



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

Ask the Pastor Sunday

February 5, 2023

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.

Currently, mask usage is up to each individual.

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

Prelude

Pavan in C Minor

William Byrd**

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

Christ Beside Me

Trad. Gaelic melody**

Words St. Patrick's Breastplate; adapt. James Quinn

Call to Worship Deacon Judy McCullen

Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made.

People: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Leader: Come, let us lift our voices in song. Come, let us hear the word of God.
Come, let us explore the faith. Come, let us celebrate the warmth of community.
Come, let us open ourselves to a relationship with the Divine. Come, let us worship
our God.

***Opening Hymn**

We Gather Together

**We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing,
God chastens and hastens thy will to make known.
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing
Sing Praises to God's name, God forgets not their own.**

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining the kingdom divine.
So from the beginning, the fight we were winning
Thou Lord was at our side, all glory be thine.

We all do extol thee, our leader triumphant,
And pray that thou still our defender wilt be.
Let thy congregation escape tribulation,
Thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free.

Prayer of Invocation & Unison Lord's Prayer..... Deacon Judy McCullen
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

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 Return to Their Families*

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.

**PreK through 2nd grade may transition to Spiritual Friends.*

Parents, please pick up your children by 11:15.

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Mark Mendes

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Prayer Response

Let It Be

[excerpt]

The Beatles**

New Testament Epistle Reading I Corinthians 12:4-27

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Anthem

Let Thy Holy Spirit

Paul Tchesnokoff**
arr. James Allan Dash

Affirming Our Partnership in Ministry

Deacon: On January 28, 2008, the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction called the Rev. Mr. Mark Mendes to serve as our Senior Pastor. On August 3, 2009, Laurie Chipman came to serve as our Christian Education Director. On March 2, 2017 Kul Dahal became our church's sexton. On May 4, 2021, Rev. Ron Faux came to be our Minister of Visitation. On October 4, 2021, Jennifer Kelly came to be our Church Administrator. And on May 5, 2022, Bethany Blake came to become our Organist and Choir Director. Come, let us affirm these decisions and ask our God to continue to bless our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: We are blessed to have Mark, Laurie, Kul, Ron, Jennifer, and Bethany as our professional staff and we pledge our support to them as we partner in ministry on behalf of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction.

Staff: We thank the First Congregational Church, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown to us over this last year. We ask forgiveness for the mistakes we have made. We are grateful for the ways our leadership has been accepted. And we look to the future with promise and optimism.

People: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and re-affirm our commitment to your ministry. We express our gratitude for your dedication and work this last year. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith is appreciated as we move into the unknown future.

Staff: We forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together, both in the past and time to come will be pleasing to God.

Vow of Partnership

Deacon: Do you, the members and friends of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction promise your continued support of Mark, Laurie, Kul, Ron, Jennifer, and Bethany?

People: We do, with the help of God.

Deacon: Do you offer your encouragement for their future ministry as it unfolds in new ways among us?

Staff: We do, with the help of God.

Deacon: Do you offer your encouragement and prayers to all members and friends of this church, promising to treat all with the love of Christ? And do you promise to pray for them, journey with them in the exploration of faith, teach them of your knowledge and care for them to the best of your ability?

Ministers: We do, with the help of God.

Witness of Shared Ministry

Church President: On behalf of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, I, Catherine Shearer, President of the Church, witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and a commitment to future ministry. I, along with the members and friends of this church hold both our ministers and our members accountable to the promises made this day. May we hold each other in prayer and pledge our commitment to our shared ministry in the future.

Everyone: Thanks be to God.

Prayer

Deacon: Let us pray.

People: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. During this past year, we were united in your name and saw laughter and tears as well as hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories, but move in new directions, as we work together to build a good and healthy church that gives glory to you here in Essex Junction. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation and Words of Institution

Communion Music

Ave Verum Corpus K. 618

W. A. Mozart

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Today, we will partake of communion by passing the bread and cup out to each person. The Minister will direct everyone to dip your pieces of bread into the cup and partake. When each cup is received, everyone is welcome to partake when they choose. This symbolizes both the individual and corporate nature of our faith.

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

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

Invitation & Offertory

Awesome God

Rich Mullins**

***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

***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 is 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

Galliard in c minor

William Byrd ******

*Please stand if you are able

A Few Key Announcements

- ♦ Regular Sunday Morning Worship -
 - ⇒ 8:30 and 10:15. 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.
- ♦ Faith Formation for PreK through 8th at 10:30 in Peer Rooms
- ♦ 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 the Sanctuary Choir for the beautiful music today!

Upcoming Events:

Today, Sunday, February 5.....Community Concert, 3pm in the Sanctuary

Sunday, February 12.....Pulpit Swap w/ Rev. Karen Mendes

Tuesday, February 21.....Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5pm to 7pm,
Fellowship Hall (hopefully)

Wednesday, February 22Ash Wednesday Service at 7pm in the Sanctuary

Sunday, February 26.....FCCEJ Leadership Training at 1pm,
Fellowship Hall (hopefully)

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 Helen Sims

Marie Johnson

Maureen Evans

LaPierre Family

Elizabeth Stone

Bernie Currier

Joyce Jacobs

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

*The flowers on the altar are given by Ginny Coe
in loving memory of her son, Tom.*

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

ONGOING PROGRAMS!

- ♦ **Sermon Talk Back**, Tuesdays at 8:30am in Marvin Lounge & Zoom:
<http://zoom.us/j/740803865>
- ♦ **Tai Chi Class**, Tuesdays at 10:15pm in the Fellowship Hall—currently on hiatus
- ♦ **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

Weekly Calendar: February 5—February 12

FELLOWSHIP HALL UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, February 5

10am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming
10:15am: Spiritual Friends (PreK-2nd grade)
11:15am: FCCEJ Annual Meeting, Sanctuary
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
3pm: Paul Asbell Concert, Sanctuary

Monday, February 6

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

Tuesday, February 7

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5pm: Yoga @ FCCEJ, Sanctuary
6:30pm: Troop 624 District Meeting, Gym
7pm: Church Council, Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, February 8

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary
6pm: Troop 624 Leaders Meeting, Marvin Lounge
7pm: Searchers, Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624, Gym
Chamber Music Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Thursday, February 9

9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
5:30pm: Piano Lesson, Sanctuary
6:30pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Friday, February 10

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
4pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Marvin Lounge

Saturday, February 11

8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11am: Kyle Harper Birthday Party, Fellowship Hall or Gym
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge

Sunday, February 12

8:30* & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:15am: Peer Groups (PreK-8th grade)
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge

Events in italics = Local Community Groups