

The Messenger

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

December 2013

Reflections from Pastor Rick

What are we waiting for? Advent is the season in which we wait for the birth of Jesus. Perhaps we ought to think of this Advent as the season in which we wait for his rebirth at Fisk. We want our church community to be alive, vibrant, exciting, and over-populated. Most of all we want our church community to reflect the wonder of Jesus whose body we are in the world. Some of that is here, but we have a way to go to be where we want to be.

There are many ways to wait. We can sit back and hope that what we wish for will appear. Or we can wait by being the very thing for which we are waiting. We can be the wonder of Jesus in the world. We can be alive, excited, and vibrant. We can prepare the way. When Jesus was born, the preparations had been made. The prophets had predicted who he would be. The angel had told Elizabeth that she would bear a son, John, who would go before him. The angel came to Mary and told her who she would be birthing. The signs were in place so that when he was born, the shepherds, the wise men, and those who had faith rejoiced.

How should you and I wait? With eager anticipation, ready hands, joyous hearts, and full confidence that Jesus will be birthed again this year. We should tell our friends and neighbors the good news that



Jesus is here. We should sing the carols and tell the story. We should be the love that we seek, have the faith that we need, and never be afraid to hope for God's miracle to explode in our midst. Now, that's the way to wait!

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Rick



REJOICE... *for our Saviour is born!*

Staff of Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

Pastor:	Rev Rick Black
Admin. / Newsletter Editor:	Judy Bortolotti
Deacon:	Rev. Cheryln Gates
Youth Minister:	Josh & Deanna Leedy-Andreozzi
Choir Director /Organist:	Eric Mazonson

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Eric's Email: emazonson@verizon.net	
Church Website: fiskumc.org	

January Messenger Deadline is December 26th @ 8:30am

Worship Service Participants and Nursery Volunteers for December

Greeters

Dec 1 – Joshua & Deanna Leedy-Andreozzi
Dec 8- Geoff & Sherry Del Sesto
Dec 15 –Gary & Marcia Hoyt
Dec 22- Tom & Susan Carney
Dec 29- Geoff & Sherry Del Sesto



Lighting the Advent Wreath

Dec 1 -Gary & Marcia Hoyt & family
Dec 8 - Larry & Michelle Drolet
Dec 15- Geoff & Sherry Del Sesto
Dec 22 – Thom & Janis Townsend
Dec 24 - Altar Guild “Sisters”

Acolytes

Dec 1 – Rose C
Dec 8- Sarah F.
Dec 15- Elizabeth M
Dec 22 – Kelli G.
Dec 29 - Sarah F.



Liturgists

Dec 1 - Dorothy Phillips
Dec 8 – Deanna Leedy-Andreozzi
Dec 15 – Rev. Cheryln Gates
Dec 22 –Zachary Gates
Dec 29 –Marilyn Carr

Communion Servers

Dec 1- Debbie Friscino & Elizabeth Coates



Alternative Christmas

Do your shopping at Fisk...no heavy traffic, no pushing crowds, no sales tax, plenty of parking ...AND you are helping improve the life of a family or a child.



December 1st and the 8th
in Whipple Hall

- Fair traded coffee
- Items to support World Hunger
- Gift ideas from Heifer International
- Jewelry from Rosie's Place (homeless shelter) in Boston
- Help the United Methodist Church eradicate Malaria

When you purchase a gift from this display you are helping a family become self-sufficient, teaching them a trade and commerce while they are making life changes, or possibly saving a life! 1000's of children die EVERY DAY from Malaria.

Instead of another tie or another toy...buy an ornament! A mosquito bed net will keep a child safe from malaria for months.

Give the gift of a flock of chicks....

- Provides eggs and protein for nourishment
- Boosts income through sales of extra eggs and offspring
- Ensures security for generations

We have many options for you to make your Gift-giving more meaningful. You'll be surprised how the recipient feels, knowing that he/she is ...

Passing on the Gift. A Gift of Life!

