



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
A United Church of Christ
July 9, 2023**

During the summer months, we have one service at 9am. During the rest of the year, we offer two distinct worship services. Our 8:30am service with organ and traditional choir is in person and streamed. Access is available through our webpage: www.fccej.org. You can watch that service live or any time thereafter. Our 10:15am service with our praise band is in the Sanctuary and is not streamed.

Our Faith Formation Program for all children is in person starting in September at 10:30am.

Currently, mask wearing is determined by the individual.

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

Order of Worship

Prelude *Sonata in C Major K 330, movement 1* W.A. Mozart**
[excerpt]

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

Our Minister will welcome everyone and highlight significant events in our shared life, then the Deacon on Duty will welcome everyone and invite people to sign the Friendship Book.

Musical Introit *Canticle of the Sun* Marty Haugen**

Call to Worship Deacon Maureen McKenzie

Leader: We are Protestants and as such we look to the Word of God for guidance in our lives. Early leaders of the reform movement sacrificed and even died to bring scripture to us in our own language.

People: : Scripture is at the heart of our worship service and Faith Formation Program, and Jesus' biblical teachings guide us in how we live on a day to day basis.

Leader: Come, let us explore an ancient biblical practice as we seek God's guidance in our lives today. Come, let us worship and praise our God.

Opening Hymn *We Limit Not the Truth of God* #316*

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation

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.**

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

Nocturne in G Minor

Frederick Chopin**

[excerpt]

***Congregational Hymn of Choice**

Each week, our organist Bethany Blake invites the congregation to select a hymn of their choice by raising your hand for the worship leader to call upon you.

The Practice of Lectio Davina [A Hands on Biblical Practice] Jonah Moos

Introduction

One Scripture engagement technique that has a long and rich history is lectio divina, Latin for "sacred reading," It has been in use for over a thousand years and was originally practiced by monks who noticed that at times individual words, phrases, or verses seemed to leap off of the page with a special personal importance. These special words or verses can give a sense of encouragement, comfort, thankfulness, or conviction that often applies to present situations and can draw us closer to God. The four traditional stages of lectio divina are lectio (reading), meditatio (meditation), oratio (prayer), and contemplatio (contemplation).

Reading the Scripture: Romans 12.....The New Life in Christ

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect....

...Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Meditation

Jonah will read the passage aloud twice. Everyone should listen and be attentive to some segment of the scripture [word, phrase, image, metaphor, etc] that is especially meaningful to them. Everyone sits in silence for 1-2 minutes reflecting on what drew your attention to the particular word or phrase. Focus intently on why the Holy Spirit might have chosen these words to speak to you today. Reflect on how it might apply to your life. Is it relevant to something that you are going through? Does it bring to mind a struggle that you have been dealing with? Do certain people come to mind that God may want you to reach out to or reconcile a relationship with? Is there a strong sense of a movement or change that needs to happen? When you are thinking about a passage in God's presence, ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate that passage so that you can grasp the message in terms of your own life.

*Then people are invited to share it aloud: just a simple statement of one or a few words with **No elaboration!***

Prayer and Contemplation

Everyone now sits in silence and prays; just sit with the Divine Presence.

Scripture, Contemplation and Prayer

Deacon Jonah Moos will read the scripture again. Listen anew to the scripture passage and see what draws you into the text this time. Everyone sits in silence for 1-2 minutes. During this time, everyone is asked to go deeper and reflect on what they see or hear is going on in their phrase or text and think about why did this text come to the fore? Look for meaning and insight concerning what God wants for your life or the life of our church.

Sharing aloud: Anyone is free to briefly share in one or two sentences, what meaning you have drawn from your word, phrase or text. Everyone then sits in silence and just sits with the Divine Presence.

Then one last reading of Scripture and time of Reflective Silence

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

The Lone, Wild Bird

McFayden/Haugen/Johnson**

***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**

Holy Spirit, Truth Divine

#63**

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction

***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

Sarabande from *Suite in D Minor* HWV 437

G.F. Handel**

*Please stand as you are able

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

Matthew Carney

Family & Friends of June Nadeau

Peter Gray, Pam Blake and Don Gray

Father of Adam Hoy

Maureen Evans & 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



*The flowers on the altar this morning are given by
Carolyn Toof in honor of her dear friend, Ansley.*



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—on hiatus till September
- ◆ **Coffee Clatter**, every Friday @ 8am at Martone’s
- ◆ **Lunchtime Book Group**, 3rd Mondays in Marvin Lounge
- ◆ **Bridge Group**, 1st & 3rd Fridays @ 1:30pm in Marvin Lounge—on hiatus till Sept.



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39039ht

INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fccej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9

A Few Key Announcements

- ◆ Summer Sunday Morning Worship -
 - ⇒ 9am — Streamed via youtube.com/c/fceej
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month.
- ◆ Sincere thanks to Ed Guild, Gary Hartmann, and Francis Gravel, operating the live stream tech.
- ◆ Special thanks to Jonah Moos for leading worship this morning.
- ◆ Thank you to Bethany Blake and Amanda Palmer for the beautiful music today.

Summer Schedule—June through Labor Day

- ◆ Sunday Morning Worship -
 - ⇒ One service at 9am. Streamed via youtube.com/c/fceej
 - ⇒ All Family Worship—Faith Formation on hiatus till September
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month
 - ⇒ Rev. Mark on vacation through August 2

FCCEJ Outdoor Ministry Camping Trips (Friday afternoon to Sunday morning)

- ◆ Friday, August 25 to Sunday morning, August 27 at Branbury State Park on Lake Dunmore - www.vtstateparks.com/branbury.html (5 tent/RV sites, 1 tent only)
- ◆ Contact Laurie if you're interested.

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

Today at 3pm, Community Concerts @ First presents 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 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>

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@fceej.org— if you are interested or would like more information.

Weekly Calendar: July 9—July 16

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, July 9

9am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming
All Family Worship
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
3pm: Jon Gailmor Concert, Sanctuary

Tuesday, July 11

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
10:15am: Tai Chi, Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Thursday, July 13

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
7pm: Men @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Saturday, July 15

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
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Monday, July 10

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, July 12

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
6:30pm: Eagle Scout Board of Review,
Marvin Lounge
7pm: HRC, 2nd Floor Program Room

Friday, July 14

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
9am: Food Pantry Brownell Library Visit,
Fellowship Hall
10:30am: Service Trip Leadership Team,
Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, July 16

9am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming
All Family Worship
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Events in italics = Local Community Groups