

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

fiskoffice@fiskumc.org

106 Walnut St., Natick, MA 01760 (508) 653-1674

www.fiskumc.org

December 2021

Pastoral Note

For years we have celebrated Advent and Christmas. We sing the hymn, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (UMH 211) but I wonder if we truly want Emmanuel to come. And if Emmanuel comes, how many of us are willing or ready to receive Emmanuel? Well, Advent has arrived and the season of waiting has started. The season is always a blessed time as we live in:

Hope- for better persons, places, and things on earth. But also to continue to be blessed as faithful servants of God into a living hope and in new ways through God's grace.

Joy- for what we have and people in our lives. But also for those situations and circumstances in life that we have escaped because of God's mercy.

Love- for God and love for all our neighbors. But also to remember that love embodies patience and we can be the love of God through the giving of Jesus Christ to the world.

Peace- on earth and good will to humanity. But also for peace within each meek and humble heart. The 'Prince of Peace' brings peace that the world cannot give nor take away.

Hence, as we travel the season of advent to Christmas, know that Hope, Joy, Love, and Peace are spiritual and life-giving gifts that we can have and still have enough to share. When we all share, what a blessing it will be for all of God's creation on earth as it is in heaven.

"A Blessed, Safe, and Merry Christmas to each of you, your families, and friends!

+ Pastor Alecia

We WELCOME All

Fisk United Methodist Church is a loving community of believers and servants with open hearts. We extend our welcome to all people, celebrating differences in age, economic reality, nationality, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, abilities, and limitations.

- We invite all to find a spiritual home with us and to share in the fellowship, worship, sacraments, ministry, responsibilities, and blessings of participation in our congregation.
 - We affirm the gifts and graces of all persons.
 - We are committed to be a fellowship in which all persons feel a part of our family.
 - And, we invite you to work for justice with us.
- Statement of the Administrative Board, Fisk UMC, 2019

For Personal Reflection & Spiritual Growth

For continuous spiritual growth and reflection, read the following Scriptures that have been selected for our worship this month.

December 5: Malachi 3:1-4 Luke 1:68-79

December 12: Zephaniah 3:14-20 Luke 3:7-18

December 19: Micah 5:2-5 Luke 1:46-55

Psalter: Psalm 37 (UMH 772)

December 24: (Christmas Eve)

Isaiah 9:2-7 Luke 2:1-20

December 26: Service will include carols and the following Scriptures:

1 st	Luke 1:26-38	The Prophetic Visit
2 nd	Luke 2:1-7	The Nativity
3 rd	Luke 2:8-14	The Shepherds
4 th	Matthew 2:1-12	The Epiphany
5 th	Luke 2:21-38	The Temple Presentation
6 th	Matthew 2:13-15	Flight into Egypt

"Read as you study, study as you live, and live well!"

- Pastor Alecia



Weekly Worship Service



WORSHIP SERVICES IN DECEMBER

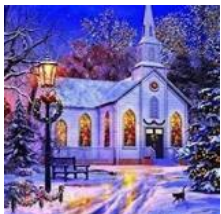
Worship service is every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Please join us every Sunday with joyful hearts during this season of

Advent. ZOOM services will also be available.

On November 28th, we celebrated the first Sunday of Advent with the Hanging of the Greens service. The four Sundays represent Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. Try to ask yourselves these four questions during this month.

- Can there be **Hope**? Hope is what we need in these difficult times. Hope keeps us alive.
- Can there be **Love**? Bring some love and take more to share with family and others.
- Can there be **Joy**? Remember the words of the hymn "Joy to the World, the Lord has Come".
- Can there be **Peace**? Let peace live in our hearts and help us to encourage others to live peacefully in the World.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE



Fisk UMC is hosting a **Candlelight Christmas Eve Service on Friday, December 24th, at 7:00 p.m.** All persons are invited. Masks will be required and we ask that you sit in family groups to observe social distancing. We will sing carols as

we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child. Come, and enjoy this "Life-Giving" service of Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace on Earth.

Log in information for ZOOM Services

<https://zoom.us/j/93666906008>

Meeting ID: **936 6690 6008**

Connect by telephone use either of these numbers.
+1 253 215 8782 US or **+1 301 715 8592 US**

Meeting ID: **936 6690 6008**

If those links fail to get you into Fisk Service, visit

www.zoom.us click "Join Meeting" on top right

Type in **936 6690 6008** in the "Meeting ID" Click Join.

Coming in 2022

We are making preparations to start a **monthly worship service at Cedar Gardens**, with blessings, on the residents and the support of the tenants Organization under President Sandra Green. Until then, please hold the residents in prayers with thanksgiving for your continued gifts that make Fisk Ministry possible in the community and beyond.

