



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

August 3, 2025

From May 25 through September 7, 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 Chaconne in F Major (excerpt) Jacques Du Phly

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 Andrea Sharp
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.

A Special Welcome to the Green Mountain Gospel Choir

Introit

Call to Worship..... Andrea Sharp

Leader: Listen, all who are fleeing the Holy One. God is calling us together.

People: O give thanks to God, for God's steadfast love endures forever.

Leader: God is eager to embrace us, and is waiting to satisfy our needs.

People: God fills those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Leader: Let us bury our selfish disobedience.

People: God leads us to a new identity, to new life.

We seek renewal in the image of our Creator.

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	<i>Interlude</i>	César Franck

***Congregational Hymn of Choice**

Scripture Readings		
Old Testament Wisdom	Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14, 2:18-23	[page 477]
New Testament Gospel	Luke 12:13-21	[page 57]
Special Music	<i>I Shall Wear a Crown</i>	Thomas Whitfield arr. Try McLaughlin

Summer Sermon	<i>Earthly Treasures & Heavenly Rewards</i>	Rev. Arnold Thomas
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The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Invitation, Sharing of the Elements and Prayer of Thanksgiving
Communion Music will be softly played during communion

Today, we will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion by intinction, which invites everyone to come forward to receive the elements from Rev. Thomas and or the Deacon. As you come forward, please take the bread and dip it ever so slightly into the cup and then partake. Be careful not to let your fingers go into the juice and if you drop a piece into the cup, leave it and simply take another piece. Once you have partaken, return to your seats. If you cannot get up to the table, simply tell a Deacon and it will be brought to you. We serve gluten-free bread and non-alcoholic juice—all are welcome at Christ’s table.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Jesus Promised

Tim Carpenter

***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.**

***Hymn**

For All the Saints

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***Benediction**

Pastoral Benediction Rev. Arnold Thomas

***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**

Chaconne in C Major (excerpt)

George Frederick Handel

***Please stand if you are able**

- ◆ Sincere thanks to Rev. Arnold Thomas for leading worship and providing the message, and to the Green Mountain Gospel Choir for sharing their incredible musical talents with us!

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

SUMMER SCHEDULE 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 till August

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.

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>



Annual Summer Lawn Sale

Save the date for our annual lawn sale—Saturday, August 16 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. Sign up at the table in the Fellowship Hall after worship.

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.

Weekly Calendar: August 3—August 10

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<u>Sunday, August 3</u> 9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>	<u>Monday, August 4</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, August 5</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> <i>5pm: BSA Troop 624 Leaders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>6:30pm: BSA Troop 624 District Meeting—Fellowship Hall</i> 7pm: Church Council—Marvin Lounge	<u>Wednesday, August 6</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 Bell Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary <i>BSA Troop 624 PLC—West Wing</i> 7pm: HRC—Marvin Lounge <i>BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall, Gym</i>
<u>Thursday, August 7</u> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>5pm: Reiki Share—Marvin Lounge</i>	<u>Friday, August 8</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>5pm: Blue Spruce Grange—Fellowship Hall</i>
<u>Saturday, August 9</u> <i>8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary, West Wing</i> <i>8:30am: Weight Loss Support Group—Fellowship Hall</i> 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>11am: Autism Playgroup—Gym</i> <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i>	<u>Sunday, August 10</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