



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



First Service

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
The Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 18, 2025

From June through Labor Day weekend, we follow our Summer Worship Schedule. The Sunday service each week starts at 9am and we have special music from individuals or groups that have volunteered, which gives our two musical groups [Sanctuary Choir & Finally @ First] the summer to rest and simply enjoy worship. Our streaming will continue with a simple wide shot of the service and not the multiple cameras and special screen shots of the hymns and various parts of the bulletin which gives our tech folks a break. Our nursery is open each week with a paid attendant for ages 6 months through 3 years. Children three and older are asked to join their parents in worship which gives our Faith Formation volunteers a little time off as well.

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

Order of Worship

Prelude	<i>Third Gnosienne</i>	Erik Satie
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An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements	Rev. Mark Mendes
<i>No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome in this place.</i>	

The Deacon's GreetingDeacon Maureen McKenzie
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.

Musical Introit	<i>Hosanna</i>	Christian Gregor arr. Ivan Trusler
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Call to Worship..... Deacon Judy McCullen
Leader: After Jesus died and rose from the dead, he came to the disciples and everyday people, empowering them with the Holy Spirit of God.
People: The politicians and powerful who helped shape God's presence and message did not like appreciate Jesus and his teachings. They thought his death would be the end of the movement.
Leader: But God had a different plan. Jesus continued to be with the regular people and give them the words and wisdom to continue to preach the Good News.
People: Still to this day, many of the well-connected and rich do not always like Christ's message and try to stifle it. And still to this day, normal every day people seek to spread love, kindness and peace to all.

***Opening Hymn** *Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer* # 18

***Hymn** *I Love to Tell the Story* # 522

Unison Prayer Response *Be Now My Vision* # 451 [vs.1]

Historical Acts 4:1-31 [page 92]

Anthem	<i>I Sing of America</i>	Nathalie Sleeth
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Easter Sermon *A Day in the Life* Rev. Mendes

Offertory *With My Own Two Hands* Ben Harper

Prayer of Dedication

***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.**

*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 musical talents with us this morning!

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.

Dave Johnson
Bruce Blackman
Family and friends of Duke Ehler
Danair Williams
Josh Winslow
The Moos Family
Family and Friends of Geoff Grove
Juno Johnson
Karen
Judy Moreau
Family and Friends of Joseph Kamuda

Joanne Irwin
Jim Driscoll
Family and Friends of Arthur LaGrange
Victims of gun violence and their families
Carol Daigle
Bruce Parker
Jon Eric Lindholm
Patty Giroux
All those suffering due to violence in
Ukraine, the Middle East, and around the world

~ **UPCOMING EVENTS—MARK YOUR CALENDARS** ~

- **Sunday, May 25**—One Worship Service at FCCEJ at 9am
Worship Service at Mount Philo at 10am
- **Saturday, May 31**—Essex Pride Festival, 12-4pm at Maple Street Park
- **Sunday, June 1**—Music Appreciation & CE Volunteer Appreciation
Ice Cream Social after worship
Pride Worship Service, 3pm in the Sanctuary
- **Sunday, June 8**—Scout Sunday
Celebrating Graduates in Worship

SUMMER SCHEDULE—MAY 25 THROUGH LABOR DAY

- ♦ Sunday Morning Worship -
 - ⇒ One service at 9am. In-person and streamed via [youtube.com/c/fccej](https://www.youtube.com/c/fccej)
 - ⇒ All Family Worship—Faith Formation on hiatus till September
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month
 - ⇒ Rev. Mark on vacation July 1 through August 4

Celebrating Graduates

Do you have a graduate in the family? Graduation Sunday is June 8!

Email Jen at the church office (welcome@fccej.org) the following info:

- ♦ Name of graduate
- ♦ Graduation/recent picture & baby/young picture
- ♦ School (high school, undergrad, graduate) & degree if applicable
- ♦ Their plans for the future

The deadline for submissions is May 23. Contact the church office for more information.

Grief Support Group

2nd Thursday of each month from 10 to 11:30am in Marvin Lounge.

This 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 June 12. Please note, the group is taking a hiatus in July and August and will resume in September.

Scripture Study Group

Scripture Study Group, led by Mary McHugh, is exploring the Gospel of Luke. We meet in Marvin Lounge from 1:30-3pm on the 2nd & 4th Fridays of the month.

