



# 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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)   **Website:** [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)



# The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

Third Sunday in Lent

March 12, 2023

*Our First Service with organ and traditional choir is streamed and begins at 8:30am with access on our webpage: [www.fccej.org](http://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

*Come, Thou Almighty King*

Felice deGiardini  
arr. Roger Summers

***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

*Grace Alone*

Brown/Nelson

Call to Worship ..... Deacon Alison Wermer

Leader: Jesus offers living water for those who want fullness of life. Come, drink deeply from God's well and know that you are loved and welcomed into the very kingdom of the Living God.

**Pulpit Side: Jesus offers me a drink even when I understand God differently and question the free nature of the gift.**

**Lectern Side: Jesus offers me a drink even though I have been excluded from the table for a very long time.**

**Pulpit Side: Jesus offers me a drink even though I have behaved badly.**

**Lectern: Jesus offers me a drink so that I might know both spirit and truth; he then welcomes me into eternity.**

Leader: Jesus offers living water for those who want fullness of life. Come, drink deeply from God's well and know that you are loved and welcomed into the very kingdom of the Living God.

**\*Opening Hymn**

***Sing Praise to God***

**#6**

**Vs. 1,3,5**

Prayer of Invocation & **Unison Lord's Prayer**..... Deacon Alison Wermer

***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

Prayers of Adoration

*During this time of prayer, we will focus our prayers on God: how we understand God and our gratitude for who God is and what God has done in your lives.*

*Before we pray, everyone is asked to connect with two or three people for a minute or two and share one way we understand God and some way we have seen God in our lives. Be sure to ask other members of your group to prayer for you during the upcoming week .*

Pastoral Prayer of Adoration

*During this part of the pastoral prayer, the minister will lift up ways by which we know God and express our gratitude for what God has done in our lives. The minister will then invite folks to share some of those prayers during the congregational prayer. 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

*You Are Mine*

David Haas

## Prayers of Supplication and or Petition

*During this time of prayer, we will focus on our own needs in our lives and ask God to take care of them. Be sure to ask other members of your group to prayer for you during the upcoming week.*

*Before we pray as a congregation, everyone is asked to connect with two or three people for a minute or two and share one need in which you are asking for God's help.*

### A Pastoral Prayer of Supplication or Petition

*During this part of the pastoral prayer, the minister will lift up areas in our lives where we need God's help. The minister will then invite folks to share some of those prayers during the congregational prayer 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!**

Old Testament Historical Reading      Exodus 17:1-7      [page 49]

New Testament Gospel Reading      John 4:5-42      [page 71]

## Prayers for Guidance

*During this time of prayer, we will focus on God the many ways in which God guides our lives and specifically ask God to help guide us in a particular circumstance.*

*Before we pray, everyone is asked to connect with two or three people for a minute or two and share one way in which we are asking God to guide us in our lives. Be sure to ask other members of your group to prayer for you during the upcoming week .*

### A Pastoral Prayer for Guidance

*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

“Come and See”

Rev. Mark Mendes

## Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

*Give Thanks*

Henry Smith

**\*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 Love that Will Not Let Me Go*

**#485**

## 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

*God Be With You*

William G. Tomer

[excerpt]

\*Please stand if you are able

### **A Few Key Announcements**

- ◆ Sunday Morning Worship -
  - ⇒ 8:30 and 10:15. Streamed via [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://www.youtube.com/c/fccej) (8:30 service only)
  - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Denise Keating 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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or call (802) 878-5745.

Victims of gun violence and their families

Jacki Knapp  
Russ & Alma Wilson  
Kathy Galbraith  
Juliana Faux  
John Venner  
Elizabeth Stone

Bernie Currier

Joyce Jacobs  
Grace Goodwin  
Dan Harmon

All those suffering due to violence in Ukraine  
...and all persons affected by COVID19



*\*The flowers on the altar this morning are given by  
Sylvia Nyhagen in loving memory of her husband, Ed.\**



### 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](http://bit.ly/39039ht)



INSTAGRAM

[bit.ly/3rlfgZf](http://bit.ly/3rlfgZf)



INTERNET

[fccej.org](http://fccej.org)



YOUTUBE

[bit.ly/3oPpBv9](http://bit.ly/3oPpBv9)

## **Interested in Membership?**

The New Member's Class will be in the Marvin Lounge today, 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].

## **Planned Giving Seminar—POSTPONED TILL MAY 4**

Our Planned Giving Seminar has been postponed till Thursday, May 4. The time remains the same: 6:30 to 8pm 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.**

## **Ukrainian Easter Bread Fundraiser**

In an effort to support our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, we are offering Ukrainian bread for Easter. There are three varieties available; 8" round braided, 9" round apple coffee cake, and 5"x6" with decorative icing. The sign-ups and suggested donations are in the Fellowship Hall.

**Deadline to order is April 5.** Bread will be delivered on Easter morning to FCCEJ.

## **Community Concerts @ First**

Community Concerts @ First - Please join us on Sunday March 26 at 3pm for a Community Concert @ First. Pianist David Feurzig will perform as part of his "Play Every Town" tour to raise awareness about climate change and build community. All concert proceeds will support 350Vermont's efforts to build collective power for climate justice. The FCCEJ sanctuary choir will collaborate with Feurzig for one piece. Suggested donation of \$20/person.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- Today, Sunday, March 12 ..... One Great Hour of Sharing Offering  
New Members Class after 2nd Service, Marvin Lounge
- 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.
- Sunday, April 2 ..... Palm Sunday—Sanctuary Choir Cantata
- Thursday, April 6 ..... Maundy Thursday Supper Service, 6pm, Fellowship Hall
- Friday, April 7 ..... Good Friday Service, 7pm, Sanctuary
- Sunday, April 9 ..... Easter Sunday**
- Sunrise Service at Holy Family Gazebo—6:30am**
- Services at FCCEJ at 8:30 and 10:15am**
- Thursday, May 4 ..... Financial Planning Seminar, 6:30pm, Fellowship Hall

# **Weekly Calendar: March 12—March 19**

\*Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections\*

## **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*

## **Tuesday, March 14**

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: Eagle Scout BoR,  
2nd Floor Program Room*  
7pm: Deacons, Marvin Lounge

## **Thursday, March 16**

*9am: Essex Art League, Marvin Lounge*  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
*5:30pm: Piano Lesson, Sanctuary*  
*6pm: Cub Scouts Wolf Den,  
2nd Floor Program Room*  
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
Open & Affirming Sub-committee,  
2nd Floor Program Room  
*7pm: Weblos, Gym*

## **Saturday, March 18**

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

## **Monday, March 13**

8:30am: Food Pantry Set-up, Fellowship Hall  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship,  
Marvin Lounge*  
5:30pm: Food Pantry Distribution,  
Fellowship Hall  
*7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge*

## **Wednesday, March 15**

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: Searchers, Fellowship Hall  
*BSA Troop 624, Gym*

## **Friday, March 17**

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship,  
Fellowship Hall*  
1:30pm: Bridge Group, Marvin Lounge  
*7pm: Burlington Amateur Radio Club,  
Fellowship Hall*

## **Sunday, March 19**

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*