



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 United Church of Christ
July 27, 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 In the Spirit of Christ</i>

Order of Worship

Prelude	<i>Allemande from Partita No. 4 in D Major BWV 828</i>	J.S. Bach
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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 Gary Hartmann
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>Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)</i>	Tomlin/Giglio/Newton Arr. Raney
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Call to Worship..... Gary Hartmann

Leader: God is eager to restore us to right relationships.

The Creator is eager to embrace us as divine offspring.

People: We have come to meet God who welcomes us.

We have gathered to experience God's steadfast love.

Leader: Listen, for God will speak to those who want to hear.

Turn your hearts toward the One who saves.

People: We come asking, searching, and knocking.

We seek the good that only God can provide.

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 Rev. Arnold Thomas

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Arnold Thomas

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response *Threefold Amen*

***Congregational Hymn of Choice**

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Torah Genesis 18:20-32 [page 11]

New Testament Gospel Luke 11:1-13 [page 55]

Special Music	<i>10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)</i>	Myrin & Redman Arr. Larson
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Summer Sermon *Is There a God Ethic* Rev. Arnold Thomas

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory *Kyrie* (excerpt) Based on music by Antonín Dvořák
arr. Ruth Elaine Schram
adapt. Gary Alan Smith

*Doxology

**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.

*Postlude

Sarabande from Suite in D Minor HWV 437 George Frederick Handel

*Please stand if you are able

- ◆ Sincere thanks this morning to Rev. Arnold Thomas for leading worship and providing the message, and to Amanda Palmer, Terri Livak, Andrea Sharp, and Bethany Blake for sharing their incredible musical talents with us!

***The flowers on the altar this morning are given
In memory of Diana Higgins, from her family.***

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.

Texas flood victims

Family and friends of Bruce Parker

Family and friends of Bruce Blackman

Family and friends of Malcolm LeVanway

Family and friends of Elaine Helmstutler

Family and friends of Ruth Furman

Janet Warden

Danair Williams

Joe Shields

Heather Rogers

Sean Garvey

Josh Winslow

Judy Moreau

Victims of gun violence and their families

Everyone experiencing uncertainty and fear
in their communities

Carol Daigle

Jon Eric Lindholm

Patty Giroux

All those affected by violence in Ukraine, the
Middle East, and around the world

Everyone that may be privately suffering

Vacation Bible Camp 2025—God is Calling You, Just as You Are

Join us on Saturday, August 23 from 9am to 12pm, and Sunday, August 24 from after Children's Moment to 11am for crafts, music, drama, science, snacks, and more! All children entering kindergarten through 8th grade are welcome.

We are thrilled to welcome Jordan Verasamy to the VBC team! Jordan has extensive experience working with kids and will be leading the weekend as well as organizing the drama component. The theme is based on the Jeremiah scripture (chapter 4, verses 1-10), as he is called by God. We're also in need of volunteers to assist with the various stations. All supplies and curriculum will be provided. Please contact the church office or Elizabeth to sign up.

Annual Summer Lawn Sale—Saturday, August 19 from 9am to 1pm

If you have items to donate you may bring them starting at 7am on the day of the sale, or you may make arrangements with the church office to drop them off early.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

The following volunteers are need for the lawn sale:

1. Setting up tents at 4:30pm on Friday, August 15th
2. Setting up tables & chairs at 6:30am on August 16th
3. Bringing tables & chairs back to the church at 1pm on August 16th
4. Bringing items from the West Wing of the church to the tables at 7am on August 16th
5. Volunteering on August 16th from 9am to 1pm

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the church office at welcome@fccej.org.

Bake Sale for J.U.M.P. (Joint Urban Ministry Project)

The Missions Committee is hosting a bake sale in conjunction with the annual lawn sale to support J.U.M.P. We are asking our fabulous, talented bakers at FCCEJ for donations. All items can be dropped at the church on Friday, August 15th with the items clearly marked for bake sale. Items can also be brought to the church on Saturday, August 16th, starting at 7am.

Altar Flowers

Flowers on the altar are a wonderful way to remember loved ones or celebrate a special day. We include a note in the bulletin about who donated the flowers and who/what they are honoring. Scan the QR code or use this link to sign up for the remaining Sundays in 2024:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0545A8AB2FAAF58-46881013-fccej>



SUMMER SCHEDULE 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 till August

Heavenly Food Pantry

We've been selected as a recipient for the Hannaford's "Fight Hunger Bag Program" for the month of July. Heavenly Food Pantry will receive \$1 from every purchase of a reusable bag for \$2.50 from the Hannaford's in Essex (21A Essex Way). The Food Pantry is always in need of reusable bags so consider donating it—with maybe some non-perishables to stock our shelves. Peanut butter, baked beans, cereal, spaghetti sauce, specialty soups, canned veggies, and condiments are most appreciated, and we also need empty one-dozen egg cartons.

Josh Pallotta House Soda Drive

When: Now through the Fall

What: Soda with sugar

Where: Big Blue Bin in the Fellowship Hall

Who: Josh's House—an organization that combines local and national resources, emergency services, and research to provide veterans the resiliency, transition and reintegration tools to help them sustain or return to full and healthy lives.

COTS Back to School Bonanza

COTS is seeking donations for their Back to School Drive which supports the Back to School Bonanza. Please consider donating money and new supplies to COTS. You can also donate through their Amazon Wish List: Search for **2025 COTS Back to School Wishlist** in your Amazon account.

The COTS Back to School Bonanza is a free kid-centric community event where any Vermont student in need can come get ready for a successful school year in a dignified, stress-free, and fun environment. The goal is to foster confidence through picking out school supplies and a backpack, choosing first day of school outfits, getting a haircut, and so much more. It is set up like a carnival so that students can have fun while they get ready for a successful school year!

The Back to School Bonanza will be held on August 2nd in the parking lot at COTS; 95 North Avenue in Burlington, from 12pm-3pm. The rain date is the following Saturday. More info can be found at cotsonline.org/backtoschool.

Weekly Calendar: July 27—August 3

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<u>Sunday, July 27</u> 9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>	<u>Monday, July 28</u> 9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge</i>
<u>Tuesday, July 29</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>	<u>Wednesday, July 30</u> <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop 6pm: Men At First Rehearsal—West Wing
<u>Thursday, July 31</u> 10am: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>6:30pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i>	<u>Friday, August 1</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>
<u>Saturday, August 2</u> <i>8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary,</i> <i>West Wing</i> <i>8:30am: Weight Loss Support Group—Fellowship</i> <i>Hall</i> <i>9:30am: Reiki II Class—Marvin Lounge</i> 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>	<u>Sunday, August 3</u> 9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>

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