Whitney Place ON-Going Worship Experience

Have you realized that when you share the love and word of God with our homebound seniors and nursing home residents, you are playing a vital role in God's plan? Well, because of your gifts, Pastor Alecia is present once a month at Whitney Place to officiate at a worship service with the residents. We resumed in August with 4 persons and then 7 in September. For October and the past month, November, there were 12 persons in worship including two of the caretakers.

The service is the first Wednesday of each month from 1:30-2pm in the community room. During this time, the Good News is shared with those who are unable attend church. Hence, worship is taken to them and they are reminded that they are loved and never alone. Sometimes Fisk UMC prayer cards, prayer bears, the Upper Room booklets, and connectional notes are given out. **Thank you Fisk Family for your gifts that make this ministry possible for these residents of Natick.**

Stewardship Reminder and Update

Have you taken the opportunity to prayerfully consider your stewardship and your Covenant of Giving Pledge with our Lord and Savior? We have reflected over the last several Sundays: a river of love running through each of us, the gratitude we have for the many, many ministries of our church, and deciding what our church and fellowship is worth to us. Thom reminded us of one of my favorite scriptures on giving:

*"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, **for God loves a cheerful giver.** And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." – 2 Corinthians 9:6-8*

We have received less than half of last year's pledge as of press time on November 22. Remember, all pledges are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Thank you, and God bless. – the Stewardship Team
2022 offering envelopes will be available for pick up on December 19.

Education

Message from Lay Leader

Share **Love** at Christmas
Dr. Dorothy J. Phillips, Lay Leader

A new command I give you; **Love** one another. As I have loved you, so you must **love** one another.
John 13:34

Let us not mistake—that the hunger is only for a piece of bread. The hunger today is so much greater; for **love**---to be wanted, to be loved, to be cared for, to be somebody. *LOVE, The Words and Inspirations of Mother Teresa*, Blue Mountain Press, 2007

Thought: How can I share **love** this Christmas with my family, with my friends, and/or with those underserved?

SPRC

SPRC would like to wish our Fisk Family a very Merry Christmas. We are so blessed to have our beloved Pastor Alecia. Her inspiration, enthusiasm, and blessings bring us all joy throughout the year. The past 2 years have been hard on everyone but we have pulled through together. As Pastor always says it is "Blessed to be a Blessing", so let's all be a blessing to someone today and days to come.

Genesis 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The SPRC Team

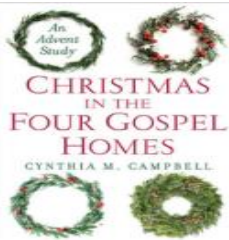
Charitable Giving and Taxes

Remember, all contributions to Fisk are tax deductible, and you may save as much 20-30% of your donation in taxes...to receive in your refund in February...or add back to your contribution! The last opportunity for you to make your 2021 contributions to Fisk will be Sunday, December 26, or by mailing to arrive before Thursday, December 30, or on-line by December 30. All tax deductible contributions are required to be paid by December 31st of each year.



Please join our four churches for a combined Advent Bible Study as we connect and study the book,

"Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes" by



Cynthia M. Campbell.

Focus will be on the homes of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and reflection on our four home churches. Please get a book

from Cokesbury, Barnes & Noble, Amazon, or other and join us in what will be a new and different experience of Christmas homes as we prepare for Christmas. If there are any questions, speak with Pastor Alecia. THANKS!

Wednesday evenings on Zoom from 7-8 p.m.

Dec. 1: Pastor Alecia Reeves-Freeman
of Fisk Memorial UMC in Natick

Dec. 8: Pastor Rebecca Cho
of Community UMC in Wayland

Dec. 15: Lay Leader Bonnie-jean Rowe
of First UMC & Wesley UMC in Framingham

Dec. 22: Pastor Alicia Velez Stewart
of Weston UMC in Weston

ADVENT BIBLE ZOOM LINK

ZOOM LINK

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5086530577>

(Pass code: 0) to join.

Zoom Meeting ID: 508 653 0577, Pass code: 0

To join by phone:

Dial (646) 558-8656

Enter the Meeting ID: 508 653 0577

When prompted press #, then # again.

