the bridge

January 4, 2026 - 9:45 AM

WORSHIP MUSIC
Everyday
Who You Say I Am
Power of Your Love
Shout to the Lord
Mighty to Save

SPECIAL MUSIC
Do You Hear What I Hear?
Jill & Craig Seal
Cheryl & Charles Green
Terry Wisegarver

SCRIPTURE
Matthew 25:31-46 NRSVUE

MESSAGE
A Matthew 25 Church
Rev. Nathan Decker

CUMC STAFF DIRECTORY

Ministers ..... All Disciples of the Congregation
Lead Pastor: Nathan Decker .....nathandecker@chesterumc.org
Minister of Music: Joshua Wortham..... music@chesterumc.org
Pastoral Intern: Evan Moody .....youthleaders@chesterumc.org
Office Manager: Michelle Couvillion.....office@chesterumc.org
Office Assistant: Sally Maxwell ..... assistant@chesterumc.org
Financial Administrator: Julie Jones..... finance@chesterumc.org
Nursery Specialists.....Carla Adams, Morgan Hall
Children's Ministry: Whitney Graham ..... preschool@chesterumc.org
MS & HS Youth Ministry: Evan Moody .....youthleaders@chesterumc.org
Preschool Director: Whitney Graham..... preschool@chesterumc.org

A Community in Christ

Chester United Methodist Church

Embrace – Love - Impact

12132 Percival Street, Chester, Virginia 23831 * Church: (804) 748-6006
Web Site: www.chesterumc.org * *A Stephen Ministry Congregation*

FRESH START SERVICE

January 4, 2026- 8:30 AM

Please sign the attendance pad and pass it to your neighbor.

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A Matthew 25 Church
Rev. Nathan Decker

January 4, 2026 **A Service of Worship and Praise** **11:00 AM**

Epiphany

Welcome, Announcements, and Greeting

Prelude — Charles Green, Pianist

* Call to Worship[1]

Leader: Darkness is banished!
People: God's light has come to us!
Leader: The brightness of the Star leads us!
People: We come to celebrate God's abiding love!
Leader: Glory be to God in the Highest!
People: And on earth, peace forever. Amen.

* Wesley Covenant Prayer

We are no longer our own, but thine. Put us to what thou wilt, rank us with whom thou wilt. Put us to doing, put us to suffering. Let us be employed by thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought low for thee. Let us be full, let us be empty. Let us have all things, let us have nothing. We freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thou art ours, and we are yours. So be it. And the covenant which we have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

* Hymn No. 254 — ***We Three Kings***

Anthem — ***Seeking the King*** — Chancel Choir, Joel Furtick, Soloist

Why We Give

Offertory — ***Do You Hear What I Hear?*** — Jill & Craig Seal, Cheryl & Charles Green, Terry Wisegarver

* Doxology No. 94

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

	Hymn No. 393	***Spirit of the Living God***	
	Scripture	***Matthew 25:31-46***	NRSVUE
	Sermon	***A Matthew 25 Church***	Rev. Nathan Decker
	Holy Communion		
*	Hymn No. 568	***Christ for the World We Sing***	
*	Benediction		
*	Choral Amen		Chancel Choir

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* *Please stand as you are able.* **Bold print indicates a response in unison.**

[1] https://ministrymatters.com/2018-12-01_worship_connection_epiphany_sunday/

Assisted Listening Devices are available for anyone who has trouble hearing during worship in the Sanctuary.

