

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

fiskoffice@fiskumc.org

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

www.fiskumc.org

July 2020

Pastor's Note

These past months of physical distancing, I have been reading and focusing on the Book of Psalm as I think about what can help to provide a sense of calm in the midst of all the chaos, conflicts, and confusion. Then, I was struck that though there are many issues in the world today that are crucial to human existence, we can remain calm and hopeful. More so, because there is one who is, not only supreme, but is in full control.

There is not much that anyone can control. But the sometimes-difficult question is, "Are we willing to surrender to the Good Shepherd?" The one, who knows us, provides, guides, protects, and never leaves us. Now, the answer may be different for different persons but I believe that we can. We can when we truly open our ears to listen to the cries, our eyes to see falling tears, our hearts to feel, and our minds to change.

As we surrender control, we can live each day with a sense of awareness of the pains and sufferings that come with human conditions and encourage change; for these are caused by us and/or others on this earth. I say this because the God who created this world and all that is in it, said that all was good until we made it different.

In view of God's goodness of sending Jesus Christ, the greatest "C" as shepherd of God's flock, I have chosen and created a Sermon series on Psalm 23 after intentional and deep meditation. Though I once heard that Psalm 23 is meant to inspire, over my years of living, I believe that it conveys confidence and encourages us to surrender control. David who is credited for this Psalm had a personal relationship with God. The Lord was personal to David centuries ago, that same Lord is personal or can be for us today. That is, we have a Lord that we can be in a personal relationship with. That Lord provides, protects and guides us to prosperity. But most of all, all is peaceful when we open ourselves and allow the Lord to refresh, renew, revive and restore what is missing in our lives or is obstructing us from the abundance. Hence, what would be a better time to reflect more, than now; during a time like this?

As we make preparations to return to a sense of calmness in hope of greater and better persons, places, and things in this moment of physical distancing, it is my prayer that when the time comes, we re-enter with the confidence of David, the shepherd boy who found himself in sometimes unfamiliar places. If it becomes too familiar, permit oneself space to think; for the familiar will sooner or later become the unfamiliar. But when we dare to ponder, join me in a 9-week Sermon series on, "The 23rd Psalm"

May God continue to be our blessed Healer and Shepherd for unity and Peace in the world!

-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,
April 2019, Fisk UMC

For Personal Reflection & Spiritual growth

For continuous spiritual growth and reflection, read the following Scriptures that have been selected for our worship this month.

July 5	Psalm 23	John 10:11-18
July 12	Psalm 23	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
July 19	Psalm 23	Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43
July 26	Psalm 23	Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

Council of Ministries

Summer Worship to remain on Zoom **at 10:30 AM each Sunday**

COM met on June 16th and discussed resuming in-person worship services. At this time, Fisk has decided to continue using Zoom throughout the summer and into the Fall. The Zoom connection link and phone numbers remain the same each week to make it easy to connect.

We will meet again in July to review current info regarding COVID and our community. If you have any concerns about this decision, don't hesitate to let me know. While any decision around worship is our pastor's, COM does play an important role in representing our congregation interests and needs as well as providing input and support to whatever decision is made. At this time, Council on Ministries members all agreed that Fisk should continue with Zoom worship.

If you have been unable to connect – give it a try! If you have difficulties, there are several who are willing to assist. And we ask that you let us know about your experience by completing the insert found in this Messenger. If you haven't been successful in connecting for virtual Zoom worship - we want to help!

Peace and best of health to all,

Sherry Culver, Chair COM, sherrycd@comcast.net

Worship

As noted above, we will continue to have Zoom Worship services every Sunday. There were many considerations including the age and underlying health conditions of a number of people in our congregation. A review of other United Methodist churches nearby, as well as all denominations in Natick, showed that most, if not all, will not have in-church services until September. Check the August newsletter when it comes out for updated information.

Please remember that on July 5th and August 2nd, we will be observing Communion Sundays (first Sundays of the month). You are asked to have bread (any kind) and juice (any kind) available at home for the ZOOM service. Pastor Alecia will read the liturgy for the service.

Thank you to all of you who have agreed to read various parts of the services over these past weeks. I have been gratified to see how many are willing to participate. If you have not been asked and would like to participate, please email me at dafrsf@earthlink.net.