Elizabeth Coates and Marcia Hoyt



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 22nd and for Christmas Eve service on Tuesday, 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 1st, 8th and 15th**, 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 16th

(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



New Hospitality Room Open on Sunday Mornings

The new Hospitality Room is located in Ogle Parlor, where you are welcome to stop by for a cup of coffee, and spend time in fellowship and/or to read the Sunday paper. The room will be available before worship from 9:00 AM-10:15 AM starting Sunday, November 24.



Candlelight Service

Christmas Eve fast approaches and we joyfully anticipate a beautiful Candlelight Service at 6:00 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.

Stewardship Reminder and Update

Did you receive your letter? If you have not yet sent in your Pledge, please do so as soon as possible. If you have not pledged before, we would ask that you prayerfully consider giving Fisk a confidential pledge, which gives us a better idea of the financial support we can utilize in planning our ministries. We have received 51% of our Pledges goal for next year, as of press time on November 21. Remember, all Pledge covenants are treated with the utmost confidentiality

Members of the Fisk community are invited to be Angels!

Beginning December 1st, 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 15th so that it may be distributed by the Natick Service Council or MIHN in time for Christmas.



The Visioning Team Requests Your Input for 2014 Planning

Lay Leader Dorothy Phillips

Goal

Goal: To position Fisk Church to be a vital, sustainable, spirit-led, welcoming and healthy church that serves its members, the community, and global missions.

The Visioning Team is in the process of developing a list of 2014 programs, activities and a model for conducting them that will foster GROWTH, resulting in a healthy church. The model focuses on communicating or announcing the activity to the members and the community, following up on those who attend, measuring the impact and learning as we go. In 2013 we made progress in communication to get people here. In 2014 we will strive to see the impact.

The first phase of our strategic plan focuses on infants, toddlers and elementary school children. The Visioning Team welcomes and appreciates your input to ensure that we are meeting the nurturing and fellowship needs of this target group. We would especially love to hear from parents, grandparents, Sunday school teachers and all those with interest in our youngest members. Please feel comfortable to share with Pastor Rick Black, myself or other members of the Visioning Team. My email address is dwphillips@comcast.net

Visioning Team: Marcia Hoyt, Barbara Beekman, Deborah Hernandez, Zachary Gates, Thom Townsend, Michael Bruns, Dorothy Phillips, and Pastor Rick Black

Ephesians 3:20 With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine.

Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 24th

Join us for Christmas Eve
Worship at 6:00pm



Adult Education Notes

1. Thanks to Barbara Beekman who is wrapping up a study of the Names of God on Sunday mornings.
2. Next up will be Rolland French teaching from an awesome workbook entitled "The Workbook of Intercessory Prayer." We have ordered and received these books that were written by Maxie Dunnam who was the editor of The Upper Room. Watch the website and Sunday Bulletin for specific dates.

Intercession is neither simple nor easy. This 7 week study gives participants an opportunity to experience the impact prayer can make on other people's lives.

3. Pastor Rick is teaching a 10:30 class on Tuesday mornings ... based on the lectionary. Please join us when you can. We are still working out the kinks with the start-time of this study,..... it may change to later in the day. Please speak to Pastor Rick if a later start-time would work better with your schedule
4. Coming Attractions - In January , I will be leading a Bible Study using a new book by the author of " The Bad Girls of the Bible ". This book focuses on Ruth and Naomi. It will be a late afternoon group - hoping that it will reach out to those of you who are working . If you are interested please share times and days that would work into your schedule.
May God bless our efforts in education in His name
Susan Carney

United Methodist Women

We thank you all for your help with the Annual Holiday Fair! Again, we raised over \$4500.00 for mission work with women, children and youth through the United Methodist Women's organization.

You are invited !

Please join us !

Stories of Christmas

December 3, 2013

7:30pm

*Stories, fellowship, carols,
a great dessert and an ornament exchange.*

*Bring an ornament and hang it on the tree. When you
leave take a different ornament home to enjoy. You can make the ornament, use one you may have or buy a new one!*
All women encouraged to attend. Questions? Call Debbie Friscino

- Prayer Shawl Ministry on Wednesdays at 10:00am
- Finish your Reading Program books
- Pay your Mission Pledge to your Circle Treasurer
- Send a card to a Missionary
- Alternative Christmas on December 1st and



8th

Have you noticed the moving of furniture etc. here at Fisk?

