

*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*

*Phone: 802-878-5745*

*Fax: 802-872-8236*

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

*Website: [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)*

*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  
United Church of Christ  
March 18, 2018  
A SERVICE OF HEALING**

*Be thoughtful, be silent, be reverent, for this is the house of the Lord. During the Prelude, speak to the Lord; during the service, let the Lord speak to you; after the service, speak to one another.*

*The Order of Worship*

Centering Music by John Michael Talbot

Words of Welcome and Opening Scripture: Mark 1:29-34 [page 27]

Call to Worship

Leader: Today we come to this place in need of the healing touch of God.

**People: We come to this place in need of our Creator's touch to center our lives and focus our spirits.**

Leader: Today we come to this place united as Vermonters, United States citizens, and civilized people of justice and mercy.

**People: We come as a community grounded in faith in God and committed to the law of love.**

Leader: And today we come to boldly proclaim God's presence in the midst of evil, God's victory in the midst of darkness.

**Everyone: Our presence is testimony to God's enduring power. We are shaken but never defeated. We will sing and pray and proclaim God's glory.**

**Unison Prayer of Invocation**

**Eternal Friend, grant me an ease to breathe deeply of this moment, this light, this miracle of now. Beneath the din and fury of great movements and harsh news and urgent crises, make me attentive still to good news, to small**

occasions, and to the grace of what is possible. Remind me of your steady power and gracious purposes that I may live fully. Renew my faith that the earth is not destined for dust and darkness, but for frolicking life and deep joy. Set me free from my anxiety for the future, that I may take risks of love today. We pray this as creatures dependent upon your presence, amen.

A Scripture of Healing: Mark 2:1-12 [page 28]

A Time of Confession

Call to Confession

Leader: Jesus invites us to come and lay our cares at his feet. He has promised to take them unto himself and in return offer peace and wholeness.

**People: We give you our hearts, minds and souls, dear Lord. Come and offer us your forgiveness, mercy and love.**

Leader: Come, let us be honest with our God.

Unison Prayer of Confession

**People: Tonight, we come to confess that we have not lived up to our potential. We get discouraged with the news of the day. We get caught up in the incivility of our times. We divide people by wealth, education, social circles, political philosophy and religious belief. You demand growth, hope, compassion, unity, peace and love. We lose sight of your demands and get discouraged, apathetic and angry. Forgive us and give us the insight and power to do better.**

Leader: In the name of Jesus Christ, I declare that your faults are understood, your sins are forgiven and your future is hopeful.

A Time for Silent Confessions

Unison Lord's Prayer [NEW ZEALAND PRAYER BOOK]

**Eternal Spirit Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all. Loving God, in whom is heaven. The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the earth! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the**

**bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.**

A Healing Scripture: Mark 5:21-43 [page 30]

A Meditation for Healing

*Jesus, the Great Healer*

Rev. Mendes

A Time for Healing

An Invitation for Personal Healing

***At this time the worship leader will ask all those who are in need of healing to come forward as directed by the Deacons and kneel at either the kneeling bench or sit in the provided chair for a personal prayer of power and healing and an anointing with oil if desired. Then you may return to your seat.***

*While people are receiving their prayers for healing*

*We will listen to the contemplative music of John Michael Talbot*

Celebrating Christ's Last Supper with His Disciples

Closing Scripture of Healing: Acts 3:1-10 [page 92]

Closing Congregational Hymn [a capella]

***Jesus Loves Me***

**Jesus loves me, this I know, for the bible tells me so  
Little ones to him belong, they are weak but he is strong  
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.**

**Jesus loves me, this I know, as he loved so long ago,  
Taking children on his knee, saying, "let them come to me."  
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.**

**Jesus loves me, still today, walking with me on my way.  
Wanting as a friend to give, light and love to all who live.  
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.**

Pastoral Benediction