



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 Second Sunday of Christmas

January 1, 2023

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

Prelude

Barcarolle

J. Offenbach**
arr. O. Toussaint/G. Saleses

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

Allemande from Suite in A Minor, RCT 5

Rameau**

Call to Worship Deacon

Leader: Christmas has twelve days to explore God's incarnational presence in our world and to recognize how Christ's authority is manifested in a world of darkness and depravity.

People: The presents have all been opened; the feasts have all been delicious; the family and friends have been delightful; the services all sang of the glory of God.

Leader: Now, life returns to normal with jobs, schools and even more bills than before. Wars, poverty, distrust and fear still invade our institutions and world.

People: The same was true for Jesus and his family as they fled for their lives to Egypt. Despots turned to violence as innocent lives were taken. Luckily, the Holy Immigrant Family found safety and refuge in a foreign land.

Leader: Come, let us explore the full story of Christ's birth where harsh realities break in upon the sweet manger scene. Come, let us contemplate how the good news grew in power and force, even as it was being threatened. Come, let us seek our God and the good book for some answers for our lives.

Opening Hymn

Arise, Your Light Has Come

#164**

Children's Message.....Rev. Mark Mendes

**Whether young or old or new,
Jesus loves us through and through,
Teaching us to love all creatures in the world.**

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

Rev. Mark Mendes

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation & Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Today, we will celebrate communion by passing out the elements to the congregation where we will eat the bread together and then drink the cup separately; this symbolizes both the individual and corporate nature of our faith.

Communion Music

St. Anthony's Chorale

Franz Joseph Haydn**

arr. H. Whitford

Special note: All the bread offered today is gluten free. All juice used is non-alcoholic.

Absolutely everyone is welcome at Christ's table!

Celebrating Our Giving to God at First Church

*Thank you to everyone, both at home and in the sanctuary,
who are financially supporting our ministry.*

Invitation

Offertory

Sarabande from Suite in D Minor HWV 437

G.F. Handel**

[excerpt]

***Doxology and Prayer**

#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. Amen.**

Closing Hymn

We Shall Overcome

#570**

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction

***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

Gigue from French Suite No. 5

J.S. Bach**

*Please stand if you are able

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 (802) 878-5745.

Victims of gun violence and their families

Family and friends of Gary Smith

Family and friends of Joshua LaPierre

Family and friends of Floyd Hewitt

Maureen Evans

LaPierre Family

Prajna Faux

Elizabeth Stone

Bernie Currier

Joyce Jacobs

Ann Gray

Malley Powell

Faith Truax

Fletcher Coolidge

Grace Goodwin

Dan Harmon

Sean McKenzie & Sandy Wynne

All those suffering due to
the violence in Ukraine

...and all persons affected by COVID19

CONNECTIONS:

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

Our "Weekly Update" eConnection: <http://bit.ly/3rlslSv>

Our monthly "SPIRIT@FIRST" eNewsletter* <http://fccej.org/v5/category/newsletters/>
*available in a printed, snail-mailed format



Sunday Morning Worship

- In person & streamed @ 8:30
 - In person & Faith Formation @ 10:15
 - Communion on 1st Sundays
- Teleworship: youtube.com/c/fccej



Sermon Talk Back

Tuesdays at 8:30am in the Marvin Lounge and Zoom:
<http://zoom.us/j/740803865>

ONGOING PROGRAMS!

- ⊕ **Tai Chi Class**, Tuesdays at 10:15pm in the Fellowship Hall
- ⊕ **Yoga @ First**, Tuesdays at 5pm in the Sanctuary
- ⊕ **Coffee Clatter**, every Friday @ 8am at Martone's
- ⊕ **Lunchtime Book Group**, 3rd Mondays in Marvin Lounge
- ⊕ **Bridge Group**, 3rd Fridays @ 1:30pm in Marvin Lounge



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39039ht



INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fccej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9

A Few Key Announcements

- ♦ Sunday Morning Worship - 10am today - All Family Worship
 - ⇒ Regular Sunday morning worship is 8:30 and 10:15. Streamed via youtube.com/c/fccej (8:30 service only)
 - **Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #728093-A. All Rights Reserved.
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month.
- ♦ Sincere thanks to Jonah Moos, Ed Guild, Gary Hartmann, Francis Gravel, and Linda Lou Parker, operating the live stream tech!
- ♦ Thank you to Bethany Blake for the beautiful music today!

Heavenly Food Pantry

The food distribution days for December are Monday, January 9 at 5:30pm and Thursday, January 26 at 2pm. We continue to need the following items:

Juice, Baked beans, Canned pasta, Chunky soups, Canned green beans, and small bags of dry cat food. We can also use dozen-sized egg cartons.

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, then the pantry could REALLY use your help. Please call the church office at 802-878-5745 or send an email to welcome@fccej.org. We appreciate all the support as we continue the pantry's mission of seeing that no one goes hungry! www.fccej.org/Serving-Others/Heavenly-Food-Pantry.

Yoga @ First

Come practice a compassionate, inquisitive sequence to integrate the mind, body, and soul. In each session, we will focus, breathe, build heat, strengthen, and relax. Tuesdays, from 5-6:15pm in the Sanctuary. Wear comfortable, non restrictive clothing. Bring a mat or borrow one. Donations (to FCCEJ) welcome, but not required.



JUMP will be holding their third Online Auction February 1-10, 2023. The theme again will be "Showing Love for JUMP". The success of this JUMP fundraiser will be based on the number and type of items being auctioned and the number of people who place bids on those items. Please help spread the word about JUMP seeking donations for the auction and encouraging people to bid on items in February.

Please contact Margaret Welch for more information: 802-862-2428 or auction@jumpvt.org.

Dates to Remember:

Monday, January 2—Church office closed all day

Tuesday, January 3—Committee reports due for Annual Meeting

Friday, January 13—Farewell dinner for Pastor Josh—details TBA

Sunday, January 15—Pastor Josh final Sunday at FCCEJ

Sunday, February 5—FCCEJ Annual Meeting

Weekly Calendar: January 1– January 8

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, January 1

10am: Worship, Sanctuary

1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Monday, January 2

Church Office Closed All Day

8:30am: Food Pantry Set-up, Fellowship Hall

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge

Tuesday, January 3

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge

10:15am: Tai Chi Class, Fellowship Hall

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

5pm: Yoga @ FCCEJ, Sanctuary

6:30pm: BSA Troop 624 District Meeting, Fellowship Hall

7pm: Church Council, Marin Lounge

Wednesday, January 4

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary

6pm: BSA Troop 624 PLC, Marvin Lounge

7pm: BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall

7pm: Wednesday Night Searchers, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, January 5

8:30am: Essex Art League, Fellowship Hall

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

5:30pm: Piano Lesson, Sanctuary

6:30pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

7pm: Scouts Pack 630 Meeting, Fellowship Hall

Friday, January 6

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Saturday, January 7

8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary

10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 8

8:30am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming

10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary

10:30am: Faith Formation, Peer Rooms

11:30am: Music Committee, Sanctuary

Junior Youth, Youth Room

1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

4pm: High School Youth. Youth Room

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

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]
Music Director: Bethany Blake [bblake@fccej.org]
Church Administrator: Jen Kelly [welcome@fccej.org]

Music

Chair of Music: Denise Keating
Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley
Men at First Director: Bill Bickford

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—Co-Chairs
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