

# The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church  
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[www.fiskumc.org](http://www.fiskumc.org)

## December 2024

### Pastor's Message

As we enter the Season of Advent and anticipate the birth of the Christ Child, believe that God already made it plain and simple how to live and what to do. That is, do what is fair and just to your neighbors, be caring, compassionate, share freely and most of all, embody real love, the love of Jesus Christ.

Micah was a prophet who had strong opinions all the time. For example, Micah would say that a person who does no harm is fulfilled and that person was intolerant of persons who acted unfairly, took advantage of others and was self-centered. And though, Micah's words sometimes sounded extreme, Micah reminds us to live each day with justice as our rod and staff.

This time of the year, schedules are filled with events, gift-giving and sometimes sharing from the heart but there is always that hidden message of, "Fear not". That was the message from the angels when they said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10). That message still exists today because during the holidays, I am amazed how strangers reach out to others with kind words, a smile, a gift or some goodies without fear. For this, I have hope in what God can and will do through us and for humanity today. Especially in the days ahead as we walk and work together.

So, as we reflect on how we can live and work together, let us remember Micah's words in order to promote hope and not fear. Let us promote love and not hate. Let us promote justice and not injustice. Let us promote unity and not division. Let us promote the peace of God. Most of all, let us go out to extinguish fires of fears, dig graves for hate, destroy bigotry, advocate for justice as we light a bonfire for Jesus Christ for others to see and follow the light.

Now, I know that this is not always easy but we can try by increasing our spiritual connection to God and connections to each other. We can also be active participants, and listening presence as we continue to live with hope, joy, love and peace this season and all the seasons ahead.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

+ *Pastor Alecia*



**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**  
**Tuesday, December 24**  
**in the sanctuary at 5:00 p.m.**



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 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](http://www.Zoom.us) and enter

Meeting ID: **994 3325 8889**



## Worship

### For Spiritual Growth & Reflection- December 2024

For continuous spiritual growth; read and reflect on the following scripture passages:

#### Liturgist

December 1, 2024 - Dwayne L. Stanley Jr.  
and Tiffany Aljani Stanley

Scripture: Jeremiah 33: 14-16, Isaiah 40:28-31

Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

December 8, 2024 - Thom Townsend

Scripture: Philippians 1: 3-11, Isaiah 51:9-11, &  
Malachi 3: 1-4

Gospel: Luke 1: 68-79

December 15, 2024 - TBD

Scripture: Zephaniah 3; 14-20 & Isaiah 12: 2-6

Gospel: Luke 3: 7-18

December 22, 2024 - Amy Ciccarelli DeSouza

Scripture: Hebrews 10: 5-10 & Micah 5: 2-5

Gospel: Luke 1: 46-55

December 24, 2024 Christmas Eve – TBD

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7 & Titus 2: 11-14

Gospel: Luke 2: 1-20 & Christmas Readings

December 29, 2024 -TBD

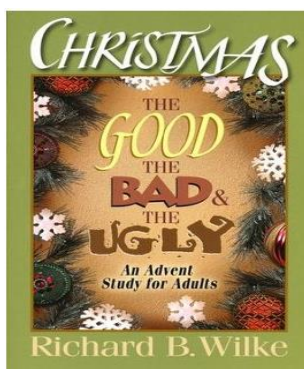
Scripture: Colossians 3:12-17

Gospel: Luke 2: 41-52

Psalter Reading: Psalm 148 (UMH 861)

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

### Advent Book Study on Zoom!



### Advent Bible Study on Zoom -

Wednesdays December 4, 11, and 18<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:00 p.m. “Christmas; The Good, The Bad & The Ugly” (By Richard B. Wilke)

This will be a study on zoom every Wednesday in

December prior to Christmas. - “In the midst of living and traveling the journey that we call, ‘LIFE’, we receive gifts to enjoy and to share.

Therefore, as we start the season, we can also surrender all obstacles that affect relationship with God and all God’s creation. I know we can because in this study Richard stresses evangelism and the vitality of our local churches. Please join us to experience joy and remember that we have a Savior who is greater than anything within and without.

### Wednesday, December 4

First Week of Advent

Let’s Keep Herod in Christmas (Matthew 2:1, 7-8, 16-18)

### Wednesday, December 11

Second Week of Advent

Let’s Keep the Wise Men in Christmas (Matthew 2:1-12)

### Wednesday, December 18

Third Week of Advent

Let’s Keep Joseph in Christmas (Matthew 1:18-25; 2:13-15, 19-23)

Let’s Keep the Shepherds in Christmas (Luke 2:8-20)

**Advent Bible Study Book: Christmas- *The Good, the Bad & The Ugly* - by Richard B. Wilke**

**Books are available for a \$10.00 donation in the Church office.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94918188289> Meeting ID: 949 1818 8289

Dial by your location • +1 646 931 3860 US • +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) Meeting ID: 949 1818 8289

### Christmas Eve Service –

There will be a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Tuesday, **December 24 in the sanctuary at 5pm**. All visitors, families and friends are invited to this celebration as we await the birth of the Christ Child. Please feel free to leave the cares of the world behind and join us for the **STORY** in Scriptures and Songs.



## ON-GOING LIFE AT FISK UMC

### ***Establishing, Enhancing and Nurturing Trust at Fisk UMC:***

As we strive to keep trust and nurture the trust we have in, for each other and those who enter and/or use our facility, we have a ***Safer Sanctuary Policy*** to guide our living in the facility. This resource is available because of the theological grounding of our work at Fisk UMC. One of the important works is to prevent abuse in whatever form it presents itself and to give us some guidelines to reduce risk.

As baptized Christians, we pledged to resist evil in whatever form it presents itself. Hence, we seek to do justice, and walk humbly as we live out our faith and follow Jesus Christ. Especially, while we walk with others on this journey that we call, 'LIFE.'

### **Stewardship**

#### **STEWARDSHIP: 2024-2025**

Fisk UMC has been blessed by your faithful stewardship gifts of tithes, time and talent. Every year we honor the ways in which we continue to give back to God through Fisk's ministry and mission work. For this, we are thankful for all God has done and continues to do in our lives and the life of this great church. And that is why we sing, "Blessed be the tie that binds" (UMH 557).

We have been bonded by a covenant instituted by God through the sacrament of Baptism. That has made us the church of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. And as baptized Christians, we can look back with gratitude on how far God have brought us and what we have been given.

Therefore, let us continue to focus on prayer as the Holy Spirit moves in our midst and enable us to be faithful stewards in rethinking our giving for 2025. As we do, it is our prayer that God will multiply our gifts, widen our circle and increase our territory to create a harvest that will need more workers. Thank you and God bless you!

On November 17, we celebrated Consecration Sunday with the blessing of our gifts. If you have not yet received your covenant pledge card in the mail, they are available in the church office but if you need one to be sent to you, please call Carolyn in the office at (508) 653-1674. With thanksgiving to God and our appreciation for each of you.

### **United Women in Faith**



United  
Women  
in Faith

***UWF***  
***Christmas Brunch***  
**Saturday,**  
**December 14, 2024**  
**at 10:00 AM**



**All women are invited to join us for brunch, a time of laughter and fellowship along with some merry music making (think carol sing!)**

We will have a gift swap so please bring a wrapped gift (max \$10) to exchange. "Recycled" (regifted) items are fine!

Please RSVP to Debbie Friscino by December 8<sup>th</sup>  
[dfriscino@gmail.com](mailto:dfriscino@gmail.com) or  
call the church office 508-653-1674

**Susanna Circle** will be having their Christmas Luncheon at the **Wayside Inn in Sudbury on Thursday, December 12th at 2:15**. Please let Janis Cail know if you will be attending. Do not forget that individual UWF pledges are due to Terry.

Meet in the church parking lot at 1:30PM if you would like to carpool.



**Truly a Blessing...**

Fisk women, and their families, have been busy this fall between the yard sale and the fair. We sorted and moved hundreds of things to get ready for the yard sale. And then the pink bags started arriving! When combined with items left from the sale, we filled the truck with just under 2,400 pounds of “stuff” to recycle. **Activities that day generated slightly more than \$2,000 for missions.**

But the work didn't stop there. We regrouped and went to work on the Fall Fair. Once again, our husbands, friends and children joined us – ***we are SO GRATEFUL for your help.*** It was a successful day with good attendance, good food and scrumptious baked goods to buy. We talked with many people in the community about the work UWF does to care for creation and promote awareness of the impact of gun violence. The silent auction generated our greatest revenue thanks to the tireless work of many in getting donations and encouraging bidding. When everything was accounted for, **UWF earned \$7,800 from the event.**

We look forward to sharing these monies with organizations and programs benefitting women and children locally and throughout the world.



**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 \$16 for 1 or \$30 for 2 cookie assortments and must be pre-ordered. Pickup options are Saturday, December 21st, 9-10am or during fellowship on Sunday, December 22nd. Number of assortments available are limited so order today! Last day to order is Sunday, December 15th.

Look for details during Fellowship after Worship service on December 8th and 15th. Or to order, email Sherry Culver, [sherryleeculver@gmail.com](mailto:sherryleeculver@gmail.com)

**What is the Wesley Development Group? How will it help Fisk church?**

With the availability of several grants, the Trustees of Fisk Church have hired the Wesley Development Group (part of the United Methodist Foundation of New England) to conduct a Consulting Engagement with Fisk UMC church leaders. **The Consulting Engagement (one of several programs this group runs) helps churches and organizations reach their potential within the context of the communities they serve.** Their consultants have expertise in real estate development, architecture, structural engineering, affordable housing, project management, and more. **The Group's goal is to provide Fisk UMC with an analysis that offers clarity as the church determines the path ahead for its ministry.** This Group has already helped 30 congregations over the past 18 months.

During the Consulting Engagement, the Group will make an evaluation of Fisk's assets, physical and financial, to determine their best use for a vital and sustainable ministry in the future. First they will perform a site visit. Then, they will meet with church leadership to discuss the core values of our church. They will want to gain insight into both the church and the community we serve and will strive to understand what the church fundamentally needs to know from the results of our analysis.

After this, they will do an analysis of trends within both the church and the broader community over the last ten to twenty years. They will interview a few key community members within the broader community who can provide insight to Fisk's decision making concerning its future. Afterwards, a second meeting with church leadership is held to present initial findings and gain feedback. Together we develop a strategic path or, perhaps more likely, alternative strategic paths with the strengths and weaknesses of each, along with corresponding investments of time, talent, and resources necessary. A final meeting is held to present the analysis and to provide tangible information for clear decision making in the implementation of a strategic vision for the future of Fisk Church's ministry.

Fisk church leaders are excited about conducting this Consulting Engagement with the Wesley Development Group and are eager to learn what might be in the future for Fisk Church.

Geoffrey Del Sesto,

President, Fisk UMC Board of Trustees

# MISSIONS and OUTREACH



## FOOD DONATIONS

As November ends, please bring your food donations to the church. These will be donated to the **Natick Food Pantry** to feed our neighbors who may be “food insecure.” Your gifts are needed and appreciated. DEADLINE is December 8<sup>th</sup>

Suggestions: cereals, soups, canned fruit and vegetables, snacks for school children, crackers etc.

## THANKS TO MIKE AND AMY

Thanks for making the trip to UMEM in Salem Maine. They delivered all the toys and Christmas gifts to **Maine Economic Ministry**. The congregation was very generous, and we are thankful for the delivery. *The Hoyts*

## MAPLE SYRUP

The Bruns also brought back a supply of Maine Maple Syrup. We sold some at the Fair last week, but have plenty for you to purchase as gifts, stocking stuffers or to enjoy at home! Great Hostess Gift! All sales benefit **UMEM**-United Methodist Economic Ministry and the family farms who produced the syrup!  
Pints--\$12.00 Quarts--\$20.00

See Gary or Marcia Hoyt

## WHITE STOCKINGS

and

## HOMELESS VETERANS

What do these have to do with each other?

For many years we have filled the long (knee high) white men’s stockings with small games, cards, shampoo, lotions, flashlights, notepads, knit hats, gloves, and whatever else you can find that will fit. Then we add some candy to top it off.



These are then delivered to the **Boston Homeless Veterans** building in Boston. This is always a fun way to “say Happy Holidays” to those who have served our country and now they need our help.

**December 8 is the day!** Come to Fellowship Time and fill a stocking with the suggested items.

We have enough stockings...just need you to replenish some of the other things—hats, gloves, deck of cards, games etc.



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

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO OUR MISSIONARIES

Send them an email to wish them a Blessed Christmas and thank them for their ministry.

Dr. Belinda Forbes in Nicaragua [Belindagbgm@gmail.com](mailto:Belindagbgm@gmail.com)

Mat and Kayle Pelletier in South Africa [KaylePelletier@gmail.com](mailto:KaylePelletier@gmail.com)

Financial gifts may be sent to either one by putting a check in the offering MEMO-Belinda and/or Kayle



**Children's Sunday School Classes**  
 Join us Sundays 9:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m. Grades 1-7. Bring your child for some time with the Lord and give them the gift of Christian Community. – Susan Carney

**Women's Bible Study on ZOOM**

**Women's Bible Study on ZOOM: Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m.**

Please let me know if you are interested and I will send you information. God bless you all. We serve an awesome God and His word lights our path. -Susan Carney  
[susanjcarney@gmail.com](mailto:susanjcarney@gmail.com)

**United Methodist Men**

**United Methodist Men**

**All men and older boys are welcome to a DECEMBER TRADITION!**

**We gather for breakfast together at a restaurant before we go along to worship at Fisk. Mel's Commonwealth Café Route 30 Wayland, December 8 at 8:00am**  
**-Best to make reservations with Gary Hoyt or Geoff DelSesto**

**Fisk Pizza, Games, and Fellowship**

**Save the date!**

**COM will be hosting a gathering on Friday, Jan. 17 for our church community. Pizza, games, fellowship. All are welcome.**

Time not yet decided.