Ministry of Caring

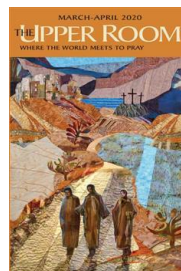
Valuable + Vulnerable = _____

In the early 90's, Thomas Moore, a former Catholic monk and a psychotherapist, wrote "Care for the Soul." He said in the book that the word "soul" was almost impossible to define. Later, he goes on to describe the soul with "it has to do with depth, value, relatedness, heart, and personal substance." When you talk about the soul, your soul, you are in a "sacred place."

Loneliness, grief, disappointment, and mistrust are factors that lead into the "soul taking a beating" category.

During the past four months of this coronavirus, mistrust has been a tough feeling to navigate. Trust vs. Mistrust. Do you trust yourself? Others? The evening news? Scientists? Your local, state, and country leaders? You have heard the term "vulnerable populations." Aren't all humans vulnerable? God: Are you still here? (*Yes! God is here!*) What will the world look like in a few months? All factors can lead to strong feelings and can in turn, affect your soul. When you are feeling overwhelmed, reach for the phone and talk to someone that you know from Fisk.

There is no "one size fits all" for healing of your soul and not one plan for everyone. We are all God's children and each of us will find that "God prescribed" way through this pandemic. Thinking of your family and friends - a good place to start is with your gratitude attitude. How about a new notebook and journal through these challenging times? Have you found a hero that has moved you during this pandemic? Write them a note! You did not get sick with the virus? Do you know someone who did, and they recovered? Another gratitude attitude check. *"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases."* With your soul, reach in and find a new devotion, new music, or maybe even new silence. The hearts of your church family are with you!



If you would like to have an *Upper Room* devotional booklet mailed to your home, please send an email to the church office fiskoffice@fiskumc.org or call to leave a message with your name and address (508) 653-1674. Please indicate if you prefer a large print booklet.

God Is Calling Us!

We see in the media and, in some cases, we participate in the rallies, peaceful protest, and marches for social justice for Black and Brown Americans. God calls us to advocate for **Justice**.

Amos 5:21-24 New International Version (NIV)

²¹ "I hate, I despise your religious festivals;
your assemblies are a stench to me.
²² Even though you bring me burnt offerings and
grain offerings,
I will not accept them.
Though you bring choice fellowship offerings,
I will have no regard for them.
²³ Away with the noise of your songs!
I will not listen to the music of your harps.
²⁴ But let justice roll on like a river,
righteousness like a never-failing stream!

Walking in Faith,

Dorothy J. Phillips, Lay Leader



FAMILY PROMISE Update:

Staff at Family Promise remain busy with two families in the shelter program and about 20 more in transitional housing or the LIFE program (which keeps families in their housing to PREVENT homelessness). As we will not be hosting this summer, they have asked for support in other ways. As mentioned before gift cards for local grocery stores are always appreciated. But if you're interested in something more fun....

Provide a **Summer Fun Bag** (and more) for a shelter/transitional living/LIFE family - you could provide a basket of a variety of items (cleaning supplies, personal hygiene items, sidewalk chalk, jump rope, gift card for ice cream, some special "extras" for parents or kids). Deliver the basket or supplies to the day center, and our van driver will deliver them to the families. We are hoping to deliver the baskets by the end of June.

Questions? Contact Debbie Friscino

Prayer Shawl Ministry Thrives During Covid-19

We delivered another bundle of prayer shawls and lap blankets to Metrowest Medical. The Chaplain expressed her thanks and appreciation for them - and assured me that we are filling an important need for those hospitalized at this time. This is God's love reaching out and in action.

In another couple of weeks, we'll ask again for any prayer shawls that need delivering. In the mean time you can continue to knit or crochet and we'll be in touch about pickup.

You now can send a Pocket Prayer Cross to a friend or relative by mail. We will continue to reach out to our community with these "pocket-sized" reminders of God's care and hope for those needing some love.



Contact Joanne Billo with your name and address. A Pocket Prayer Cross with an envelope will be mailed to you. You will address the envelope to the recipient.

joanne.billo@verizon.net 508-653-3074

May God bless our hands to do his work.

The Fisk Prayer Wall and Prayer Box

When you find the need to pray with the assurance that others are praying for and with you, leave a prayer in the prayer box on the front lawn of the church, on-line on our website, or just call and speak with Pastor Alecia. Remember that no one walks alone. We at Fisk UMC are willing and ready to travel the journey with you.

Therefore, if you are looking for a church home, we invite, welcome, and accept all persons. We are a phone call away (508-653-1674). Thanks, and be blessed.

