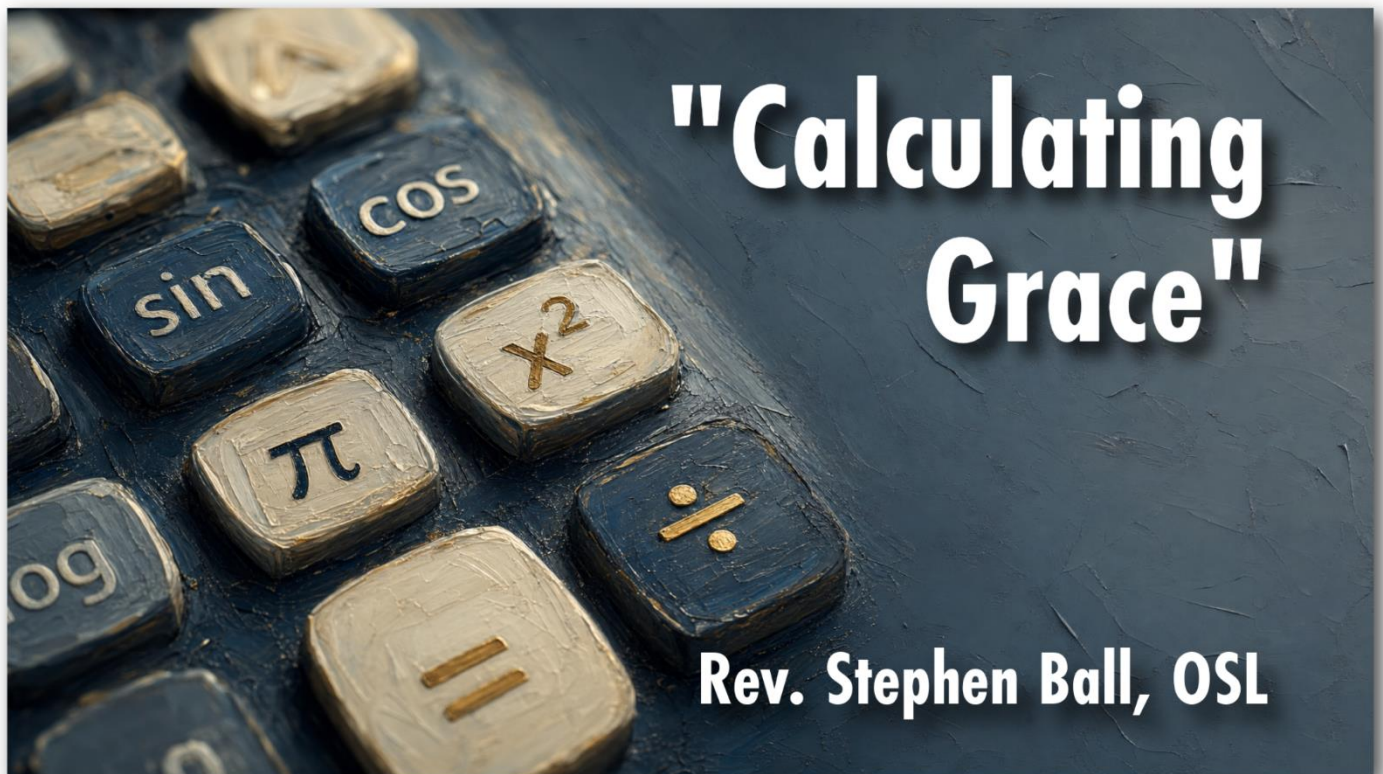


Sunday, September 13, 2026

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Homecoming Sunday



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

Homecoming: "Quilted Together in Time"

Homecoming is the time we intentionally celebrate the life of this particular instance of the Body of Christ. We worship God in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, but we also give attention to who we are as First Christian United Church of Christ in Downtown Burlington, North Carolina!

This is our family reunion, a time to reflect on who we are in relation to each other, and to examine what it means to be a church family. So, welcome, everyone; pass out the hugs and handshakes! Greet your neighbors like the family that they are.

