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A SPIRITUAL HOME AWAY FROM HOME

FROM WORSHIP TO FELLOWSHIP, STUDENT-LED GROUPS OFFER DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES TO NURTURE FAITH

by [Kelley McGee](#) | February 5, 2026

For those seeking fellowship, community, or a quiet place to pray, members of the Christopher Newport community can find on-campus spaces and organizations that support a wide range of faiths. From Pope Chapel, the central interfaith space on campus dedicated to spiritual growth, to a wide array of religious organizations, the University offers many welcoming places for connection and support.

One of the newer spaces on campus is a dedicated prayer room for Muslim students, faculty, and staff located in the Tribble Library. Youssef Chouhoud, an associate professor of [political science](#), offered guidance on creating the space and says it all came to life quickly and thoughtfully.

“Provost Quentin Kidd reached out to me about the lack of a dedicated area for Muslim students on campus and his desire to establish a suitable space. He was spurred to action simply by a student asking if he could recommend a location where they could offer the five daily prayers prescribed in Islam,” Chouhoud said.

A few days later, Kidd let him know that there was an area in the Tribble Library that fit the bill.

“Not long thereafter, President Kelly would inaugurate that room as a dedicated area for Muslim students at CNU to gather and pray,” Chouhoud said. “The speed with which the administration moved to bring this nascent idea to fruition was remarkable. Provost Kidd and President Kelly made clear that Muslim students are not an afterthought on this campus. Their thoughtful and decisive action was truly heartening.”

The prayer room complements the many worship spaces and community organizations available around campus,

reinforcing CNU's commitment to spiritual inclusivity.

Pope Chapel, located near the library, is the central hub for those seeking a quiet place for meditation or communal worship. Pope is a welcoming space for people of all faiths, hosting services, prayer sessions, and special religious events.

The [Catholic Campus Ministry \(CCM\) at CNU](#) works with a local Catholic church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and offers Sunday Mass at Pope Chapel at noon during the school year. Additionally, CCM has an off-campus house at 91 Shoe Lane, where students can gather to pray in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and enjoy fellowship events such as Sunday Suppers and Milkshake Monday. There are also several small group Bible studies that meet throughout the week on campus or at the CCM house.

"Catholic Campus Ministry hopes to provide a meaningful encounter for all of its students, one that draws them into deeper communion with God and with one another. Christ is present in each student in a unique and powerful way, and it is a joy to witness how students live out that call and build one another up to become more fully the people God created them to be through weekly events and the celebration of the Sacraments," said Conner Cummings, Director of CCM at CNU.

Christopher Newport also has an active Hillel chapter that supports Jewish students through a variety of cultural, religious, and social events. The organization strives to build relationships between students and professors and connect with other members of the greater Jewish community. Students in Hillel have the opportunity to bond through the group's social and cultural events and religious programming.

"Find your shalom away from home at [CNU Hillel](#)! As the premier Jewish organization on campus, Hillel celebrates the High Holidays, hosts monthly Shabbat, and offers Jewish education events. Jewish, Jewish-adjacent, and Jewish allies are welcome at events. At Hillel, we celebrate all kinds of Jewish. Hillel is connected to the larger Jewish Peninsula community, and students can attend services at local Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox synagogues," said Julia Downer, Director of Enrichment Programs and Athletics at the [Jewish Peninsula](#).

The [Office of Inclusion and Belonging](#) is another resource for religious and spiritual life on campus. Vidal Dickerson, who is the office's executive director, serves on [Interfaith America's](#) Interfaith Leaders in Higher Education Council, which provides access to mini-grants and other resources to host campus programming that promotes interfaith cooperation.

"Students and employees can also receive a professional certificate in interfaith leadership," added Dickerson.

The following is a list of many of the [registered student faith and spirituality organizations](#) you'll find on campus.

- **Catalyst College:** An on-campus organization centered on the Gospel. It meets weekly for students to be disciplined.
- **Catholic Campus Ministry:** Roman Catholic on-campus ministry.
- **Christian Student Fellowship:** A Christian group open to all for Sunday hangouts (games or activities) and weekly Bible studies.
- **Christian Student Outreach:** Providing a community for Christian students on campus to grow in their faith, fellowship with one another, and engage in service and outreach activities.
- **Cru:** Interdenominational Christian parachurch organization focused on discipleship and evangelism.
- **Delight Ministries:** A nationwide ministry with a mission to invite college women into a Christ-centered community that fosters vulnerability and transforms stories.
- **Fellowship of Christian Athletes:** Provides an opportunity for groups of athletes and former athletes to gather in fellowship, combining games and faith-based conversation. FCA also offers men's and women's Bible studies.
- **Flourish:** A progressive, social-justice-oriented, non-denominational Christian campus ministry.
- **InterVarsity Christian Fellowship:** Non-denominational Christian organization that holds small and large group gatherings.
- **Orthodox Christian Campus Ministries (OCCM):** An organization offering students a supplement to the secularism of academia, providing a safe space to pray and enjoy Christian fellowship while bridging the campus to the church throughout their collegiate journey.
- **Reformed University Fellowship:** A Christian, reformed ministry group on campus.

- **Sigma Alpha Omega:** A religious sorority.
- **Young Life:** Young Life is an international nonprofit organization focusing on mentoring and sharing life with area teenagers.
- **Muslim Student Association:** This organization seeks to introduce the community to Islamic culture and thought by sharing the spirit of Islam with both Muslims and non-Muslims. It brings together Muslim and non-Muslim students interested in learning about Islam, combating Islamophobia, and fostering interfaith dialogue. It strives to create connections with other faith groups around campus.

There are also many other organizations on campus that offer opportunities for worship, fellowship, and religious education. They include:

- **Baptist Collegiate Ministries:** Provides a community for Baptist students and others interested in exploring Baptist faith and practice.
- **Christopher Newport Hillel:** Supports Jewish students with cultural, religious, and social events.
- **More Light Presbyterians at Christopher Newport:** The mission of More Light Presbyterians is to work for the full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people in the life, ministry, and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in society.
- **United Campus Ministries:** A Christian community providing a safe space to grow in faith.
- **Wesley Campus Ministry:** Serves Methodist students and others interested in Methodist practices and teachings.

WEEKLY WORSHIP GATHERINGS

- **Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ International):** Every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m., students gather at the Pope Chapel to worship, laugh, learn from God's Word, and discuss its impact on daily life. Cru's mission is to help people connect with Jesus Christ and experience God's love and plan for their lives.
- **Reformed University Fellowship (RUF):** campus ministry welcoming students from all backgrounds. Through authentic relationships and the study of God's Word, students discover Christ's love, find their significance in God's redemptive story, and engage in the life of His church. RUF meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at the Crow's Nest.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES NEARBY

There are numerous local churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples near campus, representing a wide array of religious traditions. Many of these places of worship offer students transportation options or carpooling arrangements.
