

***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**

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The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
United Church of Christ
December 9, 2018
Second Service ~ Second Sunday of Advent

A Welcoming Community,

Accepting and Serving All

In the Spirit of Christ

Order of Worship

Prelude

Prepare Ye

Schwartz

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 by Cherub Choir

This Little Light of Mine

Loes

Lighting the Advent Candle: PEACE

Leader: Prepare! Prepare! The prophet Isaiah proclaims: "A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and authority will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

People: Prepare! Prepare the coming of the Lord, the Prince of Peace!

Leader: Prepare! Prepare! The prophet continues: "There will be vast authority and endless peace for David's throne and for his kingdom, establishing and sustaining it with justice and righteousness now and forever."

People: Prepare! Prepare the coming of the Lord, the Prince of Peace!

Leader: Today on the second Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of Peace. The Prince of Peace comes "to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadows of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

People: Prepare! Prepare the coming of the Lord, the Prince of Peace!

An Advent Song

**Light the Advent candle, two: Think of heavenly harmony;
angels singing "Peace on earth" at the blessed Savior's birth.
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.**

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

***Opening Hymn**

City of God [song sheet]

Schutte

Children's Message

During worship our staff person, Jennifer, is in the Nursery for children under 3 years. There is audio in there and the service is streamed to Fellowship Hall. After the Children's Message second service, Preschool - eighth grade are welcome to follow Laurie for Faith Formation with music & peer groups on the 2nd & 3rd floors. High School youth are welcome to join in as helpers. Adults can accompany children, get them settled, stay or return to worship. When peer groups end at 11:30am, children in Preschool - 2nd grade will need to be signed out by an authorized person.

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

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, Who orderest all things mightily;

To us the path of knowledge show, And teach us in her ways to go,

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Prophetic Malachi 3: 1-5 [pg. 692]

New Testament Gospel Luke 1:68-79 [pg. 44]

Anthem *Mary Was the First One to Carry the Gospel* Gaither

Sermon *A Path to Peace* Rev. Josh Simon

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem *Mary Did You Know* Lowry

***The Doxology #119**

As with Gladness, Folk of Old

**As with gladness, folk of old, did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, burning bright;
So most gracious Lord may we, ever more be led to thee.
As they offered gifts most rare, at the manger rude and bare;
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy;
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ to you, from whom they spring.**

***Hymn** *The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore* #115 [vs 1, 2, 6]

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction

Sung Community Benediction** ***Let There Be Peace on Earth

**Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be!
With God our Creator, family all are we,
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry breath I take, let this be my solemn vow;
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.**

*Postlude

*Please stand if you are able.

*The flowers on the altar are given by Linda Bogardus
in loving memory of Joan Baynham.*

Deacon: Amy Trimble

Ushers: 1st Service: Ann Gray; 2nd Service: Gorden & Lauren Starkey

Greeters: 1st Service: ; 2nd Service: Marilyn & Steve Mitchell

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Lilly & Donny
Gabrielle
Carol Janwich
Bruce Giannuzzi
Mike K

Barbara Howe
Judy Janwich
Richard Ansell
Mark McKenzie & Family
Frank Polanshek
Kathy & Rob

Holton Family
Eric & Shannon
Joe Phenix
Jenna
Carolyn

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 * * ***



Christmas Poinsettias

Order your poinsettias for Christmas services in memory or honor of a loved one or special event. They will be the same as last year, \$12.95 and come in red, white, pink and a marbled variety. Please place your order by Sunday 12/16, your dedication will be remembered in the Christmas bulletins. Please remember to take them home as well and enjoy them after the Christmas Eve services.

**LAST DAY! 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.



2019 Altar Flower Chart Is UP!

Remember a loved one or a special event in your life by dedicating the altar flowers on Sunday. Maplehurst Florist creates two vases for \$34. Please take them after the services or we can try to find someone to enjoy them when Mark & Josh visit during the week. The chart is in the Fellowship Hall hallway to the Sanctuary.

**TODAY, Christmas Pageant Rehearsal for PreK-4th Grade, 11:30-12pm
5th - 12th grade, 11:30-2pm**

More info in the Children, Youth & Family section

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



Monday ~ Heavenly Food Pantry, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Yoga & Meditation @ First !

Jonah is now offering 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 this week, 12/12 at 7pm in the Marvin Lounge
Next meeting will be January 2, 2019

This Thursday ~ 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 Dettnerieder 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!



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!



Submissions for January Newsletter-Due This Friday, 12/14

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



Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 8th grade

December 9th ~ Music & Peer Group time

December 16th ~ Pageant Sunday ~ All in worship

December 23rd ~ 10am worship ~ intergenerational for all ages

December 30th ~ 2 services ~ intergenerational for all ages

TODAY, Christmas Pageant Rehearsal for PreK-4th Grade

December 9th 11:30-12:00 Join the older youth in telling the Christmas Story. Pick a part (angel, shepherd, magi, sheep) and learn your entrances and who to follow. Pageant is Dec. 16th



Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2018

Total for 2018 \$712.67

*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

Help usher & greet on the 1st Sunday of the month during 10:15am service

Christmas Pageant Rehearsals

Dec 9th, 11:30-2; 15th, TBA ~ For all youth, 5th-12th grade



Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

Mark your calendars!

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 15th & Jan 5th 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

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

Giving Tree Gifts Due on December 12th!

We will be distributing the gifts on Dec. 19. If you took a tag or two please return them by 12/12. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Elaine Raymond at 879-7350.



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

Dec 9th & 15th ~ Christmas Pageant Rehearsals

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



December 12th ~ Giving Tree Gifts Due

We will be distributing the gifts on Dec. 19. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Elaine Raymond at 879-7350.



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

January 5th ~ New Worship Service!

Once a month on the first Saturday of the month, 4:30 pm

Interactive and Communion included.



January 8th ~ Finance/Council Meetings [moved from the 1st]

January 10th ~ 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. 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!

THIS WEEK: December 9th - 15th

- 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
2:30 - 8:00 pm Food Pantry [open 5:30-7:30] / FH & Kitchen
5:30 - 6:30 pm Group Victory / Youth Lounge
5:30 - 7:30 pm Girl Scouts / Third Floor
6:00 - 7:30 pm Boy Scout Alumni Assoc. / 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
7:00 - 9:00 pm Deacons / 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
3:30 - 5:30 pm Heavenly Food Pantry Board Meeting / Marvin Lounge
5:30 - 7:00 pm Finally @ First / Sanctuary
6:00 - 7:30 pm Currier Bell Choir / Sanctuary
7:00 - 9:00 pm Wednesday Night Searchers / Youth Lounge
7:00 - 8:30 pm Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall
- THURSDAY:** **8:00 - 9:00 am** Jamaica Bound Calcutta Committee / Marvin Lounge
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
3:00 - 4:00 pm Easterseals Clinician Meeting / Third Floor
4:00 - 8:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open
6:15 - 7:00 pm Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary
7:00 - 8:30 pm Bereavement Group / Marvin Lounge
7:00 - 9:00 pm Essex Eats Out Meeting / Youth Lounge
7:00 - 8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary
- FRIDAY:** ****NEWSLETTER DEADLINE****
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
6:30 - 10:30 pm Scrapbooking Journey / Marvin Lounge
7:30 - 10:30 pm Grange / Fellowship Hall
- SATURDAY:** 9:00am - 12:00 pm Nepali Comm Worship & Meal / Sanctuary & FH
9:30 - 11:30 am Women's Spirituality / Marvin Lounge
1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / 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
U N I T E D C H U R C H O F C H R I S T

December 9, 2018

Second Sunday of Advent

Luke 3:1-6

Make Ready

It is a troubling moment in the history of Israel when John the Baptist appears in Luke's Gospel. It is the fifteenth month of the Roman emperor Tiberius, & Pontius Pilate is governor. Herod and his family, political sycophants and bullies run Jerusalem and the countryside. They do this with the support and backing of the full might of the Roman Empire. John calls across the centuries from his anxious and troubled world. He calls to us urging preparation because something is coming, he says. Make everything ready he tells us, and let no mountains or crooked paths stand in the way. Make smooth the roads that will bear the good news.

There are all kinds of ways to make roads smooth aren't there? You can clear them of debris, pave them, or get out the heavy equipment and begin digging through the mountain. How does the church of the twenty first century smooth out the roads to make way for the good news of the birth of Jesus? Sometimes the good news we tell is born in the good deeds we do, and even in the physical roads we clear.

Most of the roads in Puerto Rico were wiped out in the category 5 Hurricane Maria, whose sustained winds of 155 mph and rain pounded the island dealing the worst natural disaster in the island's history. A history that includes 120 years as part of the United States, becoming a territory in 1898, a Commonwealth in 1952 and, in 1917, its inhabitants becoming citizens of the US. This island off the coast of Florida has a population of almost 3.5 million people (roughly the same as Connecticut). Since Hurricane Maria, much of the island has been cleared and power restored. The Disaster Ministries of the United Church of Christ has been on the ground since just after the storm and has remained long after the big equipment and military vessels left. As of the summer of 2018 there was much left to do. While the island's beautiful tourist spots were open and welcoming, people in the rural and remote parts of the island still needed assistance. UCC Disaster Ministries have stuck with those people by organizing volunteer teams. Teams from churches across the country have been showing up to help with repairs and thru donations from congregations and individuals have been able to smooth the roads and make everything ready so that people of Puerto Rico know they are not forgotten.