# 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 Website: www.fccej.org

Facebook: First Congregational Church of Essex Junction UCC



# The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction A United Church of Christ September 15, 2019

#### WELCOME BACK 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.

A Musical Introit

"Welcome Back"

John Sebastion Adapted by F@F

#### Call to Worship

Leader: As the Creator, God has offered us this day for life and this world for beauty and sustenance. As the Lawgiver, God has offered us a way in which we can all live in a just peace. As a Beloved Son, Jesus offers us a life of love and models what that means for the living of these days. As Divine Spirit, God imbues our very being and is as close to us as our breath.

People: The Divine Presence meets us throughout each day in myriad and mystical ways. Come God and enter my heart, soul, mind and body so that I might live into your command of love. Help me to make your world a better place and teach my children to do the same.

Leader: Come, let us worship our God.

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

#### Children's Message

After the Children's Message, children in PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to join us for Welcome Back Sunday activities. The Nursery is self-serve with a speaker for you to listen in the room. Parents/Grandparents are welcome to accompany the kids, help them get settled and stay or return to worship. All children & youth 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.

**Congregational Response** 

"Multiplied"

**Rinehart & Rinehart** 

God of mercy, sweet love of mine, I have surrendered to Your design. May this offering stretch across the skies, and these hallelujahs be multiplied. These hallelujahs be multiplied. Scripture Readings

Old Testament Deuteronomy 4:9-14 [page 125] New Testament Matthew 19:13-15 [page 16]

Musical Anthem Wh

When We Pray

Wells, Hulse & Wedgeworth

Sermon The Heart of the Matter

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication
Anthem

Help Me Find It

Frey, McDonald & Ingram

\*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 God of Our Life #366

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

<sup>\*</sup>Postlude:

<sup>\* =</sup> Please stand if you are able



The flowers on the altar are given by Kathy Finnie & Kevin Dorn in memory of their loved ones.

### First Church's Prayer Ministry

Mary Weltzin Serena & Chris Baker Mark McKenzie & Family

Mike K Frank Polanshek Richard Bamford

Tib T Tom McKenzie & Family Craig
Marion Schneider Russ Dettenrieder John A
Ryan Bob Ursiny Aidan W

Carol Bishard & Family Beth Terry Ruth Legendre & Family

Please, let the office know if you would like a name added to our Prayer Ministry. You may write it on the Friendship Pad; call the office @ 878 5745; or email at welcome@fccej.org. Additionally, prayer requests will be edited quarterly. If you find an unintended error or omission, then please, contact the Church office.

# Unity

Bible in a Year: Proverbs 22-24; 2 Corinthians 8

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:3

From today's Our Daily Bread: https://odb.org/2019/09/15/unity



# TODAY @ FIRST

# **Nursery Worker Wanted**

Our church is looking for a year-round nursery worker for Sunday mornings: \$50/week [~8:15-11:30am, September-May]; \$25/week [~8:45-10:15am, June-August]. If interested, please contact Rev. Mendes @ 878-5745; or email him @ mmendes@fccej.org.

# Want To Host with Hospitality?

"You look like you are having so much fun!" We have gotten this feedback a number of times and we have had some people ask if they can host Fellowship Time on a Sunday. We would LOVE the help and will help train you, so that you feel comfortable doing it! Sign up at the food table on a Sunday or email glatzjim@gmail.com for details.

#### **Hannaford Cards**

Reload your Hannaford Cards (up to \$500!) OR purchase new ones in \$25, \$50, \$100, and \$200 increments. This will be your last chance to buy/reload cards in September!

# **Support JUMP!**

Part of our church's mission to JUMP (Joint Urban Ministry Project) is to provide feminine hygiene products. Our Red Tent Project has been very successful, but we need your donations! Please, find the red tent in the church's Marvin Lounge or Fellowship Hall (depending on construction.)

# Craft Fest Silent Auction Volunteers Needed!

Today, packets will be available for volunteers to distribute to businesses in the Essex Community. The packets are for businesses who have supported our silent auction in the past. Please check out the Table in Fellowship Hall. Linda Bogardus and Wendy Wark will be available to answer questions. Sign-up also available next Sunday, September 22nd.

# College Students: We Need Your Info!

Pastor Josh is looking for college student mailing addresses and emails. Please, email Josh at <a href="mailto:jsimon@fccej.org">jsimon@fccej.org</a> with your college student's address.

### **BELLS ARE RINGING... AGAIN!**

# Cub Scouts Parent Orientation Today @ 4-5pm, Fellowship Hall



# **FAITH FORMATION**

Interested in Volunteering to help our children & youth?
Contact Laurie Chipman, CED: 878-5745 ext. 103; or lchipman@fccej.org.

### 2019-2020 Faith Formation Recruitment

Many opportunities to volunteer and support First Church children & youth:

- Nursery Be a friendly face to the parents and the littlest ones among us during 1st or 2nd service. We strive to follow our Safe Conduct guidelines for a 2:1 ratio in the Nursery.
- **Spiritual Friends** 1st Sundays of the month, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Read a story, have snack and great conversations with PreK & Kindergarten children. Then a little Godly playdough time before returning to worship for communion.
- Peer Group Leaders & Helpers PreK-8th grade meet 2x/month during 2nd service. You receive a weekly email with the lesson and activity. All items are gathered for you. You don't need to feel like you have all the answers. Leader and helpers learn right alongside the children and youth. It's OK for all to ask questions.
- Hands-On Mission Sunday Helpers PreK-8th grade are together building community while doing a mission activity. Last year's: shirt baskets for our Easter breakfast tables; Church World Service Hygiene Kits; sorting donations for JUMP; Thrift Store tour; Vacation Bible Camp décor; planting seeds for Earth Day...just to name a few.
- Youth Group Helpers Be an adult helper and get to know our Junior (5<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>) or High School (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) youth.

# **Sunday School Offering Spectrum Youth & Family Services**

*Total for 2019* — \$305.83

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

# Sunday School Calendar Preschool-8th grade

♦ September 15th

Welcome Back Sunday!

◆ September 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> Peer Group & Music time

# <u>Junior Youth (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade)</u>

♦ September 22<sup>nd</sup>

Kick Off! All Youth: 11:30am – 1:30p; Parent Meeting: 11:30am-12pm; Get Air! in Williston, 5-7pm

- ◆ September (Fri-Sat) 27th-28th Overnight, 6pm to 9am
- ♦ October 6<sup>th</sup>

Help Greet/Usher/Read Scripture during 10:15am worship; then meet b/w 11:30am-1:30pm

# **Peer Group Leaders**

- Preschool: Paula Sargent, Jessica & Makaylah Moos and
- Kindergarten: Jenny Bourn and
- ◆ 1st & 2nd Grade: Sue Conti and Lisa Clark
- 3rd & 4th Grade: Barb Smith and Allison VanSteensburg
- ◆ 5th-8th Grade: Laurie Chipman and Pastor Josh

High School youth are encouraged to help with a Peer group during Faith Formation time. Junior and Seniors can also opt to be a paid helper in the Nursery.

# THIS WEEK @ FIRST

# **Sermon Talkback Tuesdays**

Tuesdays, 8:30-10am

Gather with us in the Marvin Lounge for coffee, baked goods, and a lively discussion of the sermon delivered on Sunday, and much more! Join us for the conversation, the goodies, the camaraderie, or all of the above!

# **Wednesday Night Searchers**

Wednesdays @ 7pm

Each week, a group of folks get together in the Marvin Lounge 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. Current reading: *Fear of the Other* by William H. Willimon. Books available @ the Church office.

# **Coffee Clatter Fridays**

Fridays @ 8-9am

This may seem like a foolish question, but if you like to talk and drink coffee, then come down to Martone's for open conversation. Rev. Mark and/or Josh are there every week and 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!** 

### **Bridge Club**

Friday, September 20th @ 1:30-4pm

Casual potluck-style game of Bridge. Join Pastor Mendes in our Marvin Lounge for a rousing game and a chance to win some of his world-famous jam!

# Yoga @ First Mondays, 5:30pm-6:45pm

Jonah Moos, FCCEJ member, is offering a free yoga class in our Gymnasium! Jonah collects donations on behalf of our Church. All levels from beginner to experienced are absolutely welcome. You can bring your own mat or borrow one of Jonah's.

### **Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop**

Tues & Wed, 10am-3pm; Thurs, 4-8pm; 1st & 3rd Sat, 9am-1pm. Come support the Church's thrift store! Enjoy vintage clothing; embark on some antique archeology; shop and make friends! Contact Sue Wood @ 578-2329 or suewood@myfairpoint.net; or Elaine Raymond @ 879-7350 or ebraymond@gmail.com

# Women's Spirituality Group

Saturday, September 21 @ 9:30am

All women of the church are invited to be a part of this vibrant group. In the hopes of expanding our group we will begin our year with conversation around what should be the groups purpose, and how can we interest more of our church women to be a part of this supportive group. Our programs will address personal growth, community outreach and having fun. Please consider joining us for conversation and goodies. (Bring your ideas for a possible name change.) Fellowship, Coffee & Conversation (we'll provide light food).

