

March 20, 2022 — Lent 3: From Earning to Receiving

“Holy #@&! Being God’s Pungent People”

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

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

Worship: 10:00 AM

Pastor: Steve Ramer

Cell: 970-412-7510



Season of Lent: Seeking God’s Ways

Too often we think God offers one thing (privilege), but what God really offers looks quite different (inclusion); we think the world works one way (scarcity), but really it works a different way (abundance); we think power means one thing (control), but it is really found in something else (solidarity). Lent is a time to repent—to turn from our ways and recommit ourselves to the ways of God as revealed in Jesus.

Today’s Focus: As we seek God’s way, we move from believing that we must earn our nourishment, our privileges, even our identity as God’s children, to an understanding that abundant life is a gift from God to all.

1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude (John)

Call to Worship (Lynette)

Leader: Together we seek the way of God,

People: whose ways are not our ways, whose thoughts are beyond our thoughts.

Leader: Today we accept God’s invitation to the feast,

People: where there is water in the desert and delightful food to share.

Leader: As we worship, we receive the abundant gifts of God

People: without money and without price.

All: So, let us praise God and sing for joy.

Opening Song (John, Cathy, and everyone)

Responsive Reading (Lynette and Congregation)

Leader: Your ways, O God, are higher than our ways.

People: Your thoughts are higher than our thoughts.

Leader: We seek God's ways.

All: Lord, move us from feeling we must earn your love to receive and give your grace to ourselves and others.

Lenten Prayer of Confession (Lynette and Congregation)

Leader: Holy One, we seek you while you may be found.

People: We call upon you while you are near.

Leader: Have mercy on us, O God, for our thoughts are not your thoughts and our ways are not your ways.

People: Forgive us for acting as if we must earn your love. Open us to receiving your love as a gift.

Leader: As we walk with Christ on this Lenten journey, let us see your way more clearly

All: and follow your way more faithfully.

Prayer (Lynette)

Gracious God, may our rich feast be an open ear to listen. May our rich feast be a song that springs forth from the heart. May our rich feast be a word of praise on our lips. May our rich feast grow as a gift, simple nutrients slowly nourishing the soil, patient as a tree. May we trust that the fruit will come. May we trust that Jesus is providing—the earth, the water, the air, the ear, the heart, the lips, the hands, the tools for the work—and that we are invited to take our place at the table, a table set long before our arrival. Amen.

Congregational Singing (John, Cathy, and everyone)

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; Luke 13:1-9; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Sermon: "Holy #@&! Being God's Pungent People" (Steve)



Like the gardener, Jesus doesn't give up on us. He continues to nurture us like a fig tree. The tree does not earn this loving care: it is not bearing fruit. Christ's living water and Holy Manure are freely dumped on us. It is difficult for us to accept this grace, or even imagine it. God's way contrasts with our culture, which urges us to be self-sufficient and earn our way, basing our identity on the way we make money. True religion expresses itself through abundantly generous sharing of these gifts to others, who like us, are also undeserving.

Congregational Singing (John, Cathy, and everyone)

Response (everyone)

Joys and Concerns (everyone)

Offering (everyone)

Sending (Steve): From this time and place into whatever awaits, may you follow God's way of receiving. May you let go of your feelings of unworthiness and accept God's abundant gifts. As you go, know that our God of the wilderness remains with you on the way.

