

*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**

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Facebook: First Congregational Church of Essex Junction UCC



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

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
United Church of Christ
September 24, 2017
First Service

A Welcoming Community,

Accepting and Serving All,

In the Spirit of Christ.

Order of Worship

Prelude

*Chromatic Fugue
In The Cathedral*

Pachelbel
Zimmerman

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 then highlight events in our shared life, then the Deacon on Duty will welcome everyone and invite people to raise significant celebrations to the congregation or introduce yourself or a friend as a guest. We encourage everyone to sign the Friendship Book.

Introit

God is Truly With Us (#68, vs 1 & 3)

Tersteegen

Call to Worship

Leader: Even when we are down, God loves us as if we were flying high. When we come in last God loves us as if we won first prize. When our efforts are for God . . .

People: God is on our side.

Leader: It does not matter what your job is or where you went to school or the grade you got on that test as long as our minds are with God . . .

People: God is on our side.

Leader: It does not matter where you are from, it does not matter whom you choose to love, it does not matter how you express your faith when your love comes from God . . .

People: God is on our side.

Prayer of Invocation and **Unison Lord's Prayer** ("trespasses")

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.

Children's Message

After the Children's Message, children and youth are invited to follow Laurie out for a time of Faith Formation on the 2nd and 3rd floor. Our volunteer, Manu, is in the nursery. There is audio in there or the service is streamed to Fellowship Hall. Adults are welcome to accompany the kids, help them get settled and stay or return to worship. Children in Preschool up through 2nd grade need to be signed out by an authorized person at 11:30am.

God has made us all a rainbow.

Colors dancing 'round and 'round.

In our hair and skin and eyes, big and little, every size,

God has made us all a rainbow dancing 'round.

Jesus loves the little children,

All God's children of the world.

Whether young or old or new, Jesus loves us through and through

Teaching us to love all creatures in the world.

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Requests Offered within the Community

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response

Hear Our Prayer

Whelpton

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

It's in His Name

Simon

The Doxology # 778

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done;

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

*Hymn of Preparation

O for a World

#575

Scripture Readings

Hebrew Bible: Jonah 3:10-4:11 [pg. 668]

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16 [pg. 17]

Anthem *O Lord, My God, You Are My Refuge* Bach

Sermon *Judgy?* Devon Thomas

***Closing Hymn** *God of Grace and God of Glory* #436

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction

***Sung Community Benediction**

Go Now In Peace

**Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of every day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith and in love**

*Postlude: *Grande Chorus* Lemaigre

*Please stand if you are able.

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Coby Miller	Jack Lucas	Keenan Weischedel
David Tibbetts	Judy Janwich	Mike Heston
Emily Carroll & family	Lilly and Donald	Jaime Real
Michael Flynn	Frank & Earl	Don Mable
Shirley Boucher	Roger Kalar	Acacia Moore & her family
Hazel Billheimer	Donna	Ruth Legendre
Emily Schueren & family	Sharon Kennedy	Mickey McKenzie
Campbell Miller	George Jackson	Cathleen & Lilianna
Ann Mudgett-Learned		Marion Ferris @ Starr Farm

Please let us know if you would like a name added to our Prayer Ministry, you can write it on the Friendship Pad, call or email the office or send us a note, welcome@fccej.org

*The flowers on the altar are given by
Bill & Grace Jones in loving memory of loved ones.*

Deacon: Lori Giannuzzi
Greeters: Sylvia Nyhagen
Ushers:

Faith Formation Class Leaders for 2017-18

Preschool - Jenny Bourn & Trista Acebo
Kindergarten - Sue Conti
First & Second Grade – Cathy LaPierre (fall) & Allison VanSteenburg
Third & Fourth Grade – Lisa Clark & Erna Deustch
Fifth & Sixth Grade – Laurie Chipman
Jr High (7th & 8th grade) & Sr High (9th-12th grade) - Devon Thomas & Erica Garvey

* * * **TODAY** * * *



How To Support Hurricane Relief

http://www.ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey

If you do not feel comfortable giving online, make a check out to FCCEJ with Hurricane Relief in the memo line and we will send it in as a group check. We will have TWO matching donations, the first \$500 will be matched from Missions and the second \$500 will be matched from an anonymous donor! Also, Fleet Feet

in Essex (Rite-Aid Plaza) is accepting donations of reusable decent condition shoes that they are sending to Houston.



**Tickets for the 150th Anniversary Dinner
on Sale TODAY in Fellowship Hall**

Celebrating
150
YEARS



TODAY ~ How To Be An Acolyte

11:35am ~ Come practice carrying the light of Christ!

