

# **Glimpses of Life and Eternity**



# **Glimpses of Life and Eternity**

**Christian Reflections for Whosoever**

**Frances F. Morrisson**

Copyright © Frances F. Morrisson 2012.

*Glimpses of Life and Eternity* is a revision of my previous book *Christian Reflections for Whosoever*, with the addition of many new poems.

**This book is online, accompanied by recordings of the author reading her poems.**

**[www.GlimpsesOfLifeAndEternity.com](http://www.GlimpsesOfLifeAndEternity.com)**

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, King James Version.

Scripture quotations marked “NKJV” are taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version, Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked “NIV” are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society, Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

ISBN-10: 1453776869  
ISBN-13: 978-1453776865

# Acknowledgments

Until you become involved in transforming a manuscript into a book, you have small idea of the kinds of work involved. This one was a family enterprise.

Thanks to daughter Maria Kneas, indispensable live-in secretary and assistant editor. Thanks to son Bob Morrisson for skill and patience in designing the website and keeping it going, and to his wife Sue for helping in various ways. Thanks to the staff and members of our church for time, help and encouragement.

And thanks to *you* for wanting to read (and possibly hear) the results of all this work. As the restaurant waitress says, while leaving the full table: “Enjoy!”



# Preface

Each day lent to us by our faithful and just Creator brings adventures of the everyday and even riddles of the cosmos to reflect on. May these reflections shared with you, encourage your own as we travel into the future: God's gift to us.

Being in my ninth decade, I heartily recommend old age. Every season has its particular challenges and beauty.

Whatever season of life is yours right now, may the blessings of our Creator bring you His Truth, Wisdom and Lovingkindness in abundance, that you might be rich in Hope.

Frances F. Morrisson  
March 2012



## **POETRY, POETRY**

False and True... Me and You;  
Dark and Light... Health and Blight  
Love and Cling... Weep and Sing;  
Young and Old... Shy and Bold...

These are some things we keep in view.  
When I go there, will you come too?



# Contents

Acknowledgments .....	v
Preface .....	vii
Poetry, Poetry .....	ix

## Prologue

Beginnings .....	3
Infant Arrival .....	4
Echoes from Psalm 8 .....	5
Trusting .....	6
To Adolescence .....	7
Beyond Christmas .....	8
History .....	10
Cosmic Choreography .....	12
Welcome Home .....	13
Why So Narrow .....	14
Unrequited Love .....	15
Blest .....	16

## Portraits

The Butterfly .....	19
The Older Mall .....	20
The Photograph .....	21
Change .....	22
TIME and a Photograph .....	23
Tribute to Meggie .....	24
A Diamond Among the Castoffs of the World .....	26
Reflections on Childhood .....	28
Vietnam in the Grocery Store .....	29

Visiting the Old .....	30
Grey Heads .....	31
Antique Ghosts at Birthday Time.....	32
Marty .....	33
The Soldier .....	34

## Nature and Art

Night.....	37
Beauty.....	38
Joy .....	39
Rorschach Revisited ( <i>Bears in the Boxwood</i> ).....	40
Vastness and Microtude .....	42
Art Museums .....	43
Skyscapes .....	44
Longing .....	45
No .....	46
Hats Off.....	47
Evening Symphony .....	48
String Quartets.....	50
Opera .....	51
In the Company of Trees .....	52
Some Laughter .....	54
Metropolitan Mountains.....	55
Early Springtime .....	56
Dawn .....	57
Winter.....	58
Leaves.....	59
Never-Lived-Before Wednesday.....	60
Lonely.....	62
Life While Here.....	64
Little City Garden.....	65

**From Eden to Eternity**  
**(Section I)**

Choices .....	69
Salvation.....	70
Pleasing Him .....	71
Dress Rehearsal.....	72
Exiled .....	74
Glories and Shadows.....	76
Various Perspectives .....	78
God Has a Big Eraser .....	80
Relative?.....	81
Hidden Anguish.....	82
Love Newfound.....	83
After Serious Illness .....	84
The Eye of the Beholder.....	86
Games People Play .....	87
A Question.....	88
Invitation .....	90
HIS LOVE.....	91

**From Eden to Eternity**  
**(Section II)**

Seeking .....	95
You .....	96
Evil at Bay .....	98
Marriage .....	99
Night or Day .....	100
Mysteries .....	102
The Once Perfect World.....	104

Will-O-The-Whisp .....	106
Destiny .....	107
Newer Height .....	108
Under the Sun.....	109
Thou in the Flesh.....	110
The Mote in the Eye .....	111
The In-Betweens .....	112
The Very First Man .....	113
Old Age with Binoculars.....	114
Death Approaching .....	115
Reflectors .....	116

## Our Times

Kaleidoscope .....	119
Camouflage .....	120
These Times .....	121
A Snapshot of America: 2005 .....	122
Trust .....	124
Why .....	125
A Jingle .....	126
Coming Storm .....	127
Crisis.....	128
Echoes from the Book of Job .....	129
Free! .....	130
Future Memory.....	131
Hawking Wares.....	132
Hopscotch.....	133
Kudzu .....	134
Looking Down.....	135
Pagan “Gods” in Modern Garb .....	136
Powers in the World.....	137
Sailing.....	138
The Ivory Door.....	140
The Terrifying Cosmos .....	142

The Pharmer in the Dell .....	144
Unwelcome Darkness.....	145
Worldliness.....	146
Awash.....	147

## **Some Animals**

Chrysalis on Horseback.....	151
Dancing with Turtles.....	152
Squirrels .....	154
Sparrows.....	156
Theologians and Centipedes.....	158
The Odd Couple and Mozart.....	160
Pets in the Kitchen.....	161
The Ladybug .....	162
The Birds' Chorus .....	163

## **Finale**

Yearning .....	167
I Saw You Seated .....	168
The Idiot .....	170
Entropy .....	171
Sins .....	172
Hold On.....	173
A Portrait of My Husband.....	174
Last Moments .....	175
Legacy .....	176
Love Beyond Understanding.....	177
A Startling Happening.....	178
The Ocean of God's Love .....	180
From Early Death .....	182
Memorable Silence for Two.....	184
The New Widow .....	186
Requiem for a Young Squirrel .....	190

Song.....	192
Summing Up.....	194
Nestling in Salvation .....	195
Forgiveness.....	196
Blessed in the Crucible.....	197
A.S.K. ....	198

## **Eternity**

Eternity .....	203
----------------	-----

About the Author.....	205
Index of All Poems.....	207

**This book is online, accompanied by recordings  
of the author reading her poems.**

**[www.GlimpsesOfLifeAndEternity.com](http://www.GlimpsesOfLifeAndEternity.com)**

# Prologue



# BEGINNINGS

How mystery-simple  
to produce  
(if not to tend)  
a Man.

Then

One moment  
for variegated dreams  
to start what they  
began:

That moment  
not first breath or cry  
but touch (or lack)  
of love-warm vision  
to beginning span.

# INFANT ARRIVAL

And you shall have lithe limbs, your muscles and skills unfurled;  
And you shall find your voice.  
You shall skip and run, in the whole wide world.

Soon your flesh shall rise and you shall newly walk.  
Your hands will clasp and fling  
to taste, discover, learn: and you shall talk.

Wise men will seek your ear to reach your heart;  
Deceivers will storm your mind;  
And you must war, to choose the Light and fend the Dark.

