

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

HOMECOMING Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC 10:30 am Worship Service September 14th, 2025

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INTROIT

* CALL TO WORSHIP: (Psalm 98:1-5)

Leader: O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory.

People: The LORD has made known his victory; he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.

Leader: He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.

People: the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

Leader: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

People: praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.

*HYMN OF PRAISE: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

The New Century Hymnal #459

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: Let us confess our sin against God and our neighbors.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: O merciful God, we confess that we have not acknowledged you as the source of our successes, our substance, our selves. We have been far more ready to complain when things go wrong than to praise when all is well. We have fed our bodies a rich diet while neglecting to feed our souls. Power and wealth have assumed greater importance to us than sensitivity and service. We have allowed religious words and forms to substitute for living encounters with the persons you have called us to love. Forgive us, compassionate Redeemer, and grant us the opportunity to start over again. Keep us from repeating the mistakes of the past or from new evils that could mislead or destroy. In the name of Christ we pray for forgiveness. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Hear the good news: In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus we learn that God's love has no bounds. In Christ we are forgiven and are empowered to begin anew.

THE COMMUNITY LISTENS TO THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: Numbers 21:4b-9

...but the people became discouraged on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole, and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

People: Thanks be to God!

GLORIA

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

HOMECOMING PRESENTATION

ANTHEM "Give Me Jesus"

Molly Ljames

READING OF SCRIPTURE:

Pastor: A reading from the Gospel According to John 3:13-17

No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

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

Many: Thanks be to God!

SERMON: "Lift High the Cross" Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD

*HYMN FOR CELEBRATION: "To God Be the Glory"

The Hymnal #66

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

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

INVITATION TO GIVE

THE GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*DOXOLOGY

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 FOR DEDICATION: "Lift High the Cross"

New Century Hymnal #198

*BENEDICTION AND BLESSING FOR THE MEAL

EXTROIT

CHORAL EXTROIT

POSTLUDE

*All who are able to are asked to stand; May we all lift our spirits into fellowship with God!

Announcements

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sunday, September 21st

Sunday School Cancelled Worship Service at 10:30 am

Tuesday, September 30th

Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm

Saturday, October 4th

CROP Walk

(Trinity Worship Center at 3157 S. Church Street. Registration at 8:30 am. Walk starts at 9:30am. We have a few members walking. Feel free to register to walk or sponsor those walking.)

Sunday, October 5th

Neighbors in Need Offering World Communion Day Vote on 2026 Budget after worship

Tuesday, October 6th

Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00am (Ducks in a Row Program)

Wednesday, October 8th

Finance Meeting at 11:00am

*John Graves Sunday School will be cancelled on September 21st and 28th.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Regular Office Hours

Monday - 9am – 12pm Tuesday – 9am – 12pm Wednesday - 9am – 12pm Thursday - 9am – 12pm Friday - closed

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.

Serving in our Armed Forces

CPT Kirk Workman James Barnwell

Notes

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



Church Officers

President: Jamie Fonville Vice President: Cindy Sharpe Treasurer: Judy Kipp Assistant Treasurer: Julie Miller Secretary: Mark Garrison

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: Carol Fonville Hymn Leaders & Anthem: Choir Greeters: Benjie Terrell & David Hodges

Ushers: Benjie Terrell, Julie Miller, Charlie Vitou, Eleanor Lovgren