



# 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

April 24, 2022—First Service

*Our First Service with organ and traditional choir is streamed and begins at 8:30am with access on our webpage @ [www.fccej.org](http://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.*

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

*A Welcoming Community,*

*Accepting and Serving All*

*In the Spirit of Christ*

Prelude

I Will Call Upon the Lord

Michael O'Shields\*\*

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 and highlight significant events in our shared life, then the Deacon on Duty will welcome everyone and invite people to sign the Friendship Book.*

Musical Introit

Awesome God

Rich Mullins\*\*

Call to Worship:

Leader 1: Christ is Risen!

**People: Christ is Risen indeed!**

Leader 1: In the spirit of living a resurrected life, today, we celebrate our Tenth Anniversary as an Open and Affirming congregation. As our Open and Affirming Statement expresses, we embrace diversity and affirm the dignity and worth of every person, because we are all created by a loving God.

**People: We seek to live Christ's call for compassion, justice, healing and wholeness in life.**

Leader 2: 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.

**People: 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.**

Leader 1: Let us celebrate and worship God together.

Prayer of Invocation & **Unison Lord’s Prayer** .....Deacon Myrna Doney  
***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.

Dedication of New Paraments ..... Rev. Josh Simon  
Leader: We give thanks for our new Open and Affirming paraments. These beautiful paraments express the fullness of God’s creative and diverse humanity. We are reminded that God loves all.

**People: O God of creativity and diversity: Accept our offering of new paraments and bless them that they may adorn this sanctuary and glorify you; through Jesus the Christ, the Anointed One. Amen.**

Children’s Message..... Rev. Josh Simon

The Congregation Sings as the Children Come Forward

**Jesus loves the little children,  
all God's children of the world.  
Whether young or old or new,  
Jesus loves us through and through,  
Teaching us to love all creatures in the world.**

The Congregation Sings as the Children Transition to Faith Formation

**God has made us all a rainbow.  
Colors dancing ‘round and ‘round.  
In our hair and skin and eyes, big and little, every size,  
God has made us all a rainbow dancing ‘round.**

Pastoral Prayer ..... Rev. Josh Simon

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Text prayer requests to Rev. Josh [920-858-6601]

Musical Prayer Response

Father, I Adore You

Jimmy Owens\*\*

## Scripture Readings

Isaiah: 58: 3, 6-12

“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

Matthew 5: 14-16

‘You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Temple authorities. Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Anthem

O, That I Had a Thousand Voices

Jay Althouse\*\*

Meditation

So Others Might Grow in Faith and Love

Rev. Josh Simon

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

Give Thanks

Henry Smith

\*Doxology

#778

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

Prayer of Dedication

\*Hymn

**I Love to Tell the Story**

#522

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction..... Rev. 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

We're Marching to Zion

Robert Lowry\*\*

\*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](https://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 1<sup>st</sup> 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!

## **Sunday Morning Faith Formation - Today, April 24**

All meet together after second service Children's Moment for a hands-on mission activity.

### **Young Apostles & Youth**

- ◆ **Young Apostles** (3rd - 5th graders & their families)  
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: May 15, at 4pm.
- ◆ **Junior Youth** (6th—8th grade)  
Bake cookies with Pastor Josh and our Youth Ministry Team today from 11:30 to 12:30 in the church kitchen.  
Next meeting is a pizza party on May 15
- ◆ **Youth Gathering** meets again at 4pm on Sunday, May 22 at SpareTime in Colchester.

### **First Community Concert at First!**

Vermont pianist Claire Black will perform our inaugural concert on Sunday, May 15 at 7pm. A classical pianist with a vibrant history of performances as a soloist, chamber musician, and accompanist, Ms. Black will present a program of solo piano music by Robert and Clara Schumann. Ms. Black trained at the Cleveland Institute of Music and Baldwin Wallace University.

**Community Concerts at First** is an opportunity to experience great music while raising funds for FCCEJ and our community partners. The recipient organization for our May 15 event is Spectrum Youth and Family Services in Burlington. The mission of Spectrum is *"to empower teenagers, young adults, and their families to make and sustain positive changes through prevention, intervention, and life skills services"*.

