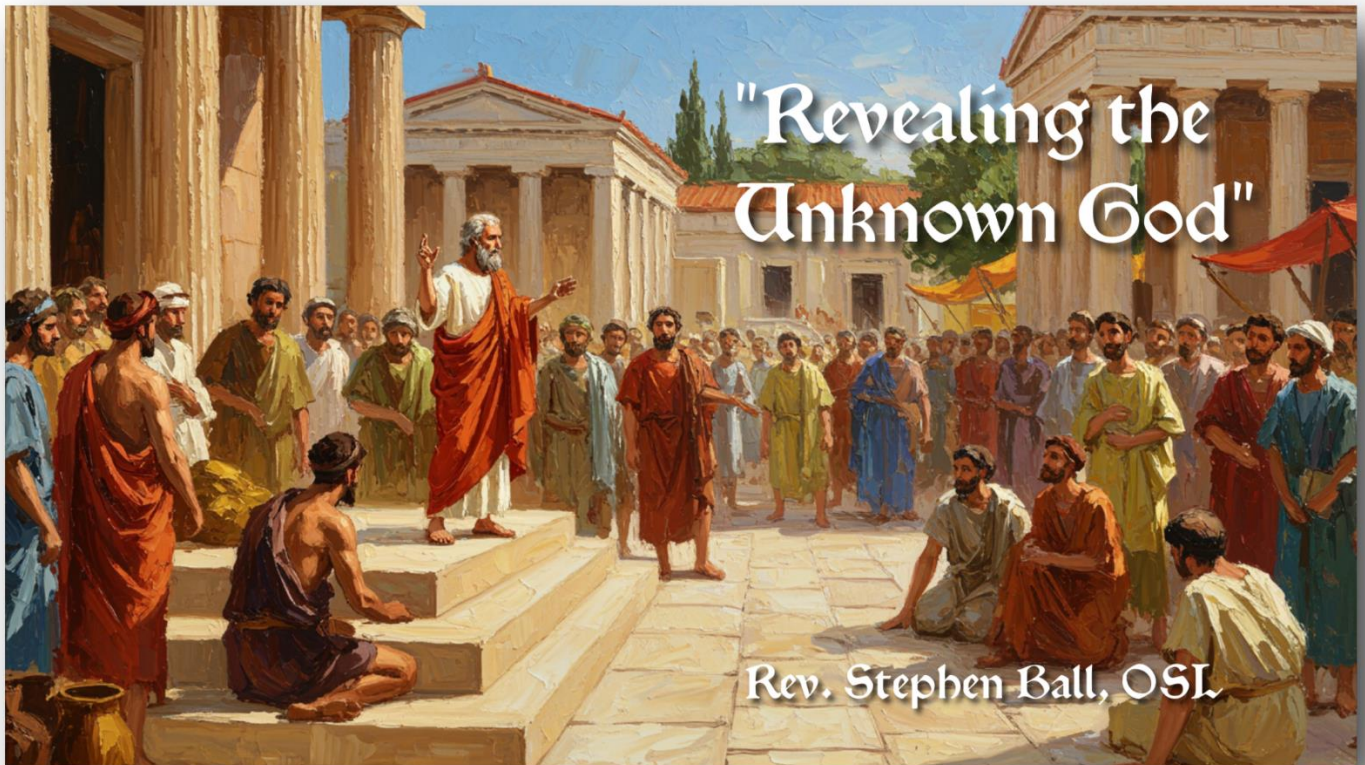


# Sunday, May 10, 2026

## The Sixth Sunday of Easter



"Revealing the  
Unknown God"

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 Sixth Sunday of Easter

First Christian United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

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

*Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL*

## **THE COMMUNITY GATHERS**

CENTERING CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CELEBRATION OF MOTHERS

PRELUDE

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We walk through the streets of our lives, passing a thousand altars to things we do not name.

**People: We look for the One who gives us breath, yet we often settle for the shadows.**

Leader: Paul stood in the heart of the city and declared: "The God who made the world does not live in shrines made by human hands."

**People: God is not far from any one of us. In God, we live and move and have our being.**

Leader: Let us open our eyes to the Presence that has been here all along.

**People: Let us worship the God who is no longer unknown.**

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

*The New Century Hymnal #349*

ACT OF CONTRITION

Leader: If we are honest, we are quite skilled at building monuments to our own anxieties and calling them "necessities." We fill our calendars and our hearts with "Unknown Gods" – ambition, security, the frantic need to be right- while the Author of Life stands quietly in the periphery. Let us pause, drop the tools of our own making, and confess our distance from the Truth.

**People: Holy Mystery, we confess that we are often more comfortable with an "Unknown God" than a known one. A God who stays at a distance doesn't ask much of us; a God who stays in a shrine doesn't follow us home. We have ignored your fingerprints on the world around us, preferring the fingerprints we leave on our own idols. We have sought life in things that do not breathe and sought truth in things that do not speak. Forgive our spiritual nearsightedness. Reorient our hearts, that we might recognize you in the stranger, in the struggle, and in the very air we exhale. Amen.**

Leader: The Good News is almost too dramatic to believe: God is not playing hide-and-seek with your soul. The One who created the stars is the same One who reached through history to bridge the gap we created. In the name of the Risen Christ, you are forgiven, you are known, and you are free to begin again. **Amen.**

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

SCRIPTURE: John 14:15-21

#### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSIVE PSALM from Psalm 66

Leader: Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of his praise be heard, who has kept us among the living and has not let our feet slip.

**People: For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.**

Leader: I will come into your house with burnt offerings; I will pay you my vows, those that my lips uttered and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.

**People: Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for me.**

Leader: I cried aloud to him, and he was extolled with my tongue.

**People: Truly God has listened; he has heard to the words of my prayer. Blessed be God, who has not removed his steadfast love from me.**

#### GLORIA

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

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 3:13-22

#### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM *Rise Up and Call Her Blessed*

*By P. Choplin*

SCRIPTURE: Acts 17:22-31

#### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

**People: Thanks be to God!**

SERMON: *"Revealing the Unknown God"*

Rev. Stephen Ball, OSL

**THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO THE WORD**

*\*HYMN OF CELEBRATION: "I Love To Tell The Story" vs 1-2*

*The New Century Hymnal #522*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

Leader: "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: "I Love To Tell The Story" vs 3-4*

*The New Century Hymnal #522*

\*BENEDICTION

EXTROIT

POSTLUDE

# Announcements

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**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>**

John Graves Sunday School 9:30 am  
Worship Service 10:30 am

*Hot Dog Lunch & Cake Auction  
after worship*

## 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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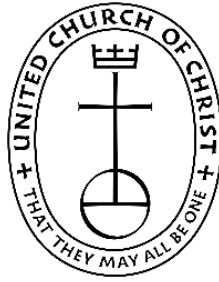
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## Our Love and Prayers

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

Brenda Grogan  
Rodney Paul Sr.  
Holly Bent  
Nanci Isley  
*(Friend of Sherry Massey)*  
Curtis Foster  
Jon & Judy Kipp  
Betty King & Roger King  
Troy Marquardt  
Blake Jones  
June Sellars



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