

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
Appreciation Sunday & Montana Team Blessing
June 7, 2026**

Our worship opportunities during the year offer two services: one traditional with our outstanding organist and Sanctuary Choir at 8:30 a.m. and one less traditional with our talented Finally @ First Band and our Faith Formation Program for our children at 10:15 a.m. We meet together with communion on the first Sunday of each month. Everyone is welcome to join us as a precious child of God. Each week our service is streamed for all to see live or whenever they would like; check it out on our web page at fccej.org. From June 7th through September 6th, we have one service at 9:00 a.m. with our organist and a group of talented volunteers offering their musical abilities to God and our congregation.

*A Welcoming Community Accepting and Serving All
In the Spirit of Christ*

Order of Worship

- Prelude *Courante from Suite in F Major* BWV anh. 80 J.S. Bach
- An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements..... Rev. Mendes
*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey
you are welcome in this place.*
- Deacon's Greeting..... Riley Elliott
Our Deacon will welcome everyone to our community of faith; ask if anyone has special joys to share, 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 *Steal Away*  Wallace Willis
- Call to Worship
Leader: God gifts us the beauty of creation.....
People: And we seek to be good stewards of God's created order.
Leader: God plants fairness and equality through the law.....
People: And we work to create a just society for all.
Leader: God came to the world in Jesus of Nazareth who taught love....
People: And with compassion, we work to make the world better.
Leader: God sent the Spirit to draw us into community.....
People: And we use our gifts to draw all people together for goodness.
Everyone: God coming to us in myriad and magical ways calls us to volunteer in ways that make for peace, instills love and builds a stronger community. Come let us re-commit our time, treasure, and talent to partner with God with hope for a brighter future.

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

Appreciating Our Teachers

Elizabeth & CF

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 Pastor Bob

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Prayer Response

Somebody's Knockin' at Your Door ✨

Spiritual

New Testament Scripture Readings

I Corinthians	12:4-13	[page 133]	Pastor Bob
	12:14-31	[page 133]	Deacon Riley Elliott
	13:1-8a	[page 134]	Rev. Mendes

Anthem

Here Comes the Sun

George Harrison

Steph Field, vocals; Kim Sonntag, guitar

Appreciation Meditation

The Heart of the Gospel

Rev. Mendes

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Rev. Mendes and Pastor Bob

*This month, we will share the bread and cup by **congregational intinction**, which means that the Deacons will pass out both the bread and the cup together and each member will receive the elements and pass it to the person sitting next to them. This emphasizes the personal connections we have with each other even in the midst of community. The juice is non-alcoholic and the bread is gluten free so that everyone may feel welcome.*

Invitation, Passing Out the Elements & Prayer of Thanksgiving

Communion Music by Bethany Blake

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Polonaise from Anna Magdalena

J. S. Bach
Notebook BWV anh. 117b

***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.**

Blessing the Montana Service Trip Volunteers

The Introduction

Pastor Bob: We greet you in the name of Jesus who calls all of us to put our faith into action by loving our neighbors, taking care of the poor and standing up for justice. The Apostle Paul proclaimed that all of us have gifts from the Spirit of God to help make the world a better place.

People: The gifts, just like all of us, are all different, but every single one comes from God and should be used to help people and make society kinder.

Deacon: The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all. Christ is like a single body, which has many parts. It is still one body even though it is made up of different parts.

People: All of us are Christ's body and each one is a part of it.

The Presentation

Service Trip Leader: Through prayer, planning and preparation, our church will embark on an Mission Service Trip to the Blackfeet Nation in Montana. Following Christ's call, our church will help the Blackfeet people who continue to be oppressed.

Pastor Bob: These people have responded to Christ's call to love our neighbors in the Blackfeet Nation by offering their time, talent and treasure to help make their lives, homes, and wider community better.

Deacon: These people have accepted their call to be our short term Global Service Volunteers and are before us in witness to their willingness to serve. They are:

Danielle Charlebois, Lisa Clark, Brenda Dawson, Monica John, Cathy LaPierre, Derek and Isaac Lyman, Laura and Betty Marthaler, Mark Mendes, Bill Nedde, Andrea Sharp, Wendy Wark, and Betsy Weischedel.

The Questions

People: It is an honor to be entrusted to be a Global Service Trip Volunteer for our church. Having considered your duties and responsibilities, are you prepared to spread some of God's kindness around in Montana? If so, please say, I am...

Candidates: I am.

Deacon: Do you promise to show forth the love of Christ and represent our church with honor, grace and joyful reverence?

Candidates: I do.

Mission Leader: Members and friends of First Church, you have heard the promises of these people to be your servants to the Blackfeet Nation. Let us affirm our intention to live in covenant with them and support their ministry among us. Let us rise and wish them well as they represent all of us on this important venture.

People: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in the service of humanity. We promise to love you, honor your work in the Blackfeet Nation, and support you as we all strive to create a just community in Christ's name in Essex Junction and the world.

The Laying on of Hands

Leader 1: The laying on of hands is the symbolic act whereby the church in every age recognizes God's call to ministry in the lives of faithful men and women and asks the Holy Spirit to confer upon them the gifts of ministry. We lay hands upon these people so that the power of the Holy Spirit may empower them to be your emissaries in Montana.