**Coffee Hour/ Fellowship Time Schedule**

If you would like to host coffee hour, there is a sign-up sheet located in the back of the Sanctuary or you can email the Office. Thank you!



**UMC Commonwealth East District News**



**NEW HOPE EPISCOPAL AREA**  
 THE NEW ENGLAND AND NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCES  
 THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

This is the new name for our New England Conference UMC and this logo was designed by our new bishop: Rev. Dr Thomas J. Bickerton. At the most recent district event of Commonwealth East in November 2024, he emphasized that relationships are crucial. He also offered his expectations around how we will be in relationship.

For this, I shared what was highlighted:

- R** – Take **responsibility** for what you say, feel without blaming others.
- E** – Use **empathetic** listening.
- S** – Be **sensitive** to differences in communication/cultural styles.
- P** – **Ponder** what you hear and feel before you speak.
- E** – **Examine** your own assumptions and perceptions.
- C** – Keep **Confidentiality**
- T** – **Tolerate** ambiguity because we are not here to debate.

So, as the year 2024 ends, it is my prayer that we will take these words as our rod and staff for next year and all the years ahead.

"HAPPY NEW YEAR & GOD'S BLESSINGS!"

**New District information: District 6-Hub #5 Commonwealth East and Commonwealth West District Offices have combined and there is a new email address: [ce-cwoffice@neumc.org](mailto:ce-cwoffice@neumc.org) (NEW Email address!) Website: [www.neumc.org/CE](http://www.neumc.org/CE)**  
**District Superintendent: Rev. Nizzi Santos Digan**  
**Address: 2600 Massachusetts Ave, Lexington, MA 02421**  
**Email address: [CEDS@neumc.org](mailto:CEDS@neumc.org)**  
**Administrative Assistant: Allyson Printz**  
**(978) 682-7676 ext. 270 Email : [CEDistrict@neumc.org](mailto:CEDistrict@neumc.org)**

**December Celebrations**

**Happy Birthday!**

**Claire Prince 12/3 Thom Townsend 12/18**

**Friday, December 20, 9:00 a.m.**

- 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
- Aiden Izuta 12/12

**Thank you, Fisk Family!**

This Thanksgiving season, I wish to take the opportunity to thank my wonderful Fisk family for all the prayers, cards, my prayer shawl, and offers to help after my fall this spring. It is heartwarming to know that good friends are available in difficult times. God bless you all.

~ Marilyn Donnelly

**A thank you note to Fisk UMC from A Place to Turn:**



I am writing to personally thank everyone at Fisk Methodist Church for your generous donation of 870 diapers to A Place to Turn. It will have an immediate impact on our ability to serve the growing number of families visiting the pantry every month, many of whom have young children. As you know, diapers are essential to

healthy babies and peace of mind for parents. Your partnership and support help us keep all babies in our community healthy and happy.

Thank you!

With Gratitude,

**Rebecca Gallo**, Executive Director, A Place to Turn

**January Messenger Deadline: Please submit information by**

**Community News / Events**



**The A Cappella Singers Present Holiday Concerts 2024**

- 1. Saturday, December 7th, 7:00 p.m. Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church 106 Walnut Street, Natick
- 2. Sunday, December 8th, 3:00 p.m. First Congregational Church 100 Winter Street, Norwood MA

Tickets available at the door.

Visit their website [www.theacappellasingers.org](http://www.theacappellasingers.org) Or call 774-231-8508 for more info.

**Natick Annual Community Opioid Vigil**

Will be held at the **First Congregational Church in Natick on Sunday, December 15 at 5pm.**

Come to listen, remember those lives lost and give support to those dealing with challenges.

**2024 Christmas Poinsettia Order**



**Please PRINT legibly**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Plants \_\_\_\_\_

Red

White

My plant honors: \_\_\_\_\_

My plant is in memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please take your plant home on Christmas Eve 12/24.

**Orders with payment must be in by:**

**Wednesday, December 11.**

You can mail or leave your order form in the Church Office door basket.

*Please make checks payable to Fisk Memorial UMC & note Altar Guild or Poinsettia 2024 on the memo line.*

**Red and White 6" Poinsettias are \$25.00 each.**

=====

Altar Guild - Total Amount Received: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check

Cash