

THE
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 | May 12, 2024, 10:00 am

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

Prelude “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” *Beethoven/arr. H Halvey*

Welcome & Passing the Peace

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

Gathering Song “O God in Whom All Life Begins” (p. 4)

After singing, children will gather with Ms. Janis in the back for Children’s Church

Parents are invited to go pick up their child(ren) during the Postlude

Parents w/children under 2 y.o. may use the nursery outside the sanctuary at any time

Prayers of the People

Centering Moment

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

We invite you to take a slow, deep breath, and then: pray the prayer below, ponder the Meditation Questions; move through the Breath Prayer; or sit silently as the music plays.

“Mother God, we feel it in our bodies and souls. We know this to be true: Mothers are essential. Soft and strong, with open arms and hearts; we thank you for the array of women who are nurturing our world in all their varied ways; for those who cultivate peace and embody your life-giving presence through their mothering spirits. We thank You for the women who raise us, for the women who teach us how to love boldly and stand courageously. We thank you for the women who show us how to care for others and for ourselves too. Divine Mother, we thank you for the mothers: the ones up late into the night, the ones exhausted and at the end of their ropes, the ones showing up and doing their best. We thank you, for their persistence has cared for us all. Mother God, we feel it in our bodies and souls. We know this to be true: Mothers—biological or not; related or not; female or not—mothers are essential. Thank you for them all. Amen.” ~ A Prayer for Mother’s Day

Meditation Questions

- ◆ What does it mean to you to “mother” someone? Can people who are not female “mother” others? Who has mothered you?

Breath Prayers for Moms (and anyone else)

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

For when you’re...

exhausted: *Inhale:* I’m hitting my limit. | *Exhale:* Help me rest.

grateful: *Inhale:* Help me savor | *Exhale:* The good gifts in my life.

needing forgiveness: *Inhale:* Create in me a clean heart. | *Exhale:* Renew my spirit.

hopeful: *Inhale:* Hope is | *Exhale:* Worth fighting for.

doubtful: *Inhale:* Help me be brave | *Exhale:* When I am afraid.

feeling like a failure: *Inhale:* There is no perfect. | *Exhale:* My best is enough.

lonely: *Inhale:* Even in The Valley | *Exhale:* You are with me

needing help: *Inhale:* I don't have to be a superhero | *Exhale:* I can ask for help

grieving: *Inhale:* I don't have to hold it all together | *Exhale:* I get to be human, too

filled with wonder: *Inhale:* Every breath is a miracle | *Exhale:* Thank you

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father/Mother/Parent, 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 "God of the Women" vv. 1-3, 5 (p. 3)

Scripture [Jeremiah 9:10, 17-21; Isaiah 66:7-13; Matthew 23:37](#)

Sermon "Mourner, Mother, Midwife: The Liberating Presence of God"

Musical Meditation

Our Shared Life & Offering

Offering Opportunities

Offertory Anthem

"Like the Gentle Rain"

Mary Lynn Lightfoot

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 "Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us" (p. 5)

Benediction

Postlude

"With a Heart of Thanksgiving"

arr. H. Helvey

Thank you for joining us for worship!

† † †

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: Gip Seaver, Ruth Olle, and Skip Schramer

Ushers for May 19: Nate & Pam Kitterman, Linda Mason, and Allison Stahl

All music this morning is used with permission: CCLI License #3234671

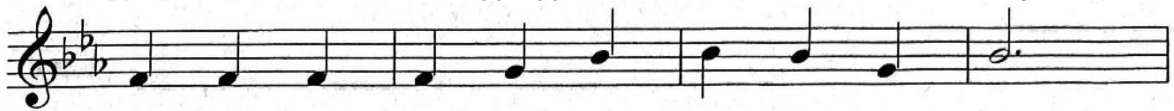
"A Prayer for Mother's Day," used in the Centering Moment, is adapted from To Light Their Way: A Collection of Prayers and Liturgies for Parents by Kayla Craig.

"God of the Women"

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette



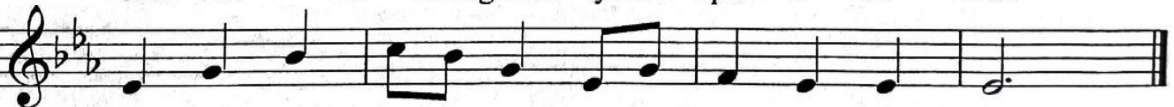
1. God of the wom - en who an - swered your call,
2. God of the wom - en who walked Je - sus' Way,
3. God of the wom - en long put to the test,
5. O God of Phoe - be and min - is - ters all,



trust - ing your pro - mis - es, giv - ing their all,
giv - ing their re - sourc - es, learn - ing to pray,
left out of stor - ies, for - got - ten, op - pressed,
may we be joy - ful in an - swering your call.



wom - en like Sar - ah and Han - nah and Ruth,
Ma - ry, Jo - an - na, Su - san - na, and more,
qui - et - ly ask - ing: "Who smiled at my birth?"
Give us the strength of your Spir - it so near



give us their cour - age to live in your truth.
may we give free - ly as they did be - fore.
In Je - sus' dy - ing you show us our worth.
that we may share - in your min - is - try here.

“O God in Whom All Life Begins”

Carl P. Daw, Jr.

1 O God in whom all life be-gins, who births the seed to fruit,
2 U - nite in mu - tual min - is - try our minds and hands and hearts
3 Through tears and laugh - ter, grief and joy, en - large our trust and care;

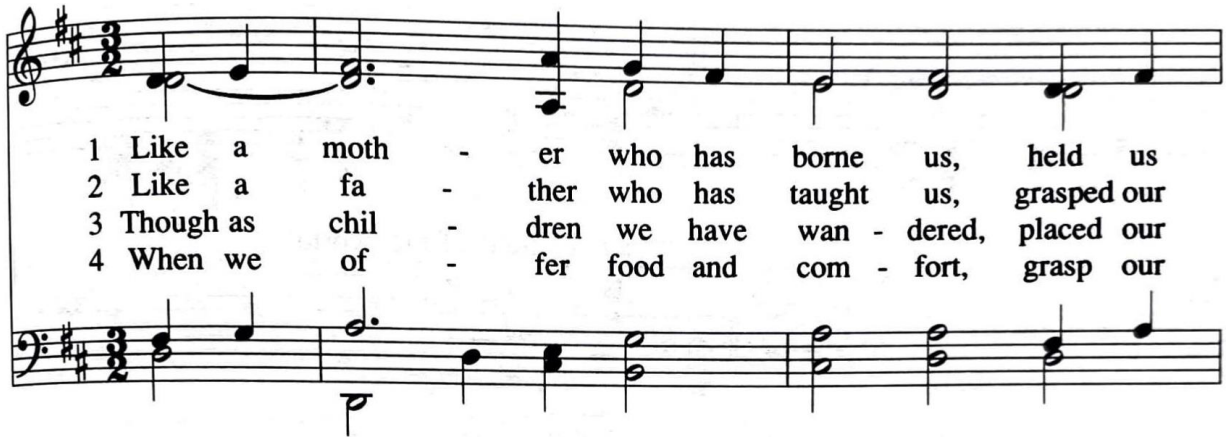
be - stow your bless - ing on our lives; here let your love find root.
that we may have the grace to seek the power your peace im - parts.
so bind us in com - mu - ni - ty that we may risk and dare.

Bring forth in us the Spir - it's gifts of pa - tience, joy, and peace;
So let our var - ied gifts com - bine to glo - ri - fy your Name
Be with us when we gath - er here to wor - ship, sing, and pray,

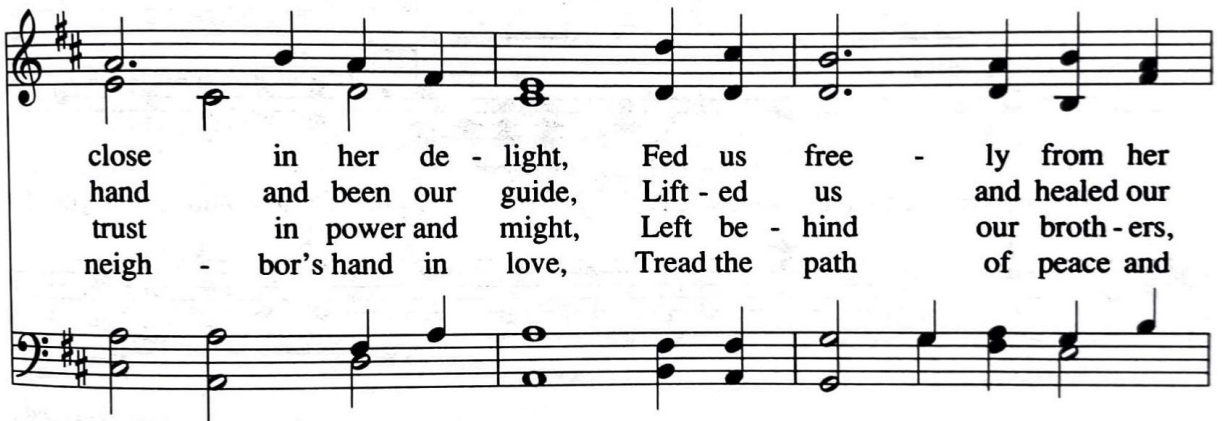
de - liv - er us from numb - ing fear, and grant our faith in - crease.
that in all things by word and deed we may your love pro - claim.
then send us forth in power and faith to live the words we say.

“Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us”

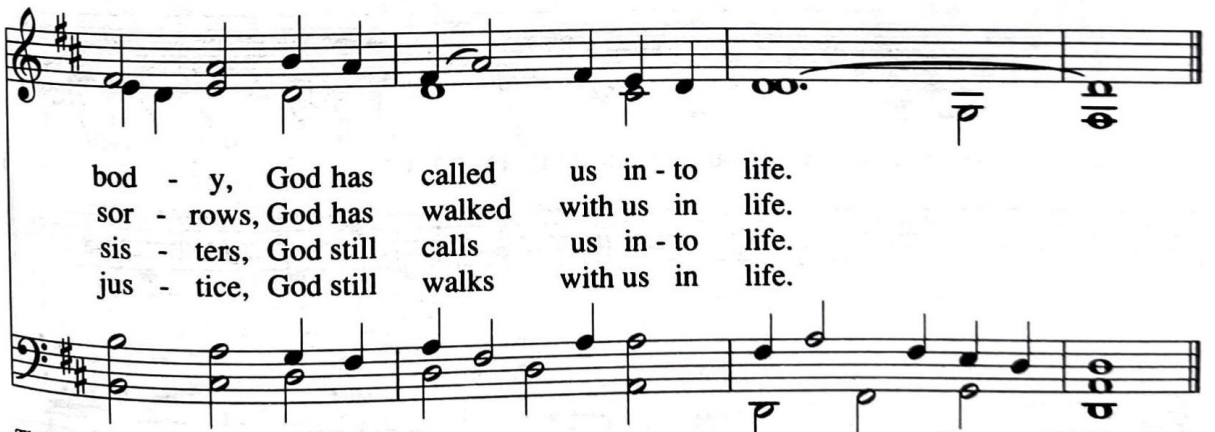
Daniel Bechtel.



1 Like a moth - er who has borne us, held us
2 Like a fa - ther who has taught us, grasped our
3 Though as chil - dren we have wan - dered, placed our
4 When we of - fer food and com - fort, grasp our



close in her de - light, Fed us free - ly from her
hand and been our guide, Lift - ed us and healed our
trust in power and might, Left be - hind our broth - ers,
neigh - bor's hand in love, Tread the path of peace and



bod - y, God has called us in - to life.
sor - rows, God has walked with us in life.
sis - ters, God still calls us in - to life.
jus - tice, God still walks with us in life.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pride Planning Team

June is LGBTQ+ Pride month. Sadly, too many people believe that being Christian is antithetical to being LGBTQ+, and too many LGBTQ people continue to experience churches as unsafe places for them to belong. As an "open and affirming" congregation, we are continuing to explore how we can more faithfully, actively, boldly, and publicly embody God's extravagant love for all.

That's where YOU come in! We're looking to form a team to imagine and plan some (intergenerational) ways we can live into this commitment as a church--including, *but not limited to*, our participation in DeKalb County's Pride Fest and March on Thursday, June 20th. Have some ideas? Have none, but are interested and ready to help? Sign-up in Dutton Hall or at the link in the eNews.

Pentecost (and Pancakes) Sunday, May 19th

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for an eventful Pentecost Sunday on May 19th:

- During worship, we'll be welcoming new members! If you've attended a Federated 101 and would like to become a member of Federated, please let Pastor Eric know or email him today.
- After worship, we will celebrate with a special pancake breakfast

Thrift and Plant Sales

Donations are now being accepted for the Thrift and Plant Sales. Items for the Thrift Sale may be dropped off Monday-Thursday between 7 AM & 5 PM at the Youth Room. Potted plants from your garden may be placed in the church courtyard. Place house plants on the round table in the church library.

Volunteers are needed to set-up, clean-up and help during both sales. See the sign-up sheets in Dutton Hall or in the weekly eNews.

May Love Offering | CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)

CASA provides trained advocates for children involved in the court system due to parental or guardian abuse or neglect. The advocates work on behalf of the child to make court recommendations and represent children as Guardian ad Litem.

Donations of any amount are welcome. For checks, please note in the memo "CASA." Donations should be put in a Love Offering envelope located by the bulletins, mailed to the church, or they can be made online at <https://bit.ly/GiveFCS>.

Get Connected & Serve!

There are a variety of ways to plug into what we do here, to serve others, and to get connected. Various ongoing/additional sign-up sheets are located on the credenza on the far wall in Dutton Hall.

Weekly eNews

Click this QR code to see the most recent eNews with all these announcements and more! Subscribe tab is at the top.



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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