



# 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 **E-mail:** [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) **Website:** [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)



The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

Sunday, January 2, 2022

First Service: 8:30 a.m.

**The Second Sunday of Christmas - Holy Communion**

The Order of Worship

*Our First Service with organ and traditional choir is streamed and begins at 8:30am with access on our webpage @ [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org). You can watch that service any time thereafter. Our Second Service with our praise band is live in the sanctuary at 10:15am and it is not streamed.*

*Our Faith Formation Program for all children occurs during the second worship service.*

***Currently, masks are required for all attendees.***

*A Welcoming Community, Accepting and Serving All  
In the Spirit of Christ*

Prelude

Breath of Heaven

Amy Grant/Chris Eaton

Denise Keating, piano

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An Extravagant Welcome

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey  
you are welcome in this place.*

Welcome Greeting and Announcements

*Our Ministers will welcome everyone to church and then highlight some significant events and or announcements in our shared life.*

Musical Introit

Rise Up, Shepherd, And Follow

African American Spiritual

Call to Worship .....Deacon Alison Wermer

Leader: In Israel's darkest hour when they were deported and forced to make a foreign nation their home, they held onto the belief that light would come.

**People: The Persians defeating the Babylonians and allowed the Israelites to return home to rebuild their homes, plant their crops and celebrate life once again. Light came back into their lives.**

Leader: Christmas teaches us that though life can be full of shadows, demons and forces of evil, light comes to enlighten, lift the burden and invite us back into the warmth of love. Both the God of the Old Testament AND the God of the New Testament teach us this truth. Come, let us worship THAT God.

Angels, from the realms of glory,  
 wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
 As you sang creation's story,  
 now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
**Come and worship, come and worship,  
 worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,  
 watching o'er your flocks by night,  
 God with us is now residing,  
 yonder shines the infant light:  
**Come and worship, come and worship,  
 worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

Sages, leave your contemplations,  
 brighter visions beam afar;  
 Seek the great Desire of Nations,  
 guided by Christ's natal star:  
**Come and worship, come and worship,  
 worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

Saints, before the altar bending,  
 watching long in hope and fear,  
 Suddenly, your prayers attending,  
 Christ beside you shall appear.  
**Come and worship, come and worship,  
 worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

Prayer of Invocation & Unison Lord's Prayer .....Deacon Alison Wermer

***Loving God***, 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 do not let us fall into temptation***, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen.

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

Pastoral Prayer .....Rev. Josh Simon

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer  
 Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other  
 Musical Prayer Response                      Like a Child

For thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;

proclaim, give praise, and say, 'Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel.'

See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labour, together; a great company, they shall return here.

With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back,

I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away;

say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.'

For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.

Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,

and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,

I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

I will give the priests their fill of fatness,

and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."')

From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Anthem

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Communion Meditation

The Party After the Party

Rev. Mark Mendes

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation and Words of Institution

**Sharing the Bread and the Cup**

*Today, we will partake of communion by passing the bread and cup out to each person: the elements will be wrapped in plastic wrap with a small cup of juice. Each pew will get a plate to unwrap and share. Please wait for the minister to direct you to dip your pieces of bread into the cup and partake.*

*Special note: In order to welcome as many people as possible to Christ's table, all bread is gluten free and the juice is non-alcoholic grape juice.*

*Absolutely everyone is welcome at Christ's table.*

Celebrating Our Giving to God at First Church

*Thank you to those at home who are joining us  
and financially supporting our ministry.*

*Thank you to folks in the sanctuary who are present  
and offering their gifts in the basket provided.*

*Thank you to everyone who has sent in their pledge card for 2022  
and for everyone planning to send it in shortly.*

\*Hymn

**Go Tell It on the Mountain**

#154

**Refrain:**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill 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]**

**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

Pastoral Benediction ..... Rev. Mark Mendes

### **\*Sung Community Benediction**

#### **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.**

\*Postlude

Joy to the World

\*Please stand if you are able

### **A Few Key Announcements:**

- ◆ Sunday Worship - Two Services - 8:30am\* and 10:15am  
\*First service streamed via [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://www.youtube.com/c/fccej)  
We are pleased to offer in-person worship with COVID precautions in place. This includes masking and social distancing regardless of vaccination status.  
Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month. The elements will be sealed and passed out to the congregation.
- ◆ Music: Marie Johnson and Denise Keating are leading Sanctuary Choir  
Rick Dooley leads our Praise Band *Finally @ First* at second service at 10:15am.
- ◆ Sincere thanks to Jonah Moos, Ed Guild, Gary Hartmann, Francis Gravel, Linda Lou Parker and Harsh Shah operating the live stream tech!

### **Faith Formation & Youth**

- ◆ Faith Formation ~ PreK through 8th grade  
This Sunday, January 2, we are having an Epiphany celebration & telling the story of the magi
- ◆ Young Apostles ~ 3rd grade through 5th grade with a parent/grandparent  
Next meeting is January 9 at 4pm
- ◆ Youth Gathering ~ 6th grade through 12th grade, 6:30 to 8pm on Sunday evenings  
Join us tonight for a holiday party and cookie making for a local organization.

# OUR PRAYER MINISTRY

If you require prayers for yourself or a loved one; or if you wish for a call from a pastor, please contact [welcome@fcej.org](mailto:welcome@fcej.org) or call 1(802) 878-5745.

Josh Ludwig  
Bruce Giannuzzi  
David (David Irwin's friend)  
Nancy Hayes  
Bill Barrett (Nancy Hayes son-in-law)  
Patty Garvey  
Dave Johnson  
Joe and Ann Wells

Maureen MacKenzie  
Catherine McMaster's sister : Margaret Sprague  
Robert Howe  
The Family of Mary Gellatly  
Jordan  
Sean McKenzie  
Jaime Real  
Claire Glatz  
Emily Broude  
Carlene Lawrence's Family  
Duke Ehler and the Family of Emily Ehler  
College Students (and their parents!)

...and all persons affected by COVID19

## ALTAR FLOWERS REQUESTS

To sign up for altar flowers, visit our website:  
[fcej.org/Serving Others/Get Involved](http://fcej.org/Serving_Others/Get_Involved).  
Use the Sign Up Genius link.

### CONNECTIONS:

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

Our "Weekly Update" eConnection:  
<http://bit.ly/3rlslSv>

Our monthly "SPIRIT@FIRST" eNewsletter\*  
<http://fcej.org/v5/category/newsletters/>

\*available in a printed, snail-mailed format

### **ONGOING PROGRAMS!**

- ⊕ **Coffee Clatter**, every Friday @ 8am, Martone's
- ⊕ **Bridge Group**, 3rd Fridays @ 1:30pm Marvin Lounge



**Sunday Morning Worship** @ 8:30 & 10:15  
**Communion** on 1st Sundays  
**Teleworship:** [youtube.com/c/fcej](https://www.youtube.com/c/fcej)



**Sermon Talk Back (Hybrid Format!)**  
Tuesdays @ 8:30am, Marvin Lounge  
...and Zoom: <http://zoom.us/j/740803865>



**Wednesday Night Searchers** 7pm in the Marvin Lounge—next meeting is January 12



**Noontime Book Group**  
3rd Mondays @ 11:30am, Marvin Lounge  
*Zoom component is on hiatus*



FACEBOOK

[bit.ly/39O39ht](https://bit.ly/39O39ht)



INSTAGRAM

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



INTERNET

[fcej.org](http://fcej.org)



YOUTUBE

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

# MINISTRY DIRECTORY

## Staff

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Mark Mendes [mmendes@fccej.org]

**Associate Pastor:** Rev. Josh Simon [jsimon@fccej.org]

**Minister of Visitation:** Rev. Ron Faux [revronfaux@gmail.com]

**Christian Education Director:** Laurie Chipman [lchipman@fccej.org]

**Church Administrator:** Jen Kelly [welcome@fccej.org]

## Music

**Currier Bell Choir:** Alison Wermer [clwerme@msn.com; P# 802-879-7650]

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

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

## Officers

**President:** Cathy Shearer [802-878-6023]

**Vice President:** Brenda Dawson [802-881-5253]

**Financial Secretary:** Rob Sinkewicz [802-878-4470]

**Treasurer:** Dan Petherbridge [802-879-0261]

**Clerk:** Christine Sinkewicz [802-878-4470]

**Historian:** Ann Gray [802-878-4088]

**Auditors:** Betsy Weischedel [802-922-2094] & Steve Wood [802-878-3068]

## Committee Chairs

**Christian Education:** Lisa Clark [802-872-5849]

**Communications:** Francis Gravel [802-318-6235]

**Deacons:** Judy Pomainville [802-236-0604]

**Finance & Pastoral Relations:** Cathy Shearer [802-878-6023]

**Hospitality:** Jen Dooley [802-578-0230]

**Human Resources:** Brenda Dawson [802-881-5253]

**Missions:** Paula Sargent [802-879-3598]

**Music:** Denise Keating [802-345-8900]

**Nominating:** Dick Harris [802-644-6488]

**Stewardship:** Kathryn Brennan [802-878-9509]

**Trustees:** Kaki McGeary [802-879-2062]

**Ushering:** Marlene Frank [802-872-9126]

## Recognized Groups

**Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop:** Sue Wood [802-878-3068] [woodsusanjane@gmail.com](mailto:woodsusanjane@gmail.com)

**Heavenly Food Pantry:** Valerie Gabert [802-879-0109]