The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

United Church of Christ

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

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, United Church of Christ, is an Open and Affirming congregation, embracing diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of every person, because we are all created by a loving God. We seek to live Christ's call for compassion, justice, healing and wholeness in life. Therefore, we welcome into our community persons of every race, gender, age, sexual orientation, faith background, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, mental and physical ability, economic and social position, gender identity and expression, level of education and family structure. We invite all to share in the life, leadership, ordained ministry, lay ministry, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, fellowship, blessings, and joys of our congregation as we seek to grow together in faith and love.

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Essex Junction, VT 05452

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E-mail: welcome@fccej.org
Website: www.fccej.org
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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
February 4, 2018
Communion Sunday

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

Prelude	*Morning Hymn*	Peeters
	Prelude	Gear
	Communion	Abt

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 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 guests. We encourage everyone to sign the Friendship Books.

Musical Introit *God Reigns O'er All The Earth* Sheppard

Call to Worship

Leader: We gather to respond to the call of God's love

All: Thankful that someone cared enough to share this good news with us.

Leader: May we be compassionate enough to share this divine presence with others.

All: Love, when shared, is not divided but multiplied.

Leader: Love, given away, is not diminished but expanded.

All: May our gathering presence beckon and welcome those near and far to know the love of this divine presence.

Opening Hymn** ***O Source of All That Is **#513**

A Time of Confession

A Call to Confession

Leader: It is an ancient tradition of the church to seek forgiveness and try to amend all broken relationships before receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion.

People: On this first Sunday of the new year, let us confess as a community of faith and as individuals our shortcomings, hoping that Christ's continued entrance into our lives might create healthier and more joyful people.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Holy One, what a blessing and privilege we share here in this sacred space and among this loving community. We sometimes are jealous of what we share here. We know that others are longing and thirsting for what we know and experience. Forgive our reluctance to open our doors, open our hearts to others; some like us, some not. We seek forgiveness for our hesitations and unwillingness to witness to those we have considered strangers and even enemies for fear they just might become friends. Amen.

The Assurance of Pardon

Leader: The one who calls us to this place calls us to reconciliation through grace. Know that you are forgiven and walk in the new way that is made know to you in God's love.

People: God's love overflows within us and we will continue to spread God's love to all.

Children's Message

After the Children's Message, preschool and kindergarteners are invited to follow Laurie out for a time of Faith Formation on the 2nd floor with our Spiritual Friends and all will return for Communion. Adrienne & Manu are in the nursery. There is audio in there and the service is streamed to Fellowship Hall. Adults are welcome to accompany the kids, help them get settled and stay or return to worship.

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.

Anthem by Heavenly Harmony *The Gift of Love* Hopson
Guitar-Rick Dooley Piano-Marie Johnson

Pastoral Prayer and **Unison Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")**
Prayer Requests Offered within the Community
A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer
Musical Response *Hear Our Prayer* Whelpton

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.

Offering Our Gifts to God
Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication
Anthem by Sanctuary Choir *The King of Love* Rutter
***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.

New Testament Reading: Mark 1:29-39 [page 27]

Communion Meditation Rev. Josh Simon

The Sacrament of Holy Communion
The Invitation & Words of Institution
Sharing the Bread and the Cup
At both services today we will celebrate communion by passing out the bread and cup to the congregation where we will eat the bread together and then drink the cup separately. This symbolizes both the individual and corporate nature of the faith.
Special note: All the bread offered today is gluten free.. All juice used is non-alcoholic.
Absolutely everyone is welcome at Christ's table!

Closing Hymn** ***O Love That Will Not Let Me Go **#485**

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: *March Maestoso* Merkel

*Please stand if you are able.

Deacon: Betsy Weischedel
Greeters & Ushers: 1st Service Bart & Paulette Frisbee
2nd Service Carolyn Toof, Andrea & Carley Goedken, Alison & Carl Wermer

The flowers on the altar are given by Ginny Coe
in loving memory of her son, Tom.

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Carol Mauger	Iris	Bill Bogardus
Mike Heston	George Dunbar's family	Eric & Shannon

We have 'reset' our Prayer Ministry for 2018, please let the office know if you would like a name added back on, you can write it on the Friendship Pad, call or email the office or send us a note, welcome@fccej.org

*** * * TODAY * * ***

TODAY ~ Hannaford Cards & Reloads on SALE!

