

*The First Congregational Church  
of Essex Junction  
United Church of Christ*



*A Welcoming Community, Accepting and Serving All  
in the Spirit of Christ*

“We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the will of God. We agree to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As in the past, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.”

One Church Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
[www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)

Phone: 802-878-5745

Fax: 802-872-8236

E-mail: [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)

Twitter: [1stChurchEJ](https://twitter.com/1stChurchEJ)

Facebook: [First Congregational Church of Essex Junction UCC](https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchofEssexJunctionUCC)



Open and Affirming means that we welcome everyone to First Church including our GLBTQ brothers and sisters.

**The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction  
A United Church of Christ  
December 18, 2016  
Pageant Sunday ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent**

*A Welcoming Church,*

*Accepting and Serving All,*

*In the Spirit of Christ.*

*Order of Worship*

Prelude

*O Little Town of Bethlehem  
Sages from Afar  
Christmas Prelude*

Redner  
Blake  
Wells

An Extravagant Welcome

*No matter who you are  
or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome in this place.*

Welcome Greeting and Announcements

*Our Ministers will welcome everyone to church and highlight significant events in our shared life, then the Deacon on Duty will welcome everyone and invite people to sign the Friendship Book. You are encouraged to introduce any friends you might have brought to church today.*

*An Associate Pastor Search Committee Assignment*

Musical Introit by the Cherubs

*Happy Birthday Jesus*

Call to Worship

Leader: We come to church today to experience the sacred ritual of our children's Christmas Pageant. Lines will be forgotten, laughter will erupt, pride will be apparent and the warmth of the holiday will be manifest.

**People: Christ's story is still shared and known throughout the world. We are here to hear the familiar story from new voices and in new ways. Christ is alive and his teachings still ring out.**

Leader: Come, let us worship the living God.

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation

**\*Opening Hymn**

***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing***

**#144**

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”**

**Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”  
Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come, off-spring of the virgin’s womb.**

**Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th’incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.**

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”  
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!**

**Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.**

**Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.**

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

Lighting the Fourth Candle of Advent: The Shepherd’s Candle

Pastoral Prayer & **Unison Lord’s Prayer** (“trespasses”)

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

**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 and the power and the glory forever, amen.**

**Congregational Response #122** *Come, O Long Expected Jesus*

**Israel’s strength and consolation, hope to all the earth impart;  
Dear desire of every nation, enter every longing heart.  
Born all people to deliver, born a child and yet a king!  
Born to reign in us forever, come, be known to us again.**

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem by Joyful Noise

*Sing to God*

Huesmann

**\*Doxology # 159**

*As With Gladness Folk of Old*



**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep  
on the hay. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus,  
no crying he makes; I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

*Scene 5 - The Stable*

**Carol**

***The First Noel***

*(Angels, Shepherds & Sheep move to the Narthex)*

**The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so  
deep. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.**

*Scene 6—In the Fields*

**Carol**

***Angels We Have Heard on High #125***

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains, And the mountains in reply,  
echo back their joyous strains. Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong? What the gladsome tidings  
be which inspire your heavenly song? Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Carol**

***What Child is This, Who Laid to Rest #148***

*(Magi move to the Narthex)*

**What child is this, who laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

**Carol**

***We The Kings***

**We the kings of orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.  
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

*Scene 7—On the Road*

**Carol**

***Joy to the World #132***

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth its praises bring;  
Let every heart prepare Christ room, and heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.  
Joy to the Earth! the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.  
Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
The glories of God's righteousness and wonders of God's love,  
And wonders of God's love, and wonders, wonders of God's love.**

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction

**\*Sung Community Benediction**

**Go Tell It on the Mountain**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.**

**Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

**While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,**

**Behold throughout the heavens there shone holy light**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.**

**Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

\*Postlude

*Joyful Tidings*

Wells

\*Please stand if you are able.

*The flowers on the altar are given by Carolyn Toof in loving memory of Dick Toof.*

**Worship Participants**

Deacon: Anne Harris

Greeters: Cathy & Tom Shearer/Pete & Eva Cunningham-Firkey

Ushers: Linda Bogardus

**Cast**

*Narrator.....Vincent Hoffman*

*Michael.....Munroe Shearer*

*Gabriel.....Sam Dooley*

*Raphael.....Nick Mendes*

*Uriel.....Charlotte Frivoll*

*Mary.....Emma Parker*



\* \* \* **TODAY** \* \* \*



**TODAY, Pick up your Pledge Envelopes in Fellowship Hall**

**Hannaford Cards & Reloads on sale TODAY in Fellowship Hall**



**Pageant Party 11:30-1:30pm**

**2017 Flower Chart is Up in the Fellowship Hall Hallway**

Please feel free to sign up for your special dates to remember loved ones or honor events in your family's life. Please remember to put a check next to your name if you would like to keep your flowers, otherwise we will distribute them to brighten someone's day!



