the bridge

Reminder: No Bridge Service Next Sunday, March 29.

March 22, 2026 - 9:45 AM

WORSHIP MUSIC
Boundless Love
There Is a Name I Love to Hear
How Great Is Our God
I Saw the Light

SCRIPTURE
Ezekiel 37:1-14 The Message

SPECIAL MUSIC
Come to the Cross
The Weeping Tree
Mette Shultz

MESSAGE
Worst Knock Knock Joke Ever
Pastor 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

March 22, 2026 - 8:30 AM

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

WORSHIP MUSIC

What A Friend
I Am Free
How Great Is Our God
Awake My Soul

SPECIAL MUSIC

Come to the Cross
The Weeping Tree
Mette Shultz

SCRIPTURE

Ezekiel 37:1-14 The Message

MESSAGE

Worst Knock Knock Joke Ever
Pastor Nathan Decker

March 22, 2026 **A Service of Worship and Praise** **11:00 AM**
Fifth Sunday in Lent

Welcome, Announcements & Greeting
Prelude ***I Love to Tell the Story*** Organist

* Call to Worship[1] Herb McCulloch, Liturgist

Leader: The Spirit of God has brought us here.
People: The Lord has set us down here, though our bones are tired.
Leader: Can these dry bones live?
People: Yes! The Breath of God will revive us! The Word of God will awaken us!
Leader: Today, we come together to experience new life.
People: Let us give thanks to the Wild, Life-Giving Spirit of God!

* Opening Prayer[2]

Holy Savior, my betrayal set Judas against you, my denial stabbed Peter's words into your heart, and my lies concealed your innocence. Because of my sinful thoughts, thorns pierced your scalp. Because I have lived according to the flesh, the flogger's cords tore into your muscles. The cross of my judgment was laid on you to carry. My refusal to believe and accept you hammered nails into your hands. My greed divided your clothing, and gambled for your robe. My insults and mocking ways filled the mouths that taunted you. My sin tore you from God, and drained your life, drop by precious drop. The spear thrust into your side aimed at ending my wickedness forever. You died my death, and my sin sealed your tomb. With one great act of love, you gathered all my shame and guilt, and buried it in the depths of hell. Crucified Savior and risen Savior, I stand before you naked and new. I died in you. Now I pray you will live in me. Amen.

* Hymn No. 437 ***This Is My Song***

* Affirmation of Faith

We believe. We believe in the Spirit of the Living God, giver of peace when the storms of life are raging. We believe the sweet, sweet Spirit is the active Presence of God and Jesus Christ, filling us with Love, compassion, and praise. We believe that the Spirit of the Living God grants us courage. We believe. We believe. We believe the church is a community of saints and sinners who gather in love to worship God. We believe, in this community, called into being by Christ we learn about God's call and the responsibilities of discipleship. We believe the fellowship of believers will witness God's unconditional love to everyone. We believe. We believe.

* Gloria Patri No. 70

Glory be to the father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Anthem ***For the Least of These*** Chancel Choir

Why We Give

Offertory ***Come to the Cross*** Mette Shultz

* Doxology No. 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

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

Special Music ***The Weeping Tree*** Mette Shultz

Scripture ***Ezekiel 37:1-14*** MSG

Sermon ***Worst Knock Knock Joke Ever*** Rev. Nathan Decker

* Hymn No. 347 ***Spirit Song***

* Benediction

* Choral Amen Chancel Choir

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

[1]https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2013/04/call-to-worship-ezekiel-37-1-14.html
[2]Worship and Song, pg. 14, No. 24
[3]Africana Worship Book

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

Calendar

March 22, 2026– March 29, 2026

Today: Sunday, March 22

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
11:50 AM	UMW Salad Luncheon- DFH
2:00 PM	Hurricane Mission Meeting- 226
3:00 PM	Pint with a Pastor-Three Leg Run
4:00 PM	Youth Group- Annex

Monday: March 23

1:00 PM	Bridge Builders- 116
6:30 PM	Boy Scouts- DFH

Tuesday: March 24

10:30 AM	Joy Singers- Music Suite
12:30 PM	The Psalms for Lent, Book Study- 221
3:00 PM	Rest Stop- Annex
7:00 PM	ESL- 205, 214, 221, 226

Wednesday: March 25

12:00 PM	Lenten Luncheon- Bermuda Hundred UMC
2:00 PM	Grief Share-213
5:45 PM	Wacky Wed.- Trinity
5:45 PM	Handbell Choir
6:15 PM	Youth Bible Study-Trinity
7:00 PM	Chancel Choir- Music

Thursday: March 26

1:30 PM	Prayer Shawl- Parlor
6:30 PM	Young Adult Bible Study- Annex
7:00 PM	ESL- 205, 214, 221, 226

Friday: March 27

5:00 PM	Children's Ministry Rehearsal- DFH

Saturday: March 28

7:00 AM	Running for HIS Glory- Church Parking Lot
10:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal- Sanctuary

Next Sunday: March 29

8:15 AM	Nursery until 12:00 PM
8:30 AM	Easter Cantata-Sanctuary
9:45 AM	Sun Sch PreK-107 Sun Sch Gr K-5-206 Adult SS-Various Youth Sunday School
11:00 AM	Easter Cantata-Sanctuary
3:00 PM	Pint with a Pastor-Three Leg Run
4:00 PM	Youth Group- Annex

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, Mrs. Cindy Webb, is available today, 9:00 AM, Room 105.

