

Remembering Terry Hanna

“I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.”-Psalm 116: 9

I am sitting on a bench with my mom outside the Westin Poinsett Hotel in downtown Greenville, S.C. I brought my mother here for her 86th birthday. This is where my mother was born and raised and the place of my family roots. Mom had her Senior prom in this old hotel and it has been some thirty or forty years since she has been back to visit.

Mom and I sit and watch people as they walk the tree lined streets. The old building next to our hotel was converted into a bookstore and bakery making it the perfect neighbor. Then we walk past stores and restaurants and old textile mills turned into new condos to get to the River Front Park. In the park we can meander on paths that lead through green space surrounded by huge oak trees and waterfalls. My mom keeps saying, “I don't recognize anything. I am just turned around and can't seem to get my sense of direction.”

Last week in worship I was reading King Solomon's words when he blessed the new temple in I Kings, chapter eight, verse 54-61. I talked about remembering where we have been and committing our future to the Lord. This week I am looking around me and remembering. Old stones mark the old campus of Furman University, before the new campus where I graduated was built. New stones were used to build stores and restaurants that line the park and the river walk. Statues of bronze and famous quotes are placed on the sidewalk around town to remember history. They rest next to a beautiful new theater, the Peace Center, and modern condos- the old and new, past and future living side by side.

In dedicating the new Temple, King Solomon reminded the people that the Lord had always kept his promises. The Lord was with them as with their ancestors and would never leave or abandon them. The Lord would remain near the people and give them what each day required. He then encouraged the people to recommit their way to the Lord, to walk in his steps and keep his commandments.

It is a good reminder for us today. As we step into our places of worship, just like I walked the streets of my past, we should remember our roots, our ancestors and God's goodness in our lives. And as we remember, may we devote ourselves completely to the Lord our God, to commit, *again*, to walk in God's ways and keep his commandments throughout all our days!

Pastor Terry