



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

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

August 9, 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 Praise Band and our Faith Formation Program for our children at 10:15 a.m. We worship 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

Prelude No 1

J.S. Bach

An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements

Opening Greeting Deacon Andrea Sharp

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

Blessed Jesu, We Are Here

J.S. Bach

Call to Worship Deacon Andrea Sharp

Leader: Today, we come to hear the Word of God as we listen for guidance in our lives; let us be attentive. This morning we remember Jacob's favorite son Joseph and how his anguished journey saved Israel from starving and set them on a course with history.

People: Maybe my family can change the world for the better.

Leader: We remember Elijah the prophet who heard God in the still small voice on the edge of a cave calling him to action.

People: Maybe I can be one of God's prophets.

Leader: We remember Paul who searched his heart and found Jesus leading him into ministry with a whole different theology of grace.

People: Maybe Jesus will offer me his grace so that I can spread God’s love around and change some lives for the better.

Leader: We remember Jesus walking on the water and inviting Peter the Rock into the turbulent waters where he relied on Jesus’ hand to save him.

People: Maybe Jesus will be with me in the turbulent waters of life and save me to do some ministry in his name.

Leader: Today, let us come together knowing that all of us are called to follow Jesus and live our lives in his name. Come, let us decide to follow Jesus!

***Opening Hymn**

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Insert

Prayer of Invocation and Unison Lord’s PrayerDeacon Andrea Sharp

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

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response

Seven Fold Amen

Lutkin

***Hymn**

Take My Life, God, Let It Be

448

Scripture Readings

Old Testament

Torah

Genesis 37: 23-28, 36

[page #27]

Genesis 45:4-8

[page # 33]

Prophetic

I Kings 19:11-16

[page #255]

New Testament

Epistle

Romans 10:8b-15

[page 122]

Gospel

Matthew 14:22-33

[page # 12]

Special Music Anthem

Andantino

Le Maigre

Sermon

Go Where I Send Thee

Rev. Mendes

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

Happy The Home When God is There

Lani Smith

***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**

Go Where I Send Thee

Insert

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**

Festal Postlude

Charles Gounod

***Please stand if you are able.**

❖ Sincere appreciation to Ed Guild and Marie Johnson for providing the beautiful music this morning!

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.

*Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, Senior Pastor at
Charlotte Congregational Church
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 Riley & Lorinda Elliott
In memory of Riley's son, Ryan Maxwell Elliot***



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 are 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 Coffeeshouse 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 9 – August 16

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

Sunday, August 9

9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming
10:30am: Music Committee –
2nd Floor Program Room
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*

Monday, August 10

9am: Food Pantry Organizing—
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen,
Storage Rooms
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*
1pm: Food Pantry Set Up –
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen
5:30pm: Food Pantry Distribution –
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Sanctuary

Tuesday, August 11

8:30: Sermon Talkback—
Marvin Lounge/Zoom
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship -
Fellowship Hall*
*6:30pm: BSA Three Rivers District
Roundtable – Fellowship Hall,
2nd Floor Program Room*
7pm: Deacons – Home of Rev. Mark

Wednesday, August 12

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 13

10am: Grief Support – Marvin Lounge
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*
3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
6:30pm: Bluebird Montessori Parent Mtg.

Friday, August 14

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*
6pm: Blue Spruce Grange – Fellowship Hall

Saturday, August 15

8am-1pm – Annual Lawn Sale

*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*
*3pm: Morrill Family Reception –
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen*

Sunday, August 16

9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming
*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 McGearry
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