



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

Christmas Pageant Sunday - December 18, 2022

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. Nursery care is available at both services for infants through 3 y/o. On the first Sunday of the month, the Sanctuary Choir and organ play at both services.

Currently, mask usage is up to each individual.

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

Prelude	<i>Nordisches Lied</i> (Nordic Song)	Robert Schumann**
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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.

Musical Introit *What Child is This?* Greensleeves**
arr. Tom Barabas

Call to Worship Deacon

Leader: Long ago Mary welcomed God into the world through the birth of Jesus Christ. Emmanuel means God with us and since that birth day, God has been in the world in a unique and powerful way.

People: Mary brought God into the world and challenges all of us to shape our lives so that God comes to life through us in our day and age.

Leader: Come, let us see Christ through our pageant and the message it offers to us today. Come, let us worship our God and seek to follow in Christ's Way of love.

Prayer of Invocation and 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.

Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle of Advent: Love

First Service: The Bourn Family: Phil, Jennie, Molly and Isabelle

Second Service: The Humphries Lyman Family: Derek, Rachel, Isaac & Abigail

2022 Christmas Pageant - *Where Love Is*
Written in 2008 by Rev. Karen Mendes
Act 1 rewritten in modern-day by Laurie Chipman

~ ACT 1: *SCENES 1-4* ~

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

**Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set they people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now they gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts along;
By thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.**

~ ACT 2: *PROLOGUE* ~

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Child of God appear.**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!
**O Come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show and cause us in her ways to go.**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

~ *SCENE 1* ~

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"**

**Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

**Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, off-spring of the virgin's womb.**

**Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

~ SCENE 2 ~

Oh Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.

Yet in thy dark street shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.

~ SCENE 3 ~

Away in the Manger

[move your little shepherds, sheep & angels to the narthex during this carol]

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

~ SCENE 4 ~

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem,

Come and behold him, born the King of angels.

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angles, sing in exultation,

O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

Refrain

~ SCENE 4: CONTINUED ~

Angels we have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Glo - - ria in excelsis De-o!

Glo - - ria in excelsis De - o!

~ SCENE 5 ~

Angels we have Heard on High

[parents move your young magi to the Narthex]

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why our joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?

Glo - - ria in excelsis De-o!

Glo - - ria in excelsis De - o!

Come to Bethlehem and see, Christ whose birth the angels sing,
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Glo - - ria in excelsis De-o!

Glo - - ria in excelsis De - o!

~ SCENE 6 ~

Magi We Of Orient Are (We Three Kings)

Magi we of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
Refrain: O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

~ SCENE 6: CONTINUED ~

Magi We Of Orient Are (We Three Kings)

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign

Refrain

Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice.
Al-le-lu-ia, Al-le-lu-ia, sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

~ SCENE 6: CONTINUED ~

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hill and everywhere.

Go tell it on the mountain,
that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens
there shone holy light

Refrain

The shepherds feared and trembled,
when lo! above the earth,
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed the Savior's birth.

Refrain

Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Mark Mendes

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Prayer Response *Nocturne in E flat Major*
[excerpt]

Frederick Chopin**

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

***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.**

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

La Visionaire from the *25th Ordre*

François Couperin******

*Please stand if you are able

Cast List

In Order of appearance:

Narrator.....	Elizabeth Miller	Joseph.....	Genevieve King
Voice of Jesus.....	Teddy Owens	Shepherd 1.....	Teddy Owens
Jonathan	Rev. Josh Simon	Shepherd 2.....	Shay Mendes
Homeless Person	Maureen McKenzie	Angel.....	Lillian Putnam
Waitress.....	Genevieve King	Toddler Jesus	
Woman with baby	Lillian Putnam	1st service.....	Nicholas Wermer
Storeowner.....	Jenn Kelly	2nd service	Abigail Noel
Child	Kelvey Spaulding	Magi 1.....	Mindy Bickford
Gabriel.....	Beth Volker	Magi 2.....	Maureen McKenzie
Mary	Kelvey Spaulding		

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)
 - **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 and Ed Guild for providing accompaniment today!

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

5pm Outside Family Service

We will have our popular, kid-friendly Christmas Eve Service at 5pm directly in front of the church outside on the steps and lawn. We will have special guests that will tell the story Christ's birth. This is also a great service in which to bring a young family with kids.

9pm Service of Lessons & Carols

This is the traditional service where folks read the birth narrative, and our musicians sing of the glory of God and the unique nature of God's inbreaking in the world. We are also blessed to have a baptism planned, and music offered by our Sanctuary Choir, directed by Bethany Blake and Men @ First, directed by Bill Bickford Jr.

11pm Contemplative Service

This service is our quieter service that includes the sacrament of Holy Communion. We have some lessons and carols as well as the lighting of our candles at the midnight hour. We are also blessed to have our band Finally @ First leading music for the service.

Christmas Sunday

Join us Sunday morning at 10am to celebrate the birth of the Christ child. We'll have a carol-sing, a time for reflection & meditation, and Christmas treats. This will be an all-family worship service.

Dates to Remember:

Monday, December 26—Church office closed all day

Sunday, January 1—One service at 10am

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



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.

Weekly Calendar: December 18 - December 25

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, December 18

Pageant Sunday / Friendship Sunday

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary

12:15pm: Christmas Caroling, Williston Place

1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

Monday, December 19

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

10am: *Hiawatha Elementary Food Pantry Tour, Fellowship Hall*

11:30: Lunchtime Book Group, Marvin Lounge

11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

7:30pm: *Group Victory, Marvin Lounge*

Tuesday, December 20

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

Wednesday, December 21

January Newsletter Articles Due

8am: Food Pantry Delivery Drop off, Fellowship Hall

11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary

7pm: *BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall*

Thursday, December 22

11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

6pm: *Lion Den Meeting, 2nd Floor Program Room*

6:30pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

7pm: Racial Justice Task Force, Youth Room

Friday, December 23

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market

11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve

8am: *The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary*

10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

5pm: Family Service, Outside

8:30pm: Mini Christmas Concert, Sanctuary

9pm: Service of Lessons & Carols, Sanctuary

11pm: Service of Candlelight & Communion, Sanctuary

Sunday, December 25

Christmas Sunday

10am: Worship, Sanctuary

11am: *The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall*

1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*

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 or call (802) 878-5745.

Victims of gun violence and their families
Family and friends of Wayne Hathaway
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
Joe and Ann Wells
Sean McKenzie & Sandy Wynne
All those suffering due to
the violence in Ukraine
...and all persons affected by COVID19

*The flowers on the altar are given by Betty Buscigilo
In memory of her husband, Rick*

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 Morning Worship

- In person & streamed @ 8:30
- In person & Faith Formation @ 10:15

Communion on 1st Sundays

Teleworship: [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://www.youtube.com/c/fccej)



Sermon Talk Back

Tuesdays at 8:30am in the Marvin Lounge
and via Zoom:

<http://zoom.us/j/740803865>



Wednesday Night Searchers

On hiatus through December

ONGOING PROGRAMS

- ⊕ **Coffee Clatter**, 8am every Friday at Martone's
- ⊕ **Bridge Group**, Every 3rd Friday at 1:30pm
Marvin Lounge—next meeting is January 13



Lunchtime Book Group

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



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39039ht



INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fccej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9