

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

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December 2018

Pastor's Note

As the days get cooler, I pray that each of us will continue to have warmth in our hearts. As the warmth spark flames of love, we might need to think about how far we have come and how blessed we are as we move forward.

As we rethink and reflect, we can prepare for what lies ahead. Advent starts this month. It is a season of the Christian year in which we focus on the coming of Jesus Christ. It is a time of preparation, waiting and getting in touch with our need for God. In Advent we can look back to the experience of the Israelites as they yearned for God to forgive them and restore their nation. As we do, we can put ourselves in the Israelites' shoes to ask for forgiveness as God restores the earth and as we prepare to celebrate the good news with hope, love, joy and peace.

We can also look and move forward to new life and new possibilities from God. As we prepare to accept and share all the blessings of the season, let us look for ways to celebrate and create inclusiveness in our celebrations. Let us remember that God is with us ("*...And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*") *Matthew 28:20.*

Our response to the presence of God is to be present with all of God's children as we travel from Advent to Christmas and beyond. Do not forget to share the love of God, our stories as a faithful community, and the story of the one who comes down in and with love. Most of all, let us live out our faith by loving so that others will see, feel and maybe hear about this great God.

Reach out, fill the world with the love of God and have a merry, blessed and safe season!

-Pastor Alecia

filler needed – maybe a quote for Advent

Pastor's Announcements

WORSHIP SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Worship service is every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.
Please join us every Sunday with joyful hearts during this season of Advent.

Sunday, December 2 The Hanging of the Greens

A special service of *Hope* as we dress our sanctuary for the season of waiting while focusing on the traditions of people around the world from which decorations come. The Sacrament of Holy Communion will also be celebrated on this Sunday.

Sunday, December 9 is *Love* Sunday. Bring some love and take more to share with family and others.

Sunday, December 16 is *Joy* Sunday. Rejoice always and never cease to rejoice with others.

Sunday, December 23 is *Peace* Sunday. Let peace live in our hearts as we encourage others to live peacefully in the world and as the Prince of Peace comes.

Monday, December 24 is *Christmas Eve*. We will have a "Candlelight Service" at 5 p.m. All persons are invited to come and experience the greatest celebration of the Christ Child's birth. Come just as you are and be blessed to take the blessing to your family and into the world.

Pastor's Advent Bible Study

"Preparing the Way" A Study for Advent and Christmas
by Martha Rowlett

As we receive God's gift, Jesus Christ, know that God understands our struggles and our challenges. But we can believe that with God all things are possible. (Matt: 19:26). Therefore, you can surrender all the obstacles that affect relationship with God and all God's creation as we receive the Christ Child. As you surrender come and experience a God who understands. We will meet in Ogle Parlor:

Sundays—December 2, 9, 16, 23 at 9:15 a.m. and

Thursdays—December 6, 13, 20 at 7:00 p.m.

Church Annual Conference

Tuesday, December 18 from 7-8 pm

All persons are invited. Questions to start thinking about for our church conference on Tuesday, December 18 are below:

- What are your hopes and dreams for the year(s) to come?
- In what ways can we pray for and seek God's Way on the year(s) for come?
- What is our prayer for the greater UMC's Way Forward?
- What do we give thanks for?
- What struggles and challenges do we pray about?
- How has God's Way closed behind/before the congregation?

Note: SPRC will meet at 6pm with the District Superintendent, Rev. Rene Perez.

December 2018 – Bible Readings

For continuous learning and reflection please find time to read the following.

12/2:	Jeremiah 33:14-16	Luke 21:25-36
12:9	Malachi 3:1-4	Luke 3:1-6
12/16:	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 1:39-45
	Psalm 126	
12/23:	Micah 5:2-5	Luke 1:47-55
12/24	Isaiah 9:2-7	Luke 2:1-20
12/30:	Luke 1:26-38 (1 st)	Luke 2:1-7 (2 nd)
	Luke 2:8-14 (3 rd)	Matthew 2:1-12 (4 th)
	Luke 2:21-38 (5 th)	Matthew 2:13-15 (6 th)

FAMILY PROMISE GUESTS RETURN TO FISK

In conjunction with three other Methodist Churches (Community, First and Wesley), Fisk will again be hosting families working to regain financial stability and find permanent housing through Family Promise Metrowest. Over the next year, we will serve as a host site four times beginning with December 16-23, 2018.

