

THE  
**Federated Church**  
OF SYCAMORE



everything  
[in] between

Meeting God in the midst of extremes

Lent 2025

# Responding to God's Invitation

## Prayer Stations at home for online worshippers

*Lent is an invitation to journey through the things we tend to avoid—our doubts, fears, griefs, wounds, and even death. This Lent, though, we are inviting you to hold the “both/and” of life—for even amidst our doubts, we do believe in something; in the face of fear, we experience courage; our wounds can make way for connection; and even death can be the seedbed for new life. Let's meet God here, in the midst of life's polarities.*

*During this time (~10 min), people in the sanctuary will be visiting various prayer stations. While we can't re-create that experience for you at home, here are some ways you can use this time to create sacred space and connection for yourself wherever you are!*

**Waiting in the Wilderness:** Some seasons of life feel like wilderness wandering. Even here, God is present. We, too, are invited to be present—even here.

*Meditate on the poem (p. 5 in the bulletin). This will be a new poem each week. As you read, notice what word jumps out at you; what feeling(s) arise(s) in you.*

*When you finish, take a few slow deep breaths and read the poem again. This time, listen for how these words are calling you to action. Reflect on the prompt beneath the poem.*

**Divine Seeing:** *Pause to look more deeply at the artwork (on p. 7) inspired by today's scripture. As you do, ponder the questions and Artist's Statement (p. 8) beneath it.*

**Prayer Candles:** Lighting candles as one prays for a loved one or a people / place around the world who are weary, war-torn, grieving, or suffering is an ancient spiritual practice. *Find a candle, bring it into your space with you and, as you light it, offer any prayers for yourself, loved ones, or people around the world.*

**Table of Offering:** We are grateful to continue expanding our accessibility online, growing our intergenerational community in person, and offering a bold witness of love and justice in the wider world. As a small church/nonprofit, none of this is possible without many donations, large and small. Your donations to the “general fund” will especially help us enhance our growing children's ministries and accessibility for young families. *If our worship or ministries have blessed you, we invite you to consider making a donation to support them or our Love Offering partner through [this link](#).*

**Practices for Living in the Messy Middle:** In Lent, we intentionally focus on practices that help us live more fully amidst the mess, brokenness, and uncertainty, trusting that as we do, healing, hope, and new life *will* emerge—even here. [Click here](#) for an e-reader version of our Lenten devotional filled with poetry, art, question prompts, and short essay reflections. Commit to using this devotional as a spiritual practice during Lent. Use the question prompts to deepen conversation with a partner, friend, or (grand)child!

**Order of Worship** | April 20, 2025 | 10:00 am

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

**Prelude**

“There Is a Redeemer”

*Melody Green*

**Gathering at Jesus’ Tomb**

**Welcome**

**Easter Vigil**

[John 20:1-3, 11a](#)

**Introit**

“Morning Breaks, the World Awakens”

**Easter Proclamation**

[John 20:11b-13 & Mark 16:6-7](#)

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!** (3x)

**\*Passing the Peace & Gathering Song** “Christ the Lord is Risen Today!” (p.2)

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

**Centering Our Hearts**

**Prayers of the People**

**Silent Prayer & The Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father/Mother/Parent who is in heaven, hallowed be your name.**

**Your kin(g)dom come, your 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from**

**evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Choir Anthem**

“Hallelujah Chorus”

*Handel / Ward*

**Scripture**

[Luke 24:1-12](#)

**Sermon**

“Grief AND Hope”

**Sung Response**

“Morning Breaks, the World Awakens” vv. 2-3 (p.3)

**\*Prayer Stations: Responding to God’s Invitation**

*(see inside bulletin cover)*

**Preparing to Live God’s Love**

**Our Shared Life**

**\*Sending Song**

“Lead Us From Death to Life” (p.4)

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude**

“Lift High the Cross”

*Sydney H. Nicholson*

*Thank you for joining us for worship today!*

**"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"** by Charles Wesley



1 Christ the Lord is risen to - day, Al - le - lu - ia!  
2 Let the Vic - tor's peo - ple sing, Al - le - lu - ia!  
3 Love's re - deem - ing work is done, Al - le - lu - ia!  
4 Soar we now where Christ has led, Al - le - lu - ia!



