

I never cease to be amazed by the positive spirit that people show even in the most difficult of circumstances. In my ministry in hospitals, in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, in detention centers, and in the homes of people who have faced terrible loss I have found many people to be of strong faith. People who face serious life crises often find that such troubles strengthen rather than shake their faith. Many will say that they could not have survived all that they have had to cope with if it were not for their faith in God.

God does not promise us an easy road through life. The world is a difficult one, and life seems to randomly send the most unexpected challenges our way. What God *does* promise is to stay close to us whatever we go through in life, to be with us in times of trouble. Hebrews 13 tells us the Lord has promised "I will never leave you or forsake you." Of course, God is with us always through joys as well as through sorrows, but there is something about the heart that is broken that invites the spirit of God to enter and to offer the comfort and peace that can only be known through God's love. Psalm 46 offers great comfort when times are hard

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

Please continue to pray for those on our prayer list, and continue to hold Ron and his fellow pilgrims in the Holy Land in prayer. Ron will be back with us next week and will be leading our Ash Wednesday service at 12:30p.m. on February 14.

Blessings and God's peace to you all,
Ruth



**Howard VanDenburgh's Memorial Service
is this Saturday, February 10
At 1:00 p.m. in the sanctuary
With a reception to follow in Fellowship Hall**



**Ash Wednesday Service
February 14 at 12:30 p.m.
in the sanctuary**

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This Week's Daily Bible Readings					
Growing with God's Word in Faith			Ash Wednesday	February 14	Psalm 51
Sunday	February 11	Genesis 47:1-31	Thursday	February 15	Psalm 52
Monday	February 12	Genesis 48:1-22	Friday	February 16	Psalm 73
Tuesday	February 13	Genesis 49:29-50:26	Saturday	February 17	Psalm 108

NOTES FROM DAVID BEDENBAUGH... MUSIC MINISTRIES

We look forward to worshipping together again this coming Sunday! The Chancel Choir sings a beautiful arrangement of Psalm 23, "The Lord Is My Shepherd" and Cross & Crowns leads us in upbeat and thoughtful music. Please join us and let's make a joyful noise!

In your February Spire you'll find a blurb about an exciting concert coming up on Sunday February 18th at 3:00 p.m. I will be giving a concert of my original Art Songs. I hope you will join me for an afternoon of thoughtful poems and music! Here's another poem that will be featured on the concert:

End of day

When faces leave, when noises cease,
When moons emerge from silent peace,
When sighs are through, when movements stay,
There are things certain known at the end of day.

Things unquestioned, things unfraught,
Truths, afar from doubt, are thought.
Truths that go, unheard, unspoken,
Ne'er to be quenched or broken.

The certain song whose music grows,
Within her heart the singer knows
And knows that she shall live her dreams
the end of day the singer sings.

Music Director
David Bedenbaugh

Performs original Art Songs



Sunday February 18
at 3:00 p.m.

in our sanctuary

At

NOTES FROM SARAH OVERFELT...CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES (352-843-4080)

Sparks:- Children's Ministry: Please let me know if your child or grandchild would like to participate in the Palm Sunday service! It will be short and sweet, very cute!

Kaleo—Youth Ministry: This Sunday is back to the norm at 5:30p.m. in Room 21! We will be having a thought provoking message that you just don't want to miss! Spread the word.