Help us make this holiday time easier for up to four families by joining with our "team of fellow Methodists" to provide or host a dinner or stay overnight at Fisk. Contact Debbie Friscino at fris@rcn.com for information or to sign up.

Want to know more about the programs Family Promise offers and the lives we've touched over the past 10 years? Check out their website at www.familypromisemetrowest.org

The Christmas Story.....

Live on the Lawn!

Saturday - December 15th ~ 4:30 p.m.



Experience the true meaning of Christmas....

Hear the story
with narration and music, with actors –
including Joseph and Mary
with baby Jesus in the Manger,
and the Three Kings who come to
honor the newborn Savior.

Then, join us indoors!

- Old-fashioned carol sing
- Hot chocolate and cookies
- Fellowship time with family and friends

Come! This is an event for everyone!

We look forward to you being with us!



2018 Poinsettia Orders

It is that time of year again! If you are interested in ordering a poinsettia, please complete an order form and give it with payment to Debi Henry, Lois Potter, or during the week - Joanne Fitzgerald in the church office. 6" Plants are \$15 each and order forms will be in the Sunday bulletins on December 2, 9, & 16, and will be available in the church office or in the literature rack outside the nursery.

Sunday, December 16th is the last day to order plants.

Thank You!

The altar flowers in November included flowers in celebration of Anton Xu's baptism, and Mike & Carolyn DiSciullo's joy of membership at Fisk. Judy Maloney gave flowers on Veterans Day in memory of her husband Gerald, and Mary Magazo in memory of loved ones. On December, 2, 9, or 30 - if you would like to reserve a date please print your name legibly on the Flower Calendar outside the Church Office, and you will be contacted. Blessings and Peace,



The Altar Guild



Help your children or grandchildren make a Nativity Set

Fisk's Council of Ministries, is sponsoring a workshop on ...

Sunday, December 16 ~ 2-4 p.m.

This is an opportunity for children from age 3 or 4 through high school to paint, glue, use markers, make decisions as a family, draw, or cut fabric to construct the stable and the three figures (one set per family).

Join us at 2 p.m. for ice cream sundaes and instructions for your family group (an adult & children) to work together on this project.

This Nativity set could be "a family heirloom" and be used year after year! We will be inviting the public to join us...as long as groups include an adult and children. It would be great to have you respond to the office or Marcia if your family is planning to attend (for supply purposes).

Questions? Marcia Hoyt 508-655-0077

Farewell

Dear Fisk family & Friends,

With sad but grateful hearts, we say "goodbye" to our Music Minister, John Bybee II as he concludes his ministry here and takes on another of his life's passions; Climate Change.

During December, we say, "Thank you John" and we wish him all the best as he leaves our music ministry more vibrant and ready for the next phase.

Please join us in giving thanks and stating our heart-felt appreciation for his ministry with us. To this end, we hope that all of you will join us on Sunday, December 30 as we celebrate John's ministry.

United Methodist Men

All Men and Boys are invited to attend the Fisk **United Methodist Men (UMM)** Breakfast at Eli's restaurant ("Breakfast, Burgers, & Brews") at 12 Washington Street in downtown Natick (next to the Dolphin restaurant).

Please join us Sunday morning December 9, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. sharp.

United Methodist Women



Christmas Brunch Invitation...

To all women and older teen girls who have an interest in the broader scope of missions, fellowship, growing in their faith, reading program, retreats, knitting and/or helping others through our church.

Saturday, December 8, 2018

at Fisk at 9:30 a.m.

