

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 | October 1, 2023, 10:00 am

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

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

"Isn't He?"

John Wimber

Welcome

Passing the Peace *(We invite you to say "Hi" in the comments and like the video to let us know you're here.)*

Gathering Song "Walls Mark Our Boundaries" (p.4)

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 sit silently as the music plays.

"Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone—we find it with one another." ~ Thomas Merton

Our families are the first place we learn what love is—even if that love isn't really love.

Meditation Questions

Who has most shaped your understanding of what love looks like? What did it look like?

What memories come to mind when you think of being loved? Was love earned, or was it reinforced even when it wasn't for something you earned?

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:** My dignity cannot be diminished

Inhale: I will love others as they are | **Exhale:** We do not have to prove we're loveable

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 "Come As You Are" (p.3)

Scripture [Luke 8:19-21; Romans 7:14-25](#)

Sermon "Family Is Our First School of Love"

Musical Meditation

Holy Communion

We practice an "open table"—everyone is welcome to receive God's gifts. There is no dogma you must first believe. God meets us where we are—amidst our questions, doubts, fears, and failures—and offers us nourishment and a blessing on life's journey.

Invitation & Words of Institution

Sharing Bread & Cup

*Please come forward as you feel ready by forming a single line in the center aisle.
If you would like to participate but do not wish to receive bread & cup,
we invite you to come forward and Pastor Eric will offer you a blessing.*

Choir Anthem "Come, Share the Lord" *Leech/Tabell*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Our Shared Life & Offering

Offering Opportunities

Offertory "Let Us Break Bread Together" *arr. Marianne Kim*

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 #332 "As We Gather at Your Table"

Benediction

Postlude "Change My Heart, Oh God" *Eddie Espinosa*

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: Sharon McKee | **Ushers:** Pam Wagener, Chris Borresen & Skip Schramer
Ushers for Sunday, Oct. 8: Judy Winter, Gip Seaver and Ruth Olle

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

“Come As You Are”

Gary Rand / Lenora Rand

lay your bur - dens down. Come as you are. Come you wear - y, come and
doubts and your scars. Come as you are. Bring your hopes, bring your

The musical score is written on three staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The second staff continues the melody with lyrics: "lay your bur - dens down. Come as you are. Come you wear - y, come and". The third staff continues with lyrics: "doubts and your scars. Come as you are. Bring your hopes, bring your". There is a triplet of eighth notes in the third staff. The piece ends with a final chord.

Walls Mark Our Boundaries

Ruth Duck

1 Walls mark our bound'-ries and keep us a - part;
2 Walls make us sure who is in and who's out;
3 Once we were strang-ers, di - vi - ded, a - lone.

walls keep the world from our eyes and our heart.
walls keep us safe from all ques - tion and doubt,
Hate and dis - trust built a wall stone by stone.

Ta - bles are round, mak - ing room for one more,
but at a ta - ble in o - pen ex - change
Now at a ta - ble the bread that we share

wel - com - ing friends we had not known be - fore. So
new ties are formed as our lives re - ar - range. So
joins us to Christ in a cir - cle of care. So

build us a ta - ble and tear down the wall!

Christ is our host. There is room

for us all!

all!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Governance Revitalization Presentation & Conversation

10/8, Dutton Hall, Following Worship

Join the Governance Revitalization Task Force for a presentation and conversation, including updates about the process, changes being considered to our organizational structure, and a chance to ask questions and offer feedback.

Federated 101—10/15, Following Worship, Settle Room

So... you've started worshipping with us, receiving the newsletter, and maybe even had coffee with Pastor Eric. But we're guessing you still have questions. Or maybe you're trying to find ways to connect, serve, or further explore your faith. Or maybe you're wondering how one becomes a member--or what the point of membership is. If this sounds like you, then we invite you to "Federated 101"—a chance to gather around a table for a conversation with Pastor Eric and others in the same boat to learn more about who we are, to finally ask that question you've had, to connect with others. Childcare will be provided while we gather.

All-Church Conversation: "Becoming School of Love"

10/22, Following Worship, Dutton Hall

Join us following worship on October 22 for an "all church" conversation on what it might look like for us to be a "School of Love." After getting coffee and snacks, we will split into small groups and reflect together on a series of prompts to begin imagining the kind of community we might seek to be—and become ever more. This is not a formal "visioning" session, but rather a chance for us to hear and learn from—as well as be inspired by—one another.

Creating a Safe & Accessible Community

As part of living into our values of creating a space that is safe and accessible to all, we've installed UV-C lights in our HVAC system in both our sanctuary and in Dutton Hall, which kills covid, flu, and other viruses as air in the room is filtered and the clean air is then blown back into the room. As such, we no longer require masks, although we encourage those who feel more comfortable wearing them to do so.

Online Giving

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 online platform (<https://onrealm.org/federatedchurch/give/now>)! *Contact the church office with questions.*

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

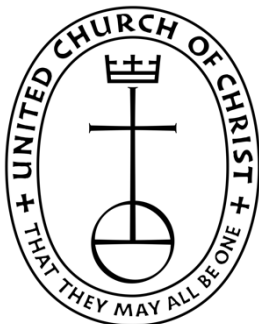
We are an "Open and Affirming" congregation, which is our way of saying that we value diversity. In a time of deep division, we believe it is paramount to gather people from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and identities in order to build authentic relationships and community. We believe that 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*



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@FederatedChurchSycamore

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