

December 3, 2023

“What Are You Waiting For?”

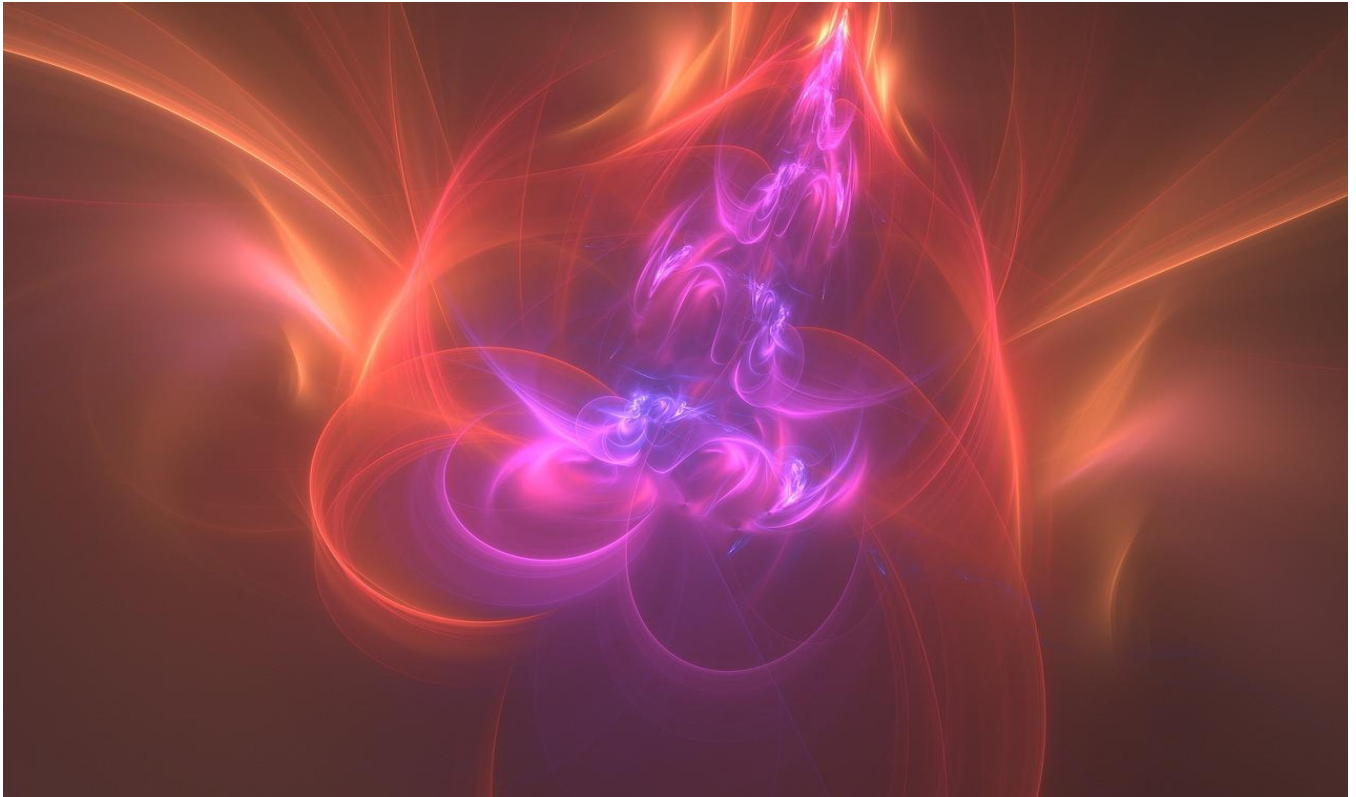
FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

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

Worship: 10:00 AM

Pastor: Steve Ramer

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SEASON OF ADVENT

During Advent we are called to wait for the coming of God’s Chosen One; the One who will help birth a new world, the world that God desires. We are simultaneously giddy with excitement and filled with anxiety since so many of the details still need to be worked out. But like intrepid investigative reporters, during our time of preparation, we must seek to uncover the who, what, where, when, and how of this great and radical Advent hope!

1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude (John)

Call to Worship (based on Isaiah 40)

Leader: “Comfort, give comfort to all my people,” says our God.

People: “Speak softly and tenderly to those who are suffering and without hope.”

L: A voice cries out from the wilderness, “Get ready, make the way clear and wide and level for the arrival of God’s Chosen One.”

P: Let’s fill up every valley and level every mountain and smooth out the rough spots

L: ‘Cause when you do this, the glory of the LORD will be seen by everyone!

P: But then the voice cried out again, “All humans are but grass and flowers of the field.”

L: Grass that soon withers and flowers that eventually fade; the opposite of the word of God that lasts forever.

P: So, we will climb to the mountain tops and shout at the top of our lungs, “the Chosen One is on his way!”

L: Open your eyes so you can see it! The Chosen One comes with comforting strength in order to save us all.

ALL: For the One who’s coming is our Good shepherd, the One who gathers the lambs in his arms, carrying them in his bosom while gently leading all his sheep.

Opening Prayer (based on Psalm 85)

O Chosen One of God, come to us and restore us once again.

Time after time you forgave us in the past for our mistakes and failures.

Can you please forgive us one more time?

Things are a real mess down here and we just need a couple comforting words of peace.

And, oh yes, help me to really hear them.

Surely our salvation is at hand!

Certainly, steadfast love and faithfulness will meet and righteousness and peace will kiss just like lovers do.

O Chosen One, we know that you give us what is good. May we take that and multiply it.

Congregational Singing (Cathy)

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.

"In all chaos there is a cosmos, in all disorder a secret order" — Carl Jung

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Mark 13:24-33

"But in those days, after much suffering, the sun will be darkened, the moon will refuse to shine and stars will fall from the sky as all the forces of heaven are let loose.

"Then all will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds' with great power and in great splendor. And then he will send out his heavenly messengers and they will gather in his people from the ends of the earth and to the edges of the sky.

"Learn a lesson by taking a cue from the fig tree. When its branches begin to bud and it begins to leaf, you know that summer is just around the corner. So

too, when you see these things taking place, you will know that he is very near - maybe just outside your door. Truly, I swear to you that this generation will not pass away until all these things happen. Heaven and earth will pass into oblivion, but my words will not.

"As for the exact minute or even the day that this will happen, no one knows, none of God's heavenly messengers do nor even God's Chosen One - only God knows.

"So be on your guard! Stay Alert! And remain awake! Cause you'd certainly hate to sleep through it!"



SERMON: "What are You Waiting For?" (Steve)

What are you waiting for this Advent? Well, I have some good news as well as some bad news. God's Chosen One is coming to save the world – yea! But according to the our first Gospel lesson of Advent, this arrival coincides with both cataclysmic events in the heavens as well as a coming apocalypse here on earth. Before a new world can be born, the old must pass away.

3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Congregational Singing (Cathy)

Response (everyone)

Joys and Concerns (everyone)

Offering & Music (John)

Sending (based on Corinthians 1:3-9)

Grace to you and may the peace of God go with you. I give thanks to God always for all of you because God's grace has been given to you, enriching you in so many ways, so that you are lacking nothing in any way the spiritual gift's that you need. It is God who will keep you strong until the end. And God is faithful!

"Chaos does not mean total disorder. Chaos means a multiplicity of possibilities. Chaos is from the ancient Greek words that means a thing that is birthed from the void. And it was about that which is possible, not about disorder." — Jok Church