

# **Federated Church**

## **OF SYCAMORE**



**A Congregation of the  
United Church of Christ &  
Unitarian Universalist Association**

# ***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? Fill out our brief online [Connection Form here](#), 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 | June 18, 2023, 10:00 am

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

### **Prelude**

### **Welcome & \*Passing the Peace**

**Gathering Song** “For Everyone Born” vv. 1-2, 4-5 (p.3)

### **Sharing Prayers of Joy & For Healing**

### **Centering Moment**

*This is your time to center more deeply into the presence of God.*

*We invite you to slowly read the quote below, and then: ponder the Meditation questions; move through the Breath Prayer; or simply sit in silence.*

“Then the righteous and just will say, ‘Lord, when did we see you a stranger and invite you in...?’ “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these siblings of mine, you did for me.’ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed... for I was a stranger, and you did not invite me in, ... you did not look after me.’ ... ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

~ Jesus, Matthew 25

### **Meditation Questions**

1. Have you ever felt like a “stranger” or an outsider in a community? What specific words or actions made you feel “Other” or like you didn’t belong?
2. Who is the “stranger” you have a hard time welcoming and caring / advocating for?
3. How can you build on your experience of “unbelonging” to help us as a church live more fully into our proclamation that “all are welcome here”? What concrete things may need to be done/change for us to do so?

### **Breath Prayer**

*“Breath Prayer” is an ancient Christian form of prayer done by choosing one or two lines to meditate on, and to inhale / exhale through them. This helps us unite our prayers with our full being. Take a moment to breathe through these lines as your centering prayer.*

**Inhale**: God loves me as I am | **Exhale**: God loves me too much to leave me there

**Inhale**: God loves everyone as they are | **Exhale**: I will keep growing in God’s love

*(repeat)*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**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 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** "New Patterns of Loving" (p.4)

**Scripture** [Matthew 19:11-12; Acts 8:26-40](#)

**Sermon.** "God Breaks the Rules to Get People In"

## **Musical Meditation**

### **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** "We'll Build a World" (p.5)

## **Benediction**

## **Postlude**

*Thank you for joining us for worship today!*

*† † †*

## **WORSHIP NOTES**

*Serving us this morning are:*

**Pastor:** Rev. Eric J. Ogi | **Ministers:** All of us! | **Music Director:** Gary Mattin  
**Liturgist:** Phil Wagener | **Ushers:** Nate & Pam Kitterman, Linda Mason, & Allison Stahl  
Ushers for Sunday, June 25: Paula von Ende and Bev & Skip Schramer

All hymns this morning come from *The New Century Hymnal* unless noted otherwise, and are used with permission: *CCLI License #3234671*

# “For Everyone Born”

Shirley Erena Murray and Brian Mann



1 For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble,  
2 For wom - an and man, a place at the ta - ble,  
4 For just and un - just, a place at the ta - ble,  
5 For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble,



for ev - ery - one born, clean wa - ter and bread,  
re - vis - ing the roles, de - cid - ing the share,  
to li - sten and mourn, for - give and be changed,  
to live with - out fear, and sim - ply to be,



a shel - ter, a space, a safe place for grow - ing,  
with wis - dom and grace, di - vid - ing the pow - er,  
in an - ger, in hurt, a mind - set of mer - cy,  
to work, to speak out, to wit - ness and wor - ship,



for ev - ery - one born, a star o - ver - head,  
for wom - an and man, a sys - tem that's fair,  
for just and un - just, a new way to live,  
for ev - ery - one born, the right to be free,



and God will de - light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice and



joy, com - pas - sion and peace: yes,



God will de - light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice,



jus - tice and joy!

# “New Patterns of Loving”

Barbara Hamm

1. New pat - terns of lov - ing make room for new ways,  
2. Our an - ces - try marks us with vis - i - ble signs;  
3. God bless all the mo - thers and fa - thers to - day;

cre - at - ing new fam - ilies to care for and raise.  
we bear in our bod - ies ge - net - ic de - signs.  
help us to raise chil - dren to walk in God's way,

All those who have loved us and helped us to grow  
But love, be - yond lim - its of gen - der or race,  
to care for each oth - er as chil - dren of God,

are fam - ilies of choice by the car - ing they show.  
can fash - ion new fam - ilies and new ways em - brace.  
whose love is in - clu - sive, far - reach - ing, and broad.

# “We’ll Build a World”

David Lohman

1  
1. We are diff - rent, you and I, yet to -  
2. As we la - bor toward that day, don't let  
3. In this var - ied u - ni - verse all ex -

4  
geth - er, fates en - twine. Now we gath - er in this  
diff - rence fall a - way. Your u - nique - ness I will  
ist - ence so di - verse. Filled with won - der, life so

7  
space, joined in spir - it, filled with grace; bring your  
see, and the same thing, see in me. Thus we're  
queer, steeped in mys - t'ry, oft un - clear. Yet to -

10  
full - ness, I'll bring mine, and to - geth - er we will  
val - ued, known and named, hon - ored, cher - ished, loved and  
geth - er, hand in hand, we'll cre - ate that Prom - ised

13  
REFRAIN  
shine. \_\_\_\_\_  
claimed. \_\_\_\_\_ To - geth - er, we'll build a world where there's  
Land. \_\_\_\_\_

16  
room for all to be; a world where we'll live our lives lib - er -

19  
at - ed, strong, and free! This glo - ri - ous fu - ture \_\_\_\_\_

22  
\_\_\_\_\_ build it now with me. \_\_\_\_\_



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **June's Love Offering** | *Strengthen the Church.*

The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering in June reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ. Donations in any amount are welcome and can be placed in the "offering" plate, mailed to the church office, or given online at <https://onrealm.org/federatedchurch/give/now> — select the fund: Love Offering. Be sure to write "Strengthen the Church" in the memo section of checks.

