

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

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April 2019

Pastor's Note

As we come to the end of the Lenten Season, and approach Resurrection Sunday, know that the Christian journey is challenging, but with renewed hope and continuous trust in God, we can affirm who we are. We are Christ's resurrected people. Yes, "WE ARE FISK".

At Fisk, we are a diverse, intergenerational, and inclusive group of faithful servants **who truly love God and all our neighbors**. We stand in solidarity with all our brothers and sisters. But today, we stand with and raise our voices for, immigrants, Muslims, and LGBTQIA+ communities.

In spite of all the chaos, conflicts, and confusions, Fisk UMC has a commitment to follow Jesus Christ; to love, serve, and welcome all persons in spite of who they are, where they have been, and what they have done. Therefore, we will continue to invite, welcome, accept, and nurture in a safe space with peace, equality, and justice for all persons, while Christ does transformations. And while faith in God and prayers are master keys, we will continue to think, reflect on, use words, and act in ways that "do no harm".

The challenging question is, "Can we walk together as resurrected people, live worthy lives and see all persons as made in God's image?"

I know we can. I believe in all that God gives and can do to make great and good things happen. Keep Living.

-Pastor Alecia

Reflection Readings

For continuous spiritual growth; even as you travel during Lent and spend time with family and friends, continue to read and reflect on the following scripture passages:

April 7	Philippians 3:4-14	John 12:1-8
April 14	Mark 14:1-15:47	
April 21	Acts 10:34-43	John 20:1-18
	Psalter: Psalm 118	
April 28	Revelation 1:4-8	John 20:19-31

Worship Team

Traveling through Lent

As we come to the end of the Lenten Season, remember that this time offers us an opportunity to renew our commitment to being more Christ-like and present with each other. As we conclude, some days will be easy and others may be difficult, but we will be together. We will be walking side by side, and praying until victory is won.

At Fisk we believe God already knows what we need, but we humble ourselves by asking through prayers. All we need to do is to always pray and see what great things God does. You may leave a prayer request on our website (www.fiskumc.org) by filling out the form, or by visiting our church, and leaving a prayer on the prayer wall, or just dropping a prayer in the prayer box on the front lawn of the church.



Palm Sunday, April 14th –10:30 a.m.

Passion play and distribution of Palms

Maundy Thursday – April 18th

Join us for a creative and spirit-filled reenactment of the Last Supper. Come to reflect, remember and feel the emotions of that last night. Please come fasting, if you are able, at 7 p.m. to go out filled with the love of God and spiritual food.

Good Friday – April 19th –12:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Come during these three hours and listen to readings, holy music, say a prayer, hang a prayer on the cross, or leave a burden at the cross of Jesus Christ.

Easter Sunday – April 21st

6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service Gammon's Garden
7:00 a.m. Pancake Breakfast
10:30 a.m. Worship Service of Resurrection

A Time for Spirited Kids

We are pleased to announce that the United Methodist Foundation of New England awarded Fisk a \$2,000 grant for its adaptive church worship service. The grant provides seed money for resources, supplies and outreach as we welcome families seeking a more flexible, less structured worship experience for children and youth with diagnoses and challenges that make attending a traditional worship service difficult. The 30-minute monthly service will be held at 4:30 p.m., generally on the third Sunday of each month. Worship will be followed by a light meal and time of fellowship. While the service is designed for people with special needs, everyone is welcome to join us.

In March, we talked about the ways the armor of God is like a turtle's shell! This month we will think about the work/struggle a caterpillar goes through in transforming into a butterfly and compare it to our journey as we strive to be more Christ-like.

Come join our discussion!

The next service is Easter Sunday, April 21st, 4:30 p.m.

Evangelism Team

Evangelism & Finance Annual Corned Beef Dinner

This dinner was held on Saturday, March 23rd at 5:30 p.m. It was well attended by an intergenerational and diverse group of people from Natick and beyond.

The greatest and most joyful part is that we could all sit down, have a meal, sing, and fellowship together. Isn't that what Jesus did, and would want this to continue; especially during times like these where we live in fear of the other? I would say yes, with thanks to all those who donated, worked, and attended this event.

Our Evangelism Team is about inviting, welcoming, and accepting. Most of all, we want people to "belong". Therefore, if you ever want to belong, and be an ardent part of; feel free to also worship with us on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m., and join us at other Fisk events. And, do not forget to leave a prayer on our prayer wall or in our prayer box on the lawn as you enter the main parking lot.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

There will be no classes on Sunday, April 21 & 28. We will resume on May 5 at 9:15 a.m., with the Book of Genesis. If you believe, like John Wesley, to continue to learn and live in a faithful community with others, come; bring your Bible and your heart.

Christian Education



Confirmation Class 2019

We have completed the confirmation class and it ended with a retreat for the youth on Saturday, March 9. There were eight youth: four from our church and four from Community UMC in Wayland, MA.

We were blessed by this experience and those whose vows will be taken on Sunday, May 5 during our 10:30 a.m. worship service. Prior to that service, we will join our sisters and brothers at Community UMC, Wayland, MA for their service on April 28 at 10 a.m.

A short note from two of our candidates . . .

Nick—*During the Confirmation classes I learned a lot about my religion and my church. Some things I learned were how John Wesley was the creator of our church and how him and a group of his friends had meetings on Jesus Christ. After learning that, and much more about my church, I feel ready to get confirmed to my church.*

Sebron—*Confirmation was a great experience.*



Confirmation Covenant Sunday is May 5 for our four youth: Rose C., Sarah F., Nick J., and Sebron R.

We give thanks to God for their families and all those who have nurtured them over the years. After the service, please join their church family to celebrate in Whipple Hall.

Vacation- Pastor Alecia will be away from April 23- 30th. If there is an emergency, call the church office and one of her colleagues will be contacted.

Ministry of Caring

Prayer is the master key of our ministry. We pray for all persons, even if you do not leave a prayer. Therefore, if there is a need for us to reach out and/or be present with you and your family, please leave a note for the Caring Team, knowing that the Lord is also with you.

Count on us, and believe that this ministry has been and is a life-sharing ministry. If you have a spiritual gift of helping or nurturing others, please let Pastor Alecia or a member of the team know. There is always room at the "Serving Table."

Team Members: Pat Price, Marilyn Donnelly, Clotilde Hyango, Gerry Billingsley, Joanne Billo, and Pastor Alecia

***Join Fisk Church Walkers for the
10th Annual Walk to End Homelessness
Saturday, April 6th at 8:30 a.m. at Natick High School***

Looking for a way to make a positive impact on someone's life? Participate in the fund-raising walk for Family Promise. What started over 10 years ago as a program to provide temporary housing to families has grown into a program that offers so much more thanks to the generosity of members of metro-west communities. Your contributions support:

- The Shelter Program which provides a supportive environment and resources that empower motivated families who are homeless to develop life skills essential for achieving stability.
- The Steps to Success Program which assists families in maximizing their earning potential and developing their skills through comprehensive employment and education support
- The Transitional Living Program which provides case management and support for families transitioning from shelter into community housing in order to establish long-term stability
- The LIFE Program (Local Initiative for Family Empowerment) which is a homelessness prevention program that provides subsidies, case management, and life-skills trainings for families at risk of eviction.

Register to walk or donate to the team online (search for Fisk Church Walkers on the Walkathon website). You may also give donations to Debbie Friscino, Sherry Culver, or Susan Carney.

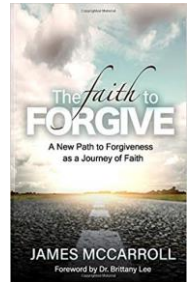
Family Promise

From March 24th-31st we provided a home for two families as we hosted Family Promise guests. With members of Community, First and Wesley United Methodist Churches we provided meals and overnight accommodations. Thanks to Deb Friscino, the Family Promise team and those who provided meals.

Food for Thought

Food for Thought - Can we forgive?

A lot is happening in the world today that makes it harder to forgive. So, if you are **STRUGGLING WITH FORGIVENESS**, there is a new and practical book about forgiveness by James McCarroll (nephew of our Lay Leader, Dr. Dorothy Phillips). It is an easy read but powerful reflection about the faith we need to forgive, and the role that faith plays in reconciliation, and transformation.



Boston Marathon Day Gathering

This is your official INVITATION to the annual Patriot's Day gathering at the Hoyt's on Monday, April 15th. There will be coffee and donuts early. From our house, you do have to "cross the tracks" to sit with a group of church people and cheer for your friends.



We supply popcorn, cold drinks and hot dogs...you are welcome to bring anything else to share. You may want to bring your lawn chair. Come to visit, even if you don't watch the runners. Start of the race is 10 a.m. and the first athletes will be by, just before 11a.m. Families welcome (no pets please).

Gary and Marcia, 8 Bacon St., Natick



Church Spring Cleaning Day is Saturday, April 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Please help in any way you can to clean up the grounds and building in preparation for Holy Week. Healthy morning snacks and beverages will be provided.

We have Leslie Harvey, our Nursery Care provider, amongst the 30,000 runners in the Boston Marathon. She is running for Metrowest Boys & Girls Club. It's her fourth time! Please help her compete and raise funds by clicking on the link below.

<https://www.crowdrise.com/o/en/campaign/bgcmetrowest/lesliewhiteharvey>

Finance & Stewardship

As the Finance Committee continues its work to oversee church finances, we thought it would be a great idea to give you a glimpse into the process and the value of your participation in this process.

Fisk finances are in the hands of good and faithful stewards. We have a budget and are working within the confines of it. Not all churches are so fortunate; some struggle with cash flow and control of their finances. Not Fisk! Our budget is drafted in January by the Finance Committee using data from past years and anticipations for next year. It is then reviewed and approved by the Administrative Board. Our financial journey through the year is monitored monthly at the Finance Committee meetings. Our Treasurer and Financial Secretary have their tasks well in hand. The great thing is that this control of our process has been in place, and stable for many, many years.

This year, income and expenses are tracking expectations. Although a balanced budget was approved, a small but anticipated increase in mission shares indicates there may be a small deficit to close. Fortunately, our congregation pledges to support Fisk's ministries, staff, missions and building. As a congregation, Fisk UMC is very active with all sorts of outreach, fellowship and ministry, activities, and mission. In view of this, we have a monthly, "We are Fisk" moment during the Worship service on the second Sunday. This helps us understand the connection of our activities and our on-going giving.

The budget process continues to be difficult and sometimes challenging; especially for the last few years, and might continue. Fortunately, the budget is well prepared, monitored, and managed. Most of all, we have you; a strong, faithful, and active congregation.

THANKS FOR YOUR DEDICATED STEWARDSHIP!

-The Finance Committee

2019 Easter Flowers

Final orders for Easter lilies and tulips will be taken following worship on Sunday, April 7.



United Methodist Men

Join us at The Villa

Tuesday, April 9th at 7:00pm

Food and Fellowship!

(Wayland-Route 30 near Mel's Commonwealth Café)



Spring symbols remind us of Resurrection

By the Rev. Mark Price

When the weather turns warmer and the grass grows greener, it's easier to understand the promise of new life and renewed hope that Christians proclaim as "**Easter people**". The reminders are all around us so be sure to keep an eye out on your next spring stroll.

Birds: The robin has a red breast and a **legend** to explain it. Seems that once a gray robin flew to Christ's crown of thorns to draw out a thorn, and when it did, a drop of Christ's blood fell on its breast, leaving a stain forevermore.

Bees: It takes lots of **buzzing bees** to spread the pollen and make flowers grow. The honey these creatures create is a biblical symbol of God's favor. The Torah agrees, for it describes God's Promised Land again and again as "flowing with milk and honey."

