

The Messenger

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

fiskoffice@fiskumc.org

www.fiskumc.org

September 2024

Pastor's Message

As we approach the season of Fall, I am reminded that there is a season for everything. The scripture passage of Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8, affirms this. With the pending arrival of the Fall Season, I write to share that there is a season for everything and the wisdom in this passage is real and true. Hence, as the heat of summer gives way to cooler days, leaves are falling and flowers are fading away, we can never give up or give in. But we can recommit and continue to fully participate in the ministry and mission of Fisk UMC. Most of all, we can focus to be engaged and fully present in one of the greatest seasons of all times; Our annual and faithful time of, 'Ongoing Stewardship'.

Remember that in the midst of a change in season and time, I am giving thanks to God for all our siblings at Fisk, our visitors and our friends. We are grateful for all those who find the time to visit us, serve with us, and continue to support us in ministry and mission as we reach out to all people and God does the transformation.

We have done a lot this year and over the years with appreciation for all of you who have shared your gifts. Therefore, as we continue to travel this Christly journey together and to be God's ardent presence in the world, let us never forget to serve God and all of God's creation in all places and at all times.

I believe we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. So, be blessed as we anticipate the Fall Season, as we stand on the promise of our faith, and as we pray for increased gifts and the widening of our Fisk's circle.

Thanks again as we remain united, connected and richly blessed!

+ 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, Fisk UMC, 2019

All persons are invited to Fisk UMC
Worship Service 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary.
To connect by telephone use either of these numbers: +1 646 558 8656 US
Enter Meeting ID: **994 3325 8889**
+1 312 626 6799 US Enter Meeting ID: **994 3325 8889**
By computer, tablet, or smart phone, use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/99433258889>
Or visit www.Zoom.us and enter Meeting ID: **994 3325 8889**



BIBLE STUDY

Starting this month of September and as we prepare to focus on and remember our Season of Stewardship, we will be studying the book on **TREASURE** by Jacob Armstrong. Our focus will be, "Giving Your Treasure Back to God".

Therefore, if you believe that this is a spiritual practice and it must be an ongoing practice, **come**, bring your Bible, your heart and your thoughts. And **leave**, believing that we belong to God, and all that we have, God gives.

The four sessions will be:

September 8- Week one: Where is your Treasure?

September 15- Week two: The Problem with two Masters.

September 22- Week three: Giving your Treasure back to God.

September 29- Week four: Do not worry about a thing. God is in control.

We will begin on Sunday, September 8, from 9:30-10:00am in the Women's Parlor and every Sunday after until the 29th.

Note:

The book is "**Treasure**" by Jacob Armstrong (daily readings). If you are interested in attending and purchasing the book, it is available at Cokesbury or on Amazon. Can't get a copy? Let Pastor Alecia know. She will give you a copy with thanks to those who donate to the Pastor's Discretionary Funds each year.

Special Note:

If you cannot attend, you can also purchase the book. It is for light reading can be read daily.

May God continue to bless each of us as we study, share and serve with our gifts

STEWARDSHIP: 2024-2025

We, at Fisk United Methodist Church recognize that all we are, and all we have are gifts from God. Therefore, we are striving to live with gratitude as faithful stewards by sharing our gifts.

We also continue to ask God to please help us rethink what we offer as gifts. As we rethink, let us be encouraged and led by the holy Spirit to give as

we look past the offering plate and increase our gifts for God's ministry and mission here at Fisk UMC. And let us also be inspired to give more willingly that others will be touched and share with generosity as they experience God's provision and grace this year and the years ahead. Thank you for all you support!

"In order to lead effectively with compassion, one must give unselfishly."

Blessings from Pastor Alecia

Congratulations!



We are so proud of our sibling, Michelle Drolet who is not only the chairperson of our SPRC but who is living out her faith as she leads Towerwall, a cyber- security company that she founded

and serves as CEO.

Having received a few awards over the years, she most recently was recognized on the Forbes' "50 Over 50: Innovation" list, an honor that celebrates women making significant contributions to business and innovation.

Congratulations, Michelle with blessing on you and your household.

Sympathy Announcement



With deep sadness, our Fisk family announces the death of Mother Helen Hollingworth who passed on Friday, August 23 in Maine at the youthful age of 99.

May she rest in peace as her family is comforted.

Helen's Memorial Service will be held at Fisk UMC on September 9, 2024 at 11:30am followed by a time of visit with the family.

Join us for **DINNER** on **Tuesday, September 10th** at **6:00 p.m.**

All men and women are invited to join us for dinner and a discussion on **WATER-what's in our water anyway?**

Dr. Robert Wingfield, Jr. (Dorothy's brother,) will join us via zoom to talk about his work as Director of Fisk University's Environmental Toxics Awareness and Sustainability Program.

The goal of that program is to increase community capacity to reduce exposure to toxins and build healthier communities.

While we hear about places like Flint Michigan in the news, water supplies are negatively impacted by agricultural, corporate and personal activities everywhere. In fact, the Nyanza Chemical Waste site in Ashland was one of the first superfund sites in the US. And local lakes currently have measurable levels of mercury and PFAs.

Lets talk about the challenges and see what we can do to make a difference.



YARD SALE is coming!

It's time to start saving items for the yard sale- Saturday, **October 19th.** You know the drill!

And once again, we will have pink bags for you to fill with "soft goods" not suitable for the thrift shop in Maine.



Pink Bag Collection

You don't need a pink bag any bag will do please tell your friends.

All the leftovers from the October Yard Sale and all the clothes that are brought

to the truck will be taken for recycling. A donation will be made to MISSIONS through these efforts. Help us make this as successful as it was the last time and follow the law in NOT sending material goods to the dump to sit and sit and sit. Help PROTECT GOD'S EARTH.

ALTAR GUILD



I will be moving to Ohio in September. It has been an awesome privilege and sacred responsibility to have been a part of the Fisk family. Please hold me in your prayers as I take on this next adventure.

Exciting news for Fisk! Deborah Hernandez is now the Altar Guild Chairperson. Her enthusiasm and new ideas will bring a wonderful addition to the Worship Service. Thank you, Deborah, for answering the Call.

Blessings,
Barb Beekman
Past Altar Guild Chairperson

Farewell & Thank you

In September, the Fisk UMC family will bid farewell to our beloved sister, Barbara Beekman who is relocating. We will miss her for her love, support and service at Fisk; especially as our faithful chairperson of the Altar Guild and Lay delegate to our New England Annual Conference for many years.

Thank you, beloved sister with God's continuous blessings as you settle in your new home and enjoy another path on this journey that we call, 'Life.'

NOTE:

Our heartfelt appreciation to another beloved sister, Deborah Herandez for graciously accepting the significant and sanctified role to lead the Altar Guild as we worship and praise the Living and Eternal God, now and the years ahead.

MISSIONS and OUTREACH

Well, as summer is winding down and fall is ahead of us, we again look at “what are we doing under the broad category of MISSIONS / OUTREACH.”

Our work and help is needed all 12 months and each and every day. We do our best to serve as often as we can and do all we can for those in need of our help.

Just to recap a bit...

Fisk members and one youth were involved in the HUB UMC Youth Mission Week. Each year it is an inspiring time with youth from 4+ churches. They gather each morning for Devotions and thoughts about the day's activities. Here are a few of the OUTREACH projects.

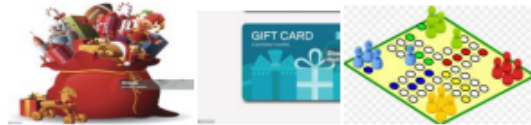
- a trip to **Cooper Community Center** in Roxbury and helped make a “snake” (ask us about it), read to the children and gave them Fisk Teddy Bears (thanks, Pat),
- did extensive yard work for a parishioner in Wayland, called BINGO at the **Wayland Nursing Home** and visited with the residents,
- made sandwiches and distributed them on the streets of Cambridge for those hungry and were involved in the **Street Ministry** there, and
- YES they had a pool party to relax and celebrate with each other and what they experienced during the week. It all made a difference to so many ...including the youth.

In August, 14 women (ages 22-90) from Fisk ventured to Maine for a weekend RETREAT in the record “heat and humidity” with more than our share of rain. We did what we had planned...with some limitations! Relaxed, prayed, read and discussed 5 children's books from the UWF **Reading Program**, did morning stretches with Heather, worked on a project for the Fair in November (thanks Terry), shared meals, some did swim, games of UNO and assembled **54 Health Kits** for UMCOR.



