

March 15, 2026
Season of Lent: Dwelling in Dissonance

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

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

Worship: 10:00 AM

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT: SUBMISSION AND POWER

Jesus understood and demonstrated power so differently from what we expect. We experience the upside-down kingdom.

1. GATHERING

Prelude

Call to Worship

One: We gather for worship, seeking a kingdom that is not of this world.

All: "Your Kingdom come! Your will be done on earth!"

One: We pray. Then we look around . . .

Where is it? What is truth?

One: We gather for worship, asking questions and staying the course. We pray again and again,

All: "Your kingdom come!"

One: Looking and longing . . . Where is it? Where are you?

One: We gather for worship and find that God is here.

All: On earth as in heaven.

One: God's kingdom now and not yet; here and in the world to come.

All: Let us worship our God.

Opening Prayer

Welcome Lent. Welcome questions: Who are you? What is truth?
Welcome silence and responses that deal more with faith than proof.
Welcome humbleness in glory. Welcome peace amid the pain.
Welcome all the upside-downness of Jesus' kind of reign. — Amen

Congregational Singing

*"The doctrine of blind obedience and unqualified submission to any human power, whether civil or ecclesiastical, is the doctrine of despotism, and ought to have no place among Republicans and Christians.
— Angelina Grimke*

Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also, with you.

Leader: Let us offer one another signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: John 18:28–40 (Common English Bible)

28 Then they (members of the Jewish Legislature) took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death."

...33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" 35 Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here."

37 Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

38 Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him."

Confession

Jesus, your kingdom doesn't work the way we expect.

Power, honor—everything is backward. Are you the king? What is the truth?

We feel for Pilate, wondering how a prisoner can be king. If you have power, why are you here instead of sitting on a throne in glory?

Why don't you call in your armies? Silence the naysayers, free yourself, conquer the oppressors!

And you say, "My kingdom is not of this world." You say, "This is how I testify to the truth." You say, "Listen to my voice."



Sermon: "Jesus is Simply Outta This World!"

Another passage full of dissonance but also one that is also very timely. Currently in our nation the term "criminal" is widely used to arrest, deport, and kill many whose only crime is not having the correct papers or living on the streets. In our world and our nation, violence and injustice are the rule. But Jesus was saying, "God's rule is not at all similar to this world or nation."

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Congregational Singing

Reflections and Responses

Joys and Concerns

Offering & Music

Sending Blessing

As you go, may you listen for God in the discordant melodies of your life, seeking to live in the upside-down kingdom that is here, but also yet to come. May you go with Christ's peace surrounding you, to practice a different kind of power.

"We're blind to our blindness. We have very little idea of how little we know. We're not designed to know how little we know."

— Daniel Kahneman