

The Messenger

**First & Wesley
United Methodist Church
89 Center Street
West Haven, Connecticut 06516
203-933-8795
September 2026**



Rev. Frank Sarpong

Jump In: A Call to First & Wesley

If “**Show Up**” was our invitation to be present, “**Jump In**” is our invitation to truly belong. God never intended for us to be spectators in His house; He created us to be active participants in His mission.

This year, we are challenging every member of First & Wesley United Methodist Church to shift their perspective, moving from the pew to active participation, from being an observer to being an owner, and from asking, “What is the church doing?” to asking, “What can I do?”

As the Apostle Paul reminds us, “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good”. (1 Corinthians 12:7). You matter. You have a unique contribution to offer, and you possess a gift that God intends to use for His glory.

Finding Your Place

Jumping in means discovering where your specific gifts meet the church’s needs. Perhaps you feel called to teach, or maybe you find purpose in singing, praying, greeting newcomers, preparing meals, visiting the homebound, or mentoring our youth. You might simply be the one who offers a timely word of hope to someone struggling. While we aren’t all called to serve in the same way, we are all called to serve in some way.

As Peter writes, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms”. (1 Peter 4:10).

First & Wesley needs more than just a congregation that attends worship; we need disciples who actively fuel the mission of Christ. If ministry is left to a small, select group, our congregation cannot reach its God-given potential. Jesus didn’t just invite His disciples to listen to His sermons; He invited them to follow, to learn, and to work alongside Him before eventually sending them out to sustain the movement.

Taking Ownership

Jumping in is ultimately an act of ownership. It means that when you see a need, you don't wait for someone else to step in. It means reaching out when a neighbor needs encouragement, volunteering to mentor our children, or asking leadership, "Where can I help?"

We look to the early church in Acts 2:42 as our blueprint. They were a community that learned, prayed, worshipped, and cared for one another with profound devotion. The result was transformative: "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved". (Acts 2:47).

Our Year to Participate

At First & Wesley, we have a unique opportunity to build a congregation where every generation; from our children and youth to our seasoned seniors finds a place, a purpose, and a ministry. We want our children to grow up watching adults serve. We want our youth to know their voices matter. We want our older members to know that their wisdom remains an essential cornerstone of our life together.

This year, don't just attend. Jump in by doing any of the following:

Join a ministry team.

Volunteer your time.

Encourage a fellow member.

Pray for someone in need.

Invite a neighbor to join our work.

Whatever you do, remember the encouragement of Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord." We showed up, and now it is time to jump in. Let's move from attendance to involvement, and from sitting in the church to serving through the church. Show Up. Jump In. Move Out.

HERE WE GO!

Some ways to "JUMP IN"

Next to each item is a person to ask for more information

- Knit a prayer shawl (Edith Mulligan)
- Sign up for coffee hour (Christine Chan)
- Become a worship leader (Christine Chan)
- Help with a Spaghetti Dinner (Mary Rolfe or Peggy Jerrell)
- Help prepare or clean-up at the Community dinner (Mary Rolfe)
- Join one of the choirs (Christine Chan)
- Learn how to do an A/V job (Jian Chan)
- If asked to be on a committee, try it for a year. (Pastor Frank)
- Put newsletter together. (Helen Smith)
- Let us know a skill you have!



