

#### 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



## 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. 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 Wel	come	

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome in this place.

**Greeting and Announcements** 

First, we begin with the refrain:



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**

*Opening Hymn	O God, How We Have Wandered	#202 [verse 1 only]**	
Come, let u	is praise and worship our God.		
For you repay to all according to their work.			
Power and steadfast love belong to you, O God.			
Leader: Once God has spoken, twice I have heard this:			
People: Sung Refrain			
If riches in	crease, do not set your heart on them.		
And set no	vein hopes on robbery		
Leader: Put no confidence in extortion			
People: Sung Refi	rain		
They are to	ogether, lighter than a breath.		
in the ba	lances they grow up,		
Those of h	igh estate are a delusion;		
Those of lo	ow estate are but a breath,		
Pour out your heart before God who is a refuge for us.			
Leader: Trust in Go	Leader: Trust in God at all times, O people;		

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.



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 2:13-2	[page 71]	
w/ a very brief meditation		
A Sanctuary Choir Anthem	God Gives Us Love	Price/Besig

A Sanctuary Choir Anthem

Price/Besig

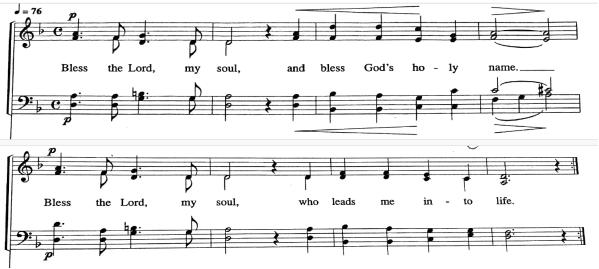
The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation and Words of Institution

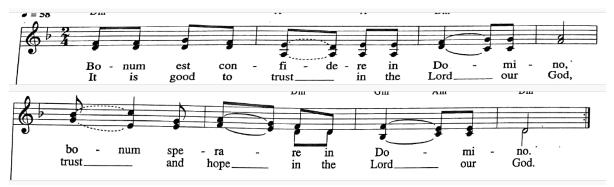
Sharing the Bread and the Cup

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 <u>aluten free bread</u> together. The Deacons will then pass out the <u>non-alcoholic</u> 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:



For the Cup:



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).

#778\*\*

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication Anthem **\*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.

n O God, How We Have Wandered #202 [vv. 2 & 3]

\*Hymn

#### **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:

 $\Rightarrow$  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 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/3rlslSy 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 ٠
- Yoga @ First, Tuesdays at 5pm in the Sanctuary ٠
- 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







You

Tube

bit.ly/39039ht

bit.ly/3rlfgZf

fccej.org



bit.ly/3oPpBv9