## **Federated Preschool Update**

The preschool appreciates the support the church members and the community have shown in our efforts to raise funds. We received \$8,171.18 from Give DeKalb County and an additional \$4,125.00 from the Love Offering.

These funds have helped in ordering the furniture and equipment required by DCFS to open our new full-time classroom.

## **DeKalb County Pride March** | *June 22, 4:30pm, Van Buer Plaza in Downtown DeKalb*

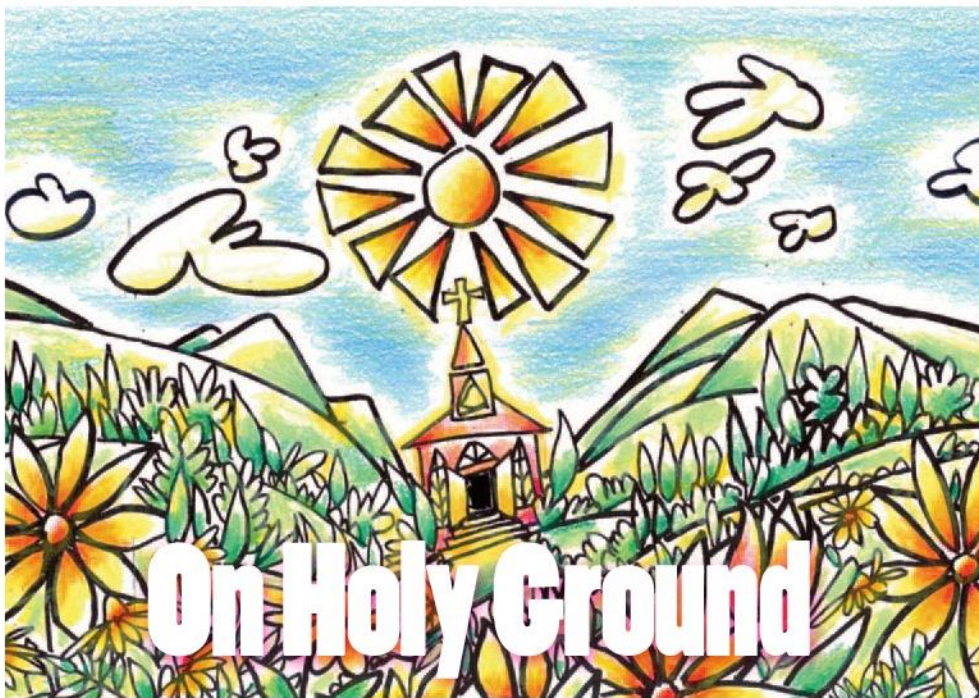
Pastor Eric is organizing a group to participate in the DeKalb County Pride March. What a powerful witness it would be to have an intergenerational group of folks there together! Sign up in Dutton Hall if you are interested in joining us!

## **Ladies' Night Out** | *June 27, 6PM, Bea's Wok 'N Roll*

Ladies' Night Out will be held June 27, at 6:00 PM at Bea's Wok 'N Roll, 1402 Sycamore Rd., DeKalb. Some ladies will be going to the concert at the Dee Palmer Band Shell in Hopkins Park after dinner, all are welcome to attend. The concert begins at 7:30 PM.

**Online Giving** is now live! Whether it's your weekly, monthly, or quarterly pledge, a one-time or recurring donation, or a contribution to a specific fund (e.g.: monthly LOVE Offering, Pastors Emergency fund, etc.), you can now do that simply and securely through our our online platform (<https://onrealm.org/federatedchurch/give/now>)! *Contact the church office with questions.*





## The Holy Ground Where God Appears

Rev. Traci D. Blackmon, *Associate General Minister United Church of Christ*

*“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”* Exodus 3:5

**S**cripture names many places as holy. Yet my heart resonates most with Moses’ encounter with the burning bush in Exodus. God appears in the flames of a burning bush that is not consumed. Yet what matters most to me in this text is not where or to whom God appears, but why God appears.

God appears in response to the cries of God’s people who are being treated unjustly. God appears because of the people’s cries, and wherever God appears is holy ground.

I often have the privilege of standing on holy ground as I travel the breadth of our beloved Church. These are places where God shows up through the work of God’s people to treat other’s needs as holy.

Plymouth UCC in Des Moines is holy ground, a church that removed the

---

stairs to the pulpit and replaced them with circular ramps, honoring a God who still speaks through preachers and laity who do not stand.

Plymouth Congregational in Kansas is holy ground, a church where one of our unhoused siblings welcomed me to “their church” after worship, before heading back outside by choice with his bags and dog. This reminds us that those unhoused should still have a home with us.

Saint John’s UCC in St. Louis is holy ground, a church that partners with the community to feed and clothe those in need of help, and whose members take communion to their surrounding neighbors as an extension of Christ’s table of grace.

Trinity UCC in Chicago is holy ground, partnering with the food security network to import organic fruit and vegetables in a neighborhood robbed of access to healthy food options.

Wherever you are this morning, take the time to see how God is moving through the work and witness of those who gather and know that you are, we all are, on holy ground.

**The Strengthen the Church Offering reflects the commitment of all settings of the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations as we work to become a multi-cultural/ multi-racial, accessible to all Christian movement.**



# 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](http://www.fedsycamore.org)**

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

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

**Federated Church Preschool, Director Bobbi Clough**

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

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