



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

Palm Sunday

April 10, 2022—Second Service

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.

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

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 by Finally @ First Rosanna Hosanna

**

Call to Worship & Lighting the Fifth Lenten Candle: Get Ready!

Reader: On this final Sunday of our Lenten journey, let us recall that God finds us where we live and offers us gifts beyond measure: faith, belonging, healing, and renewed life.

(Light five candles)

Congregation: As pilgrims journeyed to Jerusalem, the people in the streets proclaimed, "Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," hoping that one fine day the Messiah would come.

Reader: This ritual of welcoming strangers year after year in the hopes that one of them would be the Messiah teaches us to always be ready to meet God.

Congregation: On mountain tops or in light, in vines and branches or flowing waters, in gates to your gardens or doorways: God through Jesus comes to us as we in turn journey toward our God.

Reader: Let us pray. Dear God, thank you for reaching out to us as we travel through this barren land. Help us to see you surrounding us each and every day.
Amen

(Light the sixth and last candle of Lent)

Opening Hymn

Blessed By Your Name
(see handout)

Matt & Beth Redman**

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. Mark Mendes

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. Parents, please collect your children from their peer rooms after service.

Pastoral Prayer..... Rev. Josh Simon

Today's Lenten Focus of Prayer: Adoration and Praise

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

Lord, I Need You

Matt Maher**

Lord, I need You, oh, I need You.

Every hour I need You.

My one defense, my righteousness,

oh God, how I need You.

You're my one defense, my righteousness,

oh God, how I need You.

Jesus Enters Jerusalem

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it."' So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!'

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.' He answered, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.'

Anthem

Amazing Grace/My Chains Are Gone

Chris Tomlin **

Meditation

And Where Are the Palms?

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.

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

Hosanna (Praise is Rising)

Paul Baloche

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction Rev. Mark Mendes

***Sung Community Benediction**

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be!

With God our Creator, family all are we,

Let me walk with my fellow in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.

With ev'ry breath I take, let this be my solemn vow;

To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

*Please stand if you are able

**Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #728093-A. All Rights Reserved.

A Few Key Announcements:

- ◆ Sunday Morning Worship - 8:30 and 10:15
 - ⇒ In-person and streamed via [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://www.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 lead the Sanctuary Choir at first service
Rick Dooley leads Finally @ First Praise Band at second service
 - ⇒ 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 with Laurie for fun-filled fellowship, recreation, mission projects, laughing & talking, and, most important, creating bonds that will steer our children into lasting friendships in their teen years.
 - ⇒ Next meeting: Today, April 10, at 4pm. Come join the fun as we gather in Fellowship Hall, get to know each other, do a mission project activity together all in one hour.
- ◆ **Junior Youth** (6th-8th grade) meets at 11:30 today
- ◆ **Youth Gathering** (9th – 12th grade) meets at 4pm today—We are making a sign that shows our church's support for transgender and gender nonbinary youth as part of our Open and Affirming work. wear clothes you can paint in

Looking for Paid Nursery Staff Person (or two)

Be the friendly and respectful person that greets and helps our youngest families feel comfortable and at home during worship here. Interested candidates must follow our Safe Conduct Guidelines for working with children. For more information or to apply, please contact Laurie or Pastor Mark.

Heavenly Food Pantry

The next food distribution is tomorrow, Monday, April 11 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. The Food Pantry is allowing families to “shop” inside on a limited basis. Masks are still required for both volunteers and patrons.

The pantry needs help to fulfil the delivery part of its mission. If you have an hour or so available on a food pantry day and the means to deliver 8-10 bags of food to a neighbor in need, then the pantry could use your help.

If you are interested in helping, please call the church office at 802-878-5745 or send an email to welcome@fccej.org with your name, phone number and email address. Someone will be in touch with you. We appreciate all the support as we continue the pantry's mission of seeing that no one goes hungry!

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

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

Family and friends of Russ Dettenrieder

Don Lorraine

Josh Ludwig

Bruce Giannuzzi

Joe and Ann Wells

The Family of Mary Gellatly

Jordan

Sean McKenzie

Jaime Real

Claire Glatz

Emily Broude

...and all persons affected by COVID19

*The flowers on the altar are given by Jonah & Jessica Moos
In memory of in memory of our mothers,
Annette Manley and Leora Ramey*

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*



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.

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



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