



The Spirit at First October 2018

A Pastor Ponders.....

This last summer, such joy came my way as we stretched our reach to some of the great National Parks out West: Yellowstone, Grand Tetons and the Badlands. Experiencing the mountains, seeing the bison roam freely, standing atop a mountain and enjoying the vista of a 10,500' granite monument of God's grandeur, or sitting in the grand lodge overlooking icy waters of high mountain lakes: these are all treats that blessed my life this past summer. There is not much I love more than getting in my camper with family in tow and traipsing all over the place, never knowing exactly what we will find or what experiences await.

But home always awaits. Working my mind and heart away from the wildness of unexpected realities and into the rhythms and schedules of my normal life is always a transition that takes some time. Fall is upon us though: my kids are back in school, church meetings defining my nights and the regularity of life returning. Slowly, albeit reluctantly, I return to the comfort of the life created over decades. Books and projects, new initiatives and old relationships, wood for the all nighter and sweaters unpacked: all wash over me and bring me great comfort. I cannot wait for the first fire, the first snow, dance recitals, school projects, driving the kids around to their appointments, soups and fresh bread around the table on a cold winter's night.

Upon reflection, I was ready to be home, to return to the life I have created; to laugh, cry and talk with the people in my life I treasure; to draw strength from the home I love, the community I have chosen to live; to return to the seasons and cycles of my life. The leaves beginning to show the colors of fall is simply a reminder of the pull that order has in my life.

This is the primordial tension: chaos verses order. God brings order to a universe mired in disarray and the battle that goes on each day in our members and society is not between life and death or morality and immorality but between chaos and order. In this day of tension and turmoil, I believe what we crave and miss is order. Everything seems up for grabs, fleeting, amorphous. The church with all of its faults and darkness is a reminder that order is God's wish for all of us and society. Nations may totter, justice seem fleeting, moral values diminish and yet the church's message that God loves us and we should stand up for peace for all people is a light that will see us through, a hope that will displace the darkness and a voice to follow.

As we shift the wild summer attitudes into mundane ways of living, let us re-commit ourselves to the invaluable order of belonging to a faith community and committing ourselves and our families to standing up for peace and hope.

Thrilled to be doing so here at 1st Congo in Essex Junction, I am

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Mark

SPECIAL SERVICES & EVENTS IN OCTOBER

Communion will be handed out to the congregation and the Neighbors in Need Offering will be collected at both services on October 7th.

October 6th ~ Saturday Afternoon Worship Begins, 4:30 pm



The Deacons and Minsters of the church have decided to try to reach out to busy families and schedules by providing a service on the first Saturday of every month starting at 4:30 p.m. beginning on October 6th. The service will be a little shorter, informal, interactive, family / kid friendly with an acoustic guitar accompaniment. We will be shaping the service as we go by asking for feedback. We will worship in Fellowship Hall and there will be communion served. Everyone is welcome, bring a friend.

October 14th ~ Blessing of The Animals, After Both Services

After each service on October 14th, Rev.'s Mark and Josh will be blessing any animal or stuffed animal that you bring to church. We have had cats and dogs, chickens and hedgehogs, rabbits and snakes, even a fish.....you name it. Immediately after the service we will meet in front of the church [gym if it is raining] and ask God to protect and keep them safe as a member of the family.

October 21st ~ A Stewardship Celebration

During both services, we will all bring our pledges up to the altar to demonstrate our commitment, dedication and financial support to the work and ministry of FCCEJ. The Stewardship Committee knows how generous people have been with their "*Our Home, Our Future, Our Time*" Capital Campaign pledges but also know that the everyday expenses continue and are the heart of our everyday life. The Stewardship Committee is not pushing for great increases but wants everyone to consider keeping their pledge the same as last year so that we continue to meet the church's expenses. We will celebrate our support of the many ministries we accomplish together by joyously bringing our pledge cards forward. If you have already submitted your pledge, there will be a special card available that you will be able to bring up.

October 28th ~ Reformation / Bible Sunday

One of the very oldest traditions in the Protestant Church and New England Congregations is to honor Martin Luther's emphasis of translating the bible into everyone's native tongues so that they can read the Good News for themselves is to give our 3rd graders new bibles. We do so on the anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of the 95 theses on the doors of the Castle Church [start of the Protestant Reformation] in Wittenberg, Germany. On October 28th, we will give our 3rd graders and anyone older who does not already have one, a bible. Bring your 3rd grader to receive their own bible and come to participate in our celebration of Reformation Sunday.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR NEWS