Mor - tal tongues and an - gels say: Al - le - lu - ia!  
Where, O death, is now your sting? Al - le - lu - ia!  
Fought the fight, the bat - tle won, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Fol - lowing our ex - alt - ed Head, Al - le - lu - ia!



Raise your joys and tri - umphs high, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Dy - ing once, Christ lives to save, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Death in vain for - bids Christ rise, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Al - le - lu - ia!



Sing, glad heavens, and earth re - ply: Al - le - lu - ia!  
Where your vic - to - ry, O grave? Al - le - lu - ia!  
God has o - pened par - a - dise, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Al - le - lu - ia!

“Morning Breaks, the World Awakens” by Hanna C. Brown



1. Morn - ing breaks, the world a - wak - ens,  
2. In a gar - den, met with won - ders,  
3. You bear wounds yet com - fort oth - ers,



ach - ing hearts must face the day, brav - ing now a  
ten - der hearts seek what is true. Emp - ty, long - ing,  
shar - ing peace and breath and bread, car - ing for the



world that's shak - en, dar - ing still to breathe, to  
gripped with hun - ger, we reach for a touch from  
ones who suf - fer, call - ing us to give and



stay. Who are we with - out your pres - ence?  
you. What is this strange rev - e - la - tion,  
mend. How can we be - come your bod - y



Who will move our stone a - way?  
plant - ing seeds of hope a - new? Here a - mong us  
here on earth as you as - cend?



green - ing pow - er, here a - bove us dawn - ing skies;



here a - round us grow - ing prom - ise, here with - in us love will



rise.

# “Lead Us from Death to Life” by Satish Kumar / Marty Haugen

*Refrain* C C7 F G C G/B Am

Lead us from death to life, from false-hood to truth, from de -

Dm7 G C Dm7 C7/E C7 Dm7

spair to hope, from fear to trust. Lead us from hate to

G C/E E7 Am Dm7 G

love, from war to peace; let peace fill our hearts, let

Em Am Dm7 C/E Dm/F C/G G7 C

peace fill our world, let peace fill our u - ni - verse.

*to Stanzas*

Dm7 G Em7 Am

1 Still all the an-gry cries, still all the an-gry guns, still now your  
 2 So man - y lone-ly hearts, so man - y bro-ken lives, long-ing for  
 3 Let jus-tice ev - er roll, let mer-cy fill the earth, let us be -

Dm7 G7 C Am Dm7

peo-ple die, earth's sons and daugh-ters. Let jus-tice roll, let  
 love to break in - to their an - guish. Come, teach us love,  
 gin to grow in - to your peo - ple. We can be love,

E7 Am F D7/F# C/G G7 C to Refrain

mer - cy pour down, come and teach us your way of com - pas-sion.  
 come, teach us peace, come and teach us your way of com - pas-sion.  
 we can bring peace, we can still be your way of com - pas-sion.



# everything [in] between

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## **Waiting in the Wilderness**

### “In the Direction of Hope”

I am on my way.

Wait for me in the garden;

I will be there soon.

I'm not the fastest runner,

Lord knows that,

but these legs are moving.

I suppose I could blame my weary spirit for the slow speed.

I could blame the grief I've shoved into my pockets and  
laid around my neck.

I could blame my own hesitation to hope,  
a hesitation that clings like mud.

But I don't know that Jesus cares about my speed.

So tell God when you see them—

I am on my way.

Wait for me in the garden.

I will be there soon.

*by Rev. Sarah Speed*

## Where am I on the spectrum?

As you ponder this week's polarities—*shouting & silence*—consider where you would place yourself. Do you feel more strongly aligned to one end or the other, or more in the middle?

Consider how your location on the spectrum reflects where you are in your faith journey. Is your current location different from previous seasons of life? Is God calling you to move in a particular direction now?

