

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 20, 2025

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

Prelude “There’s Something About That Name” *Wm Gaither / arr. L. Larson*

Welcome

Call to Worship

(“Prayer Against Famine,” by John Knoepfle)

One: Maker of the wheel
 that turns the stars,
 place the shadow of your shadow
 between us and everything evil.

Many: Have mercy on the dead
and on the living,
and on those who will be born
in your good time.

One: Protect us when we are tempted,
when we want to make ourselves
the center of your world,
when we would deny others
a place in the circle of your love.

**All: Cleanse our eyes oh god
 and pour your light into them,
 so that we may see your creation
 where anyone
 touches your earth.**

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 “Precious Lord, Take My Hand” (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 “Lift Every Voice and Sing” (p.4)

Scripture 2 Kings 2:1-14

Sermon “Taking Up the Mantle”

Musical Meditation

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 “We Shall Overcome” (p.5)

Benediction

Postlude “Revelation Song” *Jennie Lee Riddle / arr. L Larson*
Thank you for joining us for worship today!

† † †

WORSHIP NOTES

While Pastor Eric is on vacation, 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: Nancy Renfer | **Ushers:** Pam & Nate Kitterman, Linda Mason and Allison Stahl
Ushers for Sunday, July 27: Paula von Ende, and Bev & Skip Schramer

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"Precious Lord, Take My Hand" by Thomas A. Dorsey; alt.

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,
2 When my way grows drear, pre-cious Lord, lin - ger near,
3 When the shad - ows ap - pear and the night draws near,

The first system of the musical score is in 3/4 time, key of D major. It features a treble and bass staff. The melody is in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the staffs.

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
when my life is al - most gone,
and the day is past and gone,

The second system of the musical score continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the staffs.

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light:
Hear me cry, hear my call, hold my hand, lest I fall:
At the riv - er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand:

The third system of the musical score continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the staffs.

Refrain
Take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

The fourth system of the musical score is the refrain. It is marked with the word "Refrain" above the staff. The melody and accompaniment are written below the staffs.

Lift Every Voice and Sing *by James Weldon Johnson*



1 Lift ev-ery voice and sing, till earth and heav - en ring, ring with the
 2 Ston-y the road we trod, bit-ter the chas-tening rod, felt in the
 3 God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears, God who has



har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty; Let our re - joic - ing
 days when hope un - born had died; Yet with a stead - y
 brought us thus far on the way; God, who by your



rise, high as the lis - tening skies, let it re - sound loud as the
 beat, have not our wea - ry feet, come to the place for which our
 might, led us in - to the light, keep us for - ev - er in the



roll - ing sea. Sing a song full of the
 peo - ple sighed? We have come o - ver a
 path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the



faith that the harsh past has taught us, Sing a song full of the
 way that with tears has been wa - tered, We have come, tread - ing our
 plac - es, our God, where we met you, Lest our hearts, drunk with the



hope that the pres - ent has brought us; Fac - ing the
 path through the blood of the slaugh - tered, Out from the
 wine of the world, for - get you; Shad-owed be -



ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun, let us march
 gloom - y past, till now we stand at last where the white
 neath your hand, may we for - ev - er stand, true to our



on till vic - to - ry is won.
 gleam of our bright star is
 God, true to our na - tive land.

"We Shall Overcome"

1 We shall o - ver - come,
 2 We'll go hand in hand, we shall o - ver -
 3 We are not a - fraid, we'll go hand in
 4 Our God will see us through, our God will see us

come, we shall o - ver - come some day;
 hand, we'll go hand in hand some day;
 fraid, we are not a - fraid to - day;
 through, our God will see us through some day;

(1-6) Oh, deep in my heart, I do be - lieve,

we shall o - ver - come some day.
 we'll go hand in hand some day.
 we are not a - fraid to - day.
 our God will see us through some day.

5 The truth shall make us free . . . some day.

6 We shall live in peace . . . some day.

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).

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. On August 3, 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>.

Summer Congregational Meeting | Sunday, July 27, after worship

The purpose of the meeting is to elect the officers for the 2025-2026 year that begins on August 1, 2025, and review/approve the minutes of the January 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting. A mid-year update on the annual budget will be provided. Printed copies of documents will be available in Dutton Hall when they are available.

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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