



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



First Service

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2026

Our worship opportunities during the year offer two services: one traditional with our outstanding organist and Sanctuary Choir at 8:30am and one less traditional with our talented Finally @ First Band and our Faith Formation Program for our children at 10:15am. 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 through September, we have one service at 9am 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

Toccata #3 in D Major
(Per l'Organo da sonarsi alla levatione)

Girolamo Frescobaldi

An Extravagant Welcome and Announcements Pastor Bob

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

Deacon's Greeting Deacon Emily Guziak

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

Amen, We Praise Your Name, O God

Trad. South African

attr. to S.C.Molefe as taught by George Mxadana

Call to Worship Deacon Emily Guziak

Leader: The Word became flesh and lived among us.

People: We have seen God's glory, full of grace and truth.

Leader: From God's fullness we have all received grace upon grace.

People: Jesus Christ is the light of the world!

Leader: Let us come into Christ's presence with praise.

People: Let us worship the light of the world!

Leader: Praise be to God forever!

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 Elizabeth O’Beirne

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Mark

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Musical Response *Be Still and Know that I Am God* Anon.

Scripture Readings:

New Testament	Matthew 21:23-32	Read by Rev. Mark	[page18]
Old Testament	Psalms 25:1-10	Read by Pastor Bob	[page 390]

Anthem *Be Still* Hank Beebe

Meditation Reflection Pastor Bob

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory *Out of the Depths* Ruth Duck; Robert Batastini

***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.**

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

Canon in D

Pachelbel

*Please stand if you are able.

- ❖ Sincere thanks to Bethany Blake and the FCCEJ Sanctuary Choir for sharing your musical talents with us this morning!
- ❖ *Special request from your Deacons and staff: As we head into “sniffle season” please remember to take your used tissues with you after worship. There are garbage cans in the Narthex, by the elevator, and in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you!*

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>Fran Thomas</i>
<i>Mike LaMoy</i>	<i>Nick Hella</i>
<i>Josephine Lawrence</i>	<i>Bob Hahner</i>
<i>All those affected by violence around the world</i>	<i>Emily Guziak & friends & family of Nancy Thayer</i>
<i>David and Family</i>	<i>Remi and Family</i>
<i>Patty Giroux</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>Carol Daigle</i>	<i>Fletch Coolidge</i>
<i>Myrna Lindholm</i>	<i>Laura Cunningham-Firkey and Family</i>
<i>Shashaunah</i>	<i>Myrna Dooney</i>
<i>Bill Bickford Jr.</i>	<i>Joe Shields</i>
<i>Elizabeth Stone</i>	<i>Josh Winslow</i>
<i>Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, Senior Pastor at Charlotte Congregational Church</i>	<i>Patty Geiger</i>
<i>Flood victims in Nepal and surrounding areas</i>	<i>Everyone that may be privately suffering</i>
<i>Everyone experiencing uncertainty and fear in their communities</i>	



***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#/





The packets will be housed in cubbies by the front door. Everyone is encouraged to take one to distribute when the opportunity arises.

First Friday Dinners

Our next dinner for young families is this Friday, October 2. All families with elementary-age children are welcome to come, eat, hang out, and play in the gym for a bit. No cooking, clean-up, or cost. This Friday will be a Mexican-style buffet. Bring friends – this is open to the community as well as our FCCEJ family. We'll serve food from 5:30 to 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall and the gym will stay open till 7. If you're interested in helping out, please contact the church office.

Grief Support

Grief Support Group meets monthly on the 2nd Thursday in the Marvin Lounge from 10-11:30am. Led by Mary McHugh and Sharon Dettenrieder. This is a safe place to share, question, and learn about the grief experience. Next meeting is October 8.

Adult Bible Study

Bible Study dates & topic:

October 23 & Nov 13: Paul's 2nd letter to the Corinthians.

We meet from 1:30-3pm in Marvin Lounge. Led by Mary McHugh.

Josh Sharp Ordination & Celebration

We are thrilled to celebrate the ordination of (soon-to-be Reverend) Josh Sharp on Sunday, October 25 at 3pm! There will be an ordination service in the FCCEJ Sanctuary, followed by a pot-luck reception in the Fellowship Hall. More information and a Sign Up Genius will be available in the October newsletter and worship bulletins.

Heavenly Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is seeing a significant uptick in families requesting food assistance. We continue to need reusable shopping bags as well as **empty one-dozen egg cartons**, baked beans, canned fruit and veggies, chunky soups, ready-made pasta, and feminine hygiene items - specifically pads (moderate, heavy, and extra absorbent).

We're also looking to expand our volunteer base. We need people for organizing during the week, set-up, assisting during the distribution times, and to make deliveries in the Essex area. Please contact the church office for more information.

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: September 27 – October 4

Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections

Events in italics = Local Community Groups

<u>Sunday, September 27</u> 8:30* & 10:15am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming* 10:30am: Peer Groups (PreK-5th) <i>1pm: Brown Bag—Fellowship Hall</i> 3pm: Community Concert, Sanctuary	<u>Monday, September 28</u> 9am: Food Pantry Organizing— Fellowship Hall, Kitchen 11:30am: Lunchtime Book Group – Marvin Lounge <i>Brown Bag—Fellowship Hall</i> 3:45 & 4:40pm: Music Lesson – Sanctuary
<u>Tuesday, September 29</u> <i>8:15am-3:30pm: Bluebird Montessori</i> 8:30: Sermon Talkback—Marvin Lounge/Zoom 10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>10:15am: Intermediate Tai Chi – Fellowship Hall</i> <i>11:30am: Brown Bag - Fellowship Hall</i> 7pm: Communications—2nd Floor Program Room	<u>Wednesday, September 30</u> <i>8:15am-3:30pm: Bluebird Montessori</i> 10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall 11:30am: Brown Bag—Fellowship Hall 3pm: Highland Dance Rehearsal – Gym 5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal - Sanctuary 7pm: Searchers – Marvin Lounge <i>BSA Troop 624 – Fellowship Hall</i>
<u>Thursday, October 1</u> <i>8:15am-3:30pm: Bluebird Montessori</i> 8:30am: Essex Art League—Fellowship Hall 10am: Music Lesson - Sanctuary 11:30am: Brown Bag—Marvin Lounge 6pm: Music Lesson—Sanctuary 6:30pm: Bluebird Montessori 7pm: Choir Rehearsal – Sanctuary	<u>Friday, October 2</u> 8am: Coffee Clatter—Martone’s Deli 8:15am-3:30pm: Bluebird Montessori 10am: Bone Builders—Fellowship Hall Music Lesson - Sanctuary 11:30am: Brown Bag—Fellowship Hall 1:30pm: Bridge Group – Marvin Lounge 5:30pm: First Friday Dinner – Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Gym
<u>Saturday, October 3</u> 8am: Give It A Go Support—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 Hall	<u>Sunday, October 4</u> LIFT Sunday 10am: Worship—Sanctuary & Streaming* 10:15am: Spiritual Friends (PreK-5th) 11am-12pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop <i>1pm: Brown Bag—Fellowship Hall</i>