the bridge

July 26, 2026 - 9:45 AM

WORSHIP MUSIC
Christmas Carol Medley
How Great Is Our God
O Come, All You Unfaithful
Angels From the Realms of Glory

SPECIAL MUSIC
Carol of the Bells/Joy to the World
Mary, Did You Know?
Joshua Wortham

SCRIPTURE
Luke 1:46-55 CEB

MESSAGE
Mother Mary Singing
Rev. Nathan Decker

CUMC STAFF DIRECTORY

Ministers ..... All Disciples of the Congregation
Lead Pastor: Nathan Decker ..... nathandecker@chesterumc.org
Associate Pastor & Youth Ministry: Mel Fleischer ..... pastormel@chesterumc.org
Minister of Music: Joshua Wortham ..... music@chesterumc.org
Children's Ministry & Preschool Director: Whitney Graham ..... preschool@chesterumc.org
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Financial Administrator: Julie Jones ..... finance@chesterumc.org
Nursery Specialists ..... Carla Adams, Vicki Hankins

Chester United Methodist Church

Embrace – Love – Impact * A Community in Christ
12132 Percival Street, Chester, Virginia 23831 * Church: (804) 748-6006
www.chesterumc.org * *A Stephen Ministry Congregation*

Get Connected! Join our Text Ministry to receive updates on events, small groups, ministry opportunities, and more. Simply scan the QR code or text **CONNECT** to **(804) 979-2922** to stay connected with our church family!

Give with Zelle: Donate quickly and securely through your bank's Zelle app. Send your gift to finance@chesterumc.org or scan the QR code. Questions? Contact Julie Jones, Financial Administrator, at finance@chesterumc.org.

FRESH START SERVICE
July 26, 2026 - 8:30 AM

WORSHIP MUSIC
Christmas Carol Medley
How Great Is Our God
O Come, All You Unfaithful
Unspeakable Joy

SPECIAL MUSIC
Carol of the Bells/Joy to the World
Mary, Did You Know?
Joshua Wortham

SCRIPTURE
Luke 1:46-55 CEB

MESSAGE
Mary for the Many
Pastor Mel Fleischer

July 26, 2026 **A Service of Worship and Praise** **11:00 AM**

Ninth Sunday After Pentecost – Christmas in July

Welcome, Announcements, and Greeting

Prelude ***Christmas Celebration*** Organist

* Call to Worship[1] Pastor Mel Fleischer, Liturgist

Leader: We gather in preparation
People: for good news is about to be proclaimed.
Leader: We gather in expectation
People: for joy is about to break forth in our midst.
Leader: We gather in celebration
People: for we are those people who have said yes to the manger, yes to the incarnate for others, yes to the wholeness of God.
Leader: In preparation and expectation, let us celebrate!

* Opening Prayer[2]

God of glory, your splendor shines from a manger in Bethlehem into the darkness of human night. Open our eyes to Christ's presence in the shadows of our world so that we, like him, may become beacons of your justice and defenders of all for whom there is no room. Amen.

* Hymn No. 238 ***Angels We Have Heard On High***

* Affirmation of Faith No. 881

* 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.

Special Music ***Carol of the Bells*** Joshua Wortham

Reception of New Members

Why We Give

Offertory ***Mary, Did You Know?*** Joshua Wortham

* 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. 230	***O Little Town of Bethlehem***	
	Scripture	***Luke 1:46-55***	CEB
	Sermon	***Mother Mary Singing***	Rev. Nathan Decker
*	Hymn No. 246	***Joy to the World***	
*	Benediction		
*	Postlude		

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

[1] Worship and Song Resources, pg 7, No. 4, William B. Odon

[2] Worship and Song Resources, pg. 8, No. 8

<u>The Altar Flowers</u> are given to the glory of God.

<u>Would You Like to Provide Altar Flowers?</u> There are still several opportunities available to provide altar flowers as a beautiful way to honor and glorify God**, c**elebrate a special occasion, or remember a loved one. Your gift helps enhance our worship space and is a meaningful expression of faith and thanksgiving. The remaining available dates for 2026 are **August 30; September 6, 20, and 27; and November 29**. If you would like to sign up, please write your name on the flower chart outside the Church Office and complete one of the forms located below the chart. You may also call or email the Church Office to reserve a date. Once you've signed up, please make arrangements with your preferred florist. (River's Bend Florist will waive the delivery fee.)

Calendar
July 26, 2026– August 2, 2026

Today: Sunday, July 26

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 New Member Reception- Fellowship Hall
12:00 PM Youth Ice Cream Event- Youth House/Annex Lawn

Monday: July 27

6:30 PM Boy Scouts- Fellowship Hall

Tuesday: July 28

7:00 PM Nominations Meeting-116

Wednesday: July 29

12:00 PM Bulletin Deadline
1:30 PM Emmaus Leader Meeting- Parlor

Thursday: July 30

10:00 AM The Book of Romans Bible Study- 226
1:30 PM Prayer Shawl- Parlor
6:30 PM Young Adults Bible Study-Youth House/ Annex

Friday: July 31

Saturday: August 1

10:00 AM Quilting Guild- 226

Next Sunday: August 2

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 Gather & Graze- Welcome Center

Sunday Worship Schedule

August 2: 8:30 "Come, All Who are Thirsty", Isaiah 55:1-5 NIV
9:45/11:00 "What's Happening to Us at Table", 1 Corinthians 11:17-26, The Message

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 at 9:00 AM in room 105.

New Membership: Please join us in extending a warm Christian welcome to our newest church members.

- **Bill & Marie Chapin,** reaffirming their faith and transferring from Beulah UMC.
- **Michelle Havlena,** professing her faith.
- **Matthew & Megan Krumich**, professing their faith.

Baptisms Today:

- **Otto James Krumich** (age 9), son of Matthew & Megan Krumich.
- **Viktor Thomas Krumich** (age 7), son of Matthew & Megan Krumich.

New Member Reception: *Today,* 12:00 PM **in the *Fellowship Hall***. Please join us for a reception immediately following the 11:00 AM Worship. Enjoy some refreshments while welcoming our newest Church Members.

Youth Ice Cream Sundae Social! *Today,* 12:00 PM on the Youth House (Annex) Lawn. Grades 6 -12 are invited to come hang out with Pastor Mel. Come enjoy delicious ice cream, cake, fun conversation, and a chance to learn more about Pastor Mel. We hope to see you there!

CUMC Emmaus Reunion Group Lunch that was planning to meet today ***has been cancelled***. The next luncheon will be on August 23, in the Fellowship Hall, immediately following the 11:00 AM worship. POC: Don Schmidt, wahoodon45@gmail.com

Chesterfield County Fair: Friday, August 28 - Saturday, September 5. Let's share God's love and grace with our community! This is a great fundraising opportunity for the Church. Volunteer positions: Ticket Sales, (must be 18 or older) and Collect and Scan Tickets -youth are welcome to participate. A mandatory training session will be held on Sunday, August 23 at 3:30 PM at the Fairgrounds.
A T-Shirt will be given to those who sign up no later than *TODAY.*
Provide your shirt size when signing up. Use the QR code or link to register.
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0D44A5A72BA75-64645760-chesterfield
POC: Stacey Ferrer, (804) 300-0033, ssfva@comcast.net.

Rise Against Hunger: Sunday, August 30, 12:00 PM, Fellowship Hall. Join the movement by signing up to volunteer. Volunteers are needed for set-up, meal packaging, and clean-up. Rise Against Hunger works in countries worldwide to fight hunger, targeting communities facing high rates of food insecurity. Visit the link to volunteer.
https://act.riseagainsthunger.org/event/e803210

Keep In Prayer: Wesley Yandle; Cathy Epps; The family of Horace Dean Downs, Sr.; Bill Chapin; April Cibula; Billy Hopson; Rick Poole; Bentley Cobb; Cindy Webb; Emory Large; Dawn York; Audrey Comer; Barbara Dance; Lisa Dabney; Michael Stinnett; Jennifer Dyson; Abby Honn; Joshua Devericks; Monty Nunery; Dorothy Nugent; Bobbie Morrissette; Linda Nabors; Pat Baake; Walt Stone; Sharon Buchanan; Linda Willingham; Bruce Highley; Mary Tyree; 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: https://www.facebook.com/share/18Xuixg6DR/?mibextid=wwXIfr
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/c/ChesterUMC.
Prayer Chain Email: to subscribe or to submit a prayer request, email 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, July 19, 2026

8:30 AM, Fresh Start.....…95
9:45 AM, Bridge 51
11:00 AM, Traditions.....119
Online.....57
Total……...322

Leading Our Worship Today, Sunday, July 26, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Joan Osborne	
	9:45	Steve Davies	
	11:00	Sharon Buchanan, Mary Musslewhite	
Ushers:	**8:30**	Wendell Landis*, Bill Comer	*Head Usher
	9:45	Brenda Stacy, Kim Young	
	11:00	Gary Williams*, Jeff LeSueur, Patrick Mims, Don Schmidt, Kay Williams	
Donut Disciples:		Andy & Eileen Steck	
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Vicki Hankins	

Interested in Joining Chester UMC? We warmly welcome you to join our Church family. If you would like to learn more about membership, please contact our Membership Coordinator, Joan Oborne. POC: Joan Osborne josbor61@gmail.com, (540) 270-4251.