**LAST WEEK ~ Green Table-Jamaica Bound Stock Sales**

The Jamaica Mission Team will be selling Stock in their trip after both services. If you would like to support this mission trip, stock is \$25/share and entitles the holder of the stock to a luncheon with delicious Jamaican food as well as a report of our experience. Look for the green Jamaica table in Fellowship Hall.



**Let Jen Know by Tuesday, Dec. 20th ~ Christmas Poinsettias**

Order your poinsettias for Christmas services in memory or honor of a loved one or special event. They are \$12.95 and come in red, white, pink or marbled varieties. Your dedication will be remembered in the Christmas bulletins



\* \* \* **THIS WEEK** \* \* \*

**Mondays ~ Yoga @ First !**

New to yoga? Returning? Come sit with Jonah and practice a gentle sequence to integrate the mind, body, and soul. In each session, we focus, breathe, build heat, strengthen, and relax. We have switched to Monday evenings, from 5:30-6:30. Wear comfortable, nonrestrictive clothing. Bring a mat or borrow one of Jonah's. Donations to FCCEJ welcomed, but not required.



**Wednesday Night Searchers on hiatus until January 4th**

## Tuesday Morning Sermon Talkback

Join us on Tuesdays from 8:30-10am for coffee, home baked goods and a lively discussion of the sermon (and other topics!) that was delivered the previous Sunday. Come for the conversation, the goodies, the camaraderie, or all of the above! Join us!

**Services this Week: Christmas Eve: 5pm, 9pm, 11pm**

**Christmas Day: 3pm**

**New Year's Day: 8:30am & 10:15am**

**\* \* \* Children, Youth & Family Announcements \* \* \***

### Faith Formation Sunday Mornings

Preschool thru 12th grade during 10:15am Worship

**December 18th** ~ All in worship for Christmas Pageant, Snacks in between services

**December 25th** ~ Intergenerational 3pm worship

**January 1st** ~ Birthday Party for Jesus



### 2016 Faith Formation Sunday School Offering

King Street Center ~ Total is now up to \$784.64

*Dec 25th will be the last day that your offering will go to King Street Center*

### December 30th, 5:00-7:30pm End-Of-The-Year Bowling Bash!



**\* \* \* Opportunities To Volunteer & Donate \* \* \***

### Baking for The Vermont Respite House in January

Once again, Mission Possible is baking treats for the Vermont Respite House in January. The Vermont Respite House is a facility that provides supportive end of life care for residents in a home-away-from-home setting at its new location 3113 Roosevelt Highway, Rte. 7 in Colchester. We would like to deliver 6 dozen treats on Sunday January 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. People prefer to bake at home and deliver them to the Respite House or bring them to church for me to deliver. There is a poster on the bulletin board in the hallway between the front door and the Fellowship Hall with slots to sign up for a week to provide treats. For further information, please contact Gail Babinger at [gail@babinger.net](mailto:gail@babinger.net). Thank you.



**Food Pantries for January are Monday evening, January 9th, 5:30-7:30 and Thursday afternoon, January 26th, 2:00-6:00**

**THIS WEEK: December 18th - 24th**

- TODAY:** 8:30am & 10:15am **Worship Services-Pageant Sunday / Sanctuary**  
11:30-1:30pm **Pageant Party/Marvin Lounge & Youth Lounge**  
1:00 - 2:00 pm **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
- MONDAY:** 8:30 - 12:30pm **Parking Lot Side Doors Replacement / Foyer**  
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge**  
1:30 - 4:00 pm **Food Pantry Stocking / FH & Gym**  
5:30 - 6:30 pm **Yoga / Fellowship Hall**  
5:30 - 6:30 pm **Group Victory / 3rd Floor-5/6 Class**
- TUESDAY:** 8:30 - 10:00 am **Sermon Talk Back / Marvin Lounge**  
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**  
6:30 - 8:30 pm **Eagle Scout Board of Review / Third Floor**  
7:00 - 9:00 pm **CE Committee / Fellowship Hall**  
7:00 - 9:00 pm **Missions Committee / Marvin Lounge**
- WEDNESDAY:** 12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**  
5:30 - 7:00 pm **Finally @ First / Sanctuary**  
6:30 - 7:30 pm **Currier Bells / Gym**  
6:30 - 8:30 pm **Eagle Scout Board of Review / Third Floor**  
7:00 - 8:00 pm **Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall**
- THURSDAY:** 9:00—10:30 am **Summit Kindergarten Field Trip / Fellowship Hall**  
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge**  
6:30 - 7:00 pm **Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary**  
7:00 - 8:30 pm **Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary**
- FRIDAY:** 12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
- SATURDAY:** 9:00am - 3:00pm **Nepali Community Worship & Meal / All Building**  
1:00 - 2:00 pm **Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge**  
5:00pm **Family Service / Sanctuary**  
9:00pm **Lessons & Carols / Sanctuary**  
11:00pm **Carols & Communion / Sanctuary**
- SUNDAY:** 3:00pm **Christmas Day Worship (casual & family friendly) / Sanctuary**

