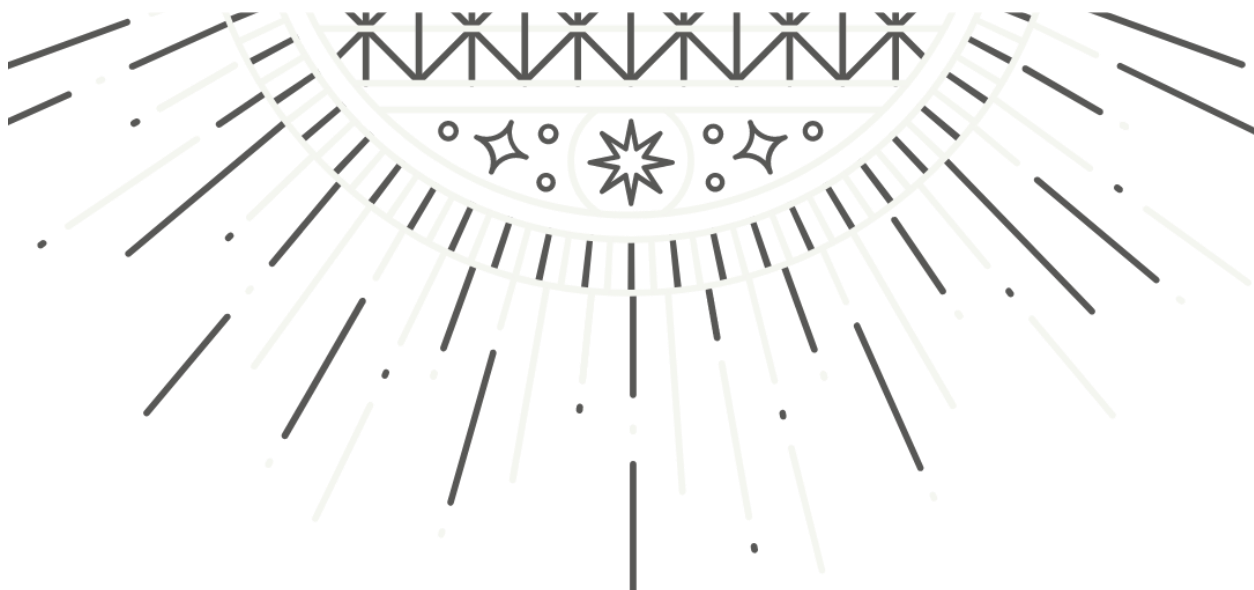


The Federated Church

United Church of Christ + Unitarian Universalist Association



EPIPHANY

**A SEASON OF
ILLUMINATION & TRANSFIGURATION**

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

A warm WELCOME to those visiting or checking out Federated Church!

We're glad you're here! Are you looking for more information about who we are, what we do, or how to get involved? Would you like to meet with Pastor Eric or get connected to others? In the book rack on the back of the pew toward the center aisle, you will find a green or red "pew pad" with a yellow bookmark-sized "Connection Card" inside. Fill it out and place it in the offering plate as they are passed around during the "Offertory," and we will be in touch with you soon!

Federated Church is an Open & Affirming Community

In a time of deep division and vitriolic rhetoric around issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, and where the dignity of people living with disabilities or mental health issues are often ignored, demonized, or turned into a joke, we promise to:

Welcome all people of every age, gender, race, national origin, faith expression, marital status & family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, physical ability, mental or emotional condition, economic and social status, and educational background to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our church family.

The Rainbow Flag: We proudly display a rainbow flag at the front of our sanctuary as a visual declaration of God's extravagant and inclusive love, as well as of our own "promise of welcome" to all people. Our prayer is that all can be their truest selves here. This flag serves as a particular signal that our church is a safe and affirming space for LGBTQIA+ people to be, to belong, to lead, to question, and to grow in faith.

Order of Worship | February 19, 2023

All music is from the **Black New Century Hymnal** in your pew back, unless noted otherwise.

* indicates moments in the service where you are invited to stand or rise in spirit

Please join in reading those parts printed in **bold**

Prelude

Welcome & *Passing the Peace

Gathering Hymn “Womb of Life and Source of Blessing” (p. 5)

Centering Moment

Sharing Prayers of Joy & for Healing

Silent Prayer & Reflection

“The glory of God is the human being fully alive.”

~ St. Irenaeus of Lyon (2nd century)

“Somewhere along the line, I had been taught that in order to be human, I needed to convince white people that I’m human... that I am worthy...”

~ Christena Cleveland, PhD and author of *God is a Black Woman*

- Who have you been trying to convince that you are worthy of dignity, of love?
- What might it look like for you to believe that God doesn’t want you to shrink yourself or limit yourself to others’ expectations of you, but to simply be fully who God created you to be?

Breath Prayer:

Inhale slowly: “I have nothing to prove” | Exhale slowly: “My dignity is inherent”

Inhale slowly: “This flesh is sacred” | Exhale slowly: “I contain the divine” (*repeat*)

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Sung Response “Ground and Source of All That Is” (p.6)

Scripture

[Matthew 17:1-9](#); [2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2](#)

Sermon

“Becoming Divine”

Choir Anthem

“I Believe”

Hank Beebe

Our Shared Life & Offering

Offering Opportunities

Offertory

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.

Prayer of Dedication

Sending Hymn “Transfigure Me” (p.6)

Benediction

Postlude

As the postlude plays, please join us in Dutton Hall for coffee and fellowship!

† † †

WORSHIP NOTES

Those serving us this morning are:

Pastor: Rev. Eric J. Ogi | **Ministers:** All of us! | **Director of Music:** Gary Mattin

Ushers: *Nate & Pam Kitterman, Linda Mason, & Allison Stahl*

Ushers for Sunday, Feb. 26: Paula von Ende, and Skip & Bev Schramer

All hymns are used with permission: *CCLI License #3234671*

“Womb of Life and Source of Being”

Ruth Duck

sung to tune of Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

Verse 1

***Womb of life, and source of being, home of every restless heart
In your arms the worlds awakened; you have loved us from the start
We, your children gather ‘round you, at the table you prepare
Sharing stories, tears, and laughter, we are nurtured by your care***

Verse 2

***Brooding Spirit, move among us; be our partner, be our friend
When our memory fails, remind us whose we are, what we intend
Labor with us, aid the birthing of the new world yet to be
Free of servant, lord, and master, free for love and unity***

Verse 3

***Mother, Brother, Holy Partner, Father, Spirit, Only Son:
We would praise your name forever, one in three, and three in one
We would share your life, your passion, share your word of world made new
Ever singing, ever praising, one with all, and one with you***

"Ground and Source of All that Is"

Richard Bruxvoort-Colligan

Ground and source of all that is, one that an-chors all our roots,
Lov-er of ten thou-sand names, ho-ly pres-ence all have known,
Call to kind-ness, call to serve, free-dom for our chos-en course,
Be-ing of all ways and forms, deep-est home and fi-nal truth.
Beau-ty ev-er wel-com-ing, my-ster-y to stir the soul.
Guide and friend for all who dream, nour-ish-ed by our ground and source.
We live and move in you. We live and move in you.

"Transfigure Me"

Christopher Grundy

Trans-fig-ure me so that I might be more like Je-
sus, more like Je - sus; trans-fig-ure me so that I might be
more like_ Je - sus, Je - sus my_ light.
Je - sus my_ light... Je - sus my_
light... Je - sus my_ light...

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Listen to Sermons Online—Video of sermons are posted each week on our website: www.fedsycamore.org/sermons_. They're also available via podcast (*scan the QR code!*)



February's Love Offering is for *CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)*.

This donation will help to make it possible for *CASA* to advocate for children in our community whose parents are in the court system.

Learn more about CASA by scanning the QR Code:



Cash or check donations may be placed in the Sunday “offering” plate. Make checks out to Federated Church and write “CASA” in the memo section; for cash donations use an envelope by the bulletins labeled *CASA*. Checks may also be mailed to The Federated Church, 612 W. State St., Sycamore, IL, 60178.

Progressive Christian Children's Books—we're curating a library of children's books that reflect our progressive Christian values of love, diversity, compassion, dignity, and justice for ALL. *Scan the QR code to see!*



From pictures to storylines, these books reflect an attention to diversity of authorship and representation in ethnicity, culture, race, gender, sexuality, and family units. They are LGBTQIA+ affirming, communicate healthy responses to feelings, and include an emphasis on our connection to and care for creation / the environment. These books are primarily written from a Christian perspective, although there are also many fantastic books that align with our values that are not explicitly “Christian.” *Many of these titles are also available to be checked out for free from our church library! Have a question about how to do so? Email the church office!*

Lent 2023 Small Groups (*see next page for details*)

We are excited to share the following small group opportunities during the upcoming season of Lent. We like to think of these small group opportunities as mini “schools for life”—spaces where we pause from “doing” and to reflect on the kind of people we really want to *be*, the kind of life we really want to lead; when we start here, we may well realize that in order to get “there” we have to start doing things differently. These groups are meant to help us reflect on these kinds of questions. We hope that you'll consider how you might make room in your schedule to join us!

