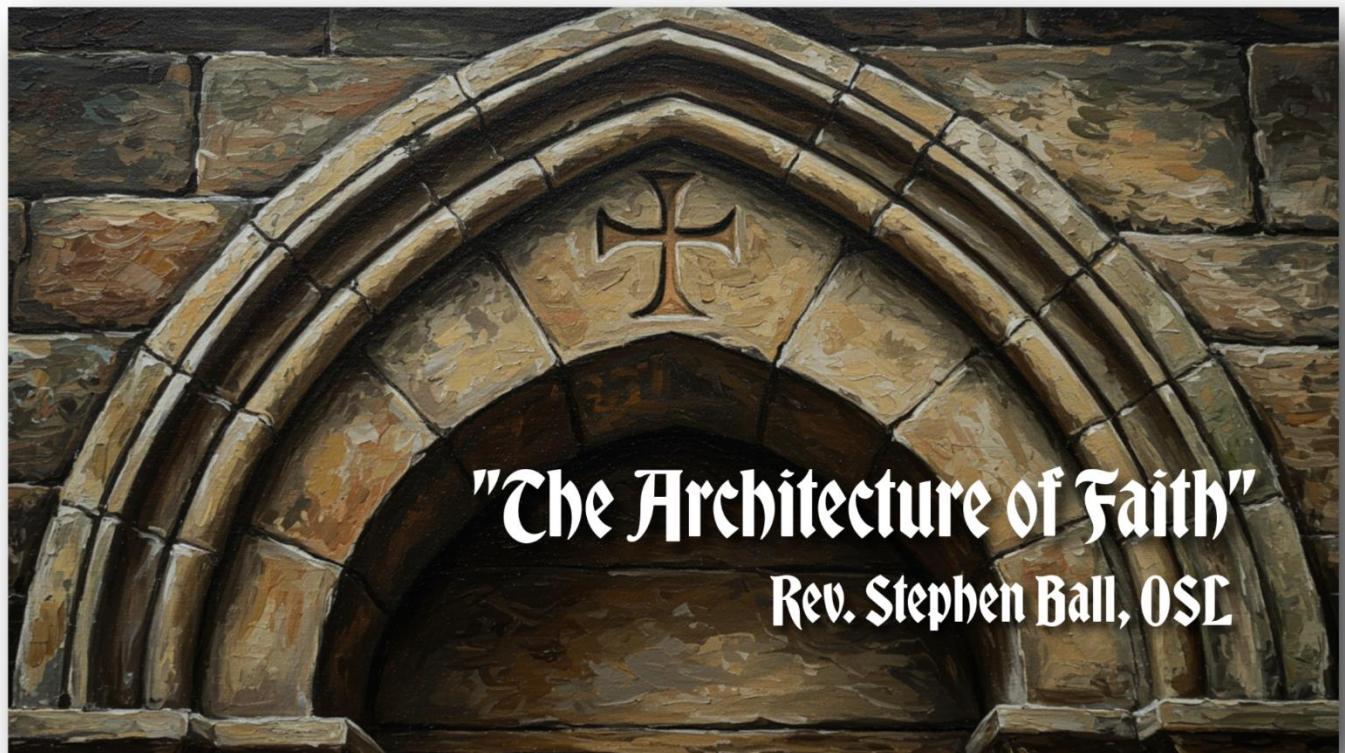


Sunday, May 3, 2026

The Fifth Sunday in Easter



"The Architecture of Faith"

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSC



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."

To All God's beloved...who are called to be saints... -Romans 1.7

To be a saint is to be sanctified;
set apart for a sacred purpose.
That would be you.
Every breath of your life is for a sacred purpose:
to shed light, to radiate God's love.
You don't have to be influential,
or pious, virtuous or pure.
You have to be yourself.
The You of you is what God has made holy.
You are God's beloved.
All you have to do is act like it.
Everything you do today is an opportunity
to embody God's love,
not by your effort or skill,
but by the love you embody.
The light of God is in you.
Be transparent to it.

*Steve Garnaas-Holmes
Unfolding Light*

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

May 3rd, 2026 at 10:30 am

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INTROIT

THE EASTER ACCLAMATION

Leader: He is Risen!

People: He is Risen, indeed!

All: Alleluia!

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, like newborns seeking the milk of the Spirit, for we have tasted that the Lord is indeed gracious.