Chester Chums is a 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". Please consider becoming a Chester Chum. Contact Joan Osborne at josbor61@gmail.com.

Lay Servant Academy: Looking for a way to grow in your faith and deepen your discipleship? Pastor Nathan encourages anyone interested to consider the Virginia Conference's online Lay Servant Academy. These courses are designed to equip God's people for ministry and are open to both new and experienced lay servants. The primary Academy will be held August 14–15 and offers courses including the Basic Course, Spiritual Gifts, Loving People and Planet, Connectional Living and Giving, Aging and Ministry in the 21st Century, Millennial Narrative, and CLM Orientation. Additional courses begin in early August, including Exploring a Culture of Care for a Caring Congregation and Called to Preach. Be sure to register early, as some classes begin before August 14. POC: Pastor Nathan, pastornathan@chesterumc.org
For more information visit https://vaumc.org/laity-district-and-conference-training/

Give a Dog a Job 5K: Canine Companion 5K run/walk: Saturday, October 10. This family and dog run/walk supports Canine Companions, (www.canine.org), a non-profit that provides service dogs to children, adults and veterans with disabilities, at no cost to them. Our very own Andy, Eileen, & McDuff Steck will be there this year working the donut and water table. Use this link to register today. Pass this information on to friends and family.
https://runsignup.com/Race/VA/TBD/GiveaDogaJob5krunwalk

Leading Our Worship Next Sunday, August 2, 2026

Greeters:	**8:30**	Patrick & Gina Dobbs	
	9:45	Jesse Stacy	
	11:00	Pam Kasky, Mary Musselwhite	
Ushers:	**8:30**	Wendell Landis*, Bill Comer	*Head Usher
	9:45	Brenda Stacy*, Pat Stanfield	
	11:00	Will Herrmann*, Janis Hargrave, Geoff LeSueur, Jeff Marlin, Tommy Petrey	
Communion:	**8:30**	Chip & Laurie Cobb	
	9:45	Pastor Nathan, Pastor Mel	
	11:00	Herb McCulloch, Betty Stone	
Donut Disciple:		Laura Hougland	
Nursery:		Carla Adams, Vicki Hankins	

Christmas In July: We're celebrating Christmas in July by collecting food items for our food pantry. Donations of non-perishable food items are appreciated. We especially need *peanut butter, breakfast cereal, canned chili, canned chicken and tuna, canned beef stew, and soup.* No expired items, please. Financial contributions (memo: Christmas in July) are also gratefully accepted and will be divided between the CUMC food pantry and the Rise Against Hunger campaign in August. Thank you for impacting our community and loving our neighbors!

Children's Ministry Lemonade Stand: Sunday, August 16, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM, Welcome Center. Join us after each worship service. Grab a refreshing lemonade and help us "Stuff the Bus" by donating new school supplies.

Blessing of the Backpacks: Sunday, August 23, during worship. Join us as we pray over our students, teachers, and school employees as they begin the new school year. Bring your backpack or work bag to any worship service for a special back-to-school blessing.
POC: Whitney Graham, preschool@chesterumc.org

National Night Out: Tuesday, August 4, 5:00 PM-7:00 PM at Bermuda Hundred UMC. There will be bounce houses, free hot dogs and Kona Ice, visits from McGruff the Crime Dog, the Enon VFD's classic fire truck, dunk tank, games, crafts, and more! Bring family and friends.

Grief Recovery Group: Wednesdays, 2:00 PM, Room 213. A new session will begin August 5 through October 28. This is 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.

Tax-Exempt Purchases for the Church: A friendly reminder that Chester United Methodist Church is exempt from Virginia sales tax on qualifying purchases made for church ministries and operations. If you are purchasing items on behalf of the church, please obtain a Virginia Form ST-13 Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption before making your purchase. The retailer must receive this form at the time of the sale to exempt the purchase from Virginia sales tax. To request a signed copy of the ST-13 form, please contact Julie Jones, Finance Administrator, at finance@chesterumc.org. Every dollar saved in sales tax is another dollar that can be used to support the ministries and mission of Chester United Methodist Church. Thank you for helping us be faithful stewards of God's resources.