Meanwhile: tiny pink toes for counting;  
eyes fresh to the world;  
distress, comfort, wide-eyed queries and energy:  
steadily mounting.

*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb  
is his reward. (Psalm 127:3)*

## ECHOES FROM PSALM 8

Out of the mouths of countryside children,  
children both small and eager,  
come wonder at Glory; come laughter and praise.

Veiled from the silver-screen, noise and hustle;  
unsurrounded by sweets, and by toys;  
far from concrete, and streets in a maze,

they are fellows with puddle and bug, sheep and cow,  
loving family, and horses that graze.  
Such joys, from Your Hand, are the Praise of their days.

# TRUSTING

LOVE pouring out  
to small inquiring eyes,  
faithful through the years,  
kindles portent to be wise.

Struggle will ensue  
with evil and its ways;  
“Good” will seem obscure,  
“Evil” beckoning all his days.

God will woo that child;  
Love will do its best;  
only yearning hearts  
discern a path that finds God’s Rest.

## TO ADOLESCENCE

Once again, as at the very beginning  
when, slowly the eyes open themselves  
to an unknown world: his new life is stirring.  
Differently. It's burgeoning, amid the dangerous world  
harboring his newfangled quests.

Long ago, as limbs began to grow nimble  
as eyes could see well and voice could express,  
as mind began comprehension: life  
burst forth, full blown, ready to be used for exploring,  
thrusting running feet and hands forth,  
mind twirling: not yet reined in  
by consequences except by loving arms:  
ceaseless vigor finally felled by slumber.

O let him be bathed in Light. Your Light.

But now: new awareness, new defenses,  
new exaltation plunging toward manhood:  
toward the mortal dance twixt good and evil.

O, let his Creator find entrance; Let Him be seen  
in His splendor, and let His Wisdom be inhaled.  
Let prayers on youths' behalf be many and steady  
as the prince of this world attempts to entangle his soul.  
Let him find the hidden ivory door  
opening to the narrow path, leading to Glory.  
Let him hike, and struggle along it, lifted by prayer:  
all through his story.

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge  
(Proverbs 1:7)*

# BEYOND CHRISTMAS

*for Mr. B*

How tiny and helpless that first Christmas morn  
Came the Son of God to our sin-sick world:  
Wrapped in cloths, asleep newborn!  
His holy Glory as yet unfurled.

Time brought Jesus to precocious youth  
Speaking with elders of His young days  
Challenging what they spoke as Truth;  
Disturbing priests, and leaders, by His learned ways.

With His mother, at a wedding during manhood time,  
She told Him of the bridegroom's diminishing wine.  
Then, for large amounts of water, He quietly asked:  
Turning water into wine: His first miracle task.

He became His Father's poor, traveling, Preacher  
Gathering men along His daily way.  
They became disciples, he their Teacher  
Disrupting priests and leaders in their sway.

Knowing God's wisdom, knowing God's Heart,  
These, to Man, He came to impart;  
Unmasking sin, teaching Love in new ways,  
He prayed, He healed, He taught all His days.

Then came the Time for judge and high priest:  
They nailed Him hard to the cruel tree:  
The World in fury at Truth's holy feast:  
But on His crucified shoulders, He bore the whole World's sin.



The agony over, the Sacrifice done,  
Behold! From the chrysalis of Ancient Law  
The New Covenant! Revealed in Jesus Christ!  
(Never visioned plainly before.)

The Messiah of the ages, from servanthood to Glory  
He came and fulfilled the age-old Story.  
High praise to the Father, High praise to the Son.  
Fulfillment in Christ, brings lively Hope: begun!



High praise to the Father, high praise to the Son  
On the third day, He rose again!  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, and Amen;  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, once again.

Forty days later we saw Him rise  
Beyond our sight, up up through the skies;  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, let the whole world sing  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, let every bell ring!

He has risen, He has risen, He has risen indeed!  
Bring to him your love, bring your care and need.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah; hallelujah amen.  
Let every bell ring, let the whole world sing!

**HA LE LU JAH !**

*Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.  
Praise ye the LORD. (Psalm 150:6)*

# HISTORY

We prepare, in joy, a nursery and bassinet for our precious first born child.

Almighty God, by His Word, prepared the Heavens and the Earth with His Spirit and His Christ, in joy. For us.

He created stars and planets; space, light, air; waters; living trees and living animals: every needful thing for life on Earth while all his host of Angels sang and sang and sang....And sang.

Then God Almighty came down to Earth and with His very own Hands formed Adam from His Dust and breathed His very own Breath into Adam.

Behold! Man! Man made in God's image (although in reduced capacity): Man to subdue the Earth, and people it with Mankind!

But little by little, one of the host of Almighty God's Angels grew Envy. "Was not he greater than Man? Could not he have God's power even over Man?" So, taking the form of an animal, he came down to Earth to find out, by speaking to Adam in the Garden of Eden.

And we are Adam's great...great...more-numbers-than-the-sands-of-the-seas...great grandchildren!

And the serpent of the Garden of Eden is in **our** garden now, encouraging us, as he encouraged Adam, to doubt the Goodness of the LORD our GOD. For Adam doubted. And Adam fell.

And now the serpent is called "**Prince** of this World."

But Almighty God is **King**: King of kings; and His Goodness is the same yesterday, today and forever.

And He Loves us.

And He sent to us His Christ. His only begotten Son.

In flesh:

Just like ours.

Hallelujah!



And we say, with Francis Thompson:\*

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy  
Once, and just as small as I?  
And what did it feel like to be  
Out of heaven, and just like me?

\* *Francis Thompson (1859-1907), "Little Jesus."*

# COSMIC CHOREOGRAPHY

O LORD, we exalt You, our God, the King.

You gave us the ability to learn, or else we would yet be in our bassinets. We learn, to different degrees: Some only able to grasp a little: but if that little knows You and loves You, and knows that You love him, he knows a mystery and treasure unknown to most of Mankind all the way back in history.

You are “the Great Teacher.”

O God, in Your wisdom You know what adversity to send us to learn from and grow from; and what comfort and mercy to bring, and when and how to bring it: all these things from the Providence You arrange: And this could take much time for answering prayer — and strengthening our faith and awe of You: much time for strengthening our trust in Your Wisdom and Faithfulness.

We pray, and You respond, in the mystery of Your wisdom and the Providence it provides. You are the Great Teacher by Your Providence, especially when we can recognize Your intricate Cosmic Choreography over time.

O LORD, we exalt You, our God, the King, forever and ever.  
Hallelujah, Amen.

Hallelujah, Amen  
once again.

# WELCOME HOME

Not so long ago I came home from a hospital having just escaped from bleeding to death.

Just as I was settling down to sleep at night, a nightingale somewhere near my bedroom window began sending its liquid song through the dark window and continued pouring out its beauty for about five minutes.

The next night, and again the third night, the very same thing happened. This area doesn't have nightingales that we know of, and we have never heard such birdsong concert before or since.

Can I prove that this was a small, beautiful example of God's cosmic choreography? Of course not. But that memorable beauty and uplifting affect is still uplifting to think about, right now: an encouragement and joy.

If God could send a great fish for Jonah and ravens for Elijah, then He could send a bird for us. "With God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26) And all Christians are members of the family of God.

Thank You LORD.  
Hallelujah, Amen.



Years ago an older man at a gathering of some sort that we were in complained that he had moved into an area that had lots of nightingales. "You can't get to sleep at night. They are an awful nuisance."

One man's treasure can be another man's trash.

