

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

fiskoffice@fiskumc.org

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

www.fiskumc.org

December 2023

Pastor's Message

We have entered the season of Advent and it is always a busy time of the year. There is a lot to do, people to visit and many persons to reach out to before Christmas arrives. Though the season of Advent is a time of waiting, preparation and anticipation, sometimes, we are so busy that we cannot prepare, be patient, be prayerful and might lose out on the real reason for the season; the coming of the Christ Child.

Some of us put the weight of the world on our shoulders, some of us spend money that we do not have, some spend money that others need, some of us buy things that we do not need, and others do not want. Some of us just shop until we are exhausted and still others, continue to carry a heavy load of pains, suffering and hopelessness. Though I find this time as a gift of reflection and great joy, there are many who will not be joyful or hopeful because of all that is happening in their lives and the wider world. But there is always hope in the One who comes in the name of God; the one who comes to give abundant life, create wholeness, healing and to be the Peace that the world needs.

For all that has happened this year in our lives, the life of the church, community and the world, we can receive the Christ Child and be all that God wants us to be for the transformation of the world. Let us continue to remain hopeful, joyful, and peaceful as we strive to love all our neighbors. When we do, love is not just a spark that keeps the fire going but becomes a bonfire for all to see Jesus Christ as the light of the world.

May this Christmas revive in us, a sense of gratitude, love, joy and sharing. And may Christmas also help us to rediscover and give those gifts that are vital to life; those life-giving gifts of hope, love, joy and peace that last for generations.

MERRY CHRISTMAS with lots of love and blessing!



+ 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

All persons are invited to Fisk UMC Worship Service

Every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

To connect by telephone use either of these numbers:

+1 646 558 8656 US

Enter Meeting ID: **994 3325 8889**

+1 312 626 6799 US

Enter Meeting ID: **994 3325 8889**

By computer, tablet, or smart phone, use this

link: <https://zoom.us/j/99433258889>

Or visit www.Zoom.us and enter

Meeting ID: **994 3325 8889**



Worship

For Personal Reflection & Spiritual Growth

For continuous learning and reflection please find time to read the following. In addition, may you be strengthened and inspired to continue to go out and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

“Read as you study, study as you live, and live well!”
+ Pastor Alecia

	<u>Liturgist</u>
December 3, 2023 Psalm 62:1-8	- Deborah Hernandez Mark 13:24-37
December 10, 2023 2 Peter 3: 8-15	- Janis Cail Mark 1:1-8
December 17, 2023 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24	- Debbie Friscino John 15:9-17
December 24, 2023 (Christmas Eve Readings)	- Amy Bruns
December 31, 2023 Isaiah 60:1-6	- TBD Matthew 2:1-12

Please email the Church Office at:
FiskOffice@FiskUMC.org to choose a date to be a liturgist. There is also a liturgist signup sheet located in the back of the Sanctuary. Thank you!

Advent Season

During this season of Advent and Christmas, we give and receive a variety of gifts. More often, great thoughts go into the selection of those gifts. This month at Fisk, we are not just providing a gift, but sharing **Love**, advocating for **Peace**, spreading **Joy** and living with **Hope**.

We will share together in an Advent Bible Study and a HUB celebration in anticipation of the birth of Jesus Christ. As we do, may our words, thoughts, and deeds toward God, family, church, community, and the world express the gratitude we have for the anticipated birth of Jesus Christ in hope of real thanksgiving and reconciliation.

“Give a Christmas Gift today and feel blessed!”
-Pastor Alecia

December Advent and Christmas Save the Dates

Saturday, December 2 at 10:00 a.m. is our United Methodist HUB Christmas Celebration at Fisk UMC followed by a reception.

Sunday, December 3 is the first Advent Sunday in December. Come celebrate Communion as we prepare our hearts.

Advent Book Study will be every Wednesday from 7-8 pm on ZOOM (starting Nov. 29, Dec. 6th, 13th and 20th.) Book: All the Good: A Wesleyan Way of Christmas by Prof. Lacey C. Warner.

Saturday, December 9th 10:00 a.m. United Women in Faith annual Christmas get-together for brunch at Marcia’s house. The invitation is in this Messenger.

Friday, December 15 6:00pm –8:00pm All Church Event! Advent Holiday Party Fun and Games for ALL at Fisk!



ADVENT PARTY NIGHT at FISK UMC

(Hosted by our Council of Ministries)

Please join us on

Friday, December 15 from 6- 8pm in rooms (8 & 9) for a night with families and friends.

