

Federated Church

OF SYCAMORE

United Church of Christ + Unitarian Universalist Association



seeking:

what are you seeking?

**honest questions for a deeper
faith and a more authentic life**

LENT 2023

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 LGBTQ persons to be, to belong, to lead, to question, and to grow in faith.

Order of Worship | April 02, 2023

All music can be found at the back of the bulletin.

We invite you to say “Hi” in the comments and like the video to let us know you’re here. Today we will be taking communion. We invite you to participate however you’re best able.

*Feel free to use whatever you have for the “bread and cup”—
whether that’s bread and grape juice or a cookie and coffee. God takes our ordinary offerings, whatever they are, and blesses them as we share them together!*

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

Prelude

Joining the Palm Procession

Join the procession by waving your palm branches as the choir sings!

Introit

“Hosanna!”

Craig Courtney

Welcome

Scripture

[Matthew 21:1-11](#)

Passing the Peace & Gathering Song “Hosanna in the Highest” (p.4)

Centering Our Hearts

Sharing Prayers of Joy & for Healing

Silent Prayer & 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 “Broken Body of Christ” *verse 1 (p.3)*

Scripture

[Luke 19:41-42](#) & [Matthew 21:12-15](#)

Sermon

“Where Are You Headed?”

Musical Meditation

Responding to God’s Invitation: Prayer Stations

Lent is an invitation to journey through our questions, doubts, fears, longings, griefs, and wounds—to journey through the wildernesses of life instead of trying to avoid them. This year, we’re imagining the wilderness as “The Land of the Seeking.” During this time (~5min) connect with what it is that you are seeking in this season.

As the music plays, we invite you to freely visit different prayer stations. Take your time. This works best if you don't try to visit all the prayer stations each week; linger where your heart feels called and receive what you need as you journey toward new life. (station descriptions continued below)

*We are trains on a track, moving through life at warp speed...
The years pass like a flipbook, faster than we can absorb, but the train does not stop.*

*We press our faces to the windows to try and get a good view
And we ask each other, "Where are you headed?" And there we decide—*

We want to head toward the promised day.

We want to head toward crowded tables and long, healthy lives.

We want to move in the direction of joyful children and hopeful communities.

*We want to move closer to God with every mile of track,
And that does not happen by accident.*

So, it's time to ask: "Where are you headed, and who is driving that train?"

"Where Are You Headed?" by Sarah (Are) Speed

Waiting in the Wilderness: The wilderness can be a season of silence; of waiting; a time when our most pressing questions have no simple or straightforward answers. Allow yourself to remain in your pew and sit in silence as you wait on God.

Wall of the Seeking (*front*): What is it your heart seeks? What questions do you carry? Write them on our Wall of the Seeking. Pause to notice what others are seeking; offer a prayer for them, and receive theirs for you.

Water of Release (*front*): What is weighing you down? What do you need to release in order to journey toward new life? Take a slow, deep breath as you drop a stone—or stones—into the bowl of water as you release this burden.

Prayer Candles (*front*): Light a candle and offer a prayer for a loved one or for a place / people around the world who are suffering.

Table of Offering (*middle*): What do you have to offer for the healing of the world God so loves? Place a donation to the church, Raise the Roof fund, or Love Offering supporting a community partner in the basket, or sign up in Dutton Hall to serve.

Baptismal Blessing (*back*): Dip your fingers in the baptismal font and mark your forehead in the sign of the cross or circle as a reminder of God's infinite and irrevocable love for you, and your desire for this love to heal and make you new.

Wonder Wall (*back*): Each card has a different question; take one (or a few) home with you. Real connection begins with wonder. In the week ahead, plan a time over coffee, at dinner, or at bedtime with a family member or friend to wonder together on this question, and see what happens in your relationship.

Holy Communion

We practice an “open table”—everyone is welcome to partake. There is no dogma you must first believe. God meets us where we are—amidst our questions, doubts, fears, and failures—and offers us bread and cup: nourishment and a blessing on life’s journey.

Invitation & Words of Institution

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Sharing Bread & Cup “Broken Body of Christ” verse 2 (p. 3)

Please come forward by forming a single line in the center aisle

Preparing to Live God’s Love

Our Shared Life

Sending Song “Two Processions” (p. 5)

Benediction

Postlude

† † †

WORSHIP NOTES

Those serving us this morning are:

Pastor: Rev. Eric J. Ogi | **Ministers:** All of us! | **Music Director:** Gary Mattin
Liturgist: Sheldon Turner | **Ushers:** Pam Wegener, Chris Borresen, & Skip Schramer

“Broken Body of Christ”



1. We are the wand - 'ring _____ we are the seek - ing _____ We are the ones _____
2. We are the thir - sty _____ look - ing for mer - cy _____ We have _____ all _____



_____ left out to dry _____ We are the bleed - ing _____ Our hearts are weep - ing _____
_____ been kicked a - side _____ We are the stum - bling _____ Our hands are fumb - ling _____

Chorus



_____ We are the bro - ken _____ bod - y of Christ _____ And when we eat, _____



_____ we are fed _____ the love that God has giv - en _____ And when we drink _____



we take it in _____ this love, _____ this earth - ly hea - ven. _____

"Hosanna in the Highest"

Ho - san - na!

Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho

san - na! Sing praï-ses to the Lord!

Ho san - na! Ho

13 san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na!

Sing praï-ses to the Lord! (Last time to Coda)

19 1. Bles - sed is the One, bles - sed is the One, who
2. Glo - ry to our God, glo - ry to our God, re

21 comes in the name of the Lord! Ho
joice

Coda

23 Bles - sed is the One, who comes! Ho - san - na!

ff Shout...

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the hymn "Hosanna in the Highest". It consists of ten staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes a Coda section starting at measure 21. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo) and a "Shout..." instruction. Measure numbers 13, 19, and 23 are indicated at the start of their respective staves.

"Two Processions: A Palm Sunday Hymn"

Amanda Udis-Kessler

5 Bm Gmaj9 A6 Gmaj9 A6 Bm

Two pro-ces-sions en-ter-ing Je-ru-sa-lem, two op-pos-ing
Two pro-ces-sions en-ter-ing Je-ru-sa-lem, power of love a-
Two pro-ces-sions en-ter-ing Je-ru-sa-lem: Realm of hope, do-

10 Gmaj9 Asus A Em Cmaj7

king-doms on dis-play. Which of these pro-ces-sions are we
against the love of power. Will we choose the path of do-mi-
10 min-ion built on fear. As we choose the path that love has

15 Bsus Bm A6 Gadd2 Aadd2 Esus E

part of? Which one will we fol-low on its way?
15 na-tion? Will we let com-pas-sion have its hour?
o-pened, we will see the realm of hope draw near

21 Bm A/C# D6 D Esus E D2/F# Gmaj7

Will we shout "Hail Pi-late" or "Ho-san-na" when we have a
God has had a dream of joy-ful jus-tice. Rome has spun a

26 A A7 Bsus Bm G2 A2 Bm A/C# D

choice whose praise to sing? Will we trust the vio-lent migh-ty
26 night-mare of ne-glect. If we join the com-mon-wealth of

31 Esus Em D2/F# G2 A2 D2 1. 2. F#7/A#

31 ru-ler? Will we trust the peace-ful pea-sant king?
ser-vants we may bring God's joy and jus-tice yet.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

April's Love Offering is for *The Federated Church Preschool*. Bobbi Clough, Center Director, shares this message: We will be adding a fourth classroom in fall 2023 so that we can offer full-time childcare here in Sycamore. There is a huge shortage of full-time, full-day childcare. We want to support our local families so that they can work knowing their children are safe in our care. We already have 15 kids (out of 32 openings) signed up. The additional spots will fill up quickly. We need furniture for this fourth classroom: tables, chairs, shelves, dramatic play items, an art easel, and a sand and water table. These items are required by DCFS, our state licensing body. We cannot thank Federated Church enough for all of your assistance as we venture into going to full-time care!

Donations in any amount are welcome and can be placed in the collection plate on Sundays or mailed to the church office. Be sure to write "preschool" in the memo section of checks.

Raise the Roof Campaign We continue to accept contributions for the Raise the Roof Campaign. An anonymous donor has agreed to provide **half** of the remaining \$30,000 balance needed for our roof repairs ***if the congregation can raise the other half -- \$15,000 – by our May 1 deadline.*** As stewards entrusted with this gift that was handed down to us by our faithful forebears, we invite you to prayerfully consider whether and how you can contribute so that we too can bless another generation; any amount will get us closer to the goal. Be sure to write "Raise the Roof" in the memo section of checks.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday—*Thursday, April 6, 5:30pm, Dutton Hall/Sanctuary*

We are excited to be offering a different, engaging experience for Holy Week this year with our **Maundy Thursday** service. We will begin with a FREE vegetarian Mediterranean dinner (falafel, pita, hummus, salad, etc.), during/after which we will remember the story of Jesus' final hours—from the Last Supper through his crucifixion—through readings, music, candle lighting, and several interactive components. *Sign up in Dutton Hall or in the weekly eNews so we know how much food to order!*

Good Friday—*Friday, April 7, 3pm, Sycamore United Methodist Church*

Join us and our friends from Salem Lutheran Church, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, and Sycamore United Methodist Church for a **Good Friday service** reflecting on "the seven last words of Jesus" from the cross, and the invitation, promise, and challenge they offer us and our world today.

Easter Sunday—*Sunday, April 9, 10am*

Join us for a special Easter worship service that will feature a pick-up choir singing the "Hallelujah Chorus." No choir practice attendance needed. More info to come!

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

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