



Art by Climate Hope Card Contest Winner - Addy Stein

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ESSEX JUNCTION

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@fcej.org **Website:** www.fcej.org



The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

The Third Sunday of Easter

April 23, 2023 - First Service

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.

Currently, mask wearing is determined by the individual.

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

Order of Worship

Introit

Ballade pour Adeline

Paul de Senneville**

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.

Introit

Spirit of God

Steve Garnaas-Holmes**

Call to WorshipDeacon Judy McCullen

Leader: God created humanity out of a desire for relationship. God was fine on their own, but chose community over isolation and implanted within us a desire to be at peace with God.

People: When we went against God's ways and walked away from our sacred partnership, God made us garments of love and continued to seek us out through centuries of deliberate separation and isolation.

Leader: God created behavioral codes as gifts of grace to teach us how to live with each other in mutual respect, accountability and peace.

People: We used these codes to further separate humanity from the Divine Presence and deepen the divide between humanity's cultures, traditions and civic structures.

Leader: To overcome such entrenched isolation, God offered individuals disciplines, prayers and means by which we can all claim peace in the midst of chaos, apathy and fear-filled existence.

People: Many of us still choose to ignore God’s gifts of peace and instead cling to ancient divisions, self-absorption and human constructs that keep us vulnerable, weak and alone.

Leader: Come, renew your ties to your Creator; Come, renew your love of your neighbor. Come, renew the peace of God in your hearts and souls.

Deacon’s Prayer of Invocation **and 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.**

Opening Hymn** *God of the Ages* **#592*

Children’s Message..... Mary McHugh, Minister of Visitation

Pastoral Prayer

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Musical Response *Threefold Amen* Andra Day

Hymn** *Like a Mother Who Has Born Us* **#583*

Scriptures

Old Testament Prophetic Isaiah 9:1-7 [page 494]

New Testament Epistle Romans 12:9-18 [page 124]

New Testament Gospel John 20:19-29 [page 88]

Sanctuary Choir Anthem *Sanctuary* John Thompson, Randy Scruggs

Sermon *“Simply Peace”* Rev. Mark Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

I've Got Peace Like a River

African American Spiritual

***Doxology**

#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.**

***Hymn**

God of Grace and God of Glory

#436**

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, watching from above.
God now in peace, in faith and in love**

***Postlude**

La Visionaire from the 25th Ordre

Francois Couperin**

***Please stand as you are able**

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A Few Key Announcements

- ◆ Regular Sunday Morning Worship -
 - ⇒ 8:30 and 10:15. Streamed via youtube.com/c/fceej (8:30 service only)
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month.
 - ⇒ Faith Formation Peer Groups for PreK through 8th grades during 2nd service
- ◆ Sincere thanks to Jonah Moos, Ed Guild, Gary Hartmann, and Francis Gravel, operating the live stream tech!
- ◆ Thank you to Bethany Blake & 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@fcej.org or call (802) 878-5745.

Victims of gun violence and their families

Peter Gray, Pam Blake and Don Gray

Family and Friends of Nadine Hoffman

Bruce Parker

Jacki Knapp

Russ & Alma Wilson

Kathy Galbraith

John Venner

Elizabeth Stone

Bernie Currier

Grace Goodwin

Dan Harmon

All those suffering due to violence in Ukraine

...and all persons affected by COVID19

Altar flowers are a wonderful way to honor your loved ones.

Use Sign-Up Genius or call the church office for available dates:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0a48aaad2ca2ff2-2023#/>

CONNECTIONS:

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

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

Our monthly "SPIRIT@FIRST" eNewsletter* <http://fcej.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

fcej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9

Faith Formation Peer Groups for 2022-23

All ages are encouraged to ask questions, as we learn together about Jesus and the love our God has for everyone.