Stewardship

A reminder in this challenging time for us all, as we marshal our efforts to serve our brothers and sisters in need: we still depend on our pledged and unpledged support to continue our ministries and pay our bills. We can all continue our financial stewardship commitments in two ways:

- Use your pledge envelopes as US mail envelopes- add your check, a stamp, and send, or put them into the mail slot in the red double doors at Fisk Church
- Go on our website and click on the "Donate to Fisk UMC Ministry" button in the blue bar midpoint on the home page. This link takes you a quick, easy and secure contribution form, where you can designate "Pledge Giving" or any of several other categories, and use your bank information or debit card just as you do on Amazon or any e-com site.

With thanks to those who continue to serve and share in God's ministry and mission at Fisk.

In a year when we all have this urge to HELP our friends, neighbors, and those we know are in need of assistance – we find it difficult to do so. Most non-profits are not accepting volunteers, food or clothing donations in trying to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As we abide by those rules, there are things you can do.



It is that time of year again...

CHRISTMAS in JULY and AUGUST

It is a Fisk tradition to purchase Christmas gifts for the families in the Western Mountains of Maine. These are the families serviced by UMEM—United Methodist Economic Ministry. This is a great activity for families or individuals to help make the holidays special for these marginalized people. Since we are still meeting virtually for the summer, there is a bit of a change in this mission project. The regular RED BUCKET will be out on the covered porch at Fisk on SUNDAYS through August from 12:00 noon to 4:00PM Please put your unwrapped gifts there. The bucket will be brought into the building each Sunday afternoon at 4:00pm. If that is not possible, call Marcia Hoyt for alternate plans 508-655-0077.



GIFT SUGGESTION LIST

Gifts are for all ages, sizes, genders, and must be NEW

Packages of underwear and/or socks

Toys, games, puzzles, books for all ages

Lotions, stamps, note cards, simple jewelry-adults

Winter jackets for school age children and warm clothes

AND...this year it may be more convenient and practical to purchase **GIFT CARDS**. Amanda (an employee of UMEM) suggested \$20.00 denominations at Walmart, Amazon, Google Play, or iTunes (Apple). Basically, any store that has online shopping. Burger King and McDonalds gift certificates are welcome, as well.

NOTE: Don't leave the gift cards in the red bucket ...slide them into the mail slot in the red doors at Fisk's covered porch or mail them to Fisk Church,
Attn: Missions Committee

This area has such high unemployment, even before this COVID pandemic, and now it is more crucial to help these "people of God--our neighbors to the North."

HOW TO DO MISSION WORK

GIFT CARDS are also welcome at:

Family Promise UMEM—in Maine

Natick Service Council Heifer International

Shelters or Veteran organizations

Day Care—Cooper Community Center or FACE

These can be Gift Cards for groceries, books, clothing, toys, ice cream treats, pizza and more!

UMCOR—United Methodist Committee of Relief is in need of online donations or checks—through Fisk. Just slide a check in the mail slot or mail to the church.

CAMP MECHUWANA in Winthrop, Maine (one of our United Methodist Camps) They have an easy way to give exactly what they need.

Hello,

*Mechuwana has been an Emergency Pandemic School Food Site since March. During that time, we have **provided more than 10,000 meals**.*

Now that school programs have ended for the summer, Mechuwana is solely responsible for providing food to hundreds of Maine families. We will continue feeding families through at least August 31, and we need your help.

The last time we wrote to you about our need for meal supplies of sandwich and Ziploc bags, we created an Amazon wish list. We had no idea how quickly you would all act on this request! Within 48 hours we had thousands of supplies, which helped us immensely.



*We have created a new [wish list on Amazon](#) with just three items (multiple quantities of each) on it. This makes it very easy to see what we need and place an order to be **shipped directly to us at our physical address of 92 Holmes Road, Winthrop, ME 04364.***

*Thank you for any assistance you can provide. We continue to hold you in prayer during this time. Be safe & healthy. God bless & be well,
Norman Thombs, Camp Director*

Happy Birthday Send a birthday greeting to this this Methodist missionary.

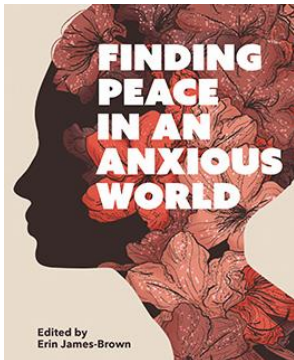
Charles Mulemena—His Birthday is July 30
Avenida Visconde de Inhauma
1557 Pedreier
66087-640 Belem Para
Brazil

Missions Committee: Janis Cail, Susan Carney, Mary Greenwood, Janis Townsend and Marcia Hoyt (chair)

United Methodist Women

July is the month we usually would be attending MISSION u at Southern New Hampshire University. The topic for 2020 was to be Finding Peace in an Anxious World. How appropriate!

