

The Messenger

Fisk Memorial United Methodist Church

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www.fiskumc.org

June 2020

Pastor's Note

Greetings my dear sisters and brothers in the name of the most Blessed One, Jesus Christ!

Over the past months, we have been tested as individuals, a community of faith, a nation, and a world. But during this time, I have witnessed how our church community has withstood the test of time, tithes, and talent. Our church family left the sanctuary; the building, but remained the church in the neighborhood. As the church of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, we reached out to connect, to help supply needs, lighten the burdens of others, prayed with and for all God's children. In addition, we transitioned to a virtual but sacred space on-line to stay in connection as we continue to worship the Almighty and Awesome God in the midst of a difficult time. All was well and continued to go well without us giving up hope that we would be together some time soon.

Now, we have been told that places of worship can return. Though it creates excitement and maybe a great idea, we, at Fisk UMC will do so with careful planning, preparation, and care for all of our members; especially those that are most vulnerable. We have missed being physically present with our sisters, brothers and all visitors.

Our Administrative Board has taken initial and great steps with Fisk in mind to guide the process. In addition, faithful leaders and members of all our committees are ready to assist with preparations to invite, welcome, and make each person feel a sense of belonging as we return. In view of this, let us never forget that we are all members of Christ's family. During this difficult time, we have sought God together. God has never left us and with that assurance, we will not fear. God will deliver us from all our fears (Psalm 34:4) as we return one day soon.

I know these past months have been difficult. So it was for David when he sought God in prayer. It must have also been confusing, conflicting, and chaotic for him but his prayers were answered. So have ours as we review plans for safety and health to transition, very soon, to our sacred and physical space. Most of all, as we

continue to celebrate the abounding mercy and grace of God in the land of the living. With this, I continue prayers for each of you, your families and all the people of God's world.

May we continue to be blessed with Good Health, Healing & Comfort as we remain united under the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ!

-Pastor Alecia

Pastor's Announcements

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.

June 7	2 Corinthians 13:11-13	Matthew 28:16-20
June 14	Romans 5:1-8	Matthew 9:35-10:15
June 21	Genesis 21:8-21	Matthew 10:24-39
	Psalm 82:1-8	
June 28	Romans 6:12-23	Matthew 10:40-42

Updates from the Conference Office

Worship:

The Bishop lifted the ban on virtual communion and has given pastors the permission to do the online communion. Hence, if we are still physically distancing, our first online communion service will be on Sunday, June 7, during worship.

Finance:

Our conference CFA office has reduced the New England Conference annual budget by \$366,477.

Administration:

Effective July 1, 2020, our new District Superintendent will be Rev. We Hyun Chang and we will be in the Commonwealth East District.

General:

There is a team formed by the Bishop to come up with best practices for restarting church.

News from Council on Ministries

This is an extraordinary time. While we have been separated, in many ways this social isolation has forced us to consider what is most important to our families, our friends, our community, and our church.

As Massachusetts begins to “re-open”, we find that our timeline for resuming in-person services in our Fisk sanctuary does not have to follow the state re-opening guidelines. Using the building and sanctuary does not make us the church – We are the Church and we are continuing to thrive during this time of social distancing.

At May’s Council on Ministries meeting, we spent much of the time talking about next steps for resuming in-person worship services. We recognized that we have not been “closed” – in fact we have remained open and welcoming despite the social distancing required for the health and safety of all. Worshiping by conference call initially and now via Zoom simply means we are being the church in a new way. We have adapted and expanded our sense of what is worship and we plan to continue this style of worship while the local communities and the state “re-open” and the implications of this process becomes known.

After much discussion, review of NECUMC Conference guidelines, state guidelines, and in coordination with Pastor Alecia, the Council on Ministries team decided to continue using Zoom for Sunday services through June. At our June COM meeting, we will evaluate this decision again – and hope to resume some sort of in-person services for the summer months. This will depend greatly on how we all collectively feel, how the community response to re-opening has been and the procedures in

place to prevent community spread of COVID-19 when we do resume gathering in-person.

We’ve been blessed with great participation on Sunday services. Going virtual has meant that we have been joined by members and friends who would not have attended an in-person worship. Those who have moved away have continued to worship with us. Our Missionary in Nicaragua, Dr. Belinda Forbes worshiped with us a few weeks ago. So, continue to invite others to worship with us. Our invitation to Christ needs to continue to happen even though we are not physically present in our sanctuary on Sunday mornings.

Over the next few weeks we will be trying some variations to the service and some of the participants will be participating from other locations – like the sanctuary or the Fisk Outdoor cross. But in all cases – we are bound together – not by a physical building – but by the living presence of Christ in our lives.