Take this insert home with you and offer a prayer asking God to grant you what you need as you journey ahead.

grief-----hope





*John*

FILL MY CUP



EASTER SUNDAY

everything [in] between grief & hope



## Fill My Cup

by Steve Prince

Inspired by Luke 24:1-12

Pen and ink on paper

For me, to not know Christ is to live a life thirsty for truth, meaning, understanding, and purpose. We search and search and it feels like we cannot find the thing that we were hoping for. It is not until we surrender and trust in faith that we are able to find peace. We must open the door of our hearts to allow the Holy Spirit to enter and to do the work. Many will see us and not believe that the peace we exude is real, looking at us with skeptical eyes. Many will come thirsty, wondering from whence cometh our help, and some will know, and they shall rejoice for we have seen the light. Our daily prayer is that God will have us thirst no more and fill our cup. —Steve Prince

## Prompts for contemplation

- Look at the three women. What expressions do you see? How do their eyes, faces, and postures impact the mood of the image?
- Focus on the middle woman. What do you think the house in her body symbolizes?
- Notice the flow of energy and movement in the image. What direction does it seem to be moving in, and how does it impact the feeling or message of the artwork?
- What does the man's position in the image suggest about his role in the scene? How does he relate to the figures and the action surrounding him?

# WORSHIP NOTES

*Serving us this morning are:*

**Pastor:** Rev. Eric J. Ogi | **Ministers:** All of us! | **Music Director:** Gary Mattin  
**Children's Church Director:** Bill O'Hagan | **Childcare Support:** Janis Schnurr-Trebe  
**Liturgist:** Sharon McKee | **Ushers:** Nate & Pam Kitterman, Linda Mason, & Allison Stahl  
*Ushers for Sunday, April 27: Paula von Ende, and Bev & Skip Schramer*

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Common Table DeKalb** | *Dutton Hall, Friday, April 25, 6-8pm*

We are excited to finally share that we will be hosting a “Common Table DeKalb” gathering on Friday, April 25, from 6-8pm. Co-hosting the event with us will be the *Muslim Community of DeKalb County*. Common Table DeKalb is a year-long, county-wide initiative that Federated helped launch this year. It brings together diverse cross-sections of our community to *eat together* (over a FREE catered meal) and to *share stories* about “home, belonging and the struggle to create both in our divided world.” The goal is that, as we deepen our connections, partnerships will form so that we can work together to address needs in our community. *A link to RSVP was shared in this week's eNews. Space will be limited, and an RSVP will be required to participate.*

*\*\* If you can help with hosting—setup or cleanup—please reach out to Pastor Eric or let Darlene know in the church office. We still need a few more hands! \*\**

**April Love Offering** | *One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)*

OGHS engages UCC congregations across the country to multiply our impact in disaster relief, refugee resettlement, and development initiatives around the world. Offering envelopes and stories of impact can be found at the *Table of Offering Prayer Station*. *Please indicate OGHS if giving by check.*

**Preschool Playground Fundraiser: Give DeKalb County** | *Thurs., 5/1*

The Federated Preschool is once again participating in Give DeKalb County, the community's annual day of giving to non-profit organizations throughout the county. This year they are raising money to update the playground with new drainage so that it no longer floods every time it rains. See the weekly eNews for more information on how to give.

## **Pastor Eric's Sabbatical**

Last week, those signed up to receive emails from Federated Church should have received one from our Moderator, Chris Borresen, and Pastor Eric about Pastor's upcoming sabbatical May 1 – July 31. *Copies of those letters are available on the credenza at the back of Dutton Hall.* The Leadership Board will also be hosting a post-service conversation about the church's ministry during the sabbatical in early May. Watch for more information to come.

Pastor Eric's last Sunday before sabbatical will be April 27 (though he will be "in the office" through the end of the month). His first Sunday back will be August 3.

## **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.



## **Church Calendar: Coming up at Federated!**

Did you know there is a Master Calendar of church/building related activities? Scan this QR code to see what's going on!

## **Special Thank You**

...to the following people for sponsoring the Easter flowers today:

Ann Finseth  
Suzanne & Dave Juday  
Linda Matuszewski  
Deb & Jim Paulin  
Paula von Ende  
Jane & Tom Whitaker

Pam Jackson & Gip Seaver  
Sharon & Glenn Hollister  
Randi Napientek  
Bev & Skip Schramer  
Pam & Phil Wagener

You may pick up your flower(s) after worship.

# 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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