The Serenity Prayer written by theologian Reinhold Niebuhr against the backdrop of two world wars and the



Great Depression is the framework for United Methodist Women's spiritual growth study because it is a well-known and time-tested example of how prayer can teach God's people to manage anxiety, namely through serenity, acceptance, courage, and wisdom.

The longer version of the prayer as recorded by Niebuhr's daughter, Elisabeth Sifton, reads:

God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And the wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to His Will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him
Forever and ever in the next. Amen.

The prayer does not deny that anxiety exists or that it is powerful, but instead encourages us to place our trust in God. This is a prayer for times of uncertainty, for feelings of anxiety, for moments of fear; it is both a soothing balm and a weapon of resistance.

-Elisabeth Sifton, *The Serenity Prayer: Faith and Politics in Times of Peace and War* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003) as quoted in *Finding Peace in an Anxious World* leader's guide, United Methodist Women, p.5.



OUR FISK UNITED METHODIST WOMEN are still connecting and doing a variety of activities while social distancing and wearing our masks.

YARD SALE

Yes, we are still planning to have the August 28th Yard Sale—possibly outside. Save your treasures. As you are cleaning out closets, the cellar, the garage---remember the YARD SALE. More information in the August Messenger.



Susanna Circle

We met on the lawn at Fisk. We brought our own chair and lunch... and caught up with each other and reviewed dates and activities of UMW. We enjoyed "seeing" each other...before we felt raindrops.

Prayer Shawl Group

This group of "knitters and crocheters" are meeting under the shade tree at Fisk on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. If you would like to do "social distant" needle crafts with the group, just stop by with your materials and bring a chair.

Joanna Circle

I know that a group of them "met by the cross" and just enjoyed their time together in this lovely setting.

Reading Program

We still have an assortment of books for your reading time this summer. If you would like a book from our UMW bookshelf call Terry Ames and she will make arrangements with you to pick out some books.

Bible Study—Book of Ruth

Susan is planning a summer Bible Study opportunity for those interested. This will be a virtual online or phone- in study. Watch for details. In the meantime, read the Book of Ruth and ponder the message.

Marcia Hoyt

July Journaling

During July, all are invited to "journal" in a new way. Consider "journaling" with a couple pieces of paper, or with your mouth. Conversation with another and then write down thoughts. Then, if you talk with someone else, you can write down those pieces and at the end of the month, see how you have grown! Here are some comments as discussion starters. Next month: August Awakenings.

- "Be the change that you wish to see in the world."
- "Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."
- "We know what we are, but know not what we may be."
- "Start by doing what is necessary; then do what is possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

United Methodist Women
Faith • Hope • Love in Action
We are women with a Purpose!

"United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience

freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church."



Council of Bishops

The United Methodist Church



June 8, 2020

Council of Bishops statement on the Scourge of Racism

The past few weeks have left many hurt, angry and outraged as we have witnessed the deaths of unarmed Black persons at the hands of police and racism; Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and the countless others whose names are known only to mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and friends.

Many bishops have worked to amplify and magnify one another's voices. The words of Bishop Bruce Ough, resident Bishop of Minneapolis area, were a clarion call to the crisis before us, "There is more than one pandemic ravaging Minnesota and our country at this time. In addition to fighting COVID-19, we are besieged by a pandemic of racism, white supremacy, and white on black or brown violence."

The voice of Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, resident Bishop of the Baltimore-Washington area, gave power to the realities, "Being Black is not a pre-existing condition; being Black is not justification for probable cause; being Black is not to be inherently suspicious nor suspect. Being Black is a gift from Almighty God and a manifestation of an aspect of God."

These prophetic voices and those of others have provided words when we had none.

As bishops of the United Methodist Church, **we ask every United Methodist to reclaim their baptismal vows** to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.

We ask every United Methodist to name the egregious sin of racism and white supremacy and join together to take a stand against the oppression and injustice that is killing persons of color.

As bishops of the whole church **we affirm the peaceful protests** as a means of giving voice where it is needed most.

We are clear that it is beyond time for all United Methodists to act. **It is time to use our voices, our pens, our feet and our heart for change.**

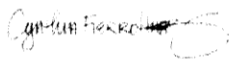
We join with other church leaders and boards and agencies of the United Methodist Church to add strength to the message that we **will no longer remain silent nor complicit** but must act now!

As a next faithful step we ask **United Methodists to read all they can on the subject of anti-racism and engage in conversations with children, youth and adults.** Have conversations with coworkers and friends. These will not be easy but they will help us gain a greater appreciation for one another. In a recent podcast, “Unlocking Us,” lecturer, author and podcast host, Brene Brown, hosted author, historian and American University professor, Ibram X. Kendi who said, “By not running from the books that pain us, we can allow them to transform us. I ran from antiracist books most of my life. But now I can’t stop running after them – scrutinizing myself and my society, and in the process changing both.” May we listen not only with our ears but with our hearts and run after books, podcasts and conversations that transform entire communities.

For at least the next 30 days, **we ask every United Methodist everywhere to join in prayer at 8:46 a.m. and p.m. for 8 minutes and 46 seconds**, the time the officer held his knee on George Floyd’s neck. Do this for at least the next 30 days. Pray for all persons of color who suffer at the hands of injustice and oppression. Pray for our church as we take a stand against racism. Imagine the power of a concert of prayer heard around the world.

And finally, to borrow from Bishop Easterling once again, “The time is now. Dismantle the architecture of whiteness and white supremacy; stop creating, implementing and supporting policies that perpetuate economic injustice; stop the dog-whistle political maneuverings which incite violence against people of color; commit to being an anti-racist; stop over-policing Black and brown bodies; stop using deadly force in ordinary police interactions with Black and brown people. Stop killing us.”

May the God of Grace and Peace be with you.



Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey
President - Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

Natick Interfaith Clergy Addressing Racism
Natick Interfaith Clergy Statement on the Need to Address Racism in Natick
June 13th, 2020

On May 26th, 2020, George Floyd, an unarmed black man, was killed by a Minneapolis police officer who pressed his knee on Floyd's neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds. The nation and the world watched this cruel and dehumanizing killing unfold via a cellphone video taken by a bystander, one of many who demanded to no avail that the officer take his knee off of Floyd's neck. In this disturbing video, we also saw George Floyd plead for his life, saying "I can't breathe" and "you're going to kill me." Watching George Floyd die in this terrifying way has convinced us that the problem of racism in our nation must be addressed. As righteous protests have swept the nation for weeks now, we have all had a chance to reflect more deeply on the profound injustice and suffering that racism causes.

As a matter of faith, we believe that racism is wrong. Racism contradicts the biblical affirmation that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). God's essence is love, whereas the essence of racism is hate. Racism stands in opposition to the will of God, and therefore we believe that liberation from racism is a possibility that God calls us to affirm in action. We believe that it is our responsibility as local clergy to speak to this problem of racism as we see it in our own town.

From the beginning of the colonization of this country, white supremacy was used by colonists to justify racist policies of unjust war, land theft, and genocide against indigenous peoples; white supremacy was also used to justify the trans-Atlantic human-trafficking of Africans and their enslavement in this country. Despite the fact that our nation had a robust Abolitionist movement and fought a Civil War to end slavery—and despite the progress of the Civil Rights movement, which formally ended the policy of Segregation and won Americans of African descent the right to vote—white supremacy remains an institutionalized reality in American life that pervades the way we think and act on a daily basis. White supremacy, which expresses itself in racist policies and practices, is the reason that people in this country with black skin are more likely to die in childbirth, more likely to be pulled over by the police and also to go to prison, less likely to be hired or promoted, more likely to live in poverty, and more likely to die of COVID 19.

The population of Natick, as of the 2010 US census, was 85.4% white, 7.2% Asian, 3% Hispanic, 2% black, .1% Native American, .5% of other races, and 2% of two or more races. That same year, the US Census found that Massachusetts as a whole was 80.4% white, 5.3% Asian, 9.6% Hispanic, 6.6% black, 4.6% of other races and 2.6% of two or more races. Therefore, Natick has a higher than average white and Asian population, and a lower than average population of Hispanics, blacks, and people of other races. Why is this? Are there policies, practices, and attitudes that exclude Hispanics and blacks from the Town of Natick? We suspect that up until at least the 1970's, de-facto segregation through real estate practices like red-lining prevented black and brown people from living in the Town of Natick. Still today, though people of color are not systematically excluded, a culture of white privilege permeates the Town of Natick, making it more difficult for people of color to thrive here.

