

Ash Wednesday

“Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.” (Joel 2:13)

Ash Wednesday provides us with an opportunity to examine where we are spiritually and relationally, where we have placed our priorities, and what adjustments we might need to make in the future.

Today’s liturgy draws our attention to the book of Joel. The prophet Joel called on God’s people to return to the Lord in the midst of a national emergency—the coming Babylonian captivity. Not only were the Babylonians a concern, but locusts had destroyed their grain and their wine grapes making it hard for them to keep up with the proper worship of God at the Temple. So, how are they to return to God if the means of worship have been wrenched away from them... the tools of their religious practice made unavailable? What was God really asking of them?

God wanted their hearts. He wanted relationship, not mere religious observance. When we make our relationship with God a religious transaction we are in danger of missing the greatest gift God has to give us: God’s own presence in us! God’s love and acceptance is freely offered, not earned because of our religious activity.

Those who come to Intermountain find that there is healing and hope available within the context of healthy relationships. Whether in residential or out-patient services, in a school setting or adult tele-health counseling, clients are asked to examine where they are in their relationships and where they want to be. They find acceptance, guidance, and healing through healthy relationships.

Call 406-457-4804 to learn more about supporting the work of Intermountain, such as becoming a monthly “Caring Friend” donor, or making a special gift at Easter to honor a loved one.

Sincerely,
Rev. Dr. Chris Haughee, Church Liaison

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