## MINISTRY AT FIRST CHURCH

Church Administrator: *Jen Dooley* [welcome@fccej.org]

Music Director: *Catherine McMaster* [cmcmaster@fccej.org]

Christian Education Director: *Laurie Chipman* [lchipman@fccej.org]

Bridge Part-time Associate Pastor: *Devon Thomas* [dthomas@fccej.org]

Youth Team *Devon Thomas & Erica Garvey* [egarvey@fccej.com]

Senior Pastor: Rev. *Mark Mendes* [mmendes@fccej.org]

### Music Ministry

Cherub Music: *Kim Hamilton* [khamilton@ccsuvt.org]

Currier Bell Choir Director: *Carolyn Harris* [899-6759]

Finally @ First Director: *Rick Dooley* [rickdooley5@gmail.com]

Heavenly Harmony Director: *Catherine McMaster* [ourvinn@hotmail.com]

Junior Choir Director: see *Catherine* if interested

Men At First Director: *Bill Bickford, Jr.* [bill.bickford@aol.com]

Sanctuary Choir Director: *Catherine McMaster* [cmcmaster@fccej.org]

### Committee / Church Officer Contacts

President, Chair Human Resources Committee: *Brenda Crocket* [881-5253]

Vice President, Chair Finance & Pastoral Relations: *Tom James* [879-1247]

Treasurer: *Ann Gray* [878-4088]

Asst. Treasurer: *Dan Petherbridge* [879-0261]

Financial Secretary: *Pat Seaver* [879-4445]

Clerk: *Andrea Sharp* [879-0580]

Christian Education: *Jenny Bourn* [802-309-7441] & *Marlene Frank* [872-9126]

Deacons: *Mark Chadurjian* [310-2399] and *Rick Dooley* [578-0229]

Hospitality: *Judy McCullen* [878-9794]

Missions: *Susan Kremer* [233-9932] & *Sandy Tallman* [879-0665]

Music: *Judy Larrabee* [236-0604]

Nominating: *Carl Wermer* [879-7650]

Stewardship: *Alison Wermer* [879-7650]

Trustees: *Kevin Meilleur* [238-4041]

Ushering: *Michael Sullivan* [879-6044]

### Recognized Groups at First Church

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop [879-6552]

Heavenly Food Pantry Contact: *Valerie Gabert* [879-0109]

Called To Care Contact: *Beth Volker* [879-4708]

Nepali Christian Community Contact: *Dan Raut* [310-4371]

Craft Fest Committee Contact: *Linda Bogardus* [lbogardus@myfairpoint.net]

*mission*  
**M O M E N T S**  
U N I T E D C H U R C H O F C H R I S T

December 18, 2016  
Fourth Sunday in Advent  
Matthew 1:18-25

*God With Us*

Joseph gets all the worrying jobs in the Christmas story. He's got to manage the fleeing into the desert and the journeying all the way to Egypt. He's got to do the packing of the donkey. And then there's all that anxiety about Herod's soldiers, as well as looking after a pregnant teenage girl. When it's time to return to Israel, he has to figure out where to live when new rulers make new fears. His dreams don't help. It was, after all, his dreams that got him into this mess. Are Joseph's dreams always bad and full of evil omens? Well, at least they keep his family safe. Responsibility and care must weigh heavily upon him. Some men, today, might resonate with Joseph's plight as the bearer of duty and dependability, especially as they make their way in a world that no longer values them as sole breadwinners, or upholds the image of the strong stoic male. What's a man to do? The twenty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted a resolution about "Men's ministry in the United Church of Christ." Among the paragraphs beginning "whereas" is this: WHEREAS, there is a need to support men as they seek growth in their relationship to God and to discover alternatives to relationships based on patriarchy and dominance. So it is that many UCC churches have developed ongoing ministries for those who identify as male. Trinity Mt. Penn UCC in Reading, Pennsylvania, has a monthly group that endeavors to create a safe nonjudgmental space where they can get to know God and deepen their walk with Jesus. Christian Fellowship UCC in San Diego, California, a progressive, inclusive, Bible-based community of believers has a men's ministry that includes a re-enactment of the Last Supper during Holy Week. If you want to find a Men's Ministry Action Plan you can find one by searching at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).