



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH *of Essex Junction*

*Love. Serve. Grow.*

## ***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.*

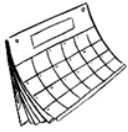
**1 Church Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452**

**Phone:** 802-878-5745 **Fax:** 802-872-8236 **E-mail:** [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)

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



# WORSHIP & FELLOWSHIP



Visit this link to view our official calendar of events: <http://fcej.org/v5/calendar>  
...and our Facebook events page: <http://facebook.com/firstcongregationalej/events/>  
We offer regular worship and fellowship opportunities, too! These include:

- ⊕ **Worship, Sundays at 10am; Monthly Communion, 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays @ <http://youtube.com/c/fcej>**
  - ⊕ **Christmas Eve Services: 5pm & 9pm @ <http://youtube.com/c/fcej>**
- ⊕ **Fellowship Hour, after Worship @ <http://zoom.us/j/980588369>**
- ⊕ **Faith Formation, Monthly on 2nd Sunday at 9am @ Church Grounds**
- ⊕ **Daily Devotionals, Weekdays 8am @ <http://facebook.com/firstcongregationalej/>**
- ⊕ **Sermon Talk Back, Tuesday at 8:30am @ <http://zoom.us/j/740803865>**
- ⊕ **Coffee Clatter, Thursdays at 8am @ <http://zoom.us/j/97659276694>**

## DONATE TO OUR CHURCH

Please, mail payments to:  
attn: Financial Secretary  
FCCEJ  
1 Church Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

Your donation could support our music, youth programming (e.g. Vacation Bible Camp), missions (e.g. Jamaica Missions), adult enrichment (e.g. Sermon Talkback, JOY), Thrift Shop, Food Pantry, and more! We are also a United Church of Christ “5 for 5” participant in these fundraisers: Per Capita (\$14.10/member is our goal), One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen The Church, Neighbors In Need

and The Christmas Fund. We appreciate this fundraising now more than ever! Here are some ways that you may help our ministry:

- ⊕ **Shop at Amazon.com** using Amazon Smile. We receive 0.5% of your purchases! Visit [smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0212216](http://smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0212216)
- ⊕ **Use PayPal!** We accept electronic donations through PayPal. Visit our donation page: [paypal.me/fcej](http://paypal.me/fcej). A PayPal account is not required to donate money!
- ⊕ **Send a Check or use BillPay!** Your bank might offer Billpay, a remote service that issues one-time or recurring check payments by mail. Please, contact your banking institution for more details. All checks should be made payable to “FCCEJ.” Be sure to note the reason for your donation in the check’s memo line (e.g. “food pantry”).

## Journey to Bethlehem! Worship Series...

Visit this link to pledge to our church

[bit.ly/2UQcXz9](http://bit.ly/2UQcXz9)



# Order of Worship

## November 29th, 2020: Live Streaming

### Introductory Music

*Begins at 9:45 a.m.*

*Announcements will be shown on screen*

### As worship begins:

*Light a candle at home,*

*Sit in a comfortable spot,*

*Center yourself w/ breathing.*

### **Service Input Preparation: Text NOW to make the service run more smoothly.**

**1 Thankfulness:** Text Rev. Mark one thought of gratitude [802 922-1773]

**2 Prayer Requests:** Text Rev. Josh your Prayer Requests [920 858-6601]

### Prelude

### Welcome

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

### Welcoming God’s Light into Worship

An Opening Reading on Gratitude [**w/ congregation sharing – text in**]

### A Few Key Announcements

Pastoral visits: simply call us up

Morning/Evening Devotions [webpage]

Faith Formation from 9 – 9:30 a.m. online

Music: Carol, F@F and Sanctuary Choir

Hybrid services postponed with the surge of COVID cases

The Governor Phil Scott’s & Vt Dept of Health Advice

The VTCUCC Strongly worded recommendation

The Decision of the Executive Committee

----hybrid will come and we are making plans, waiting

### The Giving Tree

Register to donate via SignUp Genius: [bit.ly/39dGafY](https://bit.ly/39dGafY)

Or call up Doug and have him sign up for you

IMPORTANT to mark each gift clearly 1-A, 1-B etc

To minimize the # of hands on each gift

### Mission Committee’s \$ 1000 Matching Gift

For those affected by western Fires

### Marvin Lounge Work has begun

Insulate, new walls, bookcases, conference table

Carpet, paint, artwork

*(key announcements  
continue on next  
page....)*

Christmas Poinsettias & Altar Flowers: Signup links at end of bulletin

As always great to have Jonah Moos, Gary Hartman, Ed Guild,  
Francis Gravel and Rev. Josh Simon orchestrating the technology today.

Musical Introit

Meeting & Greetings Along the Road.....The Sinkewicz Family  
Rob, Christine and Sara

Prayer of Invocation by Deacon.....Rusty Sargent

Opening Hymn

Away in a Manger

James Ramsey Murray  
perf. Finally @ First

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed.  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay;  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes;  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky;  
and stay by my cradle 'til morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care;  
and fit us for heaven, to live with You there.**

Lighting the First Advent Candle of Hope.....Beth Volker

Children's Message by Rev. Josh Simon

Offering Our Gifts to God.....Rev. Josh Simon

Invitation

Anthem

Doxology

**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.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer.....Rev. Josh Simon

*Text the prayers you want the minister to include during the prelude: Rev. Josh @ 920 858-6601*

*(Continued on next page...)*

Sacred Readings: Isaiah 9:1-7.....Read by Laurie Chipman & Friends

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Matthew 13:24-37.....Read by Rev. Mark Mendes

“The Coming of the Son of Man”

But in those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“The Lesson of the Fig Tree”

From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

*(Continued on next page...)*

“The Necessity for Watchfulness”

But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.

Anthem

Rejoice

by Chris Tomlin  
perf. Finally @ First

Sermon

“The Essence of Hope”

Rev. Mark Mendes

*If you have any questions about the scripture or the sermon,  
feel free to text them at any time during the sermon at 802 922-1773.*

Closing Hymn

O Come, O Come, Immanuel

perf. Carol/Sanctuary Choir

**O come, O come, Immanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.**

***[Refrain]: Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.***

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
who ordered all things mightily;  
to us the path of knowledge show  
and teach us in its ways to go. *[Refrain]***

**O come, O come, great Lord of might,  
who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times did give the law  
in cloud and majesty and awe. *[Refrain]***

Benediction and blowing out of the candles

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.**

# PRAYER MINISTRY

Please, email your prayer requests to [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or call 1 (802) 878-5745 ext. 100.

Richard Ansell

Illya  
(Cathie Goodheart's friend)

Colonel John Dyke  
(Paula Sargent's Son)

Roger & Sandy Daly

Malcolm Forbes  
(Cathy Shearer's Father)

Cait  
(Cathie Goodheart's friend's daughter)

Grandma Culley  
(Dorothy Kress's Grandma)

Stacy Gaudette-Hall  
(Doug Ovitt's cousin)

Damaris (New resident of Essex Junction)

All persons affected by the Coronavirus



The altar flowers are given by  
Nancy Engle & John Ferris  
In loving memory of Robert Ferris



## Have something important to share?

Please, email your announcement to Doug Ovitt, Church Administrator: [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org). If you want an announcement televised during worship, then please, send a photographic representation of your announcement in either .jpg or .png file format to [jsimon@fccej.org](mailto:jsimon@fccej.org).

2021 Altar Flower Chart is online! Visit this link to reserve a date: [bit.ly/33JWlxj](https://bit.ly/33JWlxj)

Christmas Poinsettias: Visit this link to buy: <https://bit.ly/3pWKVjQ>

Flowers may be retrieved by their respective buyers. To arrange for a pickup, please contact our staff: [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or 1 (802) 878-5745

## NEWSLETTERS

SIGNUP HERE: <https://bit.ly/3dwsHji>

Our weekly update newsletter contains important weekly announcements about Food Pantry, Thrift Shop, Capital Campaign Updates, and more! Here is a link to this week's issue:

<https://mailchi.mp/fccej/2020-weekly-update-5843188>

Our "SPIRIT@FIRST" monthly newsletter is available by snail-mail and email. Hard copies are available at church, too. Visit this link to read through our archives:

<http://fccej.org/v5/category/newsletters/>

Find us online! Click the icon or link:



[youtube.com/c/fccej](https://youtube.com/c/fccej)



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[instagram.com/fccej\\_802](https://instagram.com/fccej_802)



[FCCEJ.ORG](http://FCCEJ.ORG)

# MINISTRY DIRECTORY

## Church Staff

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Mark Mendes [[mmendes@fccej.org](mailto:mmendes@fccej.org)]

**Associate Pastor:** Rev. Josh Simon [[jsimon@fccej.org](mailto:jsimon@fccej.org)]

**Christian Education Director:** Laurie Chipman [[lchipman@fccej.org](mailto:lchipman@fccej.org)]

**Music Director:** Carol Spradling [[cspradling@fccej.org](mailto:cspradling@fccej.org)]

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

## Music Ministry

**Cherub Music:** Jenny Bourn [[jennybourn4@gmail.com](mailto:jennybourn4@gmail.com)] & Laura Marthaler [[Laura.marthaler@gmail.com](mailto:Laura.marthaler@gmail.com)]

**Currier Bell Choir Director:** Carolyn Harris [899-6759]

**Finally @ First Director:** Rick Dooley [[rickdooley5@gmail.com](mailto:rickdooley5@gmail.com)]

**Joyful Noise:** Jessica Moos [[jessicamoosvermont@gmail.com](mailto:jessicamoosvermont@gmail.com)]

**Men At First Director:** Bill Bickford, Jr. [[bill.bickford@aol.com](mailto:bill.bickford@aol.com)]

**Sanctuary Choir/Heavenly Harmony Director:** Carol Spradling [[cspradling@fccej.org](mailto: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]

**Asst. Financial Secretary:** Rob Sinkewicz [878-4470]

**Asst. Financial Secretary:** Pam Blake [872-8204]

**Asst. Financial Secretary:** Linda Bogardus [872-8972]

**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 [878-3068] OR [woodsusanjane@gmail.com](mailto:woodsusanjane@gmail.com)

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