PURCHASE TODAY! Jamaica Bound Calcutta Tickets!
Saturday, March 10th! Mark your calendars to save the date! Cocktails at 5:30 PM , dinner at 6:30 PM. Jamie Polli will begin the Calcutta at 7:30 PM. Tickets cost $125 each and include dinner for two and the chance to win the grand prize of $1000 and many other tremendous prizes awarded throughout the evening. Stop by the table in Fellowship Hall today!

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

Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2018

Total for 2018 $38.41

Your 2018 Offering Choice is ***Jamaica School Children***

Scholarship money for school uniforms and books for children.

Vote totals were: Jamaica Children ...114; OMCS ...56; JUMP ...54

Keep remembering to bring your offering

$1 a week can go a long way!

Bring your Faith Formation Sunday School offering each week and use the envelopes in the pews. It is really important to use them so we know where you want your $ to go.

Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 6th grade

February 4th~Communion Sunday ~ Spiritual Friends ~ Intergenerational Worship

Children & youth are encouraged to sign up to be a reader in worship.

***February 11th* & 18th** ~ Faith Formation Class time

February 25th ~ Hands On Mission Sunday

Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

5th - 8th graders meet TWICE a month from 11:30-1:30pm

Faith & Mission Focus ~ Meal ~ Fellowship/Games

Parents sign up for meals and to volunteer is on the JY board

February 4th ~ Sub Sunday & Fun Youth Time

February 18th ~ Fun Youth Time

High School Youth @ FCCEJ

February 11th ~ Meet at Church, 5-7pm

February 18th ~ Laser Tag, 5-7pm

Youth Mission Trip to New York City

June 17th-22nd: We're going to NYC for a Mission Trip to work on various projects throughout the city. Any youth 7th grade and up is welcome to attend. $150 per participant. 50% due by February 28th. Interested? Talk to Pastor Josh

* * * Opportunities To Volunteer & Donate * * *

Dismas House Meal Volunteers Needed!

We are currently looking for volunteers for February 28th & March 28th . Please contact Ed Steele at 871-5897 edwardmsteele@msn.com if interested or with any questions. There is also a sign-up sheet in the hallway entering Fellowship Hall. We need four (4) people to volunteer for each date. Our FCCEJ group will decide the menu to feed 12-16 people (which includes the FCCEJ cooks), and then purchase and prepare the food (typically includes the main course as well as vegetables or salad – dessert is optional). The Dismas House provides beverages, condiments, set-up and clean-up. There is no age on who can volunteer, great for retired folks on down and you can donate part of the meal even if you are not able to attend. Many people from our community have volunteered and it is a rewarding mission!

Next Food Pantry days are Monday, February 12th, 5:30-7:30pm and Thursday, February 22nd, 2-6pm

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

We need egg cartons again, please!

Got Donations? Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

Regular Hours: 10am-3pm Tues & Wed, 4-8pm Thurs
February17th, 9am-1pm
First Saturday, March 3rd 9am-1pm

Doing your winter closet cleanout? Don't forget Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop, for your donations! We welcome women's , men's, and children's clothing in clean and sellable condition. We also accept clean dishes that are not chipped, glasses and decorative items, picture frames and clean towels and blankets. Thanks to all who currently make donations. as your giving is appreciated by many in our community. For holiday giving, proceeds from sales were distributed to local non profits including Essex Meals on Wheels, VT Respite House, Steps to End Domestic Violence, JUMP, Katie Currier Memorial Fund, VNA, HOPE Lodge, COTS and the Jamaican Trip. There's a donation box on shop porch. Contact Sue Wood, Linda Bogardus with any questions.

* * * THIS WEEK * * *

February 10th **~ Praise-a-Palooza : Soup and Songs of Praise**

FCCEJ and Finally @ First are thrilled to again be hosting this fun evening for all ages! Mark your calendars for Saturday night, February 10th and join us at 5:30pm for a Soup Dinner followed at 6:30pm by an evening of praise music by local worship bands. Join us in welcoming bands from area churches and our very own Finally @ First. A free will offering will be taken. Bring a friend!

February 11th, After Both Services **~ Renew Your Wedding Vows**

After each service on February 11th, the Sunday closest to Valentine's Day, we will offer anyone who would like to renew your commitment to your partner to stay in the sanctuary after church and renew your vows. The service is no more than five minutes but you re-state your promises, hear an appropriate scripture, accept a prayer on behalf of your love, and seal the renewal with a kiss. Each couple will also receive a gift to remember the special day. Come as you are or dress up a bit, get your hair done and wear a corsage. All proceedings are of course free!

