

***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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The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
United Church of Christ
November 25, 2018
First Service ~ Christ the King Sunday

A Welcoming Community,

Accepting and Serving All

In the Spirit of Christ

Order of Worship

Prelude

An Extravagant Welcome

*No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome in this place.*

Welcome Greeting and Announcements

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

Introit

Give Thanks

Smith

Call to Worship

Leader: Today is the last Sunday of the church year; everything has been building up to this day; it is the culmination of the church's journey. It is the last and most important lesson to learn: Christ is King!

Lectern Side: Some of us proclaim that Jesus is the greatest teacher ever and that his words concerning love reflect the very heart of God.

Pulpit Side: Some of us draw power from his sacrifice on the cross as either a means to draw us to God or way to express the true power of sacrificial love.

Lectern Side: Some of us journey with Jesus as a friend and constant companion through the ups and downs of life. He is a presence that gives us power, peace and persuasion.

Pulpit Side: Some of us work with Jesus to change the world into a place of justice and righteousness, a prophet mighty in word and deed.

Leader: Christ is our Teacher, our Savior, our Friend and our Liberator. Christ is a mysterious presence that can never be defined or limited by human words or constructs. He is pure logic, unbridled passion, the uniter of all things, the most important figure in human history; Jesus is the heart of our Church. Come, let us worship and praise Christ's holy name.

***Opening Hymn**

Beautiful Jesus

#44

Prayer of Invocation [composed and led by the Deacon on Duty]

Children's Message

During both services, Jennifer, our staff person, is in the Nursery where there is a speaker to hear the service and it is streamed into Fellowship Hall. After the Children's Message second service, children in preschool up through Senior High are welcome to join us for our Hands-On Mission Project. Parents/Grandparents and older siblings are welcome to accompany the kids, help them get settled and stay or return to worship. Children 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.

Pastoral Prayer **and Unison Lord's Prayer**

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

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.

Musical Response

Thank You Jesus

African folk song

***Hymn**

Now Thank We All Our God

#419

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Prophetic Daniel 7:9-14 [page 642]

New Testament Gospel John 15:1-11 [page 84]

From Tradition: The Nicene Creed [adapted]

We believe in one God, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Child of God, eternally begotten from Almighty God, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Divine. Through Jesus all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

Musical Anthem *You Raise Me Up* Lovland/Graham

Sermon *Just Jesus* Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem *The Swan* Saint-Saens

***The Doxology #778**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

***Hymn** *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us* **#252**

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, holding you in love.
Go now in peace, in faith and in love**

***Postlude**

***Please stand if you are able.**

*The flowers on the altar are given by Dennis & Sue Conti
in honor of their 40th wedding anniversary.*

Deacon: Erica Garvey
Ushers: 1st Service: ; 2nd Service:
Greeters: 1st Service: ; 2nd Service:

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Lilly & Donny
Gabrielle
Carol Janwich
Bruce Giannuzzi
Mike Heston

Barbara Howe
Judy Janwich
Richard Ansell
Mark McKenzie & Family
Mike K

Holton Family
Eric & Shannon
Joe Phenix
Jenna
Frank Polanshek

*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@fccej.org*

* * * **TODAY** * * *

TODAY ~ The Giving Tree Is Here!

Perhaps you noticed the Christmas tree that is set up in the narthex. It holds tags for approximately 50 children in Essex Junction, Essex Town and Westford. For each child there are three tags, two of the tags ask for gifts of clothing that the child needs and the third tag asks for a book, game, toy or gift card for the child. There will be a group of tags with red ribbons that combine all three gift tags for one child. All of the other tags have green or gold ribbons. Please consider taking a tag or two to bring a smile to a local youngster. Be sure to sign your name on the sheets by the base of the tree identifying the tag number(s) that you have taken in case we need to follow up with information. Wrapped gifts, with the tags securely attached, need to be returned to the church no later than Dec. 12. We will be distributing the gifts on Dec. 19. Families that we help have expressed how much they appreciate the gifts we give their children and the joy that abounds on Christmas Day. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Elaine Raymond at 879-7350.



**TODAY! 2019 Jamaica Team
Stock Sales Fundraiser**

Our first fundraiser, "Stock" sales, has begun!

Team members are now selling shares of stock to family, friends, and supporters. Each share costs \$25.00. There is a table on Sunday mornings between and after services to learn about the Jamaica Mission Program and purchase stocks. This is a great way for members of the congregation to invest in this intergenerational, international service program. If you need more information, talk with a team member or stop by the table and see us.

TODAY! Please Join Us For Fellowship Time After Worship!

