

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church - 106 Walnut St., Natick, MA 01760
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January 2017

Pastor's Note

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2017!!

The **New Year** is a wonderful time to recommit and have a fresh start. A fresh start can allow us to open our minds, our hearts and our hands to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As we enter into 2017, this can be a good time to also reflect on where we have been, what we have said and what we have done as individuals and as a community of faith.

Growing up in a community of faith, we felt blessed after surviving the busyness of Christmas into a new year. We woke up on the first day of the year; the dawn of a new year and we were grateful to God. Hence, we greeted everyone with these words, "Happy New Year, Me No Die." That simply meant that you did not pass away in the previous year because God has given you a second chance. Now, the challenge is, what do you do with a second chance? For each of us, it may be different but together, we can make a difference.

We can start by remembering the difference Jesus Christ makes in our lives and living that difference through our faith. We can count our blessings in hope of the new thing God will do. We can share love as we work together. We can find joy in worship, Bible study and in reaching out to others as we continue to be God's presence of peace in 2017. Therefore, my prayer is that the miracle of Christmas will create miracles in our lives, the life of this church, our community and the world.

May we be blessed to be a blessing to others!

Pastor Alecia

2017 Visioning Session

Saturday, January 14, 2017 @ 10:00 am - 12noon in rooms 8 & 9. Come to pray, to share, to dream and to spend time together as we finalize plans for the year, 2017 ("The Dawn of a New Year"). *Continental breakfast will be provided at 9:30 am.* Details are on page 2.

Happy New Year with love and blessing!

A New Year brings new things. As the New Year unfolds, I pray that these things will include Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. But no matter what unfolds in 2017, may we have comfort of warmth in all our relationships to help others and never forget to have humility and openness to accept help from others.

"HAPPY NEW YEAR", Pastor Alecia.

For continuous spiritual growth and reflection, read the following Scriptures, from the Lectionary, that were selected for our worship this month.

January 1

Isaiah 60:1-6
Mathew 2:13-23

January 8

Isaiah 42:1-9
Matthew 2:1-12

January 15

1 Corinthians 1:1-9
Psalm 40:1-11
John 1:29-42

January 22

1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Isaiah 9:1-4
Matthew 4:12-23

January 29

Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15
Matthew 5:1-12

WHERE ARE THE WISE MEN ???

The Wise Men, Magi, are still following the STAR. Traditionally, in the Christian calendar, the arrival of the Magi is celebrated on January 6th, Epiphany.

On their journey, Melchior, Casper and Balthazar stopped to pay their respects to King Herod, as was the custom for diplomats of foreign countries. The Bible (Matthew 2:1-18) tells us that, during their stay, King Herod questioned them about the birth of the King of the Jews. He claimed he wanted to go to the child to honor and worship him.

When the Magi arrived in Bethlehem not only did they bring gifts fit for "God incarnate", but were visited by the Angel of God warning them not to return to Herod with answers to his questions.

When Herod learned this, he ordered all males under the age of two to be killed. He wasn't going to chance being overthrown by this King of the Jews when he became an adult.

Joseph was also visited in a dream by the Angel of God with the warning to flee to Egypt with Mary and Jesus until Herod's death.

This year, Epiphany Sunday falls on January 8th. Come worship with us and welcome the Magi.



January 2017

"And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy...' Luke 2:10 KJV

We all love the Christmas story, and those good tidings. We are pleased to report that we at Fisk are blessed with a very positive response to our financial concerns. So, let us all say **thank you** for a wonderful effort and commitments to giving. We will be able to complete our reduced mission share obligations in full this year! Last year we were only able to pay less than 4% of our obligations. Praise the Lord for your generosity!

We do not yet know what the new year will bring. We do not yet know all of our challenges for 2017. 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 2017 Commitment of Giving. We do know that we will need everyone's prayerful and giving support in 2017. But, let us pause to say **thank you**, recognize our blessings, and celebrate the good tidings of the angels.

Larry Drolet, Finance Committee Chairman

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

2017 Church-Wide Planning Meeting

Saturday, January 14, 2017

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

All members of Fisk UM Church are invited to attend.

Input from the following committees and ministries are requested: Pastor, Deacon, Lay Leader and Lay Member to Annual Conference; Administrative Board, Chair; Council on Ministries, Chair plus chairs and members of Education, Evangelism, Missions and Worship; Finance Committee; United Methodist Women Executive Committee; United Methodist Men.

Please send "Plans for 2017" to Dorothy Phillips by January 12. She will compile documents on her computer for display on the screen in Room 8 (Use 14 pt or larger font). The plans should be presented as bullet points or talking points by desired month or season (For example from Education, July, Hold Vacation Bible School).

Tentative Agenda

Continental Breakfast

Welcome

Song

Opening Devotion

Review of 2016

Plans for 2017

Wrap-up 2017 Plans

Closing Devotion



Dorothy J. Phillips

Pastor Alecia Reeves-Freeman

Break into small groups (2 or more)

Committees or individual input

What worked

What did not work

What was left unfinished

Report out by Committees and Boards Plans and Commitments

All attendees

Rev. Cheryl Gates

Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

The Natick celebration of

Dr. Martin Luther King

Jr.'s birthday will be

Monday, January 16,

2017, Wilson Middle

School, 22 Rutledge Rd,

Natick, MA, at 10:00 AM.

Community service opportunities and resources will be available in the cafeteria following the celebration in the auditorium. There is no fee to attend.



