



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



Prayer of Invocation & **Unison Lord's Prayer**..... Deacon Betty Buscglio
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..... Laurie Chipman, CE Director

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.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

During this time of prayer, we will focus on aspects of our lives in which we are grateful to God: prayers of thankfulness and joys for the blessings God has bestowed upon us.

Before we pray, everyone is asked to connect with two or three people for a minute or two and share one thing in which you are grateful with the group and verbally ask them to include those prayers in their personal prayers throughout the week.

Pastoral Prayer of Thankfulness

During this part of the pastoral prayer, the minister will lift up prayers of thanksgiving and then invite folks to raise their own prayers of thanksgiving at the appropriate time. Then we will sing.....

Just as I Am [# 207]

**Just as I am, without one plea but that your love was shed for me,
and that you called inviting me, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

Anthem

Eternal Lord of Love, Behold your Church

**

Old 124th Psalm—melody Charles Douglas—harmony

Hymn**O God, How We Have Wandered*****#202******Prayers of Confession and Growth**

During this time of prayer, we will focus on aspects of our lives where we have failed living up to God's ways: sinful behavior, embedded dysfunctional behavior, and the subsequent areas of growth that these behaviors and God demand.

Before we pray, everyone is asked to connect with two or three people for a minute or two and share one behavior that you will take on to better yourself and then verbally ask them to include those prayers in their personal prayers throughout the week.

A Pastoral Prayer of Confession and Growth

During this part of the pastoral prayer, the minister will lift up areas where humanity falls short of the glory of God and then invite folks to raise their own prayers of confession and growth at the appropriate time. Then we will sing.....

***Just as I Am* [# 207]**

**Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fighting and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

Prayers for Others

During this time of prayer, we will focus on our concern and love for others as we lift their needs up to God for wholeness, healing and hope.

Before we pray, everyone is asked to connect with two or three people for a minute or two and share one person or situation in which you are asking God to be with them and then ask them to include those prayers in their personal prayers throughout the week

A Pastoral Prayer for Others

During this part of the pastoral prayer, the minister will lift up people and situations that need God's help and then invite folks to raise their own prayers for others at the appropriate time. Then we will sing.....

***Just as I Am* [# 207]**

**Just as I am, you will receive, will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because your promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

Lenten Meditation

Sin, Evil and the devil

Rev. Mark Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Love the Lord Your God

Jean and Jim Strathdee**

***The Doxology**

All Glory Laud and Honor

#216**

**All glory, laud and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
The people of the Hebrews with palms adorned your way,
Our Praise and prayer and anthem we offer you this day.**

***Closing Hymn**

Be Now My Vision

#451**

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

Savior of the Nations, Come

J. Walther**
arr. Michael Burkhardt

*Please stand if you are able

A Few Key Announcements

- ◆ Sunday Morning Worship -
 - ⇒ 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.
- ◆ 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!

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

John Venner

Elizabeth Stone

Bernie Currier

Joyce Jacobs

Grace Goodwin

Dan Harmon

All those suffering due to the violence in Ukraine

...and all persons affected by COVID19

*The flowers on the altar are given by Sharon Dettenrieder
in memory of Eric Dettenrieder*

CONNECTIONS:

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

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

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
- ◆ **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

Leadership Workshop - Today, February 26 from 1 to 3pm

We have a busy church with hundreds of people volunteering to help make our church run smoothly and effectively. The Leadership Retreat is for any member, especially those who serve on committees or as an officer of the church, who wishes to better understand how FCCEJ works. How do congregational church meetings run? What is the relationship between the staff and the committees? What are by-laws and what do they say about how committees should run? Do we have other policies and procedures that we need to follow? What authority does Church Council have over committees and groups? How does the church handle its money in a safe and responsible way? These questions and more will be answered at the Leadership Retreat. If you serve on a committee, you are strongly encouraged to attend, and if you just want to find out what makes this church tick, then you are also welcome.

Planned Giving Seminar

You are invited to a Planned Giving Seminar on March 16, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Holly LeMieux, a local estate planning attorney, will be the presenter. Covered topics will include estate planning, wills, and elder law. Whether FCCEJ benefits from your planned giving or not, the Planned Giving Committee encourages everyone to have a written plan (such as a will, trust or estate plan). The Planned Giving Seminar is free and open to church members and friends of FCCEJ. Please contact the church office if you would like to attend.

The Interested in Membership?

Have you found comfort, courage, peace and challenge at FCCEJ? Do you love the various musical groups and leaders that feed our souls during our two distinct worship services? Do you appreciate the passion and way in which our ordained staff bring you lessons from scripture that positively guide our lives? Have you simply found a warm and loving community within which you have found friendship and a community with a shared purpose?

If you have answered yes to any of these statements, then you are invited to join First Church and lend your talents, insights and gifts to our community of faith. Together we are stronger. Together we can continue to change our corner of Christ's kingdom. Together we can commit to a journey with other like minded folks as we search for God's presence and guidance in our lives.

The New Member's Class will be in the Marvin Lounge on Sunday, March 12 at 11:30am, right after the second service. Lunch will be provided and if you need child care, contact the church office [802 878-5745].

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Today, Sunday, February 26	FCCEJ Leadership Training at 1pm, Fellowship Hall
Sunday, March 12.....	One Great Hour of Sharing Offering New Members Class after 2nd Service, Marvin Lounge
Thursday, March 16	Financial Planning Seminar, 6:30pm, Fellowship Hall
Sunday, March 19.....	Deacon Ordination, Pretzel Sunday

Weekly Calendar: February 26—March 5

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, February 26

8:30* & 10:15am: All-Family Worship,
Sanctuary & Streaming*
11:30am: Leadership Workshop, Fellowship Hall
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*

Tuesday, February 28

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
5:30pm: Finance Committee, Marvin Lounge
7pm: Stewardship Committee, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, March 2

8:30am: Essex Art League, Fellowship Hall
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*
5:30pm: *Piano Lesson, Sanctuary*
5:45pm: Trustees, Marvin Lounge
6:30pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Cub Scouts Pack 630, Fellowship Hall

Saturday, March 4

8am: *The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary*
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*
2pm: *BSA Troop 624 Sea Base Fundraiser, Kitchen*

Monday, February 27

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

Wednesday, March 1

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: Searchers,
Marvin Lounge / Fellowship Hall
BSA Troop 624, Gym

Friday, March 3

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*
4pm: *BSA Troop 624 Sea Base Fundraiser, Kitchen*

Sunday, March 5

8:30* & 10:15am: Worship,
Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:30am: Spiritual Friends (PreK—2nd grade)
Peer Rooms
11:15am: Music Committee, Sanctuary
1pm: Racial Justice Task Force, Church Grounds
Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge

Events in italics = Local Community Groups