After my September 16th sermon, I was asked by someone, what can I do to help work on immigration issues. My advice to this person applies to many, many issues. A good place to start is to ask the people who are most affected what they think. In terms of immigration and migrant justice issues, I recommend calling Migrant Justice a nonprofit that works with migrants in Vermont. A simple call, saying, “I’m interested in assisting you in your work? I’m interested in learning more, what are some ways that I might be able to learn more and to assist you?” Since Migrant Justice is a non-profit, like many other organizations that work on solving issues or helping others, assuredly there is something you can do—it might be monetary and/or helping with a project. When the organization says yes, I recommend before working with the organization is that you go with an open mind. You might have an idea on how to best assist them or what needs to be done to solve the issue. I believe the best way to solve an issue or to assist another person is to ask the person/s directly affected what they need rather than what I think they need or think is the best approach to solving the issue. This does not exclude me from having my own ideas, but going directly to the person/s affected, my ideas will be better informed. Part of this approach is to shift my paradigm from my economic self-interest to having empathy for the person/s directly impacted. In other words, the approach to assisting or working on an issue comes from the perspective of the person/s directly affected. In terms of immigration, I want to hear personal stories of those who decided to leave their country to come to America. I want to hear those stories from those who came here through the official process the government setup and those who did not. When we take this approach, not only do we feel like we’re assisting, we are also helping empower those most affected.

Another important piece to assisting or working on an issue is to be connected spiritually. James writes, “faith without works is dead,” but works without faith leads to burnout. Faith, trust, in God’s presence in you sustains your work.

High School Youth Group Schedule

Sunday, October 7th, 5-7pm @FCCEJ

Pizza will be provided.

Friday, October 19-Saturday, October 20, overnight

For those who need a ride to Sam Mazza’s Corn Maze, meet at the Marvin Lounge at 5:45pm, or you can be dropped off at the Corn Maze at 6pm. We’ll stay at the Corn Maze until 8pm. We’ll then go back to the church for food, games, movies. Lights out at midnight. Youth can be picked up at 9am.

Email: jsimon@fccej.org, to let me know if your youth and/or you plan to attend.

Pastoral Note: I am working diligently to build a successful high school youth program. I reduced our routinely scheduled day to the first Sunday of each month, so we can work together to do a youth group related activity at another point in each month. For this to be successful, I need your help. I need your input on what activities you want to participate in, how you are able to serve, and super importantly, your communication and response to emails.



Laurie's Lens

On September 23rd we handed grocery shopping bags with a list of times to shop and buy for JUMP. JUMP is an organization that is at First Congregation Church in Burlington and helps families in need. Our children and youth will hear about JUMP on Hands-On Mission Sunday, September 30th when all the shopping bags are due back to the church and the kids will also help sort the food. We have asked shoppers not to buy other items that are not on this list, however if you would like to buy more of the items listed you may. If you would like to volunteer and help deliver the bags of groceries to JUMP and have the experience of seeing where they are, please be in touch with Missions or myself.

Our 1st Sunday of the month this fall program year will be on October 7th. On this day we will celebrate World Communion Sunday and recognize that other Christians around the world are having communion on this day too. Our children in 1st grade and up will be in worship and are encouraged to participate by greeting, ushering, ringing the church bell, being an acolyte and lighting the candles and reading scripture. These Sundays will have more of an intergenerational feel. Our Spiritual friends will spend some time reading a story, having snack and doing an activity with the preschool and kindergarteners after Children's Message. They all will then return to worship to partake of communion with all of us. We feel the importance of having all the children and youth feel comfortable, welcomed and accepted for who they are and that they too can participate in this family of faith and feel the love all around them. If you feel at any time that your child or youth is having a hard time with our programming choices and you are looking for another option for them, please be in touch and let me know. We want all who come to First Church to feel comfortable sharing, asking question and participating where they feel able and lead to do so.

As I begin another program year with you all here, year ten, I was made more aware of the resources I have in my office that we no longer touch. How we program and what we do and have time to do constantly changes. Our priorities change and therefore what we put priority on has changed. So, I have done and will continue to clear items out of my office and offer them to you all to take home, give to a friend or neighbor and use to help deepen your family's faith life and journey. You will see a Family Resource table in Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings. On it you will see Take Out Church boxes, more supplies to restock your Take Out Church box you already have and many resource books of crafts, activities, devotions and more for you as a family to do at home. I hope you will stop by this table every week you are here and let me know if there is something you need that you are not finding there. Let me know how I can resource you and your family.

I continue to recruit and look for volunteers to be a part of our Faith Formation programs. If you are hearing a call to connect and wonder where you might serve, please be in touch. I'd love to chat with you.

May we all continue to grow in faith and know that we have the support of those around us here at church to lean on and reconnect with every week and every month.

Blessed to be among you, Laurie Chipman, Christian Education Director

DEACON'S CORNER



**New
Worship
Service**

Peter Schmalz, Deacons Co-Chair

MUSIC



WELCOME! As we begin a new season of prayer, praise, and other uplifting music, our Sanctuary Choirs (both our SATB mixed group, and our A Capella groups) we are seeking new voices and new faces to be among us and sing our prayers and praises through music. All that is required is a love of singing - we will help you in every way possible. Our choir, like our worship environment, is one of...Extravagant Welcome! Soli Deo Gloria!

