

The Messenger

First & Wesley
United Methodist Church
89 Center Street
West Haven, Connecticut 06516
203-933-8795

December 2022



Christmas Gift

The most exciting moment Christmas morning for children may be when they open their gifts from the Christmas tree. Whenever they open them, they may have a big expectation for what they really want. They wish and expect that there is something they really wanted for their Christmas in the box. When I was a young kid, I really wanted a bicycle, so I eagerly prayed for it. So, whenever I woke up Christmas morning at that time, I looked around my home inside and outside for my new bicycle. But Santa Claus didn't give me the bicycle until I became middle school age. When I became a middle school student aged boy, I really wanted a video game console for my Christmas gift. So, when I opened my Christmas gift box, I expected it in the box. But something different was in there. My father wanted me to play outside more with my friends at that time. When I became a high school student, I really wanted a personal computer. It was not a necessary item like nowadays, but the need began to spread out from door to door. So, some of my friends already had one and I also expected it for my Christmas gift. But it was so expensive for my father to buy it for me. In each Christmas season, I had some expectations for my gift, but it wasn't realized, so that I used to be disappointed from the gap between what I expected and what I actually got. You or your sons and daughters maybe also have had very similar experiences in the Christmas season.

Not only in the case of Christmas gifts, but also in our life, we can easily find this gap between what we expect and what really happens. And because of this gap, we are disappointed, we are depressed, and we don't find any reason why we need to pray. When we believe in God, we always expect something good from God for me, for my family, and for the world, but actually, many things we pray to God for seems not to be responded to in this world. We experience something different from what we really want. How can we approach this problem based on the gap which we frequently experience?

Here, we have to remember that God realizes God's will, not our expectations. If we fit our expectation to God's will, if we match our prayer to God's intention, how wonderful would it be? God will surely answer to that prayers and fill our expectation. I strongly believe that our faith is to give up ours, but to exalt God's. We have to know what God's will is and to try to follow it in our faithful journey. Jesus already showed us how to follow God's will on his cross. This is the reason why the baby Jesus came into the world. Amen.

Pastor Jinha Choi

Lectionary Readings for December 2022



December 4, 2022

- [Isaiah 11:1-10](#) • [Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19](#) •
- [Romans 15:4-13](#) • [Matthew 3:1-12](#)

December 11, 2022

- [Isaiah 35:1-10](#) • [Psalm 146:5-10](#) or [Luke 1:46b-55](#) •
- [James 5:7-10](#) • [Matthew 11:2-11](#)

December 18, 2022

- [Isaiah 7:10-16](#) • [Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19](#) •
- [Romans 1:1-7](#) • [Matthew 1:18-25](#)

December 24 & 25, 2022

- [Isaiah 9:2-7](#) • [Psalm 96](#) • [Titus 2:11-14](#) • [Luke 2:1-14, \(15-20\)](#)
- [Isaiah 62:6-12](#) • [Psalm 97](#) • [Titus 3:4-7](#) • [Luke 2:\(1-7\), 8-20](#)
- [Isaiah 52:7-10](#) • [Psalm 98](#) • [Hebrews 1:1-4, \(5-12\)](#) • [John 1:1-14](#)

Historical Notes of First and Wesley

by Edith Mulligan

Did you know –

- In the 50's, 60's and 70's when September came we had the biggest Sunday school. The Nursery and kindergarten met on the first floor of Fellowship Hall. The Primary Department (1st, 2nd and 3rd grades) met upstairs. Also, on this floor was a beautiful Youth Chapel for teens. The basement had the Junior Department meeting (4th, 5th, 6th graders).
- Our Sunday School was self-sustaining, each fall and spring there would be a rummage sale. Setting up the room for a week or two. Don't forget each child was given a small box of envelopes, even 5¢ would be counted.
- We had a commission on Education with volunteers helping to make the Sunday School a success.

“Breakfast With Santa”

December 10th from 9am-11am, we will have a FREE continental breakfast, craft projects for children, hats and gloves (many hands knitted) for children (several sizes available) and of course, Santa.