TODAY ~ Confirmation Call Out

Confirmation will again be offered this year to anyone entering 9th grade or older. The Kick-off event will be Sunday, September 24th, 5-6:30 pm with pizza for parents and students. If you cannot make it that evening, please see Rev. Mark.



* * * **THIS WEEK** * * *



Yoga @ First is BACK with TWO CLASSES!

Jonah is back from his summer adventures and Monday class has started again PLUS he has added a Thursday evening class as well. Both classes will meet in the gym from 5:30-6:45. All levels from beginner to experienced are absolutely welcome. You can bring your own mat or borrow one of Jonah's. Classes are free but donations are gratefully accepted for FCCEJ. Welcome Back Jonah!

Tuesday Morning Sermon Talkback

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



Wednesday Night Searchers

We are back to our regular time of 7-9pm. Join us as we embark on our first book, the 2017 Vermont Reads, "Brown Girl Dreaming" by Jacqueline Woodson. We will read the book and then Ms Woodson will be speaking at Burlington High School on October 23rd 6-8 pm and we will attend that presentation. We have copies of the book in the office, stop by and get one!

Wednesday ~ Dismas House Meal Volunteers Needed!

Looking for volunteers to provide dinner for 10-15 residents & staff. Great opportunity to grab a couple friends and serve. Next meal is Wed, Sept. 27th.

Thursday, Heavenly Food Pantry, 2:00 - 6:00 pm

Friday, steAmfest, An Art & Innovation Festival,

4:00 - 10:00 pm

Art, Music and Food ~ Walk around Essex Jct. and experience all of them



Starting October 1st ~ Christmas Wreath Sales to Benefit the Jamaica Trip 2019



The Jamaica Committee will be taking orders for handcrafted balsam wreaths, centerpieces and gift certificates from Victory Gardens in Jericho. Wreaths are \$25 with \$8 going to the Jamaica Trip 2019. Wreaths will be delivered Nov 26th. Centerpiece ordering will be until Nov 19th, with delivery on Dec 10th & 17th.

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

Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2017

Your 2017 Total is now up to \$772.59



Remember to bring your Sunday School offering. Use an envelope in the pews to distinguish it from the regular offering.

Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 6th grade

TODAY, September 24th ~ Class time

October 1st ~ Intergenerational Worship - Spiritual Friends

Preschool & Kindergarten. Sign up with Laurie to participate



TODAY, September 24th , How To Be An Acolyte

Come practice carrying the light of Christ!

Meet Laurie in the Sanctuary at 11:35am



1:30pm

Our 5th & 6th graders meet ONCE a month from 11:30-

Mission Focus ~ Meal ~ Fellowship/

Games

October 1st ~ Junior Youth Group ~ 11:30-1:30pm



Youth Ministry

Find ways to volunteer in the community & here at church – many things await you!

~Help a neighbor or a friend

~Bring your offering with you for worship and put it in the 'color me' envelopes - support the Humane Society of Chittenden County

~Find ways and places to connect with your God & have Spirit time

TODAY ~ Confirmation Call Out & Pizza, 5-6:30pm

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



Dismas House Meal Volunteers Needed!

Looking for volunteers to provide dinner for 10-15 residents & staff. Great opportunity to grab a couple friends and serve.

Next meal is Wed, Sept. 27th.



Looking for 2017-18 Faith Formation Volunteers

At First Church we believe it's important to follow Jesus' example of taking time to get to know each other and build community...

whether it's in class time or a large group activity, across the generations or in each of our classes during second service. Faith is not taught, Faith is caught! Join the fun and help the children and youth catch the Spirit!

Nursery: Lend a hand and help us strive to meet our two to one ratio

Faith Formation Class Leaders & Helpers: Be a class leader or helper for kids preschool age and up – weekly emails from Laurie – all items gathered for you

Mission Sunday Helpers: Extra hands when all ages are together - PreK-Sr. High

Next Food Pantry days are Thurs., September 28th, 2-6pm and Monday, October 9th, 5:30-7:30pm

We are in need of baked beans, tuna fish and canned fruit to restock our cabinets.

We are still all set for egg cartons ~ our storage for them is limited.



Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

Regular Hours: 10am-3pm Tues & Wed, 4-8pm Thurs, 9am-12pm first Sat/month

Fall/Winter Donations can be dropped off at the Shop anytime.

Fall & Winter is IN!

Sunday, October 1st ~ Open House, 9:30am-12pm

Currier Hand Bell Choir Needs YOU!!

We are so blessed to have a magnificent multi-octave hand bell set here at FCCEJ. Think of ringing hand bells as a team sport, we all work together to make beautiful music. No one person is more important than another. You don't need to have a music background at all, just a sense of rhythm. We rehearse Weds. at 6:30, please feel free to drop by to try it out or watch a rehearsal.

We'll give you an easy bell to start.



We Need Your Help ~ First Church Craft Fest

Volunteers are needed to hand-deliver our Silent Auction appeal letter to over 250 local Essex and Essex Junctions businesses. We have decided to hand-deliver this year to save time and money, as well as give a personal touch to the appeal.

No experience necessary, just a friendly smile and the ability to walk a short distance!

We need to have these personalized letters delivered before the end of September! We

can give you letters for one or more streets, depending on how much time you have available in the next few weeks. If you can help or have any questions, please contact:

Phyllis Willey - willeykrewe@yahoo.com Diana Higgins - dhiggins0812@gmail.com

Saturday, December 2nd ~ Vermont Food Bank Volunteer for the Holidays!

FCCEJ Sort-a-thon to be held on Saturday, December 2, 8-12:00 at Vermont Food Bank in Barre, VT. Watch for more information in the newsletter and future bulletins.



*** * * SAVE THE DATES * * ***

Thursday, October 19th, 5:45-7pm ~ Third Thursday Family Dish Share

Join us on the 3rd Thursday of the month for a great family dish share supper, fellowship and a chance to meet others here at First Church that you may not know and reconnect with old friends. Everyone at First Church is welcome! Bring a dish to share...anything really. Come be a part of this wonderful faith community and connect with God through Christian fellowship and a meal!

Friday, October 20th ~ 150TH Anniversary Celebration Dinner

@ the Champlain Valley Fairgrounds

5:30 p.m. Social Hour

6:30 p.m. Dinner

7:30 p.m. Program

Celebrating
150
YEARS

Cost: \$45 per person – this includes building rental, set up and take down, and meal ~ hand-carved baked ham, stuffed chicken breast, roasted red potatoes, fresh-steamed green beans, tossed salad, rolls & butter, celebratory cake, coffee & tea. In addition, there will be a cash bar. Church members will have no responsibilities other than to come and enjoy themselves.

Tickets can be purchased on Sundays after Labor Day following both services. Or, you can mail a check, payable to FCCEJ with the notation “150th Anniversary Celebration” in the memo line, to First Congo Church of Essex Junction, Attn: 150th Anniversary Committee, 1 Church Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452. Tickets purchased by mail will be held for pick up on the night of the event. Anyone purchasing by mail who wants their ticket(s) ahead of the event, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your check. **Deadline for purchase of tickets: Friday, October 13th**

Saturday, October 28th ~ Paul Vasile Community Concert

Paul Vasile is a freelance church musician, consultant, and composer based in New York City. A multitasking musician and dynamic worship leader, he is committed to building, renewing, and re-shaping faith communities through music and liturgy. Paul will offer a community event open to the public on Saturday night from 7-8:30 p.m. The concert will be free and we will take a free will offering to offset Paul’s trip expenses.



THIS WEEK: September 24th - 30th

- TODAY:** 8:30am Worship Service / Sanctuary
10:15am Worship Service / Sanctuary
11:30 - 12:00 pm Acolyte Orientation / Sanctuary
1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
5:00 - 6:30 pm Confirmation Call Out / Fellowship Hall
- MONDAY:** 9:30 - 11:00 am Tai Chi / Fellowship Hall
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
1:30 - 4:00pm Food Pantry Stocking / FH & Gym
5:30 - 6:30 pm Group Victory / Youth Lounge
5:30 - 6:45 pm Yoga with Jonah / Gym
5:30 - 7:30 pm Girl Scout Troop / Third Floor
6:30 - 9:30 pm Joe's Big Band / Fellowship Hall
7:00 - 9:00 pm Ladies Night Out / Marvin Lounge
- TUESDAY:** 8:30 - 10:00 am Sermon Talk Back / Marvin Lounge
10:00 am - 3:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
4:00 - 6:00 pm Food Pantry-Auditor Meeting / Marvin Lounge
7:00 - 9:00 pm Stewardship / Fellowship Hall
7:00 - 9:00 pm Trustees / Marvin Lounge
- WEDNESDAY:** 9:30 - 11:00 am Tai Chi / Gym
10:00 am - 3:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
5:30 - 7:00 pm Finally @ First / Sanctuary
6:30 - 7:30 pm Currier Bells / Sanctuary
7:00 - 9:00 pm Wednesday Night Searchers / Marvin Lounge
7:00 - 8:00 pm Boy Scouts / Gym
- THURSDAY:** 8:30 am - 6:30 pm Heavenly Food Pantry (open 2-6pm) / FH
9:00 - 10:00 am Newsletter Volunteers / Marvin Lounge
10 - 11:30 am Art Class / Third Floor / Gym
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
4:00 - 8:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store
5:30 - 6:45 pm Yoga with Jonah / Gym
6:30 - 8:30 pm Eagle Scout Board of Review / Third Floor
6:30 - 7:00 pm Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary
7:00 - 8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary
- FRIDAY:** 12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
5:00 - 10:30 pm STEAM-Fest Site / Outside Building