Your Hospitality Hosts are working hard to encourage a time of fellowship after each worship service. Please see signup sheets on the tables by the food if you would like to help out by baking/cooking/bringing something to share one week. We would like to give a shout out to the Quality Bake Shop who has been donating each week some 'day old's' and to Rose Drost who has been diligently picking them up! Thank you! Please show QBS some love the next time you go in by thanking them and giving them your business!



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



2019 Stewardship Campaign **Help us keep the train on track!**

Thank you to those who have returned their pledge cards to the 2019 Stewardship Campaign! If you haven't already, please return your card asap and mark either "yes" or "no", indicating whether or not you are able to make a pledge for 2019. You may also email your confidential pledge to Financial Secretary Pat Seaver at vttri2@aol.com. We need to hear from everyone, whether or not you plan to pledge or are keeping the same pledge amount as last year. 80% of our income comes from YOU, and we depend heavily on these funds for our operations, our programs and the many people they serve.

Yoga & Meditation @ First !



Jonah is now offering **ONE** class on **Tuesdays** at 5:30-6:45pm in the Fellowship Hall. All levels from beginner to experienced welcome. You can bring your own mat or borrow one of Jonah's. Classes are free but donations are gratefully accepted for FCCEJ. A half hour meditation session is also offered following Yoga @ 7pm.



Tuesday Morning Sermon Talkback

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



Wednesday Night Searchers

Meeting at 7pm in the Marvin Lounge

Coffee Clatter Fridays 8am

Pastors Mark & Josh are still meeting people for discussion and breakfast on Fridays @ Martone's. Join them for fellowship & great discussion!



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



Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 8th grade

November 25th ~ Hands-On Mission Sunday

Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2018

Total for 2018 \$687.67

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

Scholarship money for school uniforms and books for children.

Remember to bring your offering each week, \$1 a week can go a long way! Please use the envelopes in the pew holders so your \$ goes to the right place.



High School Youth @ FCCEJ

November 25th, Dec 2nd, 9th, 15th ~ Christmas Pageant Rehearsals
For all youth, 5th-12th grade, 5-7pm

Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

5th - 8th graders meet TWICE a month

Faith & Mission Focus with Fellowship/Games

Still In Need of Faith Formation Volunteers

There are many ways to support First Church kids and youth:

Nursery – join our staff person and be a friendly face during first service or second.

Spiritual Friends – First Sundays of the month on the 2nd floor have great conversations, read a story, have snack, Godly playdoh time & return for communion.

Peer Group Leaders & Helpers – support a group from preschool - 8th grade.

Hands On Mission Helpers – all ages together for a time of fellowship on these days with a mission focus and group building activities.

Youth Group Helpers – Every time youth gather we are always looking for adult help. Contact Laurie or Josh for more information and to volunteer!

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



Dismas House Meal Volunteers All Set for 2018!

Members of the Church have volunteered to provide dinners for residents of Dismas House Winooski for the fourth Wednesdays in both November and December. A big "Thanks" to all who have supported the Church's Dismas House mission. If you want more information about the program, please contact Ed Steele, the current facilitator of the program. (802) 871-5897 or edwardmsteele@msn.com.

Bottle/Can Drive

Thank you for all your donations! Please make sure that you only put in the cans & bottles that are **redeemable**, not just **recyclable** - thank you!



**Next Food Pantry days are Monday, December 10th, 5:30 - 7:30pm
and Thursday, December 20th, 2-6pm**



We are in need of fruit juice, 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 could donate a case!



Got Donations? Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

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

Open Saturdays Dec 1st & 15th 9 am to 1 pm

Donations needed: holiday sweaters, women & men's winter jackets, women's winter boots, women's shirts, winter gloves & hats Donations gratefully accepted anytime in our bin!



Usher/Greeter Volunteers Needed

Fall & Winter dates are all up on the Sign Up Genius-please volunteer!
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0e4facae2daafe3-ushergreeter>



VT Foodbank Volunteer Trip

December 1st, 8am-12pm, group activity bagging meals @ the Barre location See Nov. Newsletter or contact cynthiak222@gmail.com for more details

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

November 25th, Dec 2nd, 9th, 15th ~ Christmas Pageant

Rehearsals

For all youth, 5th-12th grade, 5-7pm



December 1st ~ New Worship Service!

Once a month on the first Saturday of the month, 4:30 pm
Interactive and Communion included.

December 1st ~ It Takes A Village: Voices For Equity & Belonging

8:30am-12:30pm @ EMS Cafeteria

December 13th ~ Second Thursday of the Month ~

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. 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 share their grief journey and draw support from others who are travelling down the same road. Meetings in the Marvin Lounge , 7-8:30 p.m. Dec 13th for the rest of 2018. Everyone, church and community members are welcome, bring a friend!



