

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN HARTFORD
*An Open and Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ*

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Welcome ~ Bienvenidos

June 25, 2017

10:00 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 comfortable nursery is available in the basement of the Meeting House.
The service can be heard through a speaker system in the nursery.*

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

“The deepest truth I have discovered is that if one accepts the loss, if one gives up clinging to what is irretrievably gone, then the nothing which is left is not barren, but enormously fruitful. Everything that one has lost comes flooding back again out of the darkness. One's relation to it is now free and unclinging. But the richness of the nothing contains far more; it is the all-possible; it is the spring of freedom.”

*~ Robert Bellah, per Martin Marty
quoted in *The Christian Century*, April 7, 1982*

CHIMING OF THE HOUR and GREETING

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMING BEFORE GOD

PRELUDE

Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer

arr. Dale Wood

The Light of Christ is brought into the sanctuary.

PLEASE STAND.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The sun shines more brightly;
its warmth stays with us for so many more hours.

People: So, we shake free of our routines.

Leader: We wander about the wilderness:
Sometimes by choice and sometimes not,
hoping God will open our eyes,
praying God will make us worthy,
wanting to grow with God.

People: Let us grow together in the wild ways of our God.

HYMN

God Reigns o'er All the Earth

No. 21

TERRA BEATA

PLEASE BE SEATED.

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER

God of the wilderness, you do great and wonderful things. It's what makes you our God. There is nothing else in this world like you. There's nothing else like your love. Wild God, come and worship with us. Help us to grow in your love, as we pray the words Jesus taught us...

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 RECONCILIATION

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED.

CALL TO CONFESSION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One, we come before you with our spirits bent in worship and adoration. We seek you not only to praise you, but to ask your comfort and forgiveness. We confess that we have focused on our own needs more than the world's, and that there are times when we have felt abandoned by you and by others, when we have not known how to make our way through challenging times and failed to turn to you. In our own hearts, we are too willing to believe we are self-sufficient. Free us, O God, from our arrogance and selfishness! Make us bold to proclaim your saving faith even to ourselves, and set us ever on the path of renewal and re-bonding to your community of faith, in the name of Christ. Amen.

SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: People of God, hear these words of love: God has planted within us the hope of community, the promise of divine presence in trial and rejoicing, and assurance that when we earnestly take stock of our lives and seek forgiveness, it is granted.

People: **In Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are loved, forgiven, and restored to new life. Praise God!**

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.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Genesis 21:8-21

NRSV: Old Testament, p. 16

SERMON Wilderness God, Wild God!

The Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree

RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE STAND.

HYMN

I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry

No. 351

BORNING CRY

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

Largo

Frédéric Chopin 1810-1849

PLEASE STAND AS THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD.

Hymn of Presentation

OLD HUNDREDTH

text: Thomas Ken, 1674; alt.

music: Louis Bourgeois, 1551

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Grow these gifts in your love, God of the wilderness. May they connect us to the wild and dangerous places of this world: the places of war, famine, and oppression. May they serve to strengthen your ways of love, peace, and justice. Bless our offerings, our hearts, and our hopes in your love to make us worthy of your work in this world. Fill these gifts and each of us with your goodness. Amen.

GOING FORTH

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.

HYMN

God's Eye Is on the Sparrow

No. 475

SPARROW

BENEDICTION

*Please enjoy the postlude or exit quietly.
The Light of Christ is taken out into the world. Go in peace.*

POSTLUDE

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

arr. Paul Man