



# September

## NEWSLETTER

2025



# Devotion

Writer Anne Lamott theorizes that all prayers can be sorted into three categories: Help, Thanks, and Wow! Others have since added the category Sorry. All four categories have helped me focus and simplify how I look at my prayer life. At this beginning of our new joint ministry journey, perhaps we can use this framework together.

Together as a church let us consider praying:

**Sorry!:** Creative and loving God, we confess that though we try our best to be good followers of Christ, we find ourselves depending upon our own power. We sometimes forget that you walk beside us. Forgive us when we occasionally replace your will with our own. Gently remind us that we walk in the presence of the Creator, and that your strength is our strength.

**Help!:** God, in your mercy give us your vision of who you want us to be as First Christian United Church of Christ. Form us anew as an instrument of your love to our community. Through your Spirit, point us in the direction that will make us a beacon of love and light. Show us the way to meet the needs of our community, and empower us to minister in the way that Christ demonstrated.

**Thanks!:** Bountiful and generous God, you have gifted us already with too many blessings to name! We give you thanks for our long history of service in Burlington and beyond. Thank you for those who have gone before us to pave the way and bring us to this particular moment.

# Devotion

Thank you for the family in your Spirit that you have built in this place. Thank you for sustaining us so that we remain available to love each other, revel in your presence, and work to reveal your grace to every person we meet.

**Wow!:** Surprising God, you amaze us with new opportunities around every corner! We love new beginnings, new chances to be church together, new ways to reach out in love! What an opportunity you have given to us to begin a new chapter in the life of First Christian United Church of Christ in Burlington. We can't wait to see what you will reveal to us next!

Amen.

I hope that this simple framework for prayer will help you as much as it has helped me. Let us pray together for God's wisdom, grace, and power as we begin a new chapter in our lives and ministry.

Pastor Stephen



# OUR CHURCH FAMILY

## Birthdays

Jamie Fonville 9/2

Kitty Linnens 9/2

Bex Christian 9/2

Ron Davis 9/8

Carole Johnson 9/10

Mack Painter 9/18

David Hodges 9/26

Julie Miller 9/27

## Anniversaries

## Those Remaining in Our Prayers

Buster Freeman

Nell Allred

The Family of David Allred

Amber Massey

Joe Strickland

Ross Strange Sr.

Trisha Shelly

Roger & Betty King

John Moon

Ray Palok

Lewis Fowler

Tom Peterson

(Protection, deliverance & peace)

Brooke Manning

Scott Isley

Our Nation

## 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

- **Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup>**
  - *Office closed for labor day*
- **Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>**
  - *Finance Meeting at 11:00 am*
- **Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>**
  - *Worship with Communion*
- **Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**
  - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
  - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>**
  - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>**
  - *HOMECOMING after worship*
- **Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>**
  - *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

## Alamance County CROP Walk

October 4<sup>th</sup> - Come Join us!

# THEMES & LITURGISTS

## Communion

Jamie Fonville & Phil Bray 9/7

## Greeter

Merle Sharpe

## Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

## Liturgists

September 7<sup>th</sup> - Sandra Green

September 14<sup>th</sup> - Carol Fonville

September 21<sup>st</sup> - Julie Miller

September 28<sup>th</sup> - Cindy Sharpe

## Receptions

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



FIRST CHRISTIAN  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

*First Christian United Church of Christ*

*415 South Church Street*

*P.O. Box 1678*

*Burlington, N.C., 27216*

[www.firstchristianucc.org](http://www.firstchristianucc.org)

[office@firstchristianucc.org](mailto:office@firstchristianucc.org)

*336-226-7428*

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August 11, 2025

Dear First Christian UCC Members and Friends,

Yesterday, August 10, 2025, at a called Congregational Meeting, the Church Family voted unanimously to call Rev. Stephen Ball to become our settled, part-time Pastor!!

We look forward to Rev. Ball assisting each of us in our ministries for God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev. Ball will begin leading us in worship this coming Sunday, August 17, 2025! May we each be supportive of him through attendance at worship and in service through our Church Family as he seeks to help guide us forward in our ministry and service to God.

I wish to thank those who have served on the Pastoral Search Committee during this time of seeking a pastor: Joy Ballard, Dotti Davis, Judy Kipp, Merle Sharpe, Norma Simons, Mike Smith, and Charlie Vitou.

Additionally, I wish to thank Rev. Deborah Sues for her ministerial services to us during our search process. I also thank her for stepping in to assist the Pastoral Search Committee when Judy Kipp needed to resign to provide care for her brother, and as we were having difficulty in having our profile shared with candidates.

I look forward to our moving forward in worship, fellowship and service as we give thanks to God and Jesus for their great love and hope for each of us.

Peace and hope in the day.

Jamie Fonville, Chair of the Official Board



Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

It is an exciting time in the life of a church to call a new pastor, but what may not occur to people is that it is equally exciting for that pastor beginning a new ministry! New beginnings call for starting at the beginning, so permit me to introduce myself. I am Reverend Stephen B. Ball, OSL, your new settled pastor. (The OSL after my name signifies my Life Vows in the Order of Saint Luke, an international dispersed religious community dedicated to liturgical scholarship and practice.)

A few words about me and my family: I am married to a wonderful and talented woman, Patricia Hughes Ball, a Burlington native. She is a retired music educator, the majority of her career spent as a high school band director. She retired after decades of service and decided she didn't want to *stay* retired! She continues to direct honor bands, teach summer music camps, and judge ensembles and marching band contests. She serves as the Driver Recruiter and Training Coordinator for Holiday Tours in Randleman, NC. She sews counted cross-stitch creations in what little spare time she has.

I have a daughter, Anna, 26, an elementary music teacher right here in Alamance County at Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School. My son, Steve, 24, is studying for his Master's degree in school psychology at Appalachian State University. I also have a step-son, Eric Quigley, Jr., 28, who runs his own roadside diesel repair service here in the county. Eric's lovely wife is Brook. They have two children, Raymond and Montana.

I have a baptist heritage, growing up in Indiana the grandson of a baptist preacher. I studied at Wake Forest University and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. After graduation I worked for the Women's Missionary Union. My clinical training was at Rex Hospital in Raleigh. I served as Staff Chaplain at Morehead Memorial Hospital in Eden. I pastored two churches in Rockingham County before taking leave of the pulpit to be a stay-at-home father. Most recently I worked with Exceptional Children in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School system.



I have a media production background, both in video production and photography. Each year I am obsessed with drum and bugle corps performances. I enjoy cooking. As a hobby I dabble in making jewelry.

As we begin this ministry together, I am both honored and humbled by your call. It is early in my settling-in period; I am still feeling my way around all things FCUCC! I am looking forward to getting to know you and becoming a part of your church family. On behalf of both Trish and myself, thank you for your warm welcome. We both look forward to serving together with you.



CELEBRATE WITH US

*First Christian UCC*  
*Homecoming*

SUNDAY  
9.14.2025

415 S. Church St., Burlington NC



COME WORSHIP WITH US!  
WE CELEBRATE OUR NEW PASTOR  
REV. STEPHEN BALL, OSL

Lunch and Fellowship follow the 10:30am  
worship service.

RSVP

to the FCUCC Office 336-226-7428

Name(s) & Number of guests  
in your party for the meal.



# 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