Come and enjoy the fun!





First & Wesley United Methodist Church

December 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
All Worship Services will be held both in-person and online (via Zoom). Worship Service begins at 11:00 am. All Worship Services and meetings – Link: https://zoom.us/j/147691027 / Call-in: 1-646-876-9923 *Meeting ID: 147691027#						
				1 10a–12p Koinonia Café 6p Bell 7p Adult Choir	2	3
4 11:00a Family Worship with Communion & Birthday/Anniversary Celebration Blessing of Pledges	5 7p Adult Monday School	6	7 7p Adult Group Study	8 10a–12p Koinonia Café 6p Bell 7p Adult Choir	9	10 Breakfast with Santa 9a-11a
11 11:00a Family Worship Service & Sunday School (In-person Sunday School begins after Children's Sermon) Blessing of Gift Cards & Christmas Gifts	12 7p Adult Monday school	13 7p Finance Committee	14 7p Adult Group Study	15 10a–12p Koinonia Café 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	16	17
18 11:00a Family Worship Service & Sunday School(In-person Sunday School begins after Children's Sermon)	19 7p Adult Monday School	20 *Articles Due for the December Messenger	21 7p Adult Group Study	22 10a–12p Koinonia Café 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	23	24 7p Christmas Eve Service
25 Christmas 6:30a Christmas Worship 11:00a Family Worship Service	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve

For more information go to the church website at www.firstwesleyumc.org

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! God is Good!

From The Layleader

I put the poem below which was written by Valerie Kingsley in the newsletter two years ago when we were shut down due to COVID . I love it so I thought it was worth sharing again! Listen to Jesus whisper to you.

***If you look for me at Christmas,
You won't need a special star.
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,
I'm right there where you are.***

***You may not be aware of me
Amid the celebrations.
You'll have to look beyond the stores
And all the decorations.***

***But if you take a moment
From your list of things to do
And listen to your heart, you'll find
I'm waiting there for you.***

***You're the one I want to be with,
You're the reason that I came,
And you'll find me in the stillness
As I'm whispering your name.***

***Love,
Jesus***

Missions & Outreach

Thank you to everyone who made our Halloween Trick or Treating Outreach program a great success. We estimate we had @350 people come and for many, it was very possibly the first time seeing the inside of our church.

Also, thank you to everyone who helped with the Nativity set-up on Nov. 26th.

"On Nov. 13th, we blessed 10 prayer shawls plus several mittens and hats. Below is a picture. (add attached picture). We also blessed fifty-eight \$25 Stop & Shop gift certificates to be given out to church families, our Covenant to Care social worker and the Hill Area of New Haven.

On December 11th, we will be blessing forty more \$25 Stop & Shop gift cards to be given out to church families and the Hill Area of New Haven as well as Christmas gifts for our Covenant to Care social worker to give out. Thank you to Chris Latham for coordinating this!

We helped a family in New Haven seeking asylum and are also helping a family in Milford, through Milford's Way, who are refugees.

We dedicated several prayer shawls, mittens and hats on November 13th. Thanks to all of our dedicated knitters who provide for this ministry!



December Birthdays

- 3 - Diane Soars
- 5 - Judy Juzwiakowski
- 6 - Julia Werle
- 8 - Hannah Cascio
Shirley Henrie
- 9 - Christine McGregor
- 10 - Bill Hunt
Bob Clinton
Hyacinth Young
- 11 - Lisa Ammon
Tom Mark
Jennifer Skipper
- 12 - Katelyn Hickman
- 17 - Michele Sablone
- 18 - Matt Heafy
- 20 - Jayden Abekah
- 21 - Mark Cascio
Isaiah Singleton
- 29 - Raymond Geissler
- 30 - Florence Dzikas
Stephanie Wilson
- 31 - Gina Quinn

December Anniversaries

- 3 - Peggy and Jim Jerrell
- 11 - Helen and Dave Smith
- 16 - Becky and Tom Baker 27 –
Linda and Dennis Kopec

If you do not see your birthday or anniversary listed, please let the church office know so we can update our list and make sure you are not missed.

If you would like to include someone for birthdays or anniversaries, please see below. Example- name change, address change, marriage, birth, death, etc. Email: firstwesleyumc@gmail.com or send to church office.



Have you visited our Church Website lately?

It is truly beautiful and informative. The Church calendar is updated as needed and you can check on dates and times of meetings and events.

Website is firstwesleyumc.org Check it out!

Ways to support the Church with no cost to you!

Amazon Smile

The church is registered on Amazon Smile. Amazon Smile is a way for customers to support their favorite charitable organization every time they shop with Amazon. For the church to get the .5% from Amazon, make sure you start your shopping using <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/06-0681807>. If you have any questions, please contact Helen Smith.

Stop & Shop Fundraiser (Gift cards)



If you shop at Stop & Shop, please consider getting gift cards from Dave Smith (203-415-6092). Our church receives 5% of the value of the cards sold as a donation from Stop & Shop. Checks are made out to “Dave Smith”.

ShopRite Fundraiser (Gift cards)



This program is the same as our Stop & Shop program. The church receives 4% for each card sold. If interested, call Helen Smith at 203-444-2362. Checks made payable to “FWUMC”.

We appreciate your continued support!

Remember you would be spending money at these stores anyway and now the church can receive a percentage. Share with your family and friends this opportunity.

Being Alone in the Church

For those of you who need to go into the church, do not forget to sign in each time you enter the church. Trustees have implemented a new policy and a sign in sheet.

2022 contact numbers

Helen Smith 203-444-2362 Layleader
Jim Stuhlman 203-435-1790 Trustee Chair
Peggy Jerrell 203-641-0929 Church Council Chair



Prayer Shawl Ministry
First and Wesley United
Methodist

Our Prayer Shawl group will be meeting on Thursday December 8th at 1 PM in person for lunch in celebration of the **Christmas Holiday Season** we will be meeting at the

Sandpiper Restaurant
161 Cosey Beach Ave
East Haven, CT 06512

Prayer shawls are in the Church Office. Please contact Edith Mulligan or Linda Kopec if you would like to pick one up.

All are welcome to join us.

Native American

Pennies Collection

We continue to collect pennies for the Native American Ministries.

We would like to send many thanks to our Church Family for helping us to continue with this Ministry.



Celebrate Wonder

Children will attend Sunday school during part of the service. They will go to their classrooms with their Sunday School teachers following the Children's Moment. Please join us to learn about God's love. We listen to stories, make art projects, peek into a Wonder Box, sing songs, and spend time together.

- E-mail or call Gail Bartozzi (gbartozzi@yahoo.com or text (203)747-6039) for questions about Sunday School
- Register for Sunday School <https://www.firstwesleyumc.org/ministries/childrens-ministry/>

The Craft Corner



We have Get Well and Thinking of You cards. Contact Gail Bartozzi if you would like a card sent to someone or have questions about the group. You can call the church office or e-mail Gail at gbartozzi@yahoo.com

Adult Group Study



Every Wednesday 7pm via Zoom continues in December.

Our Bible lessons follow the theme of “Freedom.” The lessons explore the concept of salvation and God’s gracious acts in redeeming us. They challenge we who have experienced God’s gracious salvation to work for freedom and justice on behalf of others. They acknowledge that as we do, we will encounter those whose beliefs and values are different from our own, so they encourage us to remain faithful to our beliefs while we act as neighbors to others.

