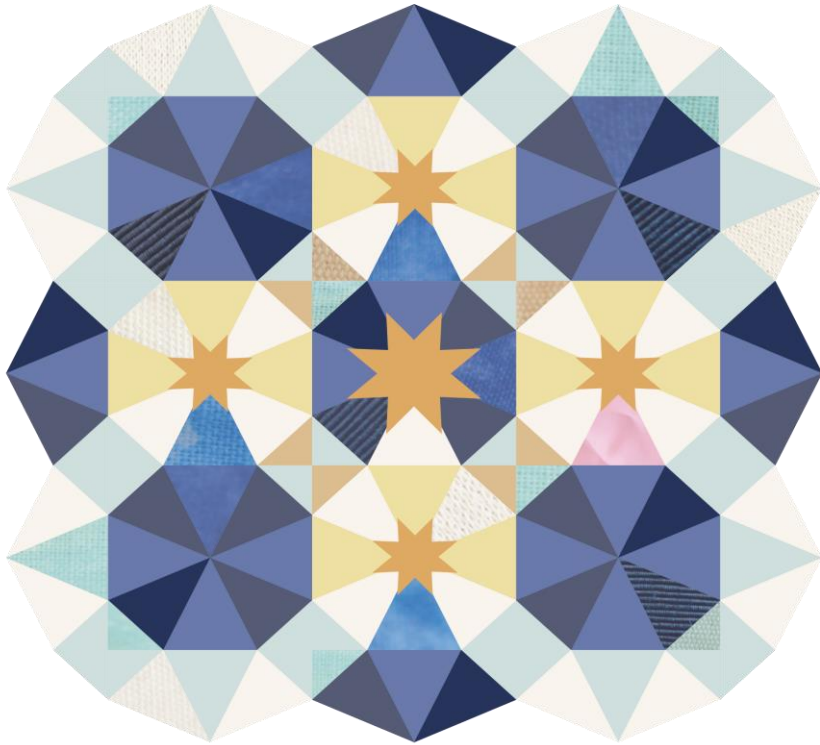


THE
Federated Church
OF SYCAMORE



FOR THE **BEGINNING**

ADVENT REMINDERS FOR NEW SEASONS

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 ridiculed, 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 a reminder 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 | December 15, 2024

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

Prelude

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

arr. Mark Hayes

Welcome & Lighting of the Advent Candles

In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we even start?

Let us start small.

Let us begin with what is right in front of us.

**Let us do the good that is ours to do,
and let us do it with joy!**

Yes, let us begin with joy.

Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy.

the candles of HOPE, PEACE, and JOY are lit

May these lights remind us of what could be.

May these lights inspire action.

May the warmth of these lights fill us with joy.

By God’s grace, may it be so!

Amen.

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 Hymn “Light Dawns on a Weary World” (p.3)

Prayers of the People

Silent Prayer & 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.

Special Music

“Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow!”

solo by Marcella Frazier

Scripture

[Isaiah 58:9b-12; Luke 3:7-16](#)

Sermon "Do the Good That Is Yours to Do"

Musical Meditation

Responding to God's Invitation: Prayer Stations *(see insert for instructions)*

Our Shared Life: Offering Invitations

***Sending Hymn** "Here I Am, Lord" *(p.4)*

Benediction

Postlude "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" *R.H. Prichard/arr M. Hayes*
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

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

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

Ushers for Sunday, Dec. 22: Sally Stevens 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*

Special thanks this morning for Marcella Frazier, a student at Sycamore High School, who is offering special music.

“Light Dawns on a Weary World” *Mary Louise Bringle/William P. Rowan*



1 Light dawns on a wea - ry world when eyes be - gin to
 2 Love grows in a wea - ry world when hun - gry hearts find
 3 Hope blooms in a wea - ry world when crea - tures, once for -



see all peo - ple's dig - ni - ty. Light dawns on a
 bread and chil - dren's dreams are fed. Love grows in a
 lorn, find wil - der - ness re - born. Hope blooms in a



wea - ry world: the prom - ised day of jus - tice comes.
 wea - ry world: the prom - ised feast of plen - ty comes.
 wea - ry world: the prom - ised green of E - den comes.

Refrain



The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;



the hills and moun - tains shall break forth with sing - ing!



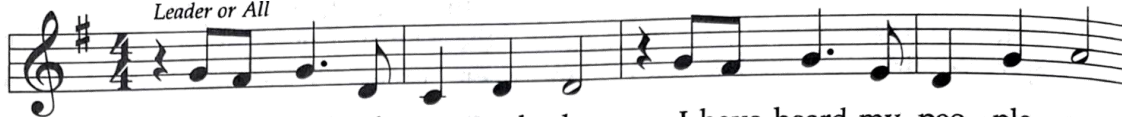
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,



as all the world in won - der ech - oes sha - lom.

"Here I Am, Lord" Daniel L. Schutte

Leader or All



1 I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
2 I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
3 I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save. I, who
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way. I will
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save. Fin - est



made the stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.
break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
bread I will pro - vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain

All



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call - ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Blue Christmas, Wednesday, Dec. 18, 7:00pm, Sycamore UMC

Join us at Sycamore United Methodist Church as we join them and Salem Lutheran Church for a special ecumenical service. Amidst the deepening darkness, as we near the longest night of the year, we will gather to *hold space for grief—ours and the worlds—trusting that this honest place is the seedbed for Advent hope.*

Christmas Eve Worship, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 5:30pm

We hope you'll join us for a special Christmas Eve worship of lessons and carols, poetry and candlelight. There will be no childcare during this service, but children are welcome.

Intro to the Bible Small Group, January-February; Date/Time TBD

Pastor Eric is looking to host a 5-6 week "Intro to the Bible" small group in January-February. Day and time TBD by the group. Please sign up by the end of December in Dutton Hall or via the link in the eNews.

December Love Offering, Hope Haven's Night by Night Campaign

Federated's goal is to raise \$1,000 for the *Night by Night* campaign in order to provide one night's shelter for 40 homeless individuals. A \$25 donation provides 3 meals, a warm bed for the night, and services for one homeless person. Donations in any amount may be placed in a Love Offering envelope at the "Table of Offering" prayer station or given online.

Recycle/Reuse Bulletin Covers & Prayer Station Inserts

We will recycle and reuse the bulletin covers and prayer station inserts. Please place the items in the basket at the back of the sanctuary on your way out. You are welcome to take these announcements and the printed order of worship with music. Thanks!

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.



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

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