February 14th, 7pm **~ Ash Wednesday**

Lent starts early this year and it always starts with Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is when we acknowledge that we are a creature like all others, created by God and precious, perhaps unique, but still a creature. God created us. This year, the Ash Wednesday service will be a little different so come and draw on this ancient ritual to bring depth and meaning to your life.

February 18th **~ Outdoor Ministry Special Offering**

Help support our VT Outdoor Ministry and our UCC Camp programs. Half will go to scholarships for VT campers to attend the week at Rock Point and the other half will help children and youth from this church attend that week or another week at a UCC camp. Help children & youth spend a week in God's creation … connecting, making friends, learning and growing in faith. By giving, the UCCOM can continue to be a vibrant ministry that provides many an introduction to a life-long spiritual journey resulting in a relationship that lasts a lifetime. The VT UCC week at Rock Point camp in Burlington is July 29th – August 3rd for youth going into 5th to 8th grade. For more info, see the Outdoor Ministry board in the downstairs Narthex by the glass doors.

* * * SAVE THE DATES * * *

February 21st, 7-8:30pm **~ Sermon Talkback TWO!**

Starting on February 21st, from 7-8:30, there will be a second evening Sermon Talkback group led by either Rev. Mark or Rev. Josh. Once people come, we will determine if folks want a snack or not. There will be a pot of decaf ready to go. Come by yourself or bring a friend and together we will unpack the sermon and explore anything we want.

March 10th ~ Jamaica Bound Calcutta
March 11th ~ Pretzel Sunday Sign Up in Fellowship Hall
HS Youth /Adult volunteers ~ 4 different shifts
Donations for materials needed
Thursday, March 15th ~ Third Thursday Potluck Dish Share 5:45 to 7pm
March 25th ~ Palm Sunday
April 1st ~ Easter Sunday
May 14th ~ Mother's Day & Jazz Sunday
May 26th ~ Bob Hullstrung's Memorial Service,
W. Swanton United Methodist, 2:30pm
May 14th ~ Mother's Day & Jazz Sunday
May 20th ~ Pentecost & Confirmation Sunday
June 3rd ~ ONE 9:30am service ~ Ice Cream Social
July 29th –August 3rd ~ UCC Camp week 'HC goes to VT' at Rock Point

August 6th -10th ~ Vacation Bible Camp 2018
Rolling River Rampage: Experience the Ride of a Lifetime with God!
Monday – Friday from 9am to 11:45am
VB Camp is a week of energy and excitement of seeing God's Love in Action! All are encouraged to join up and be a part of this fun week!
Calling all KIDS ~~ Registration is now OPEN!
Groups: You & Me (toddler & parent/grandparent)
Preschool (three & fours - potty trained) up through those entering 5th grade in the fall.
Now Recruiting for ...
Station Leader: Bible Drama ~ Crafts ~ Discovery ~ Games ~ Music ~ Snack
Helpers: Youth (entering sixth grade & up), College Students/ Adults of all ages!
See Laurie for more information and to sign up!

September 9th ~ Welcome Back Sunday ~ two services begin

THIS WEEK: February 4th-10th

TODAY:
8:30am Worship Service / Sanctuary
9:30 - 10:15am Capital Campaign Special Events Committee / Youth Lounge
10:15am Worship Service / Sanctuary
11:30am - 1:30pm Junior Youth Group / third Floor/YL/Gym
11:30am - 12:30pm Music Committee / Sanctuary
1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
6:00 - 8:00pm Cub Scout Leader Meeting / Marvin Lounge

MONDAY:
9:30 - 11:00 am Tai Chi / Fellowship Hall
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge
1:30 - 4:00 pm Food Pantry Stocking/FH & Gym
5:30 - 6:30 pm Group Victory / Youth Lounge
5:30 - 6:45 pm Yoga with Jonah / Gym

TUESDAY:
8:30 - 10:00 am Sermon Talk Back / Marvin Lounge
10:00 am - 3:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
6:00 - 7:00pm Finance Committee / Marvin Lounge
7:00 - 9:00pm Church Council Meeting / Marvin Lounge

