



# 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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)    **Website:** [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)



*Second 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](http://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*

**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 Will Sing, I Will Sing*

**Max Dyer**

**Call to Worship** .....Parts of Psalm 50

**Lead by Deacon Rusty Sargent**

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. God speaks to us every day.

**People: Thank you, God!**

Leader: God calls us to follow and spread love to everyone. God doesn't want trinkets, tanks or tablets; God simply wants a relationship with us.

**People: Thank you God!**

Leader: God wants us to be thankful and to reach out when we need help. God wants to be a partner in making the world better. God wants us to be friends.

**People: Thank you God!**

Leader: Come, let us sing for joy .

**\*Opening Hymn**

**Lean On Me**  
**[insert]**

**Bill Withers**

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation ..... Deacon Rusty Sargent

**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 & Elizabeth Miller

**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 Transition to Peer Groups\***

**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.**

*\*Parents, please collect your children by 11:30.*

Pastoral Prayer ..... Rev. Mark Mendes

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

**Musical Response**

**Lord, I Need You**

**Lord, I need You, oh, I need You**

**Every hour, I need You**

**My one defense, my righteousness**

**Oh God, how I need You.**

**You're my one defense, my righteousness**

**Oh God, how I need You.**

The Old Testament Lesson:                      2 Kings 2:1-18                      [page 259; told Narratively]

New Testament Gospel Lesson:                      Mark 9:2-10                      [page 34]

Anthem                      *Brother*                      Bo & Bear Rinehart

Sermon                      *Our Journey Home*                      Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

*What A Friend*

Matt Maher

**\*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**

***In the Sweet By and By***

**Spiritual**

**[insert]**

**\*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 if you are able**

We are thankful to be blessed with the talents of these awesome musicians this morning:

⇒ Rick Dooley and Finally @ First Praise Band!

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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](https://bit.ly/39039ht)



INSTAGRAM

[bit.ly/3rlfgZf](https://bit.ly/3rlfgZf)



INTERNET

[fccej.org](https://fccej.org)



YOUTUBE

[bit.ly/3oPpBv9](https://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

**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](https://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 Dettnerieder, 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](mailto: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 13<sup>th</sup> [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!