THE

Federated Church

OF SYCAMORE



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 | March 31, 2024

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

We invite you to like the video and/or say "Hi!" in the comments to let us know you're here!

Prelude "There Is a Redeemer" Melody Green

Gathering at Jesus' Tomb John 20:1-3, 11a

Introit "I Weep Because They Have Taken My Lord Away"

Easter proclamation John 20:11b-13 & Mark 16:6-7

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! (3x)

Hymn of Resurrection "Christ the Lord is Risen Today!" vv. 1, 2 & 4 (p. 4)

Centering Our Hearts
Prayers of the People
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.

Choir Anthem "Hallelujah Chorus" Handel / Ward We invite anyone interested in singing to join us for our pick-up choir anthem! Each section is anchored by people who know the part, so jump in even if you're a little shaky!

Scripture Luke 24:1-12

Sermon "Prisoners of Hope: Daring to Run Toward the Tomb"

Sung Response "Come, O Fount of Every Blessing v. 1 (p. 5)

Responding to God's Invitation: Prayer Stations

Preparing to Live God's Love

Our Shared Life

Sending Song "This is a Day of New Beginnings" *vv. 1-4* (p. 6) **Benediction**

Postlude "Lift High the Cross" Sydney H. Nicholson We invite you to remain seated as the postlude plays; however, Parents may leave during the postlude to gather their kids in "Children's Church." Please join us in Dutton Hall afterward for coffee and fellowship!

GUIDED REFLECTION

Use the following prompts to reflect on this morning's scripture and sermon in the week ahead. We encourage you to either journal about them or discuss them with someone.

Preaching professor and scholar, Dr. Karoline Lewis, says the disciples dismiss the women's story in Luke 24 as if it were "garbage" or "trash" (a more accurate translation of the original Greek word used). Why, after following Jesus closely, are they so quick to dismiss the women's good news? Are they too traumatized? Are they grieving? Are they unwilling to hear the truth in the voices of women? Has their world been turned upside down too many times for them to comprehend it? Are there people whose voices you find yourself dismissing when their story differs from or challenges yours? Why?

Dr. Karoline Lewis says: "The resurrection only makes sense when we remain amazed, marveling and wondering at the love of God that reversed death itself." Our comprehension of the resurrection is not based on cerebral understanding, but on our ability to embrace awe and to let it transform us from the inside out. In what ways are you experiencing resurrection this Easter? How might you be like Peter, "amazed at what had happened" (Luke 24:12)?

Why do you think Peter runs to the tomb? Why doesn't he dismiss the women like the other disciples? Imagine/Write an inner monologue for Peter when he hears the women's story. What is he thinking?

This Easter, do you find yourself asking, "Could it really be true?" In response, are you moving in the direction of hope? Where are you looking for glimpses of resurrection?

In his book, *Faith After Doubt*, Brian McLaren writes: "Acknowledging how little we know is, I think, at the core of mature faith." On a sheet of paper, write a list of all the things you don't know. When you come to a stopping point, pause and reflect. How did that exercise make you feel? As you look at your list, do you feel appreciation or awe?

Peter shows us that we can always begin again. We can add an "and" when we think our stories have come to an end. When have you experienced a holy "and" when you thought something in your life had come to an end? When have you begun again—despite heartbreak, or grief, or failures?

WORSHIP NOTES

Serving us this morning are:

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

Children's Church Coordinator: Janis Schnurr-Trebe | Liturgist:

Ushers: Alice Whitney, and Bev & Skip Schramer

Ushers for April 7: Pam Wagener, Chris Borresen, and Skip Schramer

The Introit, "I Weep Because They Have Taken My Lord Away," is a duet by Peggy

Safford and Fe Gould

All hymns this morning are used with permission: CCLI License #3234671

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lenten Love Offering | Spartan Food Pantry & One Great Hour of Sharing During Lent, our Love Offering includes two invitations:

- 1) To increase food and personal hygiene donations to the Spartan Food Pantry, which has specifically requested **shampoo & conditioner**. <u>Bring donations to worship; during the Prayer Stations, bring them forward to the "Table of Offering" at the front.</u>
- 2) Monetary donations to support the UCC's "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering, which pools our donations with churches around the country to support disaster relief, refugee resettlement, and development initiatives around the world. See flyer on the Table of Offering for an impact example. For donations: place in an envelope in the "Offering Plate;" mail to church; or give online. Note "OGHS" on checks.

Church Office Closed | Friday, April 5

The church office will be closed Friday, April 5, while Darlene takes a day off.

Let's Play: **Board & Card Games** | *First & Third Wednesdays, April-June* Board games or card games: Let's gather in the youth room, open some snacks, and share in some fun! Board games will be played the first Wednesday (Apr. 3, May 1, Jun. 5) and card games will be played the third Wednesday (Apr 17, May 15, Jun 19). Learn more in the eNews. Sign up here or in Dutton Hall.

Weekly eNews

Scan (or click) this QR code with your phone camera to see the most recent eNews with all these announcements and more! Subscribe tab is at the top.



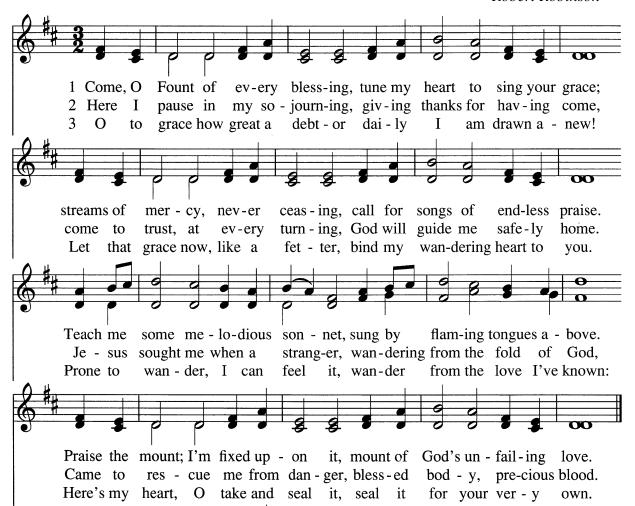
"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"

Charles Wesley



"Come, O Fount of Every Blessing"

Robert Robinson



"This Is a Day of New Beginnings"



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our God is

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.

We believe 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.

We believe in 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 working for 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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Follow us on <u>Facebook</u> & <u>Instagram</u>: @FederatedChurchSycamore

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