



# **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)





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.

A Celebration of Our Graduates

Leader: Come, let us gather as a community to pay tribute to and honor those among us who have worked hard to graduate from school. Will the following graduates please come forward.....

*Jeremy Brennan, Ashley Clark, Eva Cunningham-Firkey, Avery Hartmann-Ferland, Makaylah Moos, Gordon Schmalz, Ayla Eleanor Shea, Jamie Shearer, Munroe Shearer*

**People: When one part of our body celebrates with joy, all of us share in that joyful celebration. We, your brothers and sisters of the faith, think that you are great and are thrilled that you are a part of our family of faith!!! We admire your efforts and wish you well as you set out on your new journey.**

**Parents & Family of Graduates: We have nurtured our loved ones and offered them our support and love. We are proud of you and want the best for you. We celebrate with our family of faith in wanting only the best for you.**

Graduates: We thank God for life and for the gifts of the heart, mind, souls and strength that have allowed us to reach this day of accomplishment. We thank God for the support of our families and the support of the people in this church.

Leader: Armed with your degree and girded with all of our love and support, go forth from this place strengthened to succeed, poised to prosper and eager to engage the world.

Graduates: This place has helped plant the power of God in every fiber of my being; this community has taught me that God’s love rests within my heart; this family of faith has offered me gifts beyond measure. We take these blessings with us whether we will be here next week or whether we will be journeying to new places.

**People: May God bless you and keep you. May God’s face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God look upon you with kindness and grant you peace.**

**Everyone: Amen and Alleluia!!!**

Our Graduates Then and Now

### Pastoral Prayer & **Unison Lord’s Prayer (“trespasses”)**

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**

***Thank You, Jesus***

**African Folk Song\*\***

Transcribed by Patrick Matsikenyiri

**Thank you, Jesus, amen!**

**Thank you, Jesus, amen!**

**Thank you, Jesus, amen!**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

### Scripture and Sacred Readings

Old Testament

Numbers 12:1-16

[page 101]

A Sacred Poem

*Fury and Faith*

by Amanda Gorman

Read by Betsy Weischedel

### Anthem

*Ride the Chariot*

African American Spiritual\*\*

Men @ First & Mindy Bickford

### Summer Meditation

*Kindling God’s Anger*

Rev. Mark Mendes

### Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

*Take My Hand, Precious Lord*

Thomas A. Dorsey\*\*

Mindy Bickford

**\*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**

*Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*

**#610\*\***

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.  
Go now in peace, in faith and in love.**

**\*Postlude**

*Wade in the Water*

African American Spiritual\*\*

arr. Carl Haywood

**\*Please stand as you are able**

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*After the worship service, weather permitting, we will have our fellowship time outside to enjoy the beautiful Vermont weather AND witness to God's desire for justice in issues of race. The Social Justice Committee invites everyone to stand with God and take a turn holding a sign out by the street.*

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### **A Few Key Announcements**

- ◆ Summer Sunday Morning Worship -
  - ⇒ 9am — Streamed via [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://www.youtube.com/c/fccej)
  - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month.
- ◆ Sincere thanks to Jonah Moos, Ed Guild, Gary Hartmann, and Francis Gravel, operating the live stream tech!
- ◆ Thank you to Bethany Blake, Men @ First, and Mindy Bickford for the beautiful music during worship 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

Matthew Carney

June Nadeau

Peter Gray, Pam Blake and Don Gray

Father of Adam Hoy

Maureen Evens & Family

Dana Bills

Jacki Knapp

Bruce Parker

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](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)

## **Summer Schedule—June through Labor Day**

- ◆ Sunday Morning Worship -
  - ⇒ One service at 9am. Streamed via [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://youtube.com/c/fccej)
  - ⇒ All Family Worship—Faith Formation on hiatus till September
  - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month
  - ⇒ Rev. Mark on vacation June 26 through August 2

## **Vacation Bible Camp Online Registration! August 7-11**

Join us from 9am to 12noon or 9am to 4pm. Scholarship funds available. We are breaking ground with our afternoon session and are looking for campers. Cost should not stop you. Youth are being interviewed. Volunteers are working hard. Please sign up ASAP to help us with preparations.



## **Community Concerts @ First**

On Sunday July 9 at 3pm, Community Concerts @ First will present singer/songwriter Jon Gailmor. Gailmor is passionately committed to the power of music, emotions and laughter, and boy do we need all of them, now! This family-friendly show is appropriate for folks of all ages.

Concert proceeds will support EDD Adaptive Sports and FCCEJ. Tickets are available online with the link below or by phone (802-878-5745) \$20 suggested donation, free for 18 and under. <https://sevendaystickets.com/events/jon-gailmor-7-9-2023>

## **Racial Justice Group**

We are excited to be honoring Juneteenth today with special events. Juneteenth, celebrated on June 19th, is an annual commemoration of the freedom of enslaved African Americans in the United States after the Civil War.

During worship, there will be a special focus on this holiday through poetry, music, and Mark's sermon. We're also thrilled to welcome special guest Jamaal Hankey. Jamaal is a Project Manager for Voices for Inclusion in Essex and Westford, a Life Coach, and an Associate with The Creative Discourse Group, working with municipalities, school districts and communities on issues of equity and inclusion.

**JOIN THE VIGIL TODAY!** Following worship, we are holding a vigil in front of the church acknowledging and celebrating Juneteenth and the liberation of enslaved Africans across the US and the need for further work to end racism. We hope to have a large group of church members standing together to show our acknowledgement of this holiday and our support for racial justice. Please join us!

## **Audio/Visual Support**

We are looking to expand our audio/visual team for Sunday morning worship. This involves running the streaming video for the 8:30 service and controlling the cameras. We will provide all the training needed. Please contact the church office—[welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) if you are interested or would like more information.

# Weekly Calendar: June 18—June 25

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

## Sunday, June 18

9am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming  
All Family Worship - Scout Sunday  
10am: Racial Justice Vigil, Church Grounds  
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

## Tuesday, June 20

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  
7pm: CE, 2nd Floor Program Room  
Communications, Conference Room

## Thursday, June 22

8am: Food Pantry Set-Up, Fellowship Hall  
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*  
7pm: Men @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary

## Saturday, June 24

### **Button Bay Camping Trip**

8am: *The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary*  
*Give It A Go Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*  
9am: *Weight Loss Support Group, Fellowship Hall*  
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
10am: *Reiki Class, Marvin Lounge*  
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

## Monday, June 19—Juneteenth

### **Church Office Closed All Day**

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

## Wednesday, June 21

8am: Food Pantry Delivery Drop-Off,  
Fellowship Hall  
10:30am: Missions, Marvin Lounge  
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
6:30pm: *Eagle Scout Board of Review,*  
*2nd Floor Program Room*  
7pm: Searchers, Marvin Lounge  
*BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall*

## Friday, June 23

### **Button Bay Camping Trip**

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market  
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
4pm: *Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall*

## Sunday, June 25

### **Button Bay Camping Trip**

9am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming  
All Family Worship - Scout Sunday  
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
1:30pm: *Craft Group, Marvin Lounge*

*Events in italics = Local Community Groups*