

Ash Wednesday - March 5

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21 NRSV

It was almost 20 years ago, before the addition of our current sanctuary. On Shrove Tuesday evening, what is now Fellowship Hall was gaily decorated and teeming with folks gathered around tables for the Mardi Gras style pancake supper. Children wore brightly colored beads joyously, ate well-syruped pancakes greedily and danced with abandon to jazz music. On Wednesday evening, that same space was transformed. The tables had been removed, rows of chairs were set up and the center of focus was a candle lit worship table covered with burlap and black fabric. Quiet organ music played as adults, youth and children reverently gathered. As the service unfolded, all came forward to receive the sign of the cross, in ashes, on their foreheads. Everyone, but especially those children who had smiled so gaily, laughed, and danced the night before, left knowing in ways beyond my understanding that God created us, that we will all die and that our time on earth is important to God.

Ash Wednesday and Matthew 6:19-21 remind us that our possessions, our titles, our self-described successes are not important. What is important is where we focus our deepest significance—our place as children of God called to be the body of Christ in the world. Through repentance and refocus, the season of Lent calls us to transformation.

Rev. Sandy Huber

Prayer: Holy God, on this Ash Wednesday may we begin a season of repentance, deeper belief in the gospel and service as God's forgiven children. Amen.