



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, February 13, 2022—10am
The Order of Worship

Our Due to the recent rise in COVID19 cases, we are offering one worship service at 10am which is both in person and streamed live and available afterwards through our webpage: www.fccej.org.

Our Faith Formation Program for children ages PreK through 8th grade is a hybrid offering both in person and via Zoom and starts at 10:30am

Currently, masks are required for all attendees.

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

Prelude: Praise Medley

How Majestic Is Your Name/
Great is the Lord

Michael & Deborah Smith**
arr. by Don Wyrzten

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

Sweet, Sweet Spirit

Doris Akers**

Call to Worship Deacon Gary Hartman

Leader: Come, let us listen to what God is doing. Our Lord is offering the kingdom to the poor, food to the hungry and laughter to the grieving. God even says that if you suffer in living out your faith, there will be rewards beyond measure.

People: Every blessing comes with responsibilities: those of us with wealth are asked to share it, those of us with extra food are asked to feed the hungry and those of us who are rejoicing are asked to spread the joy around a bit.

Leader: God offers us blessings and invites us into relationship.

People: Come, let us enter God's gates with praise and work with each other to make the world a better place. Amen and Alleluia!

To you, O God, all creatures sing,
 and all creation, everything,
 Sings your praises, alleluia!
 Your burning sun with golden beam,
 Your silver moon with softer gleam
 Sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia alleluia, alleluia.

Now we who are of tender heart,
 forgiving others, take our part,
 Sing your praises, alleluia.
 To you we lift our pain and care,
 receive the burdens that we bear
 Singing praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

In you, a kind and gentle death,
 prepares to hush our final breath
 Singing praises, alleluia.
 Christ goes before us to renew the way
 that leads us home to you
 Singing praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prayer of Invocation & Unison Lord’s Prayer Deacon Gary Hartman

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

Luke 6:17-26

Read by Laurie Chipman

Jesus Teaches and Heals

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Blessings and Woes

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

‘Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

‘But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

‘Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.

‘Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

‘Woe to you when all speak well of you,
for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

Children’s Message.....Rev. Mark Mendes

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Ron Faux

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Musical Prayer Response

Come Holy Spirit

Gloria & Will Gaither**

Hymn

Be Now My Vision

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**Be now my vision, O God of my heart
Nothing surpasses the love you impart
You my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, your presence, my light.
Sovereign of heaven, my victory won
May I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heaven’s Sun
Heart of my own heart whatever be fall
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.**

For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to someone untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

The Resurrection of the Dead

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

Anthem

His Strength Is Perfect

Steven Curtis &
Jerry Salley**

Sermon

Of First Importance

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.*

**Some glad morning when this life is o'er, I'll fly away;
To a home on God's celestial shore, I'll fly away.**

**I'll fly away, O glory, I'll fly away;
When I die, hallelujah by and by, I'll fly away**

**When the shadows of this life have gone, I'll fly away.
Like a bird from prison bars have flown, I'll fly away.**

**I'll fly away, O glory, I'll fly away;
When I die, hallelujah by and by, I'll fly away**

**Just a few more weary days and then, I'll fly away;
To a land where joys shall never end, I'll fly away.**

**I'll fly away, O glory, I'll fly away;
When I die, hallelujah by and by, I'll fly away**

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**

We Will Glorify

Twila Paris**

All music performed by Denise Keating on piano and vocals.

***Please stand if you are able**

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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@fceej.org or call 1(802) 878-5745.

The family of Tom James
The family of Lynn Coddington
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 Ginny Coe
in loving memory of her son, Tom*

CONNECTIONS:

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

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

Our monthly “SPIRIT@FIRST”
eNewsletter*

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

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



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



Sermon Talk Back
Tuesdays at 8:30am via Zoom until further notice: <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 until further notice

Coffee Clatter continues to be on hiatus—further updates as events warrant.



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39O39ht



INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fceej.org



YOUTUBE

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: Judy Larrabee [802-236-0604]

Financial Secretary: Ann Gray [802-878-4088]

Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [802-879-0261]

Clerk: Brenda Dawson [802-881-5253]

Historian: Ann Gray [802-878-4088]

Internal 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: TBD

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

Hospitality: Jim Glatz [802-503-5076]

Human Resources: Judy Larrabee [802-236-0604]

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

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

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.

Heavenly Food Pantry

The Heavenly Food Pantry is continuing the drive-through method for delivering food to families until further notice. Guests will remain in their vehicles when visiting and masked volunteers will conduct registrations car-side. The next date for food distribution is Monday, February 14 starting at 5:30pm. The inclement weather has significantly increased the requests for food deliveries. If you are able and willing, please consider making a delivery or two.

Also in need are the following items:

Campbell's chunky soups, canned fruit, toilet paper, canned pasta, rice, & empty dozen-size egg cartons

For more information or to volunteer, please visit our website: www.fccej.org/Serving-Others/Heavenly-Food-Pantry

New Member Class

Rev. Mark will be leading a New Member Class after worship on February 7. We'll be meeting in the Program Room on the second floor. Please contact the office if you need childcare.

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>.

A Few Key Announcements:

- ◆ Sunday Worship - One service at 10am until further notice
 - ⇒ 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 until further notice
- ◆ 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 a volunteer
- ◆ All volunteers are vaccinated — everyone must be masked, regardless of vaccination status.
- ◆ 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

Young Apostles ~ 3rd through 5th grade and a parent or grandparent

- ◆ Next meeting is Sunday, March 14 at 4pm

Youth Gathering ~ 6th grade through 12th grade

- ◆ This Sunday at 2pm—sledding is on the schedule!
 - ⇒ No Gathering on February 20 and 27 due to Winter Break. Next Gathering is March 6.

Reminder:

Please remember to contact Jen in the church office with any scheduling needs or changes: welcome@fccej.org—thank you!