

April

NEWSLETTER 2026



Devotion

A WEEK OF SUNDAYS: THE GREAT FIFTY DAYS

It's been a month of Sundays since I visited my hometown in Indiana. You have probably heard or maybe even used the idiom, "a month of Sundays," too. You know what I'm talking about: Simply put, it means...a long time, thirty (or thirty-one) weeks, if you want to be pedantic about it.

7 1/2 months can subjectively seem like a long time. The Christian Calendar offers up a similar time period: a week of Sundays, the period we also know as The Great Fifty Days. In a glorious festival of joy that dates back to the early church, we celebrate the Season of Easter for seven weeks — fifty days.

After the forty days of Lent, when we have been contemplating the movement from Dust to Life, we can finally burst forth with exuberant Alleluias in the light of Christ's resurrection! How can we mindfully celebrate this season of resurrection in our daily lives? (Other than, of course, my annual formal hunt for the cheapest clearance chocolate Easter bunnies at the local pharmacies and big box stores, I mean!) As a church we have several ways. We will repeat the traditional Easter greeting call and response: "He is risen!" "He is risen, indeed!" We will once again sing "Alleluia!" We will light the Paschal Candle to remind us of the new life promised in the resurrection of Christ. We will hang the white banners and pulpit scarves. The choir and pastor will wear their white stoles.

I encourage you to find a way to mark this season of joy and hope in your personal journey away from the church building.

Pastor Stephen

God grant us the grace to be exuberantly undone by Your joy. May this

Alleluia be a joyful shout of praise to You, O God, who are the source of all life.

Devotion



God grant us the grace to be exuberantly undone by Your joy. May this season of the Great Fifty Days be more than a date on a calendar; let it be a Holy Commotion in our souls. We thank You for the Feast — the Bread of Life and the Cup of Blessing — that sustains us when our own rhythms falter.

Remind us, O Lord, that the stone hasn't just been rolled away; it has been shattered. Let our lives reflect that light, vibrating with the resonance of an eternal Alleluia that refuses to be dampened by the mundane.

Amen.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Birthdays

Betty King 4/1
Morgan Linton 4/4
Peggy Foster 4/15

Tena Barnwell 4/19
Mary Menefee 4/28
Spanky Newsome 4/28

Anniversaries

Roger & Betty King - 4/9

Those Remaining in Our Prayers

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

Brenda Grogan
Spanky Newsome
Holly Bent
Troy Marquardt
Blake Jones
June Sellars
Nanci Isley
Curtis Foster
Jon & Judy Kipp
Mike Smith

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

- **Thursday, April 2nd**
 - *Maundy Thursday Program at 7:00 pm*
- **Sunday, April 5th**
 - *Flowering of the Cross Drop In Time 8:30 am*
 - *Breakfast & Devotions 9:00 am*
 - *Easter Morning Worship 10:30 am*
- **Monday, April 6th**
 - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
- **Wednesday, April 8th**
 - *Finance Meeting at 11:00 am*
- **Monday, April 13th**
 - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, April 14th**
 - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Tuesday, April 28th**
 - *Deacon's Meeting at 6:00 pm*

One Great Hour of Sharing

Thank you to everyone who participated in the UCC Offering: OGHS. Together we raised \$420.00

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

(Exceptions are May and December)

THEMES & LITURGISTS

Communion

Jamie Fonville 4/2

Dotti Davis 4/5

Greeter

David Hodges

Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

Liturgists

April 2nd (Maundy Thursday) - Judy Kipp

April 5th - Dotti Davis

April 12th - Trish Ball

April 19th - Mark Garrison

April 26th - Tena Barnwell

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: Matt Rice

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

Organist / Choir Director: Matt Rice

Custodian: Rodney Paul Sr.

Office Administrator: Debbie Norris