# WHY SO NARROW?

God gave and *gave*:

Created heaven and earth;  
created mountains and seas;  
gave us plants and animals;  
breath and Time;  
gave us hope for Eternity.

He gave us His Word  
and Gave us His Son;  
gave us Love and Wisdom  
color, laughter and tears.

God *gives* and gives, in joy and sorrow.  
He gives us our faith and peace; gives justice;  
gives us His healing and brings us providence;  
teaches discernment of evil and good;  
lets us fill pages of history.

He gives us our strength for today and tomorrow.



Great gifts He gave and He gave and *gave*;  
He gives and He gives: and gives still.  
Then why is His Way so narrow?  
And — Oh — *yes*: He gives us **free will**!

*Enter by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14, NKJV)*

## UNREQUITED LOVE

Out of the realm of Your eternal Glory  
Out of warm outpourings of Your Love,  
Love vaster than the heavens,  
Deeper than any ocean, wider than sky:  
You create souls that are unique  
With unique bodies made for carrying them —  
Giving to each a plan, launched at birth  
With Your Hope, and with Your Love.

But O how often in this World's history  
Have those interfacing plans succumbed  
To the ancient curse, brought on by Adam:  
Souls by the countless millions  
Deafened, blinded to Your voice, and Presence;  
Stumbling onto the Broad Way eternally  
Stymied by evil, and sin, which You hate.  
And O what sorrow and disappointment for You.

And now, dear Lord, in my Autumn days —  
You enabled this foundering pilgrim to find You,  
To seek Your face, begin to learn Your ways.  
May this microscopic fact of history,  
Regrettably late in service to You,  
Joining other links, in Your Church,  
(The long desired Bride for Your dear Son)  
Help in assuaging Your measureless grief and sorrow.

So much grief, and unrequited Love.

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and  
stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I  
have gathered thy children together, even as a hen  
gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!  
(Matthew 23:37)*

# BLEST

O be blessed,  
unruffled by clamorings of the past,  
by fears for what we hold most dear.

O be blessed,  
flowing by His spirit  
toward His image;  
flexing to His plans —  
whether shadowy or clear.

Be blessed this very moment,  
the only time of touch or blessing:  
for the past has fled;  
but the future is not here.

# Portraits



## THE BUTTERFLY

As you turned  
From the place of blessing  
You were as a chrysalis  
Unwrapped;  
Momentarily static  
But radiantly new:

Your wings still folded,  
Colors yet to be revealed —  
Poised  
Toward  
Coming momentum  
But stunned by freshness of view.

## THE OLDER MALL

The double level mall is older. Spacious.  
The architect provided here and there  
Life sized statues, of a family:  
Father carrying small ones on his shoulders;  
Mother raising baby overhead;  
Approving parents watching children's antics.  
There is no "music"; little in the crowd  
That's raucous loud or frantic.

Raising my eyes from a lower level bench, observing,  
I saw a young and slender person — yes, a girl.  
Entering the higher level and slowly walking  
Toward the railing, where she could lean down  
To see the chattering crowd of moving people  
Below. She was beautiful. She looked intently.  
But oh — the shock! Her heavily made-up face,  
Her tawdry, gaudy, low cut glittery dress  
on such a sunny autumn morning as this.

Leaning her face on tightly clenched fists  
She looked down on the moving crowd of people:  
Young and old; high school girls. High school!  
She looked and looked, then looked again.  
Again;

Then suddenly turned

And quickly left where she had entered.

*Let your compassion come to me that I may live.  
(Psalm 119:77, NIV)*

# THE PHOTOGRAPH

A lovely young girl with long blond hair  
is leaning upon her mother's shoulders,  
looking beyond the camera.

That was in her young years  
when promise and plan of future life  
shone from eyes and rosy cheeks:  
promise undefined but present  
waiting to be nourished into form.

But here now, stands her older presence before us:  
eyes and skin pale and lusterless,  
strident voice, unbridled silhouette  
showing a buffeting by circumstance.

Now, the early photograph, with eloquence of youth,  
witnesses to blemish, spawned by confusion of loyalty.  
Like wary boxers circling in their ring,  
hope contends defeat, relentlessly:  
no outcome, as yet, inevitable.

# CHANGE

There comes a time of parting —  
Portent of different ways;  
a difference in Season,  
new patterns for our days.

That time at hand, brings mourning  
until the New arrives.

Then comes Celebration,  
horizons opening out;  
new Possibility becomes  
an apt reverberation.

Mourning scarce survives.

## TIME and a Photograph

Adorned with the promise and freshness of youth, surrounded by shoulder-length hair, eyes clear as lovely crystal, she emerges from piles of photographs — bringing to unfamiliar life the pulse of decades long gone, from decades emerging again with knowledge that's present weaving together the years.

### O TIME

Where is your level passage: in urgent times — in stabs of longings toward the future — in confrontations — or in reverencing of lingering moments of the past? You flow. You float restless — you rush in torrents — you come to harbor willingly or troubled — you rest in calm seas, sails windless: But never perfectly regular in the passing.

You flow merging. You merge: at last merging us into infinity — reluctantly or adventurous: But blinded by final illumination — shocked altogether into the ultimate Reality of His Eternal dimension: His measureless LOVE: His no-longer-elusive PRESENCE: there to continue serving Him without clocks.



Flow, TIME. Flow.

*And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. And they shall see His face (Revelation 22:3-4, NKJV)*

## TRIBUTE TO MEGGIE

Our Creator's Light is there:  
to be found; taken in, then given out  
after our Salvation.

This Diamond, Meggie,  
foreign to our country,  
came fleeing here for shelter  
(nest egg stolen at once)  
    is thirsty for Your Light  
    taking it in  
    and sending it out, to others:  
    faithful to Your Word.

This alien Diamond shone awhile, briefly,  
unnoticed; then was hunted, now is hidden:  
riding busses from state to state  
looking for jobs in waitressing:  
In a subculture, unknown to most of us,  
never sure where to rest her head.

Our only contact is the cell phone.

She is not so young any more:  
shining in her obscurity  
to anyone caring to see.

Beautiful

never bitter.

A memorable example  
until we meet again in Heaven.

High praise to our Father in Heaven;  
High praise to His Only-Begotten Son.

O Lord, please continue to strengthen Meggie.

*The LORD preserveth all them that love him  
(Psalm 145:20)*

## A DIAMOND AMONG THE CAST-OFFS OF THE WORLD

Mother locked him, toddling,  
in the bedroom closet;  
dark; hour by hour  
just a keyhole there for witnessing  
the plying of her trade with men.

Father swung him by his legs  
to hit his head on bed frame pillars:  
stealing powers from his brain.  
And, did it once, and then again;  
driving him, by law, from home  
to years in darkened institutions.

But our Creator's light was in this diamond  
(unable to pronounce the word "Creator")  
and he discovered Righteousness.  
Then, chose it.

Here he is:

A shorter man than most. Righteous  
(although he doesn't know the word)  
living upright through the journey  
of his restricted life;

Love and laughter come from him unfurled  
(though he is sometimes in despair).  
Your Light shines forth from him, visibly  
for eyes, ready and able to see  
gleams, coming forth from him:

A diamond, among the cast-offs of the World.