A night of fellowship, fun, games, sharing a meal together and stuffing socks for a mission project.

Come to celebrate, participate and enjoy this special time with all our siblings.



Sunday, December 24 is Christmas Eve at Fisk UMC at 5:00 p.m. (There will not be a 10:30 a.m. Worship Service on December 24th.) Come to the candlelit Service to celebrate the coming of the Christ Child with “Songs and Scriptures”.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS - SPECIAL

As we start to take the journey through Advent to Christmas, can we open our hearts, minds and hands wider?

I believe each of us can. As we make our shopping lists, let us never forget to celebrate with our gifts by including Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church's ministry and missions on that special list. We can be the cheerful, and faithful giver by giving a generous gift. We can continue to help all those who are struggling for food, clothing and shelter and remain God's presence in this community and beyond.

We can also offer the gift of love, joy, peace hope at this time of year. Therefore, a gift in any amount is greatly appreciated!

Thank you and be richly blessed for your faithfulness to God and supporting God's ministry and mission here at Fisk UMC.



Advent

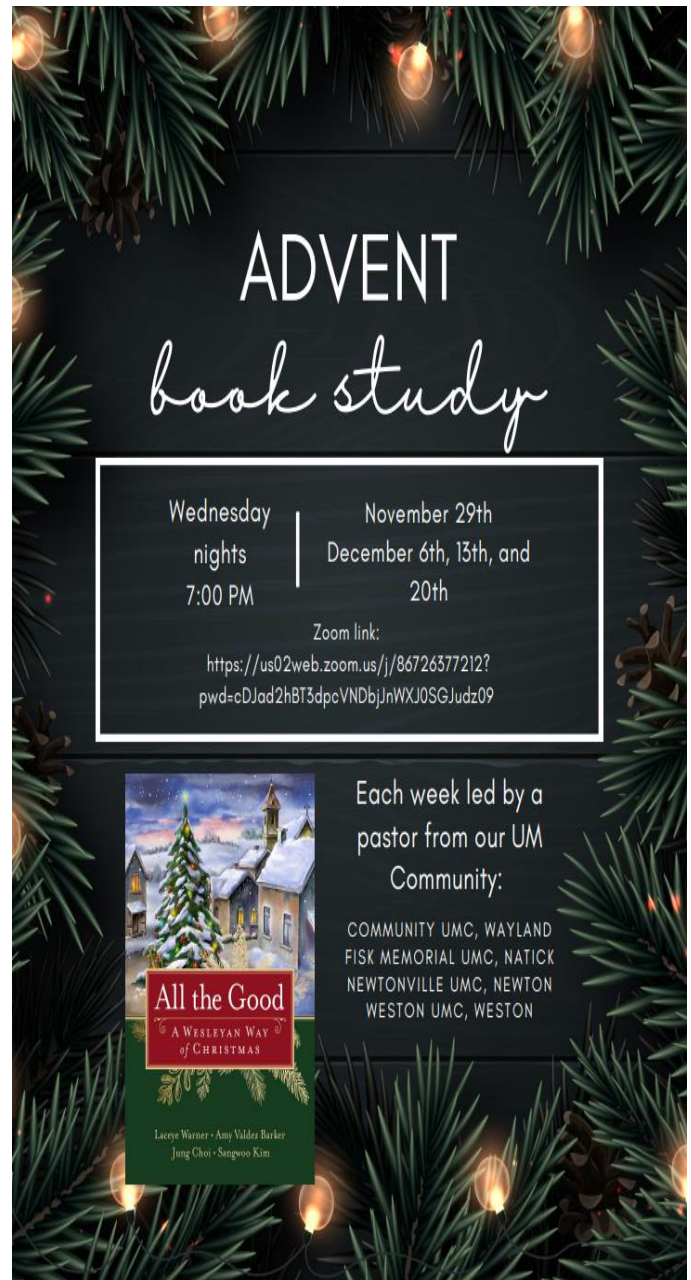
Festival of Faithful Voices

Beacon of Hope UMC // Franklin UMC
St. John's Korean UMC // Fisk Memorial
Carter Memorial UMC // Sudbury UMC
Community UMC // Grace Vision Korean UMC
Weston UMC

DECEMBER 2ND 2023
10:00 AM

Join our District Hub for our
2nd Annual Advent Music Celebration!
Sing the songs of the season, hear special musical
performances, and share in a Christmas cookie feast!

HOSTED BY FISK MEMORIAL UMC
106 Walnut St, Natick, MA 01760



ADVENT
book study

Wednesday nights 7:00 PM | November 29th, December 6th, 13th, and 20th

Zoom link:
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86726377212?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86726377212?pwd=cDJad2hBT3dpcVNDbjNlWXJ0SGJudz09)
[pwd=cDJad2hBT3dpcVNDbjNlWXJ0SGJudz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86726377212?pwd=cDJad2hBT3dpcVNDbjNlWXJ0SGJudz09)

Each week led by a pastor from our UM Community:

COMMUNITY UMC, WAYLAND
FISK MEMORIAL UMC, NATICK
NEWTONVILLE UMC, NEWTON
WESTON UMC, WESTON

All the Good
A Wesleyan Way of CHRISTMAS
Lucy Warner • Amy Valdez Barker
Jung Choi • Sangwoo Kim

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86726377212?pwd=cDJad2hBT3dpcVNDbjNlWXJ0SGJudz09>

Meeting ID: 867 2637 7212 Passcode: advent2023

To call in dial: 1 301 715 8592 Meeting ID: 867 2637 7212 Passcode: 0520427780

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZlqde-rqTwoG9bWWzc8si-BZG24QCyB2KvB/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGuqTksGdOSshiFRpwAB4joM-nwtmZBjfpfqyj_AHhAao7UDMUQZoNcCfqC

Stewardship

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: the economics of Christ, where an investment in giving will be rewarded by the Lord, that our valuables are only valuable if they are shared, and the gratitude we have for the many, many ministries of our church. As Pastor Anthony reminded us:

"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD,

and he will reward them for what they have done." – Proverbs 19:17

If you are not currently giving, consider making a pledge in 2024 for your gifts of love. Contact the Office, or Crystal Mayo if you did not receive your Stewardship letter and Pledge Card.

As an update, we have received only about half of last year's pledge as of press time on November 21. Our ministries depend upon your giving. Please join many of us in increasing your support this year. Remember, all pledges are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Thank you, and God bless. – the Stewardship Team

Charitable Giving... and Taxes

Remember, all contributions to Fisk are tax deductible, and you may save as much as 15-30% 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 2023 contributions to Fisk will be by **mailing to arrive** before Friday, December 29, or **on-line** by Saturday, December 30, or **in worship** on Sunday, December 31. All tax deductible contributions are required to be paid by December 31st of each year.



Confirmation Class

Sunday Afternoons, 2:00-3:30PM

Sessions

January 7, 2024- Weston UMC
January 21- Community UMC
February 4- Fisk Memorial UMC
February 11- Weston UMC
March 3- Community UMC
March 17- Fisk Memorial UMC
March 24- Weston UMC
April 7- Community UMC
April 28- Fisk Memorial UMC
May 5- Weston UMC
May 12- Fisk Memorial UMC

Visits to Other
Worship Sites:

Temple Israel of Natick-
Sat. Jan. 13 from 10AM-
12PM

Islamic Center of Boston
(Wayland)- TBD

St. Ann Catholic Church in
Wayland- TBD

Confirmation
Celebration

Sat. May 18
10AM-12PM

Community UMC

Church Addresses:

Community UMC Wayland
80 Main Street, Wayland, MA 01778

Fisk Memorial UMC
106 Walnut Street, Natick, MA 01760

Weston UMC
377 North Avenue, Weston, MA 02493

CONFIRMATION CLASS led by our

Commonwealth East Methodist HUB Pastors- will start Sunday, January 7 until Sunday, May 12 (every other week from 2-3:30pm)- at rotating locations (Fisk, Wayland, & Weston). See Pastor Alecia for a schedule if you want your youth enrolled. Thanks, as God blesses the youth with wisdom for generations to come.

Sunday School

Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2

Each Sunday that we have one or more in this age range, we will have a 20 minute class after the Children's Sermon, during Church. After the class, the students can go to the nursery for play and learn the lesson that they are covering in nursery class. We acknowledge that Christian fellowship is very important.

Grades 3 and up have Sunday School before Church, from 9:30 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. All take place in Room 2 and of course, the nursery. If you can help out even once a year— please let Susan Carney or Carolyn DiSciullo know.

Please note: There will not be Sunday School class on Christmas Eve, as there will not be a morning Worship Service on Christmas Eve.

(There will be a 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service on December 24th.)

