

# Sunday, April 26, 2026

## The Fourth Sunday in Easter



"HIS SHEPHERD'S VOICE"

REV. STEPHEN BALL, OSL



# **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 of Easter

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

*April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 10:30 am*

*Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL*

## **THE COMMUNITY GATHERS**

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INTROIT

THE EASTER ACCLAMATION

Leader: He is Risen!

**People: He is Risen, indeed!**

**All: Alleluia!**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The gate is open, and the Shepherd calls to us.

**People: We hear a voice that knows our names and calms our fears.**

Leader: In a world of many voices, we come to listen for the Truth.

**People: We come to find the way that leads to life in all its fullness.**

Leader: Let us enter this space with hearts ready to follow.

**People: We gather to worship the One who guides us and gives us life.**

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

*The Hymnal #8*

ACT OF CONTRITION

Leader: In the presence of the One who knows us completely, let us admit the ways we have lost our way. We turn to God now in a spirit of honesty and humility, seeking the path of righteousness.

**People: Holy Shepherd of Israel, we admit that our hearing is damaged. We have listened to the siren songs of consumerism and the loud, clanging gongs of partisan bitterness. We have followed the "hired hands" of our culture, seeking life in things that only steal, kill, and destroy. We confess that we have often stood at the Gate and hesitated, afraid that the "abundant life" You promised might actually require us to change. Forgive our stubbornness. Recalibrate our ears to the sound of Your voice, that we might follow You into the light of this Easter season. Amen.**

Leader: Hear the good news: God never abandons the flock. Through God's enduring grace, we are forgiven and restored. Walk this day in the assurance that you are claimed and loved by the Creator.

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

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:42-47

### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSIVE PSALM from 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: 1 Peter 2:19-25

### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM *Solo by Matt Rice*

SCRIPTURE: John 10:1-10

### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

SERMON: *"His Shepherd's Voice"*

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

**THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD**

\*HYMN OF CELEBRATION: "He Leadeth Me"

*The Hymnal #461*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

Pastor: "God, in your mercy..."      **People: "...hear our prayer."**

**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 Shepherd Lead Us"

*The New Century Hymnal #252*

\*BENEDICTION

THE EASTER ACCLAMATION

Leader: He is Risen!

**People: He is Risen, indeed!**

**All: Alleluia!**

EXTROIT

POSTLUDE

*The Altar flowers are given in Celebration of  
Mary Menefee's 103<sup>rd</sup> Birthday.*

*Love Benjí, Matt & Lauren*

# Announcements

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>**

Deacons Meeting at 6:00 pm

**Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>**

John Graves Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship Service 10:30 am

**Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**

Finance Meeting at 11:00 am

**Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm

**Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**

Margaret Lightbourne at 11:00 am

*(At Harbor Inn Restaurant. Spouses are welcome! RSVP to Carol Fonville)*

Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm

**Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>**

Ascension Day

**Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**

Hot Dog Lunch & Cake Auction

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Regular Office Hours**

Monday - 9am – 12pm

Tuesday – 9am – 12pm

Wednesday - 9am – 12pm

Thursday - 9am – 12pm

Friday - closed

**John Graves Sunday School Note**

Sunday School will be studying the New Testament book of James starting Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. Please join us!

# Serving in our Armed Forces

*CPT Kirk Workman*

*James Barnwell*

*Dalton Anthony Jones, Ensign US Navy*

*(Family of June & Dotti)*

## 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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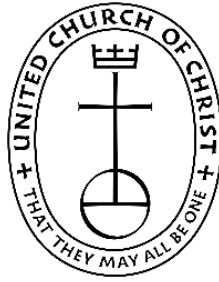
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## Our Love and Prayers

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  
Rodney Paul Sr.

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  
The Family of John Garrison  
The Family of Kay Causey  
Susan (Susie) Horne  
Gayle Pollard Watson



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