SAVE THE DATES

October 6th ~ New Worship Service, 4:30 pm

October 14th ~ Blessing of the Animals

October 18th ~ 3rd Thursday Potluck Dish Share ~ 5:45-7pm ~ All are welcome!

October 28th ~ Halloween Party during Coffee Hour following the 10:15am service in Fellowship Hall

STEWARDSHIP

Your Stewardship
been busy
our fall
Campaign! We
talking with you in
making a pledge to



Committee has
preparing for
Stewardship
look forward to
October about
support the

work of our Church. Your contribution is an expression of your deep commitment to the Church, and we hope you will respond in as generous a way as possible to honor that commitment.

Following up on our successful capital campaign, it's important to remember that it is your annual pledge to the Stewardship campaign that keeps our doors open, funds our programs, pays staff and allows us to serve God through the many activities in our Church, our community and the wider world.

Help us stay on track by making a pledge to the 2019 Stewardship Campaign!

If you have never pledged before, we hope you will consider pledging this year. You can pledge any amount you feel you can give, and if your financial situation changes during 2019, you can always alter the amount of your pledge. The amount of your financial contribution to the Church is confidential.

We will be distributing the pledge letters to those attending the Sunday, September 1st and October 7th services. If you are unable to attend, we will mail them to you.

We hope you will join with other congregation members and bring your completed pledge card to Church on Sunday, October 21 for Stewardship Sunday. If you will not be at Church that day or want to send your pledge card in early, you can also mail in your pledge card, drop it off at the Church or email Financial Secretary Pat Seaver at vttri2@aol.com. **Even if you are unable to pledge or plan to keep the same pledge amount as last year, please note that on the pledge form and return it to the Church.** If you misplace or want another pledge card, you can call the Church office.

Thank you for the many ways you support our Church and its mission and know that it can make a real difference in the world in God's name. Your Stewardship Committee

Special Offerings: October-Neighbors in Need, November-Food Pantry, December-Christmas Fund

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN NEWS

Our Home, Our Future, Our Time...



As this newsletter goes to print, the Our Home, Our Future, Our Time Capital Campaign has received gifts and pledges of \$935,666. We went way over the top of our initial goal of \$822,000 and we are inching ever closer to our \$1.02 million stretch goal! In this season of gratitude, we give thanks for the incredible support of Our Home and for all of YOU. Way to go FCCEJ!

Campaign Project Update...Over the summer months, two roofing companies have replaced all the asphalt shingles on our buildings and repaired the slate roofs. New gutters have been installed to help better manage water runoff. We also hope to complete the replacement of old windows on the parsonage side of the building this fall. The Trustees are sending out a request for bids on the parking lot and vestibule/ADA bathroom addition near Fellowship Hall. Rather than tear apart that entrance to the church during our busy Holiday Craft Fair and Advent season, the Trustees have decided to schedule the parking lot work for late spring/early summer 2019. This will also allow time for the Trustees to hire a General Contractor to oversee this complex and multi-faceted project. Also, work on the organ repairs and maintenance will take place in spring 2019, either before or after Easter. It is so exciting and heartwarming to see the results of all our fundraising to date – YOU have made this possible! And the great news is that we will continue to see new projects take shape and unfold in the months ahead. The Trustees are working hard to finalize project details, secure bids and coordinate all of the projects. They are responsible for spending the funds we have raised to ensure our church is truly OUR HOME.

Farewell Rocket Ship!

As the Campaign Steering Committee shifts our focus away from active fundraising toward the important (and exciting!) work of project implementation, we have decided to say farewell to the Campaign thermometer (yes, the rocket ship) on the front lawn. We will have a smaller sign inside so that we can still show people our progress. After all, new gifts continue to come in, and every gift we receive will help us **FILL THE HEART** and make all our stretch goal projects possible. Once we have made more progress on the construction front, and have a better sense of our actual costs for the initial projects, then we can turn our attention back to raising those remaining stretch goal dollars. If you would like more information about the Capital Campaign, please contact Co-Chairs Kaki McGeary or Dave Johnson. We will continue to keep you updated with news about our progress as we move along. For a complete list of campaign projects, please visit the Capital Campaign page on the church website at www.fccej.org.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Kaki McGeary and Dave Johnson. Co-Chairs

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Music Time During Faith Formation

Cherubs ~ Preschool - 2nd grade gather in the Youth Lounge on Sundays to sing a song or two before moving on to their peer group locations. Jenny Bourn is their leader.

Joyful Noise ~ 3rd - 8th graders gather in the Marvin Lounge for songs and music before moving on to their peer group locations. Jessica Moos is their leader.

Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 8th Grade

October 7th ~ 1st Sunday Spiritual Friends with preschool & kindergarteners

World Communion Sunday ~ Intergenerational Worship

October 14th ~ Music & Peer Group time

October 21st ~ Hands-On Mission Sunday

October 28th ~ Music & Peer Group time



Acolytes

Acolytes carry the light of Christ into the Sanctuary at the beginning of worship to remind us that God is with us. Then they carry the light out at the end of worship to remind us that God continues to be with us wherever we go. This is a great way for all those who are in 3rd grade or older to participate in worship. You can acolyte solo or with another friend or parent. Signup sheet is located on the bulletin board before you walk up the steps to worship. If you missed our Acolyte Refresher & Orientation on Sept. 23rd and would like a time to practice, please contact me. lchipman@fccej.org

Ring the Bell

All children and their families are welcome to sign up and ring the church bell 15 minutes before worship begins. Signup sheet is located on the bulletin board before you walk up the steps to worship (beside the Acolyte signup). Instructions are at the top of the sheet as to which rope to pull and how many times to ring the bell. We love to have our church bell ring every Sunday morning before worship!



2018 Faith Formation Offering ~ Jamaica Children ~ Uniforms & Books



Current Giving Total is \$595.58

Keep remembering to bring your Offering!

\$1 a week can go a long way! Just think about what you spend \$1 on! If every child and youth contributed a \$1 a week we could raise over \$2000 to help Jamaica kids have uniforms & books so they can go to school

and learn to read and write. Bring your offering each week & don't forget to use the children's envelopes in the pews so our counters know your money goes to the Jamaica Children.





All our First Church Youth Programs are Parent Supported!
1 to 3 parents/volunteers are needed at each youth group gathering!
Youth Group bulletin boards can be found in the staff hallway.
Junior Youth by Laurie's office / High School Youth by Josh's office

Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

5th - 8th graders meet TWICE a month
Faith & Mission Focus ~ Meal ~ Fellowship/Games

We had a great turn out on Call Out Sunday, September 16th. We are looking forward to seeing those of you that we missed soon. Junior Youth Registration forms & Fall calendars can be found on the Junior Youth bulletin board right outside Laurie's office (where the red UCC youth t-shirt hangs).

Mark your calendars!

October 7th ~ 11:30am – 1:30pm ~ art project

October 21st ~ 3pm – 4:30pm ~ making cookies for Halloween Party

October 28th ~ Halloween Party after 10:15am service in Fellowship Hall

High School Youth Group @ FCCEJ

Sunday, October 7th, 5-7pm @FCCEJ

Pizza will be provided.

Friday, October 19th-Saturday, October 20th, overnight

For those who need a ride to Sam Mazza's Corn Maze, meet at the Marvin Lounge at 5:45pm, or you can be dropped off at the Corn Maze at 6pm. We'll stay at the Corn Maze until 8pm. We'll then go back to the church for food, games, movies. Lights out at midnight. Youth can be picked up at 9am.

Email: jimons@fccej.org, to let me know if your youth and/or you plan to attend.

Pastoral Note: I am working diligently to build a successful high school youth program. I reduced our routinely scheduled day to the first Sunday of each month, so we can work together to do a youth group related activity at another point in each month. For this to be successful, I need your help. I need your input on what activities you want to participate in, how you are able to serve, and super importantly, your communication and response to emails.

Our Nursery

Our Nursery is one of the first places that our little ones and their parents feel the love of God and learn that the church is a safe place to be. Parents ~ please be mindful of our Safe Conduct Guidelines and help us be good stewards of our child ratio (2 children to 1 adult). Volunteer to stay in the Nursery with your child if you see that extra hands will be needed.

Thank you for your help.

You are invited to stop by the Nursery and say hello to our new Nursery staff person, Jennifer Morse. Jennifer comes with years of experience and her first Sunday with us was Welcome Back Sunday.

FELLOWSHIP & LEARNING

JOY (Just Older Youth)

A group for the over 55 crowd (both men & women) meets the first Thursday of each month at 12 noon in the Marvin Lounge. If you have any questions about the group or need a ride please call the office. Please join us with your lunch on **Thursday, October 4** at noon in the Marvin Lounge. Have you ever wanted to find a way to organize memories of your personal life and experiences? Our guest speaker will be Lauren Starkey who will walk us through the process of writing a memoir. Come and learn techniques, share experiences and find your voice.



Essex Eats Out Community Dinners Continue...

1st Friday of Every Month ~ October 5th

Come - Help - Eat www.essexeatsoout.org

Public Voter Forum @ FCCEJ

As a denomination and church, we do not believe in supporting a particular candidate for elected office. We are a religious organization, not a political one. Rather we believe that each member should use their heart and in a faithfully way, vote their conscience for the best candidate. Plus, it is against the law for us to endorse a particular candidate. However, we do believe that everyone has a civic AND religious duty to participate in the process of governance. Therefore, we are partnering with Vermont Interfaith Action [VIA] to provide opportunities for our members and the wider community to meet those running for office and hear what they have to say so that everyone can make an informed decision. On **October 9th from 6:30 – 8:00, we will be hosting a Voter Forum** where the local candidates for our own district will come and debate the issues and answer questions from those gathered. Everyone is welcome.