THANK YOU FOR 2016

Thank you to all our leaders, committee members and this congregation for faithfulness and support to all the ministries of this church. May God richly bless each of you and your families in 2017 as you continue to worship and serve God's church; Fisk Memorial UMC, Natick, Massachusetts.
-Pastor Alecia



As United Methodist Women, we look forward to a new year, new opportunities and new challenges. Our Installation of Officers is scheduled to take place during worship on January 8th. Following that service we invite all women to attend a "light lunch" to hear our plans for 2017 and to enjoy this fellowship time together. You are invited!

MISSION POSSIBLE

Breads for Daniel's Table

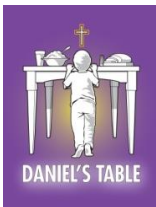
You may have read in the News about **Daniel's Table**. This is the dream of one couple in Framingham to "eradicate hunger in their town." This dream, with the support of many people, is well on its way to making this a reality. Some of us have heard about this program and wanted to do something special...well the decision has been made. Fisk will have a BREAD BAKE SALE monthly on the first

Sunday. This will continue through June (excluding January). We are asking you to bake a bread(s) to be sold at Fellowship Time following worship. Any type of bread, muffins etc. is acceptable and will be for sale. Come to buy, bake to sell or just make a donation to help feed the hungry. First Bread Sale is February 5.

Fisk's outpouring of generosity through the holidays surpassed our goals. We "sent our Christmas Gifts to the United Methodist Economic Ministries in September and helped fill their "Christmas Shoppe."

What a blessing!

In December we filled 72 "White Socks" with personal items and candy for our Veterans. They were delivered to the Veterans Agency in Worcester as "gifts of love" from Fisk. Thank you for your generosity and a special Thanks to the Youth Group who helped "Stuff" the stockings. Christmas cards were signed and sent to two prisons in Massachusetts for distribution.



Let's **Celebrate the New Year** with dinner at The Villa. We will gather at The Villa in Wayland (Rt. 30 East of Rt. 27) at 7:00pm on January 10th. Plan to meet us there or we will carpool from Fisk at 6:45pm. Call Gary Hoyt or David Cail for more information.



Ministry of Caring Where Faith and Life Connect!



The Christmas Season gave the Ministry of Caring and the congregation many opportunities to share God's love. We have been praying for Baby Thomas who had his 5th surgery just before Christmas. The Sunday before his surgery, Pat was able to deliver 83 paper ornaments from Fisk to go up on the tree in his room and around the walls. She also delivered 61 blank ornaments for visitors, doctors, nurses, and staff members to sign and create. The gratefulness from Thomas' mom overflowed. 144 ornaments! Way to go, Fisk! Now that is us being Church! Also during this past holiday season, 20 small cranberry breads with candy canes were delivered to home-bound and nursing home residents, and 45 Christmas Cards were mailed to church members and friends currently in our caring circle.

Philippians 4:6 reads "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." This verse is the foundation of Fisk's Prayer Chain. If you need and want prayers for yourself, your family, friends, or a situation, please don't hesitate to contact Pastor Alecia, Joanne Fitzgerald in the church office, or either one of us. Don't forget - if you have a need for a prayer shawl, let Joanne Billo or Winnie Sinclair know. As always, Prayer Bears are located at the back of the sanctuary. Please share the love and give to one whom you feel needs love and care.

We continue to visit and talk with people. If this is a gift of yours, please let us know! In this new year, if you are available to make a meal when needed, deliver care pieces, call those in prayer needed situations that do not have email or electronic devices, - let us know! We would love to help you share your talents and gifts with others.

Marilyn Donnelly and Pat Price, Co-Chairs
508-359-4025 508-873-1514

2017 Altar Flowers

It is time to make your 2017 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 Rev. Cheryl Gates, Debi Henry, or Barbara Beekman to reserve a Sunday or for more information.



2017 Flower Deliveries

The Altar Guild and The Ministry of Caring are 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 person in a local nursing home or hospital. If you feel called to this ministry, please let Debi, Barbara, or Rev. Cheryl Gates know.



The UMW Hannah Circle will be meeting on January 10, 2017, 12 noon-2p.m. All women are invited! Bring your lunch, and two desserts! No - not 2 cakes or 2 pies, but individual pieces of a cake or pie, 2

apples, 3-4 cookies, 2 pudding's - whatever! One for you, and one for someone else. A Hannah Dessert Trade! Beverages will be provided.



This first meeting of the new year will also include a memorial moment and discussion on the article, "Who Stole My Joy?" If you are able to attend, please contact a "Nancy" - Nancy Parece (508-653-8687) or Nancy Swan (508-653-8151).

You will find a
It's all about YOU!

2017 Family Information Form, enclosed in this newsletter, to request your contact info and some personal details that will be entered into the Fisk database. I know that some of you are reluctant to share birth dates/years and phone numbers. Please know that only one other person and I have the ability to update the database. You can request that your information not be publicized; just check "NO" in the box in the address section of the form.

So, why am I so insistent about this? The database (Realm) is the link that aids Pastor Alecia when she wishes to reach out to persons in the congregation. It's especially important for her to be able to connect with those who are facing serious challenges, are ill or in need of spiritual guidance. Some of us at Fisk Church want to make a connection with another person or family and Realm provides the address/phone/email to make that connection.

For me, the database allows me to create reports that tell the UMC area conference about Fisk's demographics and membership status. Lastly, on a positive note, we can send you greeting cards for birthdays, anniversaries, birth of a child, or a student's graduation. By the way, unless you include the year, the birthday list might show that you are 117 years old (yikes!) because 1900 is the default year.

So, please take a moment to fill out the form **completely**, even if you've done it in the past, and submit it to the church office by January 31, 2017. Thank you very much!

Joanne Fitzgerald, Admin. Asst.

Fisk Youth

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

JANUARY

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

- Jan 8 MYF meeting
- Jan 15 MYF meeting
- Jan 21 MYF meeting

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

