



SPIRIT@FIRST
monthly newsletter

**FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH** *of Essex Junction*

Love. Serve. Grow.

In This Issue...

...June 2020

- *Your Pastor's Ponderings*
- *Associate Pastor News*
- *Laurie's Lens*
- *Music Director's Musings*
- *Communications*
- *Capital Campaign*
- *Trustees*
- *Youth Ministry (Camps)*
- *Faith Formation*
- *Missions (Pantry, Thrift Shop)*
- *Volunteer*
- *Birthdays*
- *Teleworship & Fellowship*
- *Ministry Directory*

Your Pastor's Ponderings

Dear Friends,
First Church has never been busier; worship, meetings, pastoral care, music, youth group, social encounters, physical plant improvements and community outreach opportunities continue to occur despite the COVID -19 pandemic. Instead of doing all these aspects of ministry face to face, we are Zooming, YouTubing, Facebooking, Pastoral Walking and Safe Distancing Food Distributing.

The coronavirus has caused our church to conduct ministry in very different ways and despite missing the face to face interactions, there are ways in which our church is becoming ever more vibrant and healthier. Worship via live streaming is attracting double the number of people to worship. With few people physically present at church, the projects from our Capital Campaign are occurring without any programmatic or staff hindrances. The sanctuary plastering and painting is complete, the carpets have been cleaned, the pulpit and lectern are becoming moveable to allow for greater flexibility in the sanctuary and now all the staff is working from home to allow the administrative wing to have its asbestos removed / floors completely re-surfaced and in two weeks all the locks will be replaced to increase the safety throughout the church. We now have morning and evening devotionals and our Deacons are checking in on more members now than ever. We have a large Confirmation Class preparing to graduate on May 31st [you will not want to miss that service!] Our choirs continue to produce a high-quality product for our enjoyment. And the donations and clients are significantly up in our Heavenly Food Pantry outreach. All those ministries are being accomplished in the midst of the worst health care and economic crises in a hundred years. And on top of it all, all of you continue to get your pledges in! Such success is a tribute to our staff, leadership, volunteers and members and I am deeply grateful for what all of you do to make that happen.

However, despite these successes, it is still frustrating and disappointing to say that we are in this for the long haul. Re-entry back into the rhythms and cycles of our past church life will not take place for quite a while: months at the least, maybe a year or more! The Vermont Department of Health, our Governor, and our scientific experts all expect a vaccine to take a year to create and then even longer to mass produce. Your church leaders and staff are erring on the side of keeping all of you safe and healthy. As one small example, the suggested safe distancing between people is six feet but when singing that distance gets expanded to twenty-five feet! How do we worship without singing? Or perhaps a better question would be, how can we worship without singing and still celebrate and enjoy music?

It looks like the experts have understood the process to be tiered, or we will re-enter in similar ways to how we moved into our current "stay at home" order: in bits and stages. Perhaps some staff can return to the building first. Then small church and or community groups would be able to return to using our building given that they use all the safety protocols. Then if there is not a noticeable increase in cases, that number might be increased over time. For example, right now the Thrift Shop is discussing how to abide by Gov. Scott's new recommendations as they contemplate opening. Church Leadership and Staff have determined to abide by the following simple guidelines for all church and outside group activities to help us move toward re-entry in a safe, yet cautious way.

- ❖ We will strive to follow the guidelines and directives from:
 - The Vermont Department of Health
 - Governor Phil Scott's Office
 - The Center for Disease Control
 - The Scientific and Medical Experts
- ❖ Council's Executive Committee (EC) will monitor / update these policies
EC consists of President, VP, Treasurer, Clerk, Chair of Deacons, Clergy
- ❖ Volunteers over 65 or at risk can volunteer in groups of no more than two

We are learning as we journey through these uncertain days and the situation changes each week; this seems to be the nature of these pandemic times. So, I would ask everyone to live into God's grace a bit and realize we are all trying to do the right thing and keep everyone safe. We know these days will cease and we will return to a church life where gatherings, hugs, dinners, and handshakes are the norm. Then we will joyously celebrate our upgraded facilities but more importantly our love and care for each other. Stay safe and if you have any needs, please call the church office or forward your needs to one of our staff members. Let us remain strong, hopeful and compassionate as we seek to continue building Christ's community of love and peace. As always, I am

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Mark

Associate Pastor News

The long-expected Summer will be here on June 20th. To re-cap, as if we need remaindering, we had a particularly long winter. We had snow weeks before Thanksgiving and the long dreary winter season, while not officially, began. In January, we started to hear of reports of a virus and sickness affecting people in Wuhan, China. I went to Israel for 10 days and by the time I returned, the way the citizens of the world operate started to change. Vermont in March started to restrict and close certain places and eventually closed most places. New information about the virus constantly. Most places in the United States have yet to significantly quell the spread of the virus. Vermont, unlike most, has actually slowed the spread significantly. I don't know exactly why Vermont is unique, especially in the Northeast, to quell the spread, but I hope it stays that way.

So long as the spread continues to be minimal, now might be the time to garden, to find someone who will let you work in their garden, who will let you help with yard work, go for a hike, walk along the lake or river, and other outdoor activities. Whatever it is, now is the time to get outside and enjoy creation, to praise and worship God, and connect with the Holy Spirit as we are reminded of it in the blowing of the wind. I am still available for walks or hikes outside, while wearing masks and keeping a safe distance from each other. I am available for small group hikes outside. If you want to do some weeding in the front yard of the parsonage, call me up. I am always looking for ways for us to do things outside in a safe way.

High School Youth Time will continue throughout the Summer. We'll meet online via Zoom and if there's enough interest, we might try to go on a hike or spend time outside together, in a safe way.

Graduation Sunday is June 21. Please email me, jsimon@fcej.org a picture of your graduate as a little one, as an adult/graduation pic, and also the details as to where they are graduating from and what their plans are for the near future. Thanks! We'll show these pictures and information during the worship.

Rev. Josh Simon, *Associate Pastor*

Laurie's Lens



Oh, how I miss you all! I too would so like to be back in the church building and connecting with you all, especially on Sundays. As I write this article we have a team of dedicated workers removing the asbestos tile in our administrative wing, which includes the tile under the carpets in our offices. Moving out of my office last week was very exciting but with this came mixed emotions of knowing that my creative head, that so loves to work where I can touch items and walk the building, will have to look for new ways as I truly settle in working from home. Yes, I have been doing the majority of my hours from home, but also had the blessing of going into the office on Mondays, when I was usually the only staff person there, to help keep my creativity juices flowing. Change is good, but with it always comes planning, flexibility, discernment, progress and growth. I have to say this is the first article that I remember in a very long time being written while I sit outside on my deck in the sunshine enjoying the warmth of love from God.

Our faith formation year is winding down looking very different than in years past. While we are not together in person I pray you are finding the resources that are being sent out helpful. Please keep sending in your feedback and pictures of what you have been doing. I love this! It truly makes my day when I get mail from you! Our peer group leaders have been sending out a few notes to you all to help us stay connected. They all are such a blessing to me, especially in this time when my hours of planning and implementing run by way too fast. They freely give of their time, talents and energy and it all helps to keep us connected and strong. So, on June 7th when we celebrate our faith formation programs for the year and all our volunteers who make them what they are, Spiritual Friends, Cherub & Joyful Noise leaders, peer group leaders and helpers, and Hands On Mission helpers. Join with us in thanking them as we gather virtually this year. They won't be able to walk forward to be recognized, but instead are sending me a picture of themselves so that I can put together a slide show of our gratitude and thanks.

I continue to connect with area Christian Education leaders from other churches bi-weekly on Zoom. I look forward to our fellowship, community and bouncing around ideas, hear from each other of what is working or not working and doing some discerning of what could come next in our ministry.

Please read on in this newsletter for news on outdoor ministry camps and our Vacation Bible Camp which will be an at home program this year. It's easy to register for both these free programs and test them out if you have not been able to in the past.

Blessed to be in ministry with you,
Laurie Chipman
Christian Education Director

Music Director's Musings

It is a long tradition at most churches that choirs take a well-deserved break during the summer months. At First Church, we typically use this time to welcome guest music from members of our faith community (some who are members of the choirs, some who are not).

I want to thank many of our choir members who have been tirelessly contributing to our music each week. They are Marsha Duell, Beth Volker, Amanda Palmer, Judy Pomainville, Denise Keating, Andrea Sharp, Marie and David Johnson, John Mager, Doug Olufsen, Di and Michael Bottamini, and Jim Coates. Guys, it's been wonderful to be in each other's homes on Thursdays keeping spirits up through the COVID crisis.

And thanks also to Rick Dooley and F@F for creating so many wonderful songs. By dividing up the workload, we've been able to offer diverse music for worship.

This summer, I will be working very reduced hours since I have been putting in long full-time hours creating virtual choir recordings this spring (I'm your part time Music Director). Since I won't be producing

recordings outside of instrumental hymns, we are seeking self-contained special music this summer in the form of First Church members videotaping a song or instrumental piece.

This is an ideal time for students and children to share their talents with our church. Songs can be short and simple :). This will be a great time to experience one another's offerings of music.

If you're interested, please email and let me know which weekend you will cover (cspradling@fccej.org). You'll receive from our worship team current instructions for how to share your video, and other information.

Here is to a safe, happy, peaceful summer to all.
Carol Spradling, *Music Director*

Communications Committee

First, the Communications Committee wants to give a big shout-out to Kaki McGeary! She got involved in the web site updates due to the addition of the Building Use information, which she coordinated in her role as the chair of Trustees. Thankfully she continued to assist us and worked with other committees to provide content for other areas of the web. The latest area of the site to be renovated is "Who We Are", including a new section with information for visitors. Please feel free to look around our web site and watch as we continue to update the content.

Also, we want to thank everyone that has made our online worship possible. Jonah Moos and Ed Guild are there every Sunday to make sure that the stream is running smoothly to allow Pastors Mark & Josh focus on worship. In advance of the service Pastor Josh organizes the non-live sections of the service so that we can enjoy them seamlessly. And last, but certainly not least, the choirs and their leaders Carol Spradling and Rick Dooley are wrangling technology to provide beautiful music every week. Thank you all so much!!! If you haven't joined us for online worship, it is very easy. On the internet, go to www.fccej.org. This is our "Home Page." To join **Sunday** worship, scroll down and you will see this:



Click on the purple box labeled "Watch Worship". That will bring you to our "YouTube" channel. Click on the box that reads, "Sunday Worship" for the date you want. Past services are also stored here, for you to watch at any time.

We hope that you enjoy these changes and stay tuned for more website updates. Please contact the church office via e-mail at welcome@fccej.org or by calling 878-5745 if you have any questions.

Andrea Sharp, *Communications Committee Co-Chair*

Our Home, Our Future, Our Time Capital Campaign Update

The Capital Campaign work in the sanctuary is finally complete and it looks so beautiful! We are eagerly awaiting the day when we can all worship there together again. Special thanks to the volunteers who helped clean and put everything back together: Dennis and Sue Conti, Frank & Barb Smith, and Ed Guild! The carpets AND pew cushions have been cleaned –Apex Carpet & Upholstery really did a terrific job.

Wing of the building to remove old asbestos tile in all the offices and hallways on the lower levels. Originally, we thought we might need to wait a while before starting this project due to COVID-19. However, our Finance Committee and Council gave us the green light to move forward. Doing the flooring now will be the least disruptive to our operations, because the offices are pretty much empty anyhow. AND it will allow us to move forward with updating the Church Street Entrance with new, wider doors and our new keyless entry/security system. We also hope to have the new interior door locks installed on classrooms and offices in early June. The security improvements will be paid for with funds from our \$47,000 federal grant.

Pledge Payments: In these challenging times, we know that many folks are dealing with financial uncertainty and hardship and taking care of yourself and your family is the top priority. For the capital campaign, your continued pledge payments and even early pledge payments will help us avoid the need to access the bridge loan and help minimize (or even eliminate) interest expenses. Thank you for your continued support.

Dave Johnson & Kaki McGeary, *Capital Campaign Co-Chairs*

Trustees

In addition to managing all of the Capital Campaign improvement projects, your Trustees continue to maintain our facilities and fix anything essential that breaks. Here is a sampling of the things that we are working on: replace the furnace at the Sawyer House, find ways to soundproof the daycare area to minimize disruption to our staff, fix the leaks in our heating system, schedule maintenance for the elevator and lift...and the list goes on! A tremendous amount of work goes into each and every project and repair. Thank you to Frank Smith, Ed Guild, Phil Bourn, Dennis Conti & Ann Gray for the many hours you spend taking good care of our buildings and grounds!

Plans for Moveable Pulpit & Lectern

As we shared last month, Council approved plans to make our existing pulpit and lectern moveable. This is something that our staff and Deacons have discussed for a long time. The goal is to make our worship space more flexible AND make our space more attractive to people who might rent our sanctuary, while at the same time preserving the beauty of the existing pulpit and lectern AND maintaining the current layout. Andy Blodgett, who made the custom cabinetry in Fellowship Hall, is in the process of making the necessary modifications to the pulpit and lectern. These changes will be made possible through the Memorial Fund.

