



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

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

April 3, 2022—Holy Communion

Our First Service with organ and traditional choir is streamed and begins at 8:30am with access on our webpage @ 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 Children's Faith Formation Program is in person and begins at 10:30am after Children's Message.

Currently, mask wearing is determined by the comfort level of the individual.

<p><i>A Welcoming Community, In the Spirit of Christ</i></p>	<p><i>Accepting and Serving All</i></p>
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Prelude Medley

Prelude in D Minor

Clerambault
arr. by Guilmant**

An Extravagant Welcome

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

Greeting and Announcements

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

Preparing for Worship

Introductory Reading

Ring of the Singing Drum and Minute of Silence

Introit

Holy Ground

Geron Davis**

Call to Worship & Lighting the Fifth Lenten Candle: Tears

Each week we will have a call to worship that also includes lighting a Lenten candle, just like during advent. We will ask people in the congregation beforehand to participate in doing the reading and lighting the candle.

Reader: As our Lenten journey continues, we remember that God shows the divine presence in everyday life and to everyday people. The Messiah heals and shows us a way to find light in darkness.

(Light four candles)

Congregation: Today, we remember how Jesus loved his friends Lazarus, Mary and Martha. They supported, took care of, anointed and welcomed Jesus into their home for meals.

Reader: Lazarus died but Jesus raised his friend from the grave and told everyone about eternal life. When Lazarus died, Jesus cried gentle tears of love for his friend.

Congregation: God cries with us as we fail to see the beautiful gift of the divine in our midst, as we suffer with heartbreak and as we grieve for those we love.

Reader: Let us pray. Dear God, let Christ's tears wash the pain of life away and replace it with the warmth of tenderness. Amen.

(Light the Fifth Candle)

Opening Hymn

Come, O Font of Every Blessing

#459

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation & **Unison Lord's Prayer**

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. Josh Simon

After 2nd service ~ PreK – 8th graders are invited to follow Laurie for faith formation time in our peer rooms with air purifiers running. High school youth are welcome to help. All our volunteers are vaccinated, and masks are optional. All will return to participate in Communion with their families.

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Mark Mendes

Today's Lenten Focus of Prayer: Confession

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Lighting a Candle for Someone in Need of Prayer

Anytime before, during, or after the worship service, everyone is free to come light a candle for someone in need of prayer. You might come up during a hymn or during the silence in the pastoral prayer or even as you first arrive at church.

Musical Prayer Response

Prayers of the People

Bonnie Johansen-Werner**

Mary Anoints Jesus

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

Anthem

He Is Exalted

Twila Paris

Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Wesley/Glaser**

Meditation

We Do Not Always Have Jesus

Rev. Mark Mendes

A Time of Confession

It is an ancient ritual of the church to confess our shortcomings before God. Today we lean into that tradition by offering time to first write [earlier during the service perhaps] and then bring up your confession written on the provided paper and place it in one of the large bowls of water. The specially made paper with your confession written on it will then dissolve as it floats deeper into the water, symbolizing that God forgives and no longer remembers your failings and or shortcomings of behavior. As your paper dissolves, let the weight of your sin lighten as you claim the freedom of being. Once everyone is seated we will complete the rite of confession by saying the following.....

Leader: Jesus proclaimed a message of forgiveness and love. In the name of our Lord, I proclaim to you that your sins are forgiven.

People: Loving God, thank you for welcoming me home with a ring, robe and embrace. May your undeserved forgiveness give me the freedom to be a better person. I accept your grace and pledge to be more loving. Alleluia and amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Today, the Deacons will pass out plates of gluten free bread and juice to each pew. Please unwrap your plate and wait for the direction of the minister to receive your communion elements. When the minister directs, dip your bread into the cup and partake immediately.

People worshipping at home are encouraged to take their communion elements and partake at the same time as the congregation in the sanctuary. Together we are one body of Christ at First Church.

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

Our church has many vibrant ministries and a strong outreach into the community. Our work is changing lives and making our community a better place in which to live. Thanks to all who are offering your gifts to the church and partnering with us in our mission to follow Christ.

Closing Hymn

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

#193

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

Canzona

Frescobaldi**

*Please stand if you are able

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A Few Key Announcements:

- ◆ Sunday Morning Worship - 8:30 and 10:15
 - ⇒ In-person and streamed via youtube.com/c/fccej (8:30 service only)
 - ⇒ We are pleased to offer in-person worship—masks are optional.
 - ⇒ Music:
Marie Johnson and Denise Keating are leading Sanctuary Choir this morning
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month. The elements will be sealed and passed out to the congregation.
- ◆ Sincere thanks to Jonah Moos, Ed Guild, Gary Hartmann, Francis Gravel, Linda Lou Parker and Harsh Shah operating the live stream tech!

Young Apostles & Youth

- ◆ **Young Apostles** (3rd – 5th graders & a Parent/Grandparent)
 - ⇒ This group meets once a month for fun-filled fellowship. Recreation, Bible study, mission projects, laughing & talking, and, most important, creating bonds that will steer our children into lasting friendships in their teen years. This is all found in Young Apostles.
 - ⇒ Next meeting: April 10 at 4pm. Come join the fun as we gather together in Fellowship Hall, get to know each other, do a mission project activity together all in one hour.
- ◆ **Junior Youth** - 6th-8th grade—meets today, April 3, from 11:30am to 12:30pm
 - ⇒ Join Pastor Josh & Laurie for fellowship and an art project: Who is Jesus to you? Spend some time hanging in the Youth Room with your peers. We'll close in time to get you home for lunch.
- ◆ **Youth Gathering** for High School - 9th – 12th grade
 - ⇒ We will meet again on Sunday, April 10th, 4pm-5:30pm. The Youth will work on a making a sign that shows our church's support for transgender and gender nonbinary youth as part of our Open and Affirming work. Kathryn Brennan will join us. Bring clothes you can paint in.

Called 2 Care Easter Baskets

We are looking for 50-60 Easter baskets to distribute to our home-bound community. You may either assemble baskets or donate basket items. Contents typically include non-edible gifts except for some teas (e.g., lavender, green tea, chamomile) and digestives (e.g., lemon or vanilla wafers.) Examples of non-edible gifts are (not limited to) the following: puzzles (e.g., crosswords, Sudoku, jigsaw), pencils, note pads, bingo markers, mandala coloring books, greeting cards, stuffed animals, playing cards, lip balm, stress balls, lotions, travel tissues, hand sanitizers (scented and non-scented OK), plant starters, flower seeds, and other tchotchkes. Hand-made gifts are also greatly appreciated. Donations may be dropped off at the church Monday-Friday, 8am-2pm.

Requests: If you wish for a friend or family member to receive a basket, please email welcomed@fccej.org or go to our website to use our Sign Up Genuis feature.

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

Louise Kolvoord, grieving the death of her son,
Steven Kolvoord

Deb & Aliyah Watt, grieving the death of
Craig Watt, husband & father

Kaki McGeary and family

Donna & John Burnett

Russ Dettenrieder

Don Lorraine

Josh Ludwig

Bruce Giannuzzi

Nancy Hayes

Bill Barrett (Nancy Hayes son-in-law)

Patty Garvey

Dave Johnson

Joe and Ann Wells

The Family of Mary Gellatly

Jordan

Sean McKenzie

Jaime Real

Claire Glatz

Emily Broude

Students (and their parents!)

...and all persons affected by COVID19

CONNECTIONS:

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

Our "Weekly Update" eConnection
[https://www.fccej.org/v5/serving-others/
get-involved](https://www.fccej.org/v5/serving-others/get-involved)

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

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

ONGOING PROGRAMS

- ⊕ **Coffee Clatter**, 8am every Friday at Martone's
- ⊕ **Bridge Group**, Every 3rd Friday at 1:30pm
Marvin Lounge—next meeting is April 15



Sunday Worship @ 8:30 & 10:15am
Communion on 1st Sundays
Teleworship: youtube.com/c/fccej



Sermon Talk Back
Tuesdays at 8:30am in the Marvin
Lounge and via Zoom: [http://zoom.us/
j/740803865](http://zoom.us/j/740803865)



Wednesday Night Searchers
7pm in Marvin Lounge and via Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/>



Noontime Book Group
3rd Mondays @ 11:30am, in the Marvin
Lounge and via Zoom.



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39O39ht



INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fccej.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

Organ: Marie Johnson
Piano: Denise Keating
Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley

Officers

President: Cathy Shearer
Vice President: Judy Larrabee Pomainville
Financial Secretary: Ann Gray [finances@fccej.org]
Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [treasurer@fccej.org]
Clerk: Brenda Dawson
Historian: Ann Gray
Internal Auditors: Betsy Weischedel & Steve Wood

Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Lisa Clark, Derek Lyman
Communications: Francis Gravel
Deacons: Alison Wermer, Judy McCullen—Co-Chairs
Finance & Pastoral Relations: Judy Larrabee Pomainville
Hospitality: Jen Dooley
Human Resources: Cathy Shearer
Missions: Paula Sargent
Music: Denise Keating
Nominating: Dick Harris
Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan
Trustees: Kaki McGeary
Ushering: Marlene Frank

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sue Wood
Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert