

The Messenger

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

January 2016

Reflections from Pastor Xia

Dear Fisk church family and friends,

**There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
He [God] has made everything beautiful in its time.
He has also set eternity in the human heart.
(Ecclesiastes 3:1, 11a)**

A new year offers the gift of time. How will the next twelve months unfold? We may experience times of accomplishment and times of failure, times of joy and times of struggle. All our seasons, all our days, bring us measures of hope and happiness, challenge and change.

God, beyond time itself, has given us the precious gift of time. How to use it wisely and responsibly? It is a question for all of us.

As this year begins, you might consider how to approach the coming year as an opportunity for growth in many ways—in spirituality, faith, wisdom, study, career, and so forth. Can we learn to be mindfully present in the moment, receptive to grace, willing to learn and to continue the powerful process of transformation? What seeds that were planted long ago might bear fruit? What blessing of God's gifts might we be ready to live into?

It is our prayer to God, God of all our years, that we may receive our days as a precious gift, and return that gift to God in work and joy, prayer and action, wisdom and faith. As the days unfold, may all of us be strengthened by the sense of God's presence in all things that measure our days.

Rev. Xia Jiao-Chur



We all love the Christmas story, and the promise that the birth of our Savior brings to us all. We are pleased to report that we at Fisk are blessed with a very positive response to our financial concerns. In an effort to share this good news, on a preliminary basis, here at press time on December 28, we know that:

- December pledges were 25% over budget and 32% over last year (after the first 3 weeks),
- November/December giving was 10% more than last year (after 3 weeks),
- Our special appeal to increase awareness should exceed our prayerful planned expectations,
- Our special fund raisers were well supported, well attended, and provided much needed support.

So, let us all say thank you for a wonderful effort and commitments to giving. We do not yet have the final results, especially on the spending side of supporting our ministries. We do not yet know what 2016 will bring. We do not yet know all of our challenges for 2016. We DO know that we still need to hear from a few of our faithful supporters who have not yet had the chance to complete their new 2016 Commitment of Giving. We do know that we will need everyone's prayerful and giving support in 2016. But, let us pause to say thank you, and recognize our blessings, and celebrate the good tidings of the angels.

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

Larry Drolet (Chair), Pastor Xia, Dorothy Phillips (Lay Leader), Tom Currie (Chair-Admin Board), David Cail (Treasurer), Sherry Culver (Financial Secretary), Geoff Del Sesto (Trustees), Debbie Friscino (SPRC), Jen Garrant, George Haranis, Thom Townsend, Mike Bruns (Outgoing Chair)



CMA Resource Day in Sudbury UMC,
on February 27, 2016

Description and registration:

http://cmdresourceday.com/?epl_event=spiritual-leadership

For all committee chairs and laity leaders

Please give your name to the office before 1/22/2016, that we may register as a group. (7 or more). Our advance registration (before 2/1/2016) will reduce the registration fee from \$20 per person to \$12 per person.



Included in this Messenger you will find a biographical information sheet for you to complete for your family. We want to be sure that we have your current mailing address, email addresses, ages of children and birth-date information for our church family records.

The form may be completed and returned to Fisk via regular mail (106 Walnut St., Natick, MA 01760), email (fiskoffice@fiskumc.org) or left in the office for our Admin Assistant, Joanne.

You may also complete a form during *Time for Fellowship* on Sundays during January. See Sherry Culver or Marcia Hoyt with questions or to complete a form.

WORSHIP - TEAM NEWS!

What a wondrous time in the life of the Church! We have journeyed through Advent, preparing our hearts for the commemorating the birth of Jesus.

In January we will be following Jesus through his life up to the beginning of his ministry.

January 4 -- Epiphany -- The arrival of the 3 Wise Men and their warning to Mary and Joseph to flee from Herod. Why?.

January 11 -- The baptism of Jesus by John and God's declaration of Jesus as Son and Heir. How does John feel?



January 18 -- Jesus travels to Galilee. While there, he begins the choosing of his disciples. Peter and John are NOT the first!!! Who are?



January 25 -- Jesus announcing the good news of God's Kingdom and chooses 4 more disciples. Who else does he choose?

These are merely the highlights of the first 30+ yrs in the life of Jesus. We encourage you to fill in the blanks. Find a comfortable Bible, one that fits where you are in your spiritual journey. Check with Pastor Xia and Cheryln Gates, Deacon for suggestions.

We look forward to seeing you on Sundays and during the weeks at gatherings.

Serving the Lord,
The Worship Team

Ministry of Caring 2016

As we affirm faith in God through our ministries, we claim a sacred place where Christ's love unites us with compassion and the caring of others. In order to make the love of Christ a real presence in the life of each person we reach within our faith community; our ministries:

- Extends support during the trials of life and celebrates the joys
- Leads persons to resources appropriate to their needs
- Encourages all to explore and maximize their individual spiritual gifts for the work of the church and to the glory of God.

To help and participate in the Ministry of Caring, please contact Pastor Xia or Ministry of Caring Co-Chairs, Marilyn Donnelly and Pat Price. Meal preparation, transportation, praying, card/note/letter writing, visitation and listening are some of the ways you can help.

