

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church - 106 Walnut St., Natick, MA 01760
(508) 653-1674 www.fiskumc.org

February 2016

Reflections from Pastor Xia

After transitioning into a new year, what can we look forward to in the coming days? "What is the positive future to which God is calling Fisk church?" "What is our shared vision?" Can you name one? In mid January, our leaders started the year with prayerful discernment and discussion. We gathered together at Admin Board meeting. Based on the theme "Growing Our Faithful Community," we had a fruitful discussion on how we can better support one another in a mutual ministry, and how we continue to walk with Jesus through active fellowship, worship, ministry of caring and outreach.

Our Spiritual life will be enhanced during this month as Lent is fast approaching. In the season of Lent, we are all reminded of the forty-day wilderness experience of Jesus. It is a time for us, a community of faith, to look inward, to journey again with our Lord, and to reflect upon the question, "What can we do to follow Jesus in our day to day life, to deepen our faith in God's grace?"

Dallas Willard says, if a certain spiritual discipline helps you grow in God's grace, then by all means do it. Prayer, Christian fellowship and study, fasting, works of love ... Find where your heart is, pray, reflect, act, and walk the way with Jesus our Lord. To me, this Lenten season will be especially meaningful and life-giving. Along with other colleagues from the New England Conference, I will be on a spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It is a great opportunity for me to join in a journey of prayer and meditation with my coworkers in ministry, to share our reflection on faith, and to walk together in the footsteps of Jesus. This journey of prayer will definitely enrich and renew my spiritual life, through touching, feeling, praying and meditating in the land where Jesus was born, where he was tempted, where he preached and healed, suffered, died and rose again. After I come back, I will be sharing this spiritual journey with all of you ... probably you will

see a different person, fully re-energized, with life deeply touched by the Holy Spirit. Please pray for your pastor and other pastors who are going on the journey together.

Together let us prepare our hearts, and strengthen our relationship and covenant with God in the season of Lent. May God's peace and blessings be with you each and every day!

Prayer Support for Pastor Xia

Every four years, the bishop leads a spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land for recently ordained pastors. I am pleased to let you know that Bishop Devadhar has invited Pastor Xia to go on this year's trip which will be held from February 15th-24th. They will be praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, sailing across the Sea of Galilee and contemplating the Sermon on the Mount at the spot it was delivered. The trip will undoubtedly be a life-changing event which we will all benefit from, whether from insights she will share at small group studies, through worship, evening presentations or personal discussions when she returns.

Please join me in praying for safe travels for Xia and the team from the New England Conference. May they may be touched by the Holy Spirit, filled with renewed energy and an enriched understanding of our Christian faith.

Debbie Friscino
SPRC Chair



Wednesday
February 24



The Theme for Fisk in 2016

“Growing Our Faithful Community”

“Growing Our Faithful Community” and “Acts 29”

Fisk Friends, I am very pleased to have begun my service to Fisk as the Administrative Board Chair. The Administrative Board met January 14th and had a very fruitful discussion about the theme for Fisk in 2016 and what we as a congregation want to put in and get out of our shared experiences as a Christian community at Fisk.

As we see on each Sunday’s bulletin, Fisk has a marvelous mission statement.

Fisk Church is a faithful community.

Drawing others to Christ

Growing our faith and trust in God

Sharing God’s light through prayer and witness

Serving others through mission and outreach

As Pastor Xia mentioned in her sermon on January 24, 2016, the theme for Fisk this year is “Growing our Faithful Community.” This is a reminder that Fisk is a community that shares an intimate faith in God, fellowship and friendship. We share our burdens and celebrations as well. Fisk is also a community that welcomes everyone, visitors, new members and those (like me) who have been around for many years.

The Bible is full of inspiring stories of active fellowship, worship and evangelism. The Book of Acts has many of these stories. Some passages for reflection are Acts 1: 1-10, Acts 2: 1-4, Acts 2: 42-47, and Acts 8: 4-8.

One could ask where Fisk can be found in these stories. Have you looked in the book of Acts, chapter 29 verses 1 through 4? Look it up. If you have trouble finding that passage it’s OK. It’s up to Fisk and Christians around the world to provide the 29th chapter of Acts.

