

**There is no sorrow like that of losing a child. New parents accept an awesome responsibility, and they do it with absolute love, never for a moment thinking of themselves, but thinking only about the child who needs them. Parents eventually get their rewards; when kids make good grades at school or score in sports or develop their hobbies, they make their parents look really great. Losing a child is hardest on them, but it affects us all; it's losing our plans; it's losing the world the way we thought it was going to be.**

**In the midst of loss, it is easy to focus on what is not, and hard to look at what is, but that is why we are here today. We are here to affirm what is.**

**What is is that God decided to make room in our hearts for a very special kid, a child who had an easy delivery, who made his parents proud from the moment he was born, who made people want to hold him first, and who never stopped wanting to be held by you and you and you and you. When you held him he snuggled. He smiled at everyone. He fussed only briefly, and then he stopped. He ate well; he sat up well; he enjoyed riding in the car; he stayed perfectly healthy. He inspired people to love him and to love one another. He made his brother and sister happy, not jealous. He played with them. He wore his brother's clothes; he even looked like his brother, even if he was a little chunky for a baby. He was comfortable with you no matter who you were, family, friend or neighbor; he would give you his time, and you could easily overlook how precious that time was. He also developed one very special skill. He could sleep. When a child sleeps, everyone can sleep. He made your lives better even when you were asleep. He was just a happy baby, and he already had long and short nicknames. You could call him Owen Scott Barney. Or just O.**

**Owen got a lot done in the short time he was here. He spent Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's with his family, which is more than a lot of us do. He wore Christmas PJs with his brothers and sisters, and he was already showing favoritism toward OU. He crammed a lot into a little life because he had a lot to say. I think Owen's message was this: God sent him to remind us how blessed we are to have a God who can create. After hearing from you all about Owen, I think he would not want us to focus on the loss, but on the gift, on how special it is to be part of anyone's life, no matter how small, no matter how brief.**

**The Book of Lamentations was written by a people who had lost their home, their Temple, members of their families and their friends. They lost plenty. But in the passage we just heard, they somehow lifted their heads and said with determination, "The favors of the Lord are not exhausted; his mercies are not spent; they are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness." We don't know exactly how God will continue to bestow mercy, but we know that he will. The God who created a miracle like Owen can create anything he wants. He asks for our patience. He asks for our hope. The memory of Owen will always help us; his memory will offer us what he was good at and what we most need: happiness and peace.**