



# 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://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, 1<sup>st</sup> 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 @** <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>

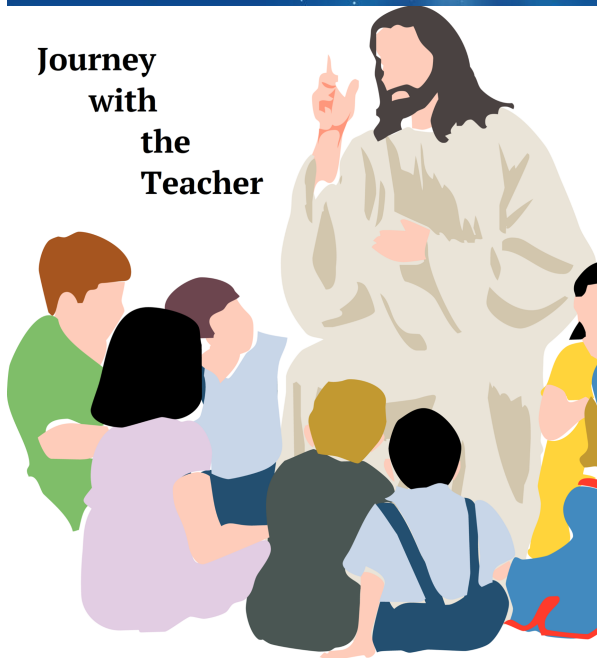
## DONATE TO OUR CHURCH

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:

- ⊕ **Shop at Amazon.com** using Amazon Smile. We receive 0.5% of your purchases! To begin, please visit [smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0212216](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0212216)
- ⊕ **Use PayPal!** We accept electronic donations through PayPal. Visit our donation page: [paypal.me/fccej](https://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”).

The Season  
of Epiphany  
begins...

Journey  
with  
the  
Teacher



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



a just  
world  
for all  
[ucc.org](http://ucc.org)

Order of Worship  
January 10th, 2021: Live Streaming  
The First Day of Epiphany

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 your Prayer Requests [802 922 1773]

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

Prelude

Welcome.....Rev. Mark Mendes

*“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

As always great to have Jonah Moos, Gary Hartman,

Ed Guild, Francis Gravel and Rev. Josh Simon

orchestrating the technology today.

Musical Introit

Away in a Manger

perf. by Betty Marthaler

Meeting & Greetings Along the Road.....Jill White

Prayer of Invocation.....Deacon Peter Schmalz

**I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.**

**I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.**

**I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;**

**I'll be there in case you wander off and find where demons dwell.**

**When you found the wonder of the Word, I was there to cheer you on;**

**You were raised to praise the living God, to whom you now belong.**

**Should you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one,**

**I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk till rising sun.**

**In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young,**

**I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.**

**When the evening gently closes in and you shut your weary eyes,**

**I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.**

**I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.**

**I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.**

Meetings & Greetings Along the Road.....Elizabeth Stone

Children's Message.....Rev. Josh Simon

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

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*

Sacred Readings

Mark 1:4-11.....Laurie Chipman

The Baptism of Jesus

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

Luke 2:239-52.....Rev. Mark Mendes

The Return to Nazareth

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

Anthem This Little Light of Mine perf. by Sanctuary Choir

Sermon "Finding Your Passion" Rev. Mark Mendes

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

Closing Hymn Show Me the Way perf. by Finally @ First  
*Words by Dennis DeYoung*

**Every night I say a prayer in the hope that there's a heaven  
But every day I'm more confused as the saints turn into sinners  
All the heroes and legends I knew as a child have fallen to idols of clay  
And I feel this empty place inside, so afraid that I've lost my faith**

**Show me the way, show me the way  
Take me tonight to the river  
And wash my illusions away  
Please, show me the way**

*(continued on next page...)*

**And as I slowly drift to sleep, for a moment dreams are sacred  
I close my eyes and know there's peace in a world so filled with hatred  
Then I wake up each morning and turn on the news to find we've so far to go  
And I keep on hoping for a sign, so afraid I just won't know**

**Show me the way, show me the way  
Bring me tonight to the mountain  
And take my confusion away  
And show me the way**

**And if I see your light, should I believe  
Tell me how will I know**

**Show me the way, show me the way  
Take me tonight to the river  
And wash my illusions away**

**Show me the way, show me the way  
Give me the strength and the courage  
To believe that I'll get there someday  
And please show me the way**

**Every night I say a prayer in the hopes that there's a heaven...**

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](https://bit.ly/31dXQ76)

## **2020 Annual Meeting Sunday\***

*Sunday, February 7th, 2021  
One Worship Service @ 10 A.M.  
Meeting @ 11:15 A.M.*

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!

*\*This is an informal notice about the annual meeting. The formal warning/warrant approved by our Church Clerk will be sent at a time and by means befitting the bylaws.*

# PRAYER MINISTRY

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

*Richard Ansell (Carol Spradling's father)*

*Malcolm Forbes (Cathy Shearer's father)*

*Roger & Sandy Daly*

*Grandma Culley (Dorothy Kress's Grandma)*

*Damaris Morales*

*Kristin (Nancy & Wayne Hall's daughter)*

*Jed Cilley & Family*

*Ilya (Cathie Goodheart's friend)*

*Linda Jackson & Family*

*Nancy Hinsdale (Mindy Bickford's mom)*

*The Poratti Family*

*Bruce Giannuzzi*

*Nancy (Carolyn Toof's friend)*

*All persons affected by the Coronavirus*



The altar flowers are given by  
Dara Stimson  
In celebration of new beginnings!



*Have something important to share?* Please, email your announcement to Doug Ovitt, Church Administrator. The address is [welcome@fcej.org](mailto:welcome@fcej.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@fcej.org](mailto:jsimon@fcej.org).

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

Flowers may be retrieved by their respective buyers. To arrange for a pickup, please contact our staff: [welcome@fcej.org](mailto:welcome@fcej.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/fcej/2020-weekly-update-5885100>

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

*Find us online! Click the icon or search the tag:*



<http://www.fcej.org>



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



fcej\_802



fcej



# 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]