Women's Retreat at Hoyt's in August

Christmas is almost over...that is for the RED BUCKETS of **toys, gifts and Gift Cards for UMEM** in Salem Maine. I have boxed up most of the toys, games etc. We will bring them in early October to Maine for their Christmas Shop. So...if you have still not contributed, there is still a few days to do that. UM Economic Ministry sets up their Christmas Shop for the clients to shop for their families.



Three carloads of “your good used clothing” were transported to Salem for their Thrift Shop. Thanks to volunteer help from Jan and Thom T. We thank you for supporting this ministry. We will collect clothing, shoes etc. through October, then stop for the winter.

Feeding our hungry neighbors! Fisk still serves at the Natick Food Pantry on the second Thursday of each month. **We do need more volunteers.** Just two people for three hours about 4-5 times a year. Do you have time to participate in this on-going ministry?

UPDATE from Kayle & Mat Pelletier in South Africa
“Please pray for their “work permit to be extended.” The government is not predictable!

Family Promise—some of you have shopped and volunteered to drop off **meals to these families.** Thank you

Have you helped water the **Fisk Pollinator Garden** by the bell? Thanks

Are you being careful when you shop to not buy “plastics” when you have a choice? Thanks

Have you tried “laundry detergent sheets”? Help us care for the environment.

Did you know that you can bring your **recyclable aluminum beverage cans and plastics** to Fisk...we will recycle them for you and Fisk benefits financially.

Speaking of aluminum cans...take off the **pull tab** and bring them to the church kitchen. They help Shriners Hospital when combined with 1000's of others from many organizations. (Notes from Marcia Hoyt)

Next month's Messenger will have some news for us to do...can you unscramble this? **eradpis**

Prayer Box / Prayer Wall/ Prayer line

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 on the prayer wall, in the prayer box on the front lawn of the church, on-line on our website, or just call and speak with **Pastor Alecia at (617) 966-7048.** **The Wednesday night prayer line: Wednesdays 6:00-6:30 p.m. Dial: 1-712-775-7270, Access code: 580274#** Remember that no one walks alone. We at Fisk UMC are willing and ready to travel the journey with you.

Sunday School



Children's Sunday School Classes

September 8 will be the first day of Sunday School for Children Grades 1-7.

We will gather together and share a Bible Lesson in Room 2 at 9:30 a.m. and then split with the older students going to the Youth Room across from the sanctuary. Have Soccer Practice at 10? Bring your child for some time with the Lord before they hit the field. Give them the gift of Christian Community. – Susan Carney

Coffee Hour/ Fellowship Time Schedule

If you would like to **volunteer to host coffee hour** there is a sign-up sheet located in the back of the Sanctuary or you can email the Office. Thank you!

NATICK Days

Extend a *Friendly Fisk Hello* at Natick Days

Save the date: **Saturday, September 7!**

WHAT: Natick Days, an annual event celebrating our Natick community, is where service organizations, youth organizations, and volunteers share information about their endeavors. **Several thousand people** attend each year, so we will have a booth and continue to spread the word that Fisk UMC is a welcoming presence in our community.

Time: 10-3 (Setup at 9ish...and cleanup following)

WHERE: We need you!

We will be handing out Blessing Tags for school children's backpacks and prayer cards for community members to continue praying for our schools and students.

* Can you offer one or two hours to greet community members of all ages?!

* Can you greet someone with a smile, give them a blessing tag, and offer a simple "hello"?!

* Can you help setup or cleanup or organize in some way?

Please **email Amy Bruns** and say **"Yes, I can help!"** (amybruns35@gmail.com). Let me know what you'd like to help with: setup, be at our booth for 1 or 2 hours, or clean up when the event ends.

Let's show everyone our open hearts...open minds...open doors!

A Note from Bishop Peggy Johnson:

Farewell for our Bishop:



Time in New England

In the mid-1970s Barry Manilow had a hit song, "Weekend in New England." At the time, I was a schoolteacher driving to and from work, and I used to sing along with his many top 40 songs on the car radio.

I remember as I listened to these

lyrics, "Time in New England took me away, to long rocky beaches and you by the bay ..."

