



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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The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
World Wide Communion Sunday
October 5, 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>

Order of Worship

Prelude	<i>The Little Shepherd</i>	Claude Debussy
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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 GreetingAllison Van Steensburg
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>Fuga in A Minor</i>	Gottlieb Muffat
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Call to Worship.....Allison Van Steensburg
Leader: God of the Universe, we cry out to you for the world is unjust and full of violence. As we observe destruction, strife and contention all around us, we wonder where you are? The wicked are all around us making life difficult.

People: God says to hold on and keep watch. Stand on the rampart and wait, for God's vision will become clear. It will surely come and will indict the proud in their self imposed agony; the arrogant will not last, and the rich will not be satisfied.

Leader: So come, people of God, and allow God's presence to claim victory in the midst of seeming defeat, love in the midst of hatred, and forgiveness in the midst of animosity. Come, let us worship Jesus even now for the gifts he brings to our lives and the world.

*Opening Hymn	<i>Be Now My Vision</i>	# 451
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Unison Prayer of Confession and Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")

Loving God, we come before you sorry that we allow the darkness of the world to hide our light under a bushel. Forgive us when we allow the valley of the shadow to hide our true character of Holy love. Help us to not let the chaos of the world shape our moral character. Keep our hearts true so that mercy will continue to replace judgement, and forgiveness will continue to trump hatred. Help us to be true to you, true to your law, true to Christ's love and true to the Spirit's guidance. We pray this all and more in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us to say when praying.....

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.

The Assurance of Pardon

Leader: God created you. You remain the apple of God's eye. God continues to love you with abandon. God offers mercy, peace and forgiveness to all who will accept it.

Amen and Alleluia!

People: I accept God's forgiveness.

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 Spiritual Friends (PreK-5th)

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

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response

Sevenfold Amen

Peter Christian Lutkin

New Testament Gospel Reading

Luke 17:1-10

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Sanctuary Choir Anthem

With A Voice of Singing

Martin Shaw

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

We celebrate communion this morning by passing the elements out to the congregation. First, the Deacons will pass out the gluten-free bread; please hold it until the minister directs you to partake. Then the Deacons will pass out the cup of non-alcoholic grape juice, which you are free to partake anytime thereafter. This symbolizes both the individual and corporate nature of our faith. No matter who you are or where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome at Jesus' table.

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Toccata in C Major

Carlos Seixas

***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.**

HymnWon't You Let Me Be Your Servant*

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***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

March Op. 65 No. 10.

Serge Prokofiev

***Please stand if you are able**

- ◆ Sincere thanks to Bethany Blake and the FCCEJ Sanctuary Choir for sharing their awesome 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.

Family and friends of Judy
Moreau (*service is 10/9/25 at
11am in the Sanctuary*)

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

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 given by Kim Sonntag
In loving remembrance of her Mom, Barbara Broughton.***

UPCOMING EVENTS—MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- ◆ 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
- ◆ 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.

Nutrition = Healthy Body ~ Giving = Healthy Church

Our 2026 Stewardship Campaign - **Nutrition = Healthy Body; Giving = Healthy Church** - will kick off on Sunday, Oct. 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 brief comedy during worship 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: 5:30pm
- 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) to help us with food preparation. Bring your appetite and your inspiring spirit! Thank you for making a difference.

Weekly Calendar: October 5—October 12

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<p><u>Sunday, October 5</u> 10am: Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming 10:15am: Spiritual Friends (PreK-5th) 11am: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i></p>	<p><u>Monday, October 6</u> 9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room 11:30am: <i>Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 6pm: Bell Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary 7:30pm: <i>Group Victory—Marvin Lounge</i></p>
<p><u>Tuesday, October 7</u> 8:30: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge/Zoom: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89903982036] 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop 10:15am: Intermediate Tai Chi—Fellowship Hall <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—Fellowship Hall</i> 7pm: Church Council—Marvin Lounge</p>	<p><u>Wednesday, October 8</u> <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 6pm: Men At First Rehearsal—West Wing 7pm: Searchers—Marvin Lounge <i>BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall, Gym</i></p>
<p><u>Thursday, October 9</u> 10am: Grief Support—Marvin Lounge 11am: Judy Moreau Memorial & Reception—Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge</i> 3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>3pm: Alpha Delta Kappa—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>5:30pm: Reiki Share—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>6:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary</i> 7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary</p>	<p><u>Friday, October 10</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 1:30pm: Bible Study—Marvin Lounge <i>6pm: Blue Spruce Grange—Fellowship Hall</i></p>
<p><u>Saturday, October 11</u> <i>8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary, West Wing</i> 8:30am: <i>Weight Loss Support —Fellowship Hall</i> 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>GMKCS—Gym, 3rd Floor, Kitchen, West Wing</i></p>	<p><u>Sunday, October 12</u> 8:30* & 10:15am: All Family Worship—Sanctuary/Streaming* <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Events in italics = Local Community Groups</i></p>