



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
August 20, 2023

During the summer months, we have one service at 9am. 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 is for children PreK through 8th grade 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 *No Need to Knock* Sally Albrecht**

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 *The Angel Rolled the Stone Away* Peter Amidon**

Call to Worship

Leader: Jesus welcomed everyone to his movement and even got in trouble with the authorities for including folks they deemed unworthy of God's time.

People: God welcome everyone here. I am a beloved child of God and come to this place to feel the unmitigated love of my Creator.

Leader: Jesus astounded his followers by saying that you should forgive those who sin against you seven times seventy times. God always forgives us when we falter and waiver. God always welcomes us home.

People: God forgives me and tells me I am precious. God wants us to do the same with those we have wronged. Lord, help me to have the courage to forgive all who have sinned against me.

Leader: Once we accept God's love and forgiveness, we can offer compassion, mercy and kindness to everyone we meet. Come, let us follow Jesus and strive for the better way.

***Opening Hymn**

My Life Flows On in Endless Song

#476**

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation

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.**

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.

***Congregational Hymn of Choice**

**

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

Scripture Lessons

Old Testament 2 Kings 5 - The Healing of Naaman [page 262]

New Testament Matthew 15:1-20 [page 13]

Anthem

Live A Humble

arr. Peter Bagley**

Summer Meditation

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Gift of Love

arr. Hal Hopson**

***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**

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

#23**

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**

Over My Head

African American Trad.**

***Please stand as you are able**

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A Few Key Announcements

◆ **Summer Sunday Morning Worship - June through Labor Day**

- ⇒ One Service at 9am — Streamed via youtube.com/c/fcej
- ⇒ All Family Worship—Faith Formation on hiatus till September
- ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month.

◆ **Sincere thanks this morning to:**

- ⇒ Jonah Moos, Gary Hartmann, and Francis Gravel, operating the live stream tech
- ⇒ Bethany Blake for the beautiful music
- ⇒ Our Deacons for stepping in a leading worship as Rev. Mark convalesces.

◆ **Two Services Beginning September 10**

- ⇒ 8:30am—In-Person & Streamed with organ and Sanctuary Choir.
- ⇒ 10:15am—In Person with Finally @ First Praise Band & Faith Formation for children PreK through 8th grade.
- ⇒ Nursery Care for infants through 3 years offered at both services.

Wednesday Night Searchers

Wednesday Night Searchers will begin meeting again in September and will discuss the book *“The Scandalous Gospel of Jesus - What’s So Good About the Good News?”* by Peter J. Gomes. Books are available in the church office if you’d like to get a head start. We’re asking for a \$15 donation per book.

Heavenly Food Pantry

Our Heavenly Food Pantry is desperately low on several food staples.

We need: Cereal, Mac-n-Cheese, Pasta Noodles (elbow, etc.), Chunky Soups, Baked Beans, Canned Tuna/Chicken, Peanut Butter, Canned Fruit, Canned Veggies (green beans, corn, mixed veggies), and pet food (dry cat food & wet dog food).

Next time you're at the market, throw a couple extra cans and/or boxes in your cart and drop them off in the foyer of the office or in the carriage by the Fellowship Hall. Thank you for your support as we continue to help our local community battle with food insecurity!

Our next food distribution date is this Thursday, August 24 from 2pm to 5pm.

FCCEJ Parking Lot

Please remember to park only in designated parking spots in our parking lot, unless you are actively loading or unloading. The spaces are designed to provide access and egress in case of emergencies. As we head into the program year, our facility is becoming busier and this is an important factor to keep everyone safe.

Remember that we have overflow parking across Church Street at the former medical building if needed. Thank you!

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.

Those impacted by the fires in Hawaii
Rev. Mark and family
Everyone affected by the recent flooding
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
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
Sylvia Nyhagen in honor 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:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89903982036#success>
- ◆ **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 @ 11:30am 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

Weekly Calendar: August 20—August 27

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, August 20

9am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming
All Family Worship
11:30am: Reiki 1 Class, Marvin Lounge
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, August 22

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge
10am: Tai Chi, Fellowship Hall
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
5:30pm: Finance Committee, Marvin Lounge
7pm: CE, 2nd Floor Program Room
Stewardship, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, August 24

8am: Food Pantry Set-Up, Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
2pm: Food Pantry Distribution, Fellowship Hall
6:30pm: Eagle Scout Board of Review, Marvin Lounge
7pm: Men @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Saturday, August 26

FCCEJ Family Camp, Branbury State Park
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
12:30pm: Craft Group, Marvin Lounge
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Monday, August 21

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, August 23

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

Friday, August 25

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE
FCCEJ Family Camp, Branbury State Park
8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, August 27

FCCEJ Family Camp, Branbury State Park
9am: Worship, Sanctuary & Streaming
All Family Worship
11am: Coburn Baby Shower, Fellowship Hall
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge

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 [mclarkdiscovery@myfairpoint.net]

Clerk: Brenda Dawson

Historian: Ann Gray

Internal Auditor: Betsy Weischedel

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

Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan

Trustees: Kaki McGeary

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman

Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert