



# 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**

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*Second Service*

**The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction**  
**A United Church of Christ**  
**September 28, 2025**

*The first Sunday of each month we celebrate the Lord's Supper with one unified service at 10am. The remaining Sundays of each month we offer two distinct worship services. Our first service, at 8:30am, is traditional with our Sanctuary Choir and organ music. Our second service begins at 10:15 and is more contemporary with music from our Finally @ First Praise Band. Our first service is streamed every week, and our second service is streamed on the third Sunday of each month. Our Faith Formation Program for PreK-8th grade occurs during our second service. Our nursery is open for children 6 months-3 years at both services (self-serve at 8:30 and staffed at 10:15).*

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

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 Greeting ..... Jim Glatz

*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	<i>Washed by the Water</i>	Bo and Bear Rinehart
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Call to Worship..... Jim Glatz

Leader: Welcome, today we hear another great parable by Jesus who teaches us deep and abiding truths in narrative form.

**People: Jesus' stories teach us how to understand not only the nature of God, but how to claim the Divine in our daily lives.**

Leader: Jesus' way of teaching is easier to understand, but more challenging at the same time.

**People: Finding God in the midst of life is what the faith is all about. Come, let us enter the fierce, fun, and fantabulous journey of faithful living. Come, let us listen and learn from the greatest teacher of all time.**

**\*Opening Hymn**

***You Are the Voice***  
**(handout)**

**David Haas**

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

**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 Transition to Faith Formation**

**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

**Rev. Ron Faux**

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

**Musical Response**

***Lord, Listen to Your Children***

**Ken Medema**

**Lord, listen to Your children praying**

**Lord send Your Spirit in this place**

**Lord listen to Your children praying**

**Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.**

Scripture Readings

Old Testament

Prophetic

Jeremiah 32:1-15

[page 570: narrative]

New Testament

Gospel

Luke 16:19-31

[page 61]

Finally @ First Anthem

*Washed by the Water*

Bo and Bear Rinehart

## Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

*How Great is Our God*

Chris Tomlin

**\*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***We Shall Overcome* ✨

# 570

**\*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 the Finally @ First Praise Band for sharing their awesome musical talents with us this morning!

✨ *Presented in accordance with our Royalties for Spirituals Project: a practice of valuing musical contributions of enslaved Africans to American worship and song. We honor unrecognized musicians who created these pieces by singing them with reverence, gratitude, and open hearts. Royalties set aside for the use of these songs today will go to a local organization that supports African American musicians.*

## 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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or call (802) 878-5745. Unless otherwise specified, prayer requests will be printed in the bulletin for a month.

Jane Piper  
Tracy Grammer & Family  
Friends & family of Nancy  
Allen  
Mark Benton & Family  
Rob Robinson  
Sylvia Nyhagen  
Allysa Williams  
Kathy & Mike Murray  
Colleen Kelly

Janet Warden  
Danair Williams  
Joe Shields  
Heather Rogers  
Sean Garvey  
Josh Winslow  
**Judy Moreau**  
Victims of gun violence  
and their families  
Carol Daigle

Patty Giroux  
Everyone experiencing  
uncertainty and fear  
in their communities  
All those affected  
by the violence in  
Ukraine, Gaza, and  
around the world  
Everyone that may be  
privately suffering

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

### UPCOMING EVENTS—MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- ◆ Sunday, September 28: Organ Concert, 3pm in the FCCEJ Sanctuary  
Don't miss this rare opportunity to enjoy the talents numerous local organists in one church, on one day! Come to the Organ Concert celebrating the 40th anniversary of our organ! Featured organists include Eun Hee Park, Evan Allen, Wayne Schneider, Catherine McMaster, Bethany Blake and Marie Johnson.
- ◆ Sunday, October 5: Mission & LIFT (Living In Faith Together) Sunday  
Community BBQ in support of the 2026 Montana Service Trip
- ◆ Sunday, October 19: Stewardship Skit in Worship, both services
- ◆ Thursday, October 23: Dismas House Volunteer Appreciation Dinner,  
5pm at Holy Family Parish Hall—RSVP by October 8
- ◆ Sunday, October 26: Celebration Sunday / Bible Sunday
- ◆ Halloween Party, 11:30am at FCCEJ  
Craft Fest Sign Ups in Fellowship Hall
- ◆ Saturday, November 1: FCCEJ Grounds Spruce Up, 9am—12pm
- ◆ Saturday, November 8: Craft Fest, 9am to 3pm at FCCEJ
- ◆ Sunday, November 16: New Members Class, 11:30am in Marvin Lounge  
CC@F presents Diana Fanning, 3pm in the FCCEJ Sanctuary

### **Scripture Study Group**

Scripture Study Group, led by Mary McHugh, will begin exploring the book of Revelation.

#### **Please note the adjustment to the schedule and location:**

The group will start on Friday, September 26 and meet each Friday through October 24. 1:30 to 3pm in West Wing. All are welcome—come to any or all sessions!

### **Heavenly Food Pantry**

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

We are also in need of volunteers who can deliver to our clientele that are unable to visit the food pantry in person. Please contact the Church Office if you are interested and as always, thank you for your support of this meaningful and important ministry in our community!

### **Craft Fest—Saturday, November 8 from 9am to 3pm**

Time to start thinking about our big Craft Fest event coming up in November and how you can help. There are ample opportunities for everyone!

Sign-up sheets will be available in Fellowship Hall on October 19th, October 26th, and November 2nd after both services. The table will have sign-ups for sweet shoppe, luncheon items, silent auction and volunteering the day of the event. All donations for silent auction and non-food items for the luncheon will be accepted on these Sundays.

### **Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop**

The seasons are changing and the Shop is changing it's hours from Wednesday, 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm to Thursday, 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm. This change will take effect the first Thursday in October which is October 2nd. The October hours will be Tuesday, 10:00 - 1:00, Thursday, 3:00 - 6:00, Saturday, 10:00 - 1:00. The Shop will also be open on the first Sunday of the month, starting October 5th, from 11:30 to 12:30, for church members to drop off donations and shop.

### **Service Trip Community BBQ**

**Sunday, October 5th, after the 10am service**, the June 2026 Montana Service Trip is hosting a Community To-Go Barbecue! Each delicious meal will feature Rick Catering's famous chicken or pork barbecue sandwich, coleslaw, fruit salad, chips, a cookie, and a drink.

Suggested donation: \$15 per meal. Your support helps fuel our journey of service and connection. Weather permitting, we'll have tables set up on the lawn so you can enjoy your meal with friends and neighbors.

### **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 October 9.

### **Giving = Healthy Church**

Our 2026 Stewardship Campaign - Nutrition = Healthy Body; Giving = Healthy Church - will kick off on Sunday, October 19 at both services with the skit, *"It's a Blunderful Life."*

Men At First will join the cast to lead us all in song at the end.

Come watch our original comedy, written by Emily Guziak, and see what we think would happen if our church coffers suffered. Laugh and sing with us as we enter into this time of giving with curiosity and generosity.

### **Committee Fair – October 19**

Come join us in Fellowship Hall on **October 19, between services and after the second service**, to meet committee members, learn what they do, and discover how you can share your gifts. Coffee, conversation, and plenty of ways to get involved await!

### **Called to Care Meeting**

Check in Time! How are things going? Questions? What's coming up? (NEWS)

For members and anyone interested in being part of our Visitation Ministry.

Monday, October 13 from 10-11:30am in Marvin Lounge.

### **Dismas Volunteer Appreciation Dinner**

Vermont Dismas is excited to invite all dedicated Dismas volunteers to a special evening to celebrate you! As a heartfelt thank you for your time, talent, and commitment, Dismas is hosting a free spaghetti dinner. This is our way of expressing gratitude for everything you do to make our community stronger and brighter.

Dismas volunteers from First Congregational Church of Essex Junction and Holy Family, St. Lawrence and St. Pious churches are invited to the event, as well as people interested in becoming a volunteer.

Event Details:

- Date: Thursday, October 23
- Time: 56:30pm
- Location: Holy Family Parish Hall, 30 Lincoln St.
- Cost: Free for all volunteers/potential volunteers

The Burlington and Winooski Houses provide housing and meals and support services for the former prisoners transitioning to society. Volunteers prepare meals, deliver them and dine in community with the residents.

Expect a delicious meal, good company, and a chance to connect with fellow volunteers and Dismas staff and learn more about Dismas.

If possible, please RSVP by October 8 ([guziakemily335@gmail.com](mailto:guziakemily335@gmail.com)) to help us with food preparation. Bring your appetite and your inspiring spirit! Thank you for making a difference.

**\*Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections\***

*Events in italics = Local Community Groups*