



# 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)



*First Service*

**The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction**  
**Second Sunday in Lent**  
**February 25, 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. Listen Assist Headsets are available in the Narthex and next to the elevator and can be used with or without hearing aids.*

*Our Nursery is open at all services.*

***Currently, mask usage is up to each individual.***

<i>A Welcoming Community,      Accepting and Serving All In the Spirit of Christ</i>
--

Prelude	<i>Come Sunday</i>	Duke Ellington**
---------	--------------------	------------------

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>O lamm gottes, unschuldig</i>	J.S. Bach**
-----------------	----------------------------------	-------------

Call to Worship ..... Lead by Deacon Alison Wermer

Leader: Our God is good. Our God wants goodness in our lives. We come here today to seek out how to align our lives with God's will so that our lives might more closely align with God's joy, meaning and hope.

**People: We all come here with our own problems, difficulties and issues. None of us can live up to God's vision for humanity. None of us can even live up to our own set of values of image of perfection.**

**Everyone: We all fall short of the glory of God.**

Leader: Come, let us welcome Jesus and his ways into our lives. Come, let us proclaim Jesus to be the Messiah. Come, let us take up Christ's cross and gain our lives in return. Come, let us worship our God in song.

*Opening Hymn	<i>God is Here!</i>	#70**
---------------	---------------------	-------

**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**

***Blessed Assurance***

**#473\*\***

**\*Benediction**

Pastoral Benediction .....Rev. Karen 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

*Just A Closer Walk With Thee*

Spiritual

**\*Please stand if you are able**

**\*\*Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #728093-A. All Rights Reserved.**

*Besides welcoming Rev. Karen Mendes to our pulpit today, we also welcome FBC's organist Evan Allen to our organ and piano.*

## 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

Albert

Ozzy and Family

Andrea & Steve Sharp

Family and Friends of Marilyn Vincent

Family and Friends of Joyce Jacobs

Bruce Blackman

Frank Smith

Connor Bryce and Family

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:**

**March 3** ~ One service at 10am, Holy Communion

**March 10** ~ Daylight Savings Time Begins—Spring Forward!

Rev. Devon Thomas, guest preacher

Community Concerts @ First presents Va et Vient, 3pm in the Sanctuary

**March 17** ~ Pretzel Sunday, Receiving New Members

**March 23** ~ FCCEJ Leadership Training, 9am-11am

**March 24** ~ Palm Sunday

Sanctuary Choir Cantata

### **The Youth Calendar:**

**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.

Click the QR Code or 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)



### **Cabin Fever Calcutta**

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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org).

## **Weekly Calendar: February 25 - March 3**

**\*Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections\***

### **Sunday, February 25**

**Pulpit Exchange w/ Rev. Karen Mendes**

**All Family Worship**

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship, Sanctuary/Streaming

*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

### **Monday, February 26**

8:30am: Food Pantry Organizing, Fellowship Hall

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

5pm: Thrift Shop Advisory Board, Marvin Lounge

*7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge*

### **Tuesday, February 27**

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: Stewardship, Marvin Lounge

### **Wednesday, February 28**

*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*

7:15pm: Bell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

### **Thursday, February 29**

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*

12pm: Calcutta Committee, Marvin Lounge

*6pm: Music Rehearsal, Sanctuary*

7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

### **Friday, March 1**

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

1:30pm: Bridge Group, Marvin Lounge

### **Saturday, March 2**

*8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary*

*Give It A Go Support Group, Marvin Lounge*

*9am: Weight Loss Support Group, Fellowship Hall*

10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

### **Sunday, March 3**

**One Service at 10am:** Sanctuary/Streaming

10:15am: Spiritual Friends (PreK-2nd)

11am-12:30pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

11:30am: Music Committee, Sanctuary

Montana Team, Marvin Lounge

*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

*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: Mindy Bickford & Joann Irwin—Co-Chairs

Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley

Men at First Director: Bill Bickford

## Officers

President: Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Vice President: Terri Stein

Financial Secretary: Ann Gray [finances@fccej.org]

Assistant Financial Secretary: Linda Bogardus

Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [treasurer@fccej.org]

Assistant Treasurer: Matt Clark [mattclark48discovery@gmail.com]

Clerk: Brenda Dawson

Historian: Ann Gray

Internal Auditors: Betsy Weischedel, Allan Kinney

## Committee Chairs

Christian Education: Derek Lyman & Terri Livak

Communications: Francis Gravel

Deacons: Alison Wermer, Judy McCullen—Co-Chairs

Finance & Pastoral Relations: Terri Stein

Hospitality: Jen Dooley

Human Resources: Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Missions: Ann Marie Sullivan

Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan

Trustees: Kaki McGearry

## Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman

Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert