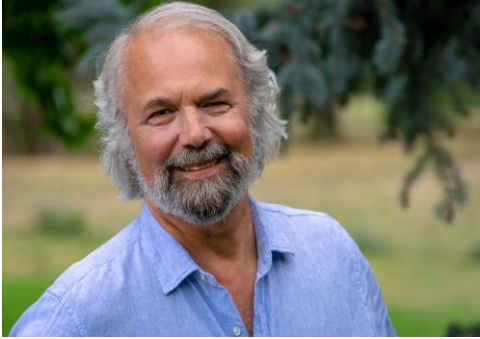


THE FULFILLMENT OF DEMOCRACY

PULSE OF SPIRIT
OCTOBER 22, 2025



DAVID KARCHERE *is a speaker and workshop leader who assists people to renew their Primal Spirituality—an experience that virtually all human beings know at birth, and that ideally grows as they mature.*

Democracy is at issue around the globe. There are major world powers like China and Russia that have dismissed democracy as an inferior form of government. Other countries, like Turkey and Hungary, pay lip service to democracy while autocrats undermine its foundational tenets.

What I propose to you is that democracy itself was never the sole end and aim of democratic movements through history. Those movements were inspired by something else. And the fulfillment of the dream of democracy goes beyond democratic principles.

In his Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln spoke of “...government of the people, by the people, for the people...” That is the idea behind democracy. But there is nothing guaranteeing the goodness of that government. And democracy, of itself, does not say what might be achieved by a country.

The fulfillment of democracy is the fulfillment of the original inspiration behind it. Democracy

does not exist for its own sake. When the original inspiration is lost, a ceiling on the culture of that nation is established. So instead of moving into the fulfillment of democracy, that country bounces off the ceiling, only to regress into patterns of human government based on authoritarian control in which human self-interest and the will of a few dominates the many. If concentration of wealth is any measure of this, it's worth noting that the United States has the greatest concentration of wealth among the rich of any major economy, with 1% of the population owning 30% of its wealth.

In the current era, the United States initiated a movement toward democracy around the world. The inspiration behind the institution of this democracy came from several sources. Perhaps foremost among them was a great urge for religious freedom and the fulfillment of religious ideals. England—the mother country for many American colonists—had broken from the Catholic Church to form a separate Church of

England. The Puritans decided that this didn't go far enough. So they separated from the Church of England, and many emigrated to the American colonies. John Winthrop, a Puritan leader, wrote in 1630, "We shall be as a city upon a hill; the eyes of all people are upon us." Other Protestant groups flocked to the colonies, seeking to fulfill their religious vision.

The *Great Awakening* was a religious movement that swept the colonies from the 1730s to the 1760s. It brought a message of spiritual individualism—the belief that ordinary people can experience a direct connection to God without clergy or hierarchy. Leaders of the movement traveled through the colonies, bringing a charismatic version of the Christian message, forging a common emotional experience among the colonies.

The philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment motivated the colonists. It inspired this idea, expressed in the Declaration of Independence in 1776:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

This turned the view of governments and of humanity upside down. No longer was the supreme earthly power seen as another person or a government. Authority was intrinsic to each person and God-given.

The close of the Declaration reflects the Puritan covenantal theology, the belief that people may

form a covenant with each other and with God to create a righteous society.

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

My point is not that the colonists' ideals were perfect. It is simply that there was a powerful vision behind the establishment of this democracy. And their primary purpose was to fulfill that vision.

What is the answer to the crisis of democracy we face in the world today? The experience of this nation suggests that we need something beyond championing the principles of democracy in and of themselves. There has to be a larger vision of what we are here to fulfill as humankind. There has to be a vision of the ultimate fulfillment of the principles of democracy.

The Founding Fathers of America had a vision of people possessing an intrinsic empowerment—something given to them by the Creator. I see this as part of our *primal spirituality*. Our *primal spirituality* is our original spirituality—the built-in connection to our spiritual origins that we were born with. In this context, the word *primal* simply means *first*. So our *primal spirituality* is our *first spirituality*. It is intrinsic to who we are. It is at the root of the human experience, and it is the originating truth behind all the world's great faith traditions and spiritual paths.