*He brought me up also out of an horrible pit,  
out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock,  
and established my goings. (Psalm 40:2)*

## REFLECTIONS ON CHILDHOOD

God's light reflected  
comes into my heart  
through eyes of a child  
wide in trust and delight;  
hungering for news, open to love  
triggered to action that's coming and going —  
out to the world with gusto, bravado;  
and back again basking in mothering warmth;  
action personified: dropped to deep sleep;  
covered with scratches and mud;  
cherubic clean, surrounded by bubbles;  
growing and probing, emerging in stages —  
surprising the one who's observing each age.

Thus the Father sees us:  
launching, retreating;  
staggering; thrusting  
to victory, defeat;  
through thick and through thin  
from milk unto meat —  
one foot in heaven, the other on earth,  
headed toward Him, in His Kingdom:  
the land of true birth.

## VIETNAM IN THE GROCERY STORE

He was wearing one of those caps. We are in the grocery store and he is approaching. A veteran? If so I'm getting ready to greet him and offer him thanks for what he did for us, as is my custom.

"Excuse me sir. Your cap tells me you are a veteran, I think. Is that correct?" He stops, ramrod straight and offers a hand from a ramrod arm. "A Marine." We shake hands, his eyes bright and alert. "Vietnam," he says. He mentions two organizations I don't understand. "Do you have a card?" He produces one quickly somehow, and offers it at once.

But his old face is pale: a ghost from haunted yesterday with eyes of Now: bright but hidden.

"You sacrificed so much to protect our freedoms, and I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart." "Marines, ma'am," he states. And we part.

Then I see that his card is filled with the names of military organizations related to Marines. I also notice he lives in the immediate neighborhood of an old veteran friend from the Merchant Marines.

Later I send his card to our friend and he tells me his neighbors report knowing who he is and that they consider him a nuisance.



O Lord,  
Please send your Holy Spirit. Here, amidst uneasy peace in our country, one man's anguish has become another man's nuisance.

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins  
(1 John 1:9)*

## VISITING THE OLD

It became a life defining moment  
Unexpectedly. I was unguarded.  
Our family matriarch, was visibly fading  
But unassumingly staunch as we walked in the garden.  
For many years there had been misunderstanding  
Anchored in natural differences, but leading to pain.  
We spoke; but there was silence, allowing thought.  
She turned to me. We were eye to eye looking deep:  
A life defining look. A knowingness,  
Clear and unashamed coming from her.  
I took it in. I understood: Peace.  
A lasting natural peace. A quiet Amen.

# GREY HEADS

*For R.H.*

Victor Hugo said,  
“Winter is on my head  
but Spring is in my heart.”

Grey heads, stand your ground:  
We are still around  
to play our given part.

Have you noticed how  
The Light comes stronger now  
on wise old eyes, although they smart?

## ANTIQUÉ GHOSTS AT BIRTHDAY TIME

Antique furnishings, and modern just a few,  
suite me just fine, for I am ancient too.

Antique people, have antique ghosts.  
But *this* birthday, goodbye ghosts: set me free!

So: here come new adventures that I never thought to see,  
and this home, that I live in, shall be the host!

Then goodbye and farewell, any antique ghost!

## MARTY

Marty's sickle cells, misshapen, were doing the best they could to transport food and oxygen everywhere in his tall body. Their "best" began to falter; and to falter more. The doctor said, "I am so very sorry, but you have only weeks to live."

That was many and many a month ago. Years now.

Marty has a family: a wife and two dear children. He wants to be a husband and a father, to do and be what families need — what the Scriptures require. So he fights with all his might. And the pain is very great, the trail hard and long. (Home a while, hospital a while, home a while ... and so it goes.)

One day his daughter came to him and hugged him round his legs (she was seven at the time). "Daddy," came her clear young voice — "I'm growing up to be a doctor. Then I will find a cure for you."

She is still growing. He is still fighting.

# THE SOLDIER

In mud  
and war-made thunder  
here he fell:  
another “soldier”

in man-made chaos  
exploded by hate  
his strong and youthful body  
spilling out its blood.

Here lies “Son” and “Daddy,” a godly man  
kindler of love and purity;  
a light snuffed out  
by the world.

Somewhere else  
a light went out;  
a future changed;  
his generation rearranged.

*...there shall be no more death, neither sorrow,  
nor crying, neither shall there be any more  
pain (Revelation 21:4)*

# **Nature and Art**



# NIGHT

Your silence dares me to come out into the greater silence of the cloudless night in which the penetrating freshness of the dense mysterious dark is pierced by light so old, so far away from humankind, that on our planet is no flesh no chemistry to comprehend it whole.

A single star advances through the heavens on its messengers of blazing light, which greets the pupil of my eye through such a vastness of eternity: it has become a cold and tiny speck of jewel announcing its existence in another eon; and my eye can hardly find it in the vast array of jewels crowding from the majesty of all the heavens into that narrow apex of my wondering mind.

How can an eye contain a star? Yet in one night it holds so many flocks of stars within its fluid cells, it does contain a universe.

I fear the cities. It is more difficult to penetrate their neon and their noise to find one quiet patch of night than for a universe to nestle in the quiet of a waiting human eye.

*He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. (Psalm 147:4)*

# BEAUTY

*For S.C.*

There's a beauty that goes beyond  
benevolence and joy  
giving strength from the realms of Glory.

There's a pureness undefinable;  
a tenderness beyond description;  
a Love, beyond all common names.

There's an evil, beyond all centuries of wickedness:  
a mystery of heartlessness, stink and destruction  
targeting every spark of LOVE and beauty;

And our Creator in His Creation  
trumping in a voice, which can be felt  
beyond all hearing.

There's a gratitude more than thankfulness  
beyond all sprinklings of blood:  
an underlying ground-bass of living.

There's a "Wholeness": inexpressible, and rare.

Praise to our holy Creator  
of loving kindnesses.

*Beauty is truth, truth beauty*  
*("Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats, 1795-1821)*

# JOY

*“Joy is the serious business of heaven.”*  
(C.S. Lewis)

Holy Joy, Heaven and Earth partaking,  
Is the apex of the LIFE He gives.  
But first:  
Mammon and rebellion need forsaking.

## RORSCHACH REVISITED

### *(Bears in the Boxwood)*

*for K.J.F.*

Come, everyone. Look out our big bay window! Since it has been snowing all night, the large Boxwoods, right outside our large bay window, are bowed down with big bunches of snow in animal-like shapes: A grand and interesting Rorschach Test!

*Look Momma; there are polar bears in our great big Boxwood! Those are huddled together; but over there they are climbing up. Some are turning heads as they climb and two are nose to nose! And look at the sheep and all their lambs down there. Lambs Momma! Don't you love snow?*



*“Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said... ‘Hast thou entered the treasury of snow?’”  
(Job 38:1, 22, NIV)*

Oops! Too late now. Strong wind is stirring our large Boxwoods, and big clumps of snow are cascading downward. Where are the sheep and polar bears now? Only a few small lambs are left.

So, it's time to look well beyond our bay window: out to that glorious Willow Oak with its many trunks and its colony of sky-reaching branches and sun-catching twigs which, etched in black, are silhouetted against the snowy haze. Two large Pine Trees, flanking the Willow Oak, offer their contrasting greens in the moving gray haze.

That window! In yielding its beautiful framed winter composition it gives us only a *fleeting* composition for it is incapable of an artist's interpretation by watercolors, oil painting or camera, since there is no human presence here with the desire, the training or the equipment to capture it and hang it in an art gallery!

So the window offers it to **your** "gallery": to your mind and senses (and mine as well). We are all painting it in words as best we can.