I thought to myself, "I'll never be going there! It's too far away." God laughed at this provincial 20-something girl from Baltimore.

Indeed, many years, later my spouse and I had the awesome privilege of serving for 20 months in New England, not only by the rocky beaches but also in the mountains, cities, suburbs, and islands of your six wonderful states.

What can we say as we are packing our clothes and books? First and foremost, we offer a word of gratitude:

Mystic Meister Eckardt once said, "If all you said was 'thank you,' it would be enough." In a macro sense, this is so true. When we say "thank you" we are acknowledging with humility our dependence on the giver. We express deep appreciation for the "alabaster jar" of grace expended on one's behalf, undeserving, full and free.

We say "thank you" to the churches, pastors and laity of the New England Annual Conference for the warm welcome, respect, and abundant love lavished upon us during these short months we have shared together. You have graciously borne with our Southern, quirky ways, our ignorance about the nuances of New England

life, and our many mispronounced words (Leominster, Haverhill, Worcester, Peabody, Bangor, to name a few). You have received my episcopal leadership with grace and patience.

These things I also know:

This Conference is graced and gifted with many resources and poised for much vital ministry in the future.

Your diversity (geographically, theologically, culturally and linguistically) is a gift and at times, a confluence of rivers that causes waves. Blessedly, these waves often result in deeper conversation and collaboration.

The world is changing rapidly, and this Conference is experiencing the birth pangs of a new way of doing church. We are smaller, more technologically connected, more collaborative, more missional, and more engaged with a hurting humanity.

This Conference has a verve for justice that can position you to take on more formal roles of advocacy in our communities and in the world.

The lay and clergy leaders are talented, feisty and resilient.

I came here because of a clarion call from the Lord to volunteer to be considered for an interim coverage assignment, in the unlikely event one would become available. At the time, in the early fall of 2022, I felt it was as unlikely as it felt when I was singing with Barry Manilow in my car all those years before. In God's providence, it came to be.

I followed a great leader, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, who graciously paved the way for a smooth transition. I have been supported greatly by Cabinet and staff.

My goals included:

- Connecting the connection.
- Strengthening the spiritual atmosphere of the Conference.
- Shining a light on the margins.
- Listening to hearts and yearnings of our churches during these liminal times with personal presence.

I have not achieved it all, and I apologize to those I have hurt or who have suffered from decisions made or not made on your behalf.

It has been an incredible joy to serve here. Your acceptance and love healed my very soul and my spouse's as well.

Mary had open-heart surgery in the early months of our journey in New England. The excellent medical and pastoral care here repaired her heart and saved her life.

As some of you may know, I wear an artificial eye; during my time here I had a replacement eye crafted by a Boston-based ocularist. New England gave me a new eye.

These two health experiences are like object lessons for us. We leave New England with a new heart for justice, inclusion, and healing from the discrimination against trans people. We leave here with a new eye that enables us to see the vast expanse of mission that is possible in the years to come, not just in New England, but throughout the United Methodist Connection. May God bless you. Know that you will always be in my prayers just as from now on, there will be Bean boots in my closet and Ben and Jerry's ice cream in my freezer.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Register now for Church Conference Reports training.

The 2024 Church Conference reports will be submitted digitally via the [People Portal/Church Dashboard](#), our online reporting database for clergy and church leaders. Church

Conference forms will be available on the Church Dashboard on Aug. 22, 2024. Paper forms will not be accepted. This online training is

designed to walk pastors and church leaders through the processes and answer your questions. We are hosting two sessions on completing Church Conference forms. Both sessions are the same; choose the one that works best for you.

Training sessions

- 1-2 pm Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2024
- 7-8 pm Saturday, Sept. 12, 2024

We will record the sessions. Visit www.neumc.org to learn more and register.

Our New District information: District 6-Hub #5 Commonwealth East and Commonwealth West District Offices have combined and there is a new email address: ce-cwoffice@neumc.org (NEW Email address!)

Website: www.neumc.org/CE

District Superintendent: Rev. Nizzi Santos Digan

Address: 2600 Massachusetts Ave, Lexington, MA 02421

Email address: CEDS@neumc.org

Administrative Assistant: Allyson Printz,



**October Messenger Deadline:
Please submit information by
Friday, September 20, 9:00 a.m.**