United Methodist Men

UMM DECEMBER BREAKFAST

Sunday, Dec. 3rd at 8:00 a.m. at Eli's Restaurant
12 Washington St. Natick, MA 01760
Questions...Gary Hoyt or Geoff DelSesto

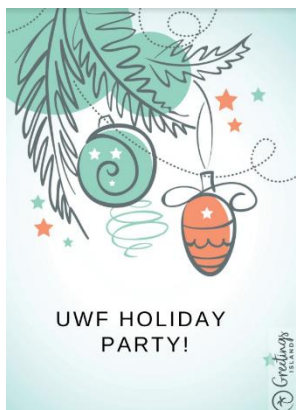
United Women in Faith



United
Women
in Faith

Your support
made a
difference
Thanks to
the generous

support of the entire Fisk community, the UWF Fall Fair was a huge success. In addition to a day of connecting with old and new friends alike, we generated over \$6,000 for missions that support women and children. It was a great demonstration of the group's belief that LOVE IN ACTION CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.



Calling all Fisk women: It's time to celebrate!

Join us on Saturday, December 9th at 10:00 a.m. for our annual Christmas get-together for brunch at Marcia's house.

Please bring a Yankee swap gift (not more than \$20) that starts with the letter "b".

And we will be collecting World Thank offerings if you have one. **RSVP to Janis Cail or Debbie by Sunday, December 3rd.**

Financial Update:

In this blessed season of Advent, many worthy charities are appealing for our support. As you reflect and discern, do not overlook the many, many ways that your giving supports the ministries of your Church. Fisk's ministries also need your help:

- Our pledge giving remains 8% below planned commitments as of October, which is more severe than last year. December's generosity is critical for our ministries.
 - We are carefully managing our spending, currently 5% less than budget, currently saving \$10,000 year to date, but required spending must still be funded, including Mission Shares,
- Our deficit as of October is higher than our Planned Annual Deficit, and we are using cash reserves to fund our obligations.

The successes of our ministries are funded almost entirely by our stewardship support. Those many ministries touch so many people in so many ways... in our congregation, our community, and our world.

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' – Matthew 25:40

Financial Secretary

Please remember to have any contributions that you want included in 2023 to the church office by December 30, 2023. Any contributions made at church on Sunday December 31 will also be considered 2023 contributions. Let me know if you have any questions. My number is [1 \(774\) 287-1705](tel:7742871705) Thanks, Crystal Mayo, Financial Secretary

Trustees

Cemetery Lots Available

The Fisk Trustees would like you to know that we have been gifted a large cemetery lot (several adjacent burial spaces) in the Glenwood Cemetery in South Natick. We are working with the Glenwood Cemetery Association to understand how we might subdivide the 12 burial graves and make them available for purchase by our Fisk community at a discounted price. If you are interested in buying two or more of these burial sites, please contact Thom Townsend, David Cail, or Geoff Del Sesto for more information.

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH



Thank you for the overwhelming response for good used clothing for our friends in the Western Mountains of Maine. As the clothes and Christmas toys are delivered to the United Methodist Economic Ministry, we pray for you and your ability and willingness to share and help others.

At this time of GIVING let us remember the many partners in Mission.



Natick Service Council-food donations & Gift Cards

Family Promise-new games, books for children

Cooper Community Center-books for children as well as items on their Wish List...including Bounty Paper Towels, Baby wipes etc.

UMCOR-this is the official Mission Arm of the UMC and welcome gifts for the important ministries they are doing.

Dr. Belinda Forbes in Nicaragua-monetary gifts to one of "our missionaries." Checks in the offering memo- BELINDA

Kayle and Mat Pelletier in South Africa-same as above. Memo -Pelletiers

Justice for our Neighbors-monetary gifts always welcome. Helping those needing legal assistance for new neighbors in our country.

NO MORE CLOTHES FOR MAINE.

We will resume this activity in April 2024.

Community Event

STAND WITH ISRAEL

SHINE THE LIGHT AND

FREE THE HOSTAGES

THIS Sunday, December 3

3:45 - 4:30pm

Natick Common

Sponsored by the Israel Action Committee of Temple Israel of Natick



"White Sock Time" "Stuffing of the Socks"

Our Annual Stuffing Party is taking a bit of a change. We are going to "stuff the white high tube socks for homeless veterans" at the Family Fun Night on December 15.

WE need items to stuff and many white high tube socks. **Shampoo, deodorant, lotions, cards, small games i.e. UNO, combs, suitable candy, notepads, snack packs, gloves, hats etc.** Anything a veteran could use and fits in a sock.

