



# 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  
A United Church of Christ  
Sunday, December 19, 2021  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love**  
**Christmas Pageant Sunday**

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

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

The Order of Worship

Prelude

Christmas Day Medley

Eugene Butler

Denise Keating, piano

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Welcome Greeting and Announcements

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

An Extravagant Welcome

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

Musical Introit

Advent Song

Denise Keating, piano

CD Baby Alpha Music

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Call to Worship / Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle: LOVE

Leader: We come to church today to experience the sacred ritual of our Children's Christmas Pageant. Lines will be forgotten, laughter will erupt, pride will be apparent and the warmth of the holiday will be manifest.

**People: Christ's story is still shared and known throughout the world. We come to hear the familiar story from new voices and in new ways. Christ is alive and his teaching still rings out.**

Candle Lighter: The teaching that rings true to our church is that of love. Jesus calls us to love God, love our neighbors, love ourselves and love our enemies. We light Advent's fourth candle of love as a reminder to our children of what's important in our faith.

[light fourth advent candle of love]

**God is Good - All the Time  
All the Time - God is Good.**

Prayer of Invocation & Unison Lord's Prayer..... Deacon Judy Larrabee  
**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.

Opening Carol

**Go Tell It On The Mountain (v1)**

**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 holy light**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.  
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

Pastoral Prayer .....Rev. Josh Simon

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Text prayers to Rev. Mark @ [802-922-1773]

Prayer Response

**Like a Child**

**Daniel Charles Damon**

**Like a child love would send to reveal and to mend,**

**Like a child and a friend, Jesus comes.**

**Like a child we may find claiming heart, soul and mind,**

**Like a child strong and kind, Jesus comes.**

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**OUR 2021 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

*Created in 1998 and adapted this year by our youth and Laurie Chipman*

*Scene 1 – The Magi from the Orient*

**Come, O Long-Expected Jesus**

**Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set they people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

**Born all people to deliver, born a child, you came to reign!  
Born to rule on earth forever, come be known to us again.**

**By your own eternal Spirit, come to claim us as your own;  
By your all sufficient merit, let us share your cross and crown.**

*Scene 2 – Mary, the Angel Gabriel, and Elizabeth*

### O Little Town Of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark street shineth the everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of God's heaven.

No ear may hear God's coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where meet souls will receive God, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descent to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

*Scene 3 – The Journey to Bethlehem*

### Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

*(Parents please help your young angels move forward to the front by the piano)*

*(Parents please help your shepherds & sheep move to the Narthex)*

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;  
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with you there.

*Scene 4 – The Shepherds are visited*

### Angels We Have Heard on High

*(Young angels, shepherds, and sheep return to their parents in the pews)*

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply, echo back their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why our joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings by which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

**Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;  
come adore on bended knee, God, Christ our Lord the newborn king.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**See him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise;  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

*Scene 5 – The Magi*

**Hark the Herald Angels Sing**

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”**

**Joyful, all ye rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

**Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold him come, off-spring of the virgin’s womb.**

**Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate Deity,  
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.**

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.**

**Mild he lays His glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

*Scene 6 – The Magi continue their journey*

**Joy to the World**

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth its praises bring;  
Let every heart prepare Christ room, and heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the Earth! the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
The glories of God’s righteousness and wonders of God’s love,  
And wonders of God’s love, and wonders, wonders of God’s love.**

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.*

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.  
God now in peace, in faith and in love.**

\*Postlude

There's a Song in the Air

Karl Harrington

arr. by Lani Smith

Denise Keating, piano

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\*Please stand if you are able

**Cast**

*In order of appearance*

Balthazar .....	Ethan Koch	Innkeeper .....	Zoe Moos
Casper .....	Genevieve King	Angel .....	Anna Kinney
Melchior.....	Zoe Moos	Shepherd.....	Braeden Koch
Servant .....	Braeden Koch	King Herod.....	Braeden Koch
Narrator.....	Izzy Owens		~~~~~
Gabriel .....	Ethan Koch	Props.....	John Kinney
Mary.....	Genevieve King	Technical Support.....	Kathryn Brennan, Pastor Josh Simon
Elizabeth .....	Anna Kinney	Costumes .....	Gretchen Owens
Announcer.....	Braeden Koch	Director.....	Laurie Chipman
Joseph .....	Ethan Koch		

# 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.

Craig & Deb Watt  
Betty Adams  
Malcolm Levanway  
Paul Hyde  
Deanna Hayes  
Marge Shepard  
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  
The family of 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

*The flowers on the altar  
are given by  
June Silverman  
in memory of loved ones.*

## ALTAR FLOWERS REQUESTS

All altar flowers request slots for 2021 are fulfilled!

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

### 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 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—on hiatus till January



**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](https://fcej.org)



YOUTUBE

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

# MINISTRY DIRECTORY

## Staff

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

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

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

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

**Church Administrator:** Jen Kelly [welcome@fcej.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]