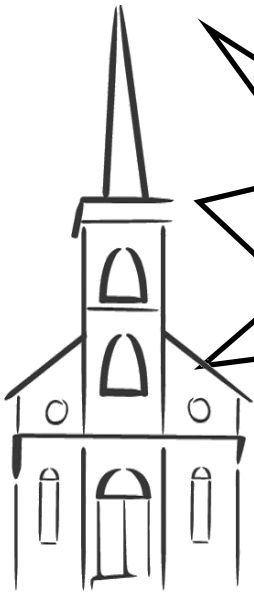
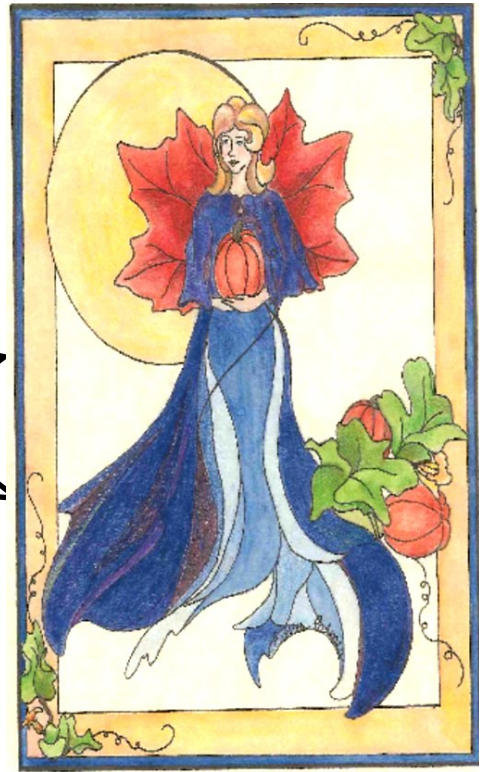


# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH *of Essex Junction*

*Love. Serve. Grow.*



**Heavenly  
Food Pantry's  
25th  
Anniversary  
Celebration**



***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@fcej.org](mailto:welcome@fcej.org)

**Website:** [www.fcej.org](http://www.fcej.org)



**The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction  
The Heavenly Food Pantry's 25th Anniversary Celebration  
October 15, 2023  
Second Service**

*We offer two different worship services: our First Service with organ and traditional choir is streamed and begins at 8:30am with access on our webpage @ [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org). You can watch that service any time thereafter. Our Second Service with Finally @ First Praise Band is live in the sanctuary at 10:15am and is not streamed. Our Faith Formation Program for PreK through 8th is in person and starts at 10:15am in worship and then break out into peer groups.*

*The Nursery is available at both services—self serve at 8:30 and staffed at 10:15.*

***Currently, mask wearing is determined by the individual.***

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

*Order of Worship*

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

Greeting and Announcements

Musical Introit      *All Are Welcome*      Marty Haugen

Call to Worship .....Deacon Bob Driver

Leader: We come here today to celebrate God's beautiful creation, a world filled with an abundance of wildlife, plants and agricultural products.

**People: Thank you, God.**

Leader: In every era, God proposed laws and ethical guidelines that included the distribution of food and resources for everyone. Jesus and the early church followed in God's footsteps and encouraged followers to take care of the poor.

**People: Thank you, God.**

Leader: Today, we honor the people who have answered Christ's call to feed the hungry in our community. Today, we celebrate the steady and effective leadership of the Heavenly Food Pantry volunteers. Come, let us lift up this vital ministry of our church.

**People: Thank you, God.**

Deacon's Prayer of Invocation .....Deacon Bob Driver

**\*Opening Hymn**

***Blest are They***  
**[handout]**

**David Haas**

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.**

*\*PreK -8th transition to Faith Formation*

*Parents, please collect your children from their Peer Rooms by 11:30.*

Old Testament Scripture on Feeding the Poor: Deuteronomy 24:19-22

Sharing the Heavenly Food Pantry Story

Mary Richer  
Suzanne Reardon  
Mary Ellen Grove  
Elaine Raymond

Anthem

*Brother*

Bo & Bear Rinehart

Pastoral Prayer & **Unison Lord's Prayer ("trespasses")**

A Time of Silence for Personal Prayer

Sharing Our Prayers with God and Each Other

**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.**

Prayer Response

**Multiplied**

Bo & Bear Rinehart

**God of mercy, sweet love of mine  
I have surrendered to Your design  
May this offering stretch across the skies  
And these hallelujahs be multiplied,  
these hallelujahs be multiplied.**

New Testament Epistle Scripture on Feeding the Poor: James 2:14-17

## Sharing the Heavenly Food Pantry Story

Val Gabert

Betsy Weischedel

Anita Guild

## Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation, Offering, and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory *Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant*

