



# 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)



**The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction**  
**A Taize Styled Communion Service**  
**Third Sunday in Lent**  
**March 3, 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.***

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

Prelude

*Amazing Grace/How Great Thou Art*

V. Harmony\*\*  
arr. G. Prim

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

Introit and Call to Worship: Psalm 62 ..... *My Soul Is At Rest*

*Today, the Introit and Call to worship are combined and offered in the Taize style with spoken words by a leader and a refrain that the choir and congregation will sing together. First, we begin with the refrain:*

My soul is at rest in God a - lone, my sal-va-tion comes from God. My

Leader: For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from God.  
God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress.  
On God rests my deliverance and my honor;  
My mighty rock, my refuge is in God.  
I shall not be shaken.

**People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: Trust in God at all times, O people;  
Pour out your heart before God who is a refuge for us.  
Those of low estate are but a breath,  
Those of high estate are a delusion;  
in the balances they grow up,  
They are together, lighter than a breath.

**People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: Put no confidence in extortion  
And set no vain hopes on robbery  
If riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

**People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: Once God has spoken, twice I have heard this:  
Power and steadfast love belong to you, O God.  
For you repay to all according to their work.  
Come, let us praise and worship our God.

**\*Opening Hymn**                      *O God, How We Have Wandered*                      **#202 [verse 1 only]\*\***

Children’s Message..... 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 Spiritual Friends (PreK-2nd)\***

**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 pick up your children by 11:15.*

Sharing One’s Spiritual Journey ..... Jen Kelly

## A Time of Confession [words by Ted Loder from Guerillas of Grace]

*Today, our time of confession is offered in a Taize style and includes a sung response from the choir and congregation and spoken words of confession from the worship leader.*

*First we begin with the refrain.*

Je-sus, your light is shin-ing with - in us. Let not my doubts and my dark-ness speak to me.

Je - sus, your light is shin-ing with - in us. Let my heart al-ways wel-come your love.

Leader: Gracious and Holy One, creator of all things and of emptiness, I come to you full of much that clutters and distracts, stifles and burdens, and makes me a burden to others.

### **People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: Empty me now of gnawing dissatisfactions, of anxious imaginings, of fretful preoccupations, of nagging prejudices, of old scores to settle and of the arrogance of being right.

### **People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: Empty me of the ways I unthinkingly think of myself as powerless, as a victim, as determined by sex, age, race, as being less than I am or as other than yours.

### **People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: Empty me of the disguises and lies in which I hide myself from other people and from the responsibility for my neighbors and for the world.

### **People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: Hollow out in me a space in which I will find myself, find peace and a whole heart, a forgiving spirit and holiness, the springs of laughter, and the will to reach boldly for abundant life for myself and the whole human family.

**People: Sung Refrain**

Leader: : Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven, rise and walk." Forgiveness is an unlocked door to walk through, a quietness beneath the clamor, a flower to smell, a wind at my back, a pain to laugh beneath, a burden that carries me and a song to sing. It is I becoming We, becoming Yours. O Lord, unlock the door to my heart.

**People: Sung Refrain**

Scripture Reading: John 2:13-25

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w/ a very brief meditation by Rev. Mendes

A Sanctuary Choir Anthem

*God Gives Us Love*

Price/Besig

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation and Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

*Today, we will partake of communion by passing the bread and cup out to each person. The Minister will direct everyone to partake of the gluten free bread together. The Deacons will then pass out the non-alcoholic grape juice where everyone is welcome to partake when they choose. This symbolizes both the individual and corporate nature of our faith. **Everyone is welcome at Christ's table.***

For the Bread:

Musical score for the first part of the bread prayer. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the vocal line and a bass clef staff for the piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 76. The music is in 4/4 time and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The vocal line begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the lyrics are: "Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name." The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

Musical score for the second part of the bread prayer. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the vocal line and a bass clef staff for the piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 76. The music is in 4/4 time and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The vocal line begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the lyrics are: "Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life." The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

For the Cup:

Bo - num est con - fi - de - re in the Do - mi - no,  
It is good to trust in the Lord our God,  
bo - num spe - ra - re in the Do - mi - no.  
trust and hope in the Lord our God.

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 and Candle Lighting**

*During the first five Sundays of Lent, we will provide a time for folks to come up and light a candle for a loved one who has died or for someone in your life in need of prayer. While we light our candles, a member of the choir will sing "O God, As With a Potter's Hand" (#550).*

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem

**\*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**

*O God, How We Have Wandered*

**#202 [vv. 2 & 3]**

\*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

*Allemande*

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 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](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

Russ Wilson & Cathy Galbraith

Family and Friends of Marilyn Vincent

Family and Friends of Joyce Jacobs

Marie Johnson

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

*The flowers on the altar are given by Marie Benway,  
in memory of her parents.*

### CONNECTIONS:

Signup Online! <https://bit.ly/3dwsHji>

Our "Weekly Update" eConnection: <http://bit.ly/3rlsIsv>

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

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