

# April 2025

## NEWSLETTER





# Devotion

When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, God saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of God's mercy. God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom God poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by God's grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:4-7 [NIV]

There is a story from a man who had gone to visit his uncle in Ireland. One morning they got up early to watch the sun rise over a lake as they celebrated the man's 80th birthday. They were in silence, and the nephew noticed his uncle had a radiant smile. The nephew asked, "Can you tell me why you are so happy?" "Yes, lad," the uncle replied, "You see, the Father is very fond on me. Ah, me Father is so very fond on me!"

Do you believe that God is very fond of you? Are you aware of how very fond God is of your life?

There are many affirmations we learn about God through the resurrection of Jesus that we will celebrate at Easter. One of those affirmations Jesus had taught was that God is truly very fond of each person. You may have trouble believing that God is very fond of you. You may question that truth because of events that have happened in your life, or because of how you may have lived. You may not accept this fact.

# Devotion

Regardless of the events that have occurred in your life, both good and bad, the assurance we find through Jesus' teachings, and that you and I might experience through God's spirit being with us, is that God is very fond of each one of us!

God's fondness for us applies to us, even when our ways of living have hurt us, others, and God. God's love and kindness for us leads God to be merciful toward us. God's mercy comes to us because God is a God of hope. God is gracious to us because God wants us to become heirs of God.

Jesus was willing to go to the cross so that through the way he suffered we may be made even more aware of the importance of his resurrection. We learn that God's mercy is connected with God's power over sin and over death. God has the power to save us, and to also give us the gift of life everlasting.

Why would God want to save us after what humans do to one another? Because you and I have been created in God's image! We have the ability to love and to be influences for good upon others. We have the potential to live forever, and God wants us to share in thankful fellowship with God and with those who are a part of God's kingdom.

# Devotion

Easter is an event that gives us the assurance that we can believe in God's love for us and in God's power to save us. Blessed are we when we acknowledge our value to God! Blessed are we when we seek to live so that we know of God's spirit that is with us. Blessed are we when we strive to live for the benefits of God's kingdom. Blessed are we when we live so that God may use us to share God's love with those who live around us. May our celebration of Easter this April remind us of the value God places upon each life!

I hope you believe God is fond of you. I hope you not only believe it, I hope you know it. I hope you do know that God is truly fond of you. As you do know that God is fond of you, then it is shown to others by the ways in which you live your life... for knowing of God's spirit does make a difference!

Blessings are upon you, for God loves you,  
Jamie Fonville

# OUR CHURCH FAMILY

## Birthdays

Betty King 4/1  
Morgan Linton 4/4  
Peggie Foster 4/15

Tena Barnwell 4/19  
Mary Menefee 4/28  
Spanky Newsome 4/28

## Anniversaries

Roger & Betty King 4/9

## Those Remaining in Our Prayers

Buster Freeman

Nell Allred

David Allred

*(White Oak of Burlington Room 305 - C)*

Amber Massey

Joe Strickland

Ross Strange Sr.

Holly Bent (Phil's Friend)

Ray Palok

(Matt's Step-Father)

Pam Stone

Jerry Gertz

The Friends and Family of

Betty Matekovich

Benji Terrell

*(Shoulder surgery)*

Lewis Fowler

John & Judy Kipp

Bettie Braxton

Iris Workman

## Prayers

If you need prayers or know someone that does please let us know.

You can call the office or call your Deacon.

We are here to assist in anyway that's helpful.



# OUR CHURCH FAMILY

- **Sunday, April 6th**
  - *Worship with Communion*
- **Monday, April 7th**
  - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
- **Tuesday, April 8th**
  - *Finance Meeting at 11:00 am*
- **Monday, April 14th**
  - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, April 15th**
  - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Thursday, April 17th**
  - *Maundy Thursday at 6:30 pm*
- **Sunday, April 20th**
  - *Decorate the Outside Cross 8:30 - 8:45 am*
  - *Breakfast (To include hymn, scripture & prayer) 9:00 am*
  - *Easter Worship Service 10:30 am*
- **Tuesday, April 29th**
  - *Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm*

## Community Engagement

Blessed Sacrament Food Distribution will be moving their location to their building on our block. We have agreed to allow them to use our parking lot for their distribution lines.

2nd Mondays from 10:30 - 1:30 pm

4th Mondays from 1:30 - 3:30 pm

# THEMES & LITURGISTS

## Communion

Jamie Fonville 4/6

Dotti Davis 4/17

Ann Strange 4/20

## Greeter

David Hodges

## Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

## Liturgists

April 6th - Sherry Massey

April 13th - Lucius Wilson

April 20th - Julie Miller

April 27th - Sandra Greene

## Receptions

Please join us in the parlor for fellowship and light refreshments after  
Worship on Sundays.

# CHURCH INFORMATION

## Mission Statement

*(Revised 2/4/24)*

First Christian United Church of Christ in Burlington, North Carolina opens wide its doors to all who hunger for God and God's righteousness. It seeks to provide rest for weary spirits, comfort for troubled hearts, and to inspire all to follow Jesus Christ in unselfish service to humankind. We, in the spirit of Jesus' great commandments, commit to love God and our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:28-34) and follow Paul's teaching of acceptance of one another (Romans 14:1-15: 13).

We believe that all people are created in God's image and are blessed and loved equally by God. We welcome with respect, and nurture with intention, the gifts of all who come to us on the journey of faith and seek eternal salvation under the New Covenant of Jesus Christ. We welcome everyone to join us in the life and leadership of our family of faith, and in our ongoing commitment as an Open and Affirming Congregation. The people of First Christian United Church of Christ are dedicated to always being a welcoming and loving church; a "House of Christian Fellowship for ALL people."

## Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9 am - 12 pm

## Church Officers

President: Jamie Fonville

Vice President: Cindy Sharpe

Treasurer: Judy Kipp

Assistant Treasurer: Julie Miller

Secretary: Mark Garrison

## Church Staff

Interim Minister: Deborah Suess

Organist / Choir Director: Matt Rice

Custodian: Rodney Paul Sr.

Office Administrator: Debbie Norris



# RE-RETIREMENT

First Christian Beloveds –

what a wonderful journey we have had together.

Tim and I have felt so connected with you all ever since we started our first interim with you in 2020. You are a dedicated and gracious congregation. It has been a true blessing serving with you.

As you can imagine, it is time for me to “re-retire”! So my last Sunday as your Interim Minister will be on May 25. I will, however, remain available for pastoral care if that is needed.

Please know you will always be in our hearts and we hope to visit from time to time!

*Loads of Love and Blessings, Deborah Suess*