

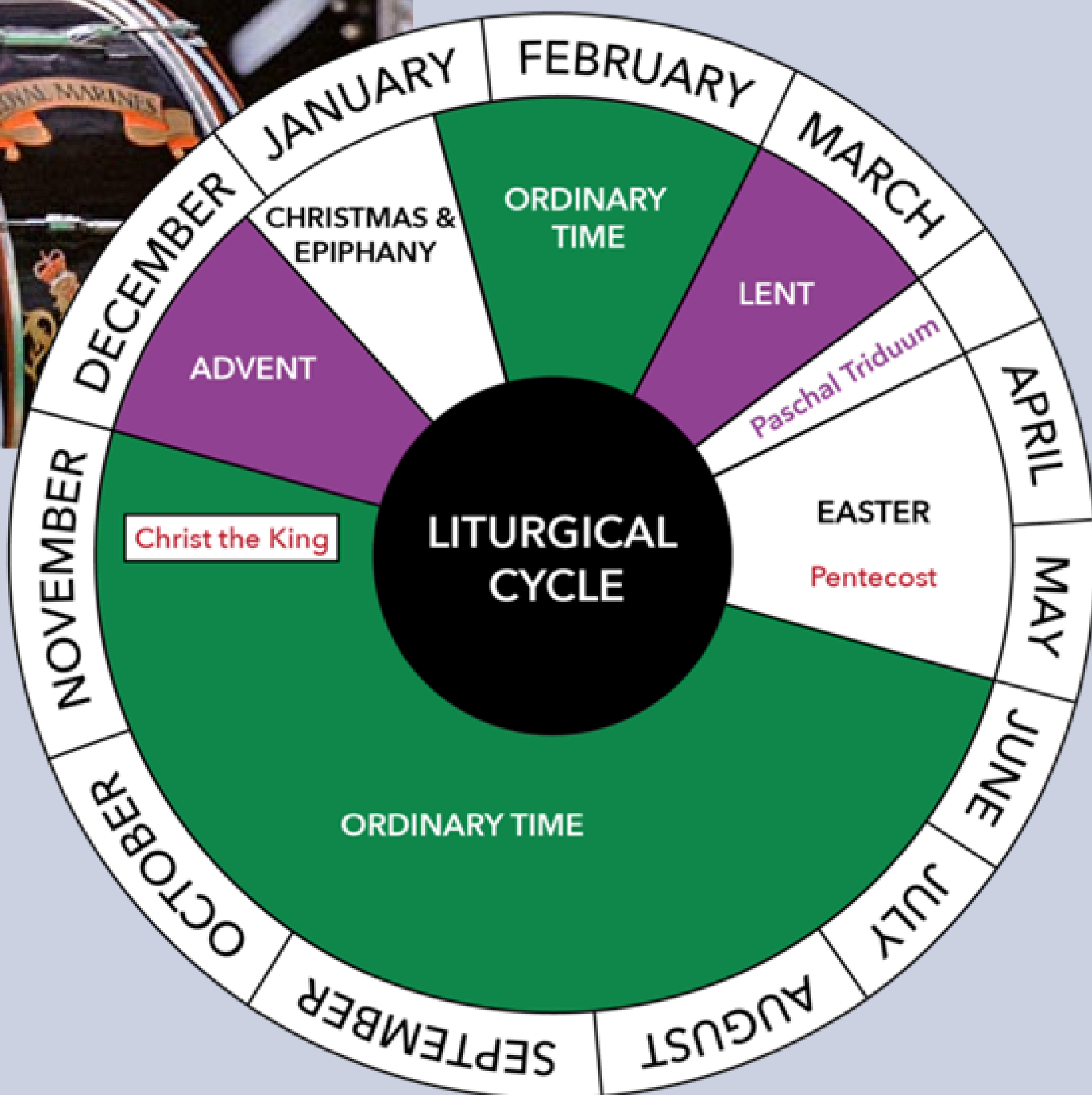
# July

NEWSLETTER 2026



# Devotion

Even before I met my band director wife Trish, I was obsessed with marching bands. I vividly remember donning my trusty Sony WF-1000XM3 noise-cancelling earbuds, loading up a playlist of military marches on Pandora, and setting off around the walking paths of Leinbach Park in Winston-Salem, marching in step to British military band music for exercise. Nowadays I just pull up YouTube clips of the Band of the Royal Marines on parade as background noise for my office work. There is something compelling about watching a group of people united in purpose, matching step for step, driving toward a common goal.



