

***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@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)**

**Website: [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)**

**Facebook: First Congregational Church of Essex Junction UCC**



The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction  
United Church of Christ  
March 24, 2019  
*Second Service ~ Third Sunday of Lent*

*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.*

Passing the Peace

*Passing the Peace of Christ is an ancient ritual of the church grounded in Christ's resurrection appearance to the disciples in the upper room when he breathed upon them and offered them peace. After the minister passes the peace of Christ, then everyone is encouraged to greet the people around you with Christ's peace. During this winter season where many have been sick, feel free to put your hands together in prayer and offer peace to your neighbor without shaking their hands. This will keep us all healthy and better able to come to church! We begin this ancient ritual with the following words....*

**Pastor:** The Peace of Christ be with you.

**People:** And also with you.

Introit by Cherubs

*Jesus Loves Me*

Warner

Call to Worship (allusions from Psalm 63 and Isaiah 55)

One: Come into the sanctuary and look around.  
Behold the beauty and splendor of God's people.  
All of us!

**All: Behold the beauty and splendor of God's people.**

One: We believe God's steadfast love is better than life,  
so let our lips praise God as long as we live.

**All: We also often doubt God's love.  
We often doubt that God will really provide when it matters.**

**One: But this is what matters today: God said, "Come all who are thirsty, come to the water, and you that have no money, come, buy and eat." All of us!**

**All: So with faith – both bold and timid – let us worship God!**

**Opening Hymn                      *How Can I Keep From Singing [song sheet]*                      Lowry**

**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**

*After the Children's Message, both Services, our Nursery is open with our staff person, Jennifer. Second Service after the Children's Message, 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                                      *Amazing Grace/My Chains are Gone*                                      Tomlin**

**Pastoral Prayer**

*Each week during Lent, we will begin our time of prayer by having each pew [or if along in a pew, then pairing with the pew next to you] in focused dialogue about particular types of prayer. This will just take a small fraction of time and in the process, we will learn some of the various ways Christians have prayed through the centuries.*

*On March 24<sup>th</sup> we will focus on Prayers for Healing*

*Throughout the Gospels, Jesus heals. Jesus sent his disciples to anoint with oil and to heal the sick. People from all over Israel went to him asking to be healed and requested healing on behalf of another. Jesus' prayers for healing often flowed out of his mercy and compassion for the other and many involved some form of touch and always done for the glory of God and in*

*and through the divine presence of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The four steps of healing prayers are to listen, ask, believe, and finally thank God.*

*Listen to your neighbor about one way they need healing and then share your one prayer for healing, then quietly hold hands and prayer for the other person's particular request believing that God will respond. End the prayer with both of you saying thank you.*

Prayer Requests Offered within the Community

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

**Congregational Musical Response #451 [verse 1]**

**Be Thou My Vision**

**Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Nothing surpasses the love you impart  
You my best thought, by day or by night  
Waking or sleeping, your presence my light**

**\*Hymn of Preparation**

***Come to Tend God's Garden***

**#586**

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Psalter Psalm 63

[Hymnal 660]

New Testament Gospel Luke 13:1-9

[page 58]

Sermon

*Repent*

Rev. Simon

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

*Only Grace*

West

**\*Doxology #451 [verse 3]**

**Be Thou My Vision**

**Riches I heed not, nor life's empty praise,  
Thou, my inheritance, now and always;  
You and you only are first in my heart,  
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art.**

**\*Closing Hymn**

***God Our Author and Creator***

**#530**

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.

