

Sunday, August 30, 2026

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost



WELCOME

First Christian United Church of Christ Mission Statement
(Revised February 4, 2024)

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."

WORSHIP MATTERS

Hear OUR prayer!

How often have you stood during the worship service and read the Prayer of Confession aloud wondering why you should be praying those particular words? ("That prayer isn't about me! I'm not guilty of *that!*") Or how often have you simply sat in place as the Prayers of the People are offered after the sermon? ("That's the Pastor's job! I'm just listening.")

The nature of prayer *during the worship service* is that it is *corporate*, that is it is a prayer of the entire body *as a single body*. You aren't really confessing your individual sins during this prayer—that's not what it's for. You are acknowledging that we, as a people, have fallen short of God's expectations. Think of it as a class-action prayer!

Similarly, the Prayers of the People feature the Pastor or Worship Leader offering up prayer on behalf of the congregation. It isn't an accident that the prayer response is "Hear our *prayer*," not "Hear our *prayers!*" Each individual prayer is a prayer of our united body, with the congregation joining in to give assent.

By the way, nobody is suggesting you can't ask for forgiveness individually during worship, it's just that the corporate prayers are a class exercise!

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

August 30th, 2026 at 10:30 am

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: In the dry and weary places of our routines, the Divine Presence blazes without consuming.

People: We turn aside to witness this holy wonder, mindful of the sacred ground beneath our feet.

Leader: The Living God speaks out of the quiet wilderness, calling each of us by name.

People: Here we are, listening for the voice of liberation, justice, and truth.

Leader: Let us worship the One who was, who is, and who shall always be.

People: We come to encounter the Holy One in the desert of our lives.

**HYMN OF PRAISE: "Seek Ye First"*

The Hymnal #42

THE ACT OF CONTRITION

Call to Corporate Confession

Leader: When God called Moses from the burning bush, the initial human impulse was hesitation, uncertainty, and a desire to look away from suffering. We, too, often avert our eyes from the cries of our neighbors and offer excuses when summoned toward justice and transformation. Trusting that God meets us with steadfast grace even in our wilderness of doubt, let us confess our sins together.

Prayer of Corporate Confession

Unison: Holy and Ever-Present God, we confess that we often walk past the quiet wonders of your grace and the urgent cries of those who are oppressed. We build comfortable boundaries to keep your burning truth at a distance. When you ask us to remove our sandals and stand vulnerable before you, we retreat into self-protection. When you commission us to work for equity and liberation, we claim we lack the eloquence, strength, or wisdom to make a difference. Forgive our reluctance and our silence. Fan the flames of holy courage within our hearts, that we may trust your presence and step boldly where your Spirit leads. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: The God who revealed the sacred name to Moses is the God who remembers the covenant, hears every cry, and comes near to deliver. In Christ, grace is unbounded, and mercy is our constant companion. Hear and receive the good news: through the unconditional love of our Creator, our sins are forgiven, and we are renewed for daily service.

THE COMMUNITY LISTENS TO THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: Exodus 3:1-15

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God!

RESPONSIVE PSALM Psalm 105

Leader: O give thanks to the LORD; call on his name; make known his deeds among the peoples.

People: Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works.

Leader: Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

People: Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually.

Leader: Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles and the judgements he uttered, O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

People: Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob lived as an alien in the land of Ham.

Leader: And the LORD made his people very fruitful and made them stronger than their foes, whose hearts he then turned to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants.

People: He sent his servant Moses and Aaron, whom he had chosen. Praise the LORD!

GLORIA PATRI: (#759 NCH)

**All: 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.**

SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:9-21

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 16:21-28

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God!

SERMON: *"What's in a Name?"*

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD

*HYMN OF CELEBRATION: *"I've Got Peace Like a River"*

The New Century Hymnal #478

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

(Leader: "God of holy fire..." **People: "...Hear our 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, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF GENEROSITY

DOXOLOGY

***ALL: Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.***

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE COMMUNITY GOES INTO THE WORLD

*HYMN OF DEDICATION: *"God Be With You"*

The New Century Hymnal #81

*SENDING AND BENEDICTION

People: "...Thanks be to God. Amen."

POSTLUDE

Announcements

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, September 2nd

Finance Meeting at 11:00 am

Monday, September 7th

Labor Day: *Office is Closed*

Tuesday, September 8th

Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm

Sunday, September 13th

HOMEcoming

(Please RSVP by placing your invitation card in the offering plate)

*If you'd like to invite any special guests, call the office with their address.

Monday, September 14th

Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm

Tuesday, September 15th

Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am

Tuesday, September 29th

Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm

Ongoing Mission Project

We will be collecting 13-gallon trash bags to help Allied Churches.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office Hours

Monday - 9am – 12pm

Tuesday – 9am – 12pm

Wednesday - 9am – 12pm

Thursday - 9am – 12pm

Friday - closed

August Mission Project

First Aid Supplies for ABSS and Matt's School at Rockingham County School

- Bandages, assorted sizes
- Sterile gauze pads and rolls
- Adhesive medical tape
- Antiseptic wipes
- Instant cold packs
- Non-latex disposable gloves
- Tweezers and small scissors
- Hand sanitizer
- Plastic size sandwich bags

Serving in our Armed Forces

CPT Kirk Workman

James Barnwell

Dalton Anthony Jones, Ensign US Navy

(Family of June & Dotti)

Notes

Inspired by something said in the word or sung in a song today? Take a moment to write it here to remember later.

Our Love and Prayers

Please remember all our sick, at home members, others in need of our prayers, and those in our area hospitals in your prayers this week.

Buster Freeman

Nell Allred

Amber Massey

Joe Strickland

Ross Strange Sr.

Trisha Shelly

Ray Palyok

(Matt's Step-Father)

Lewis Fowler

Patty Howey

(Charlie Vitou's Niece)

Shawn Hooks

(Matt's Nephew)

Brenda Grogan

Holly Bent

Nanci Isley

(Friend of Sherry Massey)

Jon & Judy Kipp

Betty King & Roger King

Blake Jones

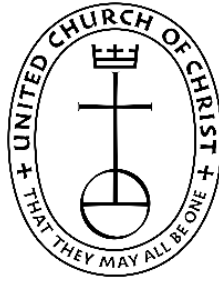
June Sellars

Nancy Hughes

(Trish Ball's Mother)

Darla Bray

Eleanor Lovgren



Church Officers

President: Jamie Fonville
Vice President: Cindy Sharpe
Treasurer: Judy Kipp
Assistant Treasurer: Julie Miller
Secretary: Matt Rice

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL
pastorfcucc@gmail.com / 336-276-0374
Organist/Choir Director: Matt Rice
Custodian: Rodney Paul
Office Administrator: Debbie Norris
(Office Hours: Monday to Thursday 9 -12pm)

Worship Participants

Liturgist: Nancey Simmons
Hymn Leaders & Anthem: Choir
Greeters: Benjie Terrell & David Hodges
Ushers: Benjie Terrell, Julie Miller, Charlie Vitou, Eleanor Lovgren