# Devotion

Recently, I asked an AI search engine, “who is the most important person in a marching band? “The AI bot said the Director was most important or maybe the Drum Major. I, however, knew that both answers were wrong. The most important person in a military marching band is the Bass Drum Player. You see, the bass drum provides the driving pulse that cuts through the music and the noise and coordinates every person’s pace, making sure they are on the same foot. Rhythm provides the framework within which the band creates the melody.

The same principle holds true for the church.

We need a rhythmic framework that helps us move through time. The liturgical calendar provides just such a pulse. The regular rotation through the events in the life and ministry of Jesus, observed by Christians around the world, “keeps us on the same foot.” The calendar provides a unified structure that allows the church to move forward with a common worship in an edifying unity. If we are, indeed, “marching to Zion,” I’m glad to hear the calendar’s steady beat.

*God of our days and our nights, and of our ever-changing seasons  
Speak to us through the divine rhythm of our lives  
So that we might faithfully worship you  
Together in unity with all who seek to follow you,  
Marching in step toward Zion. Amen.*

Pastor Stephen

# OUR CHURCH FAMILY

## Birthdays

Mary Newsome 7/1

Darla Bray 7/3

John Kipp 7/4

Norma Simons 7/10

Nancey Simmons 7/19

Lucius Wilson 7/23

## Anniversaries

Lucius Wilson & Deborah Williams 7/17

## 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

The Family of Susan Horne

Brenda Grogan

Rodney Paul Sr.

Holly Bent

Nanci Isley

Curtis Foster

Jon & Judy Kipp

Betty & Roger King

Troy Marquardt

Blake Jones

June Sellars

Nancy Hughs

## Prayers

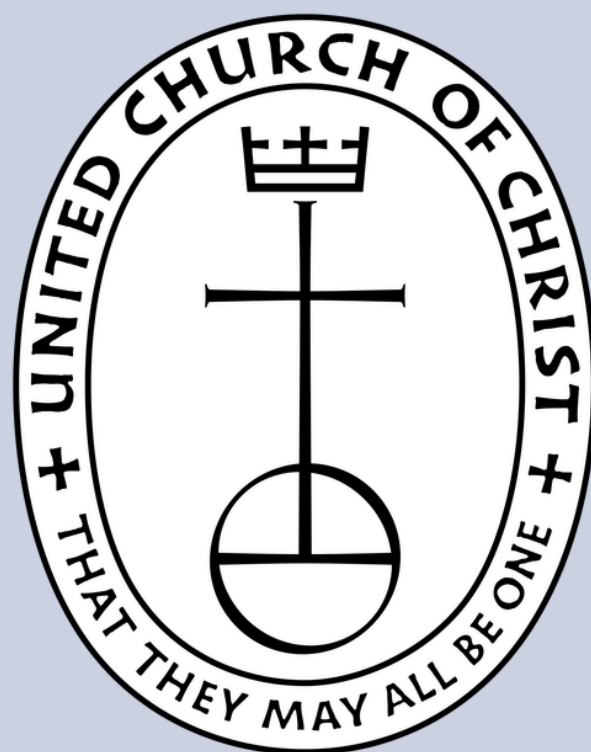
If you need prayers or know someone that does please let us know.

You can call the office or call your Deacon.

We are here to assist in anyway that's helpful.

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- **Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>**
  - Margaret Lightbourne meal at Olive Garden at 11:00 am. RSVP to Carol Fonville
- **Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup>**
  - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00pm*
- **Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>**
  - *Christmas in July Worship Service*
- **Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup>**
  - *Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm*



**Thank you to all those who participated in the  
UCC Offering Strengthen the Church.  
Together we raised \$5,000!**

## **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

Julie Miller & Ann Strange

## Greeter

Tena Barnwell

## Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

## Liturgists

July 5<sup>th</sup> - Mark Garrison

July 12<sup>th</sup> - Tena Barnwell

July 19<sup>th</sup> - TBD

July 26<sup>th</sup> - Julie Miller

## 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