

The Messenger

**First & Wesley
United Methodist Church
89 Center Street
West Haven, Connecticut 06516
203-933-8795
November 2025**



Rev. Frank Sarpong

The Role of the Holy Spirit in Church Growth - Part 1

As you are all aware, the book of the Acts of the Apostles is our focal point, and I pray that you will walk with me as we journey through the book. This is because the growth of the Church is not merely a product of human strategy, eloquent preaching, or organizational efficiency. It is, first and foremost, the work of the Holy Spirit. From the birth of the early Church in the book of Acts to the modern-day body of believers, the Holy Spirit has been the unseen but powerful force driving transformation, unity, and expansion. Without the Holy Spirit, the Church becomes a lifeless institution; with Him, it becomes a living, breathing organism that reflects the very presence

of God in the world. In the first part of this two-part series, I will look at The Holy Spirit as a life-giver of the church, and The Holy Spirit's empowerment of the church for witness.

The Holy Spirit as the Life-Giver of the Church

The Church was conceived in prayer and born in the power of the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, when the disciples were gathered together in one accord, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" (Acts 2:2). This marked the official birth of the Church.

The Holy Spirit breathed life into the disciples, transforming them from fearful followers into bold witnesses. This divine empowerment gave rise to explosive growth; three thousand souls were added to the Church that very day (Acts 2:41). Just as breath gives life to the human body, the Spirit gives life to the body of Christ.

Without the Spirit, church programs and services may continue, but spiritual vitality and true transformation will be absent. It is the Holy Spirit who animates worship, revives hearts, and makes the Church a living testimony of God's presence.

The Holy Spirit Empowers Witness and Evangelism

One of the primary roles of the Holy Spirit in church growth is empowering believers to be effective witnesses. Jesus made this clear before His ascension:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." — Acts 1:8

The growth of the early Church was fueled by Spirit-led evangelism. The apostles spoke with boldness, performed miracles, and preached messages that cut to the heart. Evangelism devoid of the Holy Spirit becomes mechanical, but when guided by the Spirit, it becomes dynamic and life-changing.

Today, the same Spirit stirs up compassion for the lost, gives courage to share the gospel, and confirms the message with signs and transformed lives. True church growth does not come from marketing campaigns but from Spirit-inspired evangelism that touches hearts and draws souls to Christ.

Lectionary Readings for November 2025

November 2, 2025

[Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4](#), [Psalm 119:137-144](#), [2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12](#), [Luke 19:1-10](#)

November 9, 2025

[Haggai 1:15b-2:9](#), [Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21](#), [2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17](#), [Luke 20:27-38](#)

November 16, 2025

[Isaiah 65:17-25](#), [Isaiah 12](#), [2 Thessalonians 3:6-13](#), [Luke 21:5-19](#)

November 23, 2025

[Jeremiah 23:1-6](#), [Psalm 46](#), [Colossians 1:11-20](#), [Luke 23:33-43](#)

November 30, 2025

[Isaiah 2:1-5](#), [Psalm 122](#), [Romans 13:11-14](#), [Matthew 24:36-44](#)

Havens/Shoreline Parish Healing and Wholeness Services

First & Wesley UMC

Tuesday, November 4th at 6pm (**New Time**)

(1st Tuesday of each month)

Branford UMC

Wednesday, November 12th at 1pm in the sanctuary

(2nd Wednesday of each month)

Hamden Plains UMC

Wednesday, November 26th at 11am (**New Time**)

in the prayer room

(4th Wednesday of each month)

Services are led by Rev. Cindy Dodd, retired UM minister.