But then, in our lifetimes, are not we witnesses to countless landscapes, countless skyscapes, water scenes, mountain and cityscapes with their constantly changing visual compositions? Is not our Creator, The Almighty, the Lord of lords, also the Authentically Unique Artist?

# VASTNESS AND MICROTUDE

Behold:

The Cosmos, intricate and vast  
beyond our struggling comprehension:

The microbe: beyond the sight of unaided Man  
needing acceptance for its power:

The water of Life, springing endlessly  
awaiting the eager Man with his thirst:

The minuscule cells of vibrant Life:  
purposeful, orderly, challenging our wits.

Behold:

Creator of Cosmos and Man, unfathomable:  
challenging us, by Deity and size.

Please help us, O God:

Steer us through: to closeness, Trust and Love;  
for we are Your Family,  
chosen, and equipped, by You.

Praise to our Creator, the great Teacher.

*What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of  
man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little  
lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and  
honour. (Psalm 8:4-5)*

# ART MUSEUMS

Museums try to bring  
the life outdoors  
into narrow rooms.

They echo and reflect  
what trees sun and people  
water and sky can do;

They remind and startle;  
get the eye agoing  
get the mind to rest.

But still:  
God's outdoors is best!

## SKYSCAPES

Skyscapes, from my hospital window  
fringed with tree tops  
change their colors and shapes;  
bring delight to eyes,  
and stir a sleepy heart.

Even skillful painters  
cannot ply their art  
enough to mirror this.  
But they are brave to try  
and we are glad they do.

# LONGING

In the blaze of Spring I lost my voice.  
With so many glorious colors  
how could a voice begin to paint  
the glories of flower and tree?

How could the joy, the springing hope  
in the heart from so much life  
declare in words the longing  
renewal brings to me?

The longing to join and be a part  
with all that sings of life,  
all that extols our God of surpassing Love,  
that gives us eyes to see.

He gave us hearts that beat for Him,  
that beat for child and brother;  
that seldom doubt God's wisdom or ask,  
"To be or not to be?"

*I have set before you life and death,  
blessing and cursing; therefore choose  
life, that both thou and thy seed may live  
(Deuteronomy 30:19)*

**NO**

O LORD;

We keep finding You in unexpected places:  
in old miasmas and beauty; in new thoughts;  
in old sorrow and friendship; hard pain;  
brotherly love;

Is there no end?

“No.”

## HATS OFF

Hats off to the ladies,  
hats off to Spring.  
Birds are returning  
to sing sing sing.

The willows are weeping,  
no snow balls to fling;  
flowers appear  
and it's *Spring*; **Spring. Hey! SPRING!**

# EVENING SYMPHONY

The Rococo Concert Hall is full and buzzing.  
Lights go down... Silent anticipation.  
A stir in the back of the stage  
and Conductor emerges, walking towards the Podium:  
Audience is politely applauding.  
He steps onto the Podium facing the orchestra  
baton in hand, then is waiting. We wait.

Suddenly baton goes up, then strongly **down!**  
Brass instruments respond at once  
followed by singing strings:  
The first episode has begun.  
Each score is executed perfectly, in style.  
Audience and musicians, in tune with the Composer.  
Tilted harp strings being plucked, now and then.  
Breath being blown through metal tubes;  
Animal skins vibrating from wooden sticks;  
Thirty men and women, bowing vibrant strings.

*God is surely Pleased.*

The audience is alert,  
some a little drowsy,  
a cough in quiet places now and then.

Episode after beautiful episode,  
changes in texture and in moods.  
Unexpected beauty flowing.  
Constant expectation wanting more.

At last: finality is approaching  
pulling everything together.

Now:

Every single instrument outpouring.  
Faster, more intense, the decibels swell.  
Great rich sound penetrates the hall:  
Thumping! Clashing cymbals; air reverberating  
Coming to a HALT!

This is clearly The **END!**



Stunned silence:

Broken by thunderous applause.  
“Bravo!” Shouted somewhere.  
More “Bravos”!  
Performers bow in groups.

*Surely God is greatly pleased:  
So many souls in harmony this hour.*

Time for intermission:



Men and women — small aspiring musicians —  
flowing gowns and levis stroll the aisles  
making their way to food and drink, chatting.  
And all have just partaken this night  
in one of God’s wonderful non-verbal languages.  
He is the One present in every step  
of preparation:

In the history of instrument-making through the ages;  
in the lengthy learning of musician’s skills for performing;  
in the inspiration for the composer’s complex score:

All these have engaged us tonight.  
Yet how many notice this right now  
as they sip a drink and choose a cake?

# STRING QUARTETS

Four sets of strings  
cradled, by four men  
sturdy in expression

grounded well  
in hard won skill  
and harmony of spirit

singing heart's deepness  
in full measured tones;  
filling listener's hearts.

# OPERA

Never mind the Plots  
(Never mind the narrow seats)  
Never mind the foreign words

Bring on the deep flowing resounding Love duets  
Highlight the Beauty and liveness of Youth  
Pour out the Sorrows  
Pour out the Laughter and strutting Costumes  
Pour out the lingering Emotions  
the Passion (with interludes)

Give the Orchestra a chance on its own

Startle ... use Silence ... use Space ... use Color

All: Bigger than LIFE itself  
All eliciting loud response.

**OPERA !!**

## IN THE COMPANY OF TREES

In the company of trees  
where there are many, and green mountains beyond,  
the sound of our feet on the trail is lost  
in trampled leaves and resilient soil  
bordered by streaks of brilliant moss.

High above is sky  
showing both fog and blue through our canopy:  
leaves borne on slender trunks  
reaching for sun.

Roots cross our path,  
and logs, placed for steady striding.

Ever changing landscape  
moves as we move:

Now come weathered boulders  
in curious sizes and shapes, giving way  
to patches of meadow. Soon, old catastrophe:  
fallen trees, branches askew,

decaying in various stages,  
sprouting new life in unexpected ways.  
Now come blossoming tulip trees:  
fallen flowers everywhere,  
pastel green and yellow — waxy.

Next, a host of laurels,  
tall, burdened with clustering blooms in pink:  
“miniature parasols” crowded together;  
followed by a precarious boulder —  
huge, asymmetrical, split in two.

God's common surprises!  
No end to them this day (or any day)  
When we perceive.



High up in the forest,  
announced by the sounds of falling water,  
come powerful torrents, bursting forth  
from an unknown source: hurtling over roots  
crashing over rocks, churning over stones;

dividing, as by a signal  
into separate smaller rushing streams  
mingling, finally, in a narrow bed  
flowing, quieter — in slower tempo  
revealing transparent glimpses

of pure flowing water.

Is this how the singing brook by the road began?  
Is this how we, from our turbulent youth  
find our place in You, having pleaded  
with David,

“Unite my heart to fear thy name”?

## SOME LAUGHTER

Some laughter is from sheer delight  
Getting the heart to sparkle and beat.  
Some laughter hides timidity  
Bringing on courage, and not retreat.

Some laughter is a shout of happiness!  
Telling: this world is full of promise,  
Needing some time, and hugs, to express;  
(Needing, now, no sorrow to repress).

So:

Here's to laughter!  
(And what may come after)  
On the way to  
The holy hereafter.

*A merry heart doeth good like a  
medicine (Proverbs 17:22)*

# METROPOLITAN MOUNTAINS

## *Nostalgia in a New York City Apartment*

Our mountain spring is a rumbling spigot  
crowned with burnished chromium;  
and seeking for earth, the wriggling foot  
meets carpet tuft and parquet floor.

