

***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.

**One Church Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452**

Phone: 802-878-5745

Fax: 802-872-8236

E-mail: welcome@fcej.org

Website: www.fcej.org

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
February 25, 2018
First Service ~ The Second Sunday of Lent

A Welcoming Community,

Accepting and Serving All

In the Spirit of Christ

Prelude

Lento Tranquillo
Jesus Priceless Treasure

Smith
Bach

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

Come and Find The Quiet Center

White

Call to Worship

Leader: Jesus came into the world inviting everyone into relationship with God. Today, Jesus invites us into a relationship with the very presence of the Divine.

People: We are here to say yes to God.

Leader: Jesus came into the world to change it for the better. He preached forgiveness, mercy, love and justice and expected his followers to follow.

People: We are here to say yes to following Christ's way.

Leader: Jesus said following him will be difficult, but the rewards would be great.

People: We say yes to God and Jesus' way of life trusting that goodness, meaning, joy and love will be ours.

Leader: Come, with courage and self-worth, let us follow our Lord into the unknown future.

***Opening Hymn**

Before Your Cross, O Jesus

#191

Lighting the Lenten Candles: The Cost of Discipleship

Deacon's 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

During both services, Adrienne is in the Nursery where there is a speaker to hear the worship service and the service is streamed in our Fellowship Hall. After the Children's Message, Preschool –8th grade are welcome to follow Laurie for Faith Formation time of Hands On Mission Sunday as we celebrate our 2017 offering to the Humane Society. Parents are welcome to accompany the children, get the settled, stay or return to worship. All will return to worship during the final hymn.

**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 Sanctuary Choir & Currier Bells

Prayer for Unity

Rickard

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Requests Offered within the Community

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Congregational Sung Response #193.....*In the Cross of Christ I Glory*

When the woes of life o'er take me, hopes deceive and fears annoy,

Never shall the cross forsake me: Lo, it glows with peace and joy.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, by the cross are sanctified:

Peace is there that knows no measure, joys that through all time abide.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

Give Thanks With a Grateful Heart

Smith

Doxology #565.....*God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

The flowers on the altar are given by Carolyn Toof in memory of loved ones.

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Please remember John Mauger and Carol's whole family as they grieve the loss of Carol

Winslow Ladue	Iris	Bill Bogardus
Mike Heston	Marion Schneider	Eric & Shannon
Carol Janwich	Joe Phenix	Dustin Keelty

Please let the office 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@fcej.org

* * * **TODAY** * * *

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!



Also: The Jamaica Mission Trip is looking for volunteers to make cupcakes for the Calcutta on March 10th. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall after the service

New Nursery Staff

Please help us welcome our new staff person to our Nursery, Adrienne Hurst. Adrienne is currently a senior at the University of Vermont in the Early Childhood Special Education Program. She grew up in Milton, Vermont and currently lives in Burlington. She enjoys snowboarding, swimming and spending time with her family. She is looking forward to meeting everyone and being a part of our faith community!



LAST DAY ~ Outdoor Ministry Special Offering

Today is the last day the envelopes for this offering will be in the pews but you can contribute at any time just by designating your offering!

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



Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2018

Total for 2018 \$163.36

Your 2018 Offering Choice is Jamaica School Children Scholarship money for school uniforms and books for children.

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 – 8th grade

TODAY ~ Hands On Mission Sunday

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

Children & youth are encouraged to sign up to be a reader in worship. Connect with Pastor Mark, Pastor Josh or Laurie on the Sunday before or during the week leading up to the 1st Sunday of the month.

March 11th ~ Pretzel Sunday ~ Peer class time

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

March 11th ~ Called to Care Easter basket craft & More

High School Youth @ FCCEJ

March 4th ~ 5pm Youth Group meets at Spare Time in Colchester for Bowling Fun!

March 18th ~ 5pm ~ Meet at church, wear clothes to get dirty, we will start to grow vegetables for our new church garden



TODAY, 9:40am, Youth Lounge ~ 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?

Come to the meeting today and find out all the details!

* * * **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, March 12th, 5:30-7:30pm and

Thursday, March 22nd, 2-6pm

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

We are again ALL set with Egg Cartons-thank you SO much!



Got Donations? Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

Regular Hours: 10am-3pm Tues & Wed, 4-8pm Thurs

First Saturday, March 3rd 9am-1pm

As the winter season begins to fade and temperatures begin to moderate, ALL items including white elephant are 50% off. Stay tuned for the upcoming bag sale in March. We will be accepting Spring and Summer items at that time. We are also looking for volunteers, even to be on a sub list! There's a donation box on shop porch. Contact Sue Wood, Linda Bogardus with any questions.



March 18th ~ Hands On Mission Sunday-Church World Service Hygiene Kits



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

It's time to gather more items and complete our hygiene kits that we started in the fall. The CWS drop off location closed for the winter and will open back up in April. On the next page are the items that we need donated to finish the kits. Please sign up and help give to complete the kits and lend a hand this Lenten season. You can sign up in Fellowship Hall on Sundays at the purple table or email Laurie. On March 18th the kids will put these remaining hygiene kits together. If you would like to help on this day with the kids, please let Laurie know.

45 wide tooth combs
44 individually wrapped bath size bars of soap
34 fingernail/toenail clippers
31 toothbrushes individually wrapped

Volunteer and be a Counselor at Camp

Are you 18yrs or older by July? Do you like working with junior youth? Looking for community service or something really good to put on your resumé? Graduating High School, in college or out, you too could have a fun week with free room and board counseling campers during the 2018 summer! Think of it... no cooking or laundry for a week, just great fun in God's outdoors! Especially recruiting for Rock Point week. See Laurie for more information.



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

WEDNESDAY, 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 other topics.



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

March 4th, 5 pm ~ First Sunday Supper of 2018!

Instead of hibernating, venture out to a fellow member's home for a potluck supper. Sign up as a host house or an attendee and we will schedule the rest. If you need a ride, or are willing to drive someone to supper, let us know that too. Your host will contact you the week of the supper to let you know the address and what you can bring. To sign up, add your name to the sheet that will be passed around during both services, or write Sunday Supper next to your name in the Friendship book. If you'd like to host, add an H; if you need a ride, add an R; and if you can drive someone, add a D.



Questions? Call Lauren Starkey at 578-7505.



March 10th ~ Jamaica Bound Calcutta

March 11th ~ Pretzel Sunday-Sign Up in Fellowship Hall-Donations Needed
HS Youth /Adult volunteers ~ 4 different shifts



Thursday, March 15th ~ Third Thursday Potluck Dish Share 5:45 to 7pm

March 18th ~ Healing Service 7pm

March 25th ~ Palm Sunday, Laurentian Singers (from SLU), 4pm concert

March 29th ~ Maundy Thursday 6pm

April 1st ~ Easter Sunday

April 8th, after 10:15 service ~ Capital Campaign Kickoff Celebration

April 15th, 3-5pm ~ Joe's Big Band Concert

May 13th ~ Mother's Day & Jazz Sunday

May 20th ~ Pentecost & Confirmation Sunday

May 26th ~ Bob Hullstrung's Memorial Service,
W. Swanton United Methodist, 2:30pm

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 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 25th-March 3rd

- TODAY:** 8:30am **Worship Service / Sanctuary**
9:40-10:10am **NYC Mission Trip Meeting/Youth Lounge**
10:15am **Worship Service / Sanctuary**
10:30-11:30am **Faith Formation / Marvin Lounge**
1:00 - 2:00 pm **Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge**
- MONDAY:** 9:30 - 11:00 am **Tai Chi / Fellowship Hall**
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
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 / Fellowship Hall**
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 Open**
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
7:00 - 9:00 pm **Stewardship Meeting / Fellowship Hall**
7:00 - 9:00pm **Trustees Meeting / Marvin Lounge**
- WEDNESDAY:** 9:30 - 11:00 am **Tai Chi / Fellowship Hall**
10:00 am - 3:00pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
5:30 - 7:00 pm **Finally @ First / Fellowship Hall**
6:30 - 7:30 pm **Currier Bells / Sanctuary**
7:00 - 8:00 pm **Sermon Talk Back II / Marvin Lounge**
7:00 - 8:30 pm **Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall**
- THURSDAY:** 8:30 - 11:30 am **Essex Art League / Fellowship Hall**
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
12:00 - 2:00pm **JOY / Marvin Lounge**
4:00 - 8:00 pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
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**
5:00 - 8:00 pm **Essex Eats Out Community Dinner / Fellowship Hall**
- SATURDAY:** 9:00am - 1:00pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
9:00am - 12:00 pm **Nepali Community Worship & Meal / Sanctuary & FH**
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@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: *Denise Keating* [j_keating7@comcast.net]

Committee / Church Officer Contacts

President, Chair Human Resources Committee: *Carl Wermer* [879-7650]
Vice President, Chair Finance & Pastoral Relations until 5/18: *Brenda Crocket* [881-5253]
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: *Betsy Weischedel* [922-2094], *Peter Schmalz* [202-297-3625]
Hospitality: *Mary Jane Allen* [557-1335], *Jim Glatz* [503-5076]
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 – NEWS & NOTES

First Group of Campaign Ambassadors Trained and Early Visits Begin!

On Saturday, February 10, 35 church member volunteers spent the morning learning more about the Capital Campaign and preparing to visit other members. These visits are vital because one of the most important goals for this Campaign is to help people feel even more connected to our church and one another.

It is important to know that these visits are NOT about asking for money; they are a time to share stories, get to know people, and answer any questions about the Campaign before confidential pledges are made. One member said, “I just had my visit, and it was such a positive experience. It gave me a chance to talk to another church member I didn’t really know very well, and I was able to share my feelings about the church and why this Campaign is so important to me.”

Eventually, everyone in the church will have an opportunity for a group or individual visit with a Campaign Ambassador. Don’t worry if you haven’t been contacted yet; the Campaign is just beginning. It will take us some time to reach everyone, but we will! The majority of visits will take place after our Campaign Kick-Off on April 8th (see below). As the initial visits get underway, the Ambassadors look forward to meeting with members and sharing more of those meaningful conversations. It is a powerful way to create connections with one another that will last long into the future, even as memories of the Campaign begin to fade.

Save the Date!

**Sunday, April 8 (after a single 10:15 a.m. service)
All-Church Campaign Kick-Off Celebration**

Mark your calendars for what is sure to be an exciting and fun event where we will have yummy food, activities for all ages, and a special announcement to update everyone about the Campaign’s progress. You won’t want to miss this. Stay tuned for more details.

Want to get involved? Please contact Co-Chairs Dave Johnson or Kaki McGeary if you would like to get involved or learn more. We are currently seeking volunteers to be Campaign Ambassadors and volunteers to help with the Kick-Off Celebration on April 8th! If you are interested in being a Campaign Ambassador, there will be a training session on Saturday, April 7th.

For more information about the Campaign, visit our Capital Campaign page on our website at www.fccej.org and follow the church on Facebook!