

**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 | September 29, 2024, 10:00 am

*All music can be found at the back of the bulletin.  
Please join in reading those parts printed in **bold**.*

**Prelude**      “Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God”      *Getty & Townsend/arr. L. Larson*

## **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**      “This Is My Song” (p. 3)

## **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, read the quotes below, and then: ponder the Meditation Reflection; offer a silent prayer; or simply let the music wash over you.*

*“Stories matter. Having many stories matters. Stories can be used to dispossess and malign, but [also] to empower and humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but... also repair that broken dignity... When we reject the single story, when we realize there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise.” ~ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie*

### **Silent Meditation Reflection**

- ◆ Is there a place or group of people about which/whom you have a single story—whether positive or negative?
- ◆ How does adding more stories about who a person, people, or place are humanize or confer dignity on them? What’s one step you can take to do that?

### **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**      “Gathered Here” (p. 2)

## **Scripture**

**Sermon**      “We Are a Multi-Storyed People”

**Choir Anthem**      “Without Love”      *Allan Robert Petker*

# Our Shared Life & Offering

## Offering Opportunities

**Offertory** "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

## 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** "God of Love, We've Known Division" (p. 4)

## Benediction

## Postlude

"By Faith" *Townsend, Getty, Runyan/arr. Larson*  
*Thank you for joining us for worship!*

## "Gathered Here" *Philip A. Porter*

Gath - ered here in the mys - tery of the hour.

Gath - ered here in one strong bod - y. Gath - ered here in the

strug - gle and the power. Spir - it, draw near.

# “This Is My Song” *Lloyd Stone*

1 This is my song, O God of all the na - tions, a song of  
2 My coun-try's skies are blu - er than the o - cean, and sun-light

peace for lands a - far and mine. This is my home, the  
beams on clo - ver - leaf and pine; But oth - er lands have

coun - try where my heart is; here are my hopes, my  
sun - light, too, and clo - ver, and skies are ev - ery -

dreams, my ho - ly shrine; But oth - er hearts in oth - er lands are  
where as blue as mine. O hear my song, O God of all the

beat - ing with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.  
na - tions, a song of peace for their land and for mine.

# “God of Love, We’ve Known Division” *Carolyn Winfrey Gillette*



1. God of love, we’ve known di - vi - sion and we’ve seen its aw-ful cost.
2. Turn us, Lord, from what di - vides us— fear that drives us far a - part,
3. May we all, in con-ver - sa - tion, speak the truth and lis-ten well.
4. You have chal-lenged us to good-ness; you have shown a kind-er way.



We have strug-gled as a na - tion, and there’s much that we have lost.  
greed that leads to great in - jus - tice, ra - cist ways that break your heart.  
May we hear, a - cross this na - tion, sto - ries oth - ers have to tell.  
It’s your love that now in - spires us as we seek a bet - ter day.



We have been a house di - vi - ded— and, di - vi - ded, we can’t stand.  
May we seek what brings to - ge - ther— hearts that bear each oth - er’s pain,  
May we learn from oth - er cul - tures and be blessed by their world - view;  
May we end our harsh di - vi - sion; may we stop the hate and fear.



May our na - tion be u - ni - ted; give us peace through - out this land.  
care and mer - cy toward our neigh - bors, love that wel - comes stran - gers in.  
May we serve with one a - noth - er— lov - ing oth - ers, lov - ing you.  
Make us one, Lord, as a na - tion; may we be u - ni - ted here.

## 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 October 6: Pam Wagener, Chris Borresen, and Skip Schramer*

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

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Evaluating Pastor-Congregation Ministry Partnership** | *Today, after worship*  
Join us for small group discussions on your sense of how we're doing as a church. Since Pastor Eric arrived 5 years ago (as of Sept.), we've been through his integration into Federated, a pandemic, and we've seen a change in the nature of our congregation. We hope these discussions will be useful in discerning next steps for us to move forward as a church.

The Board of Deacons

*Pam Kitterman, Paula von Ende, Linda Mason, Dave Juday, Nancy Renfer*

## **Support the Spartan Food Pantry**

**Let's kick off the new school year by making a food or non-food donation to the Spartan Food Pantry.** Bring donations to worship each week in Sept. and leave them in the cart at the back of the sanctuary. We will deliver them for you! See list of most needed items at the QR code:



## **Name Tags and Hospitality**

**ALL** are encouraged to wear a name tag as a sign of hospitality. Our visitors and new folks may not know (or remember) everyone's name; we also know that any of us can have a brain lapse and forget! If you don't have a name tag, blank name tag cards and holders are available in the back along with a marker. Include your pronouns if you wish. After service hang your name tag on the board in the entry alongside the others.

**Faith & Democracy Under Threat: Understanding & Responding to Christian Nationalism**, *location: Federated Church; in partnership with First Congregational UCC of DeKalb & Mayfield Congregational UCC*

*October 8, 6:30-8pm: "Christian Nationalism & the Threat to American Democracy"*  
Fred Clarkson, *Senior Research Analyst at Political Research Associates*

*October 15, 6:30-8pm: "Faith in Action for the Common Good"*  
*An evening of facilitated conversations on how we can resist Christian Nationalism and work for the common good.*

## **Weekly eNews**

Scan 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.



## **Recycle/Reuse Bulletin Covers**

We will reuse the cardstock bulletin covers. Please place them in the basket at the back of the sanctuary on your way out. You may keep the insides. Thanks!

# 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)

**Children's Church Coordinator:** Janis Schnurr-Trebe

**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