



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 21, 2024

We offer two different worship services: our First Service with organ and traditional choir is in-person and streamed and begins at 8:30am with access via 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 have a single service at 10am and is in-person and 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 *Nocturne in G Minor* Fredrick Chopin**

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 *Adoro Devote (Humbly We Adore Thee)* arr. John G. Barr**

Call to WorshipDeacon Betty Busciglio

Leader: At the beginning of creation when humanity climbed out of primordial chaos and recognized the presence of God at work in the world, they proclaimed it good.

People: The entire creation was proclaimed good: dinosaurs and pesky creatures, birds and sea monsters, wild raging rivers and oceans, as well as all sorts of growing plants and humans of every color and stripe.

Leader: Everything we see has the potential of glorifying God. Everything has the option of praise and pointing to the Divine reality in us all. Come, let us give a little love back to our Creator as we sing with gusto!

***Opening Hymn** *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* #43, vv. 1 & 4**

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation.....Deacon Betty Busciglio

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**

Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us

#583**

Scripture

Old Testament

The Story of Jonah

[narrative]

New Testament

Mark 1:12-21

[page 27]

Anthem

My God is So High

American spiritual**
arr. Benjamin Harlan

Sermon

Human Prejudice & Divine Nature

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

Hunsdon House

Anonymous**

from John Playford's *Musick's Hand-Maid* (1663)

***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**

Shall We Gather at the River

#597**

*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

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*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

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

*The flowers on the altar this morning are given by
Beth & George Paul
In memory of Margaret Blythe Baird*

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

The Montana Service Team is sponsoring the Cabin Fever Calcutta in March. It's the perfect time to shake the winter doldrums and to enjoy an evening of fun and fellowship. Be sure to purchase your ticket at our table in Fellowship Hall.

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 21 - January 28

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

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
Blue Spruce Grange, West Wing

Tuesday, January 23

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
5:30pm: Finance Committee, Marvin Lounge
7pm: Stewardship, Marvin Lounge
Trustees, 2nd Floor Program Room

Thursday, January 25

8:30am: Food Pantry Set-Up, Fellowship Hall
9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
3pm: Food Pantry Distribution, Fellowship Hall
4:30: Kristie Callahan Energy Class, Marvin Lounge
6pm: Music Rehearsal, Sanctuary
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Saturday, January 27

8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary
Give It A Go Support Group, Marvin Lounge
9am: Reiki II Class, Marvin Lounge
Weight Loss Support Group, Fellowship Hall
9:30am: Craft Group, Program Room
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Monday, January 22

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

Wednesday, January 24

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 26

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
6:30pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 28

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary/Streaming
10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th)
11:30am: New Member Class, Marvin Lounge
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