Sunday school

**Join us on Sundays,
9:30 a.m. -10:15 a.m.**

in Room 2, next to the nursery! We sing songs, make crafts, read the Bible, and learn all about our amazing God and Jesus! a



Finance Update – December 2021

The faithful support of you, the congregation continues to be a blessing, but our ministries are in need. We must report that we continue to find ourselves behind in pledge support as of the end of October. We urge you to do all you can to get your pledged commitments fulfilled for 2021 in order to minimize our deficit. Every person's effort matters. 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. We may be forced to utilize our cash reserves in order to fund all of our planned ministries this year. We need your prayerful assistance. As of October 31:

Support and other income	\$ 154,126
Expenses of ministry	\$ 166,301
Deficit (10 months)	\$ (12,175)

We are carefully managing our resources, spending less than our budgeted expenses to compensate, but most of our expenses and ministries cannot be reduced. We continue to pray for improvements in our financial position.

The ministries of Fisk touch so many people in so many ways. As we enter this joyful advent season, we must prayerfully and purposefully work to support God's work...and our finances will follow.

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

Mike Bruns (Chair), Pastor Alecia, Dorothy Phillips (Lay Leader), Tom Currie (Chair-Admin Board), Jen Garrant (Treasurer), Crystal Mayo (Financial Secretary), Deborah Hernandez (Trustees), Michelle Drolet (SPRC), David Cail, and Thom Townsend.



"Do not let your faith in the spiritual

Discipline of Stewardship be Shipwrecked"

Rescue your giving & True in FAITH

in 2022.

Family Promise

From all of us at Family Promise Metrowest:

On December 4th from 7pm-9pm, we'll all be pulling up our comfy chairs and tuning our TVs to the best streaming performance of the year:

Keeping the Promise 2021. We are beyond excited to share this amazing evening with you once again! We're bringing back some favorites from last year—Ellis Paul, Phil Stacey, Lady Cap, Dave Keller—along with welcoming some incredible new musicians—Rhett Price, Kings Return, Crimson Calamity, and more! Our auction will be bigger and better than ever!

But this evening isn't just about celebrating—we are bringing all of you together for a vital project: to help us create a permanent, welcoming home for families in their moment of greatest need. **All of the funds raised during this event—from your donations, to auction purchases - will be used to help us convert a portion of our Day Center into our new shelter.**

We'll be creating family bedrooms and space for overnight staff, while also making vital updates to our heating and safety systems. These renovations will bring our families and staff under one roof and enable our shelter families to have a stable home where volunteers can continue to provide meals, babysitting, and companionship onsite. During the concert, you'll be hearing from our families, congregations, community partners, and staff about why this is such an important and exciting change to our services, and how it will help families stabilize and move back into homes of their own even more quickly.

And we are THRILLED to announce that your generosity before and during this event is going to have an even greater impact! An amazing donor has stepped forward with a \$100,000 match for all funds raised during Keeping the Promise 2021.

So please, visit the Family Promise Metrowest website: <https://familypromise.org> to register to attend the free concert today and join us for an evening of inspiration. We can't wait to see you there!

MISSIONS---reaching out to those in challenging situations

White Sock Project Homeless Veterans

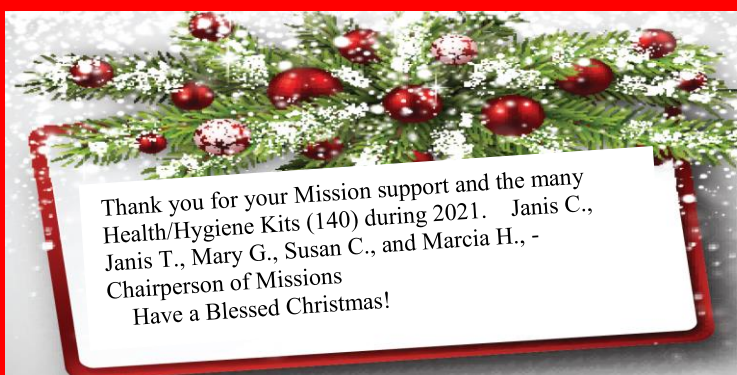
As we all are aware many veterans who fought for our freedom are in various shelters and homeless situations due to extenuating circumstances resulting from serving our country. We can help make the holidays just a bit happier.

Our **Annual Stuffing of the Socks** will take place on **December 12** at Fellowship Time following Worship. We gather items that will fit in a man's white sports sock—deodorant, note pads, candy bars, granola bars, rolled knit hat, gloves, another pair of socks, deck of cards, small game, snack foods, shampoo, lotion, sanitizer etc. Even a Word Find book or paperback novel!

(Why white socks? These are the most requested item for any homeless person. We stuff the toe with the matching sock—so they have a new pair!)

We have some socks, but could use more tall white socks, AND we do need the items to fill them. When you are out shopping just pick up a few of the above suggestions or ideas of your own. Bring them to church on the 12th and help us “stuff the socks”.

These will be delivered to the Homeless Veterans in the Boston area.



MISSIONARY SUPPORT

Our Missionaries—Continue to PRAY for the many missionaries out “in the field” doing the work we are committed to support. Email them. Send a card. Write

a note. (Not advisable to send cash) For donations the most secure way is to write your check to Fisk Church and designate UMCOR-Belinda or another missionary of your



choosing.

Then the church sends it direct to the office where their accounts are tallied.

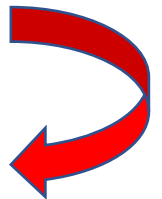
There is a list of many of the missionaries on the Mission Bulletin Board...take a slip and contact these missionaries who are separated from their families in many cases, trying to better the lives of others and helping them make a more sustainable life. Help renew them with a Christmas message.

SUGGESTED CHRISTMAS GIVING (Outside of Fisk)

- Natick Service Council is asking for Gift Cards for under-served families to shop for their families
- UMEM in Salem Maine is a United Methodist connection in need of Gift Cards also
- And...of course our UM Mission agency--UMCOR

GIVE

LOVE
JOY
HOPE
PEACE





United
Methodist
Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

Greetings from the Fisk United Methodist Women!

We have been very busy this fall since we have carefully opened up our meetings and events... following the COVID guidelines of *distancing and masks*.

We are expressing our thanks and appreciation to all (especially UMM) in and around Fisk who have attended, helped with and supported our fund raising efforts -- Yard Sales, your pledges, collection of World Thank Offerings and now the Fisk Fall Fair. Because of you we are able to fund the Mission work of United Methodist Women...caring for WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH through our FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE IN ACTION.

THANK
YOU

Reminders:

If you made a UMW Pledge to Missions through your circle, it is due NOW. Members-at-Large may send their pledge to the church- c/o Sherry Culver.

Were you a UMW Book Reader this year? Notify Terry Ames of your category of books. If you have not done this program, consider it. You will be blessed by the selection of 2022 books.

Prayer Shawl Group still meets each Wednesday at 10 am at the church. All are WELCOME. Just come for a visit...you will be hooked. Joanne Billo

Pray for the many missionaries in the world doing the work we may not be able to do physically ...but we can support them and pray for their safety and guidance.

Challenge yourself to join one of many Bible Study groups available at Fisk..."to know God", as stated in our UMW Purpose.

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SAVE the DATE
December 18, 2021
Saturday, 3:00pm
A Journey



**Aljani Stanley, MPA/MHA,
LSSGB** (Pastor Alecia &
George's daughter)
Former Evangelism
chairperson of Fisk UMC.



Your Fisk UMC family extends congratulations with blessings to you for receiving the 2021, newly created award from Harvard Medical School for all the work you have done for equity, social justice, and advocacy. Since this is the first award of its kind at Harvard Medical School and you are the first and only staff receiving it, we say thanks for the UMC social principles and those who utilize them in their living.

the Church Office

FISK CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Alecia Reeves-Freeman, Pastor

Fiskpastor@fiskumc.org

Dr. Americo Motta, Minister of Music

Fiskmusicministry@gmail.com

Susan Carney, Director of Christian Education

SusanjCarney@gmail.com

Carolyn DiSciullo, Administrative Assistant

Fiskoffice@fiskumc.org

NEUMC CONFERENCE INFORMATION

District: 6 - Name: Commonwealth East

Website: www.neumc.org/CE

Address: 2600 Massachusetts Ave., Lexington, MA 02421

Phone: [\(781\) 861-0249](tel:(781)861-0249)

District Superintendent: **Rev. We Hyun Chang**

His email address: CEDS@neumc.org

Administrative Assistant: **Allyson Printz**

Her email address: CEDistrict@neumc.org

January Messenger Deadline
Please submit information by
Friday, December 24, 9:00 a.m.

Congratulations



Please PRINT legibly

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Of Plants _____

My plant honors: _____

My plant is in memory of: _____

*(Please print any more needed information on the
back of this sheet.)*

☐ I will take my plant on Christmas Eve 12/24

☐ I will take my plant on the Sunday after
Christmas 12/26

**Orders with payment must be in by
December 12.**

Please mail or drop off your order with payment to:

**Fisk UMC Office
106 Walnut St.
Natick, MA 01760**

*Please make checks payable to Fisk Memorial UMC &
note Altar Guild or Poinsettia 2021 on the memo line.
Red Poinsettias are \$20 each.*

=====

Altar Guild - Total Amount Received: \$_____

☐ Check ☐ Cash