All are welcome! Questions? Call Pastor Dodd at 203 889-6934





First & Wesley United Methodist Church

November 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 3p-5:30p All Church Conference Branford UMC
2 10:00a Family Worship Service, Communion, Birthday/Anniversary celebration Sunday School (begins after Children's Sermon)	3 After School Prog 7p Adult Monday school	4 NO ASP 6p Healing Prayer Service	5 After School Prog 7p Adult Group Study	6 10a-12p "K" Café After School Prog 5p Youth Choir 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	7 After School Prog	8 8a Men's Breakfast 10:00a set up tables in gym, etc
9 10:00a Family Worship Service Sunday School (begins after Children's Sermon)	10 Noon-3p Set up tag sale After School Prog 7p Adult Monday school	11 Noon-8p Set up tag sale NO ASP 7p Finance	12 7a Baking Day Noon-3p Fair Set up After School Prog 6p-8p Fair set up 7p Adult Group Study	13 10a-12p "K" Café After School Prog 5p Youth Choir 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	14 7a Baking Day After School Prog	15 8a-3p Harvest Fair 5p Agape Meal (Free) All Welcome
16 10:00a Family Worship Service Sunday School (begins after Children's Sermon) 2p Clean up Gym of tag sale	17 9a – 2p Clean up downstairs of After School Prog 7p Adult Monday school	18 After School Prog	19 After School Prog 7p Adult Group Study	20 10a-12p "K" Café 1p Prayer Shawl After School Prog 5p Youth Choir 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	21 *Articles Due for the December Messenger After School Prog 7p Missions & Outreach	22 9:30a – 10:30a Craft Corner 11a Worship Committee
23 10:00a Family Worship Service Sunday School (begins after Children's Sermon)	24 After School Prog 7p Adult Monday school	25 After School Prog 7 :30p Trustees	26 NO ASP 7p Adult Group Study	27 Thanksgiving NO ASP	28 NO ASP	29 10a Outdoor Nativity setup & decorate
30 Advent 10:00a Family Worship Service Sunday School (begins after Children's Sermon)						

Zoom Link for all Worship Services and meetings!

(exceptions – SPR, CNLD,)

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/147691027>

Call-in: [1-646-876-9923](tel:1-646-876-9923) Meeting ID: [147691027#](https://zoom.us/j/147691027#)

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

Sunday School

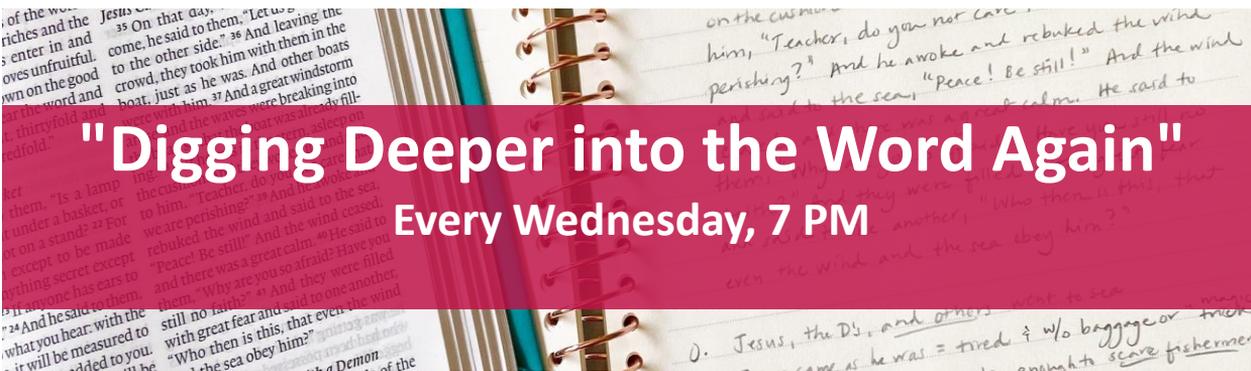


Grow in Faith with Us

Together, we're learning what it means to know God's character, understand the work of Christ, and live faithfully in relationship with God and one another.

Join us Sunday mornings right after the Children's Moment during the 10:00 AM service. We'd love to have you with us!

ADULT BIBLE STUDY



"Digging Deeper into the Word Again"

Every Wednesday, 7 PM

- ▶ Do you have any questions about the Sunday Service sermons?
- ▶ Have you experienced something or have a story that connects with those sermons?
- ▶ Do you want to explore the texts, themes, or theology used in the Sunday Service?