First & Wesley United Methodist Church

August 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 3:30p Afterschool 6p Healing	2 3:30p Afterschool 7p Bible Study	3 10a–12p “K” Café 3:30p Afterschool 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	4 3:30p Afterschool	5
6 Celebrate Children 10:00a Family Worship Birthday/Anniversar y celebration after service	7 Labor Day No After School	8 3:30p Afterschool 7p Finance	9 3:30p Afterschool 7p Bible Study	10 10a–12p “K” Café 3:30p Afterschool 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	11 3:30p Afterschool	12 8a Men’s Breakfast 8a Women’s Fellowship 12p Community Cook out
13 10:00a Family Worship Service & Sunday School (begins after Children’s Sermon)	14 3:30p Afterschool 7p Adult Monday school	15 3:30p Afterschool	16 No After School 7p Bible Study	17 10a–12p “K” Café 1p Prayer 3:30p Afterschool 5p Youth Choir 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	18 3:30p Afterschoo 7p Missions – in person	19 9:30a - Craft Corner 11a Worship Committee 5p Agape Meal (Free) All Welcome
20 10:00a Family Worship Service & Sunday School (begins after Children’s Sermon} 6p Church Council – in person	21 No After School 7p Adult Monday school	22 3:30p Afterschool 7 :00pTrustees	23 3:30p Afterschool 7p Bible Study	24 10a–12p “K” Café 3:30p Afterschool 5p Youth Choir 6p Bell Choir 7p Adult Choir	25 3:30p Afterschool	26 9a Apple Fest
27 10:00a Family Worship Service & Sunday School (begins after Children’s Sermon)	28 3:30p Afterschool 7p Adult Monday school	29 3:30p Afterschool	30 3:30p Afterschool 7p Adult Bible Study			(Oct. 3) 5pm Pasta Dinner - Fundraiser

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

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#)



Lectionary Readings for June 2026

September 6, 2026

[Exodus 12:1-14](#), [Psalm 149](#), [Romans 13:8-14](#), [Matthew 18:15-20](#)

September 13, 2026

[Exodus 14:19-31](#), [Psalm 114](#), [Romans 14:1-12](#), [Matthew 18:21-35](#)

September 20, 2026

[Exodus 16:2-15](#), [Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45](#), [Philippians 1:21-30](#), [Matthew 20:1-16](#)

September 27, 2026

[Exodus 17:1-7](#), [Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16](#), [Philippians 2:1-13](#), [Matthew 21:23-32](#)

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Next Meeting, September 21st. 1pm

Location: Edith Mulligan's home in East Haven

Please contact Edith for directions.



Knitters are welcome to participate from home. Every shawl is a special gift of love, prayer, and faith. **We hope you can join us!**

Celebrating Linda Kopec

Linda is now back home in Baldwinville, New York. Although she will be living in another state, she will continue knitting prayer shawls. We will miss having her with us and are grateful for all she has done to keep our group together and organize our shawls. Linda has been a devoted sister in faith, and we appreciate her many years of dedication.

Remembering Joan Sablone

We will also deeply miss Joan Sablone, Linda's sister. We knitted together for almost 18 years. Joan attended meetings while undergoing chemotherapy and never complained. She was courageous, faithful, and an inspiration to us all. Even while receiving hospice care at home, Joan continued knitting prayer shawls.

Joan and I attended Sunday school together. She was a faithful Christian who loved the people of First and Wesley. Her faith and love will remain an important part of our Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Prayer Shawl Availability

Prayer shawls are available in the church office. If you take a shawl, please sign your name and include the name of the person who will receive it.

Contact Information

For directions or to arrange pickup, please contact:

Sharon Ewen: 203-464-1995

Edith Mulligan: 203-821-7533

Thank you to everyone who continues to knit, pray, and share these beautiful gifts with others.



Sunday School

Children's Sunday School begins on
September 13th

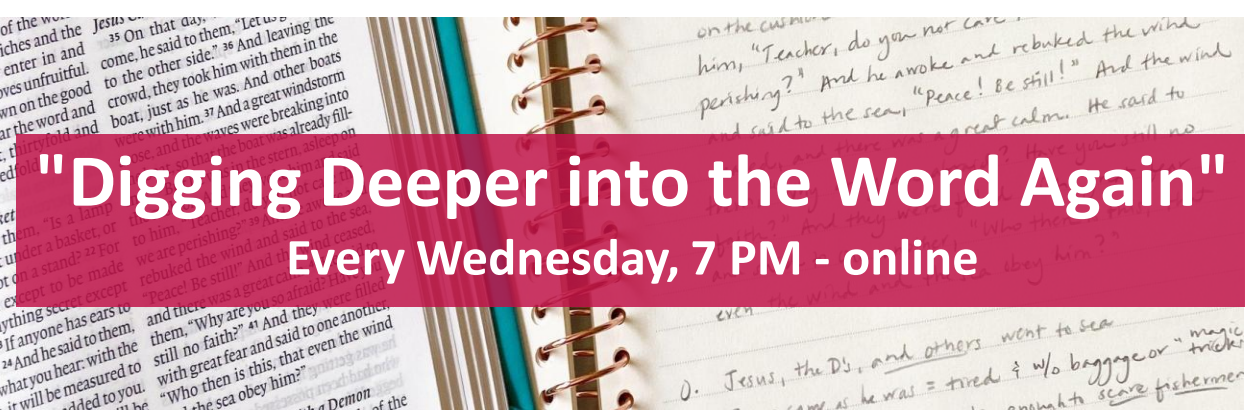
Come learn about the character of God, the work of Christ, and the means of living in right relationship to God and all people. We meet Sunday mornings following the Children's Moment during the 10:00 service.

