the bridge

May 3, 2026 - 9:45 AM

WORSHIP MUSIC
Boundless Love
Blessed Be the Name
Amazing Grace/Peaceful, Easy Feeling
There Is a Name I Love to Hear

SCRIPTURE
Acts 7:51-60 NCB

SPECIAL MUSIC
Can He, Could He, Would He?

MESSAGE
Forgiveness for the Oppressed
and the Oppressor
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

May 3, 2026 - 8:30 AM

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

WORSHIP MUSIC

Majestic
Everlasting God
You Are My King
Everyday

SPECIAL MUSIC

I Speak Jesus
Fresh Start Band

SCRIPTURE

Acts 7:51-60 NCB

MESSAGE

Forgiveness for the Oppressed and the Oppressor
Pastor Nathan Decker

May 3, 2026 **A Service of Worship and Praise** **11:00 AM**
Fifth Sunday of Easter

Welcome, Announcements & Greeting

Prelude ***Rejoice, the Lord is King!*** Organist

* Call to Worship[1] Claudia Nagy, Liturgist

Leader: The heavens open! Lift your eyes and see the glory of God! Jesus stands at the right hand of the Father!

People: In a world of shifting sand and hard hearts, God is our Rock.

Leader: So many stones are thrown in this world – the rocks of hate, the jagged edges of oppression, the deep fissure of silence. We embrace and protect those who have been bruised by the world's violence.

People: Rocks thrown in hate cannot break God's Spirit of Love.

Leader: Hear the martyr's cry: "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."
Give us a heart like Stephen's – Like Christ's own! A heart that offers the radical grace of forgiveness to the oppressor and finds healing for the oppressed.

People: We lay down our stones at the foot of the Cross.
We trade our bitterness for the Bread of Life.

Leader: Faith's Foundation never fails. We will hide ourselves in the cleft of the Rock that was struck for us.

People: God is our Rock, our Fortress, and our Deliverer. In His mercy, we find the strength to forgive and the courage to be free. Let us worship God!

* Hymn No. 110 ***A Mighty Fortress Is Our God***

Blessing of Finance Team and Counters

Why We Give
Offertory ***How Great Is Our God*** *with* ***How Great Thou Art*** Chancel Choir

* 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. 368 ***My Hope Is Built***

Scripture ***Acts 7:51-60*** NCB

Sermon ***Forgiveness for the Oppressed and the Oppressor*** Rev. Nathan Decker

Holy Communion

* Hymn No. 389 ***Freely, Freely***
* Benediction
* Choral Amen

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

[1]https://worshipswake.wordpress.com/2026/04/07/the-rock-of-refuge-against-the-rocks-of-hate/
[2]https://worshipswake.wordpress.com/2026/03/30/sheep-prayer-based-on-john-10/

Altar Flowers: Given to the Glory of God and in celebration of Sandy and Allan Foote's 54th Wedding Anniversary.

Worship Next Sunday
May 10 Trying Mother's Patience: Psalm 66:8-20 NRSVUE

Calendar

May 3, 2026– May 10, 2026

Today: Sunday, May 3

8:15 AM Nursery until 12:00 PM
8:30 AM Fresh Start Worship- 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
12:00 PM Emmaus Pot-Luck Lunch- Fellowship Hall
3:00 PM Pint with a Pastor- Three Leg Run
3:00 PM Picnic in the Park- Goyne Park
4:00 PM Youth Group- Annex

Monday: May 4

6:30 PM Boy Scouts- 226
7:00 PM Jean Craig- 205

Tuesday: May 5

10:00 AM Stephen Ministers- 226
10:30 AM Joy Singers
3:00 PM Rest Stop- Annex
6:30 PM Jr. Girl Scouts- 116
7:00 PM ESL- 205, 214, 221, 226

Wednesday: May 6

10:00 AM Blood Drive-DFH
10:00 AM Visitation Team-116
2:00 PM Grief Share-213
5:45 PM Handbell Choir
5:45 PM Wacky Wed.- Trinity

(continued)

6:15 PM Youth Bible Study- Trinity UMC
6:30 PM Crew-206
7:00 PM Chancel Choir

Thursday: May 7

10:00 AM The Hurried Gospel of Mark- 221
1:30 PM Prayer Shawl- Parlor
6:00 PM Guatemala Mission Trip Meeting-DFH
6:30 PM Young Adult Bible Study- Annex
6:30 PM Women's Book Club- Annex
7:00 PM ESL- 205, 214, 221, 226

Friday: May 8

Saturday: May 9

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

Next Sunday: May 10 - Mother's Day

8:15 AM Nursery until 12:00 PM
8:30 AM Fresh Start Worship- 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
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, Cindy Webb will be available today at 9:00 AM in Room 105.

