



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



Second Service

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
The Sixth Sunday After Epiphany
February 16, 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	Deacon Bob Driver
<i>No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome in this place.</i>	

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	<i>Come, Now is the Time to Worship</i>
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Call to Worship.....	Deacon Bob Driver
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Leader: Welcome to the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction. Here, we believe in Christ's abundant love for all God's children, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.

People: We are diverse because God made every aspect of the world that way. We stand for equity because God's prophets demand it. We include everyone because Jesus welcomed everyone to his way.

Leader: Come, let us live into the true Gospel of Jesus Christ: one of diversity, equity and inclusion. God is good.....all the time.

*Opening Hymn	<i>Blest Are They</i> [handout]	David Haas
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Deacon's Prayer of Invocation.....	Deacon Bob Driver
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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 Peer Groups (PreK-8th)*

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.

*(*Parents, please collect your children by 11:30)*

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.

Finally @ First Anthem

Show Me The Way

Dennis DeYoung

(Streamed with permission of ASCAP through Christian Copyright Solutions)

Scripture Readings

Old Testament	Psalter	Psalms 1	[page 380]
New Testament	Epistle	I Corinthians 15:1-11	[page 135]
	Gospel	Luke 6:17-26	[page 49]

Sermon

Finding One's Way

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem Offertory

What A Friend

Matt Maher

***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**

Shine, Jesus, Shine
[handout]

Graham Kendrick

***Benediction**

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**
you are able

stand if

◆ *Sincere thanks to Rick Dooley and the Finally @ First Praise Band for sharing their amazing musical talents with us this morning!*

*** After each service, Rev. Mark will officiate at a Renewal of Wedding Vows for any couple that would like to renew their love for each other in a more formal way. Each partner will share vows and hear those of the other partner and kiss right in church to affirm their commitment to each other. For those couples interested, simply stay seated in the sanctuary until Rev. Mark is finished greeting folks in the narthex.*

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.

Judy Moreau

Jed Cilley

Joanne Irwin

Jim Driscoll

Family and friends of Nancy Hayes

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

***The flowers on the altar this morning are given by Melissa Ward
In honor of Beth Volker for her many acts of kindness.***

Scripture Study Group

A Scripture Study Group, led by Mary McHugh, meets in Marvin Lounge from 1:30 – 3 pm on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. We're starting with Genesis; a good teaching tool for learning how to explore scripture. Genesis teaches us to ask the questions we can use with any scripture passage: who is God in this passage, who are we, and how are we in relationship to God, each other, and creation? After Genesis, the group will decide together what to study next! Come to any or all sessions.

Evening Scripture Group: If you are interested in an evening scripture study group that would meet 2x a month, please let Mary McHugh know by calling/texting her or leaving your name at the office. Mary: 920-664-5230.

Called to Care Gathering

Join us on Monday, March 10th at 10 AM in the Marvin Lounge. We will discuss how things are going along with a few issues that need some input. Please let Mary know if you can not attend. Any one interested in participating in Called to Care is welcome to attend.

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 March 13. Contact the church office for more information.

