



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 Fourth Sunday After Epiphany
February 2, 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.

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

Prelude

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.

Introit

Let Us Break Bread Together ✠ Spiritual, arr. Noble Cain

Opening Psalm 112Blessing of the Righteous

Deacon's Prayer of InvocationDeacon Bob Driver

***Opening Hymn**

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

#400

A Litany of Confession

Leader: Thank you, God, for the creative and beautiful magnificence of your universe. All the seasons magnify your genius. You are our Creator and to you we owe our life and allegiance.

People: Keep us humble Jesus.

Leader: Thank you God for imprinting your presence within humanity. Thank you for our minds, hearts and bodies for together this triad of realities point to the unity of all things in divine wonder.

People: Keep us humble Jesus.

Leader: Thank you God for modeling community in the very idea of a Triune nature.
Thank you for families, friends, and a faith community grounded in your son's lessons of love, mercy and forgiveness.

People: Keep us humble Jesus.

Leader: Thank you God for grounding us in a higher power and presence, for we seek redemption and communion with you, your people, your universe, and your faith community. All of us seek your forgiveness when we fall short of our potential and need a gentle, guiding hand. We place our faults in your sea of love knowing that you will wash over us and make us anew.

People: Keep us humble Jesus.

Leader: I declare to all of you that God offers us hope and newness in life.
Amen and alleluia!

Children's Message Laurie Chipman

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")** Mary McHugh

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

My Gratitude Now Accept, O God (vs. 4)

Rafael Montalvo
trans. Raquel Mora Martinez

Welcoming Our New Members

Patricia “Patty” Geiger
Tobe Zellinger

Congregational Vows, Welcome and Reception

Deacon to the Congregation: Jesus calls us to spread God’s extravagant love to all peoples and nations, offering everyone the gift of grace. Do you who witness this rite of membership, promise your support to these new members so that they might live a life where Christ’s joy and meaning is manifested?

People: Patty and Tobe, we welcome you with joy in the communion life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of our church. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and be witnesses of Christ's love in this world.

Sanctuary Choir Anthem

Sermon

“All the Parts”

Rev. Mendes

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

We will observe communion by passing the bread and cup out to the congregation. Everyone should hold the bread until directed to partake as one body by the pastor, and then take the cup when you would like individually, thus symbolizing the corporate and individual nature of faith. The bread is gluten free and the cup is non-alcoholic so hopefully everyone can partake.

EVERYONE is welcome at Christ’s table.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem Offertory

***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.**

***Closing Hymn**

Come, We Who Love God’s Name

#382

***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.**

*Please stand if you are able

- ♦ *Sincere thanks to Bethany Blake and the FCCEJ Sanctuary Choir 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.*

***The flowers on the altar this morning are given by Anna Izzo
in celebration of her sons, Blaine and Christian,
turning 25 and 20 this month!***

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

Jim Driscoll

Family and friends of Nancy Hayes

Fire victims, firefighters, and first responders
in California

Victims of gun violence and their families

Ashley Frazer and Family

Carol Daigle

Chris Hathaway

Bruce Parker

Kim Sonntag

Jon Eric Lindholm

Patty Giroux

All those suffering due to violence in
Ukraine, the Middle East, and around the world
...and all persons affected by COVID19