THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN HARTFORD

An Open and Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Welcome ~ Bienvenidos

January 21, 2018 10:30 AM

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT CENTER CHURCH. We are glad you have joined us for this service of worship and the fellowship of this congregation. We hope that you will be both comforted and challenged by the Word of God for us today. If you are new to our community, we hope you will consider making this your church home. Any of our worship leaders or ushers will be able to help with your questions. If you are already a member, be sure to extend a friendly greeting to those around you, starting with someone you don't know…yet.

Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices before the service of Worship begins.

A nursery with capable, nurturing staff is available in the basement of the Meeting House.

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

"Dance like no one is watching, love like you'll never be hurt,
Sing like no one is listening, live like it's heaven on earth."
~ William W. Purkey

CHIMING OF THE HOUR and GREETING

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMING BEFORE GOD

PRELUDE

Greensleeves Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

CHORAL INTROIT
Siyahamba

PLEASE STAND.
CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, people of God! Today is a new day! A day we are called to listen. A day we are called to move and be moved.
People: We thank God for another day! A day when we might ponder anew the sacred dance to which we are called.
Leader: Worship is a dance lesson led by God!
People: We are all students of this lesson! Let us learn to dance together in body and in spirit!

OPENING HYMN
Lord of the Dance

PLEASE BE SEATED.
PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER

Familiar songs, beloved faces, well-learned prayers, stories of old bring us to a place of deep Sabbath, deep comfort, and deep rest. We come longing for the peace this hour affords. We come hoping for your grace to transform the everyday into something special and awe inspiring. We come hoping to be healed and made new, not just so we can serve you, but so that we can live our lives more fully and with more joy. In this time of worship, be our healer, be our peace, be our joy, be our song. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus, the one who taught us to pray together saying…

Our Father*, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy 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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

(* = traditional wording but you may use alternative wording,
such as "God," "Creator," or "Mother," as seems fitting.)

CONFESSION AND RESPONSE

CALL TO CONFESSION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Sometimes, O God, we live our lives in a box, overly concerned of what others think and bound by the standards and expectations of others, instead of being faithful to ourselves. We are afraid to dance, lest we look clumsy. We are afraid to sing, in case we are out of tune. We are afraid to love, because sometimes love is imperfect and messy. We are afraid to live as Jesus told us to live, because sometimes it requires radical choices and actions and judgment from those we hold dear. We are afraid to live life fully and with abandon, but you have encouraged us to take risks and try. Forgive us our fear. Give us courage, we pray, to dance, love, sing, and live with more joy and less boxes. May it be so.

SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PLEASE STAND.

Response (sung by all)

Glory Be to God — text: *Gloria patri*, 3rd century, transl.
music: Peter DuBois, 2007

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The love of God, the peace of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Since in Christ we have been reconciled, let us share his peace with one another.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S LIVING WORD

PLEASE BE SEATED.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE — Andre Keitt

(After the message, the children exit to attend Church School.)

PSALTER READING (responsive)
Psalm 50 NRSV: Old Testament, p. 508

SERMON Dancing in the Light of God The Reverend Dr. Meredith Jeffers

RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE STAND.
HYMN No. 164
Arise, Your Light is Come FESTAL SONG

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PLEASE BE SEATED.
THE OFFERING OF GIFTS AND TITHES
(We encourage you to use offering envelopes when giving.)

Offertory Music
Look at the World John Rutter (b. 1948)
Center Church Choir

PLEASE STAND AS THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD.
Hymn of Presentation OLD HUNDREDTH
text: Thomas Ken, 1674; alt.
music: Louis Bourgeois, 1551

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heav'nly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We offer ourselves as partners in your dance. We bring our time, our talent, and our treasure. Bless each giver. Bless each gift. Amen.

GOING FORTH

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.

CLOSING HYMN No. 526

We Are Marching in the Light of God SIYAHAMBA

BENEDICTION

Leader: "Dance like no one is watching,
People: Love like you'll never be hurt,
Leader: Sing like no one is listening,
People: Live like it's heaven on earth."

Please be seated to enjoy the postlude.

POSTLUDE

Tuba Tune C.S. Lang (1891-1971)