



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



Second Service

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
A United Church of Christ
October 12, 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 10:15am 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

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 Riley Elliot
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

Call to Worship..... Riley Elliot
Leader: After enslavement, the Israelites were in the wilderness for forty years wandering aimlessly, murmuring incessantly and complaining about their hardships.

People: And yet, they were led by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night; they received the law to guide their society; they built a moveable church and established worship practices.

Leader: The Assyrian and Babylonian Empires defeated, destroyed and deported Israel's leaders and left the country in depressed disarray.

People: And yet, during deportation they codified their scriptures, excelled in surviving, and became strong in their faith.

Leader: Turning toward Jerusalem, Jesus faced increased resistance, struggling disciples, the brunt of violence by both Jewish leadership and Roman authority and ultimate death.

People: And yet, in the midst of the valley, hope sprang to life, light obliterated the darkness and Jesus rose victorious from the grave.

Leader: We are people who believe that we bloom where we are planted. We look to the future with hope and with Christ, we transform the most entrenched evil into moments of growth, triumph and love. Come, let us worship our unbelievable and mysterious God.

***Opening Hymn**

When Israel Was in Egypt's Land 

572

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 Return to Their Families

**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

Mary McHugh

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response by Men At First

***Hymn**

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

226

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Prophetic

Jeremiah 29:1-7

[page 566]

New Testament Gospel

Luke 17:11-19

[page 61]

Special Music by Men At First

Sermon

Bloom Where You Are Planted

Rev. Mendes

A Stewardship Witness by Peter Schmaltz

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Musical Offering by Men At First

***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**

There Is a Balm in Gilead 

553

***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

***Please stand if you are able**

- ◆ Sincere thanks to Men At First, under the direction of Bill Bickford, 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 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
Jane Piper
Gracie O'Malley & Family
Tracy Grammer & Family
Friends & family of
Nancy Allen
Mark Benton & Family
Rob Robinson
Allysa Williams

Kathy & Mike Murray
Colleen Kelly and Family
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 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

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.

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 need volunteers! The pantry has two distribution days each month and we're looking for people to help our guests navigate through the process. We also need people that will deliver to our clientele who are unable to visit the food pantry in person. The time commitment isn't extensive, but the rewards to your spirit definitely are! 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!

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

Craft Fest is quickly approaching and we need volunteers! 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.

Craft Fest Luncheon Needs

The Craft Fest Luncheon Team is looking for folks who love to cook! We are in need of the following main dish items for the November 8th Craft Fest Luncheon: Butternut squash, meat chili, vegetarian chili, and mac-n-cheese.

We also need the following items: Shredded Cheddar Cheese, Chips, Cream, Ice, Hotdog Rolls, Coke/orange soda/Sprite, Bottled water, Potato Chips/Doritos, Please stop by our table after the church services on October 19 to sign up OR contact Janne Giles to make or donate for any of the above food items at giles.janne52@gmail.com.

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

The seasons are changing and the Shop has changed its hours! New hours are Tuesday, 10am-1pm, Thursday, 3pm-6pm, Saturday, 10am-1pm and open the first Sunday of the month, from 11:30am to 12:30pm, for church members to drop off donations and shop after worship.

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 November 13.

Nutrition = Healthy Body ~ Giving = Healthy Church

Our 2026 Stewardship Campaign - **Nutrition=Healthy Body; Giving=Healthy Church** - kicks 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!

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: 5-6:30pm
- 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 15** (guziakemily335@gmail.com) to help us with food preparation. Bring your appetite and your inspiring spirit! Thank you for making a difference.

Aurora Chamber Singers with Bethany Blake

Bethany Blake is playing organ & piano for the Aurora Chamber Singers concert at College Street Congregational Church in Burlington on Sunday, Nov. 9, beginning at 4pm. The organ console was replaced this month, so it is like a new instrument! On top of that, acoustics in this sister church are outstanding. The concert is based on early and modern settings of the same sacred texts, and it is the choir's debut with our new director Cameron Brownell. Guest cellist Frances Rowell is also performing a piece with Bethany.

Tickets are available online at <https://sevendaystickets.com/e/through-a-glass-darkly/tickets> or at the door. Hope to see you there!

“Drop-In” Choir

Come one, come all, to our “Drop-in Sundays” choir days on the first Sunday of each month, when there is only one worship service at 10 am. Please warm up with the choir at 9:30 am, and then join us during the service as we praise God through music! The sheet music will be provided at those warmups, and can also be requested ahead of time if you wish. Thank you!

Upcoming “Drop-in” dates: Nov. 2 and Nov. 30

Weekly Calendar: October 12—October 19

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, October 12

8:30* & 10:15am: All Family Worship—
Sanctuary/Streaming*
11:30am: Junior High Youth—Kitchen, Program
Room, Youth Room
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, October 14

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
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
*6:30pm: BSA Three Rivers District Roundtable—
Fellowship Hall, 2nd Floor Program Room*
7pm: Deacons—Marvin Lounge

Thursday, October 16

11am: Music Lesson—Sanctuary
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge
3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
5:30pm: Reiki Healing—Marvin Lounge
6:15pm: Music Rehearsal—Sanctuary
6:30pm: Cub Scout Pack 630—Fellowship Hall
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

Saturday, October 18

8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge
*The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary,
West Wing*
8:30am: Weight Loss Support —Fellowship Hall
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
GMKCS—Gym, 3rd Floor, Kitchen, West Wing

Monday, October 13

Indigenous People's Day—Office Closed
9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall,
Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room
10am: Called to Care—Marvin Lounge
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
1pm: Food Pantry Set Up—Fellowship Hall,
Kitchen, Storage Room
5:30pm: Food Pantry Distribution—Kitchen,
Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary
6pm: Bell Choir Rehearsal—Gym
Cub Scout Den Meeting—West Wing
7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, October 15

10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
6pm: Men At First Rehearsal—Sanctuary
Stewardship Skit Rehearsal—Sanctuary
7pm: Searchers—Marvin Lounge
BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall, Gym

Friday, October 17

8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's
10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
1:30pm: Bible Study—West Wing
Bridge Group—Marvin Lounge
*7pm: Burlington Amateur Radio Club—Marvin
Lounge*

Sunday, October 19

8:30* & 10:15am: All Family Worship—
Sanctuary/Streaming*
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall

Events in italics = Local Community Groups