

**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 | July 6, 2025

*Today we will be taking communion. We invite you to participate however you're best able. Feel free to use whatever you have for the "bread and cup"—whether it's bread & grape juice or a cookie & coffee. God takes our ordinary offerings, whatever they are, and blesses them as we share them together! All music can be found at the back of the bulletin. Please join in reading those parts printed in **bold**.*

### Prelude

### Welcome

### Call to Worship

One: Creator, we've not seen you.

We've not heard you.

Spirit, we've never touched you, yet we believe.

**Many: We believe because we've felt something stir in the living air, nameless and powerful, calling to someone inside of us, bending the grass.**

One: Dear God, we've felt the undying love that you bear for the world.

**Many: Startle and inspire us. Spoil our excuses when we ignore you. Bring new perspective to our tired minds.**

One: How can we resist the voice calling us into being?

**All: For all that lives and breathes on earth, for those you've given to us to love, and for the work you give us to do, we give you thanks.**

### 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** "My Life Flows on in Endless Song" (p.3)

### Prayers of the People

**Sharing Prayers of Joy & for Healing**

**Pastoral 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.**

## Sung Response

“Let It Breathe on Me” (p.4)

## Scripture

[Ezekiel 37:1-14](#)

## Sermon

“In the Valley of Dry Bones”

## Musical Meditation

## Holy Communion

*We practice an “open table”—everyone is welcome to receive God’s gifts. There is no age you must be or dogma you must believe. God meets us where we are—amidst our questions, fears and failures—and offers us nourishment & a blessing on life’s journey.*

### Invitation & Words of Institution

### Sharing Bread & Cup

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

## 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

“Go My Children with My Blessing” (p.5)

## Benediction

## Postlude

*Thank you for joining us for worship today!*

† † †

# WORSHIP NOTES

While Pastor Eric is on sabbatical, we are so grateful to have the Rev. Joe Gastiger leading us in worship! In addition, those serving us this morning are:

**Pastor:** Rev. Eric J. Ogi | **Ministers:** All of us! | **Director of Music:** Gary Mattin  
**Children’s Church Director:** Bill O’Hagan | **Childcare Support:** Janis Schnurr-Trebe  
**Liturgist:** Gip Seaver | **Ushers:** Pam Wagener, Chris Borresen and Skip Schramer

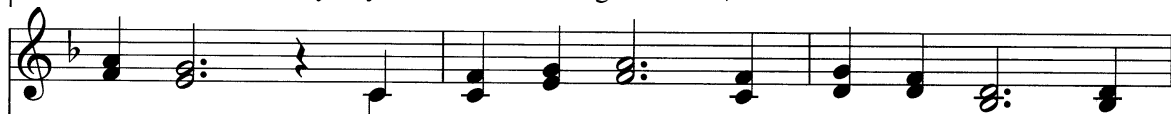
*Ushers for Sunday, July 13: Gip Seaver, Ruth Olle, and Skip Schramer*

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# **“My Life Flows on in Endless Song”** *by 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

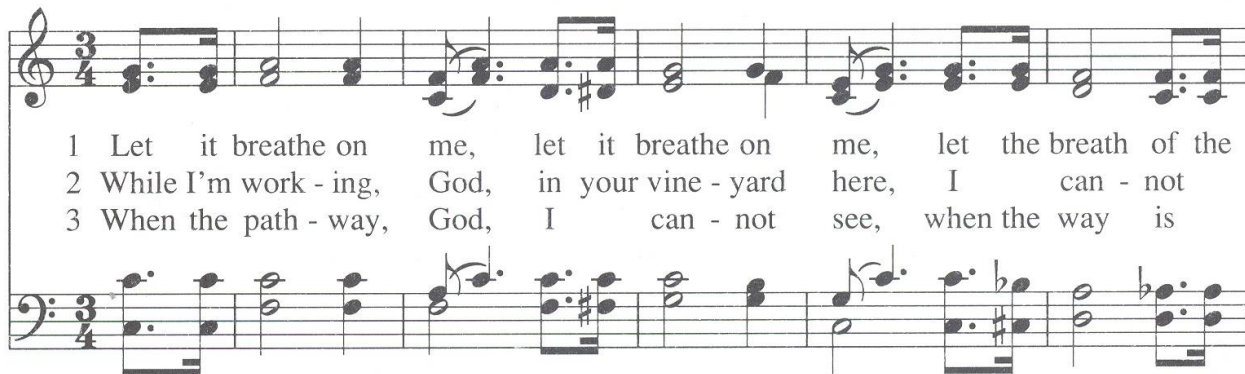


and the strife, I hear the mu - sic ring - ing; It  
 in - most calm, while to that Rock I'm cling - ing; Since  
 dun - geon vile our thoughts to them are wing - ing; When  
 fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring-ing; All



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?

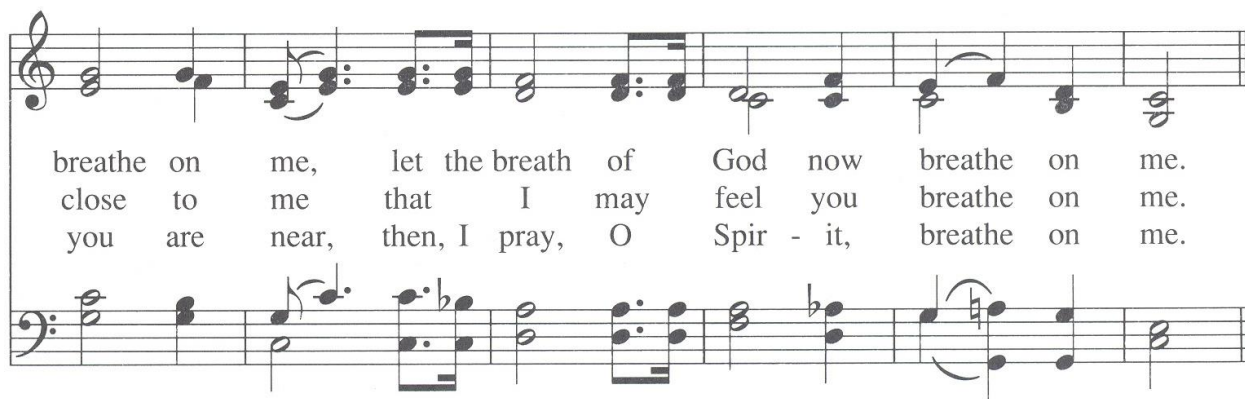
# **"Let It Breathe on Me"** *by Magnolia Lewis-Butts*



1 Let it breathe on me, let it breathe on me, let the breath of the  
 2 While I'm work - ing, God, in your vine - yard here, I can - not  
 3 When the path - way, God, I can - not see, when the way is



Spir - it breathe on me. Let it breathe on me, let it  
 serve with - out you near; O come, blessed Spir - it, so  
 hard, O breathe on me; Give me grace to know when



breathe on me, let the breath of God now breathe on me.  
 close to me that I may feel you breathe on me.  
 you are near, then, I pray, O Spir - it, breathe on me.

## “Go, My Children, with My Blessing” by Jaroslav J. Vajda

1 Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, nev - er a - lone;  
2 Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, clos - er to me;

Wak - ing, sleep-ing, I am with you, you are my own;  
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.

In my love's bap - tis-mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er,  
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here with ten - der com-fort stilled you;

Go, my chil - dren, with my bless-ing, you are my own.  
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour-ished, joy - ful and free.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### July Love Offering | School Supplies

The July Love Offering will be used to purchase backpacks and school supplies for low-income students throughout DeKalb County for next school year. Since providing these backpacks and supplies is important to helping these children start the year with the right tools, the goal for the April Love Offering is \$1,000. Working directly with area social service agencies, we typically supply between 100-200 backpacks. In early August, we will join together after worship to fill the backpacks, bless them, and send them off!

Donations of any amount are welcome. For checks, please note in the memo “School supplies.” 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>.

## **Pastor Eric on sabbatical | May 1-July 31**

Pastor Eric is away on sabbatical May 1 through July 31. If you're new or visiting during this time, *welcome!* Worship will be a little different than usual during this time. If you have any questions about our community, our ushers handing out bulletins in the back are great folks to reach out to—they'd love to talk with you!

During Pastor Eric's sabbatical, if there is a specific prayer request or concern, please reach out to one of the leaders of our **Caring Ministry**: Suzanne Juday, Karen Hamingson, Linda Babcock, Pam Kitterman, and Malorie Nelson. They will do their best to connect people to a support person and make sure every care need gets met.

In case of **Pastoral Emergency**, including any funeral arrangements, please reach out to Rev. John Dorhauer, Pastor at First Congregational UCC in DeKalb (602-402-6171; 1stdekalbpastor@gmail.com). You can also reach out to the Caring Ministry, who will then follow up with Pastor John. *Should a memorial service be needed and you would prefer to have me do it, I will of course do so when I return from my leave.*

For other questions, please reach out to either Darlene in the church office or Chris Borresen, our 2025 Church Moderator (cborresen@gmail.com).

## **Addressing Issues Affecting Migrants**

At an earlier post-service discussion about immigration, several individuals expressed a desire to explore "Know Your Rights" training. During these trainings participants receive information that can help to understand and protect one's rights in situations like interactions with ICE and other law enforcement, protests, etc.

The Leadership Board is looking to identify individuals who would like to participate. Training typically lasts an hour. Please let the church office or Gip Seaver know if you are interested.

## **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!



## ***Our Guest Worship Leader, Rev. Joe Gastiger***

We are blessed to have Rev. Joe Gastiger leading us in worship most Sunday's during Pastor Eric's sabbatical.

Pastor Joe served as the Pastor of First Congregational UCC in DeKalb from August 2001 until his retirement in October 2020.

Having grown up in New York, he attended S.U.N.Y Stony Brook and the University of Iowa before completing graduate work at Colorado State University. He came to DeKalb in 1980 to teach English at Northern Illinois University, where he later earned his doctorate.

Ministry was a second-career path for Joe. He first joined First Congregational UCC as a member in July of 1994, noting that he was led to this church by his son, Michael, whose own innocent and profound spiritual questions—which came up while he was playing with toys, or while he and Jean would read to him at night—had reawakened deeply felt concerns in himself. He turned to ministry as a quest for a greater challenge in life and a growing interest to learn more about Christianity and the Bible.

Pastor Joe has served the wider community in numerous ways and at a variety of levels over the years, doing what he can to make DeKalb County a place of greater love, justice, and belonging for all, especially the vulnerable and marginalized.

# 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*



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