

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
October 22, 2023**

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. On the first Sunday of each month when we celebrate communion, we only have one service at 10am where everyone comes together. Our Faith Formation Program for PreK through 8th is in person and starts at 10:15am in worship and then breaks out into peer groups. The Nursery is available at both services—self serve at 8:30 and staffed at 10:15.

Currently, mask wearing is determined by the individual.

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

Order of Worship

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 *My Own Two Hands* Ben Harper**

Call to Worship Deacon Jonah Moos

Leader: Come, let us gather as a community of faith to seek the Spirit of God so that our lives might be enriched.

People: May the people around me fill me with warmth and a sense of belonging. May the Word spur my mind to think about God and what my life should look like. May the music stir my heart to dance for the Lord with joy and enthusiasm. May the opportunity to give allow me to feel good about my generosity. May the prayers draw God into my life and draw me to offer that presence to others. And may this sacred place draw me to praise the Living God.

Leader: Come, let us gather as a community of faith to seek the Spirit of God so that our lives might be enriched.

*Opening Hymn *Instruments of Your Peace* Kirk Dearman**
[handout]

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation Deacon Jonah Moos

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 -8th transition to Faith Formation at 2nd Service.*

Parents, please collect your children from their Peer Rooms by 11:30.

New Testament Gospel Lesson Luke 20:20-26 [page 64]

Anthem *The Flower* Michael Franti

A Stewardship Message: "*Gratitude: So Many Ways to Give*"

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory *God of Wonders*

Chris Tomlin**

***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.**

New Testament Historical Lesson Acts 5:1-11 [page 93]

Meditation *The Spirit of Giving* Rev. Mendes

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

Multiplied

Bo & Bear Rinehart**

**God of mercy, sweet love of mine
I have surrendered to Your design
May this offering stretch across the skies
And these hallelujahs be multiplied,
these hallelujahs be multiplied.**

*Hymn

We Are Called

David Haas**

*Benediction

Pastoral Benediction

Rev. Mark Mendes

Sung Community Benediction

Let There Be Peace on Earth

**Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be!
With God our Creator, family all are we,
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry breath I take, let this be my solemn vow;
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.**

*Please stand as you are able

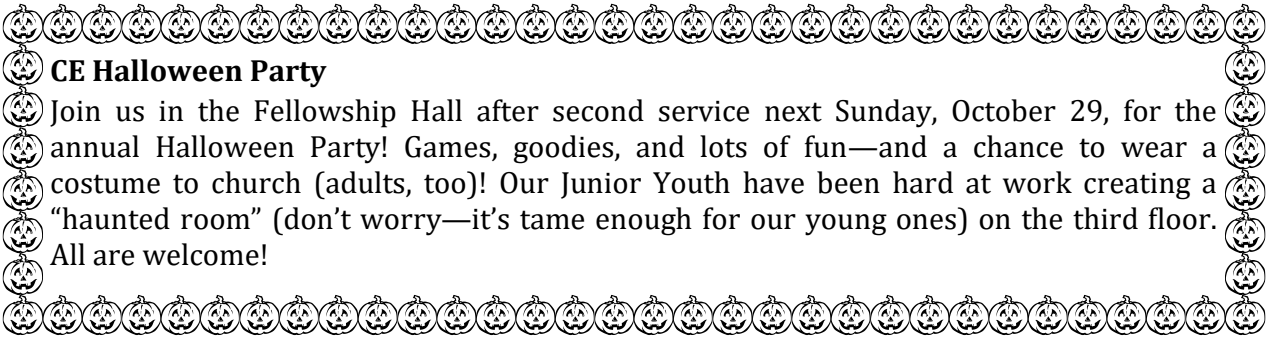
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IMPORTANT WORSHIP SERVICE UPDATE:

- ◆ Starting on Sunday, November 5, and continuing on the first Sunday of each month, we will hold a single worship service at 10am. This gives us the opportunity to connect with our faith family as we celebrate Holy Communion together.
 - ⇒ This service will be in-Person & Streamed with organ and Sanctuary Choir
 - ⇒ Staffed nursery care will be available
 - ⇒ Spiritual Friends for PreK through 2nd grade offered after Children’s Message.

