

March 5, 2023

Second Sunday of Lent: "To Be Human is to be Reborn by the Breath of God!"

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

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

Worship: 10:00 AM

Pastor: Steve Ramer

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LENT 2023: AUTHENTIC HUMANITY

Becoming authentically human is first and foremost about what God is doing. But we need to ask ourselves, what does it mean to be images of the God who created us? What does it mean to be reshaped into the image of the Son of God who, with unparalleled authenticity, lived, died, and lives anew in our true humanity? We are surrounded by a host of pressures that would squeeze and contort us into less-than-human. Lent is a season to release that pressure and to repent (turn from) all that would distort and reduce our humanity.

1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude (John)

Call to Worship – Based on Psalm 32

L: Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

P: Happy are those whom the LORD no longer blames and those whom the spirit will never deceive.

L: But I kept quiet, unwilling to own my mistakes and that's when I actually began to waste away, spending my time in despair.

P: Guilt and doubt weighed heavy upon me and my strength was dried up like a hot summer day. Selah (Stop and Listen!)

L: Then I acknowledged my fault. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave me. Selah (Stop and listen)

P: God, you are a place where I can hide. You can also keep me from trouble. Selah (Stop and Listen!)

L: So, don't be like a mule, without understanding, who is stubborn and must be curbed with bit and bridle.

All: We will choose to be glad in the LORD and rejoice. We will shout for joy and seek to live with upright in hearts.

Opening Prayer (Steve)

Congregational Singing (everyone)

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.

"You have to keep shedding old skin in order to be reborn as something else."

— Simon Amstell

"Each friend represents a world in us, a world not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born." — Anais Nin

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: John 3:1-5, 8, 16-17; Genesis 1:1-5

John 3:1-5, 8, 16-17, 1 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2 He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."

3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

5 Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit... 8 The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit..."

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

Genesis 1:1-5 1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.



SERMON: *"To Be Human is to be Reborn by the Breath of God!"* (Steve)

Being reborn, according to Nicodemus, is simply a preposterous idea. However, to return to our original humanness, Jesus says we must be "reborn," but by that same spirit or "breath of God" that was also present in the very beginning of creation.

3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Music (everyone)

Response (everyone)

Joys and Concerns (everyone)

Offering & Music (John)

"All of us are born for a reason, but all of us don't discover why. Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others."

— Danny Thomas

"You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure about you. We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us." — Marianne Williamson

Sending - #1065 (Steve)

Whatever wilderness the Spirit

Has brought you to:

Walk in boldness, as a beloved child of God;

Walk in peace, under the shelter of the Most High;

Walk in faith, knowing Christ walks with you.

Amen