

*The First Congregational Church
of Essex Junction
United Church of Christ*



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

“We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the will of God. We agree to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As in the past, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.”

**One Church Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452**

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E-mail: welcome@fcej.org

Website: www.fcej.org

Facebook: First Congregational Church of Essex Junction UCC



Open and Affirming means that we welcome everyone to First Church including our GLBTQ brothers and sisters.

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
United Church of Christ
December 31, 2017
Seventh Day of Christmas ~ Second Service

A Welcoming Community,

Accepting and Serving All

In the Spirit of Christ

Prelude

Pastorale
He Shall Feed His Flock
The Christ Child

Karg-Elert
Handel
Hailing

An Extravagant Welcome

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

Welcome Greeting and Announcements

Our Ministers will welcome everyone to church and highlight events in our shared life, then the Deacon on Duty will welcome everyone and invite people to raise significant celebrations to the congregation or introduce yourself or guests. We encourage everyone to sign the Friendship Books.

Musical Introit

Let's Tell The World

Hutchinson

Call to Worship

Leader: The day of Jesus' birth is over and our lives are slowly returning to the normal rhythm of life.

People: It is right and good to celebrate our Lord's birth and do so with abandon, joy and wonder.

Leader: And yet, Christ's birth lives on in one of faith's unfolding dimensions. God's divine presence still surprises us and calls us to a life of humility, power and awe.

People: Even though Christmas is over, we still welcome Jesus into our lives to guard, guide and govern our behaviors.

Leader: Come, let us worship the God that keeps on giving!!!

***Opening Carol**

Go, Tell It On The Mountain

**Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.**

**While shepherds kept their watching
Over silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens,
There shone a holy light. (refrain)**

**The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth. (refrain)**

**Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation,
That blessed Christmas morn. (refrain)**

Prayer of Invocation & Unison Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")

**Our Father 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 lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the
kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen.**

Children's Message... ..and in come the Magi

Please return to your seats after the message, there are hands-on items in the Narthex. Kathryn & Manu are in the Nursery with audio and the service is streamed to Fellowship Hall.

**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.
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.**

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Requests Offered within the Community

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Congregational Musical Response.....O Come Let Us Adore Him

**O come, let us adore Him. O come, let us adore Him.
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

“*Our Home, Our Future, Our Time*”A Capital Campaign Message

1st Service: Bart & Paulette Frisbie

2nd Service: Munroe Shearer

Anthem *Hope Was Born This Night* McDonald/Frey

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Anthem *Little Drummer Boy/Peace On Earth* Bowie/Crosby

Doxology..... *Of the Parent’s Love Begotten* [#118]

**Of the parent’s love begotten when the worlds were yet to be
One there was with no beginning, one who is eternally,
Source and Ending of all things that have been,
And all things that are to be, forever and forever.**

**Depths and heights break forth in singing, angels, saints make melody,
All dominions, every power sing, make new psalms of ecstasy,
Let no heart refrain from praising God,
celebrate in harmony, forever and forever.**

Scripture Readings

New Testament Gospel Matthew 2:13-23 [page 1]
Luke 2:22-40 [page 45]

***Hymn of Preparation *Angels from the Realm of Glory* #126**

Sermon *The Story After the Manger* Rev. Mendes

***Closing Hymn *In The Bleak Mid-Winter* #128**

Benediction

Pastoral Benediction

***Sung Community Benediction**

Let There Be Peace on Earth

**Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be!
With God our Creator, brothers all are we,
Let me walk with my sister in perfect harmony.**

**Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry breath I take, let this be my solemn vow;
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.**

*Postlude:

Swiss Noel

Daquin

*Please stand if you are able.

Deacon: Lori Giannuzzi

The Poinsettias on the Altar are Given by:

*Carol Bishard in loving memory of Thomas Michael Hunn & Bruce Bishard
The Chipman Family for family near & far*

*The Dooley Family in memory of Dorothy & Joseph Pine and Harry Dooley
Norma Edwards in memory of Lloyd Edwards*

*Diana & Rich Higgins in loving memory of their parents and grandparents
Joanne Irwin in memory of loved ones*

*Connie Marshall in loving memory of her father, Edward Rhame
Betty & Lily Marthaler in honor of great-grandma's, Betty & Lillian*

*The Parker Family in loving memory of Erica Ann
The Polanshek Family in loving memory of John Polanshek*

*June Silverman in memory of Ron and loved ones
Sally Turner in loving memory of family*

*FCCEJ remembers its beloved members who have passed in 2017
Ernest Wilfred Drost Jr., Rachel Herbig Jarvis, William F. Meyer,
Daniel Kevin McMaster, Hazel Ruth Billheimer and Doris 'Dodie' Farnsworth*

*The flowers on the altar are given by Beth Volker in honor of what
would have been John Denver's 74th birthday.*

First Church's Prayer Ministry

Carol Mauger	Jack Lucas	Les
David Tibbetts	Judy Janwich	Mike Heston
Cathleen & Lilianna	Lilly and Donald	Jaime Real
Shelley Marshall	Alexa	Don Mable
Shirley Boucher	Roger Kalar	Acacia Moore & family
Donna	Ruth Legendre	Emily Schueren & family
Sharon Kennedy	Mickey McKenzie	Campbell Miller

Please let us know if you would like a name added to our Prayer Ministry, you can write it on the Friendship Pad, call or email the office or send us a note, welcome@fccej.org

* * * **TODAY** * * *

2018 Flower Chart is UP TODAY!

In the hallway out of Fellowship Hall, choose a date to remember loved ones or honor a special date in your family! \$34 for the flowers and you can take them or leave them for us to find someone who needs some love!



TODAY ~Pick up Your Pledge Envelopes

If you ordered envelopes with your pledge to FCCEJ they are in the Fellowship Hall on one of the tables.

Contribution Reports will be emailed on 1/2/18 and mailed on 1/3/18.

Early Bird Calcutta Tickets On Sale

Early Bird Tickets for the Cabin Fever Calcutta on March 10, 2018 are on sale until January 15th. By purchasing an Early Bird ticket, you are entered into a drawing for a \$100 cash prize, to be awarded the night of the Calcutta. Stop by the table in Fellowship Hall and get yours today.



Moving Help Needed

Want to earn \$20 an hour? On January 15th, we're helping move the current occupant from the parsonage. We'll start at 10am and probably end at 3pm. We'll need 6 people, ages 16 and up. Email Josh at jsimon@fccej.org



*** * * Children, Youth & Family Announcements * * ***

Faith Formation Sunday School Offering 2017

Your 2017 Total is now up to \$1147.12

Humane Society of Chittenden County relies completely on outside donations to stay open and helps give pets a home while waiting for their new

*homes. **TODAY is the last day for the Humane Society, next week will start the 2018 offering.** On January 21st you will be voting for your 2018 Offering Choice on our Hands On Mission Sunday! Join us!*

Keep remembering to bring your offering

\$1 a week can go a long way!

Bring your Faith Formation Sunday School offering each week and use the envelopes in the pews. It is really important to use them so we know where you want your \$ to go.



Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 6th grade

December 31st ~ all in worship

January 7th ~ Holy Communion Sunday ~ Spiritual Friends ~ Intergenerational Worship

January 14th ~ Faith Formation Class time

Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

Our 5th & 6th graders meet ONCE a month from 11:30-1:30pm

Mission Focus ~ Meal ~ Fellowship/Games

January 7th ~ Junior Youth Group ~ 11:30-1:30pm



High School Youth Group

Our FIRST BIG High School Youth Group event is January 12th-13th. This will be a High School Youth Group Lock-in Kick-off with Pastor Josh. All high school youth, 9th-12th, are invited to attend. Arrive to the church at 7pm on Friday, Jan 12th and leave 9am on Saturday, Jan 13th. Please, wear clothes comfortable for painting.

For part of our time, we will paint the Youth Lounge.

Parsonage Painting Party

January 19, 20, and 21st. The parsonage needs to be painted before much needed new carpet is installed. We are going to paint and eat snacks, so we need painters and/or snack providers. Sign-up sheet next to Josh's office (blue office).



* * * **Opportunities To Volunteer & Donate** * * *

Dismas House Meal Volunteers Needed!

Looking for volunteers to provide dinner for 10-15 residents & staff.
Great opportunity to grab a couple friends
and serve on Wed, January 24th.



**Next Food Pantry days are Monday, January 8th, 5:30-7:30pm
and Thursday, January 25th, 2-6pm**

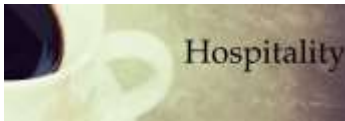
We are in need of baked beans, tuna fish, cereal, jam & jelly and
canned fruit to restock our cabinets.

In Need of Long Red Toboggan Sleds to Borrow

For our clients to bring their Food Pantry bags home
in the winter-the shopping carts don't work well!



Hospitality Needs YOU!



The Hospitality Committee is extremely low on members and
helpers. Unfortunately, this has and will result in coffee hour
not taking place after each Sunday service on a consistent
basis. If you are willing to volunteer your time to support the
hospitality work, please contact Jackie Parks, Hospitality Chair at 324-9206. Thank you.

Thanks From The Giving Tree!

Again this Christmas season, the many families who received gifts for
their children through the Giving Tree program have expressed so often
how very grateful they are for the generosity of our congregation. One
mother stated that our gifts mean that her children would wake up on
Christmas morning with their voices filled with excitement and
joy. Another stated that our gifts would be the only ones that her child would
receive. It can be difficult for us to imagine what it must be like to struggle to celebrate
the spirit of giving at Christmas. Thank you to each of you for bringing joy to so many
during this season of Christ's birth.



Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop

Regular Hours: 10am-3pm Tues & Wed, 4-8pm Thurs
First Saturday, January 6th 9am-12pm

Winter Donations can be dropped off at the Shop anytime.
Winter Potluck, January 15th, 6pm, Marvin Lounge

*** * * SAVE THE DATES * * ***



“Our Home, Our Future, Our Time”
Capital Campaign Information Meetings

Sunday, January 7th & 14th @ 9:45 & 11:30 (after both services)

Wednesday, January 10 @ 6pm

Please join us for a Capital Campaign Information Meeting to learn all about the proposed capital projects and budget! Childcare will be available. A preliminary list of proposed projects was developed by our Trustees, with lots of input from Church Council, committees, and the congregation during a feasibility study last fall. Our church has been working with John Alden and his architectural firm Scott & Partners to develop more detailed plans and cost estimates. We look forward to sharing this information at the January meetings, and hearing your feedback! Also be sure to mark your calendars for our **Annual Meeting on January 28**, when the congregation will be voting on whether to move forward with the campaign!

January 28th ~ Ask the Pastor Sunday Worship/Annual Meeting ~ 10am
worship/11:15am meeting

February 17th ~ Praise-a-Palooza : Soup and Songs of Praise

FCCEJ and Finally @ First are thrilled to again be hosting this fun evening for all ages! Mark your calendars for Saturday night, February 17th and join us at 5:30pm for a Soup Dinner followed at 6:30pm by an evening of praise music by local worship bands. Join us in welcoming bands from area churches and our very own Finally @ First. A free will offering will be taken. Bring a friend!



March 10th ~ Jamaica Bound Calcutta

March 11th ~ Pretzel Sunday

April 1st ~ Easter Sunday

May 14th ~ Mother's Day & Jazz Sunday

THIS WEEK: December 31st – January 6th

- TODAY:** 8:30am **Worship Service- / Sanctuary**
10:15am **Worship Service / Sanctuary**
11:30am **Undecorate Sanctuary / Sanctuary**
1:00 - 2:00 pm **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
- MONDAY:** 12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Marvin Lounge**
5:30 - 6:30 pm **Group Victory / Youth Lounge**
- TUESDAY:** 8:30 - 10:00 am **Sermon Talk Back / Marvin Lounge**
10:00 am - 3:00 pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
6:00 - 7:00 pm **Finance Committee / Marvin Lounge**
7:00 - 9:00 pm **Church Council / Marvin Lounge**
- WEDNESDAY:** 9:30 - 11:00 am **Tai Chi / Fellowship Hall**
10:00 am - 3:00 pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
5:30 - 7:00 pm **Finally @ First / Fellowship Hall**
6:00 - 8:00 pm **Capital Campaign Steering Committee / Marvin Lounge**
6:00 - 7:00 pm **Boy Scouts PLC / Youth Lounge**
6:30 - 7:30 pm **Currier Bells / Sanctuary**
7:00 - 9:00 pm **Wednesday Night Searchers / Marvin Lounge**
7:00 - 8:30 pm **Boy Scouts / Fellowship Hall**
- THURSDAY:** 8:30 - 11:30 am **Essex Art League / Fellowship Hall**
10:00 - 11:30 am **Art Class / Gym / Third Floor**
12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
12:00 - 2:00 pm **JOY / Marvin Lounge**
4:00 - 8:00 pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
5:30 - 6:45 pm **Yoga with Jonah / Gym**
6:00 - 8:00 pm **Pack 630 Meeting / Fellowship Hall**
6:15 - 7:00 pm **Heavenly Harmony / Sanctuary**
7:00 - 8:30 pm **Sanctuary Choir / Sanctuary**
7:00 - 9:00 pm **Confirmation Class / Marvin Lounge**
- FRIDAY:** 12:00 noon **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
5:00 - 8:00 pm **Essex Eats Out Community Dinner / Fellowship Hall & Kitchen**
- SATURDAY:** 9:00am - 12:00 pm **Nepali Community Worship / Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall**
9:00 am - 12:00 pm **Heavenly Cents Thrift Store Open**
1:00 - 2:00 pm **Brown Bag / Fellowship Hall**
1:30 - 4:00 pm **Marie Johnson-Organ / Sanctuary**

MINISTRY AT FIRST CHURCH

Church Administrator: *Jen Dooley* [welcome@fccej.org]
Interim Music Director: *Marie Johnson* [mdjkiln@gmail.com]
Christian Education Director: *Laurie Chipman* [lchipman@fccej.org]
Associate Pastor: *Rev. Josh Simon* [jsimon@fccej.org]
Senior Pastor: *Rev. Mark Mendes* [mmendes@fccej.org]

Music Ministry

Cherub Music: *Jenny Bourn* [jennybourn4@gmail.com]
Currier Bell Choir Director: *Carolyn Harris* [899-6759]
Finally @ First Director: *Rick Dooley* [rickdooley5@gmail.com]
Heavenly Harmony Director: *Marie Johnson* [mdjkiln@gmail.com]
Joyful Noise: *Jessica Moos* [jessicamoosvermont@gmail.com]
Men At First Director: *Bill Bickford, Jr.* [bill.bickford@aol.com]
Sanctuary Choir Director: *Marie Johnson* [mdjkiln@gmail.com]

Committee / Church Officer Contacts

President, Chair Human Resources Committee: *Brenda Crocket* [881-5253]
Vice President, Chair Finance & Pastoral Relations: *Carl Wermer* [879-7650]
Treasurer & Historian: *Ann Gray* [878-4088]
Asst. Treasurer: *Dan Petherbridge* [879-0261]
Financial Secretary: *Pat Seaver* [879-4445]
Clerk: *Alison Wermer* [879-7650]
Christian Education: *Jenny Bourn* [802-309-7441]
Communications: *Kevin Dorn* [878-3696]
Deacons: *Rick Dooley* [578-0229] *Mike Bottamini* [879-0763]
Hospitality: *Jackie Parks* [324-9206]
Missions: *Sandy Tallman* [879-0665]
Music: *Judy Larrabee* [236-0604]
Nominating: *Carl Wermer* [879-7650]
Stewardship: *Kathy Finnie* [878-3696]
Trustees: *Kevin Meilleur* [238-4041]
Ushering: *Michael Sullivan* [879-6044]

Recognized Groups at First Church

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop [879-6552] *Sue Wood* suewood@myfairpoint.net or
Linda Bogardus at lbogardus@myfairpoint.net
Heavenly Food Pantry Contact: *Valerie Gabert* [879-0109]
Called To Care Contact: *Beth Volker* [879-4708]
Nepali Christian Community Contact: *Dan Raut* [310-4371]
Craft Fest Committee Contact: *Linda Bogardus* [lbogardus@myfairpoint.net]

mission
M O M E N T S
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, December 31, 2017

First Sunday After Christmas

Luke 2: 22-40

Long Awaited Gift

Today is the Sunday we remember Jesus being dedicated in the Temple. It's a big event for the newborn Jesus, even if he's just a baby and probably won't remember, his parents will remember. They'll remember because of the stir this baby causes among the Temple regulars. Though this is a special baby. He is, after all, the baby of the season but he is also all babies. Here he is being presented according to tradition. Babies were dedicated this way, especially first born males. Babies have always been present in places of worship, even if sitting on a parent's lap, asleep or squirming. Pews are not always the most comfortable seating to rock and comfort a baby.

Wouldn't it be great if churches took out the last pew and put a row of rocking chairs in its place?

Parents could sit with their baby rocking, soothing in comfort—

Less distraction, less discomfort and way more welcoming. It's not an unusual idea, in fact it's been done. Old First United Church of Christ in Philadelphia has done just that. Parents no longer must pace in the back and bounce. In the First Congregational Church UCC of Elyria, Ohio and the Ellington Congregational Church of Ellington, Connecticut they simply placed a rocking chair in the rear of the sanctuary.

We are a denomination that has declared ourselves on a journey to incarnate the love of Christ as we work to build a just world for all. Love of children. Love of neighbor and love of creation.

These are our three great loves. Churches across the UCC are sharing their stories in this denomination-wide focus on mission. You can find out how other churches are loving children by going to 3greatloves.org. Share what you do to welcome, empower, include, minister to/for and with children. See what others are doing.

When children and their parents come to your door and enter your sanctuary how are they welcomed? How do they know there is a place for them? If children feel that it is a place built for adults why would they want to come? Welcome is more than a children's sermon. It's a place built for welcome. It's a sanctuary that says this is a place built for you, not that you have to twist yourself to fit into it. This is yours. Come and let us be together as we are,
all of us old and young.

Remember: "A person's a person, no matter how small." Dr. Seuss