



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

Second Sunday in Lent

March 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

Rondino

Jean Philippe Rameau**

Lighting a Prayer Candle: During the prelude or one of the hymns, people are invited to come forward and light a candle for someone that needs prayers or for which you are grateful.

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

We encourage everyone, both guests and members, to sign the Friendship Book and check any categories of need that might be appropriate. This will allow the church and her staff to best serve you. Thank you.

Musical Introit

Father We Thank Thee Who Hast Planted

Louis Bourgeois**

Call to WorshipDeacon Alison Wermer (1st service)
Deacon Mary McHugh (2nd service)

Leader: Welcome, here we lift up Jesus Christ in a bold inclusive way so that all people might feel welcomed to the arms of God and cherished as precious children of God.

People: Some of us lift Jesus up as Lord and Savior; some of us follow his ways of extravagant love freely shared; some of us just walk with Jesus as a friend throughout our lives; some of us follow his poignant demands for walking toward justice and changing the world for the better; and some of us are not quite sure and struggle with God, Jesus, and faith.

Leader: Jesus met the same diversity of thought and welcomed everyone to follow him on his "Way." Come, let us look to the future with hope.

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!**

New Testament Reading

John 3:1-17

[page 71]

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

Born of the Spirit

Rev. Mark Mendes

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation and Words of Institution

Communion Music

Loving Spirit

V. Earle Copes

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.

Absolutely everyone is welcome at Christ's table.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Sarabande from *Suite in F Major*

Froberger**

***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**

O Savior, Let Me Walk with You

#503**

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**

Ode to Joy

Beethoven**

arr. Harold DeCou

***Please stand if you are able**

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A Few Key Announcements

- ◆ Sunday Morning Worship -
 - ⇒ 8:30 and 10:15. Streamed via youtube.com/c/fccej (8:30 service only)
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month.
- ◆ Spiritual Friends for PreK through 2nd 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

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
- ◆ **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

Easter Call To Care Baskets

It is with great pleasure we announce that the Annual Easter Basket project is in full swing! Cathy Lapierre is spearheading the creation of spring Call to Care baskets to give to family, friends and neighbors in the community. Here is the timeline:

All donations must be in by **April 1**. Assembly will be take place on **April 2-4**. Distribution/Delivery of baskets will be **April 5-9**.

Requests: Please e-mail Jen welcome@fccej.org by **April 1** if you wish a friend or family member to receive a basket or if you are able to deliver a few.

Here is a possibilities list: puzzles (crosswords, word-search, other activity booklets), stuffed animals, lip balm, travel tissues, hand sanitizers, flower seeds, playing cards, mandala coloring books, mechanical and colored pencils, stress balls and toys etc.

Donations may be dropped off at the church Monday-Friday 8am-2pm or on Sunday mornings.

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.

Interested in Membership?

Have you found comfort, courage, peace and challenge at FCCEJ? 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?

Yes? 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 strengthen 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 next 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:

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| 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 |
| Sunday, March 26..... | Community Concerts @ First presents Dave Feurzig on piano, 3pm in the Sanctuary. Community soup supper to follow in Fellowship Hall. |

Weekly Calendar: March 5—March 12

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

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

Tuesday, March 7

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, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, March 9

9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
5:30pm: Piano Lesson, Sanctuary
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Saturday, March 11

8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Monday, March 6

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

Wednesday, March 8

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
*6pm: BSA Troop 624 Leaders Meeting,
Marvin Lounge*
7pm: Searchers, Fellowship Hall
BSA Troop 624, Gym

Friday, March 10

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
9:30am: Jamaica Team, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, March 12

8:30* & 10:15am: Worship,
Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:30am: Peer Groups (PreK-8th), Peer Rooms
11:30am: New Member Class, Marvin Lounge
HRC, Conference Room
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Events in italics = Local Community Groups