Richard Gillard

**\*Doxology**

**#778**

**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.**

**\*Hymn**

***I Hear Them All*  
[handout]**

**Woody Guthrie**

A Closing Scripture of Christ's Kingdom: John 21:15-19

## Lighting a Candle of Remembrance and Participation

*During this time, Rev. Mendes will light a candle of remembrance and participation for all of those people who worked so hard to make the Heavenly Food Pantry a success. Some of our friends are in God's eternal kingdom and some have had journeys that took them to new adventures in life. This candle honors all of their efforts in making our food pantry a success.*

**\*Benediction**

Pastoral Benediction

Rev. Mark Mendes

**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, family all are we,**

**Let us walk with each other 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.**

**\*Please stand as you are able**

*Join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship for cake and coffee as we continue to celebrate the 25th anniversary of our Heavenly Food Pantry.*

## **IMPORTANT WORSHIP SERVICE UPDATE:**

- ◆ Starting on Sunday, November 5, and continuing on the first Sunday of each month, we will hold a single worship service at 10am. This gives us the opportunity to connect with our faith family as we celebrate Holy Communion together.
  - ⇒ This service will be in-Person & Streamed with organ and Sanctuary Choir
  - ⇒ Staffed nursery care will be available
  - ⇒ Spiritual Friends for PreK through 2nd grade offered after Children's Moment.

## **A Few Key Announcements**

- ◆ **Two Sunday Morning Services**
  - ⇒ 8:30am—In-Person & Streamed with organ and Sanctuary Choir.
  - ⇒ 10:15am—In Person with Finally @ First Praise Band & Faith Formation for children
  - ⇒ Nursery for infants through 3 years available at both services—self-serve at 8:30 and staffed at 10:15.
  - ⇒ Holy Communion is offered the first Sunday of each month
- ◆ **Sincere thanks this morning to:**
  - ⇒ Rick Dooley and Finally @ First Praise Band for the uplifting music!
- ◆ **October Faith Formation**
  - ⇒ **October 15, 22, & 29** ~ Peer Groups during 2nd Service (PreK through 8th)

### **Gratitude.**

*So Many Ways to Give.*

Will Gramma finally understand that sandboxing doesn't mean sifting through the local playground sandbox to look for loose change for the collection plate?

Will techie-loser Dad ever learn how to use his new TV remote control?

Come to church on October 22nd and find out as we entertain you with a comedy of techie jargon and faithful feverishness as we kick off the Stewardship Campaign.

**Gratitude. So Many Ways to Give.**

## **New Member's Class Offered**

Do you appreciate a faith that encourages you to use your mind? Are you looking for a church that teaches values of love, kindness, inclusion and forgiveness to your children? Do you appreciate great music from multiple choral or musical groups? Do you feel the warmth and support of our staff and members? Do you want to be a part of an organization that helps to better the structures and tone of the wider Essex community? If you have answered yes to any of these questions, then we would love you to come and explore what membership in our church means.

On October 22 after the second service we are offering a New Members Class where you can learn about our church and her many ministries. You will learn about our history as well as what our denomination, the United Church of Christ, stands for and how they operate. Lunch is provided. If you need child care, please call the church office at 802-878-5745 and let us know.

## **Craft Fest 2024**

The Craft Fest tables are in Fellowship Hall with the following sign-up opportunities:

1. Make a goodie for sweet shoppe
2. Make a pot of veggie or meat chili or butternut squash soup.
3. Volunteer as a greeter
4. Drop off silent auction items, including gift cards.
5. Pick up a lawn sign to display

If you have any questions please contact Linda at [lbogardus@myfairpoint.net](mailto:lbogardus@myfairpoint.net).

Nearly New donations can be dropped off after October 29.

Thank you for your support!

## **Racial Justice Group**

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Arnold Thomas

*"Black Angels of the Green Mountains:*

*The Challenge of Black Abolitionists in Antebellum Vermont"*

Are you concerned about racial equity in our state and country? Would you like to learn about the history and how to move forward? Please join us this afternoon at 3pm in the Sanctuary for a lively lecture and discussion about this very important topic. This event is free and open to the public so bring a friend!

## **Audio/Visual Support**

We are looking to expand our audio/visual team for Sunday morning worship. This involves running the streaming video for the 8:30 service and controlling the cameras. We will provide all the necessary training. Please contact the church office—[welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)—if you are interested or would like more information.

Solaris Vocal Ensemble's 10th Anniversary Celebration Concert with guest choirs and Joe's Big Band is Saturday, October 21 at 7:30 at First Unitarian Universalist Society in Burlington. In addition to Solaris, the first half of the concert will feature five guest choirs – Aurora Chamber Singers, Bella Voce Women's Chorus, Counterpoint Vocal Ensemble, the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington Choir, and the UVM Catamount Singers - which will sing individual pieces and then join to sing Mack Wilberg's rousing arrangement of *Bound for the Promised Land* as well as an exciting rendition of *May the Circle Be Unbroken* arranged by Solaris' own James Stewart. Topping off this musical extravaganza will be local favorite, Joe's Big Band. This 17-piece band's special blend of American jazz standards will cap off the night of celebration. The concert is free. Donations will be gratefully accepted at the door for the Vermont Flood Response and Recovery Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation. Bethany Blake will be providing accompaniment.

