

***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
December 15, 2019

**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT SUNDAY**

**A Welcoming Community, Accepting and Serving All
In the Spirit of Christ**

Order of Worship

Prelude

Welcome Greeting and Announcements

Our Ministers will welcome everyone to church and then highlight some significant 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.

An Extravagant Welcome

*No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome in this place.*

Musical Introit

First Service

Second Service:

*Away in the Manger & Jingle Bells
Cooper & Kinlee Spaulding on violin*

Cherubs

Lighting the Third Advent Candle: JOY

Advent Candle Lighter 1: On the first week of advent we lit the candle of Hope. We hope because God teaches us that the future will be better than the past.

LIGHT THE FIRST PURPLE CANDLE OF HOPE

Advent Candle Lighter 2: Last week we lit the candle of Peace. Jesus embodied Isaiah's vision of peace which unites us with God and teaches us how to live with each other.

LIGHT THE SECOND PURPLE CANDLE OF PEACE

Congregation: Today is the Sunday during Advent when we remember that Jesus brought joy into the world. Jesus offers a deep and abiding joy to all who wish to claim it as a reality in their lives.

Advent Candle Lighter 3: Jesus brings joy into the world by offering everyone a pathway toward harmony where beauty and love reign forever. We light this candle, knowing that through Christ true joy can come into our lives.

LIGHT THE PINK CANDLE OF JOY NOW

Congregation: Dear God, give us joy this morning so that people will know that you are the one that make our hearts sing. Amen.

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.

***Opening Hymn *Go Tell It On The Mountain (verse 1)* #154**

**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**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

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| Our 2019 Christmas Pageant |
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The Fumbly Bumbly Angels
By Sandy Cope and Sandy Dillback
Adapted for First Church by Laurie Chipman

Scene 1 – *In the Heavens between*

Angels We Have Heard on High (verses 1 & 2) #125

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why our joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings by which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

O Little Town Of Bethlehem (verse 1) #133
(Parents please help your shepherds & sheep move to the Narthex)

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

Scene 2 - The Town of Bethlehem

The First Noel (verses 1&2)

#139

**The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.**

O Little Town Of Bethlehem (verses 2 & 3)

#133

(Parents please help your young angels move to the Narthex as this Carol begins)

**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 to God the King, and peace to all on earth!**

**How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of God's heaven.
No ear may hear God's coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meet souls will receive God,
Still the dear Christ enters in.**

What Child Is This? (verses 1&2)

#148

**What child is this, who laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

**Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

Scene3 – In Bethlehem & In the Heavens

Hark the Herald Angels Sing (all 3 verses)

#144

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"**

**Joyful, all ye rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, off-spring of the virgin's womb.**

**Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.

**Mild he lays His glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

Scene4 – Later in Bethlehem

Joy to the World (all 3 verses)

#132

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth its praises bring;
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.**

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

***The Doxology**

We Three Kings

**We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

Pastoral Prayer

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Congregational Response

Come, O Long Expected Jesus

#122

**Come, O long expected Jesus, born to set all people free.
From our fears of sins release us, grant us your true liberty.**

**By your own eternal spirit, come to claim us as your own.
By your all sufficient merit, let us share your cross and crown.**

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 me walk with my fellow 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.

Cast

In order of appearance

- Chance*.....Erik Frivoll
- George*Braeden Koch
- Penelope*..... Tessa Nowell
- Daphne* Izzy Owens
- Archangel*.....Charlie McGeary
- Shepherds*.....Jacob Hoy, David Hoy, Zoe Moos
- Young Shepherds*Kaydence Laflam
- Alpha Sheep*Makaylah Moos
- Sheep*Alec Mayville, Betty & Lily Marthaler,
Molly & Mindy Mannarino
Cooper Spaulding
- Travelers*Scarlet & Lila Stimson, Anthony Elay
- Innkeeper*.....David Harris
- Innkeeper's wife*Anna Kinney
- Mary*Sara Sinkewicz
- Joseph*.....Liam Gorniak
- Younger Angels*.....Genevieve King, Kelvey Spaulding
Molly & Izzy Bourn, Kinlee Spaulding
Eli Palmer
- Baby Jesus (second service)*Leah Mayville
- Toddler Jesus (first service)*Lincoln Bartlett
- Toddler Jesus (second service)*.....Blakely Noel
- Magi* Sam & Mae Dewey
- Technical Support*.....Gretchen Owen, Kaki McGeary
Leo Wermer, Oliver Waldbrise
- Stage Manager* Jessica Moos
- Cheer Leader*Pastor Josh Simon
- Director*.....Bill Bickford, Jr.
- Producer*..... Laurie Chipman



*The flowers on the altar are given by
The Stein Family
In loving memory of family.*

Today's Ushers & Greeters

(1st Service) Greeters: (No registered persons)

Ushers: (No registered persons)

(2nd Service) Greeters: (No registered persons)

Ushers: (No registered persons)

Interested in ushering/greeting? Register by visiting this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0e4facae2daafe3-ushergreeter>



First Church's Prayer Ministry

Marion Schneider

Richard Ansell

Rick Busciglio

Robert & Claire Deal

Tom Gibbs

Dylan Gibbons

George Jackson

(Linda Jackson's husband)

Barb Blanchett

Jeff Noel

John Burnett

Lester Nutting

Carlene Lawrence

Rose Johnson (Doug Ovitt's mother)

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@fcej.org. Additionally, prayer requests will be edited regularly. If you find an unintended error or omission, then please, contact the Church office.

Coat Hangers/Racks



We have several areas you can hang your coat! **Entering on Church Street?** Stop by Pastor Mark's office and use this coat closet. You probably have noticed our main coat rack off in the Foyer as you enter from the main parking lot. If you pass this one by there is one by the glass doors as you enter the front door of the church. After you walk up the stairs to the Sanctuary there is still another coat closet down the side hall to your right, just before walking into worship.

Prayer Shawls

Feeling Chilly? We have a large stock of warm, hand-made prayer shawls to keep you cozy this year, and they are free to keep! Ask our Ushers/Greeters for help.



Love Baskets made from recycled t-shirts by our Church's children & youth are available in our Marvin Lounge. Bring them to friends & family who are ill or otherwise unable to attend church.

TODAY



LAST DAY TO SIGNUP!!!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS: Order your poinsettias for Christmas services in memory or honor of a loved one or special event. Cost is \$12.95. Options include red, white, pink and a marbled variety. **Please place your order by Sunday December 15th.** You may write your request in your Friendship Pad. Or, you may call the Church office @ 802 878 5745; or email Doug @ welcome@fccej.org; or you can sign up on the spreadsheet with the ushers/greeters/deacons. 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.



FLOWER CHART: The 2020 Flower Chart is posted on the *Mission: Possible* board in the hallway between the Narthex and Fellowship Hall.

Please, write your request on the chart by **December 31st.**

An Update on the Giving Tree:

Thank you to everyone who took tags off the Giving Tree to shop for Christmas gifts for children in our community. We will disperse gifts on **Wednesday, December 18th** in our Marvin Lounge.



Church Bylaws Review Between 1st & 2nd Service

Copies of the pending Bylaws updates with rationale are available for members. Please, participate if you are a member as this process is an integral component of our beautiful institution.

BELLS ARE RINGING... AGAIN!

After a hiatus, our team of handbell ringers will begin practicing every Wednesday night @ 6:30pm in our Sanctuary and playing at services throughout the year. No experience or musical training is necessary and all are welcome! If you are interested, email Organist Carol Spradling (cspradling@fccej.org) for details.

