

***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**

Phone: 802-878-5745

Fax: 802-872-8236

E-mail: welcome@fcej.org

Website: www.fcej.org

Facebook: First Congregational Church of Essex Junction UCC



The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
United Church of Christ
February 24, 2019
First Service ~ The Seventh Sunday After Epiphany

A Welcoming Community,

Accepting and Serving All

In the Spirit of Christ

Order of Worship

Prelude

Canon in D

Pachelbel

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

We Are One in Christ Jesus

Anonymous

Call to Worship

Leader: God welcomes us into this place to listen to ancient and difficult truths so that our lives might be filled with richness, joy and meaning.

People: We seek to know God and listen to Jesus as we approach an ethic of love and way of life that will give glory to God and make the world a better place.

Leader: Come, let us celebrate the gifts God bestows. Come, let us open our hearts and minds to the Lord. Come, let create a community of love as we sing.

***Opening Hymn**

Great Is Your Faithfulness

#423

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation and Unison Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")

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.

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, children in preschool up through Senior High are welcome to join us for our Hands-On Mission Project. Adults are welcome to accompany the kids, help them get settled and stay or return to worship. All 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.**

Anthem *Cares Chorus* Willard

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Requests Offered within the Community

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response *Threefold Amen* Ramsey

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem *Just a Closer Walk With Thee* Anonymous

***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.**

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Prophetic Jonah 4:1-11 [page 668]

New Testament Gospel Luke 6:27-38 [page 49]

***Hymn of Preparation** *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* #23

Sermon *Doornat or Pure Power?* Rev. Mendes

Welcoming in our New Members

Invitation and Questions

Congregations' Vows and Welcome

Deacon: Jesus calls us to spread God's extravagant love to all peoples and nations, offering everyone the gift of grace. Do you who witness this rite of membership, promise your support to these new members so that they might live a life where Christ's joy and meaning is manifested?

People: We welcome you with joy in the communion life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ at First Church. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

Prayer
Greeting and Gifts

Closing Hymn *O Day of God, Draw Near* #611

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** *Festal Postlude* Gounod

*Please stand if you are able.

Deacon: Lauren Starkey/Josh Sharp

1st Service Ushers & Greeters: Sylvia Nyhagen, Carl Wermer, Betty & Bill Adams

2nd Service Ushers & Greeters: Marilyn & Steve Mitchell

*The flowers on the altar are given by Lester & Muriel Nutting
in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary.*

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Mary Weltzin
John A
Carol Janwich
Bruce Giannuzzi
Mike K

Linda Dudley
Judy Janwich
Richard Ansell
Mark McKenzie & Family
Frank Polanshek
Karla

Holton Family
Eric & Shannon
Joe Phenix
Tatro Family
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@fccej.org

* * * **TODAY** * * *

Looking To Show Off Your Baker's Hat?

Hospitality is looking for some help in showing off your mad baking skills! If you would like to help provide a goodie for any Sunday Fellowship Time, contact Jim Glatz 802-503-5076 glatzjim@gmail.com



Calcutta Tickets on Sale TODAY!

Stop by and chat with a Jamaica Team member in Fellowship Hall and if you haven't bought your Calcutta ticket yet, you can pick it up today! You're not going to want to miss this super fun night out! Great Fellowship AND Prizes!

NEEDED-Old T-Shirts

We are trying to discourage the distribution of plastic grocery bags at our Heavenly Food Pantry by making and distributing reusable tshirt bags. If you have old tshirts that you can donate to be repurposed into a bag, please put them in the box in Fellowship Hall. If you would like to help with this project, please contact LindaLou Parker at vttechie@yahoo.com 999-0998



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



Yoga @ First !

Jonah offers 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. Classes are free & donations are gratefully accepted for FCCEJ.

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



Each week, a group of folks get together to explore the faith. We do so through books, movies, discussions with members from other religious traditions, TED Talks and anything else we want to do. We are reading our next focus of Study: Simply Jesus by N.T. Wright. Whether you love Jesus and call him Lord and Savior or struggle with his divinity, you will be welcome to come and discuss those issues with a supportive and loving group of people. Books are available in Jen's office or on a Sunday morning.

Coffee Clatter Fridays 8am

This may seem like a foolish question, but if you like to talk and drink coffee, then come down to Martone's every Friday morning from 8-9 for an open conversation. Rev. Mark and/or Josh are there every week and we talk about everything from camping to politics, from deep theological questions to silly jokes, from village life to great vacation spots, from business deals to the best restaurants in town. We laugh, get serious and support each other. Everyone is invited!