Altar Flowers: Given by Kris Spadaccia, to the glory of God, in honor of the Journey Class, and in memory of Joe Spadaccia

Calendar

January 4, 2026– January 11, 2026

Today: Sunday, January 4

8:15 AM Nursery until 12:00 PM
8:30 AM Fresh Start Worship- Davis Fellowship Hall
9:45 AM Bridge Worship-Sanctuary
Sun Sch PreK-107
Sun Sch Gr K-5-206
Adult SS-Various
Youth Sunday School
11:00 AM Traditions Worship- Sanctuary
12:30 PM Key Club Board- 116
4:00 PM Youth Group-Youth House

Monday: January 5

6:30 PM Boy Scouts- Youth House
7:00 PM Jean Craig- 205

Tuesday: January 6

6:00 AM Special Election- DFH
2:00 PM Stephen Ministers- 226
3:00 PM Rest Stop- Youth House
6:30 PM Jr. Girl Scout Troop-116
7:00 PM ESL- 205, 214, 221, 226
7:00 PM SPRC- 213

Wednesday: January 7

10:00 AM Visitation Team- 205
12:00 PM Bulletin Submissions Due
5:45 PM Wacky Wednesday- Trinity UMC
5:45 PM Handbell Choir
6:00 PM Cub Scouts- 226
6:15 PM Youth Bible Study- Trinity UMC
6:30 PM Crew- 206
7:00 PM Chancel Choir

Thursday: January 8

10:30 AM Ada Mae Bookman- 226
1:30 PM Prayer Shawl- Parlor
6:30 PM Young Adult Bible Study- Youth House
7:00 PM ESL- 205, 214, 221, 226
7:00 PM Finance Meeting- 116

Friday: January 9

Saturday: January 10

7:00 AM Running for HIS Glory- CUMC Parking Lot

Next Sunday: January 11

8:15 AM Nursery until 12:00 PM
8:30 AM Fresh Start Worship- Davis Fellowship Hall
9:45 AM Bridge Worship- Sanctuary
Sun Sch PreK-107
Sun Sch Gr K-5-206
Adult SS-Various
Youth Sunday School
11:00 AM Traditions Worship- Sanctuary
4:00 PM Youth Group- Youth House
5:30 PM Confirmation Introduction- Youth House

We are truly blessed if you are a guest who has chosen to worship with us today! First-time guests are invited to pick up a blue Welcome Bag from the Atrium or Narthex. Thank you for celebrating the Lord with us today!

Our Parish Nurse, Cindy Webb, is available today, 9:00 AM in Room 105.

Stephen Ministers are here to support you in prayer during communion today.

Altar Flowers: Please consider providing flowers for the Sanctuary Altar. Dates available ~ February 1, 15, 22; March 1, 15, 22; April 19, 26; May 3, 17, 31; June 7, 21, 28; July 5, 19, 26; August 2, 16, 23, 30; September 6, 20, 27; October 18, 25; November 29; December 6. Sign up in the pew pad activity sheet and fill out the flower form located under the flower chart on the wall across from the Church Office. You will need to make arrangements with your preferred florist. Thank you for making the Sanctuary more beautiful!

Confirmation Class: For youth ages 11 through 18. Introductory class begins on Sunday, January 11, at 5:30 PM, at the Youth House (Annex). Parents are invited to attend the introduction class on January 11. Additional class dates will be Sundays, January 26, February 1, February 15, March 1, and March 8. Confirmands will profess their faith on Sunday, April 12 during worship. Sign your child up today in the Pew Pad.
POCs: Evan Moody youthleaders@chesterumc.org and Pastor Nathan Decker nathandecker@chesterumc.org

Feed More Food Distribution: Friday, January 16, 9:30 AM- 12:30 PM. Greenleigh Community Center. Serve your community while helping with Feed More Food Distribution. See more detailed information is within this bulletin.
POC: Eric Hougland, (804) 212-7857, ehougland88@gmail.com

Women's Fellowship Luncheon: *This month only, we will meet on the fourth Thursday*, January 22, 11:30 AM. Location will be determined soon. (All following months we will meet on the third Thursday.) POC: Joan Osborne josbor61@gmail.com, 540-270-4251.

Winter Wonderland Literacy Night at CC Wells Elementary: Thursday, January 22, 5:30-7:00 PM. Volunteers are needed to run stations. Enjoy food, hot chocolate, games, and more. To volunteer use this link or QR code. eventhttps:/.signupgenius.com/go/10C0845AAAC2EABFDC25-60449653-holiday#/

Thank You to all who helped write Christmas cards for the Veterans. The congregation, youth, and students of several elementary schools were helpful in spreading the Christmas cheer. Karen Cole wants each of you to know how much she appreciates your thoughtfulness.