Reservations for Claire Black can be made in advance (recommended) or you can make a donation at the door. Seating is limited so make your reservation early! Suggested donation of \$20 per adult (under 18 free). For tickets, please call the church office, 802-878-5745, or stop by the table in Fellowship Hall between services.

### **Heavenly Food Pantry**

The next food distribution is this Thursday, April 28 from 2pm to 6pm. 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, please contact the church office at 802-878-5745 or [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org). 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](http://www.fccej.org/Serving-Others/Heavenly-Food-Pantry)

### **Food Drive**

On Saturday, April 30, Essex Rotary is holding a Food Drive to benefit Heavenly Food Pantry. Stop by Price Chopper in Essex Town on Center Drive anytime between 9am and 1pm, pick up a flyer from a greeter on your way in and drop off a couple needed items at the table on your way out.

### **Essex Eats Out**

It began when Essex community leaders, including clergy, brainstormed how best to feed those in our neighborhoods who hunger for food, relationship, and connection. Essex Eats Out seeks to fulfil this need by providing healthy, free meals in a safe and inclusive atmosphere.

On Friday, May 6, our Essex Eats Out team is serving up chicken casserole, coleslaw, and cookies. Stop by the Fellowship Hall anytime between 4pm and 6pm for your FREE meal. Carry-out only—no dine in. Limited delivery available with advance notice.

# Weekly Calendar - April 24 - May 1

**\*Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections\***

## **Today, Sunday April 24**

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary  
10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th),  
Fellowship Hall  
11:30am: Junior Youth (6th-8th) Church Kitchen  
11:30am: Craft Fest Committee, Marvin Lounge  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
6pm: Ukraine Benefit, Sanctuary

## **Tuesday, April 26**

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge  
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
5:30pm: Finance Committee, Marvin Lounge  
7pm: Trustees, Marvin Lounge

## **Thursday, April 28**

8:30am: Food Pantry Set Up, Fellowship Hall  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*  
2pm: Heavenly Food Pantry Distribution,  
Fellowship Hall  
6:30pm: Choir Practice, Sanctuary  
7pm: Confirmation, Marvin Lounge

## **Saturday, April 30**

10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
*12pm: Scout Troop Pasta Fundraiser, Fellowship  
Hall & Kitchen*

## **Monday, April 25**

8:30am: Food Pantry Set-up, Fellowship Hall  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
*7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge*

## **Wednesday, April 27**

10am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting, Marvin Lounge  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*  
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
*6:30pm: St. Andrew's Pipe Band, 2nd Floor Program  
Room, Sanctuary*  
*7pm: BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall*  
7pm: Wednesday Night Searchers, Marvin Lounge

## **Friday, April 29**

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market & Cafe  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

## **Sunday May 1 - Communion Sunday**

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary  
10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th), Peer Rooms  
11:30am: Music Committee, Marvin Lounge  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
1pm: Racial Justice Task Force Vigil, Church Grounds

*Events in italics = Local Community Groups*

## 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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or call 1(802) 878-5745.

Family and friends of Fern Feather  
Louise Kolvoord, grieving the death of her son,  
Steven Kolvoord  
Deb & Aliyah Watt, grieving the death of  
Craig Watt, husband & father  
Donna & John Burnett  
Bruce Giannuzzi

Joe and Ann Wells  
The Family of Mary Gellatly  
Sean McKenzie  
Claire Glatz  
All those suffering due to the violence in Ukraine  
...and all persons affected by COVID19

*The flowers on the altar are given by Andrea & Steve Sharp  
In celebration of their 29th Wedding Anniversary.*

### 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 May 20



**Sunday Worship** @ 8:30 & 10:15am  
Communion on 1st Sundays  
Teleworship: [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://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/  
j/83272183334](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83272183334) Next meeting is 4/27



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



FACEBOOK

[bit.ly/39O39ht](https://bit.ly/39O39ht)



INSTAGRAM

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



INTERNET

[fccej.org](https://fccej.org)



YOUTUBE

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