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



Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 8th grade

February 24th ~ Hands On Mission Sunday ~ Tour of our Thrift Shop & more

March 3rd ~ 1st Sunday Spiritual Friends with Preschool & Kindergarteners
Communion Sunday ~ Intergenerational Worship

March 10th ~ Music & Peer Group time

Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2019

Total for 2019 \$48.50

By a vote of 45 to 22....

Spectrum Youth & Family Services is the winner for 2019!

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.

Information about Spectrum is available downstairs in the Fellowship Hall



High School Youth @ FCCEJ

Sign up to help usher & greet on the 1st Sunday of the month during 10:15am service

Sunday, March 10th, 5-7pm

Sunday, March 24th, 11:30am-1:30pm

We're bringing back Holy Spirit Cafe on Sunday, March 31st during second service. Holy Spirit Café is an opportunity for high school students to talk about issues of faith with young adults, many of whom were active in our youth ministry when they were students.



Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

5th - 8th graders gather TWICE a month Faith & Mission Focus with Fellowship/Games
Parents please stop by and sign up to help provide a meal or snack. Thank you!

Mark your calendars!

March 3rd ~ 10:15am Help Greet/Usher/Read Scripture

10th ~ 11:30am – 1:30pm ~ JYG ~ provide a meal

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

Bottle/Can Drive



Thank you for all your donations! The NEW container is on the Church Street side under the overhang. Thank you to the Boy Scouts for constructing it! **Please make sure that you only put in the cans & bottles that are redeemable, not just recyclable** - thank you!

Dismas House Meal Volunteers

FCCEJ has volunteered to provide dinners for residents of Dismas House Winooski for the fourth Wednesdays of each month. A big "Thanks" to all who supported the Church's Dismas House mission in 2018. Signups for 2019 are on the bulletin board going out of Fellowship Hall. If you want more information about the program, please contact Ed Steele (802) 871-5897 or edwardmsteele@msn.com.



Next Food Pantry days are Thursday, February 28th, 2-6pm and Monday, March 11th, 5:30-7:30pm

We are in need of fruit juice, tomato soup, spaghetti sauce 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 March 2nd & 16th 9 am to 1 pm

Week of March 4th All adult clothing \$2

Week of March 11th, All adult clothing \$1

March 26th – 28th Bag sale



Looking for: jewelry, socks, nightwear & towels, bring in your Spring & Summer Items



Usher/Greeter Volunteers Needed

Spring dates are all up on the Sign Up Genius-please volunteer!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0e4faae2daafe3-ushergreeter>

Available NOW in Fellowship Hall ~ Calcutta Tickets

The 5th annual Cabin Fever Calcutta will be held at the Catamount Country Club in Williston on Saturday, March 9th. Cocktails will begin at 5:00 PM with dinner at 6:00 PM. Jamie Polli, our MC, will begin the Calcutta at 7:00 PM. This is a fun night out with lots of great prizes in



addition to the grand prize of \$1000! We will also be holding the popular wine pull, a raffle for an overnight stay/dinner at three great area hotels; Courtyard Marriott/Bleu Restaurant, Hotel Vermont/Juniper and The Essex/Junction and also a raffle for a tablet or similar electronic device. Please make checks payable to FCCEJ with "Jamaica" on the memo line. Team members at the Jamaica table in Fellowship Hall will be happy to assist you. We hope you will join us on March 9th for an evening of fun and fellowship.

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

Saturday, March 9th ~ 5th Annual Jamaica Bound Calcutta

March 17th ~ Pretzel Sunday

A special Sunday in Lent is coming! We are looking for adults to volunteer to sign up and take a shift. Mark your calendars for this fun day and stop by the PURPLE table in Fellowship Hall or email Laurie. Shifts are: 7:30- 9:30am (mix up dough, roll pretzels & bake); 9:15-10:30am (bake & set up tables); 10:30-11:30am (bake); 11:30am-12noon (help Hospitality with clean up). See Laurie for questions and to sign up!





TODAY, February 24th ~ Outdoor Ministry Special Offering

Your donations help to send kids and youth to a UCC camp and support our VT programming. Money that comes in will be split 50/50 and go to the VT OM Scholarship Fund and the VT UCC OM Program. It costs money to build a great week a camp. By supporting you are helping kids dive deeper than one can get at VB Camp or on Sunday mornings, grow in their faith, make friends, spread their wings in a fun, safe and Spirit filled atmosphere. Mark your check ‘VTUCC OM’ , use the special offering envelope in the pew or in your offering box.

Bereavement Support Group

We have decided to discontinue the group at this time due to lack of interest. Please see Pastor Mark if you are interested in this topic and would like to see it continued.



April 21st ~ Easter

May 16th ~ Life Line Screening

Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings will be here at FCCEJ.



Register online TODAY at www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle and receive your “Community Circle” discount and your Preferred Appointment!

Be a Counselor! Share your love of God & the Outdoors!



