

**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 | May 04, 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.*

### Prelude

"Revelation Song"

J. L. Riddle / arr. L. Larson

### Welcome

### \*Call to Worship

Leader: We believe we are called by God  
to love and serve those who can't help themselves.

People: **Because we say God's creation is good,  
sacred and beautiful—to condemn any wanderer  
or stranger is to condemn a portion of God.  
And this is sin.**

Leader: We believe Christ came to free all of us,  
and to make new disciples—people willing  
to try to love and to show mercy to every person.

People: **We believe the Holy Spirit is still at work  
in the world as a power that gives us courage  
to face the truth and live it, even to die for it  
if we must, as Jesus died.**

All: **We believe in the Resurrection,  
the victory over death, the way and the truth  
and the light in Jesus' name. 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

"Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness" (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** “I Need You Every Hour” vv 1 & 3 (p. 4)

**Scripture** [Acts 9:1-20](#)

**Sermon** “On a Road to Damascus”

**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** “Peace I Leave with You, My Friends” (p. 5)

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude** “There’s Something About That Name” W. J. Gaither/arr. L. Larson  
*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:** Sheldon Turner | **Ushers:** Pam Wagener, Chris Borresen and Skip Schramer  
*Ushers for Sunday, May 11: Gip Seaver, Ruth Olle, and Skip Schramer*  
All music is used with permission: CCLI License #3234671

# **“Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”** by James K. Manley

Spir - it, spir - it of gen - tle-ness, blow through the  
wil - der-ness, call - ing and free,  
Spir - it, spir - it of rest - less-ness, stir me from  
plac - id-ness, wind, wind on the sea.

1 You moved on the wa - ters, you called to the  
2 You swept through the des - ert, you stung with the  
3 You sang in a sta - ble, you cried from a  
4 You call from to - mor - row, you break an - cient

deep, then you coaxed up the moun - tains from the  
sand, and you goad - ed your peo - ple with a  
hill, then you whis - pered in si - lence when the  
schemes, from the bond - age of sor - row the

val - leys of sleep; And o - ver the e - ons you  
law and a land; When they were con-found - ed by their  
whole world was still; And down in the cit - y you  
cap - tives dream dreams; Our wom-en see vi - sions, our

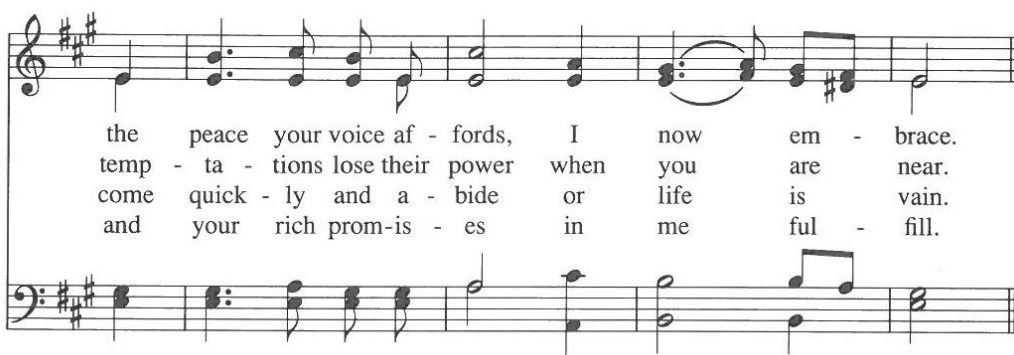
called to each thing, "A - wake from your slum -  
i - dols and lies, then you spoke through your proph -  
called once a - gain, when you blew through your peo -  
men clear their eyes. With bold new de - ci -

bers and rise on your wings."  
ets to o - pen their eyes.  
ple on the rush of the wind.  
sions your peo-ple a - rise.

# "I Need You Every Hour" by Annie S. Hawks



1 I need you ev - ery hour, O God of grace;  
 2 I need you ev - ery hour, in faith or fear;  
 3 I need you ev - ery hour, in joy or pain;  
 4 I need you ev - ery hour; teach me your will,



the peace your voice af - fords, I now em - brace.  
 temp - ta - tions lose their power when you are near.  
 come quick - ly and a - bide or life is vain.  
 and your rich prom - is - es in me ful - fill.

*Refrain*



I need you, how I need you! Ev - ery hour I need you;



O bless me now, my Sav - ior; I come to you.

# "Peace I Leave with You, My Friends" by Ray Repp

*Refrain*

D Em G D F#m

Peace I leave with you, my friends, sha-lom, my peace, in

Em Gm D Em G D F#m

all you do. Peace I leave with you, my friends. I give to

Bm Em G D 1-2 3

you so you can give to oth - ers, too.

D Em G D

1 To share God's love is why I came,  
2 Take my hand and be at peace;  
3 With this love now all will know

F#m Em/G Gm

to show God's kind - ness with - out end.  
the spir - it of our love I send.  
that lone - li - ness is at an end.

D Em G D

Go now, my friends, and do the same,  
And with this love you will be free,  
Re-joice, my friends, al - though I go,

F#m G A7 to Refrain

un - til I come a - gain.  
un - til I come a - gain.  
for I will come a - gain.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **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).

## **Thrift and Plant Sales | Fri., May 16, 9 AM – 5 PM, Sat., May 17, 9 AM – 1 PM**

There are plenty of ways to help with the Thrift and Plant Sales. Donate items & plants. Arrange & Price items during set-up. Cashier during the sales. Organize & Pack left-over items for transport or disposal. Drive unsold items to local thrift stores. Use the sheets in Dutton Hall (or the link in the eNews) to help at the Thrift and Plant Sales. Signup sheets for the plant sale are also in Dutton Hall.

## **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.



## **Recycle/Reuse Bulletin Covers**

We will recycle and reuse these bulletin covers. Please place them in the basket at the back of the sanctuary on your way out. Thanks!

## **Online Giving**

Whether it's a recurring pledge, a one-time donation, or a contribution to a specific fund (e.g. the LOVE Offering, Pastoral Emergency fund, etc.), you can now make them simply and securely through our online platform. Scan the QR code with your phone camera to get started or see the weekly Enews for a web-browser link! *Contact the church office with questions.*



## **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*



Follow us on



Facebook & Instagram:  
@FederatedChurchSycamore

**[www.fedsycamore.org](http://www.fedsycamore.org)**

**Church Office Phone:** (815) 895-2706 || **Email:** [Office@fedsycamore.org](mailto:Office@fedsycamore.org)

**Pastor Eric Cell:** (815) 797-2250 || **Email** [RevEric@fedsycamore.org](mailto:RevEric@fedsycamore.org)

**Director of Children's Church:** Bill O'Hagan

**Childcare Support:** Janis Schnurr-Trebe

**Federated Church Preschool, Director Bobbi Clough**

**Phone:** (815) 764-9473 || **Email:** [Preschool@fedsycamore.org](mailto:Preschool@fedsycamore.org)

**Address:** 612 W. State Street, Sycamore, IL 60178