The drama of heaven seeks its way  
past dusty window, narrow court;  
and all the snow we ever touch  
is cinder-speckled, doomed to slush.

The rooster, a raucous memory,  
crows alarm in the voice of a clock.  
Cricket's pulse is a mechanized hum,  
and pure air: bottled, or fantasy.

Both spring and winter show concrete.  
Huge shadows obey the sun. Buildings,  
aloof from nature, proudly try —  
on up and up — for untouchable sky.

## EARLY SPRINGTIME

Early springtime brings you glory, Lord;  
each infant leaf and bud  
is sign of life which only You can give.  
The bark of trees in grays and browns  
is stark against the crocus  
shooting yellows, shooting purples  
from the freshened ground below;  
while high above, the branches,  
touched with faintest green,  
sway in springtime breezes,  
waiting to be seen.

## DAWN

Crest of day brings rosy hues  
Chasing night with its solemn grey,  
beckoning to clearest blue;  
Prelude to our brand new morn.

A hint of gold, a slanting ray  
give promise of a warm spring day.  
Night is vanishing, birds are heralding  
day is slowly being born.

Blue reigns now though just begun.



Welcome to the full blown sun!

## WINTER

Branches wear a crown pure white;  
ground now glistens in dawn's fresh light.

Houses, bearing bunches of snow  
though worn with age, stand proud to show.

Paths and roads are blunted now:  
ready for boot prints, and the plow.

Icy cold stings finger and toe.  
When children awake they will play in the snow.

The city's grime is covered and pure,  
awaiting brown mush, it continues to endure.

All hail the Seasons! Spring *will* spring!  
bringing time for flowers, and time to sing.

# LEAVES

It's raining leaves, leaves and more leaves:  
Gentle winds robbing Autumn's glory.

Springtime with its infant buds  
is quite a different picture story.

Our lives, have special seasons too —  
the old amingling with the new.

## NEVER-LIVED-BEFORE-WEDNESDAY

*Never before has this day come,  
never to come again.*

*Here — an unspotted canvas:  
never-lived-before-Wednesday  
awaiting the blessing native only to its time,  
its gatherings of love and wisdom.*

*Here —  
this time,  
this moment followed by moment  
blessed by the light of now,  
the only stream of light to touch me,*

*generated by all my pasts —  
portending all my future —  
bathed in the blessing of Now:  
a link to all that is to come.*



Like the majestic steam locomotives  
fronted by “cowpushers,” hissing steam  
as they overwhelmed train stations of yesteryear,

I give Your Spirit permission to clear the tracks  
of all invaders to Your Purpose;

all intruders from the past  
all spectres from the future

that this day, this never-lived-before-Wednesday  
may be ours — to labour in together:

bathed in the Light of now,  
pure to Your purposes  
native only to this very Time;

fragile to all other time.

*My times are in thy hand (Psalm 31:15)*

# LONELY

Joy is lonely  
when there are few  
to share the way.

Where are those to catch  
the golden beam, hard won?  
Where the sorrowful soul  
with reinvested dream?

The Trumpet sounds  
but O so few  
to hear this day.

It isn't from  
the lack of ear:  
the mind and heart  
they cannot hear  
for they are lean.

All Glorious shake the mountain tops;  
the World draws back, ears cupped by hands  
to quell such grand disturbance.

The Trumpet raised in rarified air  
descends the golden height:

from rocky slope  
o'er forested hill  
to landscape of crops  
at night.

“Peace” is restored.  
The lowered hands  
are busy in the World  
of men:

restored from confusion  
by glorious intrusion;

busy. Busy.  
Busy once again.



Envoi

The glory fades.  
New trust can grow.  
In new decades  
new ears can hear;  
new eyes can catch  
the fiery glow.

## LIFE WHILE HERE

You give and take, in Your dear Wisdom, Lord.

Our joys and sorrows, known to You,  
Are Wealth; with our accord.



Your Eye sees far beyond our sight.

We offer patience, Love and Trust,  
All eager for Your Light.



We rise and fall; we struggle, halt, and race.

Sometimes bound and sometimes free  
We long to see Your Face.

## LITTLE CITY GARDEN

*(Out the front door at 6 a.m.)*

As the sun begins its climb, the stand of old trees begins  
unveiling unseen birds heralding the sun's arrival with  
energetic songs of joy in variations: short penetrating calls ...  
melodious streams of song ... trillings: a chorus of  
encouragement, kinship and beauty as the light progresses.  
(Where are all these birds in daytime?)

And as the freshened air, rising from the ground displays  
sparkles of dew on grass and flowers, inside the friendly brick  
of the house, snug sleepers unaware, resting in the evened  
house climate, pleasantly dark, sleep on.

Distant rumblings of Trucks, wailing sirens, rushing cars  
hurtling towards work, dimly proclaim their progress.

Time to find the front door and rejoin the sleeping household  
which is preparing for its day of work too.



# **From Eden to Eternity**

**(Section I)**



# CHOICES

There are those who would worship the  
“Great As Is”  
And those who worship the trinity of  
“Me Myself and I”

There are those who would like the world to stop  
so they may quickly get off.

But I would like to salute the ship of  
of “Now and Tomorrow”;  
To fly the flag of the unknown future  
where God awaits us there;  
Among the tasty choices of NOW  
challenging all we have.

So:

Here’s a toast of goodbye to such past  
as haunts the challenge of NOW;  
And here’s high praise to the patient Lord  
who helps us make our choices;  
And here’s hearty thanks and earnest prayer  
to the One who hears our voices.

And here’s hallelujah, Amen!

# SALVATION

Since the days  
when Adam was walking with God  
in the cool of the evening;

since the angels erected a fiery wall  
with Adam cast out for his sin,

no man has been perfect without and within,  
excepting for Christ.

(Cain, son of Adam,  
erupted in murder.  
Sin has been hounding us all.)

Do not fret; do not weep;  
do not mourn hobbled childhood:

Let your Father be God,  
his children your Family.

Christ gave us the Way:  
Acknowledge his Lordship:

Be redeemed  
from the Fall!

## PLEASING HIM

Knowing more of mystery than of fact  
we seek You  
only then to find that You were seeking us.

LORD, You gave us Wisdom, Love, Commandments  
in Your ageless Book of books;  
help us, when we ask, to grasp them:  
living day by day  
with the bloodlife coursing through our veins  
like the Blood that You poured out for us.

We would worship You  
by living the Life You gave us  
in the Time and Space that You Created;

living in the fullness that You hope for;  
worshiping by Obedience;  
Pleasing You:  
In Your strength,  
which You graciously give us;  
Later, (differently)  
in Your Heaven.

Praise to our Creator.

*The LORD takes delight in his people  
(Psalm 149:4, NIV)*

## DRESS REHEARSAL

It is so easy in the clamor of worldly life to forget that we are born into eternity; but life in this world is dress rehearsal for the next world — a very “short” interval. Our “short interval” in the world doesn’t seem so short! Especially in turmoil. Yet seeing it in the perspective of whatever world history we know going back to Adam when all was new and perfect, we see Man couldn’t make it in the face of only one Commandment’s testing. All down the centuries the way of God’s remnant has been a Narrow Way as a consequence of poor choices made by the majority, leading them to the Broad Way to destruction.