Marilyn Donnelly (508) 359-4025

Pat Price (508) 873-1514



It is time to make your 2016 flower reservations! The fresh flowers placed on the altar each Sunday beautify the sacred space of our church to honor God, and they are a gift to those attending morning

worship. The altar flowers can be dedicated to commemorate a special event, birthday or anniversary, or to remember a loved one. Please contact Debi Henry, (508) 651-0256 or altarguild@fiskumc.org or Barbara Beekman to reserve a Sunday, or for more information.

2016 Flower Deliveries The Altar Guild is looking for people who on an occasional Sunday would like to deliver flowers to a person or place in need of joy. Those who donate flowers sometimes want them to go to someone in need and this may be a shut-in, local nursing home or hospital. If you feel called to this ministry, please let Debi, Barbara, or Rev. Cheryln Gates know.

MISSIONS

The new Missions Committee welcomes any and all suggestions or ideas for activities to support the many, many MISSION opportunities before us.



One option is the Global Ministries of our church connection. The PURPOSE of this group is to connect the church with Mission.

The four Mission Goals:

1. Make disciples of Jesus Christ
2. Strengthen/renew congregations
3. Alleviate human suffering
4. Seek justice, freedom and peace

This is one of the many partners of our committee. Watch for others and how we can interact.



Connect yourself!

Global Ministries

www.umcmmission.org

facebook.com/GlobalMinistries

UMCOR

www.umcor.org

facebook.com/UMCOR

New Missions Committee:

Marcia Hoyt-Chair

Pat Price

Diane O'Loughlin

Janis Townsend

Janis Cail

Susan Carney

Claudia Segura

Watch the Bulletin Board for Mission news!



Happy New Year from all the members of United Methodist Women! As we step into a New Year of activities and programs that support women, children and youth, we invite YOU to join us. Our meetings are open to all women who support our PURPOSE which emphasizes the following mission initiatives and priorities of United Methodist Women.

- To be a community of women
- To know God
- To develop a creative and supportive fellowship
- To expand concepts of mission

YOUR INVITATION

Sunday, January 10, following worship, you are encouraged to attend a light lunch in Room 8 and 9. This is a time of fellowship and an opportunity to see the scope of the UMW program for 2016. Questions? Call Susan Carney 655-6148

Ongoing programs include:

- ❖ Circle meetings on a monthly schedule
- ❖ Prayer Shawl knitting-Wednesdays at 10am
- ❖ Reading Program—By reading 5 books from a selected list and the response magazine, you can complete the Reading Program by December 2016. Books are available in Ogle Parlor.
- ❖ Jurisdiction UMW meeting in Syracuse NY June 16-18
- ❖ Fisk Women's Retreat August 12-14 in Maine
- ❖ Two Yard Sales—May 14 and October 15
- ❖ Annual Country Fair November 12th

President-Janis Cail



Maple Syrup is here again!

We sold out at the Country Fair and have been to the United Methodist Economic Ministry in Maine to get the remainder of their stock for this year. This is a great quick gift—Thanks You, Hostess or just a thoughtful gesture.

We have one pint left for \$12.00 and 6 quarts for \$18.00 each. This is great price. The United Methodist Men make a couple of dollars on each sale to help pay their Fisk Pledge and the remainder goes to the producers—who are underserved families needing help to pay their winter fuel bills. See Gary Hoyt.

For the January messenger Evangelism would just like to announce that we are open to input from everyone please join us after coffee hour the third Sunday of the month. Please also speak with Heather Oluwole late or Michelle Drolet with any suggestions input you may have at any time. We look forward to an exciting year you may reach us by email at Heather Oluwole@hotmail.com or Michelled@towerwall.com.



**Tuesday
January 26**



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

- JANUARY -

Regular MYF meetings are held after Sunday services and we 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 January?

January 3th, No MYF meeting

January 10th MYF meeting

January 17th MYF meeting

January 22th Make dumplings and watch movie at Xu's

January 31st No MYF meeting

Looking ahead to February...

Winter retreat: Either Feb 12-14 or 19-21, 2016

How to contact Bingxin and Tian : For youth related activities, email to 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



Here we go...the Missions Committee and the Fisk Youth Group are co-sponsoring the...

Souper Bowl of Caring 2016.

To help us fight hunger we have planned two fund raisers. These are two food based events!

January 31 - Soup Lunch at Fisk following worship

February 7 - Super Bowl Football Game—we will sell containers of soup and sub sandwiches for your Super Bowl Party or just to enjoy!

Watch for more details. Mark these dates on your calendar.

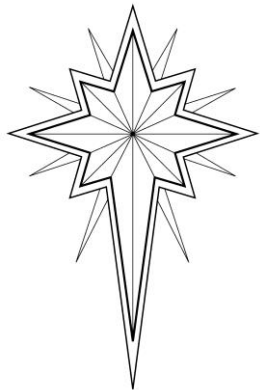
Thank You!

The Altar Guild thanks all who donated a poinsettia in honor or in memory of someone and helped beautify our sanctuary this Christmas season. The Altar Guild also thanks Joanne Fitzgerald in the church office, Deborah Hernandez, Julia Jaco, and Lois Potter for their help in coordinating the orders for the plants.

The Hannah Circle will not be meeting in January, but members are invited to pick up an "Exam" from Debi to do during the month and

bring it to the February 9th meeting (the day before Ash Wednesday) where they will focus on the “exam” and the role-playing/acting prep for the Easter Story.

January 6



EPIPHANY OF THE LORD