SATURDAY: 9:00am - 12:00 pm Nepali Comm Worship & Meal / All Building
1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
1:30 - 4:00 pm Marie Johnson-Organ / Sanctuary

MINISTRY AT FIRST CHURCH

Church Administrator: *Jen Dooley* [welcome@fccej.org]
Interim Music Director: *Marie Johnson* [mdjkiln@juno.com]
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: Marie Johnson [mdjkiln@juno.com]
Joyful Noise: Jessica Moos [jessicamoosvermont@gmail.com]
Men At First Director: Bill Bickford, Jr. [bill.bickford@aol.com]
Sanctuary Choir Director: Marie Johnson [mdjkiln@juno.com]

Committee / Church Officer Contacts

President, Chair Human Resources Committee: Brenda Crocket [881-5253]
Vice President, Chair Finance & Pastoral Relations: Carl Wermer [879-7650]
Treasurer & Historian: Ann Gray [878-4088]
Asst. Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [879-0261]
Financial Secretary: Pat Seaver [879-4445]
Clerk: Alison Wermer [879-7650]
Christian Education: Jenny Bourn [802-309-7441]
Communications: Kevin Dorn [878-3696]
Deacons: Rick Dooley [578-0229] Mike Bottamini [879-0763]
Hospitality: Jackie Parks [324-9206]
Missions: Sandy Tallman [879-0665]
Music: Judy Larrabee [236-0604]
Nominating: Carl Wermer [879-7650]
Stewardship: Kathy Finnie [878-3696]
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

September 24, 2017

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Exodus 16:2-15

Tensions in the Wilderness

After fleeing a pharaoh and his soldiers; after escaping plagues and securing safety for their children; after being given no time to pack; and no time to gather enough of anything, food or water, one can hardly blame the Israelites for being a little crabby. In this instance, they're so crabby they even suggest that dying back home in Egypt might have been preferable to having come all this way to die of hunger in the desert. And, of course, they don't think about how they might help find food or water. Instead, they blame Moses. Poor Moses. Damned if he does and damned if he doesn't. In this case, God steps in and saves the day and rains manna for the people to eat.

Sometimes leadership in our congregations are tired and worn. They face declining memberships and new members that don't seem as ready to take on the leadership positions that used to be easy to fill. No one wants to come to committee meetings and volunteer in the ways that used to keep our congregations humming. We've been walking around in the desert and we're hungry. Wouldn't it be great if manna would fall from the sky and our pews would be full? Magical thinking is always attractive. Blaming leaders is easy. Wishing for the past is simple. Just as the Israelites wanted to blame Moses and Aaron for their troubles, we local church folks often keep blaming everybody and everything. We blame working Moms. We blame school sports that practice and play on Sundays. We blame society. We blame a pastor who doesn't preach inspiring, riveting, home-spun, wise and genuine (including jokes) sermons every Sunday. But sometimes manna won't come—at least not without a caveat, not without some thought. Even the Israelites must follow rules to eat the food God showers on them.

There is a tool prepared by the United Church of Christ on all our behalf (NOTE: It's not a magic wand). However, it's like manna in that it won't go away and it needs us to gather it up. This tool is called the "Local Church Profile," and it has been prepared in conversation with local pastors and conferences. It is especially intended for churches to use when they are in transition between pastors, but congregations are encouraged to work on this profile every five years. It helps congregations ask questions about themselves; about how they worship; about the way they organize their life together; about their communities; about their neighbors; about what they believe. Jesus walked the countryside asking questions, sharing his beliefs, healing and serving those in need. He called people to do likewise, and he didn't stay in one place. He kept moving. The Local Church Profile is a way for us, lost as we might feel in a wilderness, to keep moving.