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
 - ⇒ Nursery for infants through 3 years available at both services—self-serve at 8:30 and staffed at 10:15.
- ◆ **Sincere thanks this morning to:**
 - ⇒ Rick Dooley and Finally @ First Praise Band for the wonderful music!
 - ⇒ Emily Guziak for all her creativity and hard work coordinating “Fintech @ First” and to Kathryn Brennan & the cast for sharing their time and talent!
- ◆ **October Faith Formation**
 - ⇒ October 22, & 29 ~ Peer Groups during 2nd Service (PreK through 8th)



CE Halloween Party

Join us in the Fellowship Hall after second service next Sunday, October 29, for the annual Halloween Party! Games, goodies, and lots of fun—and a chance to wear a costume to church (adults, too)! Our Junior Youth have been hard at work creating a “haunted room” (don’t worry—it’s tame enough for our young ones) on the third floor. All are welcome!

New Member’s Class Offered

Do you appreciate a faith that encourages you to use your mind? Are you looking for a church that teaches values of love, kindness, inclusion and forgiveness to your children? Do you appreciate great music from multiple choral or musical groups? Do you feel the warmth and support of our staff and members? Do you want to be a part of an organization that helps to better the structures and tone of the wider Essex community? If you have answered yes to any of these questions, then we invite you to come and explore what church membership means. Today. October 22, after second service we are offering a New Members Class where you can learn about our church and her ministries. You will learn about our history as well as what our denomination, the United Church of Christ, stands for and how they operate. Lunch is provided.

Craft Fest 2023

The Craft Fest tables are in Fellowship Hall with the following sign-up opportunities:

1. Make a goodie for sweet shoppe
2. Make a pot of veggie or meat chili or butternut squash soup.
3. Volunteer as a greeter
4. Drop off silent auction items, including gift cards.
5. Pick up a lawn sign to display

If you have any questions please contact Linda at lbogardus@myfairpoint.net.

Nearly New donations can be dropped off after October 29.

Thank you for your support!

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 necessary training. Please contact the church office—welcome@fccej.org—if you are interested or would like more information.

Grieving thru the Holidays: Coping Strategies

Are you recently bereaved or someone who still finds the holidays challenging years after a loss? Do you want to better understand and support a loved one who is grieving? This informational session will include such topics as Understanding Grief; Traditions - Old & New; Making Plans; Setting Realistic Expectations; and Self-Care.

The session will be led by Mary McHugh and Sharon Dettenrieder who have worked in Grief Support for many years. Thursday, November 9, 10-11:30am at FCCEJ in Marvin Lounge. Questions? Contact Mary at (920) 664-5230 or mmmchugh@hotmail.com.

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.

Please keep these people/places in your prayers...

Those impacted by the fires in Hawaii
Everyone affected by the recent flooding
Victims of gun violence and their families

Tony Lamb

Family and Friends of Norma Edwards

Bruce Gianuzzi

Sandy Tallman

Jennifer Smith


Denise Keating and family
at the passing of her mother

Maureen Evans & Family

Bernie Currier

All those suffering due to violence in Ukraine
and the Middle East

...and all persons affected by COVID19



*The flowers on the altar this morning are given by
Ginny Coe in loving memory her mom.*

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 10:15am in the Fellowship Hall
- ◆ **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

Weekly Calendar: October 22—October 29

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, October 22

8:30am* & 10:15am: Worship,
Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:30am: Faith Formation Peer Groups (PreK-
8th)
11:30am: New Members Class, Marvin Lounge
Montana Leadership, 2nd Floor Program Room
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

Tuesday, October 24

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: Stewardship, Marvin Lounge
Trustees, 2nd Floor Program Room

Thursday, October 26

8:30am: Food Pantry Set Up, Fellowship Hall
9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*
12pm: Calcutta Committee,
2nd Floor Program Room
2pm: Food Pantry Distribution, Fellowship Hall
7pm: Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Saturday, October 28

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, October 23

November Newsletter Articles Due

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

Wednesday, October 25

11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary
6:30pm: *Eagle Scout Board of Review,*
2nd Floor Program Room
7pm: Wednesday Night Searchers, Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall

Friday, October 27

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

Sunday, October 29

8:30am* & 10:15am: Worship,
Sanctuary & Streaming*
10:30am: Faith Formation Peer Groups (PreK-8th)
11:30am: Halloween Party, Fellowship Hall
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*

Events in italics = Local Community Groups