



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 **Website:** www.fccej.org



The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
Sunday, January 30, 2022—10am
The Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

The Order of Worship

*Our Service is streamed and begins at 10am with access on our webpage @ www.fccej.org.
You can watch the service any time thereafter.
Our Faith Formation Program for all children occurs in-person and via Zoom at 10:15am.*

Currently, masks are required for all attendees.

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

Prelude

Rain Down
Denise Keating, piano

Jaime Cortez
arr. by Mark Hayes
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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

I Will Call Upon the Lord
Denise Keating, piano

Michael O' Shields
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Call to WorshipDeacon Rusty Sargent

Leader: Welcome to the house that God's love built! Welcome to the community grounded in the love Christ brought into the world and preached with every breath. Come, find the will of Divine love in your hearts.

People: All the laws of Israel, all the utterances of the prophets, all the insights of the sages...all can be summed up in Christ's Great Commandment, "You Shall Love the Lord Your God with all Your Heart, Mind, Soul and Strength and Your Neighbor as yourself."

Leader: Come, let us re-dedicate ourselves to the heart of Christ's teaching. Come, let us strive to love more truly and honestly. Come, let us enter into Christ family of love.

Leader: Come, let us worship and praise our God.

Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven on earth be found.
Fix in us a humble dwelling, all your faithful mercies crown;
Jesus, you are all compassion, pure unbounded love impart,
Visit us with your salvation, enter every trembling heart.

Finish then your new creation, pure and spotless let us prove;
Let us see your great salvation perfectly restored in you.
Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,
Crowned as saints, we ever shall be lost in wonder, love and praise.

Prayer of Invocation & Unison Lord’s Prayer Deacon Rusty Sargent

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.

Gospel Scripture Reading I Corinthians 13: 1-13 (page 134) Read by Laurie Chipman

The Gift of Love

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Children’s Message..... Laurie Chipman

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Josh Simon

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Musical Prayer Response Oh Lord, Hear My Prayer

Jacques Berthier

Denise Keating, piano

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Hymn There's a Wideness in God's Mercy #23

There's a wideness to God's mercy like the wideness of the sea;

There's a kindness in God's justice which is more than liberty.

There's no place where earthly sorrow are more felt than in God's heaven,

There's no place where earthly failings have such kindly judgement given.

For the love of God is broader than the measures of our minds;

And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's word,

And our lives would show thanksgiving for the goodness of our God.

Prophetic Scripture Reading Read by Rev. Mark Mendes

Jeremiah 1:4-10 (page 541)

Jeremiah's Call and Commission

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,

‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,

and before you were born I consecrated you;

I appointed you a prophet to the nations.’

Then I said, ‘Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a

boy.' But the Lord said to me,

‘Do not say, “I am only a boy”;

for you shall go to all to whom I send you,

and you shall speak whatever I command you.

Do not be afraid of them,

for I am with you to deliver you,

says the Lord.’

Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me,

‘Now I have put my words in your mouth.

See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,

to pluck up and to pull down,

to destroy and to overthrow,

to build and to plant.’

Anthem

Isn't He Beautiful
Denise Keating, piano

John Wimber
arr. by Mark Hayes

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Sermon

The Elemental Nature of Love

Rev. Mark Mendes

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 on the way out.*

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

*Closing Hymn

O For a World

#575 vs. 1, 2, 5

**O for a world where everyone respects each other’s ways,
Where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.**

**O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved,
Where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.**

**O for a world preparing for God’s glorious reign of peace,
Where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.**

Benediction

Pastoral BenedictionRev. Josh Simon

*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

God Be with You
Denise Keating, piano

William Tomer
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*Please stand if you are able

COVID-19 Updates

The recent surge in COVID-19 cases weighs heavily on our minds and in our hearts. The Deacons, along with staff and church leadership, are closely monitoring the situation and have made the following adjustments to current programs:

- ◆ We are offering one Sunday worship service at 10am that is in-person and streaming. Masks are required for in-person worship.
- ◆ All church committees will meet via Zoom for the month of January.
- ◆ Internal and external groups may decide whether to meet in person or in remote fashion. All in-person gatherings must require masks and contact tracing.
- ◆ Sermon Talkback meets via Zoom during January.
- ◆ Coffee Clatter at Martone's is on hiatus for the month.

