

March 22, 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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FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT: COMPLICITY AND INNOCENCE

This week, our attention turns to the cast of characters beyond Jesus at his “trial.” Notice the roles various people play in this horrible moment. We are faced with our dissonance when we feel powerless, complicit, innocent, or accused.

1. GATHERING

Prelude

Call to Worship

Here we are.

It is still Lent and we may wish to skip this part.

We don't really want to remember the violence or

hear the horrible cries, “Crucify! Crucify!”

(We get enough of that from the news.)

And we really don't want to think that we might be among those voices,

or consider our own complicity in such things.

But it is Lent. So we are here. And we tell the story again, trusting that God will meet us in it.

Opening Prayer

All: Welcome Lent—

One: terrible dissonance, as we condemn the Human One.

All: Welcome lament and confession

One: as the story comes undone.

All: Welcome holy mystery

One: that even this can find a place in the tale of God's salvation.

All: Welcome suffering love and grace. Amen

Congregational Singing

“The genius of Jesus’ ministry is that he embraces tragedy, suffering, pain, betrayal, and death itself to bring us to God. There are no dead ends. Everything can be transmuted, and everything can be used. Everything.” — Richard Rohr

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.

Confession

Jesus, things don't always turn out the way we expect. Or want. And sometimes your choices (or the choices of our neighbors or family members or politicians) really don't agree with us.

We hate to admit it, but we feel for the angry crowd. In our fury, we too can become so consumed, so focused on who or what we are opposing, that we turn away from the things that matter most.

"We have no king but the emperor!" we find ourselves saying. And only after we hear our voice do we realize how distorted our allegiance has become.

God, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

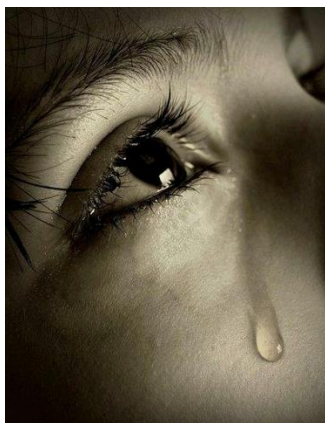
2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: John 19:1-16a (RSVue)

19:1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. 3 They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." 5 So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" 6 When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

8 Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. 9 He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and power to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above..." 12 From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against Caesar."

13 When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench... 14 Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" 15 They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." 16 Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.



Sermon: "Behold the Man!"

Jesus the victor, Jesus the Savior, Jesus the suffering, tortured, dying one. Which images of Jesus do you tend to gravitate toward, and which do you tend to avoid?

3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Congregational Singing

Reflections and Responses

Joys and Concerns

Offering & Music

"Zealot violence, Jesus knew, would lead to national destruction. It was an illusion to look for peace through violence. The way of the Suffering Servant was the only way to messianic shalom."

— Ronald Sider, founder of CPT

Sending Blessing

As you go, may you listen for God in the discordant melodies of your life, within the holy mystery and holy ache of this story, trusting that the Spirit is with us in the dissonance.

May you go with Christ's peace surrounding you.