In our day, when our nation is unraveling before us, we are blessed with the completed Old and New Testaments in brand new print. Although we are not told much about heaven, the veil is lifted in a few places according to wisdom. We are told: “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you... that where I am, there ye may be also.” We are told of the Marriage of the Lamb, and the descending of the New Jerusalem; and we have been given the spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, the same that was given to the Disciples so dramatically at Pentecost. All these riches we have during our “dress rehearsal.” Not as many of these treasures were yet available in Rome when its ancient arena was filled with hungry lions: lions that were met with the fervent hymn singing of Christians in the arena with them. There is much in Christian history to inspire us, especially in evangelical ministry down the centuries.

We have two citizenships; the first one is here in this world, the second is our true citizenship: the one in eternity with our Creator. Sometimes as we live our lives here, doing our best to be obedient to His word, it feels as though we are living with one foot on each shore; living by doing the splits!

When actually arriving in Heaven, the place of our true citizenship, His purposes for our being there, will become clear. During the hard times in this world, remembering Heaven brings strength and comfort.

We are made in His image (but in reduced capacity) and He remembers that we are dust.

*But our citizenship is in Heaven. (Philippians 3:20, NIV)*

# EXILED

*Meggie*

*Ah Lord:*

I am alien here, speaking Your language  
in a foreign world of men  
where flesh and souls speak other languages  
compelling me to translate  
    all the day long.

This land, set in a different ocean,  
recalls my native land so seldom,  
But You, oh Lord, are lord of them both.  
Ah, Lord, please still this  
    anguished longing

in my heart which beats with Yours —  
for my little group so mortal,  
far away, which also speaks Your Tongue  
and speaks our native tongue as well —  
    native from a child.

For You are our Father, and Your Word  
becomes native language now to me;  
Your heavenly Land is my land too,  
patiently waiting to be possessed  
    when my Time is full.

But oh my weary feet lose their way,  
sometimes one on solid Earth,  
the other already edging Your heavenly shore;  
and I, oh Lord, dangling  
    between such states;

yet we live upon the Earth You made,  
this very moment, in Your Time  
among so many Men in mortal ignorance:  
    Alien to You, Lord.

Ah dear Lord: there are so many.

Show me what to do.  
Bless them.  
Bless through me from You.

*The LORD... raiseth up all those that be bowed  
down. (Psalm 145:14)*

# GLORIES AND SHADOWS

O dear Lord:

The surges and stages of life can appear, dwindle and die so abruptly sometimes as life goes on its way; or the way can burst into glory and sink into mist: safely because of Your sure Hand.

Your presence in the midst of mortality is our treasure, our intimation of Heaven, our assurance that the summing up of Life amidst our struggles is precious to Your hands at the potter's wheel as we yield our joys and sorrows, our knowns and unknowns to You. The future is Your gift to us.

Vision and burst, pleasure and sorrow, pain and glory simmer — sometimes hidden, sometimes distinct; but Your Hand, Your Heart, Your Wisdom are steady.

Please give us eyes to find You and praise You in all the days of this mortality that You have granted us: shadows and glories surging through our journey to Your prepared Heaven.

Please know we love You. Praise to Your Holy Name.

Amen



From an old hymn:\*

*Out of my bondage sorrow and night  
Jesus I come, Jesus I come  
Into Thy freedom gladness and light  
Jesus I come to Thee.*

*Out of the depths of ruin untold  
Into the peace of Thy sheltering fold  
Ever Thy glorious face to behold  
Jesus I come to Thee.*

\* From *Jesus I Come* by William Sleeper (1887).

# VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Comatose Sinner:

Squint! Catch a glimpse of His beckoning Light  
with its welcoming fire: your opened eye a treasure.

Sickened Sinner:

Mired in regrets: may you tune your heart:  
Feel the aching sorrow of the ones who love you.  
Know He loves you more than they.  
None of them are absent from your bed.

Deformed One:

Strange in body, but endowed by Providence:  
the World is confronted by your specialness.  
May it learn from you, its own limitations,  
and be released.

Prodigal One:

Caught in a puzzling junction of pathways:  
may you answer the Compass' pull toward Home  
and find new wisdom, forsaking other paths.  
Learn the joy of your welcoming loved ones  
sighting you from the narrowing distance.

Violent One:

Blood lust and destruction are your gods:  
obliterating Truth, building an armored wall  
walling you into narrow cell of Self;  
separating you from LIFE.  
Death, and Second Death, shall answer your roaring.  
Unless...?

Careless One:

Careless of Creation; careless of language;  
disdainful of others, who are not *you*;  
stepping on other people's toes and feelings:  
May you come to recognize God's touch;  
And the beam of His Light, when it shines on you.

And who are We?

Praying for the various ones;  
Swimming in His ocean of LOVE;  
Or on our land, juggling perplexities:  
We are our Creator's Family:

often unsure in the fog;  
looking, but not always seeing;  
listening, but not always hearing;  
thinking, but not always speaking:  
soaring and falling unevenly.

He, alone, knows all hearts this day.  
He alone, is Judge of all His Creation.  
He, alone, is perfect goodness.  
Help us to learn, O Lord, we pray.

*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Proverbs 14:12)*

## “GOD HAS A BIG ERASER”

“God has a big Eraser.”

A wonderful thought  
that was cruelly won.

He wields it for the faithful  
whose sins He bought  
freeing them from guilt;

readying them for service  
for carrying plans He wrought;  
strengthening their hearts.

*The LORD is gracious, and full of  
compassion; slow to anger, and of great  
mercy. (Psalm 145:8)*

## **RELATIVE?**

Truth is not relative.  
It comes from our sovereign God  
and has no almost-cousins.

Confusion, deception, and hidden evil:  
these would continually crowd Truth out  
with a murmur; or with a rebellious shout.

Lord, please cleanse our crowded ears:  
still our lonely, wavering fears  
and restore our earlier innocent cheer.

# HIDDEN ANGUISH

(for S.C.)

We taste of anguish that You must have borne  
when unleashing, the world-wide Flood;  
drowning all mankind (save eight)  
in the mud.

The World is rushing, rushing to suicide.  
Youth and its rebellion and drugs,  
its self-absorbed skills and horror thrills  
is providing us with an emblem.

Keep us at Your feet, O Lord.  
Maranatha  
O Lord.

Praise to your holy name.

*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.  
(2 Timothy 3:1-5)*

## LOVE NEWFOUND

LOVE,  
its compass wavering;  
unsure of North:  
through His Providence  
and through the decades  
finds at last, His Heart;  
and blossoms forth.

## AFTER SERIOUS ILLNESS

Thanks:

For all the prayers, and pray-ers,  
that were keeping me agoing!

And thankya, Lord,

That mirrors show a face  
that almost looks like me!

Thankya, Lord,

That “ordinary” things  
and ordinary ways  
are new; and that  
the “usual” landscapes,  
the usual homescapes and  
the familiar faces —  
are wonderful and new.

Thankya, Lord,

That breathing is a privilege  
and walking such a freedom!

And thankya, Lord,

For all those well trained people,  
skilled through sacrifice; who know  
the limits and the needs of those  
stricken, prone, receiving help —  
depending on their caring skills  
in such an unfamiliar world.

Thankya, Lord,  
For ordinary challenge  
taken up again,  
of Light and Life.

And thankya, Lord,  
For such an invitation  
opened up, again,  
to be extravagant  
in spending Love!

So: Thank You, thank You, thanks!  
Hallelujah!

