



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

Website: 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, 1st Sundays @** <http://youtube.com/c/fcej>
- ⊕ **Christmas Eve Services: 5pm & 9pm @** <http://youtube.com/c/fcej>
- ⊕ **Pageant Sunday: December 20th at 10am @** <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 & 8pm @** <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>
- ⊕ **Noontime Book Group, 3rd Monday at 11:30am @** <http://zoom.us/j/626841083>

DONATE TO OUR CHURCH

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:

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

- ⊕ **Shop at Amazon.com** using Amazon Smile. We receive 0.5% of your purchases! Visit smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0212216
- ⊕ **Use PayPal!** We accept electronic donations through PayPal. Visit our donation page: 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”).

Love



Journey to Bethlehem! Worship Series...

Visit this link to read our special Stewardship message for Christmas: <http://bit.ly/2KHgldR>



Order of Worship

December 20th, 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. on line

Music: Carol, F@F and Sanctuary Choir

The Giving Tree.....Distributed to 60 plus families

ALL incredibly grateful for the help

Church Decorations / Sanctuary visits Dec 21-24

Families come and wave by Nativity

Christmas Fund Offering

Today is the Christmas Pageant

Thanks to Laurie and Josh

Ed Owens for Music

And of course the entire cast and musicians

The magnificent children of First Church EJ

As always great to have Jonah Moos, Gary Hartmann, Ed Guild,

Francis Gravel, and Rev. Josh Simon orchestrating the technology today.

Musical Introit

Meeting & Greetings Along the Road.....The Mayville Family
Darby, Luke, Alec & Leah

Deacon's Prayer of InvocationCarolyn Rushford

Opening Hymn

Meeting & Greetings Along the Road.....Carol Spradling & Jim Coates

Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle: LOVE.....The Dooley Family

Children's Message.....Laurie Chipman

Our 2020 Christmas Pageant

Gifts of Love and Light

FCCEJ Virtual Edition of

A Christmas Pageant by Rev. Karen A. Mendes

[Scene 1]

O Come All Ye Faithful

Music by Margaret Mendes on Viola

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem,
Come and behold him, born the King of angels.
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

[Scene 2]

Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Music by Carol Spradling

**Come thou long expected Jesus, born to set all people free
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of al the earth thou art,
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

[Scene3]

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Music by Zoe Moos on Viola

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel**

*(Continued on
next page...)*

[Scene 4]

O Little Town Of Bethlehem

Music by Isabelle Owens on Clarinet

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

[Scene 5 & Scene 6]

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Music by Margaret Mendes on Viola

**Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth;
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.**

[Scene 7]

We Three Kings

Music by Isabelle Owens on Piano

**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 light, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Music by Carol Spradling

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say; News, news! Jesus Christ is born today!
Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today, Christ is born today!**

Cast

In order of appearance

St. NickolasBraeden Koch
Santa Lucia.....Tessa Nowell
GabrielEthan Koch
Mary.....Sara Sinkewicz
Angel.....Izzy Owens
Joseph.....Zoe Moos
Innkeeper.....Margaret Mendes
Shepherd 1.....Charlie McGeary
Shepherd 2.....Erik Frivoll
Magi 1Izzy Owens
Magi 2Ethan Koch
Magi 3Zoe Moos

Technical Director.....Pastor Josh Simon

Pageant Director.....Laurie Chipman



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

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.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

The 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.**

Closing Hymn

Benediction and Blowing out of the candles / Taking Light out into World

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.**

Announcements and Zoom Fellowship Hour —Meeting ID # 980 588 369 OR bit.ly/31dXQ76



Christmas Poinsettias

We are happy to announce that your poinsettias were delivered to the church! They will be featured in the recordings being done today and for Christmas Eve services. However, Maplehurst ran out of marble-colored flowers. They were only able to provide three of the five marble flowers requested, so they had to substitute some with pink flowers. We are honoring flower requests in the order that they were requested, to be fair to all. Each flower contains a popsicle stick with the buyer's name for easy retrieval. Any special color designations will be noted in the Christmas Eve bulletins. Except for Christmas Day and New Years Day when the offices are closed for those holidays, you may pickup your flowers between 8am-2pm, weekdays. *Questions? Concerns? Need to schedule a pickup?* Please call the church (P# 802 878 5745) or email welcome@fceej.org.

PRAYER MINISTRY

Please, email your prayer requests to welcome@fceej.org or call 1 (802) 878-5745 ext. 100.

Richard Ansell

Ilya (Cathie Goodheart's friend)

Malcolm Forbes (Cathy Shearer's dad)

Roger & Sandy Daly

Grandma Culley (Dorothy Kress's grandma)

Stacy Gaudette Hall (Doug Ovitt's cousin)

Kristin (Nancy & Wayne Hall's daughter)

Damaris (New resident of Essex Junction)

Nancy Hinsdale (Mindy Bickford's mom)

George Jackson

All persons affected by the Coronavirus



The altar flowers are given by
Linda Bogardus
In memory of Joan Bayham



Have something important to share? Please, email your announcement to Doug Ovitt, Church Administrator. The address is welcome@fceej.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 Rev. Josh Simon @ jsimon@fceej.org.

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

Flowers may be retrieved by their respective buyers. To arrange for a pickup, please contact our staff:

welcome@fceej.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/fceej/2020-weekly-update-5850384>

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://fceej.org/v5/category/newsletters/>

Find us online! Click the icon or link:



youtube.com/c/fceej



[facebook.com/
firstcongregationalej](https://facebook.com/firstcongregationalej)



instagram.com/fceej_802



FCCEJ.ORG



MINISTRY DIRECTORY

Church Staff

Senior Pastor: Rev. Mark Mendes [mmendes@fccej.org]

Associate Pastor: Rev. Josh Simon [jsimon@fccej.org]

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

Music Director: Carol Spradling [cspradling@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]

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

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