



# 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, Sundays @ 9am via Zoom [Link in Weekly Newsletter] (2nd Sundays, 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, missions, adult enrichment, 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!** This is a remote service that issues one-time or recurring check payments by mail from your bank. 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”).

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

## WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ESSEX JUNCTION

*Sunday, February 7th, 2021 @ 11:15 A.M.*

To the members of the First Congregational Church  
of Essex Junction,

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

The Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction will be via Zoom (using this web link: <https://bit.ly/31dXQ76>) on *Sunday, February 7, 2021 at 11:15 A.M.* to act upon the following business:

**Article I:** To hear and act upon the reports of the Church Officers, Committees and Recognized Groups of the Church.

**Article II:** To act and vote upon the proposed budget for 2021.

**Article III:** To elect all church officers and committees required by the by-laws of the Church and others as may be necessary.

**Article IV:** To give authorization to the Finance Committee to borrow money and sign notes pledging the credit of the Church, if needed, to meet the current expenses of the Church.

**Article V:** To transact any other business which may properly be brought before this Annual Meeting.

On behalf of the Church,  
Christine Sinkewicz, *Church Clerk*

**2020 Annual Report:** A draft copy is available at this link. Please note it will see at least more revision following the annual meeting, so revisit this link for updated versions. <https://bit.ly/3iUdL1a>

Order of Worship  
January 31st, 2021: Live Streaming  
The Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

The Order of Worship

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 Rev. Mark your Prayer Requests [802 922 1773]

Prelude

Welcome..... Rev. Josh Simon, *Associate Pastor*

*“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 Devotions [webpage]

Faith Formation from 9 – 9:30 a.m. on line

Music: Carol Spradling: Music Director,

Sanctuary Choir: Our Traditional Choral Group

Finally at First: Our Praise Band

Faith Formation from 9 – 9:30 a.m. online Today & next Sunday

Laurie is looking forward to greeting families at the drive thru February 14<sup>th</sup>

Annual Meeting is NEXT Sunday February 7th at 11:15 a.m.

Zoom...video or phone in

Electronic Annual Reports on Web Page [Links in this bulletin, too]

Physical Annual Reports for pick up @ church office

Budget Meeting today after church [Zoom Fellowship Hour]

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..... Deb Holland

Prayer of Invocation.....Myrna Doney, *Deacon*

Opening Hymn

Here I Am to Worship  
By Tim Hughes © 2000 Thankyou Music  
Used with Permission CCLI License #11051841

by Finally @ First

**Light of the world  
You stepped down into darkness  
Opened my eyes, let me see  
Beauty that made this heart adore You  
Hope of a life spent with You**

**Here I am to worship  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You're my God**

**You're altogether lovely  
Altogether worthy  
Altogether wonderful to me**

**King of all days  
Oh so highly exalted  
Glorious in heaven above  
Humbly You came to the earth You created  
All for love's sake became poor**

**Here I am to worship  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You're my God**

**You're altogether lovely  
Altogether worthy  
Altogether wonderful to me**

**Here I am to worship  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You're my God  
You're altogether lovely  
Altogether worthy  
Altogether wonderful to me  
Here I am...**

Meetings & Greetings Along the Road.....George Beach

Children's Message.....Laurie Chipman, *CE Director*

Offering Our Gifts to God.....Rev. Josh Simon, *Associate Pastor*

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. Ron Faux

*We welcome Rev. Ron Faux to the service today. Ron is a retired United Methodist Minister who served churches in Arizona, California and Hawaii. He and his wife Joan retired to Vermont to be close to their daughter and her family.*

*Text your prayers to Rev. Mark who will pass them along to Rev. Faux. Rev. Mark @ 802-922-1773*

**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.**

Sacred Readings: Luke 12:13-40..... Read by Rev. Josh Simon, *Associate Pastor*

Luke 12:13-40: *The Parable of the Rich Fool*

Someone in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.' But he said to him, 'Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?' And he said to them, 'Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.' Then he told them a parable: 'The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.'

*Do Not Worry*

He said to his disciples, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much

*(continued on next page...)*

more value are you than the birds! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

‘Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

### *Watchful Slaves*

‘Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

‘But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.’

Anthem

### Stand in Your Love

By Josh Baldwin © 2018 Capitol CMG Paragon  
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by Finally @ First

Sermon

“Jesus’ Key to Happiness”

Rev. Mark Mendes  
*Senior Pastor*

*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 802 922-1773.*

Closing Hymn

### Take my Gifts

By Shirley Erena Murray © 1992 Hope Publishing  
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by the Sanctuary Choir

**Take my gifts and let me love you,  
God who first of all loved me,  
gave me light and food and shelter,  
gave me life and set me free.  
Now because your love has touched me,  
I have love to give away,  
now the bread of love is rising,  
loaves of love to multiply!**

*(continued on next page...)*

**Take the fruit that I have gathered  
from the tree your Spirit sowed,  
harvest of your own compassion,  
juice that makes the wine of God,  
spiced with humor, laced with laughter--  
flavor of the Jesus life,  
tang of risk and new adventure,  
taste and zest beyond belief.**

**Take whatever I can offer--  
gifts that I have yet to find,  
skills that I am slow to sharpen,  
talents of the hand and mind,  
things made beautiful for others  
in the place where I must be:  
take my gifts and let me love you,  
God who first of all loved me.**

Benediction and blowing out our candles

Let There Be Peace on Earth

**Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.  
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be!  
With God our Creator, family all are we,  
Let me walk with my fellow in perfect harmony.**

**Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.  
With ev'ry breath I take, let this be my solemn vow;  
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!  
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.**

# 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)

Ilya (Cathie Goodheart's friend)

Paul Hyde & Family

Malcolm Forbes (Cathy Shearer's father)

Linda Jackson & Family

Irving Bartlett

David (David Irwin's friend)

Nancy Hinsdale  
(Mindy Bickford's mom)

Bruce Giannuzzi

Grandma Culley  
(Dorothy Kress's grandma)

The Poratti Family

Gary Knapp  
(Jackie Knapp's son)

Damaris Morales

Bruce Giannuzzi

Nancy Hayes

Kristin

Nancy

Russ & Alma Wilson

(Nancy & Wayne Hall's daughter)

(Carolyn Toof's friend)

Jed Cilley & Family

All persons affected by the Coronavirus

The O'Neil Family



The altar flowers are given by  
Judy, Shannon, and Sean McCullen  
Celebrating Kevin's birthday!!!



**Wish to share something important?** 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 by emailing @ [jtsimon@fcej.org](mailto:jtsimon@fcej.org).

Visit us online! Click the icon or type the link, below:



<http://www.fcej.org>



<http://www.facebook.com/firstcongregationalej>



[http://www.instagram.com/fcej\\_802](http://www.instagram.com/fcej_802)



<http://www.youtube.com/c/fcej>

**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 the church office: [welcome@fcej.org](mailto:welcome@fcej.org) or 1 (802) 878-5745



## NEWSLETTERS

Sign up Online! <https://bit.ly/3dwsHji>

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

<https://mailchi.mp/fcej/2020-weekly-update-5888936>

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/>

## Journeying with the Teacher



This service is part of our six-week Season of Epiphany series titled "Journeying with the Teacher." To read more bulletins published within this series, please visit our archive:

<http://bit.ly/3oE0mN0>



# 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]