Stephen Ministers will be at the back of the congregation during the Fresh Start Service and at the front, behind the altar rail during the Bridge and Traditions Services. You are welcome to go to them after you receive communion if you'd like them to pray with you. If you prefer, there are prayer request forms in the red pew pads to write down your prayer requests and place them in the offering plate when the ushers collect the offerings. The ushers will give them to a Stephen Minister after the service, and your Stephen Ministers will pray for you in confidence. The forms are also designed to be mailed to the church.

Please Welcome into Christian Fellowship our Newest Members:

- ***Cory & Whitney Graham*** (8:30 AM), join by profession of faith. Whitney is the CUMC Preschool Director. Cory and Whitney's sons, Waylon and Hendrix, are being baptized today. Cory and Whitney are expecting a daughter, Loretta, in June.

Let's Celebrate the Baptisms of:

- ***Waylon Graham,*** age 7, son of Cory and Whitney Graham.
- ***Hendrix Graham,*** age 5, son of Cory and Whitney Graham.

Emmaus Potluck Luncheon: *Today,* in the Fellowship Hall, immediately following 11:00 AM Traditions Worship Service. If you have ever participated in an Emmaus Walk, please join us for a potluck luncheon with fellow participants. We would like to organize teams to start sending pilgrims to future walks to lessen the responsibilities of an individual.
POCs: Rev. Dr. Marg Kutz, margkutz72@gmail.com and Claudia Nagy, dgramy@yahoo.com

Picnic in the Park: *Today, 3:00 PM–5:00 PM* at Goyne Park. Join Chester UMC Children's Ministry for a fun day of play, prayer, and popsicles. Bring a picnic to enjoy, play games with us on the field, or join the kids on the playground. We will bring the fun and the popsicles.
POC: Whitney Graham at (804) 691-0383.

American Red Cross Blood Drive: Wednesday, May 6, 10:00 AM -3:00 PM, CUMC Fellowship Hall. Give blood and receive a $20 eGift Card. If you are an eligible type O, B-, or A- donor, consider making a Power Red donation. Schedule your donation by scanning the QR code or use the link below:
https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=chesterumcva

Keep In Prayer: Wade Scruton; Rose Childress; Cindy Webb; Jennifer Dyson; Abby Honn; Sandy Cullather; Joshua Devericks; Doris Hancock; Monty Nunery; Bobbie Morrissette; Jim Watkins; Dorothy Gonzalez; Linda Nabors; Victoria Harrington; Pat Baake; Laney Marshall Phillips; Walt Stone; Bruce Nugent; Sharon Buchanan; Linda Willingham; Susan May; Eliza Furr; Cynthia Corley; Bruce Highley; Dick & Lynn Weis; Ann Stuart; Bert Watson; Jo Kiser; Ella Hilton; Erika Hilton; Susan Young; Harold Worcester; Lynda Richardson; Summer Lannan; Brooke & Mary Ann Hamilton

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* Newsletter**– Submit items to assistant@chesterumc.org no later than the 3rd Wednesday of January**,** March, ***May, July, September, and November.

