

2025

# January

NEWSLETTER



# Devotion

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days.  
Ecclesiastes 11:1.

The writer of Ecclesiastes gives me a fitting way to consider living into the new calendar year of life - 2025. The text, taken literally, creates a question, - for how can bread placed in water come back to you, for it will dissolve?

However, if we think of “bread” as things and qualities that we can give away or share with other people, and the “waters” as the daily activities of life, then we can gain some guidance for our lives.

You and I do not know ahead of time how the words and actions we share with other people will affect the future. The “waters” of life flow along, and we do not know the effects we set into place by the ripples made by our words and actions.

The writer is encouraging us to share of our lives in positive ways with other people, casting words and actions freely about us, as if we were throwing bread, or seeds, or ideas, or compassion upon the waters of life. Who knows where the influence of what we will do and say will end up,... but there is always the possibility that the good we do out of kindness and generosity will come back to us.

We are not to be generous and kind expecting a return, but it does seem to be true that what we sow affects what we also reap. The Apostle Paul made such a statement in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 and Galatians 6:7-8.

# Devotion

I had a wise friend, Eva Schumann, who had a phrase that she used quite often as she reflected on various situations – both good and bad. She would say, “What goes around comes around.”

How true it seems to be that those who are generous and sharing of their time, abilities, and gifts, seem to have more friendships and an adequate amount of material goods throughout their lives.

It also seems to be true that those who are greedy, self-centered, and self-serving have fewer genuine friends, and they never seem to have enough to be satisfied.

It does seem to be true that what we sow influences what we reap. It can be that there are times we do not want to accept responsibility for the difficulties that we have to face, that we have brought on ourselves, because we did not sow wisely.

As you and I begin the new year of 2025 may we be people who seek to be generous, merciful, compassionate, just, and kind unto those about us. May we share of our lives freely, believing that what we do will make a difference for good in the lives of those about us.

What goes around comes around.

As you and I desire for good to come toward us, may we be sure to send good out toward others. It will bring its rewards in this life, and especially in God’s righteous kingdom to come.

Jamie Fonville

# OUR CHURCH FAMILY

## Birthdays

Glenna Lewis 1/2

Mark Garrison 1/6

Kathy Russell 1/9

Dotti Davis 1/17

Stuart Stone 1/17

Marybeth Linton 1/28

## Anniversaries

Stuart & Sandy Stone 1/10

## Those Remaining in Our Prayers

Buster Freeman

Nell Allred

David Allred

*(Peak Resources)*

Amber Massey

Joe Strickland

The Family of Bob Price

Justin Smith

Stuart Stone

Lewis Fowler

Mary Newsome

Ross Strange Sr.

Joy Ballard

Sandra Greene

Pam Stone

Pete Pate

John Kipp

Bettie Braxton

The Family of

Mary Leighton Sellers

*(Under Hospice Care)*

Betty Matekovich

*(Terminal Cancer)*

## 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, January 5th**
  - *Worship with Communion*
- **Monday, January 6th**
  - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
- **Monday, January 13th**
  - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, January 14th**
  - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Monday, January 20th**
  - *Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Office is closed*
- **Tuesday, January 28th**
  - *Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm*

## Community Engagement

As a community we raised \$2,475 for Christmas Cheer.  
Thank you ALL who contributed to help make this possible.

# THEMES & LITURGISTS

## Communion

Dotti Davis 1/5

## Greeter

David Hodges

## Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

## Liturgists

January 5 - TBD

January 12 - TBD

January 19 - TBD

January 26 - TBD

## 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