



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



The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

Easter Sunday

March 31, 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*

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

Finally @ First Musical Introit

I Will Sing

Max Dyer

Call to Worship Maureen McKenzie

Leader: Christ is risen!

People: Christ is risen indeed!

Leader: We are part of a family of faith than spans the generations and traces its roots to one man and one event. We are a part of Jesus' family and we proudly proclaim that Christ is alive at the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction!

Pulpit Side: Some of us meet Jesus in this place as we serve on committees, offer food to the hungry, clothe the naked, stand up for justice, sing our hearts out or simply enjoy the company of our family of faith.

Lectern Side: Some of us meet Jesus in our prayers as we deepen our relationship to God and discern ways to respond to Christ's call.

Women: Some of us meet Jesus as we follow his teachings: to love, show kindness, live at peace with all, forgive freely, and show mercy.

Men: Some of us meet Jesus in acts of kindness offered to strangers or the great movements of justice that ebb and flow in our world.

Everyone: Today, Jesus is alive in our hearts, in our church and in our world. Come, let us celebrate the wonder, joy, and power of the resurrection.

Leader: Come, let us worship our God and give glory to Jesus!

***Opening Hymn**

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today

#233

Deacon's Prayer of InvocationMaureen McKenzie

Children's Message

After the Children's Message, children are invited to stay with their families for the Easter service. The nursery will be self-serve today, but open for anyone needing the space. The service is projected downstairs will so families with young and restless children can go downstairs and still enjoy the Easter service.

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 Return to Their Families

**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.**

Pastoral Prayer and **Unison Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Leader: Let us pray.....

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.

Prayer Response

Rise Up

Andra Day

I'll rise up, I'll rise like the day
 I'll rise up, I'll rise unafraid
 I'll rise up and I'll do it a thousand times again
 And I'll rise up, high like the waves
 I'll rise up, in spite of the ache
 I'll rise up and I'll do it a thousand times again
 I'll rise up, I'll rise up, I'll rise up.
 I'll rise.

Scripture: John's Resurrection Story

John 20:1-25

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Anthem

The Rising

Bruce Springsteen

Streamed with permission from ASCAP, through Christian Copyright Solutions

Easter Meditation

Diverse Followers

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Spirit in the Sky

Norman Greenbaum

Streamed with permission from BMI, through Christian Copyright Solutions

***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**

Lord, I Lift Your Name on High

[handout]

*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

Sincere thanks to:

- ◆ Rick Dooley and Finally @ First for the fantastic music this morning
- ◆ Our Deacons and volunteers for helping prepare the Sanctuary for worship

Dates to Remember

Sunday, April 7: One Service at 10am, Holy Communion
Thursday, April 11: Grief Support, 10am in Marvin Lounge
Sunday, April 14: Community Concerts @ First presents Vermont Viruosi,
3pm in the Sanctuary
Monday, April 15: Heavenly Food Pantry Distribution, 5:30-7:30pm in the Fellowship Hall
Friday, April 19 & Saturday, April 20: FCCJ Hosts the Vermont Conference Annual Meeting

Special Offering Reminder

This Easter Sunday, we are collecting our Special Offering for March. This offering goes to our Pastor's Fund, which is a designated account providing assistance in critical times of need. Please note "Pastor's Fund" on your check. Thank you!

Children & Youth

Faith Formation Sunday Morning Calendar

April 7~ Spiritual Friends (PreK-2nd)

April 14 ~ Peer Groups (PreK-8th)

April 21~ All Family Worship

April 28 ~ Peer Groups (PreK-8th)

J.A.M. ~ Jesus & Me

April 7th from 11:30-12:30pm

3rd – 5th graders with a parent/grandparent to build community and more.

Youth Calendar:

April 7 ~ JHY 11:30-1:30pm ~ put together props for Good Samaritan skit

April 14 ~ SHY 11:30-1:30pm ~ cookie making for a local organization/group

Spare Time Fun for Youth & Parents ~ Sunday, April 28th or Sunday, May 19th

Save the Date:

May 5 ~ COTS Walk ~ JHY & SHY

Registration begins at 1pm in Battery Park. Walk starts at 2pm. Leave after church and have lunch in Burlington. Watch for registration link in Laurie's weekly emails to help gather sponsorships/donations for COTS.

Vacation Bible Camp ~ Mark your calendars now!

August 5th – 9th, 2024

Mornings 9am-12noon OR All-Day 9am to 4pm (\$100 per camper ~ scholarships available)

Campers ~ Toddlers with a Parent & PreK up through current 5th graders

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 4/11. Contact the church office for more info: 802-878-5745 or welcome@fccej.org.

FCCEJ Audio/Visual Open House

Next Sunday, April 7, the Communications Committee invites you to stay after worship (single service at 10am) and see a demonstration of how we stream our services, control our cameras, and other interesting tidbits related to our online presence. 11am(ish) in the Sanctuary.

Community Concerts @ First

Join us for our next Community Concert, Sunday, April 14 at 3pm in the Sanctuary. CC@F is thrilled to present Vermont Virtuosi, featuring flutist Laurel Maurer and pianist Michael Sitton. Proceeds for the concert will benefit the 2024 Montana Service Trip to the Blackfeet Nation. Suggested donation is \$20—under 18 is free.

Scan the QR code or use this link for tickets:

<https://sevendaystickets.com/events/vermont-virtuosi-4-14-2024>



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.

The victims, families & first responders in Maryland	Family and Friends of Joyce Jacobs
The Haitian People	Marie Johnson
Those impacted by the fires in Hawaii	Bruce Blackman
Everyone affected by the recent floods	Frank Smith
Victims of gun violence and their families	Connor Bryce and Family
Jon Eric Lindholm	Ruby and Family
Albert	Michael Flynn
Ozzy and Family	Bruce Gianuzzi
Andrea & Steve Sharp	Maureen Evans & Family
Russ Wilson & Cathy Galbraith	All those suffering due to violence in Ukraine and the Middle East
Juliana Faux	...and all persons affected by COVID19

CONNECTIONS:

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

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

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

Weekly Calendar: March 31 - April 7

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, March 31

Easter Sunday

6:30am: Sunrise Service at Holy Family Gazebo
7am-10am: Easter Breakfast, Fellowship Hall
8:30 & 10:15am: All-Family Worship,
Sanctuary/Streaming
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, April 2

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
7pm: Church Council, Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624 District Meeting, Fellowship Hall

Thursday, April 4

8:30am: Essex Art League, Fellowship Hall
9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge
6pm: Music Rehearsal, Sanctuary
6:30pm: Eagle Scout BoR, Marvin Lounge
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
*Cub Scout Den Meetings, Fellowship Hall, Gym,
Program Room, 3rd Floor Classrooms*

Saturday, April 6

8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary
Give It A Go Support Group, Marvin Lounge
9am: Weight Loss Support Group, Fellowship Hall
9:30am: Reiki 1 Class, Marvin Lounge
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge

Monday, April 1

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

Wednesday, April 3

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary
6pm: BSA Troop 624 PLC, Marvin Lounge
6:30pm: Eagle Scout BoR, Program Room
7pm: Searchers, Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall

Friday, April 5

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
1:30pm: Bridge Group, Marvin Lounge

Sunday, April 7

10am: Worship, Sanctuary/Streaming*
10:15am: Spiritual Friends (PreK-2nd)
11:30am: Audio/Visual Open House, Sanctuary
Junior Youth (6th-8th) & J.A.M., Fellowship Hall
Music Committee, 2nd Floor Program Room
Montana Service Trip Team, Marvin Lounge
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Events in italics = Local Community Groups