Our Presence on Sunday, April 26, 2026

8:30 AM, Fresh Start.....…92
9:45 AM, Bridge 50
11:00 AM, Traditions.....151
Online.....52
Total……...345

Leading Our Worship Today, Sunday, May 3, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Mike Thompson, Betsy Zalumas, and Brody 🐾
	9:45	Stephanie Decker
	11:00	Pam Kasky, Marian Perkinson
Ushers:	**8:30**	Tommy Wright*, Ron Dombrowski *Head Usher
	9:45	Scott Pugh*, Kim Young
	11:00	Beth Stewart*, Bob Kutz, Geoff LeSueur, Steve Osborne, Scott Pugh
Communion:	**8:30**	Evan Moody, Donna DiRoma, Lilly Freiin von Ketelhodt
	9:45	Cornelia DeWitt
	11:00	Steve Osborne, Claudia Nagy, Penn Schultz
Donut Disciple:		Laura Hougland
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Morgan Hall

Please Welcome Our New Nursery Caregiver: We are delighted to welcome Victoria (Vicki) Hankins as our new nursery worker! We are excited for the care and joy she will share with the little ones in our congregation. She is a parent of one of our preschoolers and is excited to be a part of our growing nursery and ministry to infants on Sundays. She will begin on May 10th. We also extend our heartfelt thanks and best wishes to Morgan Hall as she steps away from the nursery to pursue new opportunities. We are grateful for the care and dedication she has shared with our children and wish her every blessing in the days ahead.

Handbell Choir Concert: Sunday, May 17, 3:00 PM at Trinity UMC. Featuring the bell choirs from both Chester UMC and Trinity UMC. Invite your friends and neighbors to hear this beautiful, free concert featuring a wide array of musical styles! All are welcome!

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

Many Thanks to all Who Participated in the Choir's Annual Afternoon Tea Fundraiser. The tables sold out faster than ever before, requiring zero publicity. That might mean you never even heard about the tea until it was over. Want to be a part of the tea next year? All 20 tables have a hostess for April 24, 2027. If you would like to be a part of the tea, please get on the waiting list NOW by calling Jill Seal at (804) 980-1323.

Altar Flowers: Consider providing flowers for the altar. We have many dates still available- **June 7, 28; July 5, 19, 26; August 16, 30; September 6, 20, 27; October 18, 25; November 29.** Write your name on the flower chart near the Church Office and fill out one of the flower forms below the chart. Return the form to the Church Office. Or you can call / email the Church Office (748-6006), office@chesterumc.org to reserve a date. You will need to make arrangements with your preferred florist. (River's Bend Florist will waive the delivery fee).

Leading Our Worship Sunday, May 10, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Joan & Steve Osborne	
	9:45	Cathy Epps	
	11:00	Will Schmidt	
Ushers:	**8:30**	Wendell Landis*, Bill Comer	*Head Usher
	9:45	Herb McCulloch*, Kim Young	
	11:00	Herb McCulloch*, Harold Crowder, Jeff Marlin, Tommy Petrey, Jonny Phillips	
Donut Disciple:		Laura Hougland	
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Morgan Hall, Vicki Hankins	

Backpack: We are almost through another school year; just the remainder of May to go! Your support for this ministry has been amazing, and we are so appreciative of every dollar donation and each item given. This has been a long-term ministry that has grown over the years and without your support it would never have been so successful. The children at C.C. Wells and C.E. Curtis Elementary Schools have been blessed by your generosity. We like to include something "special" at the end of the school year so we are asking for donations of pudding cups. They may be left in the backpack bin in the Missions Closet. Thank you.
POCs: Carolyn Landis and Karen Comer kgcomer@verizon.net

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 on our community! How can you help? Provide monetary donations (Jail Ministry in memo) used for study books, stamps and cards. Become a volunteer. Please pray for the men in the HARP program and those CUMC members volunteering at the jail.
POC: Maureen Coker, mcoker2003@comcast.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. Call Susan to sign up to provide a meal. Contact Rest Stop Team Leader, Susan Petrey, at (804) 938-5396, for more information.

Monthly Emmaus Gathering: For those who attended Walk to Emmaus gatherings at any time in their lives. Held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at Hopewell Methodist Church, Chesterfield. Meet at 6:00 PM for a covered dish fellowship, followed at 6:30 PM with worship and communion. The next Face-to-Face encounter is October 16-17 & October 23-24**.** Face-to-Face is a daytime walk. POC: Claudia Nagy at (804) 712-7733.

