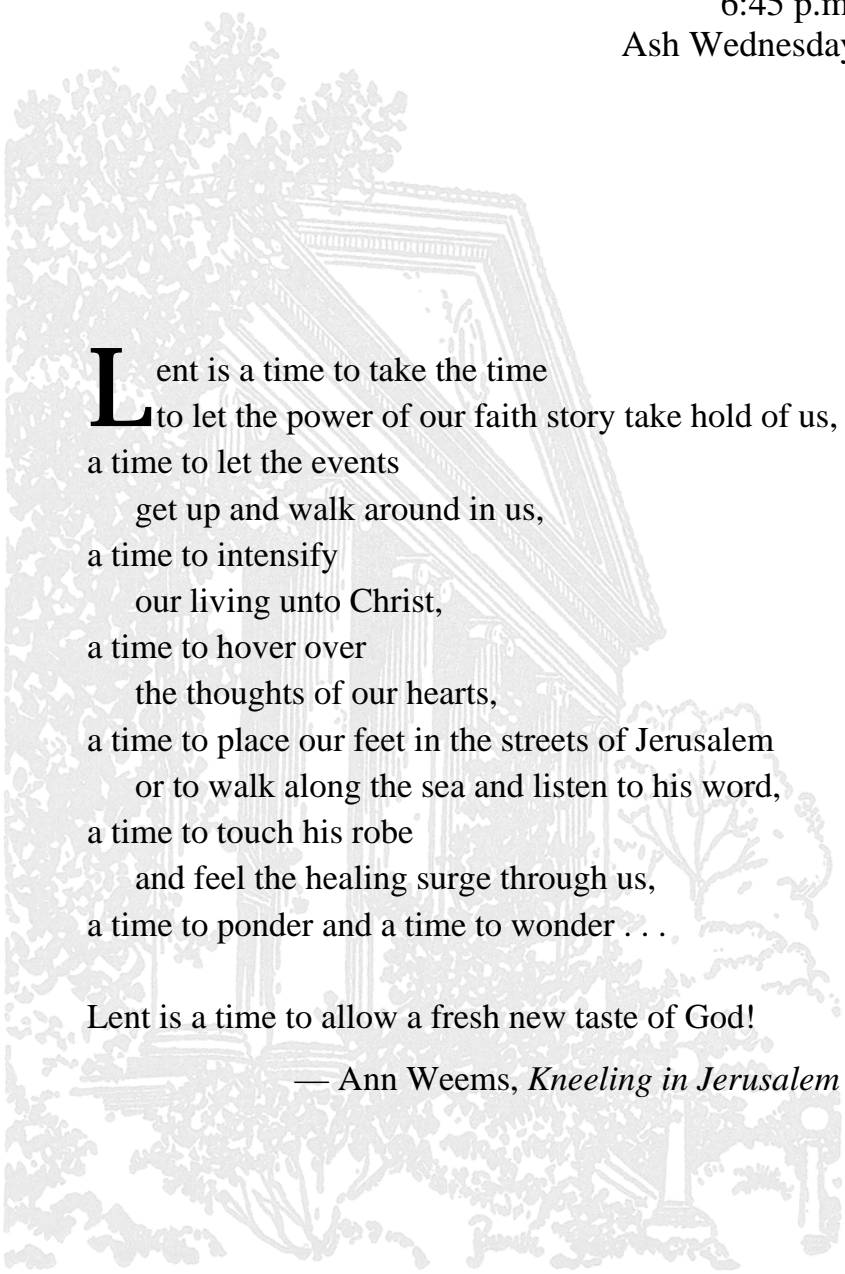


# St. John's Baptist Church

February 17, 2010

6:45 p.m.

Ash Wednesday



Lent is a time to take the time  
to let the power of our faith story take hold of us,  
a time to let the events  
    get up and walk around in us,  
a time to intensify  
    our living unto Christ,  
a time to hover over  
    the thoughts of our hearts,  
a time to place our feet in the streets of Jerusalem  
    or to walk along the sea and listen to his word,  
a time to touch his robe  
    and feel the healing surge through us,  
a time to ponder and a time to wonder . . .

Lent is a time to allow a fresh new taste of God!

— Ann Weems, *Kneeling in Jerusalem*

## MUSIC FOR PRAYER AND MEDITATION

Cantilena

*Maureen Howell, organ*

Joseph Rheinberger

*As the children of St. John's prepare our worship  
tonight, we ask that you please prepare your heart.*

## WORDS OF GREETING AND MEANING

Layne Smith

## HYMN

### **O For a Heart to Praise My God**

*LAND OF REST*

O for a heart to praise my God,  
a heart from sin set free,  
a heart that always feels thy blood  
so freely shed for me.

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,  
my great Redeemer's throne,  
where only Christ is heard to speak,  
where Jesus reigns alone.

A heart in every thought renewed  
and full of love divine,  
perfect and right and pure and good,  
a copy, Lord, of thine.

Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;  
come quickly from above;  
write thy new name upon my heart,  
thy new, best name of Love.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1742, (Ps. 51:10)

Tune: *LAND OF REST*, American Folk Melody

## PRAYER

Lee Gray

## READING FROM THE HEBREW BIBLE

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

**A LITANY OF SEARCHING**

Martha Kearse

**LEADER:** These are uncertain days. They are days that point to the wickedness and deception of a restless world. And we wonder, "where is our God?"

**PEOPLE:** **You are deep within our hearts, O God.**

**LEADER:** When peace fails to reign, when fears abound and love is obscure. We raise the only question our hearts can profess, "where is our God?"

**PEOPLE:** **You are deep within our hearts, O God.**

**LEADER:** When we see all forms of dis-ease and anguish enveloping our lives and engulfing our days, we cannot help but shout our furious query, "where is our God?"

**PEOPLE:** **You are deep within our hearts, O God.**

**LEADER:** And then we are reminded . . . to seek Your face . . . to find our hope . . . to return to You. The answer is simple . . .

**PEOPLE:** **You are deep within our hearts, O God.**

**SONG**

**DEEP WITHIN**

David Haas

*Warren Howell, Martha Kearse*

Deep with-in I will plant my law,  
not on stone, but in your heart.  
Fol-low me, I will bring you back, you will  
be my own, and I will be your God.

**READING FROM THE GOSPEL**

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Ken Smith

**HOMILY**

“A Spiritual Warning System”

**THE IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES**

*All this flourishing life, turns to a little ash, a handful of dry dust, which every breeze scatters this way and that. All this brilliant color, all this sensitive, breathing life, falls into pale, feeble, dead earth, and less than earth, into ashes. It is the same with ourselves. We look into an opened grave and shiver: a few bones, and handful of ash-grey dust.*

*Remember man  
that dust thou art  
and unto dust shalt thou return.*

*Ashes signify man’s overthrow by time. Our own swift passage, ours and not someone else’s, ours, mine. When at the beginning of Lent the priest takes the burnt residue of the green branches of the last Palm Sunday and inscribes with it on my forehead the sign of the cross, it is to remind me of my death.*

*Everything turns to ashes, everything whatever.*

— Romano Guardini, *Sacred Signs*

**PRAYER OF BLESSING**

**St. John’s Baptist Church**

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www.stjohnsbaptistchurch.org

*Intentional Interim Pastor* .....Layne Smith  
*Minister of Youth and Young Singles* ..... Lee Gray  
*Minister of Music*..... Warren Howell  
*Minister of Children and Family Life* ..... Martha Kearsse  
*Organist* ..... Maureen Howell, Jane Lineberger  
*Guitar*..... Rob Peacock