It has been a CONSTRUCTION ZONE for a few weeks.

STEP 1: We are re-purposing some rooms to fit our programming and vision for the future. We condensed the Library into the office next to the Pastor's office...go in and take a look...lots of great books, a place to study, comfortable chairs to read and meditate or just relax. It is your space...and also office space for Deanna and Josh, our Youth Ministers and Deacon Cheryln Gates. If they are not there it is yours to enjoy.



Step 2: We moved the Youth Room into the space once used as a Library. This gives them some space to study and have fellowship. They will be making it theirs over the next several weeks.



Step 3: We are creating a NEW classroom in Room 2—next to the Nursery. This will serve the class of preschool children and lower elementary grades. We child-appropriate purchased tables and chairs for the little children from a designated fund and are excited to this class near the Nursery. Great visibility for parents and visitors! (one of the goals adopted by the church was to make our Church School program more visible and parent-friendly)



Step 4: **December 1** we will be having a “ribbon cutting” to open this room to the children and teachers. Celebrate with us!

From Missions

Missions is serving dinner at St. Paul's Open Door on **Thursday, December 12th**. 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!

Are you a member of Fisk?

Are you interested in being part of a Membership Class to explore confirming your faith and joining Fisk United Methodist Church. If you think you are interested in this exploratory process speak to the pastor or call the church office.

Time to get your Christmas Wreath

These are handmade by families surrounding the United Methodist Economic Ministries in Salem Maine. Our United Methodist Men are selling them to help these under-served people pay their fuel bills during the long, cold winter. You will receive a beautiful green Balsam wreath...fresh from the Maine woods ready to decorate.

Still just \$15.00.

Sign up on the bulletin board near the Nursery or call Gary Hoyt.

What's in your mailbox?

With the holiday season upon us, our mailboxes are full of requests for money from all sorts of worthwhile charities and mission organizations. If you are like most families, you probably have a certain amount set aside for charitable giving. Each charity or mission is worthy of our support; however, this year we are asking that you also consider making an additional contribution to God's work at Fisk UMC. This year your church needs additional support if we are to achieve our goals. So please consider an additional gift beyond your pledge or regular offering toward the ministries at Fisk.

Check out Pastor Rick's Blog on our website!

www.fiskumc.org

At the top of the page, click MORE and you'll see his blog in the dropdown menu

From the Financial Secretary ...



It's that time of year again! Offering Envelopes for 2014 will be available to pick up starting on Sunday, December 15th. 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 assign you a set. 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.

Special Note about Year-End Giving:

Are you unsure about whether you have made your pledge? Do you want to know what you have given to ministry in 2013? If you'd like an up-to-date contribution statement for year-end gift planning, contact me and I'll send one along to you.

And ... If you 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



\$\$ Finance Update – December 2013

We must report that we continue to find ourselves behind in Pledge support as of October 31st. The faithful support of you, the congregation, continues to be a blessing, but our ministries are in need. Our position is:



Support and other income	\$ 178,630
Expenses of ministry	\$ 190,680
Deficit (10 months)	\$ (12,050)

As a result we are spending wisely, and carefully managing our resources:

- Your financial support remains 11% below Budget, through October,
- We are spending less than our budgeted expenses to compensate, but expenses continue, and we may not be able to fully fund our valued ministries at our current rates,
- We continue to pray for improvements in our financial position.

Please do all you can to get your pledges in for 2013 so we can end on a positive note. If you have not given in the past, we would urge you to consider supporting our ministries. If you are current, we thank you, and ask that you consider increasing your support this year, as some of our cherished families have moved out of our area. We are currently “borrowing” from our resources in order to fund all of our planned ministries in 2013. We need your prayerful assistance.

The ministries of Fisk touch so many people in so many ways. As we enter the advent holiday period, we must prayerfully and purposefully work to grow our church spiritually...and our finances will follow.

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

Michael Bruns (Chair), Reverend Rick Black, Dorothy Phillips (Lay Leader), Thom Townsend (Chair-Admin Board), David Cail (Treasurer),