Most residents of Natick do not realize that our town was originally established by John Eliot as a "Praying Town" for indigenous peoples called Praying Indians who adopted Christian faith while retaining their cultural identity. During King Philip's War, however, the Praying Indians were systematically decimated by white colonists, in spite of their declared neutrality: they were imprisoned on Deer Island where the vast majority starved to death because of harsh conditions; others were conscripted into forced military service; many others fled. Those who survived and returned to Natick were soon dispossessed of their lands by white settlers. What a shame that a town originally established as a refuge for Praying Indians now only has a Native American population of .1%.

Natick needs to do its part to honor the truths embodied by the Black Lives Matter movement. White racism degrades the lives of black and brown people in America on a daily basis. The same is true in Natick; to deny this is to be part of the problem rather than part of the solution. All across America, black people are pulled over by the police more frequently, and they more frequently have the police called on them by white people who are implicitly biased against them. Throughout the nation, black people have a harder time finding jobs than white people, even when their qualifications and skills are virtually the same. We need to take a hard look at how such realities play out in our own Natick community.

We need to honestly examine the extent to which racism is present in Natick in areas such as policing, education, housing, town hiring practices, business ownership and employment, and town leadership representation. Because of our understanding of the experience of people of color in our Town, and because of our knowledge of the history and culture of Natick, we assert that Natick is no exception to this nation's ongoing history of white supremacy and racism. Therefore, we believe that our Town needs to form an official Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, empowered by the

Select Board (aka Board of Selectmen). We also believe that we need to hire a qualified professional in the field to work full time with this Committee to understand and correct the problems of racism in our Town.

The Natick clergy are not of one mind as to whether we should be gathering in person to protest. Many of us had strict social distancing practices in place before our nation's recent awakening to the problem of racism. Some are now willing to gather in person to protest, while others prefer virtual methods. Nevertheless, we stand united in our call for substantial action for racial justice and greater equality in our town.

We also want to celebrate Natick's accomplishments in terms of promoting diversity. We applaud the fact that so many people come out for our yearly interfaith service celebrating Martin Luther King Day. We celebrate that we have a yearly Multicultural Day on the Town Common organized by the Natick Cultural District. We applaud the work of Natick Families of Color Unite, Natick Is United, SPARK Kindness, the Rainbow Peace Flag Project, the Racial Justice Dialogues, and other local groups committed to diversity and inclusion. We are glad our town changed our High School sports logo from the Natick Redmen to the Natick Redhawks in 2012. We are grateful that our Community Senior Center hired Lauri Ryding as a staff person for LGBTQ inclusion and that a local film-maker, Zadi Zokou, made a documentary called "Praying Town" to share the story of the Praying Indians. We are grateful for all those who are working to make our town more welcoming and more inclusive. We applaud the many people of conscience in town government attempting to hire people of color and encouraging people of color to run for office, join committees, and participate in town government. There are many people in Natick who are committed to anti-racist lifestyles. We recognize and celebrate all this.

Now is the time to take it to the next level. Racism is perhaps the single biggest flaw in our national life. Racism is ungodly, cruel, and delusional—but it cannot survive in the light of truth and the warmth of compassion. Therefore, the Natick Interfaith Clergy pledge that we will preach about racism, we will call out racism when we see it, we will organize our own efforts to address racism, and we will stand in solidarity with all those groups and individuals in our town who are working for racial justice. In all this, we believe, God will help us.

The Rev. Rebecca Bourret, Pastor, Christ Lutheran Church
Rev. Becky Gettel, St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Rev. John Hudson, Senior Pastor, Pilgrim UCC, Sherborn
Rabbi Daniel Liben, Temple Israel of Natick
Rev. Eric Markman, Hartford Street Presbyterian Church
Rev. Dr. Ian Mevorach, Minister, Common Street Spiritual Center
Rev. Dr. Jonathan New, Interim Pastor, First Congregational Church of Natick, UCC
Cantor Ken Richmond, Temple Israel of Natick
Rabbi Robin S. Sparr, HaMakom is The Place
Rev. Dr. Adam Tierney-Eliot, Pastor, The Eliot Church of Natick
Evangelist Deborah L. Younger-Mitchell, Refuge Deliverance Outreach Church, Randolph

From the Church Office

Summer church office hours begin the week of June 22.

The office will be open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

phone: 508-653-1674

email: fiskoffice@fiskumc.org

July/August Messenger deadline: Friday, July 24

Mailing Date: Thursday, July 30