December 16th ~ Christmas Pageant ~ Both Services

December 23rd ~ ONE Service, Lessons & Carols, 10AM

December 24th ~ Christmas Eve Services

5pm Family Service
9pm Lessons & Carols
11pm Carols & Communion

THIS WEEK: November 25th - December 1st

- SUNDAY:** **8:30 am** Worship Service / Sanctuary
 10:15 am Worship Service / Sanctuary
 1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
 5:00 - 7:00 pm Pageant Rehearsal / Sanctuary & Youth Lounge
- MONDAY:** 9:30 - 10:30 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 - 7:30 pm Girl Scout Troop / Third Floor
 7:00 - 8:30 pm Venture Crew / 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
 5:30 - 6:45 pm Yoga w/Jonah / Fellowship Hall
 6:30 - 8:30 pm Eagle Scout Board of Review / Third Floor
 7:00 - 9:00 pm Trustees / Marvin Lounge
 7:00 - 7:30 pm Meditation w/Jonah / Nursery
- WEDNESDAY:** 9:30 - 10:30 am Tai Chi / Fellowship Hall
 10:00 am - 3:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open
 12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
 12:00 - 1:30 pm Book Discussion Group / Marvin Lounge
 2:00-4:00 pm Ladies Night Out / Marvin Lounge
 5:30 - 7:00 pm Finally @ First / Sanctuary
 6:30 - 8:30 pm Eagle Scout Board of Review / Third Floor
 7:00 - 9:00 pm Wednesday Night Searchers / Marvin Lounge
 7:00 - 8:30 pm Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall
- THURSDAY:** **9:00 am** Newsletter Volunteers
 12:00 noon Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge
 3:00 - 4:00 pm Easterseals Clinician Meeting / Third Floor
 6:15 - 7:00 pm Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary
 7:00 - 8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary
- FRIDAY:** 12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
- SATURDAY:** **9:00 am - 1:00 pm** Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open
 9:00am - 12:00 pm Nepali Comm Worship & Meal / Sanctuary & FH
 1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
 4:30 - 5:30 pm Worship Service (Communion) / Fellowship Hall

MINISTRY AT FIRST CHURCH

Church Administrator: *Jen Dooley* [welcome@fccej.org]

Music & Choir Director: *Carol Spradling* [cspradling@fccej.org]

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]

Joyful Noise: *Jessica Moos* [jessicamoosvermont@gmail.com]

Men At First Director: *Bill Bickford, Jr.* [bill.bickford@aol.com]

Sanctuary Choir/Heavenly Harmony Director: *Carol Spradling* [cspradling@fccej.org]

Committee / Church Officer Contacts

President, Chair Human Resources Committee: *Carl Wermer* [879-7650]

Vice President, Chair Finance & Pastoral Relations: *Maureen Evans* [879-7517]

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* [777-9446]

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: *Barb Smith* [878-6866]

Stewardship: *Kathy Finnie* [734-9688]

Trustees: *Kevin Meilleur* [238-4041]

Ushering:

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]

mission
M O M E N T S
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

November 25, 2018

Reign of Christ

John 18:33-37

A Wise Reign

Jesus said his kingdom was not of this world. He said that to Pilate, the tool of the Roman Empire. He might have meant, “I am not of your kingdom. My understanding of how things work is not the same as yours, O Pilate.” Who are the Pilates of this world today? To whom would Jesus be speaking if he was on trial today? And where would that trial take place?

Jesus always knew what to say to the powers of his world. He spoke truth with compassion. He said what was genuine and from his heart without apology and without rancor.

We are now in times of challenge and controversy surrounded by Pilates. All of them think they are King of the world. Just as Pilate interrogated Jesus we are all interrogated by the world. And sometimes the questions are worth considering. They might be: Where do we stand? Who do we serve? In who or what will we find hope today? Who has the power? Who gets to ask the questions? Who gets to give the answers?

This last Sunday in Pentecost is called Christ the King Sunday. It’s a late addition to the liturgical calendar. It was introduced by the Roman Catholic church in 1925. Originally called Reign of Christ Sunday, protestant denominations adopted it as European churches saw the rise of ideologies like Fascism, Communism and the Nazism. Declaring Christ “King” was a way of saying there is another power in this world.

This Sunday’s scripture is perfect because it says that yes, he is a king; he’s just not Pilate’s kind of king. It might suggest that we could look around and see who today thinks they are King of this world? Who is the true King? Whose world is this?

The UCC Statement of Faith says many things about the power of people of faith, about our call to be a united and uniting church and witnesses to a triune God. Among those statements is one that reflects this scripture. It says: *We believe that the UCC is called to be a prophetic church. As in the tradition of the prophets and apostles, God calls the church to speak truth to power, liberate the oppressed, care for the poor and comfort the afflicted.*

When Jesus speaks to Pilate he is doing just what the church is called to do in his name:
Speak truth to power.