



# Benedictus

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

November 23, 2025

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*

# Reign of Christ

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC  
**10:30 am Worship Service      November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**

*Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL*

## **THE COMMUNITY GATHERS**

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: All you looking for comfort,

**People: Find here the arms of a loving God.**

Leader: All you looking for direction,

**People: Find here the hand of God to guide you.**

Leader: All you hoping to end loneliness,

**People: Find here the embrace of God and new friends.**

Leader: All you searching for meaning,

**People: Find here the Lord of Life and the Revealer of Truth.**

Leader: All you seeking happiness,

**People: Find here the deep joy of the risen Christ and the lasting peace of forgiveness.**

*(SourceBook of Worship Resources (Canton, Ohio: Communication Resources, Inc., 1994,) 30*

*\*HYMN OF PRAISE: "A Mighty Fortress"*

*The New Century Hymnal #439*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: Let us in silence confess our sins against God and neighbor.

SILENT CONFESSION

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Source of all life,

**People: We confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free. We fear that we are not good enough. We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it. We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward. Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by love, willing to speak for what is right, act for what is just, and seek the healing of your whole creation. Amen.**

## WORDS OF GRACE

Leader: God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us and empower our lives in the world. Our sins are forgiven, God's love is unconditional, and we are raised up as God's people, who will always be made new in the name of Jesus Christ.

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

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 23:1-6 A Righteous Shepherd for Israel

#### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSIVE PSALM: Psalm 46 The God of Jacob is Our Stronghold

Pastor: A Word About "Selah"

Leader: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

**People: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,**

Leader: though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

**People: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.**

Leader: God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.

**People: The nations are in an uproar; the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice; the earth melts.**

Leader: The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

**People: Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.**

Leader: He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

**People: "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth."**

**All: The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah**

#### GLORIA

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

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1:11-20 A Hymn to Christ, Firstborn of all Creation

## SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM “I Hear the Prophet Callin’”

by P. Choplin

READING OF SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:68-79

Pastor: A reading from the Gospel According to Luke 1:68-79

Canticle of Zechariah

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

SERMON: “Benedictus”

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

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

*\*HYMN OF CELEBRATION: “Be Still, My Soul”*

*The Pilgrim Hymnal #488*

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

***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: “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken”*

*The Pilgrim Hymnal #267*

\*BENEDICTION

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

**Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup> through**

**Thursday November 27<sup>th</sup>**

The Office will be closed  
Happy Thanksgiving!

**Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>**

Sunday School is cancelled  
Worship Service at 10:30 am  
&  
Hanging of the Greens

**Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Finance Meeting at 11:00 am

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**

Christmas Cheer contributions are due!

**Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**

Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am  
(At Betty King's home. Please RSVP by the  
1<sup>st</sup> week of December. All are asked to  
bring a finger food or covered dish)

Official Board at 6:00 pm

**Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**

Congregational Meeting after worship  
to vote on the 2026 Budget, Boards, and  
Committees

## 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.

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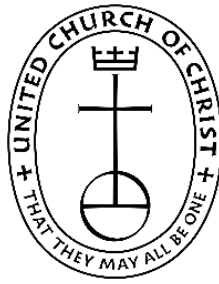
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## **Church Officers**

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