Keep In Prayer: Betty Tatum; Doug Pike; The family of Henry Samuel; The family of Kaleb Crawford; Linda Willingham; Susan May; Hunter Beazley; Eliza Furr; Cynthia Corley; Becky York; Cathy Epps; Wayne Scruton; Dorothy Gonzalez; George Kraynak; Dick & Lynn Weis; Bruce Highley; Ann Stuart; Billy Hopson; Bert Watson; Jim & Jeanne Shelburne; Jo Kiser; Ella Hilton; Erika Hilton; Susan Young; Harold Worcester; Brooke & Mary Ann Hamilton; Summer Lannan; Wayne & Ginny Virag; Lynda Richardson

Chester UMC Online Resources

Website: www.chesterumc.org.
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ChesterUnitedMethodistChurch/.
Facebook Closed Group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChesterUMC/.
Instagram: Instagram.com/chesterumc
Daily Email News: Visit http://eepurl.com/blV9Tv to subscribe.
Daily Devotionals from Pastor Nathan: *https://www.facebook.com/BetterTogether.Devos/*.
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/c/ChesterUMC.
Prayer Chain Email: to subscribe or to submit a prayer request, email Michelle at office@chesterumc.org with "Prayer Chain" or "Prayer Request" in the subject line.
The Chimes – Submit items to assistant@chesterumc.org no later than the 3rd Wednesday of ***January,*** March, May, July, September, and November.

Our Presence on Sunday, December 21, 2025		**Our Presence on Sunday, December 28, 2025**	
8:30 AM Fresh Start	84	8:30 AM Fresh Start	85
9:45 AM Bridge	80	9:45 AM Bridge	38
11:00 AM Traditions	203	11:00 AM Traditions	139
Online	49	Online	42
Total	**416**	**Total**	**304**

Leading Our Worship Today, Sunday, January 4, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Gina & Patrick Dobbs	
	9:45	Stephanie Decker	
	11:00	Janis Hargrave, Donna Nunery	
Ushers:	**8:30**	Wendell Landis*, Ron Dombrowski	* Head Usher
	9:45	Beth Stewart*, Scott Pugh	
	11:00	Herb McCulloch*, Janis Hargrave, Marshall Henry, Bob Kutz, Tommy Petrey	
Communion	**8:30**	Evan Moody, Jordan Beckner, Madison Beckner	
	9:45	Paul Marretti	
	11:00	Steve Osborne, Claudia Nagy, Beth Stewart	
Donut Disciples:		Chip & Laurie Cobb	
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Morgan Hall	

Living Waters District Training: will be held January 17, 2026, 9:00 AM–3:00 PM at Crenshaw UMC in Blackstone. To register, scan the QR code or visit **livingwatersdistrict.org** and click "REGISTER HERE." If you need help registering or have questions, email Terri Riggs at terririggs@vaumc.org New offerings this year include worship preparation sessions, youth ministry focus, disaster preparedness, babysitting for ages 3–5, and all day VBS.

Retreat For Women- Tapestry of Strength: Think you have no faith story to tell? Think again. Think you don't have time to get away for 15 hours of fun and exploration? Think again. Friday evening and Saturday (Jan. 23 & 24) Rev. Marg Kutz will guide us on a journey to discover our own faith story. Meet new people. Deepen friendships. Get a manicure. Do a craft. Give this as a Christmas present to yourself and start the new year on a new path as we weave His Story and Her Story, together with My Story making a tapestry of strength. Dates: Friday evening, Jan. 23 and Saturday Jan 24 Cost: $25 includes meals (scholarships available) Transportation: Shuttle from shopping center at route 10 and Beach Road. For more details and to register contact Betty Barker at bbarkerglen@gmail.com or Lynn Crump at lynncrumppla@gmail.com 804-513-0260