Easter Lilies: *Today is the* **DEADLINE** *to order Lilies.* The cost is $18 per pot. Order forms are in this bulletin and in the Welcome Center. Make checks payable to CUMC (Memo Line: Flower Fund or Lilies). Lilies may be taken home on Easter Sunday, after the 11:00 AM Worship.

Salad Luncheon: ***TODAY*** in the Fellowship Hall, immediately following the 11:00 AM Traditions Worship. All women of the Church are invited to a luncheon meeting of the UMW. Our speaker will be Maureen Coker and friends, who will tell us about their Bridge Builders Jail Ministry, their plans, and how we can help. POC: Susan Petrey

Nursery Volunteer Substitute Needed for Sunday, March 29, 8:15 AM-12:00 PM. Adults needed. Contact the Church Office at 748-6006 or office@chesterumc.org. Thank you!

Thank You! Thank you to everyone who generously donated items for the Youth Mission Trip Yard Sale. The sale of goods raised a total of $2,752.73, and your support made a meaningful difference. We truly appreciate your contribution!

Pint with a Pastor: Sundays, 3:00 PM, Three Leg Run. Ever had a question about faith you were afraid to ask? POC: Pastor Nathan nathandecker@chesterumc.org

He's Alive: A Musical Celebration of the Easter Story: Presented on **Sunday, March 29, at 8:30 and 11:00 AM** and on **Monday, March 30, at 7:00 PM**. Grab some postcards in the Welcome Center and invite your friends and neighbors!

Lenten Lunch Series: Wednesdays, through April 1, 12:00 PM, Bermuda Hundred UMC. Bermuda Hundred UMC invites Chester UMC to share in its Lenten Luncheon series of worship during Lent. There will be a brief worship with hymns and a message, then a light lunch.

Good Friday Worship, April 3, at 7:00 PM, Sanctuary. Featuring Chris & Natalie Franke on violin and cello, along with a solo by their daughter, Jenna, accompanied by Joshua Wortham on piano. Master Sergeant Chris Franke is the Assistant Principal Violinist with the President's Own Marine Band. This music-filled worship service will offer reflections on the journey to the cross.

Holy Saturday: The Lamentations of Jeremiah, Saturday, April 4, 10:00 AM, Chester Presbyterian Chapel. Readings from the book of Lamentations have traditionally been used in observances of Holy Saturday to mark the despair, fear, and loneliness experienced in the time between Christ's death and resurrection. Join us in historic Wyatt Chapel for this solemn meditation as Director of Christian Formation Charlotte Elia delivers these verses in unaccompanied plainchant. This program will last approximately 45 minutes.

Keep In Prayer: The family of Bill Burton; Jim Watkins; Dorothy Gonzalez; The family of Joan Crowder; Darrin Zoller; Linda Nabors; Victoria Harrington; Bill Comer; Pat Baake; Laney Marshall Phillips; Reed Willingham; Walt Stone; Monty Nunery; Bruce Nugent; Sharon Buchanan; Linda Willingham; Susan May; Eliza Furr; Cynthia Corley; Wayne Scruton; Dick & Lynn Weis; Bruce Highley; Ann Stuart; Bert Watson; Jo Kiser; Ella Hilton; Erika Hilton; Susan Young; Harold Worcester; Lynda Richardson; Summer Lannan; Brooke & Mary Ann Hamilton; Wayne & Ginny Virag

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, March 15, 2026

8:30 AM, Fresh Start.....90
9:45 AM, Bridge 37
11:00 AM, Traditions.....141
Online.....53
Total 321

Leading Our Worship Today, Sunday, March 22, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Maureen Coker, Laura Hougland	
	9:45	Brenda & Jesse Stacy	
	11:00	Sharon Larew, Jim Rhodes	
Ushers:	**8:30**	Tommy Wright*, Tracey Wright	*Head Usher
	9:45	Jim Watkins*, Kim Young	
	11:00	Gary Williams*, Marshall Henry, Larry Koon, Don Schmidt, Kay Williams	
Donut Disciples:		Andy & Eileen Steck	
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Morgan Hall	

Resurrection Walk: Saturday, April 4, 10:00 AM- 12:00 PM, Annex. All are welcome! You will encounter eight interactive stations as you walk through Jesus' Journey to Resurrection- Palm Sunday to the Tomb. He Is Risen! POC: Whitney Graham preschool@chesterumc.org

The Hurried Gospel of Mark: Thursdays, April 9 through May 7, 10:00 AM, Room 221. This Bible Study will be led by Pastor Nathan. POC: Pastor Nathan nathandecker@chesterumc.org

New Member Sunday: Sunday, April 12. We will joyfully welcome those who are becoming part of our church family. If you have been considering Church membership, we invite you to take this meaningful step. A special luncheon for our newest members will be held following the 11:00 AM Traditions worship service. For more information about becoming a member, please contact our New Member Coordinator, Joan Osborne, at josborn61@gmail.com .

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 enough money 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. 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.
- **Donate Directly to the Guatemala Trip!** 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.

Leading Our Worship Next Sunday, March 29, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Andy & Eileen Steck	
	11:00	Sharon Buchanan, Martha Miles	
Ushers:	**8:30**	Gordon Morris*, Bill Comer, Ron Dombrowski	*Head Usher
	11:00	Gordon Morris*, Geoff LeSueur, Steve Osborne, Tommy Petrey, Sandy Sims	
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Volunteer(s) Needed	

Easter Cards for Veterans: *S*hare the Easter message with the Veterans at Richmond VA Medical Center and Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center. Please do not sign your last name or seal the envelope. Place cards in the Sharing Bin outside or in the Missions Closet. **Deadline is Sunday, March 29.** Thank you. POC: Karen Cole karen.k.cole67@gmail.com

UMCOR Kits for Conference: The United Methodist Committee on Relief operates two relief depots; Salt Lake City and Baldwin, Louisiana. For the past several years CUMC and the UMW have collected materials and assembled hygiene kits to be sent to Sager Brown. They collect kits to have on hand for disaster. Our goal for the June 17-20 Virginia United Methodist Annual Conference is 100 hygiene kits. You are invited to support this effort by donating items for kits. Pick up your "assignment ticket" today, from the display in the Welcome Center. Return the assigned items to the bin in the Church Mission Closet by **Sunday, April 5.**
POC: Susan Petrey, (804) 938-5396

Walk 4 Water Chester: Sunday, April 12, 12:30 PM, Three Leg Run Brewery, 4418 W Hundred RD. Eleven million people in Uganda do not have access to clean and safe water. Help bring clean, safe water to the village of Kasaya East in Uganda. POC: Sonja Seward sonjaseward@yahoo.com Use the QR code or the link to Register/ Donate. https://support.h4ki.org/event/2026-walk-4-water-chester-va/e749657

Easter Sunrise Breakfast: Join us for a combined congregation potluck breakfast at St. John's Episcopal Church (12201 Richmond ST) after the 6:30 AM Easter Sunrise Service. If you're able to bring a dish to share, please sign up using the QR code or the link below. Food may be delivered to the St. John's Fellowship Hall immediately before the worship service begins. Questions? Call the Church Office at (804) 748-6006.

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084FAAAA2DA1F9C34-62924170-copy

Chester UMC Holy Week Worship

Sunday, March 29 ~ Palm Sunday

8:30 AM Easter Musical
9:45 AM No Worship Service
11:00 AM Easter Musical

Monday, March 30

7:00 PM Easter Musical

Thursday, April 2 ~ Holy Thursday

7:00 PM Holy Thursday Service at Trinity UMC

Friday, April 3 ~ Good Friday

7:00 PM Service of Songs and Scripture

Sunday, April 5 ~ Easter Sunday

6:30 AM Sunrise Service on Annex Lawn
8:30 AM Fresh Start Worship Service
9:45 AM The Bridge Service
11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service

Easter Sunday Communion Schedule

- Communion *will be* offered during the April 5th, Easter Sunrise Worship service at 6:30 AM, Annex Lawn.
- Communion *will not be* offered on April 5th, Easter Sunday, during the Fresh Start, Bridge, or Traditions Worship.
- Communion *will be* offered the following Sunday, April 12; served by the newest Confirmands.

TODAY is the Last Day to Order

EASTER LILIES to ADORN the SANCTUARY

Help us decorate the Sanctuary for Easter by ordering Easter Lilies in honor/memory of your loved ones.

The cost is $18 per pot (4-6 blooms).

Please submit your order with payment to the Church Office or place in the offering plate during worship. You may take your flowers home after the 11:00 AM Easter Sunday service. Make checks payable to CUMC (Memo Line: Flower Fund or Lilies). **Please fill out the order form below.**

How many total lilies are you ordering? _____

2 pots $36

Your TOTAL COST ($18 each) **$ _____**

3 pots $54

Please check one box below and **clearly print names**.

4 pots $72

☐ **In honor of**

_____

_____

OR

☐ **In memory of**

_____

_____

Given by:

_____

New Outreach at Chester UMC! We're partnering with First Touch Sports to begin a new ministry, Church on the Sidelines. We'll provide support, services, and advocacy to families involved in the youth soccer organization by:

- Offering a welcoming presence and consistent support at games.
- Providing snacks and water for players.
- Sharing information about programs and services the church offers, as well as those offered in the community.
- Practicing intentional listening to fully understand family needs and challenges.

For more information, please contact Evan Moody, youthleaders@chesterumc.org.