

MAITLAND LANE
FREE METHODIST CHURCH
CHILI COOK-OFF 2026
10/17/2026

AWARDS AND PRIZES

People's Choice (chosen by the people)	\$40
Best Spicy Chili (chosen by judges)	\$20
Best Mild Chili (chosen by judges)	\$20
Best Non-Meat Chili (chosen by judges)	\$20



MAITLAND LANE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

2026 CHILI COOK OFF RULES

By participating in this Cook Off, each entrant agrees to release and hold the Sponsor, Maitland Lane Free Methodist Church (MLFMC), harmless from any and all losses, damages, rights, claims, and actions of any kind in connection with the Cook Off or resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of any prize, including, without limitation, personal injuries, death, and property damage, and claims based on any libel, slander, illegal competition or trade practice, violation of rights of privacy, infringement of copyrights or other rights of third parties.

Chili Cook off schedule for October 17, 2026:

Set-up: Check in with registration to receive your competitor's number and table assignment between 10:00 and 10:30 am. You are required to be at your assigned table ready to proceed with tasting by the judges and public by no later than 11:00 a.m.

Judging: At 11:15 an announcement will be made for all competitors to bring their chili sample to the Judges' table with their competitor number. At 11:45 am the judging by our Panel of Judges' will begin. The Panel of Judges will not be informed who made which chili samples they are judging, the chili presented will be referred to by only the competitor's number in order to make the judging as fair as possible. We will keep the Judges sequestered until after they judge the chili samples that are competing in order to make the competition fair.

Public Tasting and Voting: Between 11:00-2:30 pm individuals from the public who have purchased tasting bands may taste and vote for the People's Choice Chili award. You are only required to serve a sample to those individuals from the public who have purchased the tasting band.

Award ceremony: 2:45 pm

Chili Ingredients You May Use:

Use your favorite recipe, with or without meat, with or without beans, as hot or mild as you like. Meat may be beef, pork, chicken, or turkey. Veggie (meatless chili) is also welcome. Beans are encouraged but not mandatory. We do require that you have a list of the meats due to potential allergies and religious purposes. Also required is a list of any nut or nut-based oil, dairy, raisins/grapes, eggs, or any other common potential allergen used in your recipe on a warning sign at your tasting table. We will provide the sign for you to complete.

Event staff will provide the following:

Tables, Chairs, Electricity, gloves for serving, sampling cups, spoons, & napkins, hand sanitizer, trash cans, and trays for transporting samples to judges.

Contestants will supply their own:

Cooking vessel (examples: stock pot or crockpot) with appropriate heavy-duty extension cord and 3 gallons of chili

Utensils to stir and serve your chili.

Sanitation at event:

Hands must be washed and sanitized prior to working with your chili and serving the chili.

Gloves are to be worn while serving chili to anyone.

No smoking is permitted in the building. There will be a smoking area posted outside.

Please keep your area as clean as possible. (This will make the public voters more likely to taste your chili and vote for you.)

Trash cans will be available for everyone to use throughout the event grounds.

Chili Preparation Rules:

1. **All entries must be homemade from scratch.** No commercially prepared, pre-packaged, or store made chili permitted. This must be your own personal recipe. (What fun is it to win with someone else's chili anyway?)
2. **All chili must be fully prepared and cooked prior to arrival at the event** so it will be ready to eat by no later than 11:30 a.m. **You agree to comply with in-home food safety guidelines** in your preparation of your chili at home, as your chili will be served to the public.
(<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/free-publications-women/food-safety-home>)
3. You must **prepare AT LEAST 3 gallons of chili to allow public tasting.** (This is equivalent to one 12-quart stock pot or two 6-quart crockpots.) **AND you must provide your own slow cooker or similar heat source and a heavy-duty extension cord** to maintain a safe food temperature for your chili during the entire event. We will provide an electrical outlet for you to use. **If you choose to use an open-flame source of heat you will be required to set your tasting table up outside due to the fire and burn danger they pose.**
4. You will be **required to use proper serving etiquette** when giving samples to the judges and the public. (examples: gloves, ladle use, etc.)
5. **We will provide a table** for you to set up your tasting station for the public.
6. **You must pre-register with the attached official entry form fully completed and pay the entry fee on or before October 10, 2026, in order to participate and compete. Failure to timely register and pay the entry fee by this date will prevent you from competing in the Cook Off.**

MLFMC 2026 Chili Cook Off Registration Form

Saturday, October 17, 2026

Maitland Lane Free Methodist Church, New Castle, PA

All participants must pre-register. You may enter more than one chili
but you must submit a separate registration for each entry.

Registration entries must be received by NO LATER THAN October 10, 2026

ENTRY FEE \$15.00

Chili Category (check one)

Meat/**Spicy**: _____ Meat/**Mild**: _____

Veg./**Spicy**: _____ Veg./**Mild**: _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Memorandum of Agreement:

I certify that I have received a copy of the attached official rules and that I agree to accept and abide by them. I understand any violation may disqualify my entry from competition and prizes/awards.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

To register return this signed form with payment to:

Maitland Lane FMC
121 E Maitland Lane
New Castle, PA 16105
(724) 654-4979