A Place of Miracles/Clothes Closet: We need winter coats, hoodies, sweatshirts, sweaters, hats, boots, gloves for winter weather for teens and adult sizes 2x and up; male and female. Cookware, sheets, pillowcases, blankets and suitcases. Please drop your donations off in the bin in the Church Missions Closet. POC: Diane Merryman, 804-586-4189 dianemerryman@gmail.com

Zelle Giving: Zelle is a great way to send your donations to the church. Find Zelle in the mobile banking app of your bank. You must have a smartphone to use Zelle. Our e-mail address is **finance@chesterumc.org** Simply select the Zelle payment option on your bank's app, input our e-mail address above or scan this QR Code. POC: Julie Jones, Financial Administrator, finance@chesterumc.org

Leading Our Worship Next Sunday, January 11, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Joan & Steve Osborne, Youth	
	9:45	Brenda & Jesse Stacy	
	11:00	Teresa Dombrowski, Marian Perkinson	
Ushers:	**8:30**	Tracey Wright*, Tommy Wright	* Head Usher
	9:45	Jim Watkins*, Kim Young	
	11:00	Will Herrmann*, Harold Crowder, Dean Hutchins, Tommy Petrey, Doug Riney	
Donut Disciple:		Laura Hougland	
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Morgan Hall	

United Methodist Men: For men who are seeking to give and receive fellowship, mentorship, and service to Church and community. We study The Word of God with other men. POC: Brion Seward 1bseward@comcast.com

United Methodist Women (UMW) is to "be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop a creative, supportive fellowship, and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." Call Susan Petrey, 804-938-5396, to learn more about UMW, our two participating fellowships, and how you can become involved.

- **The Jean Craig Fellowship**: Meets on the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 PM, Room 205. POC: Susan Petrey 804-938-5396.
- **The Ada Mae Bookman Fellowship**: Meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, 10:30 AM, Room 226. POC: Martha Miles, 804-748-5476.

Monthly Emmaus Gathering: For those who at any time in your lives attended a Walk to Emmaus, gatherings are held the *2nd Saturday of each month* at the Hopewell Methodist Church, 6200 Courthouse Rd., Chesterfield, VA 23832. We meet at 6:00 PM for a covered dish fellowship, followed at approximately 6:30 PM with worship and communion. The next Women's Walk will be held April 23-26, 2026, at Chanco on The James, 394 Floods Drive, Spring Grove, VA. The next Face to Face Encounter will be October 16-17 and October 23-24**,** 2026. Face to Face is a daytime walk; Chanco is 3 days, overnight. POC: Claudia Nagy at (804) 712-7733.

Backpack Ministry: Our numbers are growing while grocery prices are increasing. We are now delivering bags for 59 children each weekend. Our goal is to keep our costs down by shopping the sales at multiple stores. We appreciate your support in the form of food items (placed in the backpack bin in the mission closet) as well as financial donations. Our largest need is canned meats – tuna, chicken, Vienna sausages or spam. Other items include peanut butter, pop tarts, mac and cheese, applesauce cups and canned pasta. When you give to the Backpack Ministry, you are making a difference in the lives of children in our area. Thank you for your Support. POC: Carolyn Landis and Karen Comer kgcomer@verizon.net

Rest Stop is a Chester UMC after school program designed to provide rest and encouragement to at-risk youth from Thomas Dale High School. Do you have a special gift to share with these young people or just an abundance of love to give? Call Susan to volunteer or to sign up to provide a meal. Make a check payable to CUMC (memo: Rest Stop) to help cover our small expenses including gas for the church bus. Contact Rest Stop Team Leader, Susan Petrey, at (804) 938-5396, for more information.

