



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
A “Living In Faith Together” [LIFT] Sunday
The Second Sunday after Christmas
January 5, 2025

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 offer two distinct worship services. Our first service, at 8:30am, is traditional with our Sanctuary Choir and organ music. Our second service begins at 10:15 and is more contemporary with music from 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. Our nursery is open for children 6 months-3 years at both services (self-serve at 8:30 and staffed at 10:15). Currently, mask usage is up to each individual.

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

Order of Worship

An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements

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

The Deacon’s Greeting

Our Deacon will welcome everyone to our community of faith; ask if anyone has special joys to share; invite any guest to introduce themselves if they want to and encourage anyone to fill out the welcome sheet found in the pew to lift up any needs and place it in the offering plate.

A Musical Introit

Wade In the Water ✨

African American Spiritual

Call to Worship.....Deacon

Leader: In the beginning, God’s voice brought order to the Universe. As God created, humanity helped name the creatures and then was commanded to care for our world.

People: God inspires and teaches us healthy ways to live. We use our hearts, minds, souls and strengths to follow Jesus. We are God’s hands, feet and voices. We are God’s called to care team.

Leader: From the beginning of creation to Jesus’ teaching, from the early work of the disciples to modern day followers; we are all called to put our faith into action by helping those around us. Thank you, God, for making us partners with you in caring for your universe.

Deacon’s Prayer of Invocation.....Deacon

The Sacrament of Baptism.....Adelaide Ennis Jackson

Today, let us give a warm First Church welcome to Adelaide as she enters Christ's movement of love in our world. Her proud parents are Colleen and Shannon Jackson and her older sister is Aurora.

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 Transition to Spiritual Friends (PreK-5th)

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")

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, and deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen.

Prayer Response

Lord, I Need You

Lord I need You, oh I need You.

Every hour I need You.

My one defense, my righteousness,

O God, how I need You.

You're my one defense, my righteousness.

O God, how I need You.

Anthem

Brother

Bo and Bear Rinehart

Scripture Reading

James 2:14-26

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A Christmastide Meditation

"Faith Brought to Completion"

Rev. Mendes

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

To celebrate the Lord's Supper today, we will pass the elements out to the congregation: first the bread which is gluten free and then the cup which is non-alcoholic grape juice.

Everyone is welcome at Christ's table.

As Rev. Mark offers the Prayer of Thanksgiving at the end of Communion, he will invite the worshipping community to put their faith into action by shifting the worship service downstairs where we will prepare 100 Homeless Care Bags for people to take from church, place in their cars, and offer them to the homeless in the Area. As we all give them away, there will be an ongoing supply available for each member to refill their stock in their cars. This will allow all of us to offer some of God's grace to the least of those among us.

*Closing Hymn

We Are Called
[handout]

David Haas

*Benediction in Fellowship Hall

Pastoral Benediction

*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

- ♦ *The offering this morning will be taken on your way out. Please give generously in the basket provided in the Narthex, so the vital work of our congregation and our outreach to those in need may continue unabated.*
- ♦ *Sincere thanks to Rick Dooley and Finally @ First Praise Band for sharing their amazing musical talents with us this morning!*

✚ *Presented in accordance with our Royalties for Spirituals Project: a practice of valuing musical contributions of enslaved Africans to American worship and song. We honor unrecognized musicians who created these pieces by singing them with reverence, gratitude, and open hearts. Royalties set aside for the use of these songs today will go to a local organization that supports African American musicians.*

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. Unless otherwise specified, prayer requests will be printed in the bulletin for a month.

Joanne Irwin
Bethany Blake & Family
Family and friends of Nancy Hayes
Victims of gun violence and their families
Ashley Frazer and Family
Marie Benway
Carol Daigle

Chris Hathaway
Bruce Parker
Kim Sonntag
Jon Eric Lindholm
Patty Giroux
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 Phyllis Willey
In celebration of our amazing FCCEJ Faith Family!*

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>
- ♦ **Intermediate Tai Chi Class**, 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

Weekly Calendar: January 5—January 12

****Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections****

Sunday, January 5

10am: Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming*
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
4pm: Older Youth & College Age Holiday Party—
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Youth Room, Gym

Monday, January 6

Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, 2nd
Floor Storage Room, Kitchen
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
3:30pm: Nepalese Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary
5pm: Yoga at FCCEJ—West Wing
7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge

Tuesday, January 7

8:30: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
10:15am: Tai Chi—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
5pm: BSA Troop 624 Leaders—Fellowship Hall
*6:30pm: BSA Troop 624 District Meeting—
Fellowship Hall*
7pm: Church Council—Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, January 8

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

Thursday, January 9

9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting—Conference Room
10am: Grief Support—Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
6:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

Friday, January 10

8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's
10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
6pm: Blue Spruce Grange—Fellowship Hall

Saturday, January 11

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

Sunday, January 12

8:30* & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary/
Streaming*
10:30am: Faith Formation—Peer Rooms
11:30am: Music Committee—Program Room
Junior Youth—Youth Room, Kitchen, 3rd Floor
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
2pm: Ecclesiastical Council for Joshua Sharp—
Sanctuary

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

Children & Youth Ministry

Sunday Morning Faith Formation:

- January 5—Spiritual Friends (PreK-5th)
- January 12, 19, 26—Faith Formation Peer Groups (PreK-8th)

Youth Calendar:

- January 5 ~ SHY & College Age Christmas Party 4-6pm ~ invites mailing out this week!
- January 12 ~ JHY from 11:30-1:30pm ~ blanket project with Terry Livak

Questions:

- Children's Ministries (Prk-8th) and Faith Formation: childrensministry@fccej.org
- JH and SH Youth: lchipman@fccej.org



Part Time Position Opening at FCCEJ:

Youth Ministry Coordinator

The job description and other details can be found on our website:

www.fccej.org/v5/who-we-are/work-with-us/

Please email cover letter and resume to welcome@fccej.org.

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 January 9. Contact the church office for more information.

Bakers & Buyers Needed for Funeral Receptions

Are you looking for a low key way to minister to our FCCEJ family? Our Hospitality Committee hosts funeral service receptions for FCCEJ families and we ask for donations of cookies/bars/brownies and also sometimes fruit/cheese & crackers. We generally have about six to eight of these each year.

We have an email list that we send out when we have an upcoming reception and if you are able and willing at that time, you can bake or purchase any of what we need to drop off in the main kitchen.

We also occasionally need assistance in the kitchen for a reception and we include that need as well.

If you would like to be added to the email list for this ministry, please send an email to Jen Dooley: dooleyjrj2000@comcast.net and the next time there is a reception scheduled you will get an email.

Many thanks!

Cabin Fever Calcutta—Early Bird Tickets

Early Bird tickets for the Cabin Fever Calcutta are now available. Anyone purchasing a ticket before January 15th will be entered into an Early Bird drawing for a \$100 cash prize, held at the Calcutta. Your ticket includes dinner for two plus a ball number. If you do not have a ball number, see Sharon Dettenrieder. Tickets cost \$150. Checks are to be made payable to FCCEJ with Calcutta on the memo line. All proceeds from the Calcutta support the intergenerational service trip.

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

Staff

Senior Pastor: Rev. Mark Mendes [mmendes@fccej.org]

Ministers of Visitation:

Rev. Ron Faux [revronfaux@gmail.com] / Mary McHugh [mmmchugh@hotmail.com]

Christian Education Director: Laurie Chipman [lchipman@fccej.org]

Children's Ministry Coordinator: Elizabeth O'Beirne [childrensministry@fccej.org]

Music Director: Bethany Blake [bblake@fccej.org]

Church Administrator: Jen Kelly [welcome@fccej.org]

Music

Chair of Music: Mindy Bickford & Joanne Irwin—Co-Chairs

Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley

Men At First Director: Bill Bickford

Officers

President: Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Vice President: Terry Stein

Financial Secretary: Ann Gray [finances@fccej.org]

Assistant Financial Secretary: Linda Bogardus

Treasurer: Dan Petherbridge [treasurer@fccej.org]

Assistant Treasurer: Matt Clark [mattclark48discovery@gmail.com]

Clerk: Brenda Dawson

Historian: Ann Gray

Internal Auditors: Betsy Weischedel, Alan Kinney

Committee Chairs

Christian Education:

Derek Lyman, Terri Livak—Co-Chairs

Communications: Francis Gravel

Deacons:

Alison Wermer, Judy McCullen—Co-Chairs

Finance & Pastoral Relations: Terry Stein

Hospitality: Jen Dooley

Human Resources:

Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Missions: Ann Marie Sullivan

Nominating: Lauren Starkey

Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan

Trustees: Kaki McGeary

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman

Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert