

Week of Compassion

Where Your Heart Is



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

Where is your treasure?

In the bank? A locked box? Invested wisely across a diverse portfolio?

If by “treasure” we mean strictly material assets, then the answer is probably some combination of these. But the lectionary reading for Ash Wednesday refers to a greater wealth. It’s not just about money, but rather an investment of self. “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” In what places have you deeply invested your time and talent, your energy and spirit--and yes, your financial resources-- in a way that speaks the truth of your heart?

This month, Disciples congregations across the U.S. and Canada received a Special Offering for Week of Compassion. And while the gifts received through this offering are critical to the work of our partners, make no mistake: it’s not just about the money.

Your giving means so much more than that.

When you give to Week of Compassion, you put your compassion to work. You mobilize our wider Church to reach those in need “around the world, around the year.”

Giving to Week of Compassion is a radical act of hope. When you put your ‘treasure’ into this ministry, you share your heart. You share the belief that good news is possible in all things, in all places. And when our gifts are shared together, they are transformed: they become water and food; medical supplies and building materials; education and opportunity. A better future for all.

Your investment builds new homes after a fire in California. Your generosity constructs new schools after an earthquake in Haiti. Your support restores communities after a tsunami in Indonesia. When you put your treasure where your heart is-- love rises from the dust.

On Ash Wednesday, we receive the sign of the cross on our foreheads. The cross is a symbol of mortality; the ashes a stark reminder of death and of the world’s suffering. But our faith reminds us that *there is hope in the ashes.*

In the ministry that we share through Week of Compassion, new life comes from the dust. And that’s where our heart is, Church: in the hope of the dust.

Thank you for sharing during the time of Special Offering, and all around the year. From the child’s coin box to the check with multiple zeroes-- and every gift between-- your gift truly reveals the heart of our Church to those in need. Here is a prayer for the ashes, and for the journey of the coming season:

God of hope and shadow:

You have called us to turn from sin, and turn again to you.

You ask us to follow our hearts, and to stop putting our treasure into that which does not give life.

Forgive us when we fall short of that better way. Forgive us when we seek what will satisfy for a moment, only to leave us hungry again. Forgive us when we store up treasure for tomorrow, while our neighbors are hurting today.

Bless these marks on our foreheads, Lord; a sign of your endless love, worn on our skin so we cannot turn away. May our bodies be the sign of your love for another; may the work of our hands bear your mercy to a friend in need, or a stranger who's hurting.

Teach us to carry such a love with us each day. Show us what it is to put the treasure of our being into the very heart of you. All that we have, and all that we are is yours, Lord. Give us the courage to speak that truth with our lives. Amen.

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