Fruit ~ Breakfast Casserole ~ Delicious Muffins

Vote on the UMW 2019 budget

Bring any UMW Pledge monies not given to Sherry
Games! Holiday fun!

Need a ride? Call Janis Cail 781-894-1730

Thank You from the family of James E. Phillips

"Perhaps you sent a lovely card or sat quietly in a chair.

Perhaps you sent a floral piece if so, we saw it there.

Perhaps you spoke the kindest words

as any friend would say;

Perhaps you were not there at all,

just thought of us that day.

Whatever you did to console our hearts,

We thank you so much whatever your part."

(Author unknown)

In addition, we thank you for your contributions to our church in James memory and the Trustees and Choir for their vision to use the memorial fund to beautify our Choir Room.

We welcome you to sit a while on the bench on James gravesite in Dell Park Cemetery.

In love and prayer, Dorothy, Anthony, Crystal, Vickie & Albert and our families.





Making Christmas a Celebration for others

The Missions Committee has planned a couple of options for your giving to help others.

December 2 begin bringing gift items for Homeless Veterans i.e. shampoo, deodorant, candy, cards, small games, knit hats, note cards, stamps and whatever you can think of that fits into a sock. Collection box in the hall by the church office.



December 9 bring in more gift items and white socks and we will have the Annual Stuffing Party following worship. We will stuff the socks and tie them for Gifts. They will be delivered to the Homeless Veterans in Boston.

December 16 Alternative Christmas

Following worship you will have the opportunity to purchase "gift cards" to support one of many Mission Organizations. You make a donation (\$10 minimum for each gift) and you receive a card to give the recipient, describing their gift.



Christmas Greeting for our Missionaries—

➡ **Belinda Forbes** (from the Winthrop UMC) is a dentist working in Nicaragua under the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

belindagbgm@gmail.com

➡ **Kayle and Mat Pelletier** are serving in So. Africa teaching classes for the Theology College. kaylepelletier@gmail.com

We THANK YOU for all the mission support you have given during this year. You have made a difference in many lives.

Missions Committee
Janis Cail, Susan Carney, Marcia Hoyt
and Janis Townsend

"The Twenty-Third Psalm"

What Does it Mean to You?

The Twenty-Third Psalm is beautifully written, meaningful, and full of spiritual instructions, so it is odd, that perhaps the most challenging element of this Psalm is our familiarity with it."

What do you visualize when you hear or read the Twenty Third Psalm?

Are we to visualize green grasses and beautiful clouds, being well cared for by God's constant care and guidance, or should we concentrate more on "the valley of the shadow of death"?

The following are my reflections; perhaps yours will be different.

Psalm 23:

1. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

(The Lord is the One who looks after, feeds, guides and protects me; I do not lack anything.)

2. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

(He lets me rest in pleasant surroundings; he leads me into peaceful situations.)

3. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

(He renews my energies. He keeps me on the path that will bring honor to his name.)

4. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

(Even in my darkest times, I will have no fear, because you are with me all the way. Your power and protection bring me great comfort.)

5. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

(You feed and provide for me all that I need, even in the presence of those who might try to destroy me. Your anointing is so great that my life overflows with your provision and goodness.)

6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

(I do not doubt that His overwhelming compassion and unfailing love will preserve and guide me all the days of my life and that I will spend eternity with the Lord in a heavenly home prepared just for me.)

Inspirational Story (from trusting-in-jesus.com)
sent by Michelle Drolet

From the Financial Secretary

Crystal Mayo, Financial Secretary
crystal.mayo@stridea.com or (774) 287-1705

We are accepting online donations! Visit fiskumc.org and click on the Donate button located on the right side of the webpage.

Donate to Fisk UMC Ministry

or go directly to : <https://onrealm.org/fiskumc/Give>.

You can set up your pledge to be sent regularly to Fisk or make a one-time special gift on a specific date. Donations may come from credit cards, or your checking or savings account. And information may be saved so that the next time you don't have to enter in the account or credit card details.

