



# 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; Communion, 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays @ <http://youtube.com/c/fccej>
  - Limited Hybrid Worship. Register here: <https://bit.ly/31Txoip>
- ⊕ **Fellowship Hour**, after Worship @ <http://zoom.us/j/980588369>
- ⊕ **Faith Formation**, Sundays @ 9-10am, weekly on church grounds
  - Except during inclement weather; then via Zoom; linked in weekly newsletter
- ⊕ **Daily Devotionals**, Weekdays 8am @ <http://facebook.com/firstcongregationalej/>
- ⊕ **Sermon Talk Back**, Tuesday at 8:30am @ <http://zoom.us/j/740803865>
- ⊕ **Life Story/Memoir Club**, 3rd Wednesdays @ 1pm via Zoom.
  - For details, contact Pete Schmalz [pnschmalz@comcast.net](mailto:pnschmalz@comcast.net) or P#879-3352
- ⊕ **Coffee Clatter**, Thursdays at 8am @ <http://zoom.us/j/97659276694>
- ⊕ **Noontime Book Group**, 3rd Mondays at 11:30am @ <http://zoom.us/j/626841083>

## BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment.

Care for the poor.

Forgive often.

Reject racism.

Fight for the powerless.

Share earthly and spiritual resources.

Embrace diversity.

Love God.

Enjoy this life.



Journey into New Life

## 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. If you wish to contribute content, it is due by the 3rd Friday of each month (except in November and December when it is due on the 2nd Friday.) Visit our archive:

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



FACEBOOK

[bit.ly/39039ht](http://bit.ly/39039ht)



INSTAGRAM

[bit.ly/3rlfgZf](http://bit.ly/3rlfgZf)



INTERNET

[www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)



YOUTUBE

[bit.ly/3oPpBv9](http://bit.ly/3oPpBv9)

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction  
April 18, 2021: Live Streaming  
Third Sunday of Easter

Order of Worship

*Live Stream begins at 9:45 a.m. with announcements and introductory music  
beginning approx. five minutes before 10am.*

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 one thought of gratitude [(920) 858-6601]
- 2 Prayer Requests: Text Rev. Mark your prayer requests [(802) 922-1773]

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

Hybrid Service Began April 11th, Sign Up online or call Doug

Morning Devotions: Rev. Mark w/ Anne LaMott [*webpage*]

Faith Formation for Families with Children & Youth – Sundays 9 – 10 am outside  
(through June 6th)

- All are invited to join wearing masks & practicing social distancing
- In case of rain, we will switch to ZOOM (announcement will be posted by 8:30 am on our Facebook Discussion Group)
- @Home option still available – contact Laurie to sign up for take home bag

Music: Carol Spradling: Music Director,

Sanctuary Choir: Our Traditional Choral Group

Finally at First: Our Praise Band

As always great to have Jonah Moos, Ed Guild operating the live stream tech.

Musical Introit

Call to Worship\*

Leader: Christ is Risen and greets us with peace.

**All: Peace of Christ is among us, indeed.**

Leader: We are witnesses of God’s glory and steadfast love.

**All: The transforming love of Christ is among us, indeed!**

Leader: Come, let us worship.

Opening Hymn

Holy Ground

by Finally @ First

Christopher Beatty © 1982 Universal Music  
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*Participants in the Sanctuary are asked not to sing the hymns.  
A soft hum and singing in your mind’s eye is allowed.*

**This is holy ground; we're standing on holy ground,  
for our God is present and where God is is holy.  
This is holy ground; We're standing on holy ground,  
for our God is present and where God is is holy.**

**These are holy hands; God's given us holy hands.  
God works through these hands and so these hands are holy.  
These are holy hands; God's given us holy hands.  
God works through these hands, and so these hands are holy.**

