

March

NEWSLETTER 2026



Devotion

Greetings from the study, where I am currently surrounded by books and a looming sense of temporal dread.

As we approach that annual liturgical catastrophe known as Daylight Saving Time, I am reminded of my childhood in Indiana. For years, the Hoosier State famously refused to participate in this biannual shift. We lived in a defiant, static pocket of time. It was a bit confusing for travelers, but for us, there was a certain comfort in knowing the sun and the clock were in a committed, unchanging relationship.

But here in North Carolina, we play the game. This month, we will all collectively "spring forward," which is really just a polite way of saying we are being robbed.

There is something inherently melodramatic about losing an hour overnight. We feel it in our bones. The rhythm of the body is disrupted. It is a jarring, uncomfortable transition from the shadows of winter into a light we aren't quite ready to occupy. It's the "Jet Lag of the Soul."

And yet, isn't that the very essence of our Lenten journey, "From Dust to Life"?

In that classic moment in *The Wizard of Oz*, the world shifts from the sepia-toned dust of Kansas to the vibrant Technicolor of Oz. That transition isn't seamless. Dorothy doesn't just stroll into the light; she is swept there by a tornado. It is a shock to the system.

Our Lenten theme isn't a gentle suggestion. It's a radical reclamation. We began this season marked by ash, reminded that we are fragile and finite. We are, quite literally, "the dust of the earth." But as we move through these forty days, we realize that the dust isn't the end of the script.

Devotion

Daylight Saving Time forces us to look for the light earlier than we'd like.

It demands that we wake up.

Lent is our spiritual 'Spring Forward.' It is the season where we intentionally disrupt our comfortable, dusty routines to align ourselves with the coming Dawn.

So as you stumble into the sanctuary feeling a bit bleary-eyed and perhaps a touch cynical about the clock, remember: the disorientation you feel is a metaphor. We are shaking off the dust of the tomb. We are bracing our eyes for a light that the darkness cannot overcome. We are moving toward a Life that doesn't care about the loss of an hour, because it offers us eternity.

I'll see you in the light (even if we're all a little grumpy about it).

Pastor Stephen

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Birthdays

Elizabeth Painter - 3/3

Cindy Sharpe - 3/3

Nell Allred - 3/5

Garry Massey - 3/13

Judy Hodges - 3/20

Sherry Massey - 3/23

Sandy King - 3/28

Barbara Price - 3/30

Anniversaries

Jerry & Tena Barnwell - March 27th

Those Remaining in Our Prayers

Buster Freeman

Nell Allred

Amber Massey

Joe Strickland

Ross Strange Sr.

Trisha Shelly

Ray Palyok

Lewis Fowler

Carolyn Wolley / Family

Dave Smudski / Family

David Hodges

Brenda Grogan

Spanky Newsome

Holly Bent

Troy Marquardt

Joy McPhail

Blake Jones

Jerry Barnwell

Chris Wysocki

Debbie Caporoli

Nanci Isley

Prayers

If you need prayers or know someone that does please let us know.

You can call the office or call your Deacon.

We are here to assist in anyway that's helpful.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

*There will be no John Graves Sunday School the weeks of February 22nd, March 1st, or March 8th.
Class will resume on March 15th.*

- **Wednesday, March 4th**
 - *Finance Meeting at 11:00 am*
- **Sunday, March 8th**
 - *Spring Forward 1 hour*
- **Monday, March 9th**
 - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, March 10th**
 - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
 - *Program on plants and flowers by Nancey Simmons.
Please bring a sandwich.*
 - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Sunday, March 15th**
 - *One Great Hour of Sharing Offering*
- **Tuesday, March 31st**
 - *Deacon's Meeting at 6:00 pm*
 -

Community Engagement

Bless

ed Sacrament Food Distribution will be moving their location to their building on our block. We have agreed to allow them to use our parking lot for their distribution lines.

2nd Mondays from 10:30 - 1:30 pm

4th Mondays from 1:30 - 3:30 pm

THEMES & LITURGISTS

Communion

Matt Rice - March 1st

Greeter

Merle Sharpe

Ushers

Benji Terrell (head)

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

Liturgists

March 1st - Brooke Manning

March 8th - Cindy Sharpe

March 15th - Sherry Massey

March 22nd - Tena Barnwell

March 29th - Carol Fonville

Receptions

Please join us in the parlor for fellowship and light refreshments after
Worship on Sundays.



ALLIED CHURCHES *of* ALAMANCE COUNTY

MISSION COLLECTION

SUPPORT OUR MISSION DRIVE!

FEB 15TH – MARCH 22ND

COLLECTING:

- Kitchen Towels
- Bar Towels
- Window Cleaner
- 55 Gallon Trash Bags
- Paper Towels
- Microfiber Cleaning Cloths



DONATIONS NEEDED!

CHURCH INFORMATION

Mission Statement

(Revised 2/4/24)

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."

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9 am - 12 pm

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

Organist / Choir Director: Matt Rice

Custodian: Rodney Paul Sr.

Office Administrator: Debbie Norris