At our January 14 meeting, the Administrative Board discussed the goals for 2016 in the context of our mission statement, our theme “Growing our Faithful Community” and the idea of “Acts 29.” As always

I was encouraged by the insightful discussion, innovative ideas and deep commitment and concern for Fisk as a community of faith.

The “Acts 29 Challenge” set before the board can be paraphrased as planning all of 2016 with our theme in mind and all details planned within the context of the big picture at Fisk. At the time I write this letter, the various committees at Fisk are planning 2016 in this light and will bring the plans to the Council on Ministries to see how the plans fit the big picture. Throughout the year the Council on Ministries and Administrative Board will review our progress and forward looking plans as they relate to “Growing our Faithful Community.”

I look forward to 2016 and all the experiences that we as a Faithful Community will share. I am pleased that I can serve as Administrative Board Chair and welcome any feedback or ideas on how Fisk can “Grow our Faithful Community.”

Yours in Christ, Tom Currie.



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2016 – Growing our Faithful Community... Together!

Acts 29 – Fisk Growing our Faithful Community

Canceling Worship Due to

Inclement Weather

When we need to cancel Sunday morning worship services due to snowstorms or power losses, we

will communicate that information via email or on our website. It will also be posted on Channel 5.





Season of Lent 2016

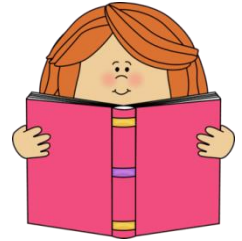
February 10, Ash Wednesday – Fisk will host an open sanctuary from 7PM-9PM for individual prayer and reflection. Come when you can and listen to selective scripture readings, rest with quiet music, pray by candlelight and receive an imposition of Lenten ashes at our communion railing.

Weekly **Soup and Fellowship** followed by a brief time of reading and reflection from Henri Nouwen's book, "Walk with Jesus." We will conclude with Night Prayer.

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| Feb. 18 | Thursday 6PM-7:30PM
sponsored by Missions
*I Walk with Jesus |
| Feb. 25 | Thursday 6PM-7:30PM
sponsored by Education
*Jesus is Condemned |
| March 3 | Thursday 6PM-7:30PM
sponsored by SPRC and Friends
*Jesus Carries His Cross |
| March 10 | Thursday 6PM-7:30PM
sponsored by Evangelism
*Jesus Falls |
| March 17 | Thursday 6PM-7:30P)
sponsored by Finance
*Jesus Meets Mary |
| March 20 | Palm Sunday |
| March 24 | Maundy Thursday (6PM-7:00PM)
sponsored by Worship |
| March 25 | Good Friday (open sanctuary) |
| March 26 | Easter Sunday 10:30 AM Worship |

UMW Reading Program Reminder

The 2016 list of suggested books to read will be available in Ogle Parlor on the bookshelves. More books from the list are coming in weekly and will be available on the bookshelves in Ogle Parlor. Currently we have copies of Tilly, Coaltown Jesus, and a few others. Watch for updates. We have many inspirational, fun and soul searching choices. You can also order on your own through, Amazon, Barnes and Noble or your favorite bookstore. Ask me if you are looking for a specific book and can't find it, I'm happy to help locate it for you.



Terry Ames, UMW Resource Coordinator



February 2016

The finance committee has closed our books for 2015. We had a projected deficit of \$15,000. We were not able to pay the full portion of our mission shares for 2015 this resulted in a much smaller deficit of \$3954.

Last winter was one of the worst yet and our snow removal costs skyrocketed. We as a congregation stepped up and covered most of the extra expenses, which helped keep the deficit down.

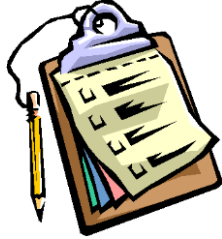
We have asked each committee to look at ways to reduce costs and increase revenue. This is never an easy process but when we all work together we can win. Let's grow our church and make 2016 the best year ever. We need everyone's prayerful and giving support in 2016

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

Larry Drolet (Chair), Pastor Xia, Dorothy Phillips (Lay Leader), Thom Townsend (Chair-Admin Board), David Cail (Treasurer), Sherry Culver (Financial Secretary), Geoff Del Sesto (Trustees), Tom Currie (SPRC), Jen Garrant, Crystal Mayo. Michael Bruns (Outgoing Chair)

HOSPITALITY!

Greeters - Ushers - Fellowship Hour



We are blessed to have dedicated and hospitable people serving on Team Hospitality! Adults and youth who are committed to welcoming everyone who enters the sanctuary on Sunday morning, pass out bulletins and collect the morning offering, and prepare and serve coffee & snacks at Fellowship Time following worship; serve God at Fisk as greeters, ushers, and host Fellowship Time. If you are interested in participating as a member of Team Hospitality, please sign-up during Fellowship Time following worship or use this link to access

the online sign-up page

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Vae2fNNSoPt163tEjvF9huXSH4U1g4FCQsnYgLTGmOQ/edit#gid=2083804203>



Where Faith and Life Connect

Prayer Chain - "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." (Philippians 4:6) This is where Fisk's prayer chain begins! We all have needs, situations that we are going through, and we all need guidance from our loving God. If you need prayer for yourself, your family, friends or any situation, please contact Joanne in the church office, Pastor Xia, or Marilyn Donnelly. Marilyn is coordinating the telephone prayer chain and calling lists for Fisk have been developed. Information on the prayer chain will be available in early February.

Visits – Is visiting and talking with people a gift of yours? We are visiting church members who cannot get out to church and would like a visit. If you would like a visit – or would like to visit someone, please let us know!

Care Bears - These bears sit in our pews once in a while, and they are located in a basket in the back of our sanctuary. They are a visible reminder that there is always someone in need of comfort. Fisk friends and family deliver the bears to those that need to be reminded of God's love and our care for them. If you know someone who has a need – bring them a Care Bear!

Fisk Pot-Luck Suppers! A Love Thy Neighbor pot-luck supper will be held on Saturday, February 13th at 5:30 p.m. Details are on the following page. In addition to the Love Thy Neighbor pot-luck, , our youth are planning for a family game night, so bring your favorite board game and your ping pong paddle and enjoy additional fellowship after dinner. Valentine Crafts will also be available! Future pot-luck suppers include a Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church Old Fashioned Hymn Sing Orchestra in April, and a celebration of Mothers, Grandmothers, and Great-Grandmothers in May!

Marilyn Donnelly and Pat Price, Co-Chairs

Happy February from the Sunday School

For God
so lovEd the world
thAt He gave His
onLy
begottEn
SoN so
ThAt whoever
believEs
iN Him shall
havE everlasting
Life.



Family Bio Sheets

In the January edition of The Messenger, we included a Family Bio Sheet to be completed and turned into the Church Office. If you haven't filled one out yet, there is still time! Please pick one up in the Church Office, or email your request to Joanne; return forms to the labeled box in the office.

Love Thy Neighbor Potluck Supper February 13, 5:30 PM



The Hannah Circle will be meeting on
February 9th
(the day before Ash Wednesday)

We will focus on role-playing/acting prep for "The Easter Story Attitude" – a play being presented in March.

We will be doing Valentine crafts for the Sunday School children and children in shelters. Women are invited to bring their lunch. Dessert and beverages provided. If you are able to come, please contact Nancy Parece or Nancy Swan.

The Hannah's meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.



United Methodist Men's meeting (UMM)
Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 7:00 p.m. room 9

All Men are invited to join for fellowship and meal of pizza & salad.

We will discuss our plans for 2016 so bring your appetites and ideas.

Call Geoff Del Sesto 508-651-1876 for more details.

Altar Guild

Thank You Amy Bruns and Barbara Naser for donating flowers for the altar in January. Also – thank you to all who donated poinsettias to decorate the altar in December at Christmas.



If you would like to give flowers in 2016, flower reservation forms are located in the church office or in the literature rack outside the nursery. Please contact Barbara Beekman, Rev. Cheryl Gates, or Debi Henry for more information



This is our first potluck supper of 2016. We hope to make this a monthly event, and a lively and spirited gathering of church family and friends. Please put this on your calendar and plan to attend and bring your favorite dish to share. In addition, the Youth are planning for a family game night, so bring your favorite board game and your ping pong paddle and enjoy additional fellowship after dinner.

