this year ... offering envelopes are ready to be mailed! The offering envelope has the Fisk mailing address preprinted on it, has a security flap and is ready to mail.

Year-End Giving: If you want an up-to-date contribution statement for year-end gift planning, contact me and I'll send one along to you.

And ... If you still haven't made a pledge to ministry at Fisk, there is still time to do so. Call the church office and request a pledge card be mailed to you or let me know directly.

Thank you for your continued support of ministry at Fisk.

Sherry Culver, Financial Secretary
sherrycd@comcast.net or 508-651-1876

Website and Digital updates!



Are you receiving this Messenger by email? If not, and you have an email address, do you want to? Simply send your email address to Judy in the office.

She can send to multiple email addresses for your family so if your family has more than one email address (and most do) be sure to send all of the addresses to Judy for emailing.

Distributing our Messenger by email saves resources money and time. You may always pick up a hard copy of the Messenger at church. There will be a basket of the monthly Messengers at the back of the sanctuary for you to take on the first Sunday of the month.

Website releases - thanks to those of you who signed a release for the using photos on the website. Photos help tell our story and create interest. If you haven't signed a release for your family, see me or contact the office for a release.



Natick Cable - We are at expanding our digital presence by adding cable broadcast. Leo Jaco is working hard to record our services and edit them for Natick Pegasus. Thanks to Leo for his efforts to get a quality recording of our service.

The aim is to have a 30 minutes segment which includes music, scripture, prayer and the morning message. If you have any questions about this process, please speak with me or Leo.



Sermons continue to be audio recorded.

They are posted weekly on the website. Look for audio CD to take home or to give to someone who is unable to attend services.

Comments and feedback about the church website, www.fiskumc.org? What do you want to see on the site?

What would you find useful? Remember to look there for the Ministry news, Calendar, information about our church and special events and happenings. The Messenger can also be read online without downloading it.

Sherry Culver sherrycd@comcast.net or 508-651-1876



United Methodist Women

- ❖ This is a busy time of year for all of us. The Fisk United Methodist Women are busy also. We do THANK you for your support for our **Annual Fair** last month. Our profits (just over \$5000) goes to our mission budget...for women, children and youth throughout the world. Thanks for your support.
- ❖ Also at this time of year, we are collecting our individual **Pledges to Mission** either through your circle treasurer / UMW unit Treasurer-Sherry Culver.
- ❖ **Winnie Sinclair** is reminding us to submit our reading lists to her by December 31 for credit for the year.
- ❖ The **Prayer Shawl** group (aka knitting group) continues to meet on Wednesday mornings at 10:00am to knit and share some time together. Come and visit us. Joanne Billo and Winnie are the chairs. Shawls are available for those in need.
- ❖ **World Thank Offering** is due at the December meeting—reminder from Susan Carney
- ❖ January 6 will be **Installation of Officers** for 2013
- ❖ Come and bring a friend to the Musical Program on **Tuesday, December 4**—Invitation elsewhere in this Messenger. Debbie Friscino-Vice President

President-Janis Cail

Secretary- Marcia Hoyt



Alternative Christmas December 2 and 9 at 11:30am following worship

This is an annual opportunity to purchase gifts and handmade items for the holidays or just for you. When you do purchase an item the money goes directly back to the women who made that item. We just act as the “vehicle” that promotes these small industries for women struggling to make a living in many places...from Boston to Central America and Africa.



We also have Heifer cards-where your gift of a live animal will make a difference” in the life of a family. They benefit from that animal ie. Milk from the cow and then are committed to pass on the off-spring to another family...it really keeps on giving.



Come and visit our tables in Whipple Hall. We have a great variety of items for you to choose.



Sponsored by UMW

Marcia Hoyt and Elizabeth Coates

UMM Breakfast at Gourmet Decisions

12 Washington Street Natick

Sunday, December 9 at 8:15am at the
restaurant
or 8:00am at the church parking lot
for a ride

Our Men's Club is meeting
for breakfast at Gourmet
Decisions (you order and
pay for your own choice)
(enter from parking lot
of the Dolphin
Restaurant)



We will then continue to the church for our
Annual Communion Service with Pastor Mark.

United Methodist Women

*You are invited
to a very special musical program.
We hope all women of Fisk and their
friends will join together-*

December 4 at 7:30pm

*for a Christmas Program of
song and stories.*



Soloist Nancy Tutunjian-Berger will
entertain us. Nancy is a well-known
vocalist, song writer and speaker.

Mark the date and do plan to join us for a
relaxed evening, you will be glad you did.

Sponsored by United Methodist Women

Advent Workshop



WHAT--This is a great way to begin your Advent
Season! Gathering to have Christmas
Fellowship and make a craft or display for
your home (or possibly a gift).

WHEN—On Sunday, **December 2 at 4:00pm-6:00pm**

HOW does it work—Come and just bring a
sandwich (or pizza, a sub, or McDonalds)
for your supper. We will provide desserts
and beverages. It is very easy!

PROJECT--We will supply the materials for
making your choice of a craft. We suggest
you bring a pair (or two) of good scissors
for cutting fabric...if you have them, we
have some but not enough.



This event is for you...singles, families with young
children, couples...anyone who is interested in spending
a couple of hours in Christmas fellowship, sharing in a
sandwich supper, singing carols and a short devotional
for the closing and going home with a Christmas Craft.

No separate child care, bring your children and work as a family.

More information—

Debi Henry, Marcia Hoyt or anyone on the Council of Ministries.