A Healing Service

Sunday, December 15th @ 7pm

The Christmas season often brings a mixture of profound joy and a deep sense of grief: joy at the wonder in our youngster's eyes and sadness that those we dearly love who are far away or no longer with us. Emotions are more poignant all around with struggles in relationships, addictions, depression and financial worries taking on even more meaning. Our church would like to offer you a quiet hour where you can focus your attention on our need for hope and healing. The service will start at 7:00 p.m. and everyone is welcome.

Support JUMP!

Part of our church's mission to JUMP (Joint Urban Ministry Project) is to provide **deodorant**. 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.)

Hannaford Cards Sunday, December 19th

Reload your Hannaford Cards (up to \$500!) **OR** purchase new ones in \$25, \$50, \$100, and \$200 increments. Or, buy a card as a stocking stuffer! You'll be putting something extra special in someone's stocking and the church earns "free" money from your purchase. **FCCEJ receives \$5 for every \$100 worth of cards it sells.**



@ 8:30am & 10:15am

Capital Campaign Update

By Kaki McGeary



Sanctuary Restoration Project Update!

Worship Services will be held in Fellowship Hall while the sanctuary is closed for restoration (starting Sunday Dec. 29 through Palm Sunday).

As we shared before, our plaster ceiling must be totally removed and replaced. This work will require temporary scaffolding and we will not be able to use the sanctuary during this time. The entire project should take about 2 months, assuming no major hiccups. The ceiling work will be done first and then it must cure for several weeks, during which time the walls will be patched. Once that is done, painting can begin.

Our staff and several volunteers have developed plans to make this temporary move as seamless and comfortable as possible. We ask for prayers that we move through this time of transition with flexibility and grace. We look forward to seeing you all in our new space on Sunday mornings starting right after Christmas!

Lighting Update—We are working with the electrician to install parking lot, sign and steeple lights as soon as possible. Federal grant funds will pay for the parking lot fixtures.

Pledge Payments—Your continued pledge payments are vital to our efforts! We have budgeted for bridge loan financing. While we have not needed it yet, our cash balance is getting low and we will likely need to secure a bridge loan for the Sanctuary Restoration. As always, early pledge payments are welcome to minimize interest expenses.

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.

FAITH FORMATION (PreK-8th Grade)

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

Faith Formation Conversations

PreK – 8th have been talking about the Christmas story.

On January 2nd, our PreK - 2nd graders will be talking about the Magi & the gifts they brought to Jesus. Join us as we celebrate Epiphany and have a birthday party for Jesus.

Sunday Morning Calendar

- *December 15th* ~ Pageant Sunday at both worship services
 - *December 22nd* ~ Intergenerational Worship & sing Carols
 - *December 29th* ~ Intergenerational Worship
 - *January 5th* ~ 1st Sundays ~ Intergenerational Worship & Spiritual Friends.
- PreK – 2nd grade who are looking for more movement can join the Spiritual Friends for a story time and activity. All will return for communion.

Save the D@tes!

December 22nd ~ One service @ 10am

January 26th ~ One service @ 10am

Faith Formation Music Time

Cherubs ~ Preschool ~ 2nd grade

Joyful Noise ~ 3rd ~ 8th grade

Music time takes place on peer group Sundays. Children and youth then move to peer groups until 11:30am. On these days we encourage parents to move from worship to coffee hour and then up to collect the children. All PreK through 2nd grade need to be signed out by an authorized person. Older children will be excused at 11:30am. Parents can update their list of authorized persons by emailing Laurie.

Sunday School Offering Spectrum Youth & Family Services

2019 Total — \$666.82 (as of 12/8)



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.

High School Youth are encouraged to help during faith formation on Sunday mornings. Connect with Laurie for more information. Be a helper on Spiritual Friends, Peer Group or Hands-On Mission Sundays.



Growing
Together
in Faith



YOUTH MINISTRY (5th-12th Grade)

FCCEJ Confirmation Class

Thursdays @ 7:30-9pm

Confirmation is an intentional time in a person's life, usually a young person, to learn more about Christianity, the Bible, faith, etc. During this time, they start to intentionally form what they believe and how they want to engage society. The confirmands attend other faith tradition's worship services, participate in community service projects, and participate in some capacity at church whether if it's through helping with faith formation, reading in worship, etc. It ends with confirmation Sunday when confirmands who want to join the church publicly do so. Anyone in 8th grade or above is welcome to join the Confirmation class. It is a one-year program. Confirmation class will take place most Thursdays, 7:30-9pm, between now and May 31st on Confirmation Sunday.

Junior Youth

Have a wonderful holiday break with family & friends.
JY time starts back up in January.

January 5th ~ JY time ~ 11:30am to 1:30pm

Sunday morning ~ Help Greet/Usher/Read Scripture during 10:15am worship

January 17th ~ JY Overnight ~ 6pm to 9am

Meal donations and snacks for youth times are appreciated! Visit this link to list your contribution:
Snack/Meal donation sign up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c054fa4a82fa5fc1-fceej>

High School Youth

Have a great holiday break with family & friends.
Watch for emails to pick our day/time to meet in January!

Pageant

Thank you

Many thanks to all those who helped to make this year's pageant a fun and exciting time for all! From our cast, to our crew and all the support that came along the way...especially our youth and their parents. It has truly been a wonderful experience and we hope you all enjoyed hearing about the birth of Christ in this fun and lively presentation.



National Youth Event

July 20-26, 2020

Calling all youth ages 12-20 by July. Travel with Pastor Josh & Laurie to Purdue University. Four (4) days of worship, music & service project. We need at least 5 youth to make trip happen. Sign up by December 1st with Pastor Josh or Laurie.

Visit <http://www.uccpages.org/nye2020/> for details.

Cost is \$250 per youth
Fundraising Event in early 2020.



Deadline to sign up for this fun trip is January 2nd.

@ the Lake UCC Camp at Rock Point

For those going into 5th – 8th grade in the fall of 2020. **Sunday, July 26 at 2pm to Friday, July 31st at 4pm.** Recruiting now for counselors, lifeguards, CIT's and a nurse.

THIS WEEK

Noontime Book Group

(3rd Monday of each Month)

Monday, December 16th @ 11:30am

In December, we will meet at Joanne Irwin's house. As has become our tradition we will each choose a short Christmas story to share with the group. It could be an old favorite, a children's story or a new one that you've just found this year. There are many available online if you Google "Holiday Short Stories." We will share a pot luck lunch. Please let Joanne know what you would like to bring so we don't end up with a dozen desserts and no main course!

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.

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!

Heavenly Food Pantry

Thursday, December 19th @ 5:30-7:30pm

The Pantry would appreciate these donations: *spaghetti sauce, cereal, and chicken noodle soup, and one-dozen egg cartons*. Also, we have several volunteering opportunities!

See our church's newsletter for more details; or contact Val Gabert directly @ val.gabert@gmail.com.

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

37 Main Street in Essex Junction

Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 10am-3pm; Thursdays 4pm-8pm; 1st & 3rd Saturday of each month, 9am-1pm. **Phone:** 879-6552.

News: The week of December 16th the Holiday Shop will be by donation only. Our Nearly New section is full with Christmas Gifts and is open Saturday 21st. The shop will be closed December 23rd to January 7th for the Holiday Season.

Please, contact Elaine Raymond @ 879-7350 or ebraymond@gmail.com.

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, December 20th @ 1:30pm

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!

Women's Spirituality Group

Saturday, December 21st @ 9:30am

Please join us in the Marvin Lounge. Joanne Irwin will inspire us with her knowledge of Christmas Carols and then we'll enjoy a gift swap. You may bring a treasure from home or buy something new (\$5 limit). Please wrap. We'll enjoy some holiday goodies as we enjoy this special time of year together.

SAVE THE D@TE!

