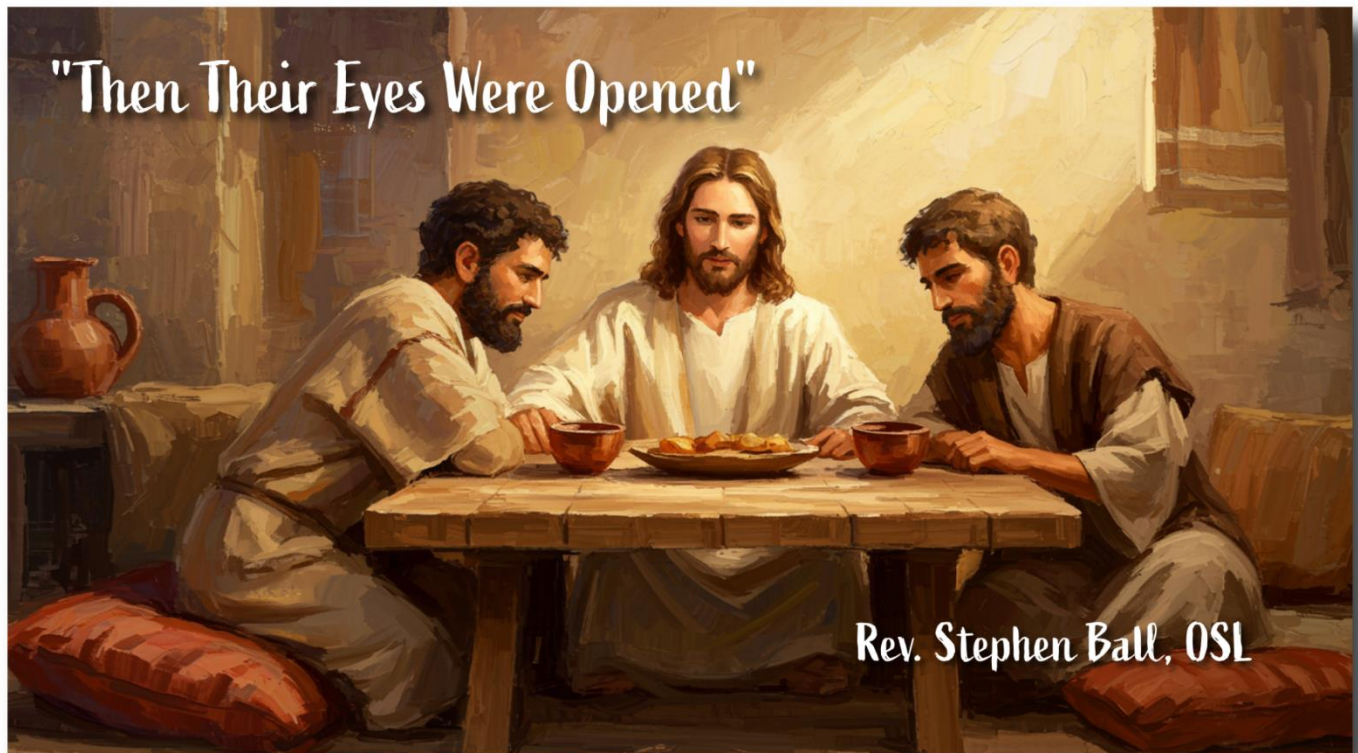


# Sunday, April 19, 2026

## The Third Sunday in Easter



**FIRST  
CHRISTIAN**

UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# **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 Third Sunday of Easter

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

*April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 10:30 am*

*Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL*

## **THE COMMUNITY GATHERS**

CENTERING CHIMES

PRELUDE

INTROIT

THE EASTER ACCLAMATION

Leader: Christ is Risen!

**People: He is Risen, indeed!**

**All: Alleluia!**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We walk a dusty road, heavy with the weight of “what might have been.”

**People: Our hearts are downcast, and the horizon feels narrow and gray.**

Leader: A stranger joins us in the journey, asking us to tell our story.

**People: We speak of endings, but the Stranger speaks of ancient promises and burning hope.**

Leader: Stay with us, Lord, for the evening draws near.

**People: Come, let us sit at the table of the World, for our eyes are ready to be opened!**

*\*HYMN OF PRAISE: “The Church’s One Foundation”*

*The New Century Hymnal #386*

ACT OF CONTRITION

Leader: We are often like the travelers on the road to Emmaus – so preoccupied with our own grief, our own narrow perspectives, and our own definitions of “the end” that we fail to recognize the Divine waking right beside us. We have allowed the shadows of the world to dim our vision. Let us now come before God with honest hearts, asking for the scales to fall from our eyes so we may see the Truth that has been with us all along.

**People: God of the Unexpected, we confess that we are slow of heart to believe. We trudge along the roads of our lives, narrating our disappointments and rehearsing our fears, while You are walking in our midst. We confess that we have looked for You only in the spectacular, failing to see You in the mundane, the weary, and the stranger. We have kept our heads down, focused on the dust of our failures, rather than the light of Your presence. Forgive us for our spiritual blindness. Open our eyes to see Your hand at work in the breaks of our hearts and the breaking of our bread. Reveal Yourself to us once more, that we might turn back toward the city with hearts on fire. Amen.**

Leader: The path is long, but we do not walk it alone. The Risen Christ is the companion who never departs, the one who explains the mysteries of grace even when we are too weary to understand. Hear the good news: God's eyes have never left you. You are seen, you are known, and you are entirely forgiven.

### ***THE COMMUNITY LISTENS TO THE WORD***

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**Many: Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSIVE PSALM from Psalm 116:12-19

Leader: What shall I return to the LORD for all his bounty to me?

**People: I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD;**

Leader: I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.

**People: Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones.**

Leader: O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your serving girl. You have loosed my bonds.

**People: I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the LORD.**

Leader: I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people,

**People: in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD!**

GLORIA

**All: Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and blessed;**

**One God, now and forever. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 1:17-23

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**Many: Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM *Lamb of God*

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:13-35

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**Many: Thanks be to God!**

SERMON: *"Then Their Eyes Were Opened"*

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

## **THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD**

*\*HYMN OF CELEBRATION: "Abide with Me"*

*The New Century Hymnal #99*

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

Prayer response: "Pastor: Lord, in your mercy... **People: ...hear our prayer.**"

**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.**

### CHORAL RESPONSE

### 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: "The Strife Is O'er"*

*The Hymnal #242*

### \*BENEDICTION

### THE EASTER ACCLAMATION

Leader: Christ is Risen! **People: He is Risen, indeed!**  
**All: Alleluia!**

### EXTROIT

### POSTLUDE

# Announcements

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**

John Graves Sunday School 9:30 am  
Worship Service 10:30 am

**Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>**

Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm

**Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**

Finance Meeting at 11:00 am

**Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm

**Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**

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 14<sup>th</sup>**

Ascension Day

**Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**

Hot Dog Lunch & Cake Auction

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Regular 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.

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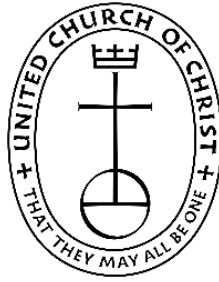
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## Our Love and Prayers

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  
David Hodges  
Brenda Grogan

Spanky Newsome  
Holly Bent  
Troy Marquardt  
Blake Jones  
June Sellars  
Nanci Isley  
*(Friend of Sherry Massey)*  
Curtis Foster  
Jon & Judy Kipp  
Mike Smith  
Betty King  
The Family of John Garrison  
Kay Causey  
Susan (Susie) Horne  
Gayle Pollard Watson



## **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: Mark Garrison  
Hymn Leaders & Anthem: Choir  
Greeters: Benjie Terrell & David Hodges  
Ushers: Benjie Terrell, Julie Miller, Charlie Vitou, Eleanor Lovgren