Vacation Bible School: June 22-26, 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM. For children preschool age through 5th grade. Volunteers are needed and appreciated! Please use this QR code to register as a volunteer and/or to register your child to attend VBS.
POC: Whitney Graham, preschool@chesterumc.org

Stephen Ministry: There are people in our congregation and community who could benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister. We have trained Stephen Ministers ready to walk alongside these people. If you are someone who could benefit from a Stephen Minister, please contact Steve Osborne, sosbor60@gmail.com.

Chester UMC Preschool Enrollment for Fall 2026: Now accepting enrollment for half-day, Christian-based preschool, for ages 2.5 up to Junior Kindergarten. Call Whitney Graham today to schedule a preschool tour. POC: Whitney Graham, (804) 748-2275, preschool@chesterumc.org

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.

- **The Jean Craig Fellowship**: Meets on the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 PM, Room 205. Next meeting will be Monday, May 4, 7:00 PM. We will assemble hygiene kits for UMCOR. POC: Susan Petrey (804) 938-5396.
- **The Ada Mae Bookman Fellowship**: Meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, 10:30 AM, Room 226. Next meeting will be Thursday, May 14, 10:30 AM. POC: Martha Miles, (804) 748-5476.

Call Susan Petrey, (804) 938-5396, to learn more about UMW, our two participating fellowships, and how you can become involved.

Church On The Sidelines - 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

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.
POC: Whitney Graham, preschool@chesterumc.org

Adult Small Group Bible Study: 9:45 AM, Room 213 "Our Pad". All adults are welcome. POC: Jeff Marlin jeff.marlinabd@gmail.com

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. 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.
POC: Laura Hamm, Laura.hamm83@yahoo.com

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. Snacks are provided.
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

Bridge Builders- Jail Ministry- 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. A Christ-centered program for those who have lost a loved one within the past two years. Go to GriefShare.org, then click "*Find A Group"*, and message Keith Mottley, keith.mottley@comcast.net or Sandy Sims, sandygeosims@hotmail.com

ESL Classes: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:00 PM- 8:30 PM. Click on this link: https://sites.google.com/view/cumcenglishclasses POC: Rebecca Hodell, rhodell7@gmail.com

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

Trinity UMC Wacky Wednesdays: Wednesdays, 6:15 PM-7:15 PM, Trinity UMC. Dinner provided.

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 great food and 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 Annex. POC: Jennifer Brame jrbrooksieee@gmail.com

United Methodist Men: For men who are seeking to give and receive fellowship, mentorship, and service to Church and community. POC: Brion Seward 1bseward@comcast.com

Trinity United Methodist Church and
Chester United Methodist Church

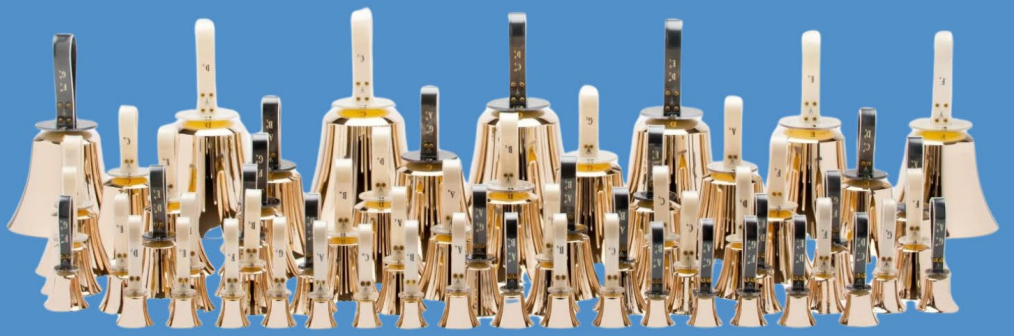
present

Chester Rings!

Sunday, May 17

3:00 PM

6600 Greenyard Road, Chester, VA 23831



Chester UMC
Preschool
ENROLLING FOR FALL 2026
ACCEPTING ENROLLMENT FOR HALF DAY, CHRISTIAN BASED PRESCHOOL FOR AGES 2.5 UP TO JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN!
CALL TODAY TO SCHEDULE YOUR TOUR
804-748-2275
PRESCHOOL@CHESTERUMC.ORG