



# **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**  
**The Fifth Sunday of Easter - Communion Sunday**  
**May 7, 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.*

***Currently, mask wearing is determined by the individual.***

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

*Order of Worship*

Prelude

First Service

*Wachet Auf* [excerpt]

J.S. Bach / arr. O'Neill\*\*

Second Service

*Rain Down*

Jaime Cortez / arr. Mark Hayes

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

*I Will Call Upon the Lord*

Michael O'Shields\*\*

Call to Worship .....Deacon Gary Hartmann

**Leader:** God calls us into this place to invite us into a relationship with our mystical and concrete manifestation of the one who brings purpose to our lives.

**People:** Thank you God for showing us the way.

**Leader:** God calls us into this place to explore and discover the truth of God's reality in our world; Jesus offers us a lens by which we discern wisdom and a way of living that brings us meaning and joy.

**People:** Thank you God for showing us the truth.

**Leader:** God calls us into this place to use our hands, feet, hearts and voices to stand up for hope, peace, joy and love.

**People: Thank you God for showing us how to live life.**

Leader: Come, let us worship our God who shows us the way, the truth and the life.  
Come, let us sing of God's glory and celebrate the life of our faith community.

### **Unison Prayer of Confession**

**Loving God, you teach us to love you, our neighbors, ourselves and even our enemies. Forgive us for neglecting our relationship to you. Forgive us for not taking care of the least among us who need food, clothing, medical care and comfort. Forgive us for not exercising our bodies. Forgive us for not continuing to see the importance of learning as we seek wisdom in our lives. Forgive us for falling prey to judgement, revenge and a lack of compassion for those we do not understand or fear. Help us to follow Christ's ways and be better people. In Christ's name, amen.**

### The Assurance of Pardon

From the fall of humanity in Genesis to the formation of communities of faith that grew out of Jesus' ministry, God has offered forgiveness and grace over and over and over again. God's unmitigated love continues to offer us a balm to the wounds that hurt our bodies and souls. God forgives us and always welcomes us home.

*[tell your neighbor that God forgives and loves them]*

**Everyone: Amen and Alleluia!**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*The Day of Resurrection*

**#245\*\***

Children's Message

### **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 transition to Faith Formation Spiritual Friends at 2nd Service.  
Children will return to the Sanctuary to participate in Communion with their families.*

Anthem

*Thank You for the Valleys*

Cindy Berry\*\*

New Testament Gospel Reading      John 14:1-14      [page 83]

Communion Meditation      *The Way, Truth and Life*      Rev. Mark Mendes

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation and Words of Institution

Music      *Hymne*      Vangelis\*\*

**Sharing the Bread and the Cup**

*Today, we will partake of communion by passing the bread and cup out to each person. Rev. Mark and Rev. Ron will direct everyone to dip the piece 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      *Lord Be with Us on this Day*      Jay Althouse\*\*

**\*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.**

Pastoral Prayer and **Unison Lord's Prayer (trespasses)**      Rev. Ron Faux

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

***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.***

Musical Response      *Amen, Amen*      An African American Spiritual\*\*

**\*Hymn**      *Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant*      #539\*\*

**\*Sung Community Benediction**

**Go Now In Peace**

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**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

*Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken*

Austrian Hymn\*\*  
arr. Gina Sprunger

\*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/fccej](https://youtube.com/c/fccej) (8:30 service only)
  - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Denise Keating & 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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or call (802) 878-5745.

Victims of gun violence and their families

Peter Gray, Pam Blake and Don Gray

Father of Adam Hoy

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://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**, 1st and 3rd Fridays @ 1:30pm in Marvin Lounge



FACEBOOK

[bit.ly/39039ht](https://bit.ly/39039ht)



INSTAGRAM

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



INTERNET

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



YOUTUBE

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

## **Faith Formation Peer Groups**

All ages are encouraged to ask questions, as we learn together about Jesus and the love our God has for everyone. Today, May 7—Spiritual Friends for PreK through 2nd grade

**Young Apostles**—May 7th from 4-5pm

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

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 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 week. Scholarships are available. Campers have lunch, watch movies, do VBC mission/art projects and play games.

**New Member Class—May 21st at 11:30am in Marvin Lounge**

If you are interested in becoming a member of FCCEJ, then you are invited to attend our New Members Class. 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.

Lunch will be provided and if you need child care, contact the church office [802 878-5745].

## **FCCEJ Intergenerational Service Trips**

The Jamaica Leadership team is excited to announce that we are expanding and re-envisioning our FCCEJ intergenerational service trips! For 2024, we have chosen to do a trip within the United States, working with an organization called Global Volunteers.

We will travel to the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana June 22-29, 2024 for a week of cultural immersion and service. We can take up to 17 people; this trip is appropriate for families with older children.

An informational meeting is scheduled on Wednesday May 10th at 7pm in the 2nd Floor Program Room for those who are interested or want more information. A representative from Global Volunteers will join us virtually to give a presentation on the program and answer questions. For full details visit <https://globalvolunteers.org/usa-montana/>.

## Weekly Calendar: May 7—May 14

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

### Sunday, May 7

8:30\* & 10:15am: Sanctuary & Streaming\*  
10:30am: Spiritual Friends (PreK—2nd grade)  
11:30am: Junior Youth, Youth Room  
Music Committee, Sanctuary  
Racial Justice Task Force,  
Marvin Lounge  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
4pm: Young Apostles, Fellowship Hall

### Tuesday, May 9

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 Three Rivers District Roundtable,  
Fellowship Hall & 2nd Floor Program Room*  
7pm: Deacons, Marvin Lounge

### Thursday, May 11

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

### Saturday, May 13

*8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary  
Give It A Go Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
*9:30am: Weight Loss Support Group,  
2nd Floor Program Room*  
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

### Monday, May 8

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, May 10

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
2pm: Senior High Youth, Youth Room  
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
*6pm: BSA Troop 624 Leaders Meeting,  
Marvin Lounge*  
7pm: Searchers, Marvin Lounge  
Jamaica Team, 2nd Floor Program Room  
*BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall*

### Friday, May 12

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market  
10am: Essex Art League, Fellowship Hall  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*  
*4pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall*

### Sunday, May 14

8:30\* & 10:15am: Sanctuary & Streaming\*  
10:30am: Peer Groups (PreK—8th grade)  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

*Events in italics = Local Community Groups*