

The background is a light gray, textured surface. It is decorated with several thin, dark brown branches of cherry blossoms. The blossoms are white with delicate pink centers and yellow stamens. Some blossoms are in full bloom, while others are buds. Scattered across the gray surface are numerous small, clear water droplets of varying sizes, giving the impression of a fresh, dewy morning.

March

2025
NEWSLETTER

Devotion

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

Matthew 7:24[NIV]

Jesus often used illustrations from everyday life and nature with his teachings to help the people better grasp what he hoped to teach them.

The illustration of building a house is a very vivid one. We can see in our mind a house being built on a rock. We can see the rain being blown against the house during a storm. We can imagine a nearby stream rising out of its banks and washing against the house. Even with the rain, wind and flood, we can picture the house withstanding the battering.

Jesus says that as a person hears his words, and put those words into practice, that he/she may build a strong, secure life that can withstand the “rains,” “winds,” and the “floods” that may come.

“Storms” seem to be an inevitable part of life. Some of them we can see coming, and so we know we need to brace for them, although they may still topple us. Other storms seem to blindside us; we failed to realize the danger was coming. They are like getting rear-ended in a car wreck.

Storms come. Jesus does not say they will not happen to his followers. In fact, he warns us to expect “storms”. Jesus’ concern is that we be prepared for the times when the “storms” come so that we will not be destroyed.

Devotion

Jesus tells us that just hearing his words are not enough to protect us from danger; we need to put his words into practice if we want our lives to be strong enough to withstand the storms we will face.

Jesus' ethical and moral teachings have practical applications for life. He tells us that we are to live with our focus being to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37-39).

We may question the importance of seeking to follow Jesus' teachings in life today, unless we notice how he lived, and especially how he faced the "storms" in his life – especially his persecution, suffering and death.

In the face of injustice and spite, ignorance and misunderstanding, pain and suffering, Jesus continued to live by faith in God. Jesus still cared for those who were persecuting him.

You may say, "But he died!, so his house came tumbling down". Through Easter we learn that his soul lives on. Jesus died so that God might show us that God has power over the sinfulness of people and over the power of death. Love will win, even if it is only at the end of this life!

As we enter the season of Lent this month, we remember Jesus died to show us that Love has the power to give eternal life. With the various "storms" we face, may we find our security in living by Jesus' teachings so that we may be able to overcome all that seeks to destroy us – body, mind, and/or soul – in this life, and also for eternity.

Devotion

On April 20 we will celebrate Easter as we remember God's power over sin, suffering, and death. May you and I continue to build our lives securely on the Solid Rock, so that we may always have hope.

Jamie Fonville

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Birthdays

Beth Painter 3/3
Cindy Sharpe 3/3
Nell Allred 3/5
Garry Massey 3/13

Sherry Massey 3/23
Sandy King 3/28
Barbara Price 3/30
Judy Hodges 3/20

Anniversaries

None Yet!

Those Remaining in Our Prayers

Buster Freeman
Nell Allred
David Allred
(Peak Resources)
Amber Massey
Joe Strickland
Ross Strange Sr.
Tony Ferrita
Pam Stone

Jerry Gertz
Betty Matekovich
(Terminal Cancer)
Benji Terrell
(Shoulder surgery)
Lewis Fowler
John Kipp
Bettie Braxton
The Family of Mary Leighton Sellers

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, March 2nd**
 - *Worship with Communion*
- **Monday, March 3rd**
 - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
- **Wednesday, March 5th**
 - *Ash Wednesday*
- **Monday, March 10th**
 - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, March 11th**
 - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Monday, March 17th**
 - *St. Patrick's Day*
- **Tuesday, March 25th**
 - *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.

During the times listed below, please park only in the parking spots directly facing S. Church Street to avoid getting blocked in.

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

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

THEMES & LITURGISTS

Communion

Matt Rice - 3/2

Greeter

Merle Sharpe

Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

Liturgists

March 2nd - Carol Fonville

March 9th - Julie Miller

March 16th - Tena Barnwell

March 23rd - Judy Hodges

March 30th - Nancey Simmons

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