



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 Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 25, 2025

From May 25 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 Accepting and Serving All</i> <i>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.

Musical Introit

Step by Step

David Strasser

Call to Worship

Leader: The Gospel of John has Christ's Spirit present at the beginning of time and etched into every fiber of creation.

People: The Resurrected Christ is reflected in the birth, death and newness of life found in the created order.

Leader: The Gospel of John has Jesus of Nazareth one with the God of the Old Testament: the great I Am.

People: Jesus is the Good Shepherd and the Door of the Sheep, the True Vine and the Living Water, the Bread of Life and the Light of the World, The Way, Truth and Life, and the Resurrection.

Leader: The Gospel of John has Jesus breathe out his Spirit upon the disciples to empower them to forgive, live in peace and spread the Good News.

People: Christ's Spirit still reverberates in our world and absorbs into our lungs even as it touches our hearts and transforms our lives.

Leader: Come, let us worship the Living God found in Jesus Christ.

Deacon’s Prayer of Invocation and Unison Lord’s Prayer (“trespasses”)
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.

Children’s Message Mary McHugh

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 Mary McHugh

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other
A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Unison Prayer Response	<i>Rise Up</i>	Andra Day
I'll rise up, I'll rise like the day		
I'll rise up, I'll rise unafraid		
I'll rise up and I'll do it a thousand times again		
And I'll rise up, high like the waves		
I'll rise up, in spite of the ache		
I'll rise up and I'll do it a thousand times again		
I'll rise up, I'll rise up, I'll rise up. I'll rise.		

New Testament Scripture Readings		
Historical	Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23	[page 204]
Gospel	John 14:23-29	[page 83]

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and

Offertory

Prayer of Dedication

***Doxology**

Old Church Choir

Wedgeworth, Hulse, Willams

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**

America the Beautiful
[handout]

***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 stand if you are able**

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

*The flowers on the altar this morning are given by Wayne & Nancy Hall
In memory of their parents.*

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
Family and Friends of Geoff Grove
Juno Johnson
Karen
Judy Moreau
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 ~

- **Saturday, May 31**—Essex Pride Festival, 12-4pm at Maple Street Park
- **Sunday, June 1**—Music Appreciation & Celebration Sunday
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
 - ⇒ 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



VACATION BIBLE CAMP 2025

AUGUST 4—AUGUST 8

Register today!



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.

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 is extended to May 26. Contact the church office for more information.

Volunteer for Summer Music!!!

If you're now thinking, "Oh my gosh, the summer is soooo loooong...I'm really going to miss hearing/singing in the choirs and Finally at First..." fear not! There are ample opportunities to sing and/or play an instrument in church over the summer. Feel free to perform one or more of the following: Prelude, Introit, Anthem, Offertory

Feel free to collaborate with friends/family/neighbors whom you think may be interested!

Please reach out to Bethany Blake, Music Director, if you are willing to share your musical talents [bblake@fccej.org]

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. 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!

Weekly Calendar: May 25—June 1

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<p><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></p>	<p><u>Monday, May 26</u> Memorial Day—Church Office Closed 9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, 2nd Floor Storage Room, Kitchen <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>3:30pm: Nepalese Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i> <i>7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge</i></p>
<p><u>Tuesday, May 27</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> 5:30pm: Finance Committee—Marvin Lounge 7pm: Stewardship—Marvin Lounge</p>	<p><u>Wednesday, May 28</u> <i>10am: 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]</p>
<p><u>Thursday, May 29</u> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>2:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i> <i>6:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i> 7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary</p>	<p><u>Friday, May 30</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i></p>
<p><u>Saturday, May 31</u> <i>8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary, West Wing</i> 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>10:30am: Autism Playgroup—Gym</i> 12-4pm: Essex Pride Festival—Maple Street Park <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>3pm: Fanus Family Celebration—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen</i></p>	<p><u>Sunday, June 1</u> 9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 3pm: Pride Worship Service—Sanctuary</p>

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

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