Our program is open to all kids ages 4 and up. A class for 6th grade and up will be held on the 4th Sunday of the month.

Please go to the church website to register your child/youth for Sunday school or ask a Sunday School teacher for a registration form.

The older class (Grades 6 & up) is on the 4th Sunday of the month

ADULT BIBLE STUDY*



- ▶ 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.

ADULT "MONDAY SCHOOL"

We hope you can join us Mondays online for our Adult Sunday School class. We just started using the book Familiar Stranger by Tyler Staton. If you cannot make it every Monday, you are welcome to come when you can. Books are available in the church office.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST NEWS



Hello men! If you haven't joined us yet for breakfast please join us on Saturday, September 12th. We meet in Kendall Dining Hall at 8am and are always out by 10 am. Besides men from First and Wesley, we also host men from several local churches as well. We will be looking at Ephesians chapter 6, so remember to bring along a Bible or pocket New Testament.

That afternoon the Church is hosting our Neighborhood Cook Out and we will need volunteers to pitch in. Tables and chairs need to be set up and taken down.

Please let Kel Youngs know if you have any lawn games that you would be willing to loan for the event.



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Meet at Old Grove Park



Laying Down Burdens & Finding Renewal

Join the Women's Fellowship for a peaceful, rejuvenating morning by the water. This intimate gathering is a space to slow down, breathe, and be restored in God's presence through movement, stillness, and meaningful connection. Together, we will release what we carry, encourage one another, and close with a healing circle and fellowship.

Come as you are. Leave feeling inspired and empowered. United Women in Faith.

Healing and Wholeness Service

We will resume our monthly meetings on Tuesday, September 1st at 6pm. If you could use some extra support or have a prayer concern which is on your heart, please come and pray with caring prayer partners. If you are not able to attend in person, you may send your prayer requests to Pastor Frank through text to 860-938-1845 and your request will be read during the service.

If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call
Pastor Cindy Dodd, 203-889-6934



MISSION & OUTREACH

Thank you everyone who was able to contribute to our Summer Diaper Drive for the West Haven Diaper Bank. We received both diapers and cash donations. New Life Church on Jones Hill

Road, who host the Diaper Bank, are grateful for our partnership with them.

We will also collect for them again around Mother's Day. Check the Community Resources Bulletin Board for contact information if you know someone that could use their services.

THANK YOU, UMARMY!

In July, the UM Army, a group of teen and adult volunteers from the United Methodist Church, completed four projects in West Haven. At church, the hospitality area in Fellowship Hall was given a fresh coat of paint. Downstairs, all the boxes of tag sale items were carted off to Savers, freeing up much needed storage space. Two groups completed projects for church members: Jamie Jerell's ramp was rebuilt, providing him with continued access in and out of the house, and Walter and Myrna Clinton had a fresh coat of paint on their metal Bilco doors, making them look like new. On Thursday that week, the UM army hosted a celebratory dinner for the projects completed in the area. It seemed like they wanted another opportunity to serve because the teens who worked all week served our meals. A card can be found on the Missions Board in Fellowship Hall thanking us for the opportunity to serve.



Coin Collection for Native American

In the past we have collected pennies for Native American missions. It was suggested that we collect all sorts of spare coins now, especially as it seems that there is a shortage of pennies these days. Pennies fit into the repurposed water bottles fine but not so with donating other coins. So we are retiring the bottles and have supplied small paper soup cups. You can find the containers on the table at the back of the church or on the long table in fellowship hall. The filled containers can be placed in the offering plate. Thank you for your generosity.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

We will be meeting on September 19th at 11:00 am on Zoom to plan for our fall worship.

July Birthdays

5 - Sharon Stuhlman
6 - Tom Baker
10 - Evelyn Briandt-Arhin
12 - Kel Youngs
14 - Nana Dondorful-Amos
16 - Shelby Poe
Laurie Simone
18 - Richard Pyrdol, Jr.
Kathy Hulse
20 - Nicole Danz
23 - Dave Goodwin
25 - Paakow Amos
30 - Jamie Jerrell

PLEASE NOTE: 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



**The wheels on the bus go round & round
round & round, round & round**

**STOP
SINGING!**



**SUFFER the little children to come unto me...
Mt 19:14 BUT STOP SINGING! - suffering bus driver**

Being Alone in 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.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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

Craft Corner



Each month we make different kinds of cards to send to people. We have some Get Well and Thinking of You cards.

Contact Gail 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

We meet the third Saturday of the month from 9:30 - 10:30.

Finance Corner

Finance Corner It is that time of year when we put together the Church budget for 2027. I've asked committees to submit their requests by September 4th so the Finance Committee can present the proposed budget to the Church Council for approval. Church Council is on September 20th .

I thought I would bring you up to date on our financial standing. Through the end of July, the financial position is very good. We anticipate that the Sunday collections and fundraisers for the remainder of the year will continue to do well. We therefore will use very little of the funds carried forward from 2025 and will not need to draw funds from the Blomberg bequest. We thank you for your support and pray that you will continue your generous support.

Jim Jerrell
Finance Chair



APPLE FESTIVAL SEPTEMBER 26 – 10A -4P

The church will have an informational booth at the Apple Festival on the green in September. We need volunteers for an hour or two to help at our booth to greet people and give out information about our church. See Pastor Frank or Kel or Peggy for a time slot.



COME ONE, COME ALL!



FREE

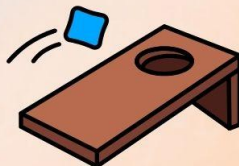
COMMUNITY COOKOUT



Saturday, Sept. 12th
12-2 pm



**Open to all - includes a hot dog or a
hamburger or a cheeseburger,
chips, drink and & dessert
Lawn games for children**



First & Wesley UMC

89 Center Street, West Haven, CT

<https://www.firstwesleyumc.org>



United
Women
in Faith

WALK • PRAY • CONNECT

A MORNING OF PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & RENEWAL

*Come nurture your physical,
mental, and spiritual well-being.*



"The Lord gives
strength to His
people; the Lord
blesses His people
with peace."

PSALM 29:11

As a new school year begins, join us as we gather in prayer
for our children, educators, families, our community,
and one another.



PRAYER
WALK



GENTLE
STRETCHING
(OPTIONAL)



QUIET
REFLECTION



FELLOWSHIP



COMMUNITY
PRAYER



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

— 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM —



WEST HAVEN BEACH OLD GROVE PARK

1 PALACE STREET

Come as you are.

Leave feeling restored, inspired, and
empowered to begin your Saturday renewed.

First & Wesley invites you to “JUMP IN”

**learn about the character of God, the work
of Christ, and the means of living in right
relationship to God and all people.**



**Children's
Sunday School
starts September 13th
at 10:00am
(during worship service)**

9:00am - Continental Breakfast



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



Spaghetti & Homemade Meatball Fundraiser

Sat., October 3, 2026

4pm take-out order pickup

5pm in person at church

Kendall Hall - First & Wesley UMC

89 Center St. West Haven

Cost: \$15 adults, \$10 kids 5-10

Family of 4+(same house) \$50

Orders Due by September 27th

Order on line at

<https://www.firstwesleyumc.org/spaghetti>



Name_____ Phone_____

Take-out_____ Eat in_____

#

☐ Adult @ \$15 each = \$_____

☐ Child 5-10@ \$10each = \$_____

☐ Family of 4+(same house) \$50 = \$_____



The Messenger

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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 September 2026 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!