Have questions? Reach out to Pastor Eric!

Liberating Masculinity

Mondays in March (6, 13, 20, 27)

5:30-6:45pm

Location: Sheldon Turner & Nicole LaDue home

Join us for a *four-week* small group as we go beyond the traditional “men’s group” in order to explore ways that the box of “masculinity” has imprisoned and even de-humanized us. As we deconstruct toxic forms of masculinity, we will reflect on how these show up in our own lives, and reimagine together what it might look like to inhabit a masculinity that is liberating—or, even more, what liberating our humanity so we can live beyond the narrow masculine / feminine binary might look like.

This group welcomes trans men as well as those who are non-binary or gender non-conforming.

Book Discussion

This Here Flesh: Spirituality, Liberation, and the Stories That Make Us by Cole Arthur Riley

Date and Time TBD

Sign up in Weekly Enews or in Dutton Hall so we know how many people are interested

This Lent, the book that will center and guide our spiritual exploration is the stunning New York Times bestselling book, *This Here Flesh*, by Cole Arthur Riley.

This Here Flesh is a captivating spiritual meditation where ‘Black words live in dignity, lament, rage, and hope.’ It explores how spirituality can heal the body, heal the stories we inherit, and give language to the deepest experiences of being human. By attending to the particularity of her Black female body, and the stories of her ancestors, Riley creates a sacred space for the reader to attend to their own body, the stories of their own ancestors, and the liberation that already is and is to come if only we are brave enough to hear its sound.

Purchase your own copy and join us over 4-5 weeks in Lent as we read this book and reflect together on how God is inviting us to grow and be changed as we do.



scan this QR code with your phone camera to see the book on Amazon

“This is the kind of book that makes you different when you’re done.”
– Ashley C. Ford, New York Times bestselling author of *Somebody’s Daughter*.

OUR FEDERATED VALUES

We believe in God

At the center of our faith is the surprising, unsettling, and deeply personal God found in the Bible, most profoundly revealed in the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus. At Federated, our primary interest is not merely talking *about* God, but in *encountering* the Mysterious Force at the heart of the universe. This is a God who comforts us where we need to be comforted and challenges us where we've become complacent. This is a God who will not be confined to dogmatic teachings, nor even to the Bible. We believe that we are invited to encounter this God everywhere: in nature, science, one another, and in other religious traditions as well.

Each person is on a unique spiritual journey

We value faith as a journey rather than a destination. We recognize that each person is at a different place on their journey, so we focus on “testimonies” of faith rather than “tests” of faith; stories of how we are being transformed, rather than dogmas we must affirm. Here, you are welcome to belong, question, explore, and lead whether you grew up in church and loved it, or you've had a painful relationship with Christianity; you are welcome whether you feel your faith is unshakeable or you're not sure if you believe in God at all. You are welcome to join a community of people "on the way": encouraging and caring for one another, learning and growing together, and serving alongside each other as we build, in some small way, the world we believe God dreams of.

Building authentic community across our differences

We are an "Open and Affirming" congregation, which is our way of saying that we value diversity. In a time of deep division, we believe it is paramount to gather people from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and identities in order to build authentic relationships and community. We believe that the simple but courageous work of showing up and being together in this way is one necessary element in healing our nation and world's deep divisions.

We believe in peace through justice

In this congregation, conversations regarding racism, sexism, poverty, war, immigration, homophobia, hunger, abuse, and a host of other issues are commonplace, both from the pulpit and around the table. We know that the Realm of God is not being experienced on earth so long as people are being hurt. With Martin Luther King Jr., we believe that we are all "caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny," and that "none of us can be free until all are free." Which means that, as a community, we have a God-given responsibility and mission to work for justice and healing in our neighborhood and beyond. Jesus says: "I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). This work is defined not merely by what we are against, but the vision we are for—flourishing for *all!*

“Welcoming Any, Loving All”

*The Federated Church is affiliated with two national denominations:
the United Church of Christ & the Unitarian Universalist Association*



Follow us on

Facebook & Instagram:

@FederatedChurchSycamore



www.fedsycamore.org

Church Office Phone: (815) 895-2706 || **Email:** Office@fedsycamore.org

Pastor Eric Cell: (815) 797-2250 || **Email** RevEric@fedsycamore.org

Federated Church Preschool, Director Bobbi Clough

Phone: (815) 764-9473 || **Email:** Preschool@fedsycamore.org

Address: 612 W. State Street, Sycamore, IL 60178