April 9th (Easter) & 23rd ~ All Family Worship

16th & 30th ~ Peer Groups

Church World Service

Welcome Backpack kits for CWS

Sign up and bring in donations by Sunday, April 30th. Children and youth will fill them during 2nd service: www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0545a8ab2faaf58-cwswelcome#/

Young Apostles

3rd – 5th graders with a parent/guardian/grandparent

May 7th from 4-5pm

Guest Janne Giles, retired school teacher, and her large Vermont floor map.

Junior Youth ~ Sundays from 11:30-1:30pm

May 7th & 21st ~ inviting this year's 5th graders to JY time ~ activity plans are in process

High School Youth

Wednesdays 1:45pm – 3:15pm @ FCCEJ

May 3rd & 17 - Reach out to Laurie and let her know you are coming. Snacks provided. Come unwind and destress.

No gatherings on school break weeks.

Vacation Bible Camp 2023 - Hero Hotline – Called Together to Serve God!

August 7-11, 2023 - Outside on the church lawn or inside on a rainy day.

<https://www.fccej.org/v5/grow-in-faith/vacation-bible-camp/vb-camp-registration/>



Morning Session: Drop off between 8:45-9am

You & Me Toddler (*attend with an adult*) thru current 5th graders

Youth Assistants – current 6th—12th graders

Closing segment of the morning session starts at 11:30. Parents are encouraged to arrive by 11:45, or before, to hear the topics of the morning and pick up their children who are not registered for the afternoon session.

Afternoon Session: Immediately after morning session– 4pm

Parents – here is your full day option – cost is \$50/afternoon or \$250 for the full week. Scholarships are available.

Campers have lunch, watch a movie, do a VBC mission/art project and play games.

SCAN ME

Weekly Calendar: April 23—April 30

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, April 23

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

Tuesday, April 25

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
3:30pm: Food Pantry Committee, Marvin Lounge
5pm: Yoga @ FCCEJ, Sanctuary
5:30pm: Finance Committee, Marvin Lounge
7pm: Stewardship, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, April 27

8:30am: Food Pantry Set-Up, Fellowship Hall
9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting, Marvin Lounge
10am: Jamaica Team Meeting, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
2pm: Food Pantry Distribution, Fellowship Hall
5:30pm: Piano Lesson, Marvin Lounge
*6pm: Cub Scouts Lion Den,
2nd Floor Program Room*
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Saturday, April 29

**UCC Vermont Conference Annual Meeting,
Rutland**
*8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary
Give It A Go Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*
*9:30am: Weight Loss Support Group,
Marvin Lounge*
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Monday, April 24

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

Wednesday, April 26

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

Friday, April 28

**UCC Vermont Conference Annual Meeting,
Rutland**
8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, April 30

8:30* & 10:15am: Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:30am: Peer Groups for PreK through 8th,
Peer Rooms
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
3pm: Paul Asbell Concert, Sanctuary

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

Staff

Senior Pastor: Rev. Mark Mendes [mmendes@fccej.org]

Ministers of Visitation:

Rev. Ron Faux [revronfaux@gmail.com] & Mary McHugh [mmmchugh@hotmail.com]

Christian Education Director: Laurie Chipman [lchipman@fccej.org]

Music Director: Bethany Blake [bblake@fccej.org]

Church Administrator: Jen Kelly [welcome@fccej.org]

Music

Chair of Music: Denise Keating

Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley

Men at First Director: Bill Bickford

Officers

President: Cathy Shearer

Vice President: Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Financial Secretary: Ann Gray [finances@fccej.org]

Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [treasurer@fccej.org]

Assistant Treasurer: Matt Clark

Clerk: Brenda Dawson

Historian: Ann Gray

Internal Auditors: Betsy Weischedel & Steve Wood

Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Derek Lyman

Communications: Francis Gravel

Deacons: Alison Wermer, Judy McCullen—Co-Chairs

Finance & Pastoral Relations: Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Hospitality: Jen Dooley

Human Resources: Cathy Shearer

Missions: Paula Sargent

Music: Denise Keating

Nominating: Dick Harris

Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan

Trustees: Kaki McGeary

Ushering: Carl Wermer

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman

Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert