

***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 16, 2018
Christmas Pageant Sunday ~ Third Sunday of Advent

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 1st Service

What Child Is This

Cornelia Abakah-Cello

2nd Service

Jingle Bells

Cooper Spaulding-Violin

Lighting the Advent Candle: Joy

Leader: Jesus came into the world to create justice, challenge people to live into fullness of life and build a community grounded in love. A key element in that love is to experience the fullness of joy.

People: Jesus demands that we joyfully celebrate life and beauty; Jesus wants us to laugh, dance and feel good about ourselves. Jesus wants us to know the length, breadth and depth of unadulterated joy.

Leader: Come, let us rollick in the joy of new birth found in the babe of Bethlehem. And let us sing of joy with our Advent song.....

An Advent Song

**Light the Advent candle, three: think of joy forevermore;
Christ Child in a stable born, gift of love that Christmas morn.
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]

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. All children and youth are remaining in worship for the Christmas Pageant.

**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

Our 2018 Christmas Pageant ~ A Night In Bethlehem

written by Sharon Kay Chatwell (Sunday School Center.com), adapted for FCCEJ by Laurie Chipman

Scene 1

Carol

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

#126

**Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:**

Refrain: Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

**Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:**

(refrain)

Scene 2

Carol

O Little Town of Bethlehem

#133

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing, and voices ring with peace to all on earth.

Scene 3

Carol

Angels We Have Heard on High

#125

(Parents please move your Shepherds & Sheep to the Narthex and Angels to the Fellowship Hall.)

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: **Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why our joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
(refrain)

Scene 4

Carol

Go Tell It On The Mountain

#154

(Toddler Jesus to his place)

Refrain: **Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.**

Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens there shone holy light
(refrain)

The shepherds feared and trembled, when lo! above the earth,
rang out the angel chorus that hailed the Savior's birth.
(refrain)

Scene 5

Carol

Magi, We of Orient Are (We Three Kings)

**Magi, we of orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and Fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star**
Refrain: **O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**
**Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.**
(refrain)

**Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, voices raising, worshiping God on high.**
(refrain)

**Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.**
(refrain)

Scene 6

The End

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

In The Bleak Midwinter

Holst

Soloists: Denise Keating, Whitney Noel, Hillary Keating

***The Doxology #119**

As with Gladness, Folk of Old

**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**

Joy to the World

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Christ room, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the Earth! the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of God's righteousness and wonders of God's love,
And wonders of God's love, and wonders, wonders of God's love.**

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 the Dorn Family in memory of loved ones.

Deacon: Amy Trimble

Ushers: 1st & 2nd Service: Trustees

Greeters: 1st & 2nd Service: Trustees

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Lilly & Donny

Gabrielle

Carol Janwich

Bruce Giannuzzi

Mike K

Elizabeth Turner

Barbara Howe

Judy Janwich

Richard Ansell

Mark McKenzie & Family

Frank Polanshek

Kathy & Rob

Holton Family

Eric & Shannon

Joe Phenix

Jenna

Carolyn

Black Family

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, welcomed@fcej.org

*** * * TODAY * * ***



Hannaford Cards & Reloads on Sale TODAY!

Christmas Poinsettias

Order your poinsettias for Christmas services in memory or honor of a loved one or special event. They are \$12.95 and come in red, white, pink



and a marbled variety. Please place your order by **TODAY, 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.



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.

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



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

Next meeting will be January 2, 2019

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

December 16th ~ Pageant Sunday ~ All in worship

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

December 30th ~ 2 services ~ intergenerational for all ages

Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2018

Total for 2018 \$733.67

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

Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

January 6th ~ 11:30-1:30 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 Thursday, December 20th, 2-6pm and Monday, January 14th, 5:30 - 7:30pm

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 Jan 5th & 19th 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>

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

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 16th - 22nd

- SUNDAY:** **8:30 am Worship Service / Sanctuary**
10:15 am Worship Service / Sanctuary
11:30 - 12:30 pm Music Committee / Choir Loft
1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
7:00 - 8:00 pm Blue Christmas Service / Sanctuary
- 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
6:30 - 9:30 pm Joe's Big Band / Fellowship Hall
- 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
4:00 - 9:00 pm St Andrew's Pipeband / Third Floor
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 Missions / Marvin Lounge
7:00 - 7:30 pm Meditation w/Jonah / Nursery
- WEDNESDAY:** **8:00 - 11:30 am Food Shelf Delivery / Fellowship Hall**
9:00 - 2:00 pm Giving Tree Distribution / Marvin Lounge
9:30 - 10:30 am Tai Chi / Gym
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 / offsite @ J Irwin's House
5:30 - 7:00 pm Finally @ First / Fellowship Hall
6:00 - 7:30 pm Currier Bell Choir / Sanctuary
6:30 - 7:30 pm Pack 630-Lion Den Nick Dennis / Third Floor
7:00 - 8:30 pm Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall
- THURSDAY:** **8:30 - 6:30 pm Food Pantry [open 2-6pm] / Fellowship Hall & Kitchen**
9:00 am Newsletter Volunteers / Marvin Lounge
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge
3:00 - 4:00 pm Easterseals Clinician Meeting / Third Floor
4:00 - 8:00 pm Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open
5:45 - 7:00 pm Third Thursday Potluck / Marvin Lounge
6:15 - 7:00 pm Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary
6:30 - 8:30 pm Eagle Scout Board of Review / Third Floor
7:00 - 8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary
- FRIDAY:** **8:30 - 10:30 am Food Pantry Tour-Hiawatha / Fellowship Hall**
12:00 noon Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall
1:30 - 4:00 pm Bridge Club / Marvin Lounge
5:00 - 8:00 pm Burlington Amateur Radio Club / Fellowship Hall
- SATURDAY:** 9:00am - 4:00 pm Nepali Comm Worship & Meal / Sanctuary & FH
1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge

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]

A Night In Bethlehem

Cast - *In order of appearance*

<i>Mary</i>	<i>Tessa Nowell</i>
<i>Gabriel</i>	<i>Isa Owens</i>
<i>Joseph</i>	<i>Alex Abakah</i>
<i>Innkeeper & Violinist.</i>	<i>Zoe Moos</i>
<i>Star</i>	<i>Makaylah Moos</i>
<i>Baby Jesus</i>	<i>1st service - Easton Isham</i>
<i>Shepherd 1</i>	<i>Allie Hoffman</i>
<i>Shepherd 2</i>	<i>Anna Kinney</i>
<i>Shepherd 3</i>	<i>David Hoy</i>
<i>Toddler Jesus</i>	<i>1st service – Blake Noel</i> <i>2nd service – Angela Abakah</i>
<i>Magi 1</i>	<i>Braeden Koch</i>
<i>Magi 2</i>	<i>Jacob Hoy</i>
<i>Magi 3</i>	<i>Cornelia Abakah</i>

Remaining Cast members ... plus many more

<i>Young Angels</i>	<i>Josephine Abakah, Molly Bourn, Kinlee Spaulding</i>
<i>Young Shepherds</i>	<i>Liam Gorniak, Teddy Owens, Kelvey Spaulding,</i> <i>Kaydence LaFlam</i>
<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Angela Abakah, Izzy Bourn, Aaron Gorniak,</i> <i>Cooper Spaulding, Tristan Stein</i>

Adult Helpers

<i>Costumes</i>	<i>Cornelia Abakah, Myrna Doney, Ashley Wermer</i>
<i>Technical Support</i>	<i>Adam Hoy, Jen Kelly, Jessica & Jonah Moos,</i> <i>Ed & Gretchen Owens, Leo Wermer</i>
<i>Director</i>	<i>Laurie Chipman</i>
<i>Producer</i>	<i>Rev. Josh Simon</i>