



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



First Service

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
A United Church of Christ
January 14, 2024

We offer two different worship services: our First Service with organ and traditional choir is streamed on the 2nd and 4th Sunday 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 our praise band is live in the sanctuary at 10:15am and it is streamed on the 3rd Sunday of the month. On the first Sunday of each month we celebrate communion and only have one service at 10am and it is streamed. Our Faith Formation Program for all children is in person and starts at 10:15am.

Our Nursery is open at all services.

Currently, mask usage is up to each individual.

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

Prelude

Slane
(tune for *Be Thou My Vision*)

Traditional**
arr. Scott W. Mains

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 Life Flows On in Endless Song

Robert Lowry**

Call to Worship

Psalm 139:1-6

Deacon Mary McHugh

Leader: O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

You know when I sit down and when I rise up;

You discern my thoughts from far away.

**People: You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.**

Even before a word is on my tongue,

O Lord, you know it completely.

Leader: You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Everyone: Come, let us worship and praise our God.

***Opening Hymn** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise* #1**

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation.....Deacon Mary McHugh

A Children's Message

Pastoral Prayer and **Unison Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")** Rev. Mark Mendes

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 *Sevenfold Amen* Peter Christian Lutkin**

Hymn** *Once to Every One and Nation* **Insert*

Scripture

Old Testament 1 Samuel 3:1-21 [page 192]

New Testament Mark 1:1-11 [page 27]

Anthem *Lifting As We Climb* Lea Morris**
(composed 2023 for the BLM Commissioning Black Composers Project)

Sermon *Hard Truths* Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian* African-American Spiritual**

***Doxology** **

**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**

Lift Every Voice and Sing

#593**

***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, holding you in love.

Go now in peace, in faith and in love.

Postlude

***Please stand if you are able**

- ◆ We are thankful to be blessed with the talents of these awesome musicians this morning:
 - ⇒ Bethany Blake and the Sanctuary Choir

Dates to Remember:

Sunday, January 21—Pulpit Exchange with Rev. Devon Thomas

Sunday, January 28—New Members Class, 11:30 in Marvin Lounge

Sunday, February 4—Racial Justice Event, 3pm in the Sanctuary

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
Everyone affected by the recent floods
Victims of gun violence and their families
Family and Friends of Bob Vincent
Connor Bryce and Family
Bernie Currier
Ruby and Family

Michael Flynn
Tony Lamb
Bruce Gianuzzi
Maureen Evans & Family
All those suffering due to violence in
Ukraine and the Middle East
...and all persons affected by COVID19

Flowers on the altar are a wonderful way to remember loved ones or celebrate a special day.

We include a note in the bulletin about who donated the flowers and who/what they are honoring.

Scan the QR code or use this link to sign up for 2024:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0545A8AB2FAAF58-46881013-fccej>



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
- ◆ **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

Montana Service Trip

Early Bird Calcutta Tickets are available today at the table in Fellowship Hall. Early Bird ticket holders are entered into a drawing for a \$100 cash prize. Hurry as the Early Bird sale ends 1/15. Regular tickets for the 7th annual Cabin Fever Calcutta on March 9th at the Catamount Country Club will continue to be on sale after the 15th. We hope to see you there for this evening of fun and fellowship

Racial Justice Event

Mark your Calendars!! On Sunday, February 4th at 3pm, the Racial Justice Subcommittee of Missions will be hosting Rev. Mark Hughes, Co-founder and Executive Director of Justice for All Vermont. Their mission is to dismantle systemic racism, eliminate poverty and ensure racial equity and relationship-building. This event is free and open to the community.

Grief Support Group

2nd Thursday of each month from 10am to 11:30am in Marvin Lounge.

This group is open to anyone experiencing the loss of a loved one. It is a place to share and connect with others. The facilitators hope to provide a safe, supportive environment in which participants learn from each other, discover ways to cope with grief, and offer the assurance that we are not alone. Grief is a normal, natural, and necessary experience!

The sessions are facilitated by Sharon Dettenrieder, MSN, RN and Mary McHugh, MAPS. Both Sharon and Mary have years of experience in leading Grief Support groups as well as personal experience with loss. Next session is February 8.

Please contact the church office for more information: 802-878-5745 or welcome@fccej.org.

New Members Class Offered

Have you found a place where you are welcomed? 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? Do you appreciate great music from multiple choral or musical groups? Do you feel 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 would love you to come and explore what membership in our church means. On January 28, after second service, we are offering a New Members Class where you can learn about our church and her many 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. Childcare is available with advance notice. Please contact the church office at 802-878-5745 and we'll be happy to arrange it.

Weekly Calendar: January 14 - January 21

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, January 14

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary/
Streaming
10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th)
11:30am: J.A.M. (Jesus And Me),
Program Room, 3rd Floor
1pm: Senior High Youth, Kitchen, Youth Room
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, January 16

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge
10:15am: Tai Chi, Fellowship Hall
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
5pm: Yoga @ FCCEJ, Sanctuary
7pm: CE Marvin Lounge
Communications, Conference Room

Thursday, January 18

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
6pm: Music Rehearsal, Sanctuary
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Open & Affirming Subcommittee,
2nd Floor Program Room
*Cub Scouts Pack 630 Pack Meeting,
Fellowship Hall*

Saturday, January 20

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

Monday, January 15

MLK Day—Church Office Closed All Day
11:30am: Lunchtime Book Group, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, January 17

8am: Food Pantry Delivery Drop-off,
Fellowship Hall
10am: Missions Committee, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary
7pm: Searchers, Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall

Friday, January 19

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

Sunday, January 21

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary/Streaming
10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th)
11:30am: Junior High Youth, Kitchen, Youth Room
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
Essex Art League, 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]

Children's Ministry Coordinator: Elizabeth Miller [childrensministry@fccej.org]

Music Director: Bethany Blake [bblake@fccej.org]

Social Media Marketing Specialist: 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 [mattclark48discovery@gmail.com]

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