

June 19, 2022

“Made Alive in Christ: Death or Deconstruction?”

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

300 E. Oak Street, Ft. Collins, CO 80524

Worship: 10:00 AM

Pastor: Steve Ramer

Cell: 970-412-7510



Welcoming the transformative work of the Holy Spirit in our congregations, we are liberated from a static understanding of the church, which often makes us allies of the status quo. As we open ourselves to the re-creating and animating power of the Holy Spirit, we become agents of healing and hope in the world.

1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude

Call to Worship (Steve and Cathy)

Leader: Come, Holy Spirit, come,

People: come fill the hearts of your faithful.

Leader: Come, Spirit of God, come, kindle in us the fire of your love,

People: warm our hearts, and free us to act with kindness and care toward all humanity.

Leader: Pour out your Spirit on your people, God of love,

People: and we shall be revived, made anew in the image of Jesus.

Leader: Come, gracious Spirit, come, guide and teach us,

Opening Prayer

Opening Song

Welcome and Passing of the Peace:

- **Leader:** May the peace of Christ be with you.
- **People:** And also with you.
- **All:** Let us offer one another signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.

People: so that by your light we may walk in the way of Jesus.

Leader: Spirit of the living God, anoint your children afresh,

People: fill our spirits with unquenchable hope, bathe our hearts with unbounded love, and nourish our souls with your peace.

All: Reveal yourself within us, great Spirit of God, so that we may better see ourselves and more truly reflect your light and truth. Amen

“At some point in our lives, we will be deeply disappointed by what we were originally taught, by where our choices have led us, or by the seemingly random tragedies that take place in all our lives. There will be a death, a disease, a disruption to our normal way of thinking or being in the world. It is necessary if any real growth is to occur.”
– Father Richard Rohr

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Ephesians 2:8-22 (Steve & Cathy)

Ephesians 2: ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works... ¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)—¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands

and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to God by one Spirit. ¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Sermon: "Made Alive in Christ: Death or Deconstruction?" (Steve)



The Mennonite Church is dying ... or is it deconstructing? "Deconstruction" means to take apart, but it does not mean to completely destroy.

Deconstruction for a church means identifying what is healthy and unhealthy, and then dismantling the the structure to eliminate the unhealth walls that divide us.

"Yearning for a new way will not produce it. Only ending the old way can do that. You cannot hold onto the old all the while declaring that you want something new. The old will defy the new; the old will deny the new; the old will decry the new. There is only one way to bring in the new. You must make room for it."
— Neale Donald Walsch

3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Congregational Singing

Response (everyone)

Sending (Steve)

Leader: Into a world filled with beauty and with suffering, the Spirit bids us go.

May the Spirit open your minds and hearts

People: so that we do not miss the beauty or ignore the suffering;

Leader: may the Spirit inspire you to let go of cynicism and indifference

People: so that we become agents of forgiveness, grace, and God's reconciling love;

Leader: may the Spirit anoint your eyes

People: so that we may see the face of God in that of our neighbor;

Joys and Concerns (everyone)

Offering (everyone)

Leader: may the Spirit fill you with God's love,

People: enabling us to embrace all God's creatures;

Leader: may the Spirit touch your lips

People: so that we can speak words of peace, truth, and kindness;

Leader: may the Spirit animate your hands

People: so that we may reach out with compassion and care to all our neighbors.

Leader: Go now, companioned by the God of wind and fire, and guided by the Spirit, to be agents of healing and hope in all the places the Spirit leads you to go.