



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
The Second Sunday of Easter**

April 7, 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 *Fugue in G Minor* John Blow (1649-1708)**

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 *God Is Here Today* Trad. Mexican**
Harmony: Gary Alan Smith
arr. C. Michael Hawn/Arturo González

Call to Worship Deacon Allison VanSteensburg

Leader: Christ's resurrection slowly became a reality in the hearts and minds of his followers.....

People: Communing with the resurrected Christ, made them strong of Spirit and powerful in their witness to love, speak truth and seek justice.

Leader: The centuries scream of Christ's resurrected Spirit moving in and among history, always on the side of compassion, peace and mercy.

People: Jesus still moves to seek justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with my God.

Leader: Come, let us worship the Living Presence of our God. Come, let us call the creator of our universe to join us in worship.

***Opening Hymn**

Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

#230

A Time of Confession

A Call to Repentance

Leader: We know that God is mighty. We know God calls us to new life. And we know that despite our most earnest efforts, we do not live according to Christ's ways or even to ways that prove healthy to our own selves.

People: We come to you as a community and as individuals, knowing that you meet us where we are and offer us new hope and new life. We offer you our humble confession.

Unison Prayer of Confession

We know, Creator, that you are all around us and yet we pretend that we can live independent of you. So, we pause now from the rush of the world to open ourselves to you. We confess our sins not because we find ourselves to be unworthy, but because we know we could be so much more. You offer us the opportunity to live into your love, but instead we feel helpless surrounded by the chaos around the world. Help us to rise above the systems of violence in which we are complicit and strive to remove them from existence. From our voices, joined as one, we offer our silent personal confessions.....

.....a time of silent confession....

The Assurance of Pardon

Leader: The Holy One who moves through the mountains and whispers on the wind.....calls you into relationship.....not to be controlled but to find new life. We can be transformed by God. Receive this unimagined and immeasurable gift from our Maker.

All: We welcome this gift of forgiveness with eyes opened wide and hearts softened. We thank you, God, and seek to live anew and share that gift with all your creation. Amen.

Children's Message

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.**

PreK-2nd transition to Spiritual Friends

Scripture Reading

Historical

Acts 2:37-42

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Gospel

Mark 16:9-20

[page 42]

Anthem

Guide My Feet

African American Spiritual 🎵
Harmony Wendell Whalum

Communion Meditation

Additions

Rev. Mendes

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation and Words of Institution

Music

Minuet from Sonata in G Major

Joseph Haydn

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.

7. EAT THIS BREAD

Jesus Christ, Bread of Life

May be sung as an ostinato by omitting verses.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features two systems of music. The first system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to him and nev - er be hun - gry. Je - sus Christ, bread of life, those who come to you will not hun - ger." The second system also includes a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in him and you will not thirst. Je - sus Christ, Ris - en Lord, those who trust in you will not thirst." The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *f*, and *mf*.

Pastoral Prayer and **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.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Excerpt from Concerto No. 2 Op. 102

Dmitri Shostakovich

***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**

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

#252

***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**

Allegro from Sonata in G Major Hob

Joseph Haydn

***Please stand if you are able**

♪ This morning's music is presented in accordance with our Royalties for Spirituals Project: a practice of valuing the musical contributions of enslaved Africans to American worship and song. We honor the unrecognized musicians who created this music by singing them with reverence, gratitude, and open hearts. Royalties will go to a local organization that supports African American musicians.

Sincere thanks to:

◆ Bethany Blake and the Sanctuary Choir for the beautiful music this morning

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—Today, 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

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.

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

The Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop is now open on the first Sunday of each month. Stop by after worship—they will be open from 11am to 12pm—and discover a new-to-you treasure or two!

“Called to Care” is a visitation ministry that we are restarting post Covid. It involves a pair of church members visiting a member who is homebound or in a care facility in our area. These visits take place at least once a month. Mary McHugh will be organizing “Called to Care.” Sunday, April 21, Mary will be available in the Fellowship Hall to answer questions after each service. There will be a training session on Monday, April 22 in Marvin Lounge from 10–11:30am. Registration is appreciated either by contacting the office or emailing Mary at mmmchugh@hotmail.com.

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
The Haitian People
Those impacted by the fires in Hawaii
Everyone affected by the recent floods
Victims of gun violence and their families
Jon Eric Lindholm
Albert
Ozzy and Family
Andrea & Steve Sharp
Russ Wilson & Cathy Galbraith
Juliana Faux

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

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: April 7 - April 14

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, April 7

10am: Worship, Sanctuary/Streaming*
10:15am: Spiritual Friends (PreK-2nd)
11am-12pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: Audio/Visual Open House, Sanctuary
Junior Youth (6th-8th) & J.A.M.
Music Committee, 2nd Floor Program Room
Montana Service Trip Team, Marvin Lounge
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
Blue Spruce Grange, Gym

Tuesday, April 9

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
3:30pm: Food Pantry Committee, Marvin Lounge
4:30pm: Essex Pediatrics, West Wing
5pm: Yoga, Sanctuary
6:30: BSA Three Rivers District Roundtable,
Fellowship Hall & Program Room
7pm: Deacons, Marvin Lounge

Thursday, April 11

10am: Grief Support, Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall

Saturday, April 13

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

Monday, April 8

11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, April 10

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: Searchers, Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall

Friday, April 12

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
6:30pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, April 14

8* & 10:15am Worship, Sanctuary/Streaming*
10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th)
11:30am: Senior High Youth, Youth Room
1pm: CC@F Set Up, Sanctuary
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
3pm: CC@F presents Vermont Virtuosi,
Sanctuary

Events in italics = Local Community Groups