



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
September 10, 2023**

WELCOME BACK SUNDAY

We offer two different worship services: 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 Finally @ First Praise Band is live in the sanctuary at 10:15am and is not streamed. Our Faith Formation Program for PreK through 8th is in person and starts at 10:15am in worship and then break out into peer groups. Nursery care for infants through 3 y/o is available at both services.

Currently, mask wearing is determined by the individual.

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

Order of Worship

Prelude

The Lone, Wild Bird

**

by Henry R. McFayden/Marty Haugen/David N. Johnson

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

Musical Introit

Dona Nobis Pacem

Mary Lynn Lightfoot**

Heavenly Harmony

Call to WorshipDeacon Judy McCullen

Leader: We are here because our Creator God loved enough to bring life into existence. God desired an end to isolation and loneliness, so God made humanity, the many creatures and our physical world.

People: It is good to experience sacred union and to belong to a world where every creature and thing combine to make a glorious whole.

Leader: In the Old Testament, the law was summarized in our love for our God, our neighbor and ourselves.

People: The Old Testament God demands that we love.

Leader: In the New Testament, Jesus, the disciples and Paul all teach the centrality of loving God, each other and ourselves.

People: The New Testament God demands that we love.

Leader: From the ancient days to the modern, love is the key to understanding the universe, connecting with God and living lives of meaning. As we begin this new year, let us affirm the centrality of love in our faith, our church and our hearts. Come, let's sing about it!

***Opening Hymn** *Jesus Loves Me* #327**

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation.....Deacon Judy McCullen

Children's Message *Ten to One*

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.

Prayer Response *Come and Fill our Hearts* Jacques Berthier**

Hymn *O For a World* #575**

New Testament Scripture Texts

Gospel Matthew 18:15-20 [page15]

Epistles Romans 13:8-14 [page 124]

I Corinthians 13:1-13 [page 134]

Anthem Spirit of Mercy, Truth & Love H. Helvey**

Heavenly Harmony

Sermon *The Heart of Faith* Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Mazurka in A Flat Major

Fredrick Chopin**

***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**

O Love that Will Not Let Me Go

#485**

Benediction

*Sung Congregational 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

Rocky Mountain High

John Denver/Mike Taylor**

*Please stand as you are able

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A Few Key Announcements

◆ **Two Sunday Morning Services**

- ⇒ 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.
- ⇒ Holy Communion is offered the first Sunday of each month

◆ **Sincere thanks this morning to:**

- ⇒ Jonah Moos, Gary Hartmann, and Francis Gravel, operating the live stream tech
- ⇒ Bethany Blake and Heavenly Harmony for the beautiful music

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.

Students and Families Navigating
“Back-to-School”

Maureen Evans & Family

Dana Bills

Those impacted by the fires in Hawaii

John Venner

Everyone affected by the recent flooding

Bernie Currier

Victims of gun violence and their families

Grace Goodwin

Sandy Tallman

Dan Harmon

Matthew Carney

All those suffering due to violence in Ukraine

Family & Friends of June Nadeau

...and all persons affected by COVID19

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
- ◆ **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



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39039ht

INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fccej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9

September Faith Formation

10 ~ Welcome Back Sunday & Blessing of the Backpack Tags (take one for your backpack!)

Peer Groups during 2nd Service (PreK through 8th) ~ Picnic 11:15-12:30pm

17 ~ Peer Groups during 2nd Service (PreK through 8th)

24 ~ Peer Groups during 2nd Service (PreK through 8th)

Acolyte Orientation in Sanctuary (3rd grade & up) 11:30-12noon

Finally @ First Praise Band

Do you enjoy singing? Play an instrument? Percussionist? Keyboardist? Finally @ First is looking for folks to join us! Our musical pieces range from traditional hymns to contemporary Christian to 70's throwbacks to 80's rock ballads to current indy rock – We're up for anything! Rehearsals are generally Wednesday nights 5:30-7:00, and we sing at second service on most Sundays during the program year. For more information, contact Rick Dooley, at rickdooley5@gmail.com or call/text at 802-578-0229.

Community Concerts @ First presents Bethany Blake

On Sunday, September 24th at 3pm, music historian and keyboardist Bethany Blake will play music for harpsichord and organ at FCCEJ. The program will feature music by French and German composers, including Bach, Couperin, and Rameau.

Your suggested donation of \$20 supports the Community on Temporary Shelter and the FCCEJ Community Outreach. Children under 18 are admitted free.



SCAN FOR
TICKETS

Welcome Back Sunday—TODAY, September 10th

Join us as we celebrate the beginning of our Program year!

Faith Formation Games during 10:15am worship for Children & Youth

Bouncy House & Picnic to follow Outside on the Lawn

(weather permitting)



Picnic sponsored by the CE Committee

(Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Veggie Burgers, Chips & Watermelon)

Bring a finger-food dessert to share

(Bars, cookies – looking for no-nut and gluten free options)



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]

Social Media Marketing Coordinator: Andrea Hickey [socialmedia@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

Weekly Calendar: September 10—September 17

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, September 10

8:30am* & 10:15am: Worship,
Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:30am: Faith Formation, Peer Rooms
11:30am: Welcome Back Picnic, Church Grounds
Craft Fest Team, 2nd Floor Program Room

Tuesday, September 12

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge
10am: Tai Chi, Fellowship Hall
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
*6:30pm: BSA 3 Rivers District Round Table,
Fellowship Hall & 2nd Floor Program Room*
7pm: Deacons, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, September 14

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
3:30pm: Food Pantry Committee,
Marvin Lounge & "Day Care Space"
7pm: Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Saturday, September 16

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: Bill Bickford Celebration, Fellowship Hall
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge

Monday, September 11

8:30am: Food Pantry Set-up, Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
5:30am: Food Pantry Distribution, Fellowship Hall
7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, September 13

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary
*6pm: Boy Scouts Troop 624 Leaders Meeting,
Marvin Lounge*
7pm: Wednesday Night Searchers, Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall

Friday, September 15

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
1:30pm: Bridge Group, Marvin Lounge
*7pm: Burlington Amateur Radio Club,
Fellowship Hall*

Sunday, September 17

8:30am* & 10:15am: Worship,
Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:30am: Faith Formation, Peer Rooms
11:30am: Junior Youth, Youth Room
Montana Service Trip, Marvin Lounge
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Events in italics = Local Community Groups