[Family members and interested parties come forward]

People: May the Holy Spirit strengthen and equip you with everything good to do God's will and to be a great First Church representative. Receive the authority to represent our church in spreading Christ's love to a people in great need.

The Declaration

Deacon: In the name of Jesus Christ, we the people of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction rejoice to announce: You are authorized short-term emissaries of First Church! In accordance with the faith and order of our church, we offer you our praise, our well wishes in your adventures and we extend to you the right hand of Christian fellowship.

[Applause and hand shaking all around]

*Benediction

Pastoral Benediction and Closing Words of Appreciation

*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

Gigue from Suite in F Major

BWV anh. 80 J.S. Bach


*Please stand if you are able



2025-2026 Faith Formation Volunteers

Jenny Bourn	Justin King	Matt Noel
Mindy Bickford	Mel Gibson King	Gretchen Owens
Lara Kalix-Crisafi	Eric Lindholm	Amanda Palmer
Lorinda Elliott	Terri Livak	Beth Poratti
Janne & Howard Giles	Derek Lyman	Mary Ann Phelps
Patty Giroux	Kevin McCullen	Judy Roy
Micah Heaney-Forbes	Mary McHugh	Ann Marie Sullivan
Barb Isham	Jessica Moos	Carl Wermer

***The flowers on the altar today are given by Ron & Joan Faux
In celebration of their 65 years of marriage on June 10.***

 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 will go to a local organization that supports African American musicians.

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.

Family & Friends of
Faye Fittipoldi
Cheryl Dow
Meg Audette and Family
Fletch Coolidge
Annette Whitemar
Laura Cunningham-Firkey
and Family
Family & Friends of
Polly McEwing
Sharon Dettenrieder and the
Owens Family
Dennis McMahan
Family & Friends of
Bill Bickford Sr.

Myrna Lindholm
Myrna Dooney
Mike and Carole Allen
Family & friends of
Barbara Williams
Shashaunah
Michael Hahner
Bill Bickford Jr.
Elizabeth O'Beirne & Family
Joe Shields
Elizabeth Stone
Patty Geiger
Thomas Cencer
Jane Piper

Josh Winslow
Tatyana Szymanski,
Bobby Evans, and all troops
currently deployed
Carol Daigle
Patty Giroux
Everyone experiencing
uncertainty and fear
in their communities
All those affected by the
violence around the world
Everyone that may be
privately suffering

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **Celebration of Life for Bill Bickford Sr.:** Saturday, June 13 at 1pm in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall
- **Scout Sunday & Celebrating Graduates:** Sunday, June 14
- **Summer Evening #1:** Wednesday, June 17

Bible Study: Psalms

Our Bible study group is discussing the book of Psalms. We meet in the Marvin Lounge from 1:30 - 3pm. Mary McHugh is leading and using Walter Brueggemann's book "*The Spirituality of the Psalms*" as a guide. (No need to buy the book.) Our next meetings will be June 12 and June 26.

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 June 18.

Three Summer Evenings—Session 1

On June 17 plan to join us between 5:30 and 6 for a quick bite to eat, then our programming will start at 6:15. We will be using some (if not all) of our parking lot for the event, so if you are able, please park offsite.

Moses and the Burning Bush will be the theme, which we'll reinforce with a campfire, songs, stories and s'mores! Our plan is to conclude by 7:30, with clean-up being done by 8.

Weekly Calendar: June 7—June 14

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

<p><u>Sunday, June 7</u> 9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming Ice Cream Social in Fellowship Hall after worship 11:30am: Service Trip Team—Marvin Lounge <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>Bluebird Montessori Open House—West Wing</i> 3pm: Parker/Dow Wedding—Sanctuary</p>	<p><u>Monday, June 8</u> 9am: Food Pantry Organizing—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, 2nd Floor Storage Room <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 1pm: Food Pantry Set Up—Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Storage Rooms 5:30pm: Food Pantry Distribution— Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Sanctuary <i>7:30pm: Group Victory—Marvin Lounge</i></p>
<p><u>Tuesday, June 9</u> 8:30: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge/Zoom: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89903982036] 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 3:30pm: Food Pantry Committee—Marvin Lounge <i>5:30pm: BSA Three Rivers District Roundtable— Fellowship Hall, 2nd Floor Program Room</i> 7pm: Deacons—Marvin Lounge</p>	<p><u>Wednesday, June 10</u> <i>10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> 7pm: Searchers—Marvin Lounge <i>BSA Troop 624—Fellowship Hall</i></p>
<p><u>Thursday, June 11</u> 10am: Grief Support—Marvin Lounge <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Marvin Lounge</i> 3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>6pm: Music Lesson—Sanctuary</i></p>	<p><u>Friday, June 12</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone’s Deli 10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall <i>11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i> <i>6pm: Blue Spruce Grange—Fellowship Hall</i></p>
<p><u>Saturday, June 13</u> <i>8am: Give It A Go Support Group—Marvin Lounge</i> <i>The Vine Nepali Congregation—Sanctuary, West Wing</i> <i>8:30am: Weight Loss Support —Fellowship Hall</i> 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop 1pm: Bill Bickford Sr Celebration of Life— Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall <i>5pm: Boy Scout Campout—Grounds</i></p>	<p><u>Sunday, June 14</u> Celebrating Graduates/Scout Sunday 9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming <i>1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—Fellowship Hall</i></p>

Events in italics = Local Community Groups