# (More events on the following pages —>)

# Capital Campaign Update

By Kaki McGeary

Capital Campaign Update: This week, crews began painting the interiors of the historic window casings in preparation for NEW storm windows to be installed. This is very exciting and will give quite a face-lift to the sanctuary! The new storm windows were custom-built to fit our space, so they will look less choppy and they will be clean and more efficient. Once the new storm windows are in place, the refurbished historic windows & shutters will be installed (in early/mid October).

Our new parking lot entrance & ADA bathroom are available for use and the Deacons are designing shelves for the new storage closet. Our entrance is more accessible than ever, featuring automated door-opener pads. However, there will be a little more minor construction as we add a small roof above the vestibule entrance. We are still awaiting final approval of a federal grant that would pay for the new parking lot light fixtures and installation. We need to wait until we have a grant contract in place before we can use those funds, so the lighting portion of the project will take a bit longer than we hoped. We are aware that this causes some inconvenience, but the delay will save us about \$10,000 if we can use federal funds for that work instead of paying for it with Campaign funds.

The asbestos removal in the preschool wing is complete, and our Trustees and new tenant are working to get the space ready for the new daycare business to open. Last but not least, our old sign has been removed, and a new sign will be installed some time in late September/October along with some new landscaping around the peace pole.

As we wrap up a few remaining loose ends on the projects completed to date, the trustees and Capital Campaign Committee will turn our attention to the Marvin Lounge and Kitchen projects, which are the next big projects on our list.



Special Note: For your convenience, charts containing completion date projections for the Capital Campaign's various projects are posted on bulletin boards throughout the church.

# Essex Cares, Inc (Formerly the Mike Malone Classic)

In Memory of:

Mike Malone, Hector Boutin, Dick Lavalley, Bob Lemire, Lou Jarvis and Ken King

# Sunday September 15, 2019

# FOOD DRIVE

Murray's Starting at 1:30pm After Golf Event

To Benefit:

**Heavenly Pantry Food Shelf** 

ONE NON-PERSHABLE FOOD DONATION

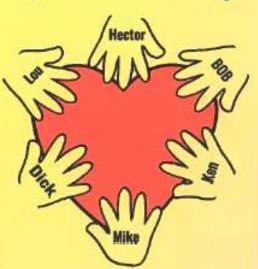


\* Limit: 1 Free Raffle Ticket per person Additional tickets can be purchased for \$5-

Bring a non-perishable food donation to Murray's after the golf event and receive one free raffle ticket. Purchase more tickets for a better chance of winning great prizes.



ESSEX



# Our Slogan is:

We Won't Forget Because Essex Cares!

Visit our website at: EssexCaresVT.ORG

# History of Constitution Week & Bells Across America

By Ann Gray



This year is the 64th anniversary of Constitution Week and the 232<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution. The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution adopted an internal resolution on April 21, 1955, designating September 17-23 as Constitution Week.

Members of the United States Congress received the DAR resolution; and on June 7, 1955, the resolution was discussed in the Senate. The first resolution to observe Constitution Week was made June 14, 1955, by Senator William F. Knowland of California. Following the passage of the resolution by both Houses of Congress, President Eisenhower issued his proclamation on August 19, 1955.

The first observance of Constitution Week was so successful that on January 5, 1956, Senator Knowland introduced a Senate Joint Resolution to have the President designate September 17-23 annually as Constitution Week. The resolution was adopted on July 23, 1956, and signed into Public Law 915 on August 2, 1956.

This year in celebration of Constitution Week, the DAR is spearheading "Bells Across America". DAR Chapters across the county are asking churches, schools, courthouses, fire houses, veterans' homes, city governments, and individuals to ring bells on September 17 at 4 p.m. EST in all time zones so they are heard simultaneously from coast to coast. The local DAR Chapter, Green Mountain, asked us to participate and Council approved our participation. There is no standard number of times the bells are to be rung. We have decided to ring the bell 14 times – 13 for the original 13 states and one for Vermont, the 14<sup>th</sup> state. Pastor Mark and Dan Petherbridge will be our bell ringers

So when you hear bells ringing from our tower on September 17 at 4 pm, it is in celebration of the 232<sup>nd</sup> signing of the US Constitution. Everyone is invited to join in by ringing bells from their porches or come by and ring your bell while standing on the sidewalk or parking lot.

# SAVE THE D@TE

# September is National Hunger Action

**Month**, and the Vermont Foodbank is putting together resources that we hope you will find useful. Visit <a href="http://www.vtfoodbank.org/HAM">http://www.vtfoodbank.org/HAM</a> to learn more about this national campaign to raise awareness about hunger and inspire people to take action.

# **Saturday Services**

Returns Saturday, October 5th

Starting in October and repeating on the 1st Saturday of each month thereafter, FCCEJ returns to offering a Saturday service with Holy Communion. During the summer, Communion is offered during our Sunday worship services.