This link will connect you with the sign up page for food items and volunteers.

<https://www.mealtrain.com/potlucks/vvgwo6>

Questions? Please reply to Pat Price
corey_pat@hotmail.com

Recycle Recycle Recycle

On behalf of the Missions Commission, I invite you to join us in improving on our recycling skills right here at Fisk.

There are a few blue barrels in some of the rooms that are labeled recycling destinations and now there will be two clear, labeled barrels as well. You will see these barrels in Ogle Parlor and one at coffee hour.



This weekend alone we filled those clear recyclers twice thanks to the kids at Music and Movement and Fisk family at coffee hour.

There are single stream barrels outside the FACE entrance that we will empty into

Please place paper, plastic, and glass (that are not covered with food) in the recyclers.

May God bless our efforts to protect our earth.

Suggestions to Susan Carney



For youth and their friends in Grades 6 – 12 Youth Fellowship Leaders:
Bingxin Xu and Tian Zhang

FEBRUARY

Plans are to hold regular MYF meetings after Sunday services and host special activities periodically for all youth. Friends are always welcome to attend MYF meetings and events.

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

What's happening in February?

Feb 7 MYF 12 noon
Feb 13 3pm - MYF Valentine's Day baking,
Feb 13 5:30 Youth and Families Game Night
Feb 21 MYF 12 noon
Feb 26-28 Sr. High Retreat at Wanakee

Looking ahead to March...

March 13 - Museum of Science, 12noon
Jerusalem at the IMAX, 2pm

How to contact Bingxin and Tian : For youth related activities, they will be using fiskyouth@gmail.com. If you have an idea for a youth program or wish to volunteer, contact them or:
Sherry Culver, Youth Council Chair,
sherrycd@comcast.net



MUSIC & MOVEMENT TIME
For Kids Ages 2 To 7
February 6 and February 27

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The event is **FREE!** No registration is required.
For more information and pictures of past classes, visit:
www.fiskumc.org/music-and-movement.html

**MISSION
POSSIBLE**

The new 2016 Mission Committee has met and has scheduled many plans for the next few months.

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, March 5, 2016

5:30pm

All ages are invited

Bring a friend or neighbor!

Mission Event

We have planned a fun evening of "appetizers type foods" with lots of information about MISSIONS around the world. Enjoy games, displays and possibly missionaries to tell their stories. Where is the United Methodist Church in Mission? Where is Fisk in Mission?

As part of our Social Action emphasis we are making some new steps to engage the church in more recycling. Watch for marked bins. See article in this newsletter about this effort.

What are we doing in the name of MISSIONS? Ask one of the Missions Committee if you do not know about these activities. Starbucks—Natick Food Pantry—Belinda Forbes—Redeemable cans and plastic bottles—Recycling (single stream) —Collect

aluminum pull tabs—Family Promise—Natick Service Council...to name a few!

More next month!

Marcia Hoyt-chair, Janis Cail, Susan Carney, Diane O'Loughlin, Pat Price and Janis Townsend.



Fisk's United Methodist Women have a busy calendar for 2016...working for missions for women, children and youth.

In January we installed the new officers and enjoyed a Lunch and Book Review together.



Black History Month is a month set aside to learn, honor, and celebrate the achievements of black men and women throughout history.

Our February meeting is a **Saturday Brunch!** We will celebrate Black History Month and our Charter for Racial Justice. Dorothy Phillips is presenting a program based on some of her life experiences and connecting it to Martin Luther King Jr. We will gather at 9:30 and close by 11:00am on Saturday **February 6**. ALL teen girls and women are invited and encouraged to attend.

At least four of us are taking a **Road trip to Syracuse** NY in June. We are reserving seats on a UMW bus and have reserved hotel rooms. We are attending the Northeast Jurisdiction UMW meeting. Sound interesting? Want to join us? Call Barbara B. The dates are June 16-18. Theme is

A Fresh Wind Blowing.

In March we have been invited to join with our Wayland UMW sisters for a luncheon and program. Mark the date March 19.

Marcia Hoyt-UMW Coordinator for Social Action