Deacons: Amy Trimble/Myrna Doney  
1st Service Greeters/Ushers: Mary Ellen Grove & Sylvia Nyhagen;  
2nd Service Greeters/Ushers: Marilyn & Steve Mitchell;

*The flowers on the altar are given by Alison Wermer,  
Dave & Susan Knox in loving memory of Robert Knox.*

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Mary Weltzin  
John A  
Carol Janwich  
Rob Fredricksen  
Mike K

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

Karla  
Eric & Shannon  
Joe Phenix  
Meredith  
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, [welcomed@fccej.org](mailto:welcomed@fccej.org)*

**\* \* \* TODAY \* \* \***

**Sanctuary Paint Color Options.... Take the Color Option  
Survey on Sunday, April 14 (Palm Sunday)**

Color concept boards and paint samples are being hung in the sanctuary so that everyone can have a chance to see the different ideas being explored. The color options were recommended by color expert Betsey Dempsey, owner of Color Concepts in Shelburne. Betsey spent time in our sanctuary and came up with two palette recommendations. Both palettes include historic neutral colors that are welcoming, peaceful, bright and timeless. Please weigh in by taking the Color Option Survey and identify your favorite choice on Sunday, April 14 (Palm Sunday).



**Signups for Easter Breakfast [Donation & Volunteers]  
in Fellowship Hall!**

### 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



### NEEDED ~ Old Tshirts For Food Pantry Bags

Bring your old tshirts to church to be recycled into grocery bags that we will provide at the Food Pantry instead of plastic bags. There is a box in Fellowship Hall to put them in. Thank you!

\* \* \* **THIS WEEK** \* \* \*

### Yoga @ First This Week



Jonah offers class on **Tuesdays** at 5:30-6:45pm in the Fellowship Hall. He is returning from traveling for this Tuesday, March 26th class. 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!



### Wednesdays, March 20<sup>th</sup> - April 17<sup>th</sup> ~ Lenten Morning Services, 7am

What better way of starting the day than by worshipping our Creator and centering yourself on the Spirit of the Living God. Pastors Mark & Josh want to provide everyone an opportunity to come to church to pray, take communion, sit in silence and hear hopeful words from Jesus' preaching during the season of Lent. The service will be about 30 minutes so that everyone can still get to work on time. Come and start your morning at church and see how it transforms your entire day.

### 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 begin a new book this Wednesday, Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America from the Culture of Contempt by Arthur C. Brooks. Love Your Enemies offers a clear strategy on how to engage with those who you disagree. And most of all, it is a roadmap to arrive at the happiness that comes when we choose to love one another, despite our differences. We'll discuss the first two chapters. Books will be available in the office or from Josh/Mark.

### **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**

***Today, March 24<sup>th</sup> ~ Hands On Mission Sunday***

***March 31st ~ Music & Peer Group Time***



#### **Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2019**

*Total for 2019 \$77.15*

*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 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month during 10:15am service*

***Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 11:30am-1:30pm***

We're bringing back Holy Spirit Cafe on Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup> 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.

#### **Junior Youth @ FCCEJ**

5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup> ~ 3-4:30 pm**

***April 7<sup>th</sup> ~ 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!



**2019 Altar Flowers**

We still have eight dates open for 2019, 6/23, 7/7, 7/21, 7/28, 8/25, 10/20, 10/27 & 11/17. The chart for altar flowers is up in the hallway leading out of Fellowship Hall. The donation is \$34/Sunday and you can write your name and also who or what event you would like remembered/honored. Contact Jen with any questions [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)



**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](mailto:edwardmsteele@msn.com).



**Next Food Pantry days are Thursday, March 28th, 2-6pm  
and Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 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 April 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> 9 am to 1 pm  
March 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> Bag sale



**Usher/Greeter Volunteers Needed**

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





**Vacation Bible Camp**  
**TO MARS and BEYOND**

Exploring Where God's Power Can Take You!

August 5-9<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 11:45am

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



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



**April 4th ~ Affordable Housing, 2pm**

In Chittenden County, low-income and middle-income residents struggle to find affordable housing. An ecumenical group of Christians from Essex, Jericho, and Underhill have been prayerfully studying affordable housing and what actions we can take in our communities. We are recruiting more folks to help shape our advocacy and to build our group. If you are interested in helping shape the advocacy of this group, please contact Pastor Josh. Next meeting is at the United Methodist Church in Jericho (71 Vermont Route 15, Jericho).

