



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 24, 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 *Air from Orchestral Suite No.3 BWV 1068 (arr. organ)* J.S. Bach

An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements Rev. Mark Mendes

*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.

Introit *Bound for the Promised Land* arr. Sondra Tucker

Call to Worship..... Andrea Sharp
Leader: Our God: the Creator of the Universe, the founder of love, the Spirit that draws us all together, comes into our lives in so many ways that the Divine Presence is almost impossible to see.

People: **Yet with minds to reflect, hearts to connect and souls to invisibly pull us into relationship, we are able to experience the Living God in powerful and seemingly magical ways.**

Leader: Come, let us enter into this sacred place with the ever encouraging hope that God will meet us here and warm our hearts in ways that will empower us to live into Christ's gospel.

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

Pastoral PrayerRev. Ron Faux

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response Chorale *In Thee is Gladness* [excerpt] J.S. Bach

***Congregational Hymn of Choice**

New Testament

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Luke 1:1-5 | Seeing God in All the Wrong Places [page 58] |
| Luke 5:6-9 | Figure It Out |
| Luke 5:10-17 | Let Me Show You the Gospel in Real Life |
| Luke 5:18-21 | Metaphors to Help You See the Gospel |
| Luke 5:22-30 | Surprise, Not Many People Get It and then Live It |
| Luke 5:31-35 | God's Sadness in Weeping |

Special Music *Christians We Have Met in Worship* arr. Sondra Tucker

Summer Sermon *What a Masterpiece* Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory *Simple Gifts* arr. Sondra Tucker

***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

Parthenia from John Playford's *Musick's Hand-Maid*

*Please stand if you are able

- ◆ Sincere thanks to Bethany Blake and the FCCEJ Currier Bell 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.

Colleen Kelly
Gracie O'Malley and family
George Beech
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 the violence in
Ukraine, Gaza, and
around the world
Everyone that may be
privately suffering

SUMMER SCHEDULE THROUGH SEPTEMBER 7

- ◆ 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 14
 - ⇒ Communion is served in the Sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of each month

SAVE THE DATE—SEPTEMBER 14 IS WELCOME BACK SUNDAY

- ◆ On September 14th, we leave behind our summer worshipping schedule and enter our program year with two services at 8:30 and 10:15am, except for the first Sunday of each month where we have one unified service at 10am.
- ◆ Join us after 2nd service for a barbeque lunch, hosted by our CE Committee, as well as a bouncy house, and a chance to catch up with friends about summer vacations, school plans and fall activities. This is a great Sunday to invite a friend or a neighbor to church.

WELCOME BACK SUNDAY: THE CE/F COMMITTEE DESSERT CHALLENGE!

Greetings one and all! One part of the planning for Welcome Back Sunday is always soliciting for desserts. This year the CE/F Committee is challenging all other committees to bring a dessert for everyone's enjoyment as well as engage in a friendly competition. We're looking for a dessert that's easy to serve that would feed a dozen or so people. Here's an opportunity for each committee to not only highlight their baking skills, but they could also feature what they are planning for the coming program year. Of course, anyone wanting to participate by bringing a dessert on their own is always welcome, as well as anyone who wants to pitch in on set-up, clean-up or even flipping burgers! We look forward to your entries. Happy Baking!

Burlington Pride Parade 2025

On Sunday, September 7, FCCEJ is participating in the Burlington Pride Parade along with other ONA churches in the Vermont UCC Conference. This year's theme is "Power in Resilience". Here are the details:

Lineup Location: St. Paul Street between Main & College (same as last year)

Lineup Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Parade Start: 12:00 PM

Please contact the church office if you would like to join us representing our faith family!

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 September 11.

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.

Heavenly Food Pantry

The Food Pantry continues to need reusable shopping bags as well as baked beans, chunky soups, canned pasta, peanut butter, and cereal.

We are also looking for volunteers who are able to deliver to our clientele that are unable to visit the food pantry in person. Please contact the Church Office or Anita Guild at anitalguild@gmail.com if you are interested and as always, thank you for your support of this meaningful and important ministry in our community!

FCCEJ Calendar Reminder

As we gear up to our program year, it is crucial to keep the FCCEJ Master Calendar up to date. The FCCEJ facility occupied every day of the week. Many internal committees have recurring meetings on the calendar, however, **PLEASE** confirm your meeting times with the church office, and check the calendar regularly—at least once a week. You can access the calendar in Sunday's bulletins, the weekly email, on bulletin boards at the parking lot door and by the admin office, and through our website: www.fccej.org/v5/calendar-news/calendar/

Weekly Calendar: August 24–August 31

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<p><u>Sunday, August 24</u> 9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming 9:15am: Vacation Bible Camp—West Wing, Gym <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i></p>	<p><u>Monday, August 25</u> 9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 7pm: Stewardship Skit Rehearsal—Sanctuary <i>7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge</i></p>
<p><u>Tuesday, August 26</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 Committee—Marvin Lounge Trustees—2nd Floor Program Room</p>	<p><u>Wednesday, August 27</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 <i>7pm: BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall, Gym</i></p>
<p><u>Thursday, August 28</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—Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, Kitchen <i>6:30pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i></p>	<p><u>Friday, August 29</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, August 30</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>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i></p>	<p><u>Sunday, August 31</u> 9am: All-Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>2:30pm: Hayes Family Gathering—Marvin Lounge</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Events in italics = Local Community Groups</i></p>

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