



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 Transfiguration Sunday

February 11, 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*

Musical Introit	<i>Piano Sonata in E-flat No.59 Hob.XVI/49, movement 1</i>	Franz Joseph Haydn**
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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	<i>Deep River</i>	arr. Moses Hogan** Traditional African American Spiritual
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Call to WorshipParts of Psalm 50
Lead by Deacon Alison Wermer

Leader: Leader: The mighty one, the Lord God, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. God shines forth in the beauty of creation.

People: Our God is not silent. The Lord comes to us and shows us how to live so that we might be faithful and honor our covenant with the Divine.

Leader: God does not want a precious creation to be sacrificed for your sin. God wants us to be thankful and to try to live into codes of behavior that are honorable. God wants us to call when we are in need and to take vows to follow in word and deed.

People: When we turn toward God and translate Christ's law of love into behaviors for living, then we will be saved. Thanks for the Good News. Now let us worship and praise our God through song.

*Opening Hymn

Come Now, Almighty God

#275

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation Deacon Alison Wermer

Unison Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")

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.

Children's Message..... Laurie Chipman

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Mark Mendes

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

Musical Response

Halle, Halle, Halle, lujah

Caribbean Traditional**

The Old Testament Lesson

2 Kings 2:1-18

[page 259]

New Testament Gospel Lesson:

Mark 9:2-10

[page 34]

Anthem

O Come and Worship the Lord

J. Paul Williams**

Patti Drennan

Sermon

Our Journey Home

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

Aftenklokkerne (Evening Chimes)

Albert Fr. Marzian

op. 9 nr. 1 (excerpt)

***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**

Come, We Who Love the Lord

#382

(We are Marching to Zion)

*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

Gigue from *French Suite No. 5 in G Major BWV 816*

J.S. Bach**

*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 FCCEJ Sanctuary Choir

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Lenten Prayers

During the 6 weeks of Lent, the staff at FCCEJ has pledged to pray for all active members and constituents in our faith community. Each week, starting on February 18 and going until Easter, we will publish a list of names in the Sunday worship bulletin. These are the people that will be prayed for that week. If you have a specific prayer request, please send it to welcome@fccej.org or call the church office. If not, we will pray as the Spirit moves us. All prayer requests will remain confidential unless we hear otherwise. Please feel free to pray for the folks on the list as part of your Lenten journey. By Easter morning, everyone at FCCEJ will have been lifted up in prayer.

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

Joyce Jacobs
Frank Smith
Connor Bryce and Family
Bernie Currier

Ruby and Family
Michael Flynn
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. A dedication is included 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

Dates to Remember:

February 13 ~ Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5:30-7pm in the Fellowship Hall

February 14 ~ Ash Wednesday Service, 7pm in the Sanctuary

February 25 ~ Pulpit Exchange with Rev. Karen Mendes

March 17 ~ Pretzel Sunday, Receiving New Members

The Youth Calendar:

February 11 ~ SH Youth (9th-12th) 11:30-1:30pm—bake cookies and more

February 18 ~ JH Youth (6th - 8th) 11:30-1:30pm— working on a Good Samaritan skit & College Care Packages

February 25 & March 3 ~ off—school break weekends

Community Concerts @ First

The 2024 lineup for CC@F is here! Mark your calendars and come enjoy these fabulous artists!

- ◆ **March 10 : Va Et Vient** - Vermont trio playing traditional Québécois, French & Cajun tunes
- ◆ **April 14: Vermont Virtuosi** - Flute and piano
- ◆ **September 29: Hairpeace** - Guitar and vocal duo performing acoustic music from the 60's through today
- ◆ **November 3: Alicia Chapman**, Oboe

A portion of the proceeds for all concerts will go to non-profit organizations in our community and all take place on Sundays at 3pm in the Sanctuary. Visit the Seven Days website for tickets: sevendaystickets.com/organizations/community-concerts-at-first-congregational-church

Montana Service Trip

The Montana Service Team is hosting the 7th annual Cabin Fever Calcutta on March 9th. It is an evening of fun and fellowship, and the perfect time to shake the winter doldrums. Be sure to purchase your ticket at our table in Fellowship Hall!

