

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 25, 2026, 10:00 am**

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

### **Prelude**

“How Great Thou Art”

*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** #593 “Lift Every Voice and Sing”

### **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 meditation. Notice the images or phrases that stay with you. Remain present & curious to the feelings brought up in you.*

### **Visual Meditation**

“A Prayer for the Church by Martin Luther King Jr.” \*

### **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.

### **Sung Response** #472 “Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

### **Scripture**

[Amos 5 \(excerpts\); Matthew 22:37-40](#)

### **Sermon**

“The Three Evils of Society” (excerpts)

“I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” (excerpts)

### **Musical Meditation**

### **Our Shared Life & Offering**

#### **Offering Opportunities**

#### **Offertory**



Give Online

## **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 Song** “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around” (p.3)

## **Benediction**

### **Postlude**

“How Great Is Our God”  
*Thank you for joining us for worship today!*

*arr. L. Larson*

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## **WORSHIP NOTES**

*Serving us this morning:*

**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:** Pam Kitterman | **Ushers:** Paula von Ende and Bev & Skip Schramer  
*Ushers for Sunday, Feb. 1: Pam Wagener and Chris Borresen*  
*All music is used with permission: CCLI Copyright: #3234671; CCLI Streaming: #22467093*  
*\* The Visual Meditation this morning produced by The Work of the People, and is used with permission.*

## **CONGREGATIONAL NOTES**

*Church Leadership for August 2025 – August 2026:*

**Moderator:** Gip Seaver | **Assoc. Moderator:** Bill O’Hagan | **Past Moderator:** Chris Borresen. | *Should you have any questions concerning the church, how to get involved, or who to contact about something, please reach out to one of them or Pastor Eric, and they will get you the information you need or connect you to someone who can.*

## **"Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around" African-American Spiritual**



1. Ain't gon-na let no - bod - y turn me 'round, turn me 'round, turn me 'round. Ain't gon-na let no - bod - y turn me 'round, I'm gon-na keep on a - walk-in', keep on a - talk - in', march-ing up to free-dom land. 2. Ain't gon-na 2. Ain't gonna let no hatred... 3. Ain't gonna let no president... 5. Ain't gonna let no ICE... 6. Ain't gonna let nobody...

## **COMING UP: AT A GLANCE**

**Annual Congregational Meeting** | Today, after worship, in the Sanctuary  
Present, discuss, and approve the Federated Church's budget for 2026 and  
review the annual report. Everyone is welcome to listen and ask questions; if you  
are a member, you are asked to stick around to vote.

**Ladies' Night Out** | Tues., 01/27, 6PM, Iniga Pizzeria Neapolitana, DeKalb  
All ladies are welcome to join us for fiery artisan pizza at Iniga Pizzeria  
Neapolitana, 206 E. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb (former Eduardo's restaurant).

**Annual Calendaring Session** | Sun., 02/01, after worship  
All are welcome to join the Leadership Board in planning the events for 2026.  
This is an informal gathering to pick dates for important events.

### **Weekly eNews**



Scan the code at the left  
to see the most recent  
eNews & join our email list.

### **Church Calendar**

Scan the code at the right  
to see the church's  
Master Calendar of events



# JANUARY MISSION OFFERING

## To Cover Asylum Legal Fees



On Sunday, we were blessed to be joined after worship for a conversation with Ahmed Elqattawi about the realities of growing up living through the horrors of Israeli bombings, escaping through education / scholarship, studying in the US while his family and homeland survives a genocide, and now seeking asylum in the US amidst our current terrorizing political climate.

This Fall, after months of conversation and discernment with the congregation, the Leadership Board adopted the following covenant to guide us in establishing a mission priority of “Immigrant Justice, Solidarity, and Welcome”:

***“As a community of faith, we commit to protecting our migrant neighbors through acts of sanctuary, solidarity, and justice. We will not stand idly by in the face of unjust enforcement. We will act, love, and speak as our faith commands—with courage and compassion.”***

Bearing witness to the stories—of struggle and joy, of pain and fear and resilience—of our neighbors, such as Ahmed, is one way we live into this covenant.

Another, is combining that witness with material support. This is, in part, what “acts of solidarity” looks like. So here's our invitation as a church:

*Ahmed personally has upward of \$10,000 in legal fees related to his asylum case. As the political landscape becomes less and less hospitable to immigrants and refugees, these fees continue to accrue as refugees and their lawyers seek out all options to ensure safety. Our January Mission Offering will go to create a “legal fund” to help cover these asylum-related fees. Our goal is to meet or exceed \$5,000.*

*Interested in supporting this by offering a “matching grant,” or other challenge to the congregation? Please reach out to Pastor Eric!*

### To donate

1. Write a check to The Federated Church of Sycamore with “asylum” in the “memo” line. Place it in the Offering Plate or mail it to the church.
2. Give cash in an envelope (write: “asylum fund” on envelope)
3. Give online (*via ACH or debit / credit card*) using this QR Code. *Under “Fund,” select “Mission Offering”*



# 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 encountering the Mysterious Force at the heart of the universe. This is a God who 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 across lines of difference—race, class, culture, citizenship status, gender, sexuality, age, and ability—not merely to tolerate each other, but to build authentic relationships and true belonging. We believe the simple but courageous work of showing up in this way is one necessary element in healing our nation and world's deep divisions.

## We believe in working for peace through solidarity & justice

At Federated, conversations about racism, sexism, transphobia, poverty, immigration, hunger, and a host of other issues are commonplace—from the pulpit and around the table. With Dr. King, we believe 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.” In this spirit, *in 2025 our Leadership Board initiated a series of conversations with the congregation, and together we discerned a mission priority for the church to act for “immigrant justice,” adopting this covenant to guide us: “As a community of faith, we commit to protecting our migrant neighbors through acts of sanctuary, solidarity, and justice. We will not stand by in the face of unjust enforcement. We will act, love, and speak as our faith commands—with courage and compassion.”*

# ***“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



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**Childcare Support:** Janis Schnurr-Trebe

**Federated Church Preschool, Director Bobbi Clough**

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