****Brand New** Bereavement Support Group**

Many if not all of us have been touched by the loss of someone we hold near and dear. That loss stays with us and shapes us our entire lives and reminds us of the love we had for that person. The journey of grief takes many twists and turns and if one does not deal adequately with their losses, then it has the potential to negatively affect one's daily living forever. Sharon Dettenrieder has led Bereavement Support Groups for decades and will be working with our ordained staff to create a support group where people can go and share their grief journey and draw support from others who are travelling down the same road. Meetings in the Marvin Lounge on the **2nd Thursday of each month, 7-8:30 p.m. Oct 11th, Nov 8th & Dec 13th for the rest of 2018**. Everyone, church and community members are welcome, bring a friend!



Sunday, October 28th ~ Halloween Party

Join us on this fun Sunday after the 2nd service in Fellowship Hall when Peer Group time ends at 11:30am. There will be a costume parade, cookie decorating, donuts on a string and more!



Wednesday Night Searchers, 7pm

In October, we are reading *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* by Reinhold Niebuhr. Niebuhr writes cogently on the morality of individuals and the moral ethics of society or the lack thereof. He illuminates why moral individuals are unable to think outside of their own self-interest, and how that impacts society at large, and how to address this for the betterment of all. Niebuhr was the most influential American public theologian in the 20th Century. We'll have a healthy conversation on ethics, politics, religion, morality, and more. The book is available online via e-books or pdf and there are a few print copies around to borrow. Join us at any point in the month.

October 3: Resources of the Individual for Social Living; Read: Chapters 2 and 3

October 10: The Morality of Nations; Read: Chapters 4 and 5

October 17: Revolution; Read: Chapters 6 and 7

October 24: Political Force; Read: Chapters 8 and 9

October 31: Conflict: Individual vs. Society; Read: Chapter 10

Third Thursday Potluck Series

Third Thursday, October 18th from 5:45 to 7pm

Each one of the 3rd Thursday fellowship potlucks will have a theme. Bring a dish to share and join us from 5:45 to 7pm. Supper will begin by 6pm and our program will start around 6:30pm. Join us this month for Tom Shearer leading us in a discussion on EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE for teens. Our discussion will be centered on how to work with the young people in your life and how our young people can express themselves. Tom is a behavior coach in Winooski.



Everyone at First Church is welcome! Come be a part of this wonderful faith community and connect with God through Christian fellowship and a meal!

The Community of Bridge

On the third Friday of every month, anyone interested in having some fun playing bridge is welcome to come to the Marvin Lounge. We always have delicious snacks and the winner of the day gets a jar of Rev. Mark's homemade jam. On **October 19th**, we will be gathering from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. to play. There is always great conversation and sometimes some stunningly great bridge playing!!! All are welcome.



Faith on Tap

Meeting People in Meeting Places outside the Church

Come join us for food and drinks at McGillicuddy's Five Corners, 4 Pearl St, Essex Jct

October 19th, November 16th from 6:00-8:00 pm

Stay Tuned to the Bulletin for this Fall's dates & topics

Yoga @ First!



This fall, Jonah is offering **ONE** class on **Tuesdays** at 5:30-6:45pm in the Fellowship Hall. 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.

Wednesday, October 17th, Noontime Book Group



This month the Noontime Book Group is reading *An Address in Amsterdam* by Mary Dingee Fillmore. Although set in the Netherlands during the German occupation, its themes resonate strongly in America today. How do communities react as their rights are gradually eroded? How do their neighbors react as their friends and loved ones are declared undesirable and marginalized. What do they do to resist? The book shows what happens to one family in particular and the community in general as they face brutal oppression. Join us on **Wed. October 17 at noon** in the Marvin Lounge for fellowship and a lively discussion. Bring your Lunch!

Women's Spirituality Group

The Women's Spirituality Group will meet in Marvin Lounge at 9:30 am on the third Saturday of each month. All women of the church are invited to join us for interesting programs and wonderful fellowship. Please join us on **Saturday, October 20th** at 9:30 in Marvin Lounge. You are invited to bring a memento that represents a woman who has been important in your life. What was her impact on who you are today? We hope you will consider attending our meetings on the third Saturday of the month. It's a chance to get to know the awesome women of our church and build new friendships.



Coffee Clatter @ Martone's

Every Friday at 8:05 a.m., Revs Mark and Josh welcome everyone to come and talk about any subject you would like. We talk politics, camping, travel, church life, community issues....any and everything that comes up. We meet for one hour ~ join us!