**April 7<sup>th</sup> ~ Devon Thomas' Installation Service, 3pm**

At the Waterville Union Church, 37 Church St, Waterville



**April 14<sup>th</sup> ~ Palm Sunday**

**April 21<sup>st</sup> ~ Easter**

**May 16<sup>th</sup> ~ 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](http://www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle) and receive your "Community Circle" discount and your Preferred Appointment!

**June 2nd ~ Ice Cream Sunday**



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

Counsel youth on the shores of Lake Champlain for @ THE LAKE July 28<sup>th</sup> ~ Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> for Campers going into 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>.

Join Laurie at Horton Center in NH and counsel youth for GOD's CO-STARs, July 14<sup>th</sup> ~ 20<sup>th</sup> for campers going into 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. See Laurie for more details on both.

**THIS WEEK: March 24th - 30th**

- SUNDAY:**     **8:30 am Worship Service / Sanctuary**  
                  **10:15 am Worship Service / Sanctuary**  
                  1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall  
                  **3:00 - 4:30 pm Junior Youth / FH & YL**  
                  **5:00 - 7:00 pm High School Youth Group / Marvin Lounge**
- MONDAY:**    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 - 9:00 pm Trustees / 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  
                  4:00 - 9:00 pm St Andrews Pipe Band / Third Floor  
                  **5:30 - 6:45 pm Yoga w/Jonah**  
                  **7:00 - 9:00 pm Stewardship / Marvin Lounge**
- WEDNESDAY:** **7:00 - 7:30 am Lenten Morning Worship / Sanctuary**  
                  **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**  
                  **4:15 - 5:30 pm Bylaw Committee Meeting / 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 / Marvin Lounge**
- THURSDAY:** **9:00 - 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
- SATURDAY:** 9:00 - 11:00 am Nepali Comm Worship & Meal / Sanctuary & FH  
                  1:00 - 2:00 pm Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall  
                  7:00 - 9:00 pm St Andrews Pipe Band / 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: 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: Joanne Irwin [878-2528], Ed Steele [871-5897]  
Music: Denise Keating [345-8900]  
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](mailto: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**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 24, 2019

Third Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 55:1-9

Amistad Sunday

Isaiah offers in nine verses the heart of the biblical message: God loves us, no matter what, reaching out to us even (or especially) in the worst of times, making promises that are not pie-in-the-sky, not theoretical. God promises what we most deeply yearn for: homecoming when we're lost, a rich feast when we're hungry, fresh water to satisfy our thirst, and a community of hope when we long for meaning—something greater than ourselves through which we might be a blessing to the world. There's no price of admission to this feast, and everyone (even the most unexpected) will be invited to the party.

**A Litany for Amistad Sunday (based on Isaiah 43)**

The 1839 slave revolt aboard the Amistad brought Congregationalists from New England together to defend the rights of these slaves to their freedom. That defense finally came before the U.S. Supreme Court. When it was finished, the slaves were freed and the American Mission Society (a forerunner of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries) was formed.

One: In the hold of the ship, the Amistad, the slaves were chained and rowed together.

MANY: But God made a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters.

One: Chains were broken, slaves revolted,  
But God said, "Do not remember the old ways I am about to do a new thing."

MANY: The slaves were recaptured, prisoners again, but not alone.  
A committee was formed to support and defend.  
Advocates, lawyers, ministers and more.  
People of faith who brought clothing and money and food.

One: Now it springs forth; do you see it?

MANY: Before the court, the Supreme Court, justice, this time, prevailed,

One: "I will make a way through the wilderness," said the God of the slaves.

MANY: And the slaves were acquitted. All were set free.

One: God gave water and rivers in the desert so the thirsty could drink.

MANY: The slaves went home but their friends persisted.

One: For abolition, for education, for liberty.  
The American Missionary Society was born,  
And continues today as part of the United Church of Christ.

MANY: So says God, "These are the people whom I formed for myself.  
so they might declare my praise."

One: Let us worship our God, a God of freedom and justice.  
Oh God of the Amistad,

MANY: Give hope to our prayers and make true our hope.  
that liberty and equality and fairness bless this land.