



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 Fifteenth Sunday of Pentecost
September 1, 2024

Next week, we return to our regular worship schedule. The first Sunday of each month we celebrate the Lord's Supper with one unified service at 10am. The remaining Sundays of each month we will have two distinct worship services. Our first service, at 8:30am is a little more traditional with our Sanctuary Choir and organ music. Our second service begins at 10:15 and is more contemporary with our Finally @ First Praise Band. Our first service is streamed every week, and our second service is streamed on the third Sunday of each month. Our Faith Formation Program for PreK-8th grade occurs during our second service and we provide nursery care (6 months-3 years) from a paid caregiver for both services.

Currently, mask usage is up to each individual.

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

Prelude	<i>Siciliano from Sonata in Eb Major</i>	J.S. Bach arr. Weekley and Arganbright
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An Extravagant Welcome

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

Greeting and AnnouncementsDeacon Judy McCullen

Musical Introit	<i>The Place Where I Worship</i>	Al Goodhart
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Call to WorshipDeacon Judy McCullen

Leader: During the final stages of creation, God united with humanity to ease the deep well of divine isolation and loneliness. The result was a marriage between humanity and the divine.

People: **Knowing the danger and destruction of loneliness, God created a model of partnership between two people, a union grounded on equality and mutual need.**

Leader: Prophets and mystics, sinners and saints, kings and paupers, scientists and philosophers: most all seek to fill their lives with others in the primordial pull toward partnership, perpetuity and participation.

People: Prayer unites us with God and each other. Coming to church draws us together with both the divine and human elements of life. Music makes us dance and our spirits soar. Our intellect is simple gray matter that reaches throughout the universe and beyond.

Leader: Complete and utter union is at the heart of creation and everything written in the bible. Jesus bridges the gap and calls us to intimacy with God that is full of passion and unrivaled in power and depth.

People: Come, let us enter into relationship with God.

***Opening Hymn**

We Worship You, God

#26, verses 1, 3, 5

A Time of Confession

Call to Confession

Leader: Kings and false prophets, people and priests, from the beginning of time to our present age: people have taken the power, presence and prestige of God and used them for their own means.

People: The biblical warrant attests to this fact. History proclaims this to be true. We know it to be true in our own time and place. Every people, every politician, every nation, every person falls short of the glory of God.

Leader: Come, let us fall on our knees with kings and prophets, priests and people as we seek forgiveness and a fresh start. Come, let us confess our sins before our God.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Loving Creator of this beautiful land, filled with purple, majestic mountains and grain fields that sway in the breeze, come to us today and assure us of your forgiveness and love. When we move toward false idols and lesser gods, help us to recognize the futility of finite, frivolous frills and replace them with the infinite and infallible presence of the divine. Align our senses to the places where the Great I Am speaks and moves and has being. Allow us to see you in the beauty of creation, the blessing of Christ's extravagant love and the ongoing empowerment of the Spirit of God. Forgive us and help us to better ourselves each day as we move toward the very kingdom of God.

The Assurance of Pardon

Leader: On behalf of the Living God made known in Jesus Christ, I proclaim to you that your sins are forgiven.

People: We accept God's abundant love and will earnestly try to live healthier and more productive lives.

Everyone: Amen and Alleluia.

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.**

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

Rev. 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

Praise the Lord, His Glories Show

Henry Lyte

Anthem

John Denver

Scripture Reading and Meditations

Song of Solomon 2:8-13 [page 483]

James 1:17-27 [page 179]

Mark 7:1-23 [page 32]

*Congregational Hymn of Choice

Each week, the worship leader will ask for a suggestion from those in attendance for a hymn the congregation should sing. The organist will then lead us in the singing. If you pick one the organist cannot sightread, then be ready with another selection.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation

Communion Anthem

Prayer for Peace

David Karp

The Swan

Camille Saint-Saëns

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.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Sonatina Op. 20 No. 1 (excerpt)

Friedrich Kuhlau

***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 For a World

[607]

***Benediction**

Pastoral Benediction

***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**

Rondeau from First Suite

Jean Joseph Mouret

arr. Weekley and Arganbright

***Please stand if you are able**

Sincere thanks the morning to:

◆ Bethany Blake, Marie Johnson, and Beth Volker for sharing their fantastic musical talents

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.

Everyone affected by the recent flooding
Victims of gun violence and their families
Family and friends of Bruce Gianuzzi
Family and friends of Lani Gorman
Barbara Mudgett-Russell
Chris Hathaway
Bruce Parker
Skip Bergin
Julia Tanner Holly
Kim Sonntag

Jon Eric Lindholm
Patty Giroux
Ozzy and Family
Russ Wilson & Cathy Galbraith
Connor Bryce and Family
Michael Flynn
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 this morning are given by Janne Giles
In honor of Howard & Janne Giles -
Married 52 (9-1-1972) years ago @ FCCEJ!***

CONNECTIONS:

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

Our “Weekly Update” eConnection goes out every Friday—contact the office

Our monthly “SPIRIT@FIRST” eNewsletter* <http://fccej.org/v5/category/newsletters/>

*also 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 for Intermediates**, Tuesday mornings at 10:15 in the Fellowship Hall
- ♦ **Yoga @ First**, Mondays & Wednesdays at 5pm in the West Wing
- ♦ **Coffee Clatter**, every Friday @ 8am at Martone’s
- ♦ **Lunchtime Book Group**, 3rd Mondays @ 11:30am in Marvin Lounge
- ♦ **Bridge Group**, 1st and 3rd Fridays at 1:30pm in Marvin Lounge



FACEBOOK

bit.ly/39O39ht



INSTAGRAM

bit.ly/3rlfgZf



INTERNET

fccej.org



YOUTUBE

bit.ly/3oPpBv9

Next Sunday, September 8

- ◆ Welcome Back Sunday with 2 Services at 8:30 and 10:15am
 - ◆ Faith Formation for PreK through 8th grade during second service
 - ◆ Welcome Back BBQ after second service
 - ◆ Burlington Pride Parade
 - ◆ 12:30pm in Burlington
- FCCEJ welcomes everyone to come and worship and participate in the full life of our church. Our Open and Affirming Statement passed in 2012, and since then we have consistently embraced this aspect of our identity and celebrated the extravagant welcome that Jesus brought into our world. On 9/8, we will join other United Church of Christ Churches in the Champlain Association in marching in support of God's love for our LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters. It is an extraordinary experience full of joy. Contact Rev. Mark if you are able to attend by emailing [mmendes@fccej.org] or calling him [802 878-5745].

Chili Grab-n-Go Fundraiser

On Friday, September 20, our Missions Committee is sponsoring a fundraiser to support Age Well and their Meals on Wheels program. We are looking for donations of chili and cornbread. You may sign up online via Sign Up Genius or downstairs at the Missions table. Please contact the church office or Linda Bogardus for more information.

Grief Support Group

2nd Thursday of each month from 10 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 September 12. Contact the church office for more information.

Heavenly Food Pantry

The FCCEJ Heavenly Food Pantry continues to need the following food items: Cereal, Peanut Butter, Canned Corn, and Baked Beans, although all non-perishable items are gratefully accepted. Please also consider donating non-dairy milk (almond, soy, etc...) as well as gluten-free items and women's hygiene products. Donations can be dropped off just outside the church office or across from the elevator in the grocery cart.

One service that sets us apart from other food pantries in the area is the delivery to local households. If you have an hour or so available on a food pantry day and the means to deliver 8-10 bags of food, then we could use your help. Please call the church office at 802-878-5745 or send an email to welcome@fccej.org. Monthly Distribution Schedule: 2nd Monday from 5:30-7:30pm & 4th Thursday from 3-6pm. Thank you for your support!

Weekly Calendar: September 1—September 8

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, September 1

9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming
Holy Communion
11am: Montana Team—Marvin Lounge
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, September 3

8:30am: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
6:30pm: BSA Troop 624 District Meeting—Fellowship Hall
Green Mountain Chorus Rehearsal—Sanctuary
7pm: Church Council—Marvin Lounge

Thursday, September 5

8:30am: Essex Art League—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge
6:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary
6:30pm: Eagle Scout Board of Review—Marvin Lounge
7pm: Cub Scout Den Meetings—Fellowship Hall, Program Room, Gym, 3rd Floor

Saturday, September 7

8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary, West Wing
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

Monday, September 2

Labor Day—Church Office Closed All Day
9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, 2nd Floor Storage Room, Kitchen
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
3:30pm: The Vine Nepali Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary
7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, September 4

10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5pm: Yoga—West Wing
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal—Sanctuary
6pm: BSA Troop 624 PLC, Marvin Lounge
6:30pm: Men At First Rehearsal—West Wing
BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall, Gym

Friday, September 6

8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's Market
10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
1:30pm: Bridge Group—Marvin Lounge

Sunday, September 8

8:30* & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming*
10:30am: Faith Formation—Peer Rooms
11:30am: Welcome Back Barbeque
Craft Fest Committee—Marvin Lounge
12:30pm: Burlington Pride Parade
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall

Events in italics = Local Community Groups