NEW DAY & TIME ~ Ladies Crafting Night Out

Do you knit, crochet or do any other crafty projects that you would like to do in fellowship with others? Join us in the Marvin Lounge the 4th Wednesday of each month at **2-4pm, October 24th** for a time of common crafting. All are welcome!



Tuesday Morning Sermon Talkback, 8:30 – 10am

Each Tuesday morning 15-20+ people meet over coffee and goodies to discuss what went on that week in worship. We expand upon the sermon and explore the things that preaching just cannot get at in twenty minutes. We explore any and every subject that might properly come forward -although we try to leave politics out of it! We laugh, challenge, eat, share our stories and support one another in our life journeys. It is a good group that you would be very welcome to attend.

October 28th ~ New Member's Class Offered!



Have you been searching for a faith community to call home and think FCCEJ just might be the place? Have your kids enjoyed the Children's messages that they experience in church and like going to their Faith Formation Classes? Do you like the many ways that FCCEJ stands up for justice and does so much to help people less fortunate than ourselves with food and clothing? Do you like that fact that Jesus' love is offered to absolutely everyone regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or economic background and done so publicly and proudly? Do you just love the music and joy that comes from listening to our many choirs? Do you enjoy learning about the faith and what it has to do with our daily living found in Rev.'s Mark and Josh's sermons? If you answered "YES" to any of these questions and are interested in joining our band of believers, you are invited to come to a New Member's Class being offered after the 2nd service on October 28th in the Marvin Lounge. Everyone is welcome.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES



Missions Challenge

The Missions Committee has challenged the FCCEJ congregation to match our donation of \$500.00 to the UCC Disaster Ministries for relief from Hurricane Florence here in the United States and Super Typhoon Mangkhut in the Philippines. These matching donations can be made at any time. Please indicate in your check memo that the donation is for UCC Disaster Ministries.

The UCC Disaster Ministries provides relief in many ways for these natural disasters all over the world.

They are often the people who arrive after many other relief organizations have come and gone. For example, they continue to actively provide support in Puerto Rico, devastated during last year's hurricane season. They receive information about needs during these disasters from groups such as FEMA, National

VOAD (National Association of Voluntary Organizations), partners and UCC Conferences and Conference Disaster Coordinators. The work and funding they provide goes a long way to help victims of these disasters. If you would like to donate and help us with our congregational challenge, please do so at any time by placing the donation in the offering plate or sending a check into the church office. If you would like more information about UCC Disaster Ministries, go to www.ucc.org/disaster.

Thank you all for your support!

FCCEJ Jamaica 2015 Team Reflections ~ Mandy Wark

I always looked forward to mission trips with FCCEJ—from service work in Buffalo, New York to learning about Heifer International while volunteering on the farm in Massachusetts, each trip brought new opportunities to have fun with members of our church family, and to give back to another community. I hold the memories, as well as the people I met along the way, close to heart. When I decided to sign up for the Jamaica trip, I was just as nervous as I was excited. I had no idea that the trip would change my life in the ways that it did.



During our short time in St. Thomas, Jamaica, I was exposed to the realities of poverty in a way that turned my idea of the world, and my faith, on its axis. I still remember the weight of these truths as we drove through the country, watching the lives rushing by behind the safety of the bus windows. I thought of my home, my school, my church, and how much I wanted to break through the glass, to do something real. This trip allowed us to do something to help the members of a community who are just as deserving of love and support as anyone else, and yet they do not have many of the things we take for granted.

The service trip to Jamaica opened my eyes to how much I still had to learn about the world, and I have since been “bitten by the travel bug”, as my mom likes to say. I traveled abroad to India after joining a global leadership development group at school called Girl Up, which empowers youth and encourages gender equality. I used what I learned in Jamaica and in India to help plan fundraisers, and was inspired to learn more about youth advocacy and global health. I have Jamaica to thank for all of my experiences abroad during my studies, as well as the plans I have for my future.

The lasting impact that this trip had on our group was clear in the conversations with some of the youth members of the trip to Jamaica. Abigail Evans, a junior at Saint Lawrence University, reflected on having the chance to meet the children and teachers who would be using the community center we helped restore.

“I still remember how grateful every single community member was; some were even brought to tears.

The work we did there was greatly appreciated and the community made sure to remind us of that whenever they had the chance. That is a feeling I will never forget.” For Nicholas Bouffard, a junior at UVM, the experience helped him to connect with different perspectives and realize the potential for using his own privilege to help others. “The experience grounded me in the privileges I had from the start and echo through my own interactions on campus as a tour guide and a senator of the student government, welcoming people of all means to UVM. I have since had a point of common ground with my religious peers and a springboard for conversations and relationships alike.” We were all blessed to have the support of a church community that inspires such endeavors, and to have the chance to give back.