**For our God is present and where God is is holy.**

Prayer of Invocation.....Alison Wermer, *Deacon*

Meetings & Greetings Along the Road.....Deb Watt

Children’s Message.....Rev. Mark Mendes, *Senior Pastor*

Meetings & Greetings Along the Road.....Terri Livak

Pastoral Prayer and Lord’s Prayer..... Rev. Mark Mendes, *Senior Pastor*

*Please, text your prayer requests to 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 7:11-17.....Laurie Chipman, *Christian Education Director*

**Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother’s only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, “Do not weep.” Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, rise!” The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen among us!” and “God has looked favorably on his people!” This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.**

Anthem

Brother

Finally @ First

Bear Rinehart © 2013 NeedToBreathe Music  
Used with Permission CCLI License # 11051841

Sermon: “The Kingdom of God is Always Near”.....Rev. Josh Simon, *Associate Pastor*

Offering Our Gifts to God.....Rev. Mark Mendes, *Senior 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

Closing Hymn

What A Friend We Have in Jesus (#506)

Carol Spradling, *Music Director*  
and Jim Coates

*Participants in the Sanctuary are asked not to sing the hymns.  
A soft hum and singing in your mind’s eye is allowed.*

**What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer! Oh, what peace we often forfeit, oh, what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.**

**Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged; take it to our God in prayer! Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to our God in prayer!**

**Are we weak and heavy laden, burdened with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge, take it to our God in prayer! Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to our God in prayer! Jesus’ arms will take and shield you; you will find a solace there.**

Benediction and blowing out our 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.**

\*Adopted from Rev . Dr. Sheila Harvey Guillaume, pastor of Union Congregational United Church of Christ in West Palm Beach.

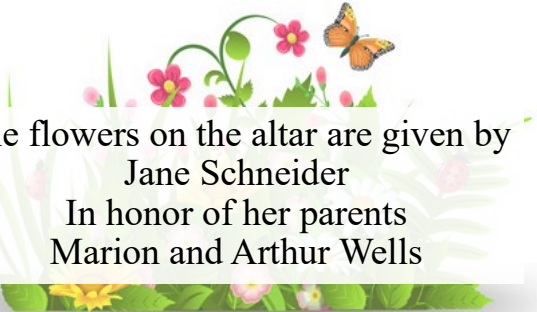
Please, join us for Fellowship Hour — Meeting ID# **980588369** OR [bit.ly/31dXQ76](https://bit.ly/31dXQ76)

**OUR PRAYER MINISTRY**

If you wish to retrieve your flowers, need prayers for yourself or a loved one, or require a call from a pastor, contact [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or call 1(802) 878-5745.

Richard Ansell (Carol Spradling's father)  
Ilya (Cathie Goodheart's friend)  
Bruce Giannuzzi  
David (David Irwin's friend)  
Nancy Hayes  
Bruce Giannuzzi  
Russ & Alma Wilson  
The O'Neil Family  
Gary Knapp (Jackie Knapp's Son)

Steve Mitchell  
The Shearer Family  
The Forbes Family  
Bonita (Judy McCullen's friend)  
Marsha Duell  
The Bartlett Family  
Jane MacFarland (Sue Wood's cousin)  
Judy (Cathie Goodheart's cousin)  
Bill Barrett (Nancy Hayes son-in-law)  
Peat Taylor  
Betty Moody & Family  
Rusty Sargent  
Arlene & Bill Bickford  
Annette Manley (Jessica Moos's mother)  
Andrea & Tom Sramek (Maureen McKenzie's  
niece and husband)  
Patty Garvey  
Dave Johnson



The flowers on the altar are given by  
Jane Schneider  
In honor of her parents  
Marion and Arthur Wells

**ALTAR FLOWERS REQUESTS**

Visit this link to reserve yours: [bit.ly/33JWlxj](https://bit.ly/33JWlxj)

If you wish to retrieve your flowers, please email [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.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:** Paula Sargent [879-3598]

**Music:** Denise Keating [345-8900]

**Nominating:** Dick Harris [644-6488]

**Stewardship:** Kathryn Brennan [878-9509]

**Trustees:** Kaki McGearry [879-2062]

**Ushering:** Marlene Frank [872-9126]

## Recognized Groups

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

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