If so, you're invited to join our Wednesday Bible Study!

This will be a time to dive deeper into the Scriptures preached in the previous Sunday's service.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

This month we will be gathering on Nov. 8th at 8am for our Men's Fellowship Breakfast. Plan on joining us for a delicious hot cooked breakfast, Bible devotional and good fellowship.

Dads and sons, Grandads and grandsons are welcome!

MISSION & OUTREACH

THANK YOU to everyone who helped out and donated candy, cookies
and time for our



HALLOWEEN OPEN HOUSE



Next Mission Meeting - Friday November 21st 7:00p by Zoom

Free Santa's Breakfast

December 6th

9-11:30

Come down and enjoy a warm breakfast and meet Santa!!! The kids can make a holiday craft, take a picture with Santa and pick out a free hat and pair of gloves.

Fellowship

Every Thursday – Koinonia Café, 10am-12pm

Please note: If you would like to help Judy Jennette with the cafe, please contact her.

FREE Community meal followed by games.

Every 3rd Saturday of each month – 5pm

Volunteers always welcome – see Dave Smith or Judy Jennette.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

First & Wesley United Methodist Church

Our next Prayer Shawl meeting will be

November 20, 2025 at 1PM

in person at the home of Edith Mulligan

65 Messina Drive, Apt A761, East Haven, CT 06512

“We wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving”

Prayer shawls are in the Church Office if someone needs one.

Be sure to sign your name and the person it will go to.

You can also contact Edith Mulligan – (203) 821-7533

Worship Committee News

All Saints Sunday

All Saints Sunday is November 2, 2025. We will be honoring friends and family who have passed away in the last year by reciting their names followed by a bell toll during the worship service.

Veteran's Sunday

We will be honoring all those who have served in the military. If you know of someone close to you who served our country, please let Helen Smith know by Nov, 3rd so they may be included in the list and in the PPT.

Shoreline-Havens Parish Concert

Our choir will be singing at this concert on Dec. 7th at 3pm. We hope you can come and enjoy this time of fellowship with the other churches in our parish during our Advent season.



1ST ANNUAL

Shoreline Havens
Christmas
FELLOWSHIP Cooperative Parish
Concert

DECEMBER 7, 2025. - 3:00PM

SPEAKERS

Come and let's make a joyful noise unto the Lord!

HAMDEN PLAINS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
15 CHURCH STREET, HAMDEN, CT 06514

November Birthdays

- 1 - Jacob Jerrell
- 2 - Sarah Santamauro
- 3 - Dolores Danz
- 4 - Sue McMillian
- 6 - Jim Jerrel,
Kelly Stuhlman Roaslet
- 8 - Renee Bobko
- 12 - Oliver Dougherty
- 13 - Emily Kopec
Jennifer Kopec
- 14 - Ava Hollister
- 16 - Eric Dzikas
- 19 - Abe McKim
- 21 - Ann Yost
- 22 - Becky Baker
- 25 - John Poe IV
Jocelyn Moscato

November Anniversaries

- 1 - Shelby and Louis Argentino
- 2 - Ann and Art Yost
- 11 - Audie and Tom Hollister
- 13 - Beth and Jim Ammon
- 25 - Sharon and Jim Stuhlman

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.

Also, please send information re any name changes, address changes, marriages, births, deaths, etc., to the Church Office, or by Email to: firstwesleyumc@gmail.com

CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor, Rev. Frank Sarpong
860-938-1845 (phone or text)
franksarpong@nyac-umc.com

Layleader, Mary Rolfe
475-988-7666 (phone or test)
mary.kate527@icloud.com

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. If you are going to be working in the church alone, please make sure someone knows you are there, and let them know when you leave.



Craft Corner

Card Ministry

Reaching Out with Care

Our **Card Ministry** creates and sends *Get Well* and *Thinking of You* cards to those who could use a little extra encouragement or support.

If you know someone who would appreciate a card, or if you have questions about the group, please contact Gail.

You can call the church office or email her at gbartozzi@yahoo.com.