Do not miss out on the fellowship meal after the service, either. Please remain seated for the Postlude, after which Pastor Stephen will offer a blessing over the meal to come. Then we will all meet downstairs in the Bray Fellowship Hall for lunch and extended fellowship time.

We're glad you're here. Welcome home!

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

HOMECOMING

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC
September 13th, 2026 at 10:30 am

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

HOMECOMING REFLECTIONS

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The mercy of the Holy One is not measured out by our small reckonings.

People: God's grace outstrips our arithmetic; God's patience exceeds our sight.

Leader: We enter this house carrying our tallied grievances and careful reckonings.

People: We are summoned here to lay down the balance sheet and enter into life.

Leader: Come, people of the covenant; return to the God who releases us from debt.

People: Let us worship the One whose mercy endures forever.

**HYMN OF PRAISE: "Come, Christians, Join to Sing"*

The Hymnal #108

THE ACT OF CONTRITION

Leader: We are eager pupils in the school of grievance, quick to calculate what the world owes us and slow to remember the vastness of the grace that preserves our breath. Let us unburden our hearts before the One from whom no secrets are hid, confessing where we have withheld pardon and release.

People: Merciful God, we confess that we are relentless accountants of each other's failings. We remember every slight, we record every injury, and we demand repayment to the last penny. Yet before You, our debts are immeasurable, and our justifications turn to dust. Forgive our spiritual stinginess. Shatter our illusions of self-righteousness, and pry open our clenched hands. Teach us the holy terror and liberating beauty of uncalculated grace, that we may pardon as we have been pardoned, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: Hear the good news that silences every claim against you: God does not manage accounts by human reckoning. In boundless pity, God cancels the sum of our transgressions and sets us upon our feet.

Leader: In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE COMMUNITY LISTENS TO THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 50:15-21

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for all people.

People: Thanks be to God!

RESPONSIVE PSALM Psalm 103:8-13

Leader: The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

People: He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.

Leader: He does not deal with us according to our sins nor repay us according to our iniquities.

People: For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

Leader: as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

People: As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

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 14:1-12

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for all people.

People: Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM *10,000 Reasons*

by L. Larson

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 18:21-35

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for all people.

People: Thanks be to God!

SERMON: *"Calculating Grace"*

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD

**HYMN OF DEDICATION: "Spirit of Love"*

The New Century Hymnal #58

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

Congregational Response:

Leader: Lord, in Your vast mercy,

People: Cancel our enmity, and make us whole.

And now, in the confidence of those whose slate of sins has been wiped clean, let us pray as our Savior Jesus Christ has taught us, saying...

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: "Go, My Children, with My Blessing"*

The New Century Hymnal #82

***BENEDICTION**

EXTROIT

POSTLUDE

BLESSING OF THE HOMECOMING MEAL

*A special thank you to Amy Marsh
for sharing her musical talents with us here today.*

Announcements

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Monday, September 14th

Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm

Tuesday, September 15th

Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am
(We will be collecting 13-gal trash bags to help with the Church's ongoing Mission project for Allied Churches)

Tuesday, September 29th

Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm

Saturday, October 3rd

Alamance CROP walk at 9:00 am
(registration starts at 8:30 am at the Trinity Worship Center)
All are welcome to participate in the walk or contribute financially.

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

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

Shawn Hooks

(Matt's Nephew)

Brenda Grogan

The Family of Patty Howey

(Charlie Vitou's Niece)

Holly Bent

Nanci Isley

(Friend of Sherry Massey)

Jon & Judy Kipp

Betty King & Roger King

Blake Jones

June Sellars

Nancy Hughes

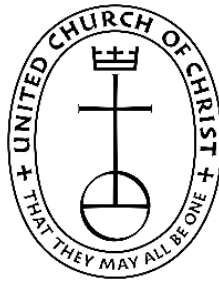
(Trish Ball's Mother)

Darla Bray

Eleanor Lovgren

Dana Matherly

(Terry Ragland's daughter)



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: Kerney Black
Hymn Leaders & Anthem: Choir
Greeters: Benjie Terrell & David Hodges
Ushers: Benjie Terrell, Julie Miller, Charlie Vitou, Eleanor Lovgren