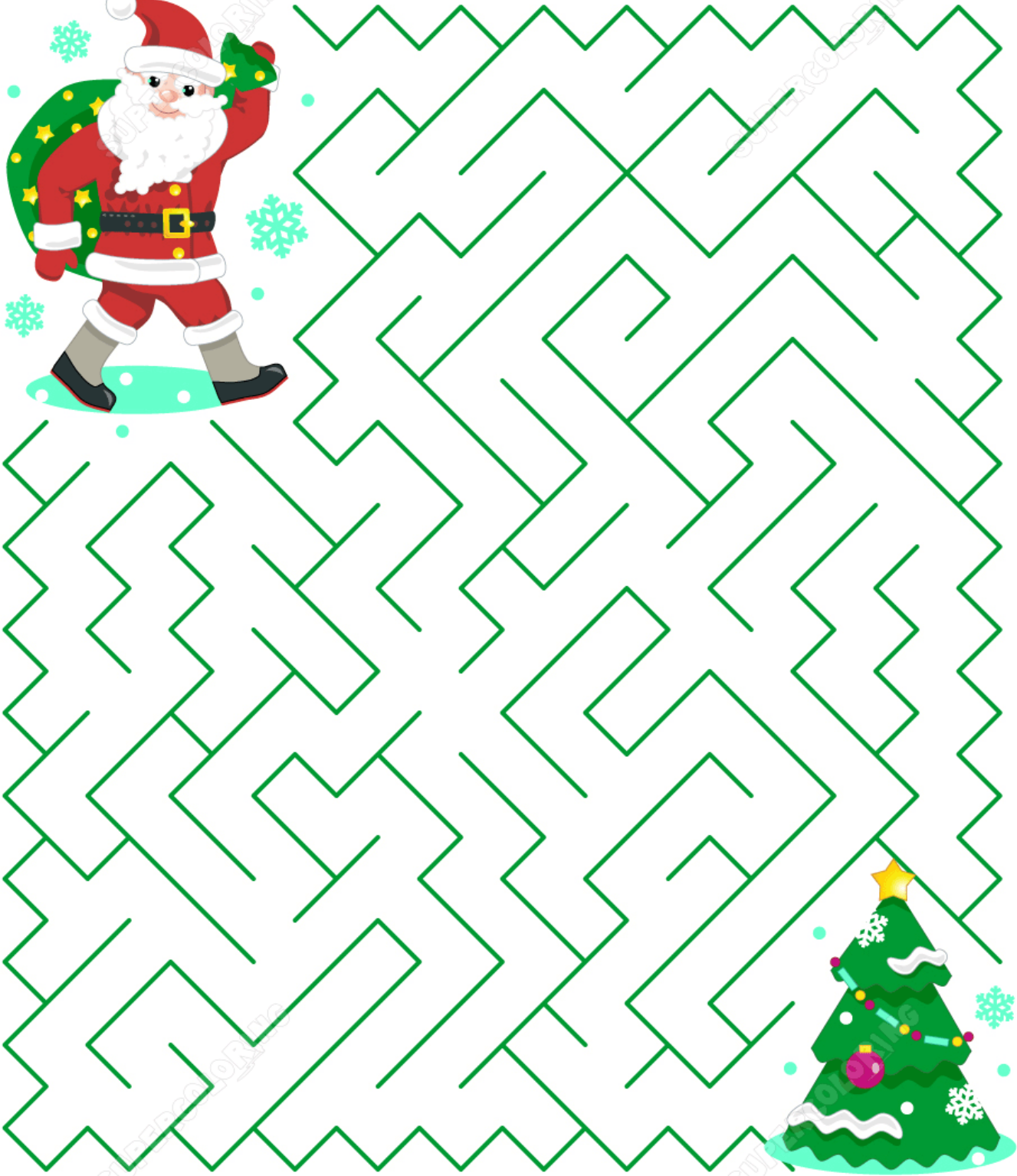
 **KOINONIA CAFÉ**
& FIRST & WESLEY UMC

Free Coffee & Refreshments

OPEN TO COMMUNITY!

THURSDAYS, 10 AM - 12 PM

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Email: firstwesleyumc@gmail.com

Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/firstwesleyumc.

Pastor Jinha Choi

“Sunday Worship Time: 11:00am”

The December Newsletter



STRONGER TOGETHER

“We can do all things
through Christ who strengthens us.”
(Philippians 4:13)

IN-PERSON & ONLINE SUNDAY WORSHIP @ 11:00 AM

COME JOIN OUR CHURCH FAMILY!