



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



The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 2, 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.

<i>A Welcoming Community</i>	<i>Accepting and Serving All</i>
<i>In the Spirit of Christ</i>	

Order of Worship

Prelude

The Pink Panther

Henry Mancini
arr. Frackenhohl

An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements.....Pastor Bob

Opening GreetingDeacon Jim Glatz

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

Miracle of Miracles from Fiddler on the Roof

Williams/ Frey

Call to WorshipDeacon Jim Glatz

Leader: Come to God seeking God's comfort.

People: We accept God's loving embrace.

Leader: Come to God seeking guidance.

People: We follow God's guiding light.

Leader: Come to God seeking patience.

People: We trust in God's timing.

Leader: Come to God for forgiveness.

People: We are saved by God!

Unison Prayer of Confession and Lord’s Prayer Deacon Jim Glatz

Loving God, help us. When we have run away, when we have turned our backs on love, when we have sought immediate satisfaction and not long-term healing, help us. Merciful God, forgive us. When we have been selfish, when we have been mean, when we have closed our ears to the cries of others, forgive us.
Give us the courage, the strength, and the hope to accept your grace and hear Your call in Jesus Christ. AMEN

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 Pastor Bob

Leader: God knows our every weakness and loves us still. Let us remember the promise of Christ’s amazing grace and let us believe the good news of the gospel and know that we are forgiven.
People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Amen!

Children’s Message..... Pastor Bob

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 Rev. Faux

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other
A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer
Musical Response

Scripture Readings

Old Testament	Psalm 17:1-7, 15	Read by Deacon Jim	[page # 385]
New Testament	Matthew 14:13-21	Read by Pastor Bob	[page # 12]

Anthem

Go the Distance

Alan Menken/David Zippel

Communion Meditation

Pastor Bob

Sharing the Sacrament of Communion

*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. **Absolutely everyone is welcome at Christ's table.***

Invitation, Passing Out the Elements & Prayer of Thanksgiving

Communion Music

For Good from Wicked

Stephen Schwartz

Offering Our Gifts to God

Pastor Bob

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

The Prayer

***The 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.**

*** Closing Hymn**

In Christ There is No East or West

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Benediction

Pastor Bob

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.
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 appreciation to Bethany Blake and the Stein Family for sharing their fantastic musical talents with us.

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.

*David and Family
Emily Guziak
and friends and family of Nancy Thayer
Remi and Family
Family & Friends of Sally Lembake
Family & Friends of Lani Goram
Michael Lafoy
Audrey Sawyer
Allan and Barbara Reith
Family & Friends of Chris Canosa
Family & Friends of Russ Kinaman
Meg Audette and Family
Fletch Coolidge
Family & Friends of Annette Whitemar
Laura Cunningham-Firkey and Family
Myrna Lindholm
Myrna Dooney
Shashaunah*

*Michael Hahner
Bill Bickford Jr.
Joe Shields
Elizabeth Stone
Patty Geiger
Thomas Cencer
Jane Piper
Josh Winslow
Tatyana Szymanski,
Bobby Evans, Phil Bourn,
and all troops currently deployed
Carol Daigle
Patty Giroux
Everyone experiencing uncertainty and fear
in their communities
All those affected by violence
around the world
Everyone that may be privately suffering*



***The flowers on the altar today are given by Richard Higgins,
In memory of Diana Higgins***



Altar Flowers

Flowers on the altar are a wonderful way to remember loved ones or celebrate a special day. We include a note in the bulletin about who donated the flowers and who/what they are honoring. Scan the QR code or use this link to sign up: www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0545A8AB2FAAF58-53196874-altar#/



Summer Lawn Sale

The annual Craft Fest Summer Lawn Sale is Saturday, August 15th from 9am to 1pm. We'll be accepting kitchen items, books, children's toys, holiday items, puzzles, baskets, bath items, paintings, frames, jewelry, and furniture. Any furniture which hasn't sold can be picked up at 1pm. If not picked up, then the item will be left for free. Please note no early shoppers.

Items can be dropped off at the church in the West Wing during office hours or on Sundays. Signs are up indicating where to leave your items. Items can also be dropped off that Saturday starting at 7am on the church lawn. Volunteers are needed for the following:

- Friday, August 14th from 4:30—5:30pm—setting up Tents
- Saturday, August 15th from 6:30—7am—setting up tables
- Saturday, August 15th from 1—2pm taking down tents and tables

All proceeds from the sale benefit the church budget. The event also includes a bake sale hosted by the Missions Committee, and a food drive to supplement the Heavenly Food Pantry. If you have any questions or wish to volunteer, please contact the church office.

Soda Drive for Josh's House

The Missions Committee continues to support Josh Pallotta House in Winooski. Josh's House Vermont is for veterans and current military personnel. It's a designed recreation/wellness space offering meeting and study areas, a large communal kitchen, video games, and a state-of-the-art gym. Many of the veterans being served at the Pallotta house are recovering substance abusers. These veterans rely on sugar items to get them through their addiction. Missions is sponsoring a soda drive during July, August & September. You can drop the soda anytime while the church is open. The drop-off place will be in Fellowship Hall. Signs will be posted to provide the exact location.

Remember—sugar soda only, no diet. Thank you for your support!

Coffee House Cabaret

Calling all musicians, poets, dancers, magicians, comedians, etc! Our Coffeehouse Cabaret is scheduled for Sunday, September 20 at 2pm). Please be thinking about performing something in this comfortable environment (with free coffee, tea, and pastries). You may even win a gift card! Must be family friendly content, performers ages 12+, and approximately 5 minutes in length.

Scan the QR Code or use this link for the Sign-Up Genius:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0545A8AB2FAAF58-64781886-coffee>

Contact stephfield87@gmail.com with any questions. Thank you!



Stay Connected!

Our weekly E-Connection 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.

Weekly Calendar: August 2 – August 9

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

Sunday, August 2

9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming

1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*

Monday, August 3

9am: Food Pantry Organizing—
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen,
Storage Rooms

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

Tuesday, August 4

8:30: Sermon Talkback—
Marvin Lounge/Zoom

10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

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

5pm: Finance Committee –
2nd Floor Program Room

6:30pm: BSA Troop 624 District Meeting –
Fellowship Hall

7pm: Church Council – Marvin Lounge
Pastoral Search Committee –
2nd Floor Program Room

Wednesday, August 5

10am: *Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall*

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

3pm: *Highland Dance Rehearsal—Gym*

6:30pm: *BSA Troop 624 – Fellowship Hall*

Thursday, August 6

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

3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

Friday, August 7

8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's Deli

10am: *Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall*

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

1:30pm: *BD Meeting –
2nd Floor Program Room*

Saturday, August 8

8am: *Give It A Go Support Group—
Marvin Lounge*

*The Vine Nepali Congregation—
Sanctuary, West Wing*

8:30am: *Weight Loss Support –
Fellowship Hall*

9:30am: *Reiki 1 Class – Marvin Lounge*

10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*

Sunday, August 9

9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming

10:30am: Music Committee – 2nd Floor
Program Room

1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*

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 Jr.

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