#### **Essex Eats Out**

Friday, October 4th @ 5:30-6:30pm

This ongoing service project offers free, community-wide dinners open to all (with a special invitation to the needy & lonely) every Friday night throughout the Essex area. FCCEJ hosts Essex Eats Out on the first Friday of each month.

# Women's Spirituality Group

3rd Saturday of Every Month, 9:30am Next group meets on Saturday, September 21th Then, we meet again on Saturday, October 19th

Then, we meet again on Saturday, October 19th All women of the church are invited to be a part of this vibrant group. In the hopes of expanding our group we will begin our year with conversation around what should be the groups purpose, and how can we interest more of our church women to be a part of this supportive group. Our programs will address personal growth, community outreach and having fun. Please consider joining us for conversation and goodies. (Bring your ideas for a possible name change.) Fellowship, Coffee & Conversation (we'll provide light food).

# **JOY (Just Older Youth)**

1st Thursday @ Noon

If you are 55+ please consider joining this active church group in the Marvin Lounge. We strive to present programs that foster learning, fun, or service.

# VT Christian Rock-toberfest The 'Love is a Lion' Tour

September 28th @ 7pm
Citizen Way; Jason Gray; The Young Escape

Presented by the VT Christian Music Organization. Be one of thousands of participants to attend this affordable, community-building, spiritually-catalyzing event! For info @ donating, visit:

VTChristianMusic.com

# **Heavenly Food Pantry**

Thur, Sept. 26th. @ 2-6pm

The Pantry would appreciate these donations: spaghetti sauce, juice, cereal, and chicken noodle soup! We now have plenty of egg cartons, so thank you! Also, we have several volunteering opportunities! See our church's newsletter for more details; or contact Val Gabert directly @ val.gabert@gmail.com.

# 2019 Church Office Holidays

The church office will be closed in honor of these holidays:

- ♦ Columbus Day: Mon, Oct. 14
- ♦ *Thanksgiving:* Thu-Fri, Nov. 28 & 29
- ♦ Christmas: Wed, Dec. 25

# MINISTRY @ FIRST

#### Church Staff

Senior Pastor: *Rev. Mark Mendes* [mmendes@fccej.org] Associate Pastor: *Rev. Josh Simon* [jsimon@fccej.org] Music Director: *Carol Spradling* [cspradling@fccej.org]

Christian Education Director: Laurie Chipman [lchipman@fccej.org]

Church Administrator: *Doug Ovitt* [welcome@fccej.org]

#### Music Ministry

Cherub Music: Vacant; Currently Searching...

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 <u>suewood@myfairpoint.net</u>

Heavenly Food Pantry Contact: Valerie Gabert [879-0109]

Called To Care Contact: Beth Volker [238-2713]

Nepali Christian Community Contact: Dan Raut [310-4371]

Craft Fest Committee Contact: Linda Bogardus [lbogardus@myfairpoint.net]



September 15, 2019 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost **Growing in God's Love** 1 Timothy 1:12-17

**1 Timothy 1:15-17** (NIV) Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Holy One,

We confess.

We confess that we miss the mark as often as we hit it. We confess that we gaze longingly down the road that branches the other way, not Your way. We confess that our thoughts and our actions separate us from You, from Your beautiful creation and from our own true selves

We confess that we separate from You whenever we are captivated by consumerism, by violence, by political polarization, by all our addictions and resentments. Remind us always that we cannot serve You and those other gods.

We confess that we do all that we can to separate ourselves from the rest of your creation. We ignore the crisis of the changing climate on this beautiful planet which you have placed in our care. We foment division among peoples, making war with neighbors across the street and across the globe.

We confess that we are separate even from our own true selves, the beings of love and light that you created.

We confess that we hate to confess.

Unlike your follower Paul, who proudly proclaimed that he was "the worst" of sinners, we shudder at the word sin. Maybe it's because we believe that if we confess that we sin, we will somehow be confessing that all we are is sinful. Maybe we even believe that's true.

We confess, then, that we have forgotten that we were born of your love, in order to live in your love. We confess that we need reminding that You created us in Your image, holy and pure. Free us to see that confession is the path to freedom from shame, not the piling on of it.

Give us the courage to look at our broken places and name them, bringing them into the light. Unchain us by this act of confession from both our sin and the shame we feel about our sin, so that we can move forward into your transformation.



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# **SERMON NOTES**

\* Special note: This page prints automatically on all bulletins, so rather than keeping it blank, it has been repurposed for Tuesday Talkback attendees' notes. However, this notes page will be replaced by other content if additional space is required by the Church staff. \*