Builders Ministry is asking for help supporting the Men's HARP program with toiletries for the men leaving jail and for those coming into the jail until their commissary accounts are started. Items needed are deodorant, soap, body wash and shampoo. Please leave your donations in the Mission Closet. Thank you for supporting this Ministry!
POC: Maureen Coker, mcoker2003@comcast.net

Stephen Ministers Needed: CUMC will be offering training this Fall for new Stephen Ministers. The twenty-session training will be held mid-fall to Thanksgiving, then January-February. The dates and times will be tailored to your schedule as possible. Stephen Minister training is an engaging, energizing experience that features a mixture of presentation, video, group discussion, skill practice, and spiritual growth activities. Since 1975, more than 600,000 Stephen Ministers have been equipped by this training to provide care for millions of people. This is what a Stephen Minister said about the training: *"God gave me a heart for other people. Stephen Minister training gave me the skills I needed to minister to people and bring God's love into their lives during a time of deep need."* If you would like to talk to somebody about participating, please contact Lynn Crump at lynncrumppla@gmail.com or Andy Steck at coop1kate@gmail.com.

Volunteers Needed: Teachers' Pancake Breakfast at C.C. Wells Elementary:
Friday, August 21, 8:00 AM, C.C. Wells Elementary Cafeteria. Join us as we celebrate and encourage the teachers of C.C. Wells Elementary before the start of the new school year! We're looking for volunteers to help cook and serve a delicious pancake breakfast as a small way of showing our appreciation for the dedicated teachers and staff. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Pastor Nathan at nathandecker@chesterumc.org or the Church Office at office@chesterumc.org or (804) 748-6006. Thank you for helping us make this a warm and welcoming start to the school year!

WOW: Worship on Wednesdays: Children's Church, ages Preschool through 5th Grade. Join us starting in September, on the first Wednesday of each month, 5:00 PM- 7:00 PM, Room 205. Get creative and messy with crafts, science, and sensory while learning a bible lesson and meeting new friends. A light dinner will be provided. Please RSVP. Parents may drop off or stay.
POC: Whitney Graham, (804) 691-0383, preschool@chesterumc.org

ChesterFest 2026: Saturday, September 26, 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM, 11804 Centre Street.
CUMC will be sharing a booth at ChesterFest with Bermuda Hundred UMC and Trinity UMC as part of the UMCs of Chester partnership. We're looking for three CUMC volunteers to help welcome visitors and offer hospitality at our booth. (One volunteer for each of the three shifts.) When you sign up, please let us know if you already have a "UMCs of Chester" T-shirt from last year. If you need a shirt, please include your size in the comments section of the sign-up form. Use this link to sign up as a volunteer.
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E4FAAA72AA4FD0-64646771-chesterfest#/

Conversation on Parenting in the Digital Age: On September 27th at 4 pm, Pastor Nathan will lead "Parenting in the Digital Age." From managing daily screen time to navigating the world of Artificial Intelligence, parenting today looks completely different than it did just a few years ago. Join us for a supportive community conversation for parents and guardians. Together, we'll explore practical ways to protect your child's cognitive development, No judgment. Just honest talk and actionable strategies to help your kids grow up healthy, balanced, and safe.
POC: Pastor Nathan, nathandecker@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. *Currently on summer break.* 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, Youth House 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.
Grades 6-12. POC: Pastor Mel Fleischer, pastormel@chesterumc.org

Youth Group: Grades 6th-12th, 4:00 PM -5:30 PM, Youth House. Meets weekly for fun, fellowship and outreach. Snacks are provided.
POC: Pastor Mel Fleischer, pastormel@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. Helping the men of HARP. 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

Wacky Wednesdays: Wednesdays, 5:45 PM- 7:00 PM, Trinity UMC. Children of all ages. Dinner Provided. *Starts back on September 2.*

Youth Bible Study: Wednesdays, 6:15 PM-7:15 PM, Trinity UMC. Middle School- Grades 6-8. Dinner Provided. *Starts back on September 2.*

WOW: Kid's Ministry: 1st Wednesday of the month, 5:00 PM-7:00 PM, Room 205. Preschool- 5th Grade. Light dinner provided. RSVP to Whitney Graham, (804) 691-0383, preschool@chesterumc.org.

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: Meets every other Thursday, 6:30 PM, Youth House. Age 18-30. Dinner provided. POC: Pastor Mel, pastormel@chesterumc.org

Women's Christian Book Club: 1st Thursdays of *odd months*, 6:30 PM, Parlor. 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