This month, we will meet on the fourth Saturday of the month from 9:30 to 10:30 AM to make cards together. All are welcome to join us!



Native American Coin 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.

Upcoming Fundraisers - Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, November 15th

Harvest Fair, 8am-3pm

Please note that the date for our fair is the THIRD Saturday of November

Harvest Fair Information

Our largest fundraiser, the Annual Harvest Fair, is set for Saturday, November 15, 2025. Here is a list of what we would like to have ready to make this year's fair another successful event!

- Volunteers- people are our most wonderful asset. An hour or two spent helping would make the day run smoothly. Help with pancakes in the am and or lunch at noon time, staffing booths, floaters.
- Pre-fair set up & post fair clean up.
- Calling all bakers and lovers of sweet treats. We are planning to have our table of goodies to sell by our "sweet" volunteers.

Raffle prizes - this is a great way to help us make the Fundraiser a success. Donations of baskets, gift cards, homemade items, creative crafts, etc. all are welcome! Please let Mary Rolfe know if you can help support this project.

Calendar of activities leading up to and after Fair day

If you can help out any of these days, it would be GREAT!

- Tag sale drop offs – Saturdays, November 1 & 8 from 11am to 1pm.
For other times, please contact Mary. 475-988-7666
- Sat. Nov. 8th – 10am set up tables in gym/bring down tag sale stuff
- Mon. Nov. 10th - Noon - 3pm set out tag sale stuff
- Tue. Nov. 11th - Noon - 8pm set out tag sale stuff
- Wed. Nov. 12th - 8am making monkey bread
6 - 8pm work on fair set up
- Thu. Nov. 13th – Noon - 3pm set up for fair
- Fri. Nov, 14th - pie day! 9am – finish
2pm – take pies upstairs and 6pm return pies to dining room



Calendar of activities leading up to and after Fair day (cont'd)

- Sat. Nov. 15th – FAIR DAY 8am-3p
NOTE: due to community dinner at 5pm we need to allow for them to be in the kitchen as soon as possible after lunch and we will need extra help cleaning up in the dining room in preparation for their dinner.
- Sun. Nov.16th - after 2pm -pack up everything we can in gym so After School program can go back to normal routines.
- Mon. Nov. 17th 9am to ? - finish necessary cleaning of anything left in dining room and set up for After School program. Also, clean up upstairs.

Also, if you want to make cookies, brownies, cake, or whatever for our baked goods table, that is ALWAYS appreciated. If you can list the ingredients, that is helpful to those shoppers who have allergies.

If you make crafts and would be willing to donate something to our craft booth, that is always appreciated as well!

Holiday Gift Card Fundraiser

This gift card fundraiser is going to provide a way for you to contribute to First & Wesley while spending what you normally spend on gift cards at Christmas. The way it works is very similar to the Stop & Shop and ShopRite gift card fundraisers we already do (if you would like to make use of this ongoing gift card fund raiser, please contact Dave or Helen Smith).

You purchase the gift card and the church receives a percentage of the face value of what you bought. On the order forms, you will see 38 different retailers or restaurant choices and the % amount of the face value that the church will receive.

1. You fill out an order form to order the gift cards in advance. (order form is on p. 11 of this newsletter)
2. You order and pay for the gift cards ahead of time (Make checks payable to FWUMC and write Gift Card fundraiser in the memo field)
3. **Orders need to be submitted by November 30TH.**
4. Ordered gift cards will be available on December 7th after church

HARVEST FAIR

@ FIRST & WESLEY UMC

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 8AM - 3PM

Veterans receive free breakfast!

BREAKFAST

8:00 AM - 10:30 AM

ALL YOU CAN EAT PANCAKES

ADULT: \$10.00

KID (5-11): \$5.00

LUNCH

11:30 AM - 2:00 PM

DAVE'S FAMOUS CHILI & MORE

BOWL OF CHILI: \$6.00

MEATBALL SUB: \$5.00



BOOTHS

CRAFTS / HOMEMADE BAKED GOODS / JEWELRY / PLANTS
USED BOOKS / HUGE TAG SALE / CHILDREN'S AREA / AND MORE



First & Wesley United Methodist Church
89 Center Street, West Haven, CT 06516
203.933.8795 / www.firstwesleyumc.org

Wheelchair accessible - back of parking lot

Come - Eat - Shop - Enjoy

GIFT CARD FUNDRAISER

We are providing First & Wesley members and friends of the church an opportunity to buy gift cards for Christmas gifts and at the same time support the church financially. Simply fill out the form below & send form to First & Wesley Methodist Church, 89 Center Street, West Haven, CT 06516 or give to Helen Smith
ALL ORDERS need to be received by 11-30-2025

RAISERIGHT
ORDER FORM



Name _____

Phone # _____

E-mail (for confirmation) _____

cards ordered _____ Amount enclosed _____

Submit the order form to Helen Smith by November 30th

Email

Ordered gift cards will be available for pickup starting on Sun. 12/7(after church)

All checks make payable to FWUMC - please put "gift card fundraiser" in memo line

#	Store/Business	Amount	% earned	Subtotal	#	Restaurant/Food	Amount	% earned	Subtotal
	Amazon.com	\$25	1.50%			Bob Evans	\$25	15.00%	
	Amazon.com	\$100	1.50%			Buffalo Wild Wings	\$25	8.00%	
	Apple Store,Apple.com	\$25	5.00%			Buffalo Wild Wings	\$50	8.00%	
	Barnes & Noble	\$10	8.00%			Chili's	\$25	10.00%	
	Barnes & Noble	\$25	8.00%			Chili's	\$50	10.00%	
	Best Buy	\$25	4.00%			Cracker Barrel	\$25	12.00%	
	Best Buy	\$100	4.00%			Dave & Buster's	\$25	13.00%	
	Bosco's	\$25	8.00%			Dunkin Donuts	\$10	3.50%	
	Carter's	\$25	12.00%			Dunkin Donuts	\$25	3.50%	
	CVS	\$25	7.00%			Olive Garden	\$25	8.00%	
	CineMark Theaters	\$25	6.00%			Olive Garden	\$100	8.00%	
	Dick's Sporting Goods	\$25	8.00%			On the Border	\$25	10.00%	
	Dick's Sporting Goods	\$100	8.00%			On the Border	\$50	10.00%	
	Game Stop	\$25	5.00%			Outback Steakhouse	\$25	10.00%	
	Home Depot	\$25	4.00%			Outback Steakhouse	\$50	10.00%	
	Home Depot	\$100	4.00%			Panera Bread	\$25	8.00%	
	Ikea	\$25	5.00%			Panera Bread	\$50	8.00%	
	Kohl's	\$25	7.00%			Sonic	\$10	8.00%	
	Lowe's	\$25	6.00%			Sonic	\$25	5.00%	
	Lowe's	\$100	6.00%			Starbucks	\$10	4.50%	
	Mobil	\$50	1.50%			Starbucks	\$25	4.50%	
	Shell	\$25	1.50%			Subway	\$10	6.00%	
	Shell	\$50	1.50%			Subway	\$50	6.00%	
	Staples	\$25	5.00%			Taco Bell	\$10	5.00%	
	Target	\$25	2.50%			Taco Bell	\$25	5.00%	
	Target	\$50	2.50%			Texas Roadhouse	\$25	10.00%	
	Uber	\$25	3.00%			Wendy's	\$25	6.00%	
	Walgreen's	\$25	5.00%						
	Walmart	\$25	2.50%						
	Walmart	\$50	2.50%						





The Messenger

First & Wesley United Methodist Church

89 Center Street, West Haven, CT 06516

Phone (203) 933-8795

www.firstwesleyumc.org

Email: firstwesleyumc@gmail.com

Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/firstwesleyumc.

Pastor Frank Sarpong

“Sunday Worship Time: 10:00am”

The November 2025 Newsletter

STRONGER TOGETHER



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

IN-PERSON & ONLINE SUNDAY WORSHIP @ 10:00 AM

COME JOIN OUR CHURCH FAMILY!