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. 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 3/7. Contact the church office for more info: 802-878-5745 or welcome@fccej.org.

Valentines for Veterans

This Valentine's Day we have the opportunity to share the light and love of Christ to our veterans. If you are willing and able, please consider buying or making a card and/or writing a note. We have a collection basket in the Fellowship Hall or you may bring them to the Church Office during the week. All Valentines need to be at FCCEJ by the morning of **February 13** so that we can deliver them. Thank you!

Weekly Calendar: February 11 - February 18

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, February 11

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary/Streaming
10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th)
11:30am: Senior High Youth, Youth Room
Racial Justice Subcommittee, Program Room
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, February 13

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
4pm: Essex Pediatrics Workshop, West Wing
5pm: Yoga @ FCCEJ, Sanctuary
5:30pm-7pm: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper,
Fellowship Hall & Kitchen
6:30pm: BSA Three Rivers District Meeting,
Program Room & Classrooms
7pm: Deacons, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, February 15

11am: Youth Ministry Team, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
6pm: Music Rehearsal, Sanctuary
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Open & Affirming Sub-Committee,
Program Room
Cub Scouts Pack 630, Fellowship Hall

Saturday, February 17

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

Monday, February 12

8:30am: Food Pantry Set Up, Fellowship Hall
10am: Essex Art League, 2nd Floor Program Room
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
3pm: By Laws Review, Marvin Lounge
5:30pm: Food Pantry Distribution,
Fellowship Hall
6pm: Hospitality, Marvin Lounge
7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, February 14

Ash Wednesday

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary
6pm: BSA Troop 624 Leaders, Marvin Lounge
7pm: Ash Wednesday Service, Sanctuary
BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall

Friday, February 16

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, February 18

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

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

In the old days, when fasting and sacrifice were the primary ways in which one accessed and centered yourself on the God, the night before Lent started people ate all the good stuff that they were not allowed to eat during the penitential season. Sugar and chocolate, whipped cream and sweet syrups, bacon and sausage, and anything else in the house that wouldn't last for the six weeks of Lent. It was a sumptuous feast. Some folks around the world combined it with fanciful parades, costumes and extravagant parties. Well, we experience and find God in non-sacrificial ways these days through acts of kindness, concrete behaviors in which we spread Christ's love, spiritual disciplines, reading scripture, praying more, making peace with folks, and simply spending more time communing with the Divine.

HOWEVER, we still like the idea of having a Pancake Dinner with lots of sweet toppings and plenty of bacon and sausage! It will be fun to come together for a church-wide meal and experience some really great people, maybe make some new friends and enjoy some good conversations. Shrove Tuesday comes on February 13th [an early Valentines treat?] and the dinner will run from 5:30 to 7pm. Come and bring a friend that likes to eat!

Ash Wednesday—February 14, 2024 ~ 7pm in the Sanctuary

Lent is a key time when we reflect on the meaning of our Christian faith and the importance to our faith of Christ's passion and death. One scholar stated that it is impossible to grasp the true meaning of Easter unless you travel down the darkened, narrowed streets of Lent. Our Ash Wednesday Service will be on Wednesday, February 14, 2023 at 7pm. The Ashes either placed on your forehead or wrists (optional) remind us of our connections to Christ's suffering as well as the finitude of our mortal life and thus our total dependance on God/ Jesus for our eternal hope. Everyone is welcome.

Pulpit Exchange with Rev. Karen Mendes — February 25, 2024

Rev. Mendes' partner, Karen Mendes, is the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Burlington. Each year the two Rev. Mendes' exchange pulpits with Karen coming to FCCEJ to lead worship at both services and Mark going to First Baptist to lead their worship service. It has become a well appreciated service for a great number of reasons and to add another, we are going to exchange our Organist / Choir Director for the day. So our own Bethany Blake will lead the choir and play the organ at First Baptist and their Organist, Evan Allen, will play our organ and or piano at our first service. Come and hear the great preaching of Rev. Karen Mendes!