These steps will be re-evaluated at the end of January to determine if they need to remain in place through February.

A Few Key Announcements:

- ◆ Sunday Worship - One service at 10am through the month of January.
 - ⇒ In-person and 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 1st Sunday of each month. The elements will be sealed and passed out to the congregation.
 - ⇒ Fellowship Hour is online via Zoom at 11:15am: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87536093221> / Meeting ID: 875 3609 3221
- ◆ Music: Sanctuary Choir and Finally at First Praise Band are on hiatus for the month of January
- ◆ 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 Hybrid - PreK up through 8th grade

- ◆ In person (masked) & online @ 10:30am
- ◆ Gathering in Marvin Lounge following Children's Message
- ◆ Participating online? Feel free to arrive early & chat with volunteer
- ◆ All adult volunteers are vaccinated
- ◆ High school youth are welcome – reach out to Laurie & be a helper
- ◆ Gathering Circle & story conversation/questions & activity (link for activity in Weekly email)

Nursery is OPEN for vaccinated & masked adults & infants – 3 yrs

- ◆ Air Purifier is running & worship speaker

Youth Gathering ~ 6th grade through 12th grade

- ◆ Need the link? Email Pastor Josh or Laurie.

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 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
Sharon Dettenrider

The Family of Mary Gellatly
Jordan
Sean McKenzie
Jaime Real
Claire Glatz
Emily Broude
Students (and their parents!)

...and all persons affected by COVID19

*The flowers on the altar are given by
The Deacons
in gratitude for the endless energy
and dedication
of our ministers and staff.*

*Congratulations to
Suzanne & Robert Eaton
who are celebrating their 68th
Wedding Anniversary today,
January 30.*

Contact the church office for their current address.

CONNECTIONS:

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

Our “Weekly Update” eConnection:
<http://bit.ly/3rlsSv>

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

**available in a printed, snail-mailed format*



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



Sermon Talk Back
Tuesdays at 8:30am via Zoom through
January: <http://zoom.us/j/740803865>



Wednesday Night Searchers
7pm via Zoom—next meeting is January 19
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83272183334>



Noontime Book Group
3rd Mondays @ 11:30am, via Zoom in
January

Coffee Clatter is on hiatus for the month of January



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39O39ht



INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fcej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9

Snow Angels Needed

We are looking for people to help keep our walkways clear of snow. If you are able and willing to volunteer to assist with shoveling and salting after a storm, please contact Jen in the church office. We'll put you on our Snow Angel email list and reach out as needed.

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

The thrift shop is planning to resume in mid-February. If you have donations, you may call 802-879-6552. Please leave a message and someone will reach out to coordinate with you.

Ushers & Greeters Needed

Our ushers and greeters perform a vital function in the life of our faith family and we extend our heartfelt thanks to all who currently serve in this capacity! You have helped create a warm and welcoming environment for everyone.

We are looking to expand our ushering and greeter teams. It's a fun way to serve our faith family. Please contact Marlene Frank at marlene.frank@uvmhealth.org for info or sign up via this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0a48aaad2ca2ff2-fccej2>.

FCCEJ Camping – Location Change

We changed the location of our camping weekend of June 24-26 to Lake Carmi State Park where lots of camping sites are still available. Labor Day weekend will still be at Grande Isle State Park as there currently are several spots. Feel free to arrive Thursday or Friday and stay through Saturday night or Sunday. It's all very flexible. Once you put in your reservation please be in touch with Pastor Mark or Laurie and let them know your site number so we can make a map of where everyone will be.

Joint Urban Ministry Project (JUMP)

Dear fellow neighbors/friends,

The Joint Urban Ministry Project (JUMP) is a local resource for our neighbors in search of essential basic needs and assistance to gain independence to help themselves.

JUMP will be holding its second Online Auction February 2-11, 2022. The theme will be "Showing Love for JUMP" which last February raised over \$5,000 for JUMP. We hope to do the same this year.

Whether you are yearning for a tasty treat, looking for something unique for yourself or searching for a gift for a special someone, you will be sure to find something in our auction. Help support this vital service by "Showing Love for JUMP" and joining us at our online auction and bidding on any or many of the great items.

"Showing Love for JUMP" Online Auction link:

<https://www.biddingforgood.com/auction/auctionhome.action?auctionId=341699061>