People: We are no longer wandering through the ruins of our own making; we are being gathered.

Leader: We are the mismatched stones, the jagged edges, and the forgotten bricks being stacked into something holy.

People: The Master Builder is on site, and the blueprints are spread wide across the altar. Let us worship the Living Stone, and in doing so, find our place in the walls.

**HYMN OF PRAISE: "Jesus Loves Me"*

The Hymnal #579

ACT OF CONTRITION

Leader: We often build facades of holiness to hide the structural damage within. We prefer the safety of our own blueprints over the radical design of the Creator. Let us step out of the artifice and bring our cracked foundations to the One who knows every fault line.

People: Merciful Architect, we confess that we have tried to build our lives on shifting sands and vanity projects. We have rejected the very stones You chose for our foundation, preferring the polished surfaces of our own egos to the rugged beauty of Your grace. We have failed to live as a "chosen race" or a "royal priesthood," choosing instead to blend into the shadows of apathy. We have stumbled over Your Word because we wanted a god who conforms to our design rather than a god who calls us into their own. Forgive us for our structural pride. Rebuild us, stone by stone, into a house of mercy. Amen.

Leader: Friends, the Great Architect does not look at a pile of rubble and see a loss; He sees an opportunity. In the economy of grace, the stone that the builders rejected – the one we thought was too broken or too strange-has become the very cornerstone of our lives. By the mercy of Christ, your foundation is secure. You are not a ruin. You are a temple. You are forgiven, you are chosen, and you are dearly loved.

THE RECOGNITION OF IRIS WORKMAN

THE COMMUNITY LISTENS TO THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 2:2-10

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

Many: Thanks be to God!

RESPONSIVE PSALM from Psalm 31:1-4

Leader: In you, O LORD, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me;

People: Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.

Leader: You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me.

People: take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge.

GLORIA

**All: Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and blessed;
One God, now and forever. Amen.**

ANTHEM *Clean*

SCRIPTURE: John 14:1-14

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

Many: Thanks be to God!

SERMON: *"The Architecture of Faith"*

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS AT THE TABLE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Response: Leader: "God, in your mercy..."

People: "...hear our prayer."

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 COMMUNION PRAYER *(see insert)*

THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

One: Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

**All: 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.**

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Pastor: Come, the table is prepared.

(The congregation, as they are able, proceeds to the table to commune by intinction. Those who are unable to walk will be served at their seats.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Our Savior Jesus Christ keep and preserve you to everlasting life.

Let us pray:

All: We thank you, God for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

THE COMMUNITY GOES INTO THE WORLD

**HYMN OF DEDICATION: "I Would Be True"*

The Pilgrim Hymnal #489

*BENEDICTION

Pastor: He is Risen!

People: He is Risen, indeed!

All: Alleluia!

EXTROIT

POSTLUDE

Announcements

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, May 6th

Finance Meeting at 11:00 am

Sunday, May 10th

John Graves Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship Service 10:30 am

Monday, May 11th

Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm

Tuesday, May 12th

Margaret Lightbourne at 11:00 am

(At Harbor Inn Restaurant. Spouses are welcome! RSVP to Carol Fonville)

Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm

Thursday, May 14th

Ascension Day

Sunday, May 17th

Hot Dog Lunch & Cake Auction

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Regular Office Hours

Monday - 9am – 12pm

Tuesday – 9am – 12pm

Wednesday - 9am – 12pm

Thursday - 9am – 12pm

Friday - closed

John Graves Sunday School Note

Sunday School will be studying the New Testament book of James starting Sunday, April 26th. Please join us!

Serving in our Armed Forces

CPT Kirk Workman

James Barnwell

*Dalton Anthony Jones, Ensign US Navy
(Family of June & Dotti)*

Notes

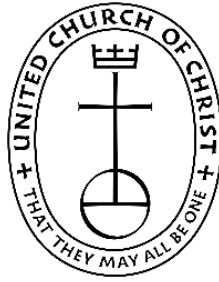
Inspired by something said in the word or sung in a song today? Take a moment to write it here to remember later.

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
Carolyn Wolley / Family
Dave Smudski / Family

Brenda Grogan
Rodney Paul Sr.
Holly Bent
Nanci Isley
(Friend of Sherry Massey)
Curtis Foster
Jon & Judy Kipp
Betty King & Roger King
Troy Marquardt
Blake Jones
June Sellars



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