

An expressive oil painting of a hand holding a fishing net. The hand is rendered in warm, reddish-orange tones with visible brushstrokes, reaching down from the upper right. It holds a fishing net made of light-colored twine, which is draped and tangled in the lower left. The background is a mix of soft, blended colors like pale blue, yellow, and pink, suggesting a sky or water. The overall style is painterly and emotional.

# SUNDAY WORSHIP

JANUARY 25, 2026

"DROP IT!"

REV. STEPHEN BALL, OSL

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*

# Third Sunday after the Epiphany

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

**10:30 am Worship Service**

**January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

*Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL*

## **THE COMMUNITY GATHERS**

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Let your lives witness to Christ's love.

**People: And may our words bring reconciliation.**

Leader: Let your thoughts be of peace.

**People: And our touch bring healing.**

Leader: Let your actions count for justice,

**People: And may our faith be a sign of hope.**

Leader: Let our time of worship here and now be a true blessing for us all and  
restore joy and praise to our lives.

*\*HYMN OF PRAISE: "I Come with Joy"*

*The New Century Hymnal #349*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: In silence let us confess our sins against God and neighbor...

SILENT CONFESSION

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Holy Companion of our difficult days,

You call us toward what is new

Even when we feel worn or uncertain.

**People: We confess the weight we carry –**

**Worries we rehearse,**

**The fears we nurture,**

**The habits that hold us tight,**

**Patterns we cling to,**

**The moments we turn from compassion,**

**The truths we avoid.**

**Unbind what tightens around our hearts.**

**Lift what has grown too heavy.**

**Make room in us for generosity,**

**Justice, and the courage to begin again.**

**Shape us for your healing work  
As this new day unfolds.  
Amen.**

#### WORDS OF GRACE

Leader: Into every place of strain or sorrow,  
God's mercy draws near.  
God's compassion reaches out.  
God's grace opens a way forward.

In this promise, receive your freedom.  
In this grace, begin again.  
Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 9:1-4

#### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.  
**People: Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSIVE PSALM: Psalm 27:1, 4-9

Leader: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

**People: The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**

Leader: One thing I asked of the LORD; this I seek: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

**People: For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock.**

Leader: Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

**People: Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!"**

Leader: "Come", my heart says, "seek his face!" Your face, LORD, do I seek.

**People: Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off; do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!**

#### GLORIA

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

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

#### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.  
**People: Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM: I Waited For The Lord

Solo by Matt Rice

SERMON: "Drop It"

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

SCRIPTURE READING

Pastor: A reading from the Gospel According to Matthew 4:12-23

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

**THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD**

\*HYMN OF CELEBRATION: "Beautiful Jesus"

*The New Century Hymnal #44*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

CHORAL RESPONSE

INVITATION TO GIVE

THE MINISTRY OF GIVING

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: "I've Got Peace Like A River"

*The New Century Hymnal #478*

\*BENEDICTION

EXTROIT

POSTLUDE

*The altar flowers are given in Memory of Ben Terrell  
and in Celebration of the January birthdays of  
Bennie Lou Terrell, Sandra Faye Terrell, and Cindy Allen.*

*Love, Benjie*

# Announcements

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>**

Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm

**Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 am**

John Graves Sunday School at 9:30 am

Worship Service at 10:30 am

**Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am

**Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>**

Finance Committee at 11:00 am

**Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>**

Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm

**Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>**

Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm

**Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>**

Congregational Meeting after worship

## 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  
John Moon  
Ray Palyok  
*(Matt's Step-Father)*  
Lewis Fowler  
Carolyn Wolley / Family  
Dave Smudski / Family  
Brooke Manning

David Hodges  
Brenda Grogan  
Spanky Newsome  
Holly Bent  
Troy Marquardt  
Joy McPhail  
Blake Jones  
Jerry Barnwell  
Chris Wysocki  
Debbie Caporoli  
Nanci Isley  
*(Friend of Sherry Massey)*  
Our Nation

## 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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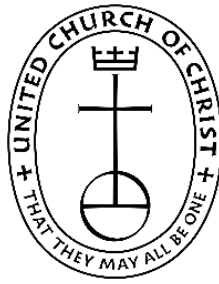
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## **Church Officers**

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