2019 Jamaica Team ~ How You Can Help!

Members of the 2019 Jamaica Bound Team have already started meeting and working on getting to know one another and starting to raise funds for the trip. We are excited to have a team of 16 people! They are: Sharon Dettenrieder, Carolyn Rushford, Mark & Nicholas Mendes, Rick & Sam Dooley, Caitlin & Kaki McGeary, Christine Czarny, Dave Dewey, Nolan Boerger, Emma Parker, Jackson Parker, Peter & Zachary Schmalz, and Aliyah Watt.

How can you help? Our first fundraiser, “Stock” sales will begin in late October. Beginning on Sunday, October 28th, there will be team members in Fellowship Hall on Sundays selling shares of “stock” for the trip. Each share costs \$25.00. This is a great way for members of the congregation to invest in this intergenerational, international mission program.

Also, be sure to put March 9, 2019 on your calendar for our second fundraiser, the annual Calcutta event. This is the biggest fundraiser for the Jamaica program and lots of fun!!

Thank-you for your support!

Dismas House

Across the state of Vermont there are four Dismas Houses that provide shelter and support to men and women making the difficult transition from incarceration to new lives. For several years now, we have once a month been serving a dinner on the 4th Wednesday of the month to the residents of the Winooski Dismas. Living there is a professional manager along with 10-15 people who have been released after serving their prison terms. Our participation in this program helps to lessen the feelings of

estrangement that people released from prison are often burdened with. The residents and staff are extremely friendly and appreciative of our help. **We are currently looking for volunteers for December**

26th. Please contact Ed Steele at 871-5897 or edwardmsteele@msn.com if interested or with any questions. A sign-up sheet is in the hallway exiting Fellowship Hall. We need four people to volunteer for each date (space is limited so that the residents and guests have a meaningful dinner experience. 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.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop News

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

Mark these dates on your Calendar

Saturday October 6th Shop Open from 9am to 1pm

Sunday October 14th Open House from 9:30 to 12:30 Refreshments will be served

Saturday October 20th Shop Open from 9 to 1

Saturday November 3rd Shop Open from 9 to 1

Saturday November 10th Shop Open from 9 to 1 – Holiday Section will be ready



Heavenly Food Pantry

Next Heavenly Food Pantry days are Monday, October 8th, 5:30-7:30pm
and Thursday, October 25th, 2-6pm

We are in need of boxed mac n' cheese and sample size toothpaste tubes. They are perfect to give out with a toothbrush. Please ask your dentist the next time you have your teeth cleaned if they would donate a case!

Volunteers for 2018-19 Faith Formation Programs

Many ways to support First Church Children & Youth

Can you say YES to these statements?

- I have been a part of the family here at FCCEJ for the least 6 months.
- I would like to help support our children and youth continue to grow in their faith.
- I have a willingness to learn and help them, knowing I don't need to have all the answers.
 - I believe the FCCEJ Faith Formation programs are vital to this church
 - I am willing to support this ministry with my time and talents.

Nursery ~ join our staff person and be a friendly face to the parents and the littlest ones among us during first service or second. We strive for a two to one ratio in the Nursery.

1st Sunday Spiritual Friends ~ join Laurie on the first Sunday of the month on the 2nd floor and we'll have great conversations with the kids. Read a story, have snack, Godly playdough time and return to worship for communion.

Peer Class Leaders & Helpers ~ support one of our groups from preschool up through 8th grade. Laurie sends out a weekly email to help keep you connected with plans for groups and special Sundays. All items are gathered for you.

Hands-On Mission Sundays ~ preschool up through youth are together for a time of fellowship across the ages for on these days with a mission focus and group building activities.

Youth Group Helpers ~ come be present with the youth! Still a youth at heart? Want to get reconnected with youth today? Join a group and or help with food. Every time youth gather we are always looking for adults to help.

Faith Formation Peer Groups for 2018-19

Preschool leaders - Erna Deutsch & _____

Kindergarten leaders - Jenny Bourn & _____

First & Second Grade leaders – Allison VanSteensburg & Barb Smith

Third & Fourth Grade leaders – Lisa Clark & Sue Conti

Fifth-Eighth Grade leaders – Pastor Josh & Laurie

High School Youth are encouraged to help with a peer group and/or attend worship.

See Josh or Laurie for questions or information.

Join the team of leaders and helpers for a peer group. For more information and contact Laurie.

Pick up a copy of our yellow 2018-19 Faith Formation Family Calendar



10th Anniversary ~ Five Corners Christmas Craft Fest

Saturday, November 10th 9am -3pm

Mark your calendar for this big holiday event! To make this event a success at our church your assistance with the following would be greatly appreciated:

Nearly New - Consider donating your gentle used items to the fest! We can make almost \$2,000 from this area. We will be accepting **donations in Marvin Lounge Starting October 7th.**

The following is a quick list of best sellers: Books, Holiday items especially Christmas, Frames, Games, Accessories – Scarves, purses and jewelry – Last year we made over \$350 on these items, Dishes.

Silent Auction – This is the biggest fundraiser of the Craft Fest. **We really need donations from church members.** The following are suggestions: Donating Tickets to a theater, arts or sporting event, Giving golf/tennis lessons, Baking a cookie/pie/cake/bread of the month, Making a homemade dinner, Sewing/babysitting/cleaning/yard work, Homemade items such sweater, quilt, table runner, Original Artwork, Gift Certificate to your favorite store.

Crafters – we have 2 tables open for the craft area. Please contact Ann Gray at 878-4088 if you are interested. Cost to church members is \$20.

The committee will have signup sheets after first service and second service for making a donation or signing up to volunteer at one of our amazing areas starting **October 21st**. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Linda Bogardus at 872-8972 or lbogardus@myfairpoint.net.

Thank you to everyone for your support from Linda Bogardus, Ann Gray, Cathy Shearer, Elaine Raymond, Phyllis Willey, Val Gabert and Mary Gratton.

Got Coats?



Winter Coat Drive – Donations by Nov. 11th for Nov. 15th Food Pantry

A Winter Coat Drive is currently underway to include coats, snowsuits, snowpants, hats, mittens, scarves, and boots for children and adults. This winter gear will be distributed at the Heavenly Food Pantry on November 15th, as well as to the men who live at the Dismas House in Burlington. We ask that the winter gear is clean and in good repair not to include sweaters or other winter clothing. We would like to receive all donations by

Nov 11th, so that we have time to organize them prior to pantry day. Please drop donations in the box in the hallway of the administrative offices marked 'Winter Coat Drive'. Please contact Sue Conti at sueconti@comcast.net if you have any questions. Thank you so much for your support of this program and for helping our neighbors in need.

FCCEJ Volunteer Trip to the Vermont Food Bank in Barre!

A great chance for volunteer work for the holidays! You are invited to volunteer on **Saturday, December 1, 2018 from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm** for a food sort-a-thon at the Vermont Food Bank in Barre, Vermont. We have openings for 12-16 people, 14+.



This is a popular volunteer activity at First Church because volunteers report that they enjoy getting so much volunteering done in a short period of time. This volunteer activity is a fast paced sort-a-thon where we fill boxes with food for senior citizens, although we occasionally help with other activities. Those who choose to carpool will meet at First Church at 6:45 AM and return by about 1:00 pm. The Food Bank provides coffee and snacks during the break. We hope you'll help Vermonters in need! Email Cynthia Kelley cynthiak222@gmail.com for the sign up link and more details or questions on this activity.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY



Pride Parade- September 8th

FCCEJ had an amazing contingent of people representing us and passing out love and unconditional welcome at the Pride Celebration in Burlington! It was a beautiful day filled with God's love and blessings!



150th Quilt Progress

The Quilters have made beautiful progress on the 150th Quilt and would love to show their handiwork to anyone who would like to see it. It will be hanging in the Marvin Lounge from Oct 7-14th and then they will be hand quilting it over the winter months.

October Birthdays

1st Bonita Petherbridge 2nd Carolyn Ambrosait, Carlene Lawrence, Aliyah Watt 3rd Gail Babinger, Shannon Kelly, Holly Parker 4th Rick Dooley, Andrea Goedken 5th John Burnett, Kelli Cieplicki 6th Joe Wells 7th Jed Cilley, Meaghan Frank, Joyce Jacobs, Ethan John, Dick Leavitt 9th Suzanne Eaton, Nancy Hunt, Paul Hyde 11th Deanna Hayes, Zach Higgins 12th Sophie Krauss, Marilyn Mitchell, Jonah Moos 13th Bernie Currier, Nate Dooley, Mary McClintock, Gordon Schmalz 14th Kevin Donley 15th Lauren Boerger 16th Kelley Charland, Paula Duke 18th Jessica Poratti 19th Stephen Hayes, Michelle Jackson, Sylvia Leavitt, Garry Weischedel 20th Nicole Frank, Ashley Warren 23rd Samantha Gilliam, Emilie McDonald 24th Alison Wermer 26th Alex Abakah, Mark Chadurjian, Martin Deutsch 27th Nancy Allen, Russell Wilson 29th Liam Palmer, Beth Paul 30th Kim Hoffman, Bill Keithcart 31st Mason Griffiths, Carl Houghton, Gorden Starkey



Dear Church Family, The lovely yellow rose made my 92nd birthday even more special!
Thanks for this yearly tradition.
Gene Cheek



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Inside...

News From Your Pastor
Special Services & Events in October
Associate Pastor News
Laurie’s Lens
Deacon’s Corner
Music
Save The Dates

Stewardship
Capital Campaign News
Children, Youth & Families
Fellowship & Learning
Mission Opportunities
Volunteer Opportunities
Our Church Family