Virtual Sunday Worship services with fellowship afterward will continue through June. At the COM June 16th meeting we will re-evaluate and make a decision about our summer informal services. There is no rush for us to return to formal Sunday worship services and programs other than the sincere desire to see each other in person. We are intact, our faith community is strong and we are supporting each other in ways that are new and varied.

Thanks to the leadership at Fisk as we navigate these new waters together. If you have any concerns or ideas for worship or programs at Fisk, do not hesitate to contact me or any of our Council on Ministries team. I’d love to chat with you – maybe even see you over Zoom!

We Are Fisk!

Sherry Culver, Chair Council on Ministries,
sherrycd@comcast.net

The Fisk Prayer Wall and Prayer Box

Prayer is the master key that can open and close all doors. 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!

Worship

The Difference

*I got up early one morning
and rushed right into the day.
I had so much to accomplish
that I didn't have time to pray.*

*Problems tumbled about me
and harder came each task.
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered,
He answered, "You didn't ask."*

*I wanted joy and beauty,
but the day was gray and bleak,
I wondered why God didn't show me;
He said, "You didn't seek."*

*I tried to come into God's presence;
I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly said,
"My child, you didn't knock."*

*I woke up early this morning,
and paused before starting the day.
I had so much to accomplish
that I had to take time to pray.*

-Darlene Estlow

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.

Ministry of Caring

Prescription 101

Where does it hurt? Back, knee, shoulder, heel, foot, hip, elbow, ankle, neck, wrist, hand, or head?

What hurts? Your feelings, your emotions, your attitude, your thoughts, your spiritual gifts, your spirit, have you lost someone, or something?

There are many types of prayer and during these times, praying daily prayers in a different way might be a source of help. On each day of the week, if you get stressed, or upset, pray the prayer of the day – over and over if you need to. Did someone "cut you off" on the road – or they didn't use their blinker to signal a turn? (I know, a rarity in Massachusetts!). If it is a Tuesday when that happens, you pray Tuesday's prayer under your breath and straight to God.

Monday: "Peace I give unto you...Let not your heart be troubled."

Tuesday: "Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him."

Wednesday: "My presence shall go with thee, and I shall give thee rest."

Thursday: "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him; free not thyself."

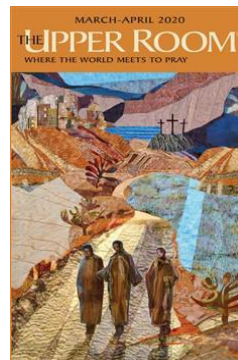
Friday: "Come unto me, all ye who labor, and are heavy laden, and I shall give you rest."

Saturday: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

Sunday: "He maketh me lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still water, he restoreth my soul."

If you have to repeat these healing words of scripture over and over on a particular day, repeat these healing words of scripture over and over! God's words and gentle assurances of healing will help with your peace of mind, and heart.

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 and leave a message with your name and address (508) 653-1674. Please indicate if you prefer a large print booklet.



Missions

During this time of “a new way of life” so many things have changed. Mission work is one activity that is changing—at least for the current time.

Many mission opportunities are limited, although the needs have increased. New guidelines have altered what we can do. In general, these agencies are NOT accepting “goods i.e. food, clothes etc.” due to COVID-19, but definitely need your support.

How can I help? What can we do as a church?

Answer: Most programs are asking for funding. This is the best way to help for the present time.

How or where can I donate?

Any donations may be sent directly to the program or you may send your gifts through the church. If you prefer the church route, just add the amounts to your usual offering/pledge check (or write a separate check), making sure to designate where you would like it to be sent.

Here are the addresses of just three of the places we regularly support, who are serving more people through these tough times.

Natick Service Council/Natick Food Pantry

2 Webster St. Natick MA 01760

United Methodist Economic Ministry

1458 Salem St. Salem ME 04983

UMCOR—(sent through Fisk) Designated to:

1. Nicaragua/Dr. Belinda Forbes or
2. COVID-19 programs
3. or any other program you want to support

HOLD THE CLOTHES

UMEM in Maine cannot accept clothes right now!

I suggest if you have another way to donate clothing for this summer...do it! We will continue to collect in the Fall. NO clothes until October!

