



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
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 30, 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 10:15am. 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 9am with our organist and a group of talented volunteers offering their musical abilities to God and our congregation.

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In the Spirit of Christ*

Order of Worship

Prelude	<i>"Raindrop Prelude"</i> Op. 28 No. 15	Frederick Chopin
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An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome in this place.*

Deacon's Greeting Deacon 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.

Introit *Fanfarinette* from *Suite in A minor*, RCT 5 Jean-Philippe Rameau

Call to Worship.....Deacon Jim Glatz

Leader: Come, let us worship the Living God in whom is life and love.

People: Thank you, God, for bringing us into being and centering us on the most effective means of defining ourselves: love.

Leader: Come, let us find God in the values, families, politics, cultures, arts, writings, and music of our world.

People: Thank you, God, for giving us eyes to see and ears to hear your presence and know your ways so that we might live meaningful and joyful lives.

Leader: Come, let us seek our God in worship and community.

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation and **Unison Lord's Prayer** ("trespasses")

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 *Intermezzo* in E flat Major Op. 117
[excerpt]

Johannes Brahms

Congregational Hymn of Choice

For the middle hymn, the worship leader will ask the congregation for suggestions to what to sing. This affords the congregation the opportunity to choose their favorite hymn for all of us to sing.

Scripture Readings:

Old Testament	Wisdom	Ecclesiastes 2:1-11	[page # 477]
		Ecclesiastes 2:12-26	[page # 477]
		Ecclesiastes 3:9-15	[page # 478]
New Testament	Gospel	Matthew 6:19-25	[page 3]

Anthem

Like A Bridge Over Troubled Water

Art Garfunkle

Meditation

Trusting God

Rev. Mendes

Today's sermon is preached for Cathy LaPierre, who had the winning bid at FCCEJ's 2026 Craft Fest Silent Auction. Whomever wins gets to choose the scripture or pick a subject for Rev. Mark to preach on. Here you go, Cathy!

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory Prelude on "*What Wondrous Love is This*"

John G. Barr

***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.*

*** Hymn**

O Savior, Let Me Walk with You

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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**

Gigue from French Suite No. 5 in G Major, BWV 816

J.S. Bach

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

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.

<i>Bethany Blake and friends and family of Thomas Cencer</i>	<i>Thanksgiving for the homecoming of Tatyana Szymanski and Bobby Evans!</i>
<i>Mike LaMoy</i>	<i>Nick Hella</i>
<i>Josephine Lawrence</i>	<i>Bob Hahner</i>
<i>Patty Giroux</i>	<i>Emily Guziak & friends & family of Nancy Thayer</i>
<i>David and Family</i>	<i>Remi and Family</i>
<i>Family & Friends of Sally Lembake</i>	<i>Phil Bourn and all troops currently deployed</i>
<i>Michael Lafoy</i>	<i>Audrey Sawyer</i>
<i>Allan and Barbara Reith</i>	<i>Jane Piper</i>
<i>Meg Audette and Family</i>	<i>Fletch Coolidge</i>
<i>Carol Daigle</i>	<i>Laura Cunningham-Firkey and Family</i>
<i>Myrna Lindholm</i>	<i>Myrna Dooney</i>
<i>Shashaunah</i>	<i>Joe Shields</i>
<i>Bill Bickford Jr.</i>	<i>Josh Winslow</i>
<i>Elizabeth Stone</i>	<i>Patty Geiger</i>
<i>Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, Senior Pastor at Charlotte Congregational Church</i>	<i>Everyone experiencing uncertainty and fear in their communities</i>
<i>All those affected by violence around the world</i>	<i>Everyone that may be privately suffering</i>



****The flowers on the altar today are given by Sue & Dennis Conti
In memory of Elenor Colburn. ****



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#/



Burlington Pride Parade

Sunday, September 13th at 12pm.

For years, Pride Vermont has been a powerful celebration of visibility, joy, and community in downtown Burlington. This year, FCCEJ will be participating with other churches in the Vermont UCC Conference. The parade starts at 12pm on South Winooski Ave. and ends at Battery Park where the Pride Festival begins at 1pm.

If you are interested in attending and/or carpooling to the event, please reach out to Rev. Mark or Pastor Bob for details.

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!

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.

Community Concerts at First

CCAF presents HairPeace on Sunday, September 27th at 3pm here in our sanctuary. Please mark your calendars now so you don't miss this fabulous concert! HairPeace has been filling the air with music since 1993. Chrystine and Ray's close vocal harmonies blend the songs of the 60s and 70s with original material and an occasional modern tune, bringing a sense of peace, love and community to every show. Joined by the incredible Kenny Z on upright bass, this concert is a must-see! HairPeace has shared stages with national acts such as The Little River Band, Roseanne Cash and Asleep at the Wheel. Visit their website (www.hairpeace.net) to listen to some of their music. Tickets \$20 at <https://sevendaystickets.com/e/hairpeace> or by calling the church office. Children 12 & under admitted free.

2nd Annual Welcome Back Sunday Dessert Challenge

The Christian Formation Committee invites dessert makers of all sorts to enter their best creation in the 2nd Annual Welcome Back Sunday Dessert Challenge on September 20. Bring your best offering, to be judged by the youth, and perhaps you will win a \$25 gift card to Boxcar Bakery, provided by Rev. Mark.

Weekly Calendar: August 30 – September 6

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

Sunday, August 30

9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming
1pm: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*

Monday, August 31

8:15am-3:30pm: *Bluebird Montessori*
9am: Food Pantry Organizing—
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen,
2nd Floor Storage Room
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*
3pm: Nominating – Marvin Lounge

Tuesday, September 1

8:15am-3:30pm: *Bluebird Montessori*
8:30: Sermon Talkback—
Marvin Lounge/Zoom
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship -
Fellowship Hall*
6:30pm: *BSA Troop 624 District Mtg.
Fellowship Hall*
7pm: Church Council—
Marvin Lounge, Zoom

Wednesday, September 2

8:15am-3:30pm: *Bluebird Montessori*
10am: *Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall*
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*
5:30pm: Finally @ First – Sanctuary
Cub Scouts Pack 630 – Fellowship Hall
7pm: *BSA Troop 624 – Fellowship Hall*

Thursday, September 3

8:15am-3:30pm: *Bluebird Montessori*
8:30am: Essex Art League –
Fellowship Hall
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*
3-6pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
6pm: *Music Lesson—Sanctuary*

Friday, September 4

8:15am-3:30pm: *Bluebird Montessori*
8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone's Deli
10am: *Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall*
11:30am: *Brown Bag Fellowship—
Fellowship Hall*
1:30pm: Bridge Group – Marvin Lounge
5:30pm: Young Family Dinner –
Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Gym

Saturday, September 5

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*

Sunday, September 6

9am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming
10am: Sanctuary Choir – Sanctuary
Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
11:30am: Service Trip Team –
Marvin Lounge
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