Flowers: Long considered a symbol of hope and new life, the **daffodil** is one of the blooms most often connected to the Resurrection. Tradition says that giving a gift of daffodils will ensure happiness for the receiver.

According to tradition, the flowering shrub known as the **forsythia**, means anticipation—an appropriate companion word for Resurrection.

It is said the **dogwood tree** used to grow straight and tall, but after it was used as a crucifix for Christ, God made it short and twisted with a thin trunk so it could never be used as a cross again. The dogwood bloom has four parts, each with a rusty red color on the end and a small hole, a reminder of where the nails were driven into the cross. The center stamens look like the crown of thorns.

Faith: The traditions that developed around these spring symbols helped explain the concept that God in the flesh took on death and came back to tell us there is life on the other side. **What fantastic news!**

The Council at Nicaea in 325 AD gave the Church a revised creed. The last line reads: "We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." As Easter people, we don't have to look further than spring for an exclamation point to that affirmation.

*Price is Minister of Spiritual Formation and Facilities Manager at Christ United Methodist Church in Franklin, TN.

Story excerpted from UMCatalyst News.

Local & Global Missions

JFON-UMCOR What does all of this mean?

THANK YOU, THANK YOU for bringing in your Nickels and Dimes for JFON (Justice for Our Neighbors). We actually collected quarters and some bills, too! You are good! All of these gifts will help our neighbors get settled in their new land. We will report the total next month.

The Story--Our JFON network grew out of the United Methodist Committee on Relief's (UMCOR) long commitment to refugees and immigrants. Since UMCOR's founding in 1940, refugee ministry has been at the heart of its work, guided by Christian values of hospitality to the stranger.



Since 1949, UMCOR has participated in refugee resettlement in partnership with Church World Service and the relief, development, and refugee assistance ministries of Christian denominations in the United States. Church World Service's ecumenical refugee program works with the U.S. government and local churches to coordinate the reception and placement of refugees.



For many years, UMCOR focused primarily on providing funding to those CWS projects which offer refugee and immigration services. However, after the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), UMCOR also began strengthening its connections with local United Methodist congregations on immigration issues, sending information and alerts, conducting workshops, and speaking out about immigration at church events—all for the express purpose of better enabling congregations to understand and respond to the needs and concerns of our immigrant neighbors.

UMCOR established Justice for Our Neighbors in 1999. Since that time, Justice for Our Neighbors has grown to a network of 19 sites that support over 50 clinics to serve more than 5,000 clients annually.

Marcia Hoyt-Chairperson, Janis Cail, Susan Carney,
Mary Greenwood and Janis Townsend

Fisk has two new volunteers at the Natick Food Pantry. Welcome to Amy and Sherry! Fisk serves clients on the second Thursday of each month. It is always wonderful to have new volunteers to fill these slots. Are you interested? It entails 3 ½ hours and you just greet and serve the families as they choose their grocery items. See Gary Hoyt if you are interested in helping.



Looking ahead

UMW Salad Lunch—Sunday, April 7 at 12:00 p.m.

Prayer and Self-Denial program
All interested women welcome

BLANKET SUNDAY ~ MOTHER'S DAY GIFTS

As we have done the last few years, the Missions Committee will have some gift giving options for Mother's Day. Remember your mother, grandmother, mother-in-law or someone who is like a mother to you...with a card designating a blanket to be used for warmth, as a tent, a wrap, a satchel or whatever their need is that day. UMCOR supplies 1000's of "Blankets of Hope" each year to those in need; victims of floods, fires, hurricanes etc. You contribute \$10 and receive a card to send or give to your "mother". We also have cards that will help a mother, in the western mountains of Maine, sustain her household through United Methodist Economic Ministry. We will be at Coffee Hour May 5th and 12th.

This is such a meaningful gift. Mom will love it.

Let's Blanket the World with Love.



SAVE THE DATE!

**UMW Spring Yard Sale is
May 11th**

Please save your treasures
now as you are doing your
spring cleaning.

We need your donations.

Thank you!

Barbara Beekman & Terry Ames. Co-chairs

United Methodist Women

Natick Food Pantry



50 years of Ministry

Maine Economic Ministry seeking 'Heroes'

The United Methodist Economic Ministry (UMEM) is celebrating 50 years of ministry with the poor in northern Franklin County, Maine. UMEM is collecting names and stories about all the heroes who have supported UMEM over the years as well as nominations for its 2019 Hero of the Year.

Have you been on a mission trip to UMEM? Perhaps you have donated to the thrift store or the prom shop; maybe you have given nickels & dimes for the ministry. Pictures, names, dates, and stories of those who have supported UMEM, submitted in April, will be included in the UMEM Heroes timeline.

Nominations for Hero of the Year are due by May 1, 2019; include a one-page description of the nominee and their service to the ministry. The honoree will be recognized at Annual Conference. Send stories for the timeline or award nominations to Carol Stevens at Foxydog48@gmail.com

Cleaning out your closets?

April 13 we will begin accepting good, wearable, clean, used, and folded clothes for Salem, Maine again. All sizes are needed. Would you give it to your sister to wear? We would welcome it also.

We help supply three UMEM Thrift Shops for the underserved people of western Maine. You may either bring donations to the Hoyt's home (front porch) at 8 Bacon St. Natick, or to the large collection box located in the hallway outside the church office. We thank you for your donations. Fisk collects from April 15th through November 1st.

Special Guest April 28, 2019 Addiction/Outreach

The Sunday after Easter, we will welcome Rev. Mike Clark to the pulpit. We will also have a light lunch, with a Question & Answer time.

The Missions Committee is pleased to have Pastor Mike return to Fisk. He was an Interim Pastor at Fisk a few years ago and is coming back to tell us about his work at the Watertown-Belmont UMC in the area of Addiction/Outreach.

The purpose of the New England Addictions Prevention and Recovery Team (APART) is to serve as a bridge builder between Church and society in the areas of outreach, education, teaching, and spiritual growth in relation to recovery from addictions and compulsions. Join us in welcoming Mike and hearing what our UMC is doing to support this outreach.

SAVE the DATE

Are you interested in a Women's Retreat? Have you ever gone to a retreat? Fisk has a special opportunity for you. August 9-11, 2019 is the date to set aside. We will be going to a lake in Maine for the weekend away, to refresh, rejoice, and relax.

For more information-See Susan Carney or Janis Cail

UMW Hannah Circle

The Hannah's will meet on Tuesday, April 9th, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Ogle Parlor. We will celebrate "Name Your Name Day", have silent discussions & onion opinions, and have a potluck lunch. All women are invited! Contact Nancy Parece or Nancy Swan if you can join us.

Youth News

For youth and their friends in Grades 6—12

Youth Group meets for Youth and Family Night on the first Friday every month, and with Bingxin & Tian on the third Sunday following service. Friends are always welcome to attend MYF meetings and events. Please use this link to view pictures and schedule updates.

<http://www.fiskumc.org/youth-and-children.html>

Youth & Family Night ~ Everyone is invited!

Friday, April 5, 2019, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Who : Youth and Families of Fisk - all ages.

Food : Simple dinner provided – we ask for volunteers to bring dessert, salad or vegetables.

Activity : Games, fellowship, and informal fun with members of the Fisk family.

Please let Tian or Bingxin know if you plan to attend.

Next MYF meeting at Fisk Church

Sunday, April 14, 12:00 PM

Youth Fellowship Leaders:

Bingxin Xu & Tian Zhang, fiskyouth@gmail.com

If you have an idea for a youth program or wish to volunteer, contact Tian, Bingxin or Sherry Culver at sherrycd@comcast.net



TO **MARS** AND **BEYOND!**

Join us for games, songs, learning, crafts and fun!
Invite your friends to join the VBS adventure too!

June 24 to June 28, 2019 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Ages 4 – 11

No Cost



Vacation Bible School at Fisk Church
106 Walnut St. Natick

Online registration available *soon* at www.fiskumc.org