Weekly Calendar: February 16—February 23

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<u>Sunday, February 16</u> 8:30 & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming 10:30am: Faith Formation—Peer Rooms 11:30am: Ushering Committee—Marvin Lounge Junior Youth—Youth Room, Kitchen, Gym <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>	<u>Monday, February 17</u> President's Day—Office Closed All Day 9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, 2nd Floor Storage Room, Kitchen 11:30am: <i>Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> Lunchtime Book Group—Marvin Lounge 3:30pm: <i>Nepalese Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i> 7:30pm: <i>Group Victory—Marvin Lounge</i>
<u>Tuesday, February 18</u> 8:30: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop 10:15am: Tai Chi—Fellowship Hall <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 7pm: CE—Marvin Lounge Communications—2nd Floor Program Room	<u>Wednesday, February 19</u> 8am: Food Pantry Delivery Drop Off—Fellowship Hall, 2nd Floor Storage Room, Kitchen <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> Missions Committee—Marvin Lounge <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>5pm: Essex Pediatrics Workshop—3rd Floor, 2nd Floor Program Room</i> 5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal—Sanctuary 6:30pm: Men At First Rehearsal—West Wing <i>BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall, Gym</i> 7pm: Searchers—Marvin Lounge
<u>Thursday, February 20</u> 9am: FCCEJ Staff Meeting—Marvin Lounge <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> Calcutta Committee—Marvin Lounge 12:30pm: Service Trip Leadership Team—Marvin Lounge 6:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary <i>6:30pm: Cub Scouts Pack 630 Den Meetings—Fellowship Hall, West Wing, 3rd Floor</i> 7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary	<u>Friday, February 21</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 1:30pm: Bridge Group—Marvin Lounge 7pm: <i>Burlington Amateur Radio Club—Marvin Lounge</i>
<u>Saturday, February 22</u> <i>8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary, West Wing</i> <i>Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge</i> 8:30am: <i>Weight Loss Support —Fellowship Hall</i> 9:30am: <i>Reiki 2 Class—Marvin Lounge</i> 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>	<u>Sunday, February 23</u> 8:30* & 10:15am: All Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming* <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>Events in italics = Local Community Groups</i>

Youth Happenings

THIS Sunday, February 16 ~ JHY time 11:30-1:30pm

March 9 ~ spring ahead an hour

March 16 ~ Pretzel Sunday – JHY & SHY help kids roll pretzels – SHY can sign up for slots in the kitchen

SHY Nursery Staff Gathering ~ which works for you?? March 9 or 16 from 9:15am-10am OR at 5:30pm for supper? Please share your thoughts with Laurie ASAP.

March 23 ~ JHY & SHY 11:30-1:30pm Fairwell Party with Laurie (her last day)

SHY ~ 1st Sundays @ 10am worship & reconnect with other SHY

2025 VB Camp ~ August 4-8 ~ Camp Firelight

Registration is open —<https://www.fccej.org/v5/grow-in-faith/vacation-bible-camp/>

VBC Planning Team Chair ~ Jessica Moos

SHY & College Students ~ apply to work Afternoon Session ~ \$366.75 for full week (M-F from 11:30-4:30pm) or \$14.67 per hour

Cabin Fever Calcutta

Do you have your ticket yet for our 8th Cabin Fever Calcutta to be held on March 8, 2025 at the Catamount Country Club? The evening promises lots of fun and fellowship just when we all are ready to get out and about. Your \$150 ticket includes a buffet dinner for two plus one Calcutta ball number. We have secured many interesting prizes, assuring that a prize is awarded every 3rd or 4th ball drawn. Prizes include hotel and restaurant packages, gift certificates to local eateries, and a wine grab. The grand prize is \$1000.

Tickets for the Calcutta can be purchased at the Service Trip table in Fellowship Hall. Contact Sharon Dettenrieder at Sharon.dettenrieder@gmail.com for additional information.

Proceeds from this event support our Intergenerational Service Trips. Watch for information in the spring about our 2026 domestic trip to the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana. The trip will be led by Lisa Clark and Betsy Weischedel.

Currier Hand Bell Choir is seeking new members to join our group.

You do NOT need to read music or have a musical background, but being able to keep a beat is helpful. Please join us as we begin practicing for Easter morning. We will teach you how to make beautiful music. Please contact the church office for more information.

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]

Social Media Marketing Specialist: Munroe Shearer [socialmedia@fccej.org]

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

Music

Chair of Music: Mindy Bickford

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, Beth Warren—Co-Chairs

Deacons:

Alison Wermer, Judy McCullen—Co-Chairs

Finance & Pastoral Relations: Terry Stein

Hospitality: TBD

Human Resources:

Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Missions: Ann Marie Sullivan

Nominating: Lauren Starkey

Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan

Trustees: TBD

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman

Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert