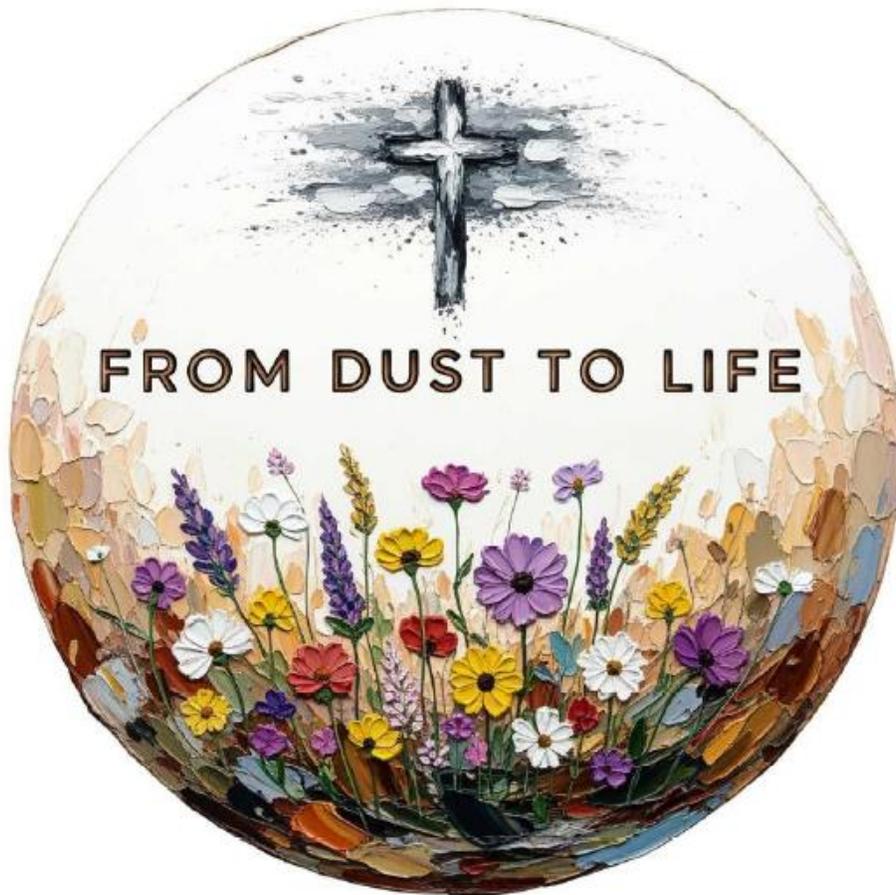


# **FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT**

**MARCH 15, 2026**



**"VISION STATEMENT"**

**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 Fourth Sunday in Lent

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

**10:30 am Worship Service**      **March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

*Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL*

## **THE COMMUNITY GATHERS**

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We come this morning with eyes wide open, yet often failing to see.

**People: Lord, open our eyes that we may behold your presence.**

Leader: Out of the dust and the spit, Christ creates a new vision.

**People: From the mud of our lives, he brings forth light.**

Leader: Let us worship the One who turns our darkness into day.

*\*HYMN OF PRAISE: "Praise to the Lord, The Almighty"*

*The Celebration Hymnal #8*

ACT OF CONTRITION

Leader: It is easy to point out the "sin" in others while remaining blind to the logs in our own eyes. Jesus reminds us that the man was not born blind because of sin, but so that God's glory might be revealed. Let us confess the ways we have remained in the dark, refusing to see the neighbors God has placed right in front of us...

**People: God of Light, we confess that we often prefer the comfort of our shadows. We have used our "sight" to judge others rather than to serve them. We admit that we are skeptical of your miracles, questioning "how" you work instead of rejoicing that you do. Forgive us when we treat the marginalized as invisible. Take the dust of our pride and the clay of our stubbornness, and mold us into people who see with the eyes of Christ. Amen.**

Leader: Jesus said, "I came into this world so that those who do not see may see." The light of Christ has pierced your darkness. The mud has been washed away, and you are made new. Believe the good news: in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven and called to walk in the light. Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSIVE PSALM: Psalm 23

Leader: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

**People: He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;**

Leader: he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

**People: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

Leader: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

**People: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.**

### GLORIA

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

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:8-14

### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM: Lonesome Valley

Marty/Schwarz

SCRIPTURE: John 9:1-41

### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

SERMON: "Vision Statement"

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

**THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD**

*\*HYMN OF CELEBRATION: "He Leadeth Me"*

*The Celebration Hymnal #461*

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

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: "Savior, Like A Shephard Lead Us"*

*The New Century Hymnal #252*

\*BENEDICTION

EXTROIT

POSTLUDE

# Announcements

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>**

Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm

**Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Maundy Thursday Program 7:00 pm

**Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**

Easter Sunday

Flowering of the Cross Drop In 8:30 am

Breakfast and Devotions 9:30 am

Easter Morning Worship 10:30 am

**Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>**

Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am

**Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>**

Finance Meeting at 11:00 am

### **\*\*Missions Project\*\***

We will be collecting the following items through March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Please consider donating some items to help Allied Churches of Alamance County.

- Kitchen towels
- Bar towels
- Window cleaner
- 55 gal trash bags
- Paper towels
- Microfiber cleaning cloths

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Regular Office Hours**

Monday - 9am – 12pm

Tuesday – 9am – 12pm

Wednesday - 9am – 12pm

Thursday - 9am – 12pm

Friday - closed

### **Display of Crosses**

The idea is of a Cross Display during Lent, starting Ash Wednesday. This would be on display on tables in the church parlor like we did when photos of our parents were brought in. Invite people to bring photos, pictures, crosses of various sizes for stands or holders, and jewelry which will be laid flat on the table. Request that the crosses be labeled with names of owners in order to return them. The Spiritual Life Committee wishes to bring to people's awareness the importance of the cross. A plastic bin will be in the parlor as we start collecting them.

# 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

## 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.

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