



January

NEWSLETTER 2025

Devotion

They say that the first step to recovery is admitting that you have a problem. OK, I may have a problem. I have a slight compulsion to purchase fancy high-tech flashlights. My heart jumps whenever I see an ad for a new model from O LIGHT, WARSUN, or WUBEN.



Of course, the algorithms behind all of my social media accounts know this about me and feed me a constant supply of bright shiny things to distract me.

In my defense, flashlights are really handy to have. I'm especially fond of the ones that slip inside a pocket or clip onto a key-ring. I usually have at least three in my pockets! (I use them to navigate the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall in the dark before I can turn the lights on.)

The more silly functions they have, the better I like them! I have flashlights with magnetic bases, Ultraviolet light emitters, strobe functions, completely customizable colored LEDs, or Laser emitters. I even have one which produces a shrill siren when you push the right combination of buttons!

Devotion

Even the most basic function of a flashlight, providing light, is not immune to feature creep. If a flashlight doesn't have at least three brightness modes, including Turbo Brightness, it doesn't really have much appeal. The test of those brightness levels is, of course, standing on my back porch in utter night and shining the light across the empty field. A good flashlight lights up the night!

That is what Epiphany brings us: light in our darkness. We have waited through the advent, stood with the shepherds in the field, witnessed the miracle of Christ's birth. Now we, too, follow the light that now shines in our lives. One of our hymnals, The New Century Hymnal, contains a version of Charles Wesley's hymn Hark! The Herald Angels Sing adapted to include Jesus, the Light of the World:

Hark! The herald angels sing, Jesus, the light of the world;

Glory to the Christ-child bring, Jesus the light of the world.

We will follow the light, beautiful light, come where the dewdrops of mercy are bright,

Shine all around us by day and by night, Jesus, the light of the world.

As we begin this new year, let us do it in the light of Jesus, which shines brighter than all the fancy flashlights in the world!

Pastor Stephen

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Birthdays

Glenna Lewis - 1/2
Mark Garrison - 1/6
Dotti Davis - 1/17

Stuart Stone - 1/17
Matthew Knight - 1/18
Marybeth Linton - 1/28

Anniversaries

Stuart & Sandy Stone - 1/10

Those Remaining in Our Prayers

Buster Freeman
Nell Allred
Amber Massey
Joe Strickland
Ross Strange Sr.
Trisha Shelly
John Moon
Ray Palyok
Lewis Fowler
Carolyn Wolley / Family
Dave Smudski / Family

Brooke Manning
David Hodges
Brenda Grogan
Spanky Newsome
Holly Bent
Troy Marquardt
Joy McPhail
Blake Jones
Jerry Barnwell
Family of Rev. Tharrington

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.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- **Wednesday, January 7th**
 - *Finance Meeting at 11:00 am*
- **Sunday, January 11th**
 - *Installation Service for Rev. Ball at 3:00 pm*
- **Monday, January 12th**
 - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
 - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, January 13th**
 - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Monday, January 19th**
 - *Martin Luther King Jr. Day - office is closed*
- **Tuesday, January 27th**
 - *Deacon's 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

Christmas Cheer

We raised **\$2,000** for Christmas Cheer 2025.

Thank you ALL to contributed to help spread Christmas Cheer to those in need.

THEMES & LITURGISTS

Communion

Dotti Davis - 1/4

Greeter

Eleanor Lovgren

Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

Liturgists

January 4th - Judy Hodges

January 11th - Jamie Fonville

January 18th - Tena Barnwell

January 25th - Dotti Davis

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

Pastor: Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

Organist / Choir Director: Matt Rice

Custodian: Rodney Paul Sr.

Office Administrator: Debbie Norris