



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.

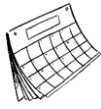
**1 Church Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452**

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://fccej.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/fccej>
- ⊕ **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>



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

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

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:

- ⊕ **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/fccej. 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”).

Order of Worship
December 27th, 2020: Live Streaming
The First Sunday After / 3rd Day of Christmas

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. Josh your Prayer Requests [920 858-6601]

2 **Prayer Requests:** Text Josh Sharp your Requests [802 399-4862]

Prelude

Welcome.....Rev. Josh Simon

*“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

Annual Reports are due to Doug ASAP.

Official deadline is Sunday, January 3rd.

Special Treat to have Josh Sharp preaching today.

Josh grew up in the church and is now attending Andover Newton

Seminary at Yale and is in his second year.

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.....Jane Schneider

Prayer of Invocation by Deacon.....Judy McCullen

Opening Hymn

The First Nowell

perf. by Marie Johnson, *Organ*

**The First Noel, the Angels 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!
 Noel, Noel
 Noel, Noel**

**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
 Noel, Noel
 Noel, Noel
 Noel, Noel
 Noel, Noel**

**Born is the King of Israel!
 Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
 Born is the King of Israel!
 Born is the King of Israel!
 Noel, Noel
 Noel, Noel**

Meetings & Greetings Along the Road.....Janne and Howard Giles

Children's Message.....Rev. Mark Mendes

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

Invitation
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

**What child is this who laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherd's 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**

**So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh. Come peasant, king to own Him
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary**

The Reception of New Members.....Mark & Erin Ferrara with son Jonathan
Elizabeth Stone
Jill White

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer.....Josh Sharp

Text the prayers you want the minister to include during the prelude: Josh Sharp @ 802 399-4862

Sacred Readings: Mark 4:30-32 "The Parable of the Mustard Seed"

He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.'

Anthem "Some Children" by Mindy Bickford

Sermon "Hope and the Mustard Seed" Seminarian Josh Sharp

*If you have any questions for Josh about the scripture or the sermon,
feel free to text them at any time during the sermon at 802 399-4862.*

Closing Hymn Go Tell It on the Mountain perf. by Finally @ First
by John Work Jr.

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills 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 a holy light.**

[Refrain]

(continued on next page...)

**The shepherds feared and trembled when lo above the earth,
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.**

[Refrain]

**Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.**

[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.**

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

**ANNUAL MEETINGSUNDAY
ONE WORSHIP SERVICE @ 10 A.M.
FEBRUARY 7, 2021**

At our Annual Meeting in 2019, the congregation voted to change the by-laws and shift the date of the Annual Meeting to the 1st Sunday in February, which would give our financial officers more time to get the church's financial reports in order. Thus, our Annual Meeting this year will be on February 7th after the ONE worship service at 10:00 a.m. or roughly at 11:15 a.m. Everyone is welcomed to attend and speak, and members are welcome to come and vote. The Meeting will be held on Zoom this year and that identifying number will be sent out closer to the meeting. Looking forward to seeing you there!



PRAYER MINISTRY

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

Richard Ansell

Malcolm Forbes
(Cathy Shearer's dad)

Grandma Culley
(Dorothy Kress's grandma)

Kristin (Nancy & Wayne Hall's daughter)

Nancy Hinsdale (Mindy Bickford's mom)

The Poratti Family



The altar flowers are given by
Heather & Terry Stein
In honor of Family



Ilya
(Cathie Goodheart's friend)

Roger & Sandy Daly

Stacy Gaudette Hall
(Doug Ovitt's cousin)

Damaris (New resident of Essex Junction)

George Jackson

All persons affected by the Coronavirus



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-5881844>

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



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]