Counsel youth on the shores of Lake Champlain for @ THE LAKE July 28th ~ Aug 2nd for Campers going into 5th – 8th. Join Laurie at Horton Center in NH and counsel youth for GOD’s CO-STARS, July 14th ~ 20th for campers going into 6th – 8th grade

See Laurie for more details on both.

Vacation Bible Camp

TO MARS and BEYOND

Exploring Where God’s Power Can Take You!

August 5-9th from 9am to 11:45am

Recruiting NOW for station leaders: Craft, Discovery/Science, Snack, Games, & Music and for Youth Helpers and Adult Group Leaders. leader, puppeteer and group leaders.



THIS WEEK: February 24th - March 2nd

- SUNDAY:** 8:30 am **Worship Service / Sanctuary**
10:15 am **Worship Service / Sanctuary**
1:00 - 2:00 pm **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
2:00 - 4:00 pm **Card Class-Andrea Sharp / Marvin 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**
6:30 - 9:30 pm **Joe's Big Band / Fellowship Hall**
7:00 - 8:30 pm **Venture Crew / Marvin Lounge**
- TUESDAY:** 8:30 - 10:00 am **Sermon Talk Back / Marvin Lounge**
10:00 - 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 **Trustees / Marvin Lounge**
- 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**
2:00 - 4:00 pm **Crafty Time Out / Marvin Lounge**
5:30 - 7:00 pm **Finally @ First / Sanctuary**
7:00 - 8:30 pm **Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall**
7:00 - 9:00 pm **Wednesday Night Searchers / Youth Lounge**
- THURSDAY:** 10:00 am-6:30 pm **Food Pantry [open 2-6pm] / Fellowship Hall & Kitchen**
12:00 - 1:30 pm **Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge**
3:00 - 4:00 pm **Easterseals Clinician Meeting / Third Floor**
4:00 - 8:00 pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
6:45 - 8:15 pm **Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary**
8:15 - 9:00 pm **Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary**
- FRIDAY:** 12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
5:00 - 8:00 pm **Essex Eats Out Community Dinner / Fellowship Hall**
- SATURDAY:** 9:00 - 11:00 am **Nepali Comm Worship & Meal / Sanctuary & FH**
9:00 - 1:00 pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
1:00 - 2:00 pm **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
4:30 - 5:30 pm **Worship Service (Communion) / Fellowship Hall**
6:00 pm - overnight **Venture Crew Sleepover / full church**

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: *Andrea Sharp* [879-0580] or *Judy McCullen* [878-9794]

Deacons: *Betsy Weischedel* [922-2094], *Peter Schmalz* [202-297-3625]

Hospitality: *Jim Glatz* [503-5076]

Missions:

Music:

Nominating: *Barb Smith* [878-6866]

Stewardship: *Jessica Moos* [399-8068]

Trustees: *Kevin Meilleur* [238-4041]

Ushering: *Jessica Moos* [399-8068]

Recognized Groups at First Church

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop [879-6552] *Sue Wood* suewood@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

February 24, 2019

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

Luke 6:27-38

Love Your Enemies

It's Seminary Sunday! Yay! Have you planned a church vocations party? What? You haven't? Well, maybe next year.

In general, church attendance may be down across the country, it's also probably true that most people think the basic code of compassionate living espoused by we followers of Jesus is worth preserving. What about you? Do you think that loving your enemies and showing mercy to the whole world is a way of living that is, at the very least, worth preserving for the future of the world? You probably do. So, why don't we celebrate church vocations more loudly?

Without new leaders, trained leaders, and leaders who can inspire others and help us learn new ways of articulating this ancient faith tradition our churches will starve spiritually. The 21st century is already a century that looks like it is going to need a hopeful word and a compassionate agenda. We need to raise up leaders who will feel called to empower that agenda and we need to install them ASAP.

Where do you think the next generation of clergy and lay leaders will come from? Do you think seminaries manufacture them or find them going door to door? No. They come from the local church. They come because you see among you those who have gifts for this kind of work and you invite them into a process of discernment that may lead them to seminary or another path toward ministry. The larger church needs all of us to pay attention to those in our pews who could help the church and spread the gospel and change the world.

Aspiring clergy begin in discernment and begin with your pastor and your church leadership. It is up to you to bring them to your Conference for further work and discernment. It is part of our job as congregations to encourage the gifts of our members and to develop them. There are many seminaries around the country that are particularly affiliated with the UCC. See if one is near you. Some of them have lay leader programs, some allow for auditors and all would be glad to give you a tour. They are:

Andover-Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA; www.ants.edu

Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL; www.ctschicago.edu

Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO; www.eden.edu

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, PA; www.lancasterseminary.edu

Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA; www.psr.edu

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, New Brighton, MN

www.unitedseminary.edu