From time to time you'll see a QR code like this one in our Sunday bulletin and Messenger. This is a quick way to access the site and make your donation. The QR code for our donation page looks like this:



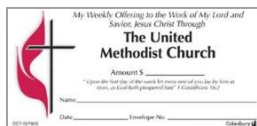
Try it out – make that special gift to ministry you've been thinking about today!

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 2018? 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.

Thank you for your continued support of our ministries at Fisk.

Offering Envelopes for 2019 will be available to pick up in mid-December. If you do not see a set of envelopes with your name and you would like to use them, please contact me.



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. Or use the new donate online button from the website or the QR code.

Finance/Stewardship Update

Our ministries at Fisk continue to reach out and touch lives in so many ways. As we enter this joyful advent season we want to say thank you for your gifts in 2018. As we say thanks, we want to remind those who have not made a commitment to support ministries and mission to consider sharing a small portion of the abundance God has given you. As you do, pray and know that we are also praying with you and your family.

As we move forward into 2019 with hope, we still have a challenge in meeting our goal of paying 100% of our mission shares this year. Hence we encourage each of you to not just send in your "Pledge Covenant Card" for 2019 but to send Fisk a life-giving gift during Advent and Christmas. To this end, every person's gift is significant and we are asking that you do not hold back.

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" – 1 Peter 4:10

THANK YOU FISK FAMILY!

Thank you for your continued faithfulness and support. May each of you and your families be blessed this season and beyond.



UMW Reading Program Reminder

Please turn in to Terry Ames your list of books read as part of the UMW Reading Program for 2018 by Sunday, December 23, 2018. Thank you.

Ministry of Caring

As God's children, we are called to bear one another's burdens and be instruments in God's grace and healing. There are those in our midst who are challenged by physical, emotional, and spiritual needs and wants. At Christmas time, it seems that the needs are magnified.

Is God calling you this season to be a part of Fisk's Ministry of Caring? How can each of us do this? Praying for each other, and those who reach out to us through our Prayer Wall or Prayer Box; being present and offering a listening ear; offering to give someone a ride to church on an Advent Sunday or Christmas Eve; helping one by providing a meal. All of these welcome your gifts and talents.

Our Card Care is Sunday, December 16th and we will have cards in Whipple Hall (both for encouragement and Christmas) for those of our Fisk Family that cannot make it to church. Stop by, write an encouraging note or sign your name.

May you seek out and may opportunities find you! Share your talents and gifts this Christmas season. Have a wonderful Christmas!

*"Somehow, not only for Christmas,
but all the long year through,
the joy that you give to others,
is the joy that comes back to you!"*

Marilyn Donnelly and Pat Price, Co-Chairs.



MUSIC & MOVEMENT TIME FOR KIDS AGES 1 TO 7

Saturday – December 15
All Wrapped Up!

Young children and their parents and/or grandparents are invited to our **FREE** Music and Movement class.

Join us, and let us see your wrapping skills!

**Join in our Christmas parade
games, music, and fun!**

For more information:
please contact/email Deborah Hernandez
deborahlhernandez@gmail.com

Fisk Youth

For youth and their friends in Grades 6—12

Youth Fellowship Leaders:

Bingxin Xu & Tian Zhang

fiskyouth@gmail.com

Youth Group meetings are held following Sunday services (usually twice a month) and there will be special activities periodically for all youth and families. Friends are always welcome to attend MYF meetings and events. Please check out

<http://www.fiskumc.org/youth-and-children.html>
to view pictures and schedule updates.



Everyone is invited!

Friday, December 7

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 members of the family.

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

Next monthly meetings at Fisk Church

MYF meetings at 12:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 16

If you have an idea for a youth program or wish to volunteer, contact them or Sherry Culver, Youth Council Chair, sherrycd@comcast.net

**PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR INFORMATION FOR THE
JANUARY ISSUE OF THE MESSENGER BY**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, AT 9AM

**DUE TO THE HOLIDAYS,
THIS IS A FIRM DEADLINE**