Christmas Eve Services

Tuesday, December 24th

5pm: Family Service

9pm: Lessons & Carols

11pm: Communion & Carols

Church Undecorating

Friday, December 27th @ 10am

**** VOLUNTEERS NEEDED **** We will undecorate the Sanctuary and other Church spaces. We have a major Sanctuary renovation happening so please volunteer to help us prepare.

FCCEJ Offices

Closed for Holidays

Wednesday, December 25th

Wednesday, January 1st

Saturday Worship

Saturday, January 4th @ 4:30pm

Our alternative Saturday afternoon worship service continues on December 7th. We gather in Fellowship Hall at 4:30 and discuss the scripture and figure out how it applies to our lives. We pray for each other and light candles for those we mention. Then we have a time of fellowship and or communion with each other as we break bread AND enjoy some goodies to eat. We would love to have you come join us.



Essex Eats Out

Friday, January 3rd @ 5:30-6:30pm

A free, community-wide dinner 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 1st Friday of each month. Donations (to help subsidize the cost of these meals) are solicited but not required. Visit essexeatsout.org for more details. Additionally, you may visit our website for menus of meals hosted at FCCEJ:

<http://www.fccej.org/v5/category/essex-eats-out/>

JOY (Just Older Youth)

Thursday, December 5th @ Noon

If you are 55+ please consider joining this active church group. JOY meets at noon on the first Thursday of the month. We strive to present programs that foster learning, fun, or service.

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS GREAT WAY TO GIVE TO THE CHURCH?



If you are over age 70 ½ and have Traditional IRA assets, you can satisfy your required minimum distribution (RMD) requirements by making a Qualified Charitable Distribution to First Church! By directing some (or all) of your IRA distribution to the church, you can support the congregation and our missions in a tax-advantaged way. The distribution amount is not included in your adjusted gross income, which can help you potentially avoid increased taxes on SSI, higher premiums on Medicare, and the loss of deductions/exemptions. If you use the standard deduction on your taxes, this allows you still to get a tax benefit on your gift to the church. If you haven't taken your RMD for 2019 or want to get a jump-start on your 2020 planning please reach out to Pat Seaver (878-4445, vtri2@aol.com) to find out more information.

Another great way to support the amazing work being done at FCCEJ is by making a gift of appreciated stock. If you happen to own stocks that have grown in value and you would like to avoid the capital gains taxes on selling those stocks, you can gift them instead! Satisfy or increase your annual pledge by gifting these shares of stock directly to the church. You save on taxes and the church can use those funds to further our ministry.

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

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: Jenny Bourn [jennybourn4@gmail.com]
& Laura Marthaler [Laura.marthaler@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 Sue Wood [879-6552] suewood@myfairpoint.net

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

mission
M O M E N T S
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 15, 2019
Third Sunday of Advent
Heartbeat of Justice
Luke 1:46b-55

Look around the room. Everyone's circumstances were unique, but every person you see has at least one thing in common – every person here was born. And before they were born, they were carried in a womb.

Look around the world. Everyone's circumstances were unique but every person you see has this in common – every person on this planet we call home was born. And before they were born, every person was carried in a womb.

However you were born, the first sounds you heard were the muffled but persistent sound of the mother's heartbeat. The heartbeat of the woman's body that carries the baby is the first sound that the child can hear. Every language records it differently, but in most every language, the word we use for that first sound is as rhythmic and beautiful as a two-word poem. Lub dub, lub dub, those who speak English say. Around the world, mothers' hearts beat, saying duru duru (Bengali), deg deg (Indonesian), pam pam (Albanian), tuks tuks (Estonian), peng peng (Chinese), bum bum (Spanish), ratama ratama (Arabic), doki doki (Japanese).

After its mother's heart, the second sound a fetus can hear is the sound of their mother's voice. Like the heartbeat, to every baby in the world, this voice sounds the same. Individual words are not distinguished – just the musical cadence of the sound of her voice.

Now look at Jesus. His story is unique, but he is like us in this way. He was born. And before he was born, he was carried in a womb. Like us, he heard a heartbeat. Like us, he heard the cadence of his mother's voice. What did it mean for Jesus to have the first words he heard be this song - a longing of a justice?

Third Sunday of Advent - Prayer for Joy

O come, O come Emmanuel!
This is grief and sorrow
in our hearts and in our world.
Save us, we pray, from our sadness.
Remind us that you are lifegiving water,
an endless spring of joy.
Help us to create the joy that comes from justice,
here and now and always. Amen.

December 16, 2019 - December 22, 2019

FCCEJ WEEKLY CALENDAR

December 2019

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

January 2020

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

Monday, December 16

- 11:30am - 1:30pm **Noontime Book Group** (Marvin Lounge) ☞
- 12:00pm - 1:30pm **Brown Bag** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 1:30pm - 4:00pm **Food Pantry Stocking** (Fellowship Hall & Gym) ☞
- 5:30pm - 6:45pm **Yoga @ First** (2nd Floor Programming Room) ☞
- 5:30pm - 6:30pm **Group Victory** (Marvin Lounge) ☞
- 6:30pm - 9:30pm **Joe's Big Band** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 6:30pm - 8:30pm **Scouting Alumni and Friends (SAF) Meeting** (Marvin Lounge)
- 6:45pm - 8:00pm **Finance Committee** (2nd Floor Programming Room)

Tuesday, December 17

- 8:30am - 10:00am **Sermon Talk Back** (Marvin Lounge) ☞
- 12:00pm - 1:30pm **Brown Bag** (Fellowship Hall) ☞

Wednesday, December 18

- 8:00am - 11:30am **Food Shelf Delivery** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 9:00am - 5:00pm **Giving Tree, Disbursement** (Marvin Lounge)
- 12:00pm - 1:30pm **Brown Bag** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 1:00pm - 2:30pm **FCCEJ Staff Meeting** (3rd Floor Youth Lounge)
- 5:30pm - 7:00pm **Finally@First** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 6:30pm - 8:30pm **Quality Youth Development** (3rd Floor Youth Lounge)
- 6:30pm - 8:15pm **Handbell Choir** (Sanctuary) ☞

Thursday, December 19

- 8:30am - 6:30pm **Food Pantry** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 12:00pm - 1:30pm **Brown Bag** (Marvin Lounge) ☞
- 3:00pm - 4:00pm **Easterseals** (3rd Floor Youth Lounge) ☞
- 6:00pm - 9:00pm **Music@First** (Sanctuary) ☞
- 6:30pm - 8:30pm **Eagle Scout BOR** (3rd Floor: Blue, Coral, or Yellow Room)
- 6:30pm - 7:45pm **Tiger Den #9** (3rd Floor Youth Lounge) ☞

Friday, December 20

- 9:00am - 10:30am **Hiawatha School, Food Donation Dropoffs** (Fellowship Hall)
- 12:00pm - 1:30pm **Brown Bag** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 1:30pm - 4:00pm **Bridge Club** (Marvin Lounge) ☞
- 5:00pm - 8:00pm **Burlington Amateur Radio Club** (Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, December 21

- 9:00am - 11:00am **Nepali Community Worship** (Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 9:30am - 11:30am **Women's Spirituality** (Marvin Lounge) ☞
- 1:00pm - 2:00pm **Brown Bag** (Fellowship Hall) ☞

Sunday, December 22

- 10:00am - 11:30am **Worship Service** (Sanctuary) ☞
- 11:30am - 3:00pm **Caroling & Cocoa!**
- 11:30am - 2:00pm **Craft Fest Planning** (Marvin Lounge)
- 1:00pm - 2:00pm **Brown Bag** (Fellowship Hall) ☞
- 6:00pm - 8:00pm **Venture Crew** (Marvin Lounge) ☞