The truth of our primal spirituality has been presented to humankind by visionaries through the ages:

The earth is the Lord's.

No being stands alone. All belong to the Great Spirit.

Pachamama holds us in her living womb. We are not masters, but children.

The Divine indwells all worlds. We are but instruments of a vast intelligence.

You are khalifa—stewards of the Earth, entrusted, not entitled.

You are here to keep the balance—to sing the world awake each morning.

All Creation is aflame with the glory of God—to tend it is to adore it.

Love the Lord your God with all.

Offer all you are to the One—heart, breath, thought, and action—as sacred fire.

Let your every heartbeat be remembrance—this is love with the whole of your being.

Offer the whole of your consciousness—mind, body, and breath—to awaken in the One.

Love one another.

I am because we are. Your life is my life. Let me love you as myself.

Let compassion be your religion. See all hearts as one—the Beloved in every face.

See the One in all beings and love them as your very Self.

These are voices of our primal spirituality. The fulfillment of democracy is to know this and to manifest it in our culture. This is not the fulfillment of religious doctrine. It is the fulfillment of our intrinsic powers of Creation.

Does it make any sense to stage another American Revolution to manifest these things? Of course, it makes no sense. It has already been

done. What we need is a movement of peaceful presence. What we need is people who simply show up knowing their primal spirituality and sharing it openly with each other.

Impotent, would you say? Consider this. Erica Chenoweth is a Harvard professor who did an exhaustive study of resistance movements around the globe from 1900 to 2006. She is the author of *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. She made this astonishing finding. Every single non-violent movement in this time period that had at least 3.5% of the population actively participating was successful in overturning the authoritarian regime. Non-violent movements were twice as likely to overturn the existing authoritarian regime as violent movements. And they were much more likely than violent movements to lead to democracy as opposed to renewed authoritarianism or civil war.

It turns out that just having the courage to show up, consciously expressing higher values, is a potent act. Think of Lech Wałęsa and the Solidarity movement in Poland, and its backing by Pope John Paul II. Or the non-violent demonstrations in Manila—with the participation of Catholic Church leaders—that led to the departure of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos (the woman with all the shoes). Ghandi's non-violent confrontation of the British Empire is perhaps the best-known non-violent movement of all.

Political and cultural regeneration does not happen all by itself. If it is part of a positive step forward in our evolution as a race, it is consequent on spiritual regeneration. And the basis for spiritual regeneration is our primal spirituality. Claiming that for ourselves—knowing it, living it, and declaring it—is not only a resistance and reaction against existing

autocracy. It compels a change of heart for humanity, which is the basis for positive change.

On November 15, 1969, a month after leading 1,200 students on a march to protest the Vietnam War, I joined a half-million people on the mall in Washington, D.C. I ended up being only several hundred feet from the bandshell as Pete Seeger led us all in singing *Give Peace a Chance*. Years later, Pete described it this way:

Well, we started singing, and after a minute or so, I realized it was still growing. Peter, Paul and Mary jumped up onstage and started joining in. A couple of more minutes, and Mitch Miller hops up on the stage and starts waving his arms. I realized it was getting better and better. The people started swaying their bodies and banners and flags in time, several hundred thousand people, parents with their small children on their shoulders. It was a tremendously moving thing.

People estimate that this simple song of essentially two lines went on for twenty minutes.

Listening to Pete and singing along with him, protest turned to fervent prayer.

What is our fervent prayer now?

No being stands alone. All belong to the Great Spirit.

Pachamama holds us in her living womb. We are not masters, but children.

Offer all you are to the One—heart, breath, thought, and action—as sacred fire.

I am because we are. Your life is my life. Let me love you as myself.

May our collective prayer bring us to a true democracy where we each embrace the gifts given to us by the Creator and use those gifts to bring the ultimate fulfillment of democracy in the world.

*David Karchere
dkarchere@emnet.org
Sunrise Ranch
October 22, 2025*



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

*To receive a weekly e-mail with *The Pulse of Spirit*, send an e-mail to emissaries@emnet.org*

Donations to Emissaries of Divine Light are welcome.

To make a contribution to assist in our work, please visit www.emissaries.org

Copyright © 2025 by Emissaries of Divine Light