Jail Ministry: Since March 2023**,** members of Bridge Builders visit men incarcerated at the Chesterfield County Jail for drug and alcohol-related offenses, where we facilitate a book study for the men participating in HARP (Helping Addicts Recover Progressively) program. CUMC is making an impact in our community! How can you help? Provide monetary donations (Jail Ministry in memo) used for study books, stamps and cards. Become a volunteer and submit paperwork for access into the jail. Pray for the men in the Harp program and those CUMC members going into the jail. POC: Maureen Coker mcoker2003@comcast.net

2026 Youth Guatemala Mission Trip Fundraising:
Over 30 youth and their families will be traveling to Guatemala in June 2026 to complete medical missions, construction projects, and VBS camps for children. Our goal is to raise $64,000 to fund the trip with airfare included. POC: Emily Smith Smith.family21@outlook.com

- **Look Into Your Employer!** For example, did you know if you are an HCA Employee you could donate through *YourCause* and HCA will match up to $500. Consider looking into your employer opportunities and see if this is an option. The Hope 4 Kids Tax ID is 47-1686704, please enter Chester UMC Guatemala June 2026 Mission in the memo and reach out to Emily Smith at (804) 721-2168 so she can notify Hope 4 Kids about this special gift!
- **Donate Directly to the Church!** Use this **QR code** to donate directly or place your donation in the offering plate. Please note this in the memo area of your check or envelope.

Chester Chums: Did you know that 68 new members joined our church this year? With so many new people visiting Chester United Methodist Church and choosing to join our church, we would like to bring back **Chester Chums**. Chester Chums is a CUMC ministry to welcome new members, to help acclimate them to the church, and to help get them involved in activities at the church. Current members who choose to become a Chester Chum are paired with new members to serve as their "sponsors". Sign up in the pew pad today. For more detailed information contact Joan Osborne at josbor61@gmail.com / 540-270-4251.

Feed More Distribution Event: Friday, January 16, 9:30 AM–12:30 PM. Come be a part of Chester UMC in action! One way to impact our community is to help with a Feed More Food distribution at the Greenleigh Mobile Home Park. We are looking for ten volunteers to assist. If you are new to mission work, or a veteran of this event, this is a great way to serve your community and build relationships! Use the link provided here or call the Church Office at 748-6006 to sign up. Volunteers are needed to: unload the food truck; set up tables and separate food; organize the food distribution; place food allotments in vehicles; traffic control; collect and break down empty boxes; and clean up afterwards. Please sign up no later than January 12. https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44ACAF2CAAF5C16-61402016-feed#/

SUNDAY SMALL GROUPS

Children's Sunday School, Kidz Zone: 9:45 AM. Pre-K (Room 107); K-2 (Room 204) Grades 3-5 (Room 206). Come join our Kidz Zone Ministry.

Adult Small Group Bible Study: 9:45 AM, Room 213 "Our Pad".

Fresh Start Sunday School Class: 9:45 AM, Room 221, at the top of the old stairway. Join the Fresh Start Sunday School Class in study, fellowship, and service. All are welcome. POC: Susan Petrey, 804-938-5396.

Friendship Ministry Class: 10:40 AM, Room 116, for adults who are developmentally challenged. POC: Mari and Dan Hayes, JLMinNaples@msn.com

The Gathering, Small Group: 9:45 AM, Room 205. Join with other young families for a time of study and fellowship. We have been reading through the entire Bible with the help of the Bible Recap. Anyone interested in joining us is welcome. POCs: Sonja Seward (804) 543-3036; Andrew Brummette (678) 409-3683; and Brion Seward 1bseward@comcast.net.

Journey Sunday School Class: 9:45 AM, Annex and Google Meet, Join by video link: https://meet.google.com/ptm-pieh-vve. POCs: Carolyn Landis landisfamily05@gmail.com and Eric Hougland ehougland88@gmail.com

Seekers Sunday School Class: 9:40 AM, Room 226. All adults are welcome. Join us as we continue our study, "Disciple Fast Track - Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study - The Old Testament". In this 12-week study of the Old Testament, participants will have the opportunity to take a spiritual gifts assessment and determine meaningful ways they can serve and live out their discipleship commitment.
POC: Laura Hamm, Laura.hamm83@yahoo.com

Senior Singles Sunday School Class: 9:45 AM, Parlor.
POC: Cynthia Corley cacorley@ctsi.net

Middle & High School, Sunday School Class: 9:45 AM, Youth House (Annex). Grades 6-12. POC: Evan Moody youthleaders@chesterumc.org

Youth Group: Grades 6th-12th, 4:00 PM -5:30 PM, Youth House (Annex). Meets weekly for fun, fellowship and outreach. POC: Evan Moody youthleaders@chesterumc.org

OTHER SMALL GROUPS

Faith Keepers Women's Prayer Group: Mondays, 9:00 AM at Grants Coffee Co. (11884 Chester Village DR). POC: Sherri Morris smorris787@aim.com

Village People Study, Socialize, & Service Group: 3rd Mondays, 2:00 PM, Community Room at Chester Village Senior Apartments (11701 Chester Village Drive).

Bridge Builders- Jail Ministry- Acceptance is the Answer. Meets every other Monday, 3:40 PM at the Chesterfield County Jail. Help us as we build relationships with the men of HARP (Helping Addicts Recovery Progressively). Maureen Coker, mcoker2003@comcast.net

Joy Singers: Tuesdays, 10:30 AM, Music Suite. Rehearsals for our retired folks. This group sings for local nursing home residents and community groups. POC: Joshua Wortham. music@chesterumc.org

Grief Recovery Group: Wednesdays, 2:00 PM, Room 213. New session begins Wednesday, March 4. A Christ-centered program for those who have lost a loved one within the past two years. $20 book fee. Scholarships available. Go to GriefShare.org, then click "*Find A Group"* and message Keith Mottley.. POCs: Keith Mottley keith.mottley@comcast.net and Sandy Sims sandygeosims@hotmail.com

English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:00 PM- 8:30 PM. A new semester begins in January. https://sites.google.com/view/cumcenglishclasses
POC: Rebecca Hodell rhodell7@gmail.com

Youth Bible Study: Wednesdays, 5:45 PM- 7:00 PM, Trinity UMC.

Kidz Zone Wacky Wednesdays: Wednesdays, 5:45 PM-7:00 PM, Trinity UMC.

Chancel Choir Rehearsals: Wednesdays, 7:00 PM. Singers of all skill levels are welcome to join!
POC: Joshua Wortham music@chesterumc.org

Handbells: Wednesdays, 5:45 PM, Sanctuary. For Adults. POC: Joshua Wortham music@chesterumc.org

Thursday Morning Men's Bible Study: Thursdays, 7:30 AM at Grants Coffee Company, 11884 Chester Village Drive. POC: Gordon Morris gordo15458@aim.com

Women's Fellowship Luncheon: 3rd Thursdays, 11:30 AM. Join us each month at a local restaurant for good food and great conversation. POC: Joan Osborne josbor61@gmail.com

Prayer Shawl Group: Thursdays, 1:30 PM, Parlor. All are invited to join! We can provide yarn and will happily teach you how to knit or crochet. POCs: Beverly Trevillian (804) 337-2367, and
Betty Stone (804) 914-0433 / wva_lady@verizon.net

Young Adult Bible Study, Thursdays, 6:30 PM, Annex. Ages 19-30. Dinner provided.
POC: Evan Moody, youthleaders@chesterumc.org

Women's Christian Book Club: 1st Thursdays of *odd months*, 6:30 PM, CUMC Parlor.
POC: Jennifer Brame jrbrooksieee@gmail.com

Stephen Ministers Are Here to Support You Through Prayer

During Communion services Stephen Ministers are available to pray with anyone who desires. If you prefer, you can use the prayer request form below. Just write in your prayer request and place it in the basket at the altar. After the service a Stephen Minister will collect the requests and pray for them following the service.

****

PRAYER REQUEST FORM

My prayer request:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.

Matthew 18:20

Stephen Ministers Are Here to Support You Through Prayer

During Communion services Stephen Ministers are available to pray with anyone who desires. If you prefer, you can use the prayer request form below. Just write in your prayer request and place it in the basket at the altar. After the service a Stephen Minister will collect the requests and pray for them following the service.

****

PRAYER REQUEST FORM

My prayer request:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.

Matthew 18:20