## OUR PRAYER MINISTRY

If you require prayers for yourself or a loved one; or if you wish for a call from a pastor, please contact [welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org) or call (802) 878-5745.

*Please keep these people/places in your prayers...*

Those impacted by the fires in Hawaii  
Everyone affected by the recent flooding  
Victims of gun violence and their families

Tony Lamb

Family and Friends of Norma Edwards

Bruce Gianuzzi

Sandy Tallman

Jennifer Smith

Denise Keating and family  
at the passing of her mother

Maureen Evans & Family

Bernie Currier

All those suffering due to violence in Ukraine  
and the Middle East

...and all persons affected by COVID19

### CONNECTIONS:

Signup Online! <https://bit.ly/3dwsHji>

Our "Weekly Update" eConnection: <http://bit.ly/3rlslSv>

Our monthly "SPIRIT@FIRST" eNewsletter\* <http://fccej.org/v5/category/newsletters/>

\*available in a printed, snail-mailed format

### ONGOING PROGRAMS!

- ◆ **Sermon Talk Back**, Tuesdays at 8:30am in Marvin Lounge & Zoom:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89903982036#success>
- ◆ **Tai Chi Class**, Tuesdays at 10:15am in the Fellowship Hall
- ◆ **Yoga @ First**, Tuesdays at 5pm in the Sanctuary
- ◆ **Coffee Clatter**, every Friday @ 8am at Martone's
- ◆ **Lunchtime Book Group**, 3rd Mondays @ 11:30am in Marvin Lounge
- ◆ **Bridge Group**, 1st & 3rd Fridays @ 1:30pm in Marvin Lounge



FACEBOOK

[bit.ly/39039ht](http://bit.ly/39039ht)

INSTAGRAM

[bit.ly/3rlfgZf](http://bit.ly/3rlfgZf)



INTERNET

[fccej.org](http://fccej.org)



YOUTUBE

[bit.ly/3oPpBv9](http://bit.ly/3oPpBv9)

# Weekly Calendar: October 15—October 22

\*Please contact the church office with any changes or corrections\*

## Sunday, October 15

8:30am\* & 10:15am: Worship,  
Sanctuary & Streaming\*  
10:30am: Faith Formation Peer Groups (PreK-8th)  
11:30am: Craft Fest Committee, Marvin Lounge  
Junior Youth, Kitchen, Youth Room  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
3pm: Racial Justice presents Rev. Arnold Thomas,  
Sanctuary

## Tuesday, October 17

8:30am: Sermon Talkback, Marvin Lounge  
10am: Tai Chi, Fellowship Hall  
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
3pm: Food Pantry Planning, Marvin Lounge  
5pm: Yoga @ First, Sanctuary  
7pm: CE, Marvin Lounge  
Communications, Conference Room

## Thursday, October 19

*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
7pm: Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
Open & Affirming Sub-Committee,  
2nd Floor Program Room  
*Cub Scouts Pack 630, Fellowship Hall*

## Saturday, October 21

*8am: The Vine Nepali Congregation, Sanctuary,  
Kitchen, Fellowship Hall*  
*Give It A Go Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*  
*9am: Weight Loss Support Group, Gym*  
10am-1pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Marvin Lounge*  
2pm: Stewardship Skit Dress Rehearsal, Sanctuary

## Monday, October 16

8:30am: Food Pantry Organizing, Fellowship Hall  
*10am: Essex Art Discussion Group,  
2nd Floor Program Room*  
11:30am: Lunchtime Book Group, Marvin Lounge  
*Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
7pm: Stewardship Skit Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
*7:30pm: Group Victory, Marvin Lounge*

## Wednesday, October 18

8am: Foodbank Delivery, Fellowship Hall  
10am: Missions Committee, Marvin Lounge  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
3:30pm: Food Pantry Committee, Marvin Lounge  
4pm-7pm: Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop  
5:30pm: Finally @ First Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
6pm: Stewardship Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
7pm: Wednesday Night Searchers, Marvin Lounge  
*BSA Troop 624, Fellowship Hall*

## Friday, October 20

8am: Coffee Clatter, Martone's Market  
9am: Organ Tuning, Sanctuary  
*11:30am: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*  
1:30pm: Bridge Group, Marvin Lounge  
*4pm: Blue Spruce Grange, Fellowship Hall*  
*7pm: Burlington Amateur Radio Club,  
Fellowship Hall*

## Sunday, October 22

8:30am\* & 10:15am: Worship,  
Sanctuary & Streaming\*  
10:30am: Faith Formation Peer Groups (PreK-8th)  
11:30am: New Members Class, Marvin Lounge  
Montana Leadership, 2nd Floor Program Room  
*1pm: Brown Bag Fellowship, Fellowship Hall*

*Events in italics = Local Community Groups*