



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



Deacon's Prayer of Invocation and Unison Lord's Prayer

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 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 Peer Groups

**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

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.

New Testament Gospel Reading

John 11:1-45 in parts

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Anthem

Better Than a Hallelujah

Sarah Hart and Chapin Hartford

Lenten Meditation

The Ultimate Sermon

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Thomas Dorsey

*Doxology

All Glory, Laud and Honor

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**All glory, laud and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosanna's ring!
The people of the Hebrews with palms adorned your way;
Our praise and prayer and anthems we offer you this day.**

Congregational Reflection

Scripture teaches us that during early church's worship services, a time was provided for folks to bear witness to how the Holy Spirit had spoken to them during the worship service or in their lives: theological or scriptural insights, spiritual reflections, personal witness, prophetic guidance, or personal confession or sharing. It was thought that God speaking to one person could positively affect another and draw the community into a closer relationship with God. So here is a little time to do just that.....

***Hymn**

Amazing Grace

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***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.

Postlude

***Please stand if you are able**

- ◆ Sincere thanks to Finally @ First Praise Band, under the direction of Rick Dooley for sharing their amazing musical talents with us this morning!



***The flowers on the altar today are given by The Taylor Family
In celebration and remembrance of Toni Taylor,
on what would have been her 101st birthday.***

OUR PRAYER MINISTRY

If you desire prayers for yourself or a loved one; or if you wish for a call from a pastor, you may use the Friendship Pads, email welcome@fccej.org, or call (802) 878-5745. Unless otherwise specified, prayer requests will be printed in the bulletin for a month.

Rose Drost	Stephanie Repolle O’Flaherty	Patty Giroux
Bill Bickford Sr.	Audrey MacGibbon	Everyone experiencing uncertainty and fear in their communities
Michael Hahner	Patty Geiger	
Bill Bickford Jr.	Thomas Cencer	All those affected by the violence around the world
Elizabeth O’Beirne & Family	Tatyana Szymanski	Everyone that may be privately suffering
Joe Shields	Jane Piper	
Jeffrey Basiliere	Josh Winslow	
Elizabeth Stone	Carol Daigle	

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

- **Palm Sunday—March 29**
Worship services at 8:30 and 10:15. Faith Formation during second service
- **Good Friday—April 3**
Ecumenical worship service at 12 noon in the FCCEJ Sanctuary
- **Easter Sunday—April 5**
Sunrise service at 6:30am at Holy Family Gazebo—30 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction
Light breakfast (pastries, muffins, fruit, etc..) at FCCEJ starting at 7am
All-Family worship at 8:30 and 10:15 in the FCCEJ Sanctuary

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **Community Concerts At First presents Tom Cleary & Amber deLaurentis:** Today, Sunday, March 22—3pm in the Sanctuary
- **Seder Meal:** Saturday, March 28—6pm in the Fellowship Hall. Reservations are required—the event is free but seating is limited.
- **New Members Class:** Sunday, March 29—11:30am in Marvin Lounge
- **Free Dinner for Young Families:** Friday, March 3—5:30pm in the Fellowship Hall
- **Deacon Ordination:** Sunday, April 12—ONE SERVICE AT 10AM
- **FCCEJ Leadership Workshop:** Sunday, April 19 at 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall

Stay Connected!

Our weekly EConnection contains timely information about the FCCEJ faith community including children/youth happenings, special events, links to online bulletins and worship services, and our current calendar. Our monthly newsletter “SPIRIT@FIRST” is available by “snail mail” and email, as well as on our website. Please share your contact information via the Friendship Pad and indicate which communications you are interested in receiving.

The Seder Meal—Saturday, March 28 at 6pm

We are pleased to once again offer a Seder Meal during Lent. This is the Passover meal and mirrors the repast that Jesus and his disciples experienced at the last supper. During the Seder meal, we will remember the Passover story and eat dinner together.

We are limited to 75 people due to space constraints; tickets are available in the church office. The meal is free; tickets are for planning purposes. This replaces the traditional Maundy Thursday service. **Tomorrow, Monday, March 23, is the last day to get your tickets!**

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 April 9.

Free Dinner for Young Families

On the first Friday of each month, we host a free dinner for families of elementary-age children. No agenda, no program—come and eat and visit with other families. Next dinner is Friday, April 3 from 5:30 to 7 in the Fellowship Hall. Soup, salad, sandwiches, fruit, and dessert.

Age Well Vermont Workshop

Age Well and FCCEJ are hosting a workshop for seniors and their families and caregivers. The event will include information on service and resources that Age Well offers as well as how programs are responding to the changes in federal funding, a Q & A period, and giveaways from Age Well and FCCEJ.

EVENT DETAILS:

- Thursday, April 30 in the FCCEJ Fellowship Hall
 - 39 Main Street, Essex Junction
- Continental Breakfast at 8:30am
- Workshop Begins at 9am
- Event is free

For more information, please contact the church office at: 802-878-5745 or welcome@fccej.org

New Member's Class Offered

Do you like the values of love, justice, inclusion and diversity that we lift up as Christ's teachings here at FCCEJ? If so, then maybe it's time you join this great church. Both God and all of us need you to help us spread Jesus' love around liberally to people who need it and to a world in desperate need of some tenderness and light.

You are invited to attend our New Member's Class on Sunday, March 29 after the second service around 11:30am in the Marvin Lounge. Come and learn more about the UCC and FCCEJ in a relaxed setting with Rev. Mark and one of our Deacons. If you need childcare, please contact the church office. Lunch will be provided for all. The class will last about an hour and a half.

Weekly Calendar: March 22—March 29

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Sunday, March 22

8:30* & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming*
11:30am: Pastoral Search Cottage Meetings—Marvin Lounge (Adults)
2nd Floor Program Room (Youth)
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
3pm: Community Concerts At First—Sanctuary

Tuesday, March 24

8:30: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge/Zoom: [<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89903982036>]
10:15am: Intermediate Tai Chi—Fellowship Hall
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
5:30pm: Finance—Marvin Lounge
7pm: Stewardship—Marvin Lounge
Trustees—2nd Floor Program Room

Thursday, March 26

8:30am: Food Pantry Set Up—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Storage Rooms
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge
12pm: Calcutta Team—2nd Floor Program Room
3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
Food Pantry Distribution—Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary, Kitchen
6:30pm: Music Lesson—Sanctuary
Cub Scout Lion Den - Program Room
7pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

Saturday, March 28

8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge
The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary, West Wing
8:30am: Weight Loss Support —Fellowship Hall
110am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
GMKCS—Gym, 3rd Floor
6pm: Seder Meal—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen

Monday, March 23

9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
7pm: Pastoral Search Committee—2nd Floor Program Room
7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge

Wednesday, March 25

10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
5pm: Essex Pediatrics Workshop—2nd Floor Program Room, Gym
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal—Sanctuary
7pm: Searchers—Marvin Lounge
Lenten Prayer Time—Sanctuary
BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall

Friday, March 27

8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's Deli
10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall
11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall
1:30pm: Bible Study—Marvin Lounge
6:30pm: Blue Spruce Grange—Fellowship Hall

Sunday, March 29

Palm Sunday

8:30* & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming*
10am: Heavenly Harmony Rehearsal—Marvin Lounge
11:30am: New Members Class—Marvin Lounge
Youth Group to Burlington
1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

Staff

Senior Pastor: Rev. Mark Mendes [mmendes@fccej.org]
Children's Ministry Coordinator: Elizabeth O'Beirne [childrensministry@fccej.org]
Music Director: Bethany Blake [bblake@fccej.org]
Church Administrator: Jen Kelly [welcome@fccej.org]
Social Media Marketing Coordinator: Andrea Sharp [socialmedia@fccej.org]
Commissioned Assistant Minister: Bob Driver

Music

Chair of Music: Steph Field
Finally @ First Director: Rick Dooley
Men At First Director: Bill Bickford

Officers

President: Terry Stein
Vice President: Kathryn Brennan
Financial Secretary: Ann Gray [finances@fccej.org]
Assistant Financial Secretary: Linda Bogardus
Treasurer: Darryl Koch [treasurer@fccej.org]
Assistant Treasurer: Matt Clark [mattclark48discovery@gmail.com]
Clerk: Alison Wermer
Assistant Clerk: Brenda Dawson
Historian: Ann Gray
Internal Auditors: Dan Petherbridge, Alan Kinney

Committee Chairs

<u>Christian Formation:</u> Terri Livak	<u>Hospitality:</u> Sue Conti
<u>Communications:</u> Francis Gravel, Beth Warren—Co-Chairs	<u>Human Resources:</u> Terry Stein
<u>Deacons:</u> Judy McCullen, Bob Driver—Co-Chairs	<u>Missions:</u> Ann Marie Sullivan
<u>Finance & Pastoral Relations:</u> Kathryn Brennan	<u>Nominating:</u> Lauren Starkey
	<u>Stewardship:</u> Beth Volker
	<u>Trustees:</u> Rob Gibson

Recognized Groups

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman
Heavenly Food Pantry: Betsy Weischedel, Lisa Clark