

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 | January 12, 2025, 10:00 am

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

Prelude “Change My Heart, Oh God” *Eddie Espinosa/arr. M. Hayes*

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** “Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us” (p. 3)

Prayers of the People

Centering Moment

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

Take a slow, deep breath. Open your heart and mind to receive this poetic visual meditation. Notice the feelings and sensations it brings up in you. Notice the images you’re drawn to, or the words that resonate. Don’t judge or even try to understand them.

Just try to stay present to the moment and let yourself experience them.

Visual Meditation

“Within, Everywhere & Always”

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.

Sung Response “O Love That Will Not Let Me Go” vv.1-3 (p. 4)

Scripture [Luke 3:15-17, 21-23, 4:1-2; Romans 8:14-16, 35-39](#)

Sermon “The Life That Love Makes Possible (One Final Reminder)”

Musical Meditation “Find the Light” *David Ramirez*

Renewal of Baptism & Sharing our own Reminders

You are invited to come forward to be marked by the baptismal waters as a reminder of your inherent and irrevocable belovedness. We then invite you to turn and bless the next person. We also invite you to bring forward your own “reminder(s) for new seasons” to bless others with. Pastor Eric will share these as the Benediction

Our Shared Life & Offering
Offering Opportunities
Offertory

***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** “My Life Flows on in Endless Song” vv.1, 2, 4 (p. 5)

***Benediction**

Postlude

“Shine, Jesus, Shine”

G. Kendrick/arr. M. Hayes

Thank you for joining us for worship today!

† † †

WORSHIP NOTES

Also 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:** Pam Kitterman

Ushers: Gip Seaver, Ruth Olle, and Skip Schramer

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

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The Visual Meditation this morning is written by Kelly Ann Hall and produced by The Work of the People, and is used with permission.

“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.

“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go” *George Matheson*



1 O Love that will not let me go,
2 O Light that fol - lows all my way,
3 O Joy that seeks me through my pain,
4 O Cross that rais - es up my head,



I rest my wea - ry soul in you;
to you I yield my flick - ering flame;
to you I can - not close my heart;
from you I dare not seek to flee;



I give you back the life I owe, that
Re - new my spir - it's fee - ble ray, that
I trace the rain - bow through the rain, and
Life's glo - ries with - er and are dead, but



in your o - cean depths its flow may swell with ar - dor true.
from your bril - liant sun - lit day it may new bright - ness claim.
know the prom - ise is not vain that you will ne'er de - part.
from the ground there blos - soms red, life that shall end - less be.

"My Life Flows on in Endless Song" Robert Lowry/Doris Plenn



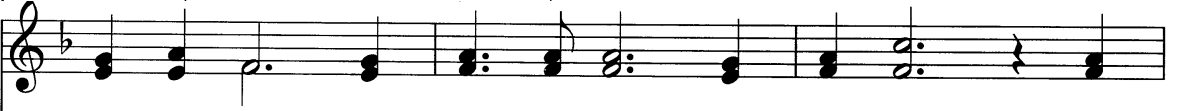
1 My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam - en -
2 What though my joys and com - forts die? My Sav - ior still is
3 When ty - rants trem - ble, sick with fear, and hear their death knells
4 I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue a -



ta - tion, I hear the sweet, though far - off hymn that
liv - ing. What though the shad - ows gath - er 'round? A
ring - ing; When friends re - joice both far and near, how
bove it; And day by day this path - way smooths, since



hails a new cre - a - tion. Through all the tu - mult
new song Christ is giv - ing. No storm can shake my
can I keep from sing - ing? In pris - on cell and
first I learned to love it. The peace of Christ makes



and the strife, I hear the mu - sic ring - ing; It
in - most calm, while to that Rock I'm cling - ing; Since
dun - geon vile our thoughts to them are wing - ing; When
fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring - ing; All



finds an ech - o in my soul— how can I keep from sing - ing?
Love com - mands both heaven and earth, how can I keep from sing - ing?
friends by shame are un - de - filed, how can I keep from sing - ing?
things are mine since I am Christ's— how can I keep from sing - ing?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

January Love Offering, *Pastoral Community Emergency Fund*

The Love Offering for January will benefit the "Pastoral Community Emergency Fund." Through monies donated to this church fund, Pastor Eric is able to help members of our wider community (not just church members) seeking emergency assistance with bills like: rent, utilities, and medical, as well as purchase gas, groceries, and more. This Love Offering comprises what we have to give to our neighbors over the whole year. Love Offering envelopes will be at the "Table of Offering" prayer station. Any amount is welcome and will help us reach our goal! Be sure to write Pastor's Emergency Fund on the memo line of checks and on envelopes for cash donations. Select "Emergency Fund Contributions" when giving online.

Final Governance Revitalization Task Force Post-Service | *after worship*

The Governance Revitalization Task Force will present a draft of the Church Constitution, including the proposed amendments focusing on the major restructuring that's been discussed over the past year. Copies will be available, with the final version being presented and voted on at the Annual Meeting on January 26.

The Great Church Un-Decorating | *Today, after Post-Service Conversation*

Following the Governance Revitalization Task Force Post-Service conversation, please help us take down the Advent/Christmas decorations. Many hands make light work. Thank you in advance!

Intro to the Bible | *Date/Time TBD*

Study books available to be picked up from Pastor Eric after worship for those who have pre-registered. The cost is \$11. Please indicate "Intro to the Bible Study Book" on your check or envelope placed on the offering plate. It's not too late to sign up, please do so by tomorrow (Monday) so we can finalize meeting day/time. Pastor Eric will be in touch soon with more information as we prepare for the first gathering.

Martin Luther King Jr Celebration | *Mon. 1/20, 6PM, New Hope Church, DeKalb*

Join us for this special ecumenical gathering! Pastor Eric will join colleagues from churches throughout the county to present excerpts of various speeches and sermons from Dr. King with special music from members of New Hope. The night will end with a "call to action" as we consider what Dr. King's words mean for us here and now.

Annual Congregational Meeting | *Sun. 1/26, after worship*

The Annual Congregational Meeting of the membership of the Federated Church of Sycamore is scheduled for Sunday, January 26, after the worship service. It will be conducted in person, in the sanctuary.

The purpose of the meeting is to present, discuss, and approve the Federated Church's budget for 2025, the slate of officers/Boards for 2025, and the proposed changes to the church constitution. Printed copies of documents including the annual report will be available in the Settle Room at the church and in Dutton Hall as soon as they are available!

Recycle/Reuse Bulletin Covers

We will recycle and reuse the bulletin covers. Please place them in the basket at the back of the sanctuary on your way out. You are welcome to keep the worship order with music & announcements. 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

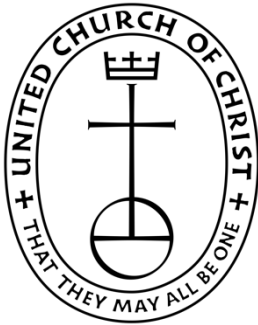
We are an "Open and Affirming" congregation, which is our way of saying that we value diversity. In a time of deep division, we believe it is paramount to gather people from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and identities in order to build authentic relationships and community. We believe that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

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