

February 19, 2023

*“Liberation from the Myth of Redemptive Violence”*

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

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

Worship: 10:00 AM

Pastor: Steve Ramer

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**EPIPHANY THEME:** Just like those ancient astronomers, we too, together, now leave the cave of Christ’s birth “reborn.” We are born again to join in with our God’s restorative process within all of creation! So, “Arise and shine, for your light has come!” The world desperately needs all the light it can get!

*“The story that the rulers of domination societies told each other and their subordinates is what we today might call the Myth of Redemptive Violence. It enshrines the belief that violence saves, that war brings peace, that might makes right. It is one of the oldest continuously repeated stories in the world. This pervasive myth is still in the mores of Western culture.” — Walter Wink*

## 1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude (John)

Call to Worship (Steve - #851)

Opening Prayer (Steve - #857)

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.

*“Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent.”  
— Isaac Asimov*

*“Revenge and retaliation always perpetuate the cycle of anger, fear and violence.” — Coretta Scott King*

## 2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

**Scriptures: Matthew 9:13-17, Romans 12:1-2, Hebrews: 4:12-13**

**Matthew 9:13-17** 13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' [a] For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

14 Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"

15 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

16 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. 17 Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

**Roman's 12:1-2** Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

**Hebrews: 4:12-13** 12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

**SERMON: "Liberation from the Myth of Redemptive Violence" (Annie)**



Annie will be sharing ideas from Walter Wink's 1980s book, "The Powers that Be." At the beginning of the book, Wink traces the development of the "Myth of Redemptive Violence."

Annie will focus on this bedrock of our colonialist, consumerist world view and consider ways we can "cleanse the doors of perception" as people of peace. We will examine repentance as finally turning away from our fascination with money and power. And we will look at how the "living and active" word of God can fuel a progressive freedom from damaging core beliefs that offer resolution through the violence of patriarchy, privilege, or domination.

## 3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

**Music ("Amazing Grace" – ensemble performance)**

**Response (everyone)**

**Joys and Concerns (everyone)**

**Offering & Music (John)**

**Sending (Steve)**

May the Love

which overcomes all differences,  
which heals all wounds,  
which puts to flight all fears,  
which reconciles all who are separated,

be in us and among us, now and always.

*"What has violence ever accomplished? What has it ever created? No martyr's cause has ever been stilled by an assassin's bullet. No wrongs have ever been righted by riots and civil disorders. A sniper is only a coward, not a hero; and an uncontrolled or uncontrollable mob is only the voice of madness, not the voice of the people." — Robert Kennedy*