



# 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](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) **Website:** [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)





Deacon's Prayer of Invocation & 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\* (PreK-8th)**

**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.**

*\*10:15 service\**

*Parents, please remember to sign your children out of their Peer Groups by 11:30*

Pastoral Prayer

Pastor Bob

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

**Musical Response**

**Lord, I Need You**

**Lord I need You, oh I need You.**

**Every hour I need You.**

**My one defense, my righteousness,**

**O God, how I need You.**

**You're my one defense, my righteousness.**

**O God, how I need You.**

New Testament Scripture Readings

Epistle I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Page 159

Read by Peter Bero

Gospel Luke 24:36-53

Page 69

Read by Deacon Paula Sargent, 8:30

Deacon Tobe Zalinger, 10:15

Anthem

*Give It All Away*

David Frey / Ben McDonald

Sermon

*Taking Our Cue from the Boss or  
From Narrative to Doctrine*

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Pastor Bob

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

*God of Wonders*

Marc Byrd and Steven Hindalong

**\*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**

*Go Make a Difference*

Steve Angrisano /

Tom Tomaszek

[handout]

**\*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 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 Sue & Dennis Conti  
In memory of Elenor Colburn.*

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

Family & Friends of Polly McEwing	Family & friends of Barbara Williams	Josh Winslow
Sharon Dettnerieder and the Owens Family	Shashaunah	Tatyana Szymanski, Bobby Evans, and all troops currently deployed
Family & Friends of Jean Tucker	Michael Hahner	Carol Daigle
Dennis McMahan	Bill Bickford Jr.	Patty Giroux
Myrna Dooney	Elizabeth O'Beirne & Family	Everyone experiencing uncertainty and fear in their communities
Family & Friends of Bill Bickford Sr.	Joe Shields	All those affected by the violence around the world
Myrna Lindholm	Jeffrey Basiliere	Everyone that may be privately suffering
Faye Fittipoldi	Elizabeth Stone	
Mike and Carole Allen	Patty Geiger	
	Thomas Cencer	
	Jane Piper	

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **Blessing the Animals:** Sunday, May 17—after each service on the church grounds
- **Confirmation Sunday:** Sunday, May 24—One Service at 10am
- **Music Sunday:** Sunday, May 31—One Service at 10am
- **Ice Cream Social:** Sunday, June 7—after worship (at 9am) in Fellowship Hall
- **Celebrating Graduates:** Sunday, June 14

### FCCEJ SUMMER SCHEDULE—STARTS JUNE 7

June through August—One Service at 9am  
In the Sanctuary and Streamed ~ All Family Worship  
Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month

### CELEBRATION OF LIFE SERVICES

**Jean Tucker's** Celebration of Life service will be on May 30<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at FCCEJ  
with a reception to follow.

**Bill Bickford Sr's** Celebration of Life service will be on June 13<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at FCCEJ  
with reception to follow.

### **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. The kids are welcome to burn off some energy in the gym, too! All are welcome—bring a friend!

Next dinner is Friday, June 5 from 5:30 to 7. If the weather cooperates, we're thinking of a summer cookout—burgers, etc... with tables and games set up outside.

### **Celebrating Graduates**

The end of another school year is just around the corner and we want to celebrate all high school, trade school, college, and post graduate degree recipients related to the FCCEJ family.

Please email Jen at the church office ([welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)) the following info:

- ◆ Name of graduate
- ◆ Graduation/recent picture & baby/young picture
- ◆ School (high school, undergrad, graduate) & degree if applicable
- ◆ Their plans for the future

We will acknowledge this milestone in worship on **Sunday, June 14** and share the information in the July/August newsletter. **Deadline is June 1.** Congratulations, Class of 2026!

### **Searchers**

The Wednesday Night Searchers will be viewing and discussing movies through June.

**May 20:** The Shack

**May 27:** Babbette's Feast

**June 3:** Left Behind

**June 10:** The Davinci Code

Wednesday nights at 7pm in Marvin Lounge.

### **May's Special Offering ~ Per Capita Dues**

Every year, FCCEJ contributes to the Vermont Conference, of which we are a part. This is called our per capita dues. These dues cover such things as clergy gatherings and educational support, pastoral search and call assistance, faith formation resources, outdoor ministries, training and resources for staff, and much more. They are assessed on a per member basis according to the data reported by cto the Conference as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year. This year, 2026, our per capita dues amount is \$16.38 per member. If possible, please pay during the month of May and, if you are able, please double your offering to cover the dues for members who may be unable to give at this time. Of course, any donation later in the year is also welcome.

### **Three Summer Evenings**

During the summer months, the Christian Formation Committee invites the entire church to attend *Three Summer Evenings!*

1. June 17 will be a campfire, along with s'mores, singing and stories
2. July 22 will be camp games
3. August 19 will be a street dance.

Food enough to call dinner will be provided each evening. Plan to join us as we follow the story of Moses through fun, fellowship and faith learning.

## Weekly Calendar: May 17—May 24

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

### Sunday, May 17

**Blessing the Animals—after each service**

8:30 & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming

9:30am: Joyful Noise Rehearsal—Marvin Lounge

*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall*

### Monday, May 18

9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall*

Lunchtime Book Group—Marvin Lounge

6pm: Bell Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

7pm: Pastoral Search Committee—2nd Floor Program Room & Zoom

*7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge*

### Tuesday, May 19

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*

3:30pm: Food Pantry Committee—Marvin Lounge

7pm: Christian Formation—Fellowship Hall

Communications Committee—Program Room

### Wednesday, May 20

8am: Food Bank Delivery—Fellowship Hall

*10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall*

Missions Committee—Marvin Lounge

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall*

5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal—Sanctuary

6:30pm: Men At First Rehearsal—West Wing

7pm: Searchers—Marvin Lounge

*BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall*

### Thursday, May 21

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge*

3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

*5:30pm: Reiki Share—Marvin Lounge*

*6:30pm: Cub Scouts Pack 630—Fellowship Hall, Parking Lot*

Estate Planning Seminar—Holy Family Parish Hall

### Friday, May 22

8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's Deli

10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall*

### Saturday, May 23

*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*

*Bluebird Montessori School Open House—West Wing*

### Sunday, May 24

**Pentecost / Confirmation Sunday**

10am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming\*

9:30am: Joyful Noise Rehearsal—Marvin Lounge

*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall*

*Bluebird Montessori School Open House—West Wing*

2pm: Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

*Events in italics = Local Community Groups*

# **FCCEJ MINISTRY DIRECTORY**

## **Staff**

Senior Pastor: Rev. Mark Mendes [mmendes@fccej.org]

Commissioned Assistant Minister: Bob Driver [pastorbob@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 [andrea.sharp@gmail.com]

## **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 McGeary

Clerk: Alison Wermer

Assistant Clerk: Brenda Dawson

Historian: Ann Gray

Internal Auditors: Dan Petherbridge, Alan Kinney

## **Committee Chairs**

Christian Formation: Terri Livak

Communications:

Francis Gravel, Beth Warren—Co-Chairs

Deacons:

Judy McCullen, Bob Driver—Co-Chairs

Finance & Pastoral Relations:

Kathryn Brennan

Hospitality: Sue Conti

Human Resources: Terry Stein

Missions: Ann Marie Sullivan

Nominating: Lauren Starkey

Stewardship: Beth Volker

Trustees: Rob Gibson

## **Recognized Groups**

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop: Sandy Tallman

Heavenly Food Pantry: Betsy Weischedel, Lisa Clark