We will assemble these during the Advent Family Night-December 15 from 6-8pm...Pizza included! Come and join the fun.

Items can be brought anytime and put in the box in the hallway by the office. Thanks for your support of these often forgotten friends. How many can we fill? They are then delivered to the Homeless Veterans in Boston.

UMCOR Hygiene Kit

Providing basic necessities to those who are most vulnerable during times of crisis. Hygiene Kits are distributed during disasters, whether socio-economic or as the result of a natural occurrence.

1 hand towel

1 face cloth

1 sturdy comb (5-7 inches of teeth)

1 nail clipper

1 3ounce bar of soap (no Ivory or Jergens)

10 Band-Aids ¾ x 3 inches

1 adult toothbrush

Put all contents in a 1 Gallon Zip Lock bag,

Missions Committee-Janis Cail, Mary Greenwood,
Janis Townsend and Marcia Hoyt

New England Conference Information

Our New District information: District 6-Hub #5

Name: Commonwealth East

Website: www.neumc.org/CE

District Superintendent: Rev. Nizzi Santos Digan

Address: 2600 Massachusetts Ave, Lexington, MA

02421 Email address:CEDS@neumc.org

Administrative Assistant: Allyson Printz

Phone: (781) 861-0249

Email address:CEDistrict@neumc.org

Disaster Response

Immigrant shelter needs sleep kits

The Massachusetts Emergency Management has opened a temporary shelter in Boston to support the Emergency Assistance program for the immigrants arriving on flights during the next two weeks.

The shelter is in need of sleep kits: pillows with sleeping bags. The sleeping bags and pillows MUST BE NEW.

Churches and individuals that want to help can contact Conference Disaster Response Coordinator David A. Arruda at

CDRC-NE@neumc.org or (978) 682-8055 ext. 140.

From 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

Office Phone: (508) 653-1674

Website: www.fiskumc.org

Church email: Fiskoffice@fiskumc.org Church Office Hours:

Mon., Tues., Wed., & Fri. 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

December Celebrations

Happy Birthday!

Claire Prince	12/3	Thom Townsend	12/18
Jeananne Roche	12/4	Terry Ames	12/18
Scott Anderson	12/4	Matthew Curran	12/19
Cynthia Hughes	12/6	Priscilla Brayton	12/20
Diane O'Loughlin	12/7	Marilyn Donnelly	12/21
Christopher Day	12/8	Gary Hoyt	12/24
Charlotte Day	12/9	Marcia Hoyt	12/26
Molly Naser	12/9	Betsy Lindsey	12/26
Nareece Cole	12/11	Kate Macdonald	12/30
Michael Curran	12/12		

Special Thanks!

On behalf of FISK SPRC, we want to express our thanks and appreciation to Susan Carney for her incredible dedication to Fisk and our congregation. Susan's selfless contributions have made a lasting impact on all of us.

Her kindness and commitment do not go unnoticed (we can't forget sense of humor), and we are truly grateful for the positive influence she brings to our Fisk Family. Thank you, Susan, for being an inspiration to both young and old as a valuable member of Fisk!

Food for Thought; Poem

Softly

Softly, almost unnoticed, the spirit of Christ enters and becomes;
*no hysteric act displays his coming unto us. A man lived with us and Christ was everywhere
 that we might search ourselves and give him lodging;
 The soul, the body is but a Bethlehem manger where Christ will come seeking birth;
 lay carefully your straw of life and bid him come,
 bid him enter there, bid him come;
 in the soft splendor of evening fires, he will come; build your Evening fire
 and bid him come; a fire not tended dies and is no more;
 a fire not tended dies. Set no extravagant nor pompous feast;
 a silent evening fire and gentle manger straw And Jesus comes. Jesus enters softly.*

By the **late Rev. Wendell Luke, Jr.**, who was a retired Elder in the New England Conference UMC.

Christmas Cookies!



Looking for a special gift? Or cookies for your holiday celebration?

United Women in Faith is baking

Christmas Cookie assortments! Each assortment contains 6 different kinds of

traditional Christmas Cookies and are boxed or plated - ready to give. Assortments cost \$15 and must be pre-ordered. Pickup options are on Friday evening at the Fisk Advent party on December 15th 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Saturday, December 16th, 9-10am or during fellowship on Sunday, December 17th.

Number of assortments available are limited so order today! Last day to order is Sunday, December 10th.

Look for details during Fellowship after Worship service on December 3rd and 10th. Or to order, email Sherry Culver, sherrycd@comcast.net.