Youth Ministry

Graduation Sunday is June 21. Send Pastor Josh (jsimon@fccej.org) your graduates (high school/undergrad/grad school) baby/young picture and their graduation/most recent picture, include where they're graduating from and what they plan to do in the future.

Junior Youth -5th - 8th graders

Faith, Fellowship & Games

JY'ers met weekly on Zoom in May and tried some different times besides our regular 11:30am on Sunday mornings, we added a 7pm on Monday and 6pm on Sunday. Share your feedback on times with Laurie and Pastor Josh. JY'ers have enjoyed playing Scattergories & Box of Lies, with conversations about truth vs. lies and ending by lighting a candle and sharing our joys & concerns.

Add to your calendars

May 24th at 6pm (praying in color) & May 31st at 11:30am (JY'er choose)

Last gathering before fall will be JUNE 7th at 11:30am

Summer – remember to find ways and places to connect with God & have spiritual time ~ a walk in town, a hike with your family, quiet time without an electronic device in your hands or near you, praying in color, etc.

High School Youth

For updates and information contact Pastor Josh

UCC NYE trip to Purdue University

July 20-26, 2020

This trip has been pushed out to July 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will share more information on this trip when it becomes available. All youth who have completed 6th grade in 2022 will be eligible to go.

Camps



Our Vermont Camp at Rock Point
for those going into 5th – 8th grade
Monday – Friday from July 27th-31st

The VT Outdoor Ministries Team of volunteers along with this year's co-deans, Pastor Ed Sunday-Winters & Laurie Chipman, and @ the Lake daytime volunteers a fun week for you! Join us and register for FREE on HC@home at www.hortoncenter.org. There will be daily morning watches at 9am, activity blocks and live evening vespers on Zoom at 7pm. We have a goal to bring as much flavor of @ the Lake to you with HC@home as we can. We will connect to the water and offer ideas for community service.

Rock Point Camp, <https://www.rockpointvt.org/camp>, Episcopal Conference Center in Burlington will also be closed for the 2020 summer season.



HC@home is FREE: Our UCC camps in New England, following much discerning, have made a tough and safe decision that all their sites will be closed for the summer camping season of 2020. To keep everyone safe and to help keep outdoor ministries alive Horton Center is offering a free option, HC@home, with a mission to continue to give campers the experience of building sacred community, encouraging time spent outdoors and continuing our faith journeys alongside one another while keeping everyone safe. Have you been interested in attending an outdoor ministries camp, but were not sure what it was like or the timing just didn't work out? Well, here is your chance! Take a leap and sign up for camp! All the camp titles now begin with HC@home and are now FREE! They run from Monday to Friday. Registration opened Friday, May 15th and there are only 30 slots for each camp. You must register 2 weeks prior to camp starting so go visit www.hortoncenter.org NOW! After you register, campers will receive and email with information on how to access their camp. Questions? Contact either Tim Hughes on the HC website or connect with Laurie.

Vacation Bible Camp @ Home: *Knights of the North Castle*



Quest for the King's Armor
*Armor UP with Truth, Justice,
Peace, Faith & Salvation*
August 10th – 14th

Kick off on Sunday afternoon August 9th (TBA) with a drive through our church parking lot as the VB Camp team greets you and you collect your take home bags. Registration form is on our website www.fccej.org. Look for the KONC logo. Click on it for the form, print and send it back by any of the 3 options on the form. If you

already turned in a form before COVID-19, consider yourselves registered already.

All ages, families and friends are welcome! (*Use one registration sheet per family*)

We are doing our best to have VB Camp@Home be as flexible as we can, because we know some of our camp families will not be able to connect with VB Camp@Home until evening. The VB Camp team is getting closer at reaching this goal as we plan to bring as much of KONC home to you as we can while still giving us all a chance to build community while keeping everyone safe by practicing social distancing. So, let's all 'be strong in the Lord'! Please take a look at our wish list below and sign up by sending Laurie and email to lchipman@fccej.org

VB Camp Wish List

For @Home Crafts & Snacks <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054FA4A82FA5FC1-fccej2>

Faith Formation

Faith Formation Calendar

PreK – 8th grade

FCCEJ Faith @ Home emails will continue weekly until the week of June 10th to all parents and youth (nursery – 12th grade) and our volunteers in the program. If you would like to be on the list to receive them, please send Laurie an email to lchipman@fccej.org and you will be added to the list. Please add my email to your address book so that my emails arrive in your inbox and not your junk folder.

Included each week is a Bible story or two, activities, music links, announcements and ways that you can connect and help your faith to grow and move along on your journey.

2020 Faith Formation Offering

Current total is: \$117.20 (unchanged since March 15th)

Vermont Adaptive Sports www.vermontadaptive.org

Even though we are not meeting at church on Sundays, you can still give by mailing in your offering. Just make a note in the memo line of the check and write 'Faith Formation Offering' or 'VT Adaptive Sports'. Remember just a \$1 a week can go a long way! Put your money aside and then pass it to your parents and have them write a check to the church. *Earn an allowance?* Practice dividing your money 3 ways:

- 1) Give to the church/offering
- 2) Save (in a bank)
- 3) You (spend/save/give to an organization)

Missions

Per Capita Gifts Requested / Mother's Day Gift

Our church, the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction belongs to the Champlain Association of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ. The local, state and national entities of our denomination are united in covenant with shared historical and theological roots that tie us together in to one big, diverse and unique whole. Many churches and denominations have split up over the years, but we strive ourselves as being a denomination that draws diverse people and groups together. Our very name attests to our founding in 1957, where four completely different denominations came together to form the United Church of Christ. We each play our role and we each support one another in our particular calling in following Christ. In good congregational fashion, no bishop or more centralized committee demands that we pay our dues, but instead we freely give money as a local congregation as part of our covenantal relationship with the association, state and national instrumentalities. We have pledged as a church to offer \$ 14 per member to maintain this unique experiment of church organization. Normally we take this collection during our Mother's Day worship service, but we have missed that this year, so I encourage everyone to send in your per capita covenantal amount for each member in your family [\$ 14 per member]. If you can chip in an extra dollar or two, then it should cover those members who cannot afford this extra financial burden. And we traditionally do it on Mother's Day because the church is often referred to as our mother [mother church].

Jamaica Service Program Update

The Jamaica leadership team has made the difficult decision to push the next Jamaica trip to 2022 due to the uncertainty surrounding travel in this time of COVID 19. We will be looking at ways to support our Jamaican partners and perhaps local Jamaican agricultural workers in 2020 and 2021. We are excited to announce that the communications committee will be launching a Jamaica section on the FCCEJ website in the near future. We invite you to check it out! This fall, we will begin recruiting members for the 2022 team. You will find lots of information on the website. If you are interested in learning more or joining the 2022 trip, contact Sharon Dettenrieder (dettenriedes@hartwick.edu) or Carolyn Rushford (cjrushford@comcast.net). Team members will need to be 16 by September 1, 2022. Our friends and community in Jamaica are safe and healthy! We have been in regular contact with the principal at White Horses School. We have also heard from both the owner of Golden Shores Resort, our home base while in Jamaica, and the owner of the transportation company that gets us safely where we need to go. All are well! The school is closed, and children are learning remotely. The Resort and many businesses are closed to prevent an outbreak there. They are thinking of us and wishing us well!

Hannaford Gift Cards are still available!

The church receives \$5 for each \$100 Gift Card we sell, and we appreciate this fundraising now more than ever! *Want to get started?* Contact Pat Seaver at vttri2@aol.com and she will mail a card to you. Let her know how much you would like to add to the card and send a check to the church. Be sure to put "Hannaford Card" on the reference line of your payment. *Need a refill?* Contact Pat Seaver at vttri2@aol.com and give her your name, the amount of money to be applied, and the last four digits of the gift card. Note: if you bought your card somewhere other than the church, you would need to provide the full length of digits. You will receive an email when funds have been added to your card. Please allow 1-2 weeks for processing as the cards are done in batches. Questions? Please call Doug Ovitt in the Church Office at 802-878-5745 extension 100.

Please make checks payable to "FCCEJ" (or use online Bill Pay) and mail to this address:

Attn: Financial Secretary, FCCEJ, 1 Church Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452

Please include "Hannaford Reload" and the date on the subject line of your email or check memo.

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

As we receive the news of retail opening throughout the state, the Thrift Shop volunteers have been making plans to open early June with a modified schedule. We will adhere to the Governor's and VT Health department guidelines for retail as well as directives from church leadership. All volunteers and customers will be required to wear masks and hand wipes, gloves and sanitizers will be provided as well. As of this submission, the schedule has not been determined as well as when we will begin receiving donations. Signage at the Thrift Shop and weekly church communication will indicate more details. In order to be back in business and fulfilling our normal hours, **we need your help** as most of our volunteers are over the age of 65 and at this time, will be allowed to work as support staff sorting and cleaning when we are closed. Contact Elaine Raymond 879-7350 or Sue Wood 878-3068 if you are under the age of 65 and interested in volunteering. Our Facebook page and church website have more details about our regular hours. Thanks for your continued support of donations and volunteer time you give! It helps us meet our mission serving our community.

Heavenly Food Pantry continues to operate monthly on the 2nd Monday ~ 5:30-7:30pm and 4th Thursday ~ 2-6pm. The Pantry dates in June are Monday, June 8th and Thursday, June 25th.

Safely receiving food: Due to current health directives, the shopping process will be modified, and food will be delivered to vehicles in the Church parking lot. Clients will stay in their vehicles, where a

volunteer will gather family information and bagged food will be placed in car trunks. This way, exposure will be strictly limited for both clients and volunteers.

Donations: The Pantry's most needed items are baked beans, tomato soup, chicken noodle soup, corn, peas. The pantry has plenty of dish soap. For the last couple of weeks in May, the church's administrative wing is undergoing construction. The blue tote immediately outside of our Church Street entrance will be accessible to those delivering donations.

Questions or Concerns? Please, email welcome@fccej.org or call the church at 1 (802) 878-5745 extension 100.

Altar Flowers

We continue to take altar flower requests. The following dates are vacant. July 5 & July 26. Email welcome@fccej.org or call 1 (802) 878 5745 if you are interested in honoring a loved one or special event.

Volunteers

Calling All Gardeners to Join the Club

Now that the interior of the church looks great and is all shiny and new, the Trustees have turned their attention to the grounds of the church.....and they have agreed that they are not in the best condition. The Trustees want to remedy that fact. First, they are going to hire someone to come in and re-seed and re-start our grass. That in and of itself is quite a task. Then they want to beautify some of the existing gardens and look for ways to have our church be a bit more presentable to the public as they drive by every day. Our sexton mows the lawn, so we just need help sprucing up our gardens. If you want to get your hands dirty, if you want to make a difference for everyone to see, if you want to work on a team having fun, then please call the church office and let us know of your interest [802 878-5745]. The Trustees want to start a garden club [new cool name will be determined later] to just walk and talk a bit in the garden!

Birthdays

HOGEL, Phyllis	06/01	GIANNUZZI, Matthew	06/08	STAPLETON, Jonathan	06/17	MCGEARY, Kaki	06/23
SULLIVAN, Ann Marie	06/01	BICKFORD, Mindy	06/09	CONTI, Dennis	06/18	CILLEY, Andrea	06/24
BOYD, Susan	06/03	HAMILTON, Finn	06/09	FAUX, Joan	06/18	CHADURJIAN, Cindy	06/25
DEUTSCH, Erna	06/03	MESSIER, Colleen	06/09	CATTERTON, Christine	06/19	SARGENT, Paula	06/25
KOLVOORD, Louise	06/03	CALHOUN, Connor	06/10	FIELD, Stephanie	06/19	BRENNAN, Kathryn	06/26
BERO, Paige	06/05	MCCULLEN, Sean	06/12	ROBINSON, Kara	06/19	GIANNUZZI, Lori	06/28
WOOD, Steven	06/05	WELLS, Ann	06/12	STEELE, Edward	06/19	JACKSON, Linda	06/28
HATHAWAY, Wayne	06/06	NADEAU, June	06/14	BOGARDUS, Linda	06/21	NOEL, Whitney	06/28
DAVIS, Bev	06/07	METCALF, Sarah	06/15	MAUGER, Rory	06/21	REARDON, Suzanne	06/28
DAWSON, Brenda	06/07	KINNEY, Brandon	06/17	GABERT, Henry	06/22	SCHMALZ, Peter	06/29
ASTORE, Janet	06/08	O'NEIL, Leslie	06/17	MAUGER, Lorelai	06/22		

Teleworship & Fellowship Services

The Noontime Book Group: June 15th @ 11:30am via Zoom. Our selection for this month is "And Then There Were None" by Agatha Christie. This was written in 1939 and is a classic "locked room" puzzle. Ten strangers with questionable pasts meet in a mansion on an island and murder is afoot. This book was also published under the title of "Ten Little Indians." Lyn Beliveau has been rereading her entire Agatha Christie collection and will lead our discussion. Even if you cannot usually join our group, I hope you will plan to join us if your adapted schedule allows. We welcome anyone who enjoys reading! Our Zoom Meeting ID is 926 155 784.

Special Saturday Service: June 6, 2020 @ 4:30 p.m. via Zoom.

We will continue to host our Saturday afternoon/early evening service on Saturday, June 6th at 4:30 p.m. This will be our last offering of this service for the year. The service is interactive and informal. We will conduct the service via Zoom: ID # 403 773 331. Hope to see you there.

Prayer Circle Offered: Wednesday Nights. 7:30-8:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Starting on Wednesday May 20th, there will be a time for prayer offered by the staff and Deacons of the church. The idea came from one of our Deacons as a way of uniting people in the ancient practice of Christ's followers, a practice that has offered people peace, comfort, strength and insight.....all gifts that could be very helpful in today's situation. So, every Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m. immediately before Rev. Josh's nightly devotion, one staff and one Deacon will join anyone who shows up for prayer. Gentle and meditative music will be playing along with a comforting picture. People can just enter and verbally say a prayer, ask one of the staff or Deacons to join in, simply text it for others to focus their spiritual presence upon it or just come and quietly soak in the atmosphere and lend your piece of divinity to another's prayer. ZOOM ID #: 847 3119 8775.

Teleworship & Fellowship "Cheat Sheet"

- ❖ Sunday Worship at 9:30am. @ <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuXmhD4K1JGklxOIdMDdZbw>
- ❖ Fellowship Hour, after Sunday Service at 10:30am @ <https://zoom.us/j/980588369>
- ❖ Saturday Worship, 1st Saturday of Each Month (**recess in July and August**) at 4:30pm @ <http://zoom.us/j/403773331>
- ❖ Daily Devotionals, Weekdays 8am and 8pm @ <https://www.facebook.com/firstcongregationalej/>
- ❖ Yoga with Jonah, Mondays and Thursdays at 5:30 pm @ <https://smcvt.zoom.us/j/620842254?pwd=WnRBL0l5V1ZSRnVBZE4zVk1QcCt5UT09>.
- ❖ Sermon Talk Back, Tuesday at 8:30am @ <http://zoom.us/j/740803865>
- ❖ Prayer Time, Wednesdays at 7:30pm @ <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84731198775>
- ❖ Coffee Clatter, Thursdays at 8am @ <https://zoom.us/j/97659276694>
- ❖ Church Committees utilize Zoom as needed. Please, contact the relevant committee chair for details.
- ❖ *Don't have a webcam?* Listen in and speak with us using a phone! Visit our Facebook Events page and click your desired event for a list of phone numbers that you can call to join by telephone/cellphone. (There are numbers for people living nationally and internationally): <https://www.facebook.com/firstcongregationalej/events/>

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: Maureen Evans [233-6127]

Vice President, Chair Finance & Pastoral Relations:

Cathy Shearer [878-6023]

Treasurer & Historian: Ann Gray [878-4088]

Asst. Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [879-0261]

Financial Secretary: Pat Seaver [879-4445]

Clerk: Christine Sinkewicz [878-4470]

Christian Education: Lisa Clark [872-5849]

Communications: Andrea Sharp [879-0580], Judy McCullen [878-9794]

Deacons: Judy Larrabee-Pomainville [802-236-0604]

Hospitality: Jim Glatz [503-5076]

Missions: Joanne Irwin [878-2528], Ed Steele [871-5897]

Music: Denise Keating [345-8900]

Nominating: Barb Smith [310-2491]

Stewardship: Jessica Moos [399-8068], Shannon McCullen [922-8792]

Trustees: Kaki McGeary [879-2062]

Ushering: Justin King [238-6273], Jessica Moos [399-8068]

Recognized Groups at First Church

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop Sue Wood [879-6552] woodsusanjane@gmail.com

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

**First Congregational Church of EJ
1 CHURCH STREET
ESSEX JCT, VT 05452**

**Phone: 802-878-5745 Fax: 802-872-8236
Email: welcome@fccej.org Web: www.fccej.org
Facebook: [@firstcongregationalej](https://www.facebook.com/firstcongregationalej)**

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