



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, 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>



WAYS TO GIVE

Visit this link to Give: <http://www.fccej.org/v5/giving>

Special Offering: Outdoor Ministry

Extended to February 28th

Your giving supports Vermont children and youth spending a week in God's creation on the top of Pine Mountain, worshipping at Chapel Rock, rock climbing, hiking, crafting, making new friends, sharing, learning, and growing in their faith...*and so much more!*

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

NEWSLETTERS

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

Our weekly newsletter contains important announcements!

View current and past issues here: <http://bit.ly/3rlslSv>

Our "SPIRIT@FIRST" monthly newsletter is available by snail-mail and email. Hard copies are available at church, too. Visit our archive:

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

We have a robust digital ministry! Find us online:



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39039ht



INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

www.fccej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9



Order of Worship
February 28th, 2021: Live Streaming
The Second Sunday of Lent
Jesus' Journey of Transformation
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. Mark your Prayer Requests [(802) 922-1773]

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

Prelude

Welcome..... Rev. Mark Mendes, *Senior 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

Lenten Schedule Begins

Wednesday Night Gathering on Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

Mark: Gifts of the Dark Wood

Josh: The Letter of James

Laurie: Faith@Home Intergenerational Gathering (*All ages welcome!*)

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..... Jon and Erica Roddy

Prayer of Invocation.....Carolyn Rushford, *Deacon*

Opening Hymn Come, O Fount of Every Blessing (#459) by Sanctuary Choir

**Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of Thy redeeming love.**

**Here I raise my Ebenezer:
Here by Thy great help I've come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.**

**Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.**

**Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter,
Bind my yielded heart to Thee.
Let me know Thee in Thy fullness;
Guide me by Thy mighty hand,
Till, transformed, in Thine own image
In Thy presence I shall stand.**

Meetings & Greetings Along the Road..... Rose Drost

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

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

Invitation [special Outdoor Ministry Collection Video 2]

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

Text your prayers to 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.

Sacred Readings: "The Return of the Redeemed to Zion"

Read by Rev. Josh Simon, *Associate Pastor*

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.'
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people;
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

(continued on next page...)

Psalm 23: The Divine Shepherd.....Read by Rev. Mark Mendes, *Senior Pastor*

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil; for you are with me;
your rod and your staff— they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Anthem

When We Pray

by Finally @ First

By Tauren Wells © 2017 Be Essential Songs
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Sermon

“Rejoicing on the Way Home”

Rev. Mark Mendes
Senior Pastor

Closing Hymn

My Life Flows on in Endless Song (#476)

by Finally @ First

By Robert Lowry

**My life flows on in endless song
above earth's lamentation.
I hear the real though far-off hymn
that hails a new creation.**

Refrain:

**No storm can shake my inmost calm,
while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since Love is Lord o'er heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?**

**Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing;
it sounds and echoes in my soul
how can I keep from singing? [*Refrain*]**

**What though the tempest 'round me roar,
I hear the truth, it liveth;
what though the darkness 'round me close,
songs in the night it giveth. [*Refrain*]**

**The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
a fountain ever springing.
All things are mine since I am Christ's,
how can I keep from singing? [*Refrain*]**

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.**

Please, join us for Fellowship Hour — Meeting ID# 980588369 OR bit.ly/31dXQ76

God of Light, Hear Our Prayer

*Richard Ansell
(Carol Spradling's father)*

Bruce Giannuzzi

*Ilya
(Cathie Goodheart's friend)*

Russ & Alma Wilson

*Nancy Hinsdale
(Mindy Bickford's mom)*

The O'Neil Family

The Poratti Family

*Gary Knapp
(Jackie Knapp's Son)*

Bruce Giannuzzi

Steve Mitchell

*Nancy
(Carolyn Toof's friend)*

The Shearer Family

Jed Cilley & Family

The Forbes Family

*David
(David Irwin's friend)*

*Bonita
(Judy McCullen's friend)*

Paul Hyde & Family

Marsha Duell

Nancy Hayes

The Bartlett Family

All persons affected by the Coronavirus

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

The altar flowers are given by
Sharon Dettenrieder
In loving memory of Douglas J. Dettenrieder

ALTAR FLOWERS REQUESTS

Visit this link to reserve yours: bit.ly/33JWlxj

If you wish to retrieve your flowers, please email welcome@fcej.org or call 1(802) 878-5745.

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

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

Director, **Sanctuary Choir & Heavenly Harmony:** Carol Spradling [cspradling@fccej.org]

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

Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley [rickdooley5@gmail.com]

Men @ First Director: Bill Bickford, Jr. [bill.bickford@aol.com]

Officers

President: Maureen Evans [233-6127]

Vice President: Cathy Shearer [878-6023]

Financial Secretary: Rob Sinkewicz [878-4470]

Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [879-0261]

Clerk: Christine Sinkewicz [878-4470]

Historian: Ann Gray [878-4088]

Auditors: Betsy Weischedel [922-2094] & Steve Wood [878-3068]

Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Lisa Clark [872-5849]

Communications: Francis Gravel [802-318-6235]

Deacons: Judy Pomainville [236-0604]

Finance & Pastoral Relations: Cathy Shearer [878-6023]

Hospitality: Jim Glatz [503-5076]

Human Resources: Maureen Evans [233-6127]

Missions: Ed Steele [871-5897]

Music: Denise Keating [345-8900]

Nominating: Dick Harris [644-6488]

Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan [878-9509]

Trustees: Kaki McGeary [879-2062]

Ushering: [PENDING]

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sue Wood [878-3068] woodsusanjane@gmail.com

Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert [879-0109]