Come to any or all sessions!

Heavenly Food Pantry Initiative

The Heavenly Food Pantry is, by its very name, committed to feeding the folks in our community who experience food insecurity. But another significant goal of the Pantry is to ensure that our volunteers, who guarantee our success, are well-cared for. Volunteers perform a multitude of tasks to include stocking shelves, inventorying food to assure its freshness, collecting donations from our partners like Hannaford's and Costco, distributing food to places like Whitcomb Woods and Town Meadows, helping with food drives, setting up the pantry on open days and, of course, assisting clients as they select their food. We have recently learned that people may not be aware that the pantry has an advisory board to make decisions for the pantry as well as to resolve any issues. We encourage you to let us know how we're doing and welcome any suggestions about how we might better serve this community. We also look forward to working with you to resolve any concerns you may have. We want to make sure that our volunteers' experience continues to be pleasant, rewarding, and fun.

The board is comprised of the following people: Anita Guild, Mary Richer, Suzanne Reardon, Mary-Ellen Grove, Valerie Gabert, Mary Morris (a community member), Lisa Clark, Betsy Weischedel, Elaine Raymond and Rev. Mark Mendes. Please feel free to reach out to any of us with a concern. An initial contact can be made with Lisa Clark, Betsy Weischedel, or Elaine Raymond. Our contact information is in the church directory. We're here to keep the incredible mission of the Heavenly Food Pantry thriving and we thank you for your support!

Essex Pride Festival—Saturday, May 31

From the City of Essex Junction's first Gay Pride Event, FCCEJ has participated in supporting LGBTQ folks in their celebration of equal rights under the law. On May 31st, we will again host "games on the green" right in the middle of the field surrounded by performers and all sorts of organizations that also support equal rights for ALL people in our community. We'll have games set up for all to play, crafts for kids to sit down and create, and pamphlets sharing our church's journey toward, and support of, equality. 12 noon to 4pm at Maple Street Park.

This year, we have been invited to host a worship service to expand the City's Gay Pride Event which will be held on June 1st at 3pm in the FCCEJ Sanctuary. If you would like to help with any of these activities and or events, please contact the church office.

Weekly Calendar: May 18—May 25

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<u>Sunday, May 18</u> 8:30 & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming 10:30am: Faith Formation (PreK-8th) <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>Champlain Valley Association—Sanctuary</i>	<u>Monday, May 19</u> 9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, 2nd Floor Storage Room, Kitchen <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> Lunchtime Book Group—Marvin Lounge <i>3:30pm: Nepalese Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i> <i>7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge</i>
<u>Tuesday, May 20</u> 8:30: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge & Zoom [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89903982036] 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 7pm: CE—Marvin Lounge Communications—2nd Floor Program Room Trustees—Fellowship Hall	<u>Wednesday, May 21</u> 8am: VT Food Bank Delivery—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room 10am: Missions Committee—Marvin Lounge <i>Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop 5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal—Sanctuary 6pm: Men At First Rehearsal—West Wing <i>6:30pm: BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall, Gym</i> 7pm: Searchers—Marvin Lounge & Zoom [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85355169054]
<u>Thursday, May 22</u> 8:30am: Food Pantry Set Up—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge</i> 3pm: Food Pantry Distribution—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Sanctuary <i>5:30pm: Reiki Sharing—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>6:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i> <i>6:30: Eagle Scout Board of Review—West Wing</i> 7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary	<u>Friday, May 23</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 1:30pm: Bible Study—Marvin Lounge <i>6:30pm: Blue Spruce Grange—Fellowship Hall</i>
<u>Saturday, May 24</u> <i>8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary,</i> <i>West Wing</i> 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge</i>	<u>Sunday, May 25</u> 9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/ Streaming* 10am: All-Family Worship—Mt. Philo <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>Events in italics = Local Community Groups</i>

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]

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: Sue Conti

Human Resources:

Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Missions: Ann Marie Sullivan

Nominating: Lauren Starkey

Stewardship: Kathryn Brennan

Trustees:

John Burnett, Rob Gibson—Co Chairs

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman

Heavenly Food Pantry: Valerie Gabert