WEDNESDAY:
9:30 - 11:00 am Tai Chi / Fellowship Hall
10:00 am - 3:00pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open
11:30 - 3:00pm VT Commons School / Kitchen
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge
5:30 - 7:00 pm Finally @ First / Fellowship Hall
6:00 - 7:00 pm Boy Scouts-PLC / Youth Lounge
6:30 - 7:30 pm Currier Bells / Sanctuary
7:00 - 9:00 pm Wednesday Night Searchers / Youth Lounge
7:00 - 8:30 pm Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall

THURSDAY:
9:00 - 11:30am VT Commons School / Kitchen & Fellowship Hall
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
4:00 - 8:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open
5:00 - 6:30 pm Jamaica Bound Calcutta Committee / Marvin Lounge
5:30 - 6:45 pm Yoga with Jonah / Fellowship Hall
6:15 - 7:00 pm Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary
7:00 - 8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary
7:00 - 9:00 pm Confirmation Class / Marvin Lounge

FRIDAY:
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
6:30 - 10:30 pm Scrapbooking Journey / Marvin Lounge
7:30 - 10:30 pm Grange / Fellowship Hall

SATURDAY:
8:30am - 1:00 pm Capital Campaign Visitation Training / Fellowship Hall
9:00am - 12:00 pm Nepali Community Worship / Sanctuary
1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
1:30 - 4:00 pm Marie Johnson-Organ / Sanctuary
3:30 - 8:30 pm Praise-A-Palooza;Soup & Songs of Praise / Sanctuary & FH

MINISTRY AT FIRST CHURCH

Church Administrator: *Jen Dooley* [welcome@fccej.org]
Interim Music Director: *Marie Johnson* [mdjkiln@gmail.com]
Interim Choir Director: *Denise Keating* [j_keating7@comcast.net]
Christian Education Director: *Laurie Chipman* [lchipman@fccej.org]
Associate Pastor: *Rev. Josh Simon* [jsimon@fccej.org]
Senior Pastor: *Rev. Mark Mendes* [mmendes@fccej.org]

Music Ministry

Cherub Music: Jenny Bourn [jennybourn4@gmail.com]
Currier Bell Choir Director: Carolyn Harris [899-6759]
Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley [rickdooley5@gmail.com]
Heavenly Harmony Director: Marie Johnson [mdjkiln@gmail.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@gmail.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] Sue Wood suewood@myfairpoint.net or Linda Bogardus at lbogardus@myfairpoint.net
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]

*Our Home, Our Future, Our Time…*the Campaign begins!

Now that the congregation has approved the $822,000 ***Our Home, Our Future, Our Time*** Campaign, the Steering Committee is getting right to work. In mid-February, we will hold a training session for people who have volunteered to be "Visitors" or "Campaign Ambassadors." After the training, those volunteers will begin the "quiet phase" of the Campaign by reaching out to an initial group of church members, starting with current and past Church leadership.

During the initial Quiet Phase, we will also be gearing up for an **All-Church Campaign Kick-Off Celebration on Sunday, April 8** after the second service. After the Kick-Off, we will reach out to the entire congregation and make sure everyone has an opportunity for a group or individual visit with one of our Campaign volunteers!

About the Visits…
The purpose of these visits is to talk about the Church, our hopes and dreams for the future, the Campaign, and the importance of every pledge. Your visitor will bring a pledge form and answer any questions. At the end of your visit, you will be invited to seal your confidential pledge in an envelope. The envelope will be only be opened by our Campaign Treasurer. ***Please know that these visits are NOT about asking for specific amounts, or finding out the details of your pledge - that is for only YOU to decide and know!***

The visits are intended to be fun and joyful, and we believe you will enjoy getting to know someone better (or making a new friend), while you learn more about this important step we are taking together in the life of our Church. If you prefer not to have a visit, your volunteer will make arrangements to deliver your pledge form and answer any questions.

If you have any questions about the Campaign, or you are interested in helping with the kick-off celebration or serving as a Visitor/Campaign Ambassador, please reach out to Campaign Co-chairs Kaki McGeary & Dave Johnson. There are many ways to get involved, and we would be happy to discuss how you might be able to lend a hand.

We will have many more details to share with you as the Campaign unfolds. In the meantime, we greatly appreciate your support, prayers and enthusiasm for the ***Our Home, Our Future, Our Time*** Campaign!