ONE EXCEPTION to the above

HYGIENE/HEALTH KITS The need is increasing locally and across the nation. Keep shopping for the 7 items (see list, UMW on pg. 5) and if you have a supply of any of the items you may leave them on my porch (8 Bacon St., Natick)...social distancing, until Fisk is open to us regularly. I delivered 95 last month and now have 26 more kits. When I have 100 I will deliver them. Marcia Hoyt

TOOLS for Rebuilding

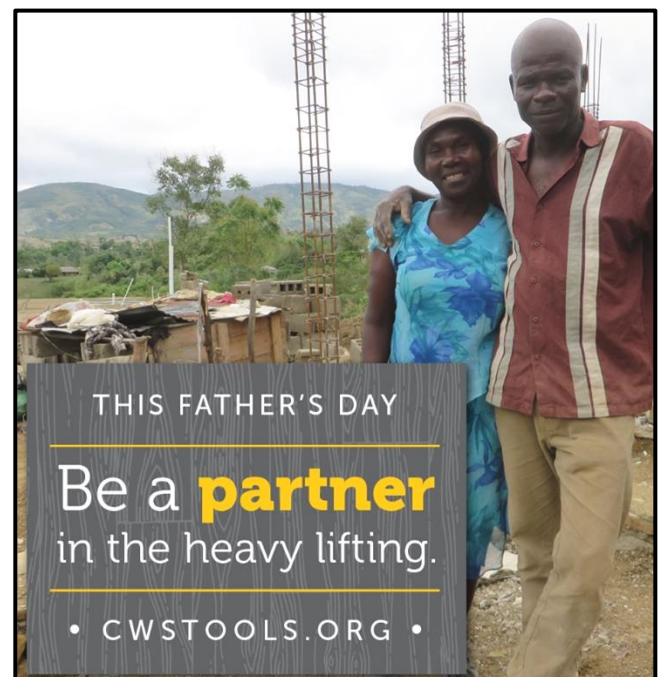
Once again, we will be celebrating **Tools for CWS (Church World Service)** during June to celebrate Father's Day and Fathers everywhere. Anytime during June, you may make a donation through the church for the Tools program. This can be done as a Father's Day gift or just a celebration of all fathers. Through contributions for "Tools", Church World Service helps families around the world recover from disasters, displacement, and helps people gain the tools, resources and skills necessary to build – or rebuild – sustainable lives and communities.

The MISSIONS COMMITTEE has a choice of Father's Day cards (gift of \$10.00) for this purpose. If you would like a card, just email or call Marcia Hoyt and a social distancing plan will be set-up for pick up.

marciahoyt@aol.com 508-655-0077

On Father's Day, be a partner in the heavy lifting and help families build better lives

That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. Luke 6:48, NRSV



United Methodist Women

Hygiene Kit List

When you can shop again...although some of these items are in grocery stores, Target or a Dollar Store.

- One hand towel (15 x 25 –17 x 27")
- One washcloth
- One comb
 - Sturdy with at least 6 inches of teeth
- One toenail or fingernail clipper
- Bath-size soap (3 oz. bar or larger)
 - No Ivory or Jergen's soap
- One adult wrapped toothbrush
- 10 adhesive bandages (¾ by 3 inches)
- One one-gallon size re-sealable bag.

See more information under the MISSION column

TO DO LIST --

for United Methodist Women

- Continue reading books on the UMW Reading List
- Knit or crochet a prayer shawl
- Pray for the missionaries listed in the Prayer List (last page of this newsletter)
- Call a neighbor and offer help
- Call another UMW member and talk
- Exercise and/or walk
- Make a craft for the FAIR
- Set aside items for the Yard Sale now scheduled for August 29
- Gardening is therapeutic...dig dirt!
- Check out the UMW web site--

www.UnitedMethodistWomen.org

UMW Hannah Circle

The Hannah Circle will meet by telephone on Tuesday, June 9, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Our spring luncheon has been cancelled and will hopefully become a Hannah Launch Luncheon in September. All women are invited to join us as we catch up on our lives and have some "Q & A" fun before the start of summer. Details will be in the *Hannah Banana Peel*. Hear you soon!

Rail Trail: Connecting our Community

(Sponsored by Fisk's United Methodist Women)

Tuesday – June 2nd – 4:15 p.m. edt

Have you wondered just what and where this is in Natick? Who is it for? When will it be ready? Why was it necessary? Members of Fisk's UMW invite all persons to a scheduled Zoom meeting. There will be a short business meeting beginning at 4 p.m., and the presentation will begin at 4:15 p.m. Josh Ostroff, Chair of the Cochituate Rail Trail Advisory Committee and John Gregory, President of the non-profit Friends of Natick Trails will provide updates and look ahead.



Within a year, the CRT will be open to the public, making a joyful new community connection that will provide new opportunities for recreation and transportation. This long-awaited project will serve everyone. Learn more about the project's design, construction, timetable, and the future enhancements that are already on the drawing board. For background on this project, please visit

<https://www.natickma.gov/crt>

Bring your questions on June 2. We hope you will join us by computer or telephone!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://umcom.zoom.us/j/98416711369>

Meeting ID: 984 1671 1369

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 312 626 6799 US

Meeting ID: 984 1671 1369

For more information, please don't hesitate to contact Debi Henry, (508) 651-0256 or

debraleighhenry@yahoo.com