*O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is  
good: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
(Psalm 106:1)*

## **THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER**

The eye of the beholder  
grasps or shuns what God would give.  
What He gives will nourish deep;  
but if shunned it will not die.  
It hounds the heart that owns the eye.

## GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

We were playing games, dear Lord  
But didn't really know it.  
You came gently by, dear Lord  
And then began to show it.

Strengthened by clear sight, dear Lord,  
New Life began to spring.  
We can trust anew, dear Lord,  
For every little thing.

## A QUESTION

“Now, it’s number 16 in your homework,” our Bible study facilitator said, looking around our circle of twelve women to see whether a hand would be raised. One tentative hand went up and a soft voice gave a brief answer that I couldn’t quite hear. The question with its small space in which to write a statement, was “What does Christ mean to you?”

Six words to reply to, and yet they opened up a very large consideration; so much so that when I first read it I wondered why any other questions had been asked because this one contained them all. But I concluded that a condensed answer of just a few words could be a fine exercise. So I had written, “Take God seriously. He loves us greatly, but His justice and wrath against sin and its destruction command our awe, even as we love Him and trust Him with grateful hearts.”

By the time I was ready to decipher what I had written, we were on to the next question. And I wondered: next month or next year, how would I answer then? Oh! Maybe I should have said, “Take God seriously. Christ is the only true basis of Reality. All other ways are Man’s ways and lead to deception.”

Or, maybe better, “His Truth and Light **are Reality**. Unbelievers and the ungodly are vulnerable to deception and insanity. They haven’t a compass to guide them through evil to good.” Or? Well, that’s enough for now. Maybe next year I’ll try again.

Meanwhile I’ll just keep trying to **be** a witness by living the best life as a Christian that I can manage to be, given my particular limitations as well as gifts. While living at this transitional time in history, all of us are facing the global scene, and life is getting harder and harder: much harder for those who haven’t accepted the Gospel yet. There’s always the hope of being able to introduce someone to the Gospel in some unexpected manner.

All believers are in this together and we know that our **true** citizenship is not in **this** world but in Heaven; and we all share hope. Amen.

*But our citizenship is in Heaven. (Philippians 3:20, NIV)*

# INVITATION

We had been pussy-footing  
around our foibles and quirks  
trying not to step on eggs.

Come:  
let us explore Godliness:  
beyond our immediate Selves;  
beyond our immediate Walls:  
beyond our immediate Century.

And there, let us invite You  
to show us how best to serve You  
in the time that You grant;

with fulness of Joy.

Amen.

# H•I•S L•O•V•E

Our Creator's TRUTH is Holy perfection: our reality for living.

Our Creator's unfathomable LOVE is His TRUTH's foundation and blooming: the essence of His Presence in all Creation.

We, the Created, on His Earth now, can glimpse, can long for, and can grasp portions of His LOVE; and can have times of knowing His enveloping LOVE on our Journey to Eternity: the Eternity which holds our present Hope: the Hope which holds the as yet unknown ways of continuing to serve Him in Eternity.

We, God's Family, can trust the mysteries and Commandments of His Eternal Word available to us here, which are formed from His all-encompassing LOVE and His desire for our well being, fruits and fellowship.

Whatever our circumstances, we Trust our unknown future into our Creator's known Hand: ready to continue serving Him in His Eternity without fear, and with eternal Praise. For He has made us His Family.

Hallelujah.

*The LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love. (Psalm 147:11, NIV)*



# **From Eden to Eternity**

**(Section II)**



## SEEKING

Eyes are weak,  
eyes are strong.  
Only God's shining Light  
steers through Right and Wrong.

Ears are sharp,  
ears are dim.  
Only God's powerful Truth  
takes Harmony within.

# YOU

God and Man as One  
plunged amid the World's lostness and sin  
knowing unrequited love, and acquainted with grief

Seeing  
beauty marred by ugliness  
healing marred by ignorance  
love, blinded stunted and twisted:  
darkness edged by Glory;

Seeing  
Truth wrestling deceit  
hope glowing and dimming  
trust sacrifice and care  
holding on:

Raging drama, between Good and Evil.

A man of sorrows, walking in the World He made  
remembering David Moses Noah and Abram;  
constrained from shining the fulness of His blinding Glory;  
looking upward, to the sky, and Heaven:

YOU.

You are indeed, far beyond us;  
yet, **in** us, around us, and Sovereign of all Creation.

To You who has said through Moses:  
I AM THAT I AM.

We resoundingly shout:  
YOU ARE! YES! YOU ARE!

All we truly know is revealed  
in the touch of your Love as we serve You.  
Praise and Glory to You forever!

Amen, Hallelujah.

## **EVIL AT BAY**

Evils small and large go hand in hand  
marching in goose step, on God's fair land:  
ignoring, distorting, God's living Command.

Loving Creator, whom we seek and fear:  
our prayers as we struggle are not always clear,  
yet we trust in Your goodness for all we hold dear.

Today we taste of the anguish which You must have borne  
when the waters unleashed in the monstrous Flood,  
drowning all Mankind (save eight) in the mud.

Help us, O LORD, to have view that's seen clearly  
when judging Evil from Truth gained so dearly.

# MARRIAGE

Our Love, O LORD, so precious, to us,  
is microscopic even in its fullness,  
being but reflection of Your Own.

We float in wonder at the greatness  
of Your Heart distilled in mortal flesh:

Prelude to our meeting Him Face to face:  
the glorious blooming of immortal grace.

# NIGHT OR DAY

Truth and Beauty  
like deep wells  
slake the thirsty  
seeking light.

But Truth distorted,  
twisted in complexity,  
pollutes itching ears  
generating Blight.

Truth polluted,  
contagious in its sorry plight,  
generates false energy  
causing Death and Night.

Clarity and simplicity,  
distilled in Holy fear,  
carry truth unhindered  
marking Day from Night.

Burdens given steadily  
to the Shepherd's shoulders,  
rest the weary spirit  
freeing breath and might.

Music,  
flowing from the Heart,  
lifts up pulsing Truth,  
soaring in its flight.

*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil;  
that put darkness for light, and light for darkness;  
that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*  
(Isaiah 5:20)

## MYSTERIES

Do you imagine with me that there is probably  
no mystery in the cosmos for God,  
except perhaps, the wickedness in Mankind  
and wickedness even in heavenly beings  
who fell before Adam had fallen?

But for us there is mystery that abounds,  
surrounding the circle of our lives  
whose circumference touches Your vast unknown  
at every point.

We struggle, under God's Word, to know  
what we cannot know; but respect.  
Yet, through years, the circumference of our lives  
will enlarge and expand.  
We become more able to truly know,  
in gratitude, that God is in Command.

But some are different: trying to force the unknown:  
by command of mistaken desires;  
supposing machines, and vain imaginations  
are able to build and sustain Mankind:  
supposing that *some men* can be gods!

O LORD:

Please help us to live in the face of worldly ways:  
to be sturdy, in knowledge and gratitude:  
knowing that *You* are in Command;

that Your Lovingkindnesses are practical  
when we seek Your wisdom in guiding our lives.  
And You are in complete Command!

Praise to Your Glory and Love forever.  
Amen.

# THE ONCE PERFECT WORLD

*For P.B.*

What was the very first thing that the virgin eye of Adam saw?  
The Ancient Book of our Creator never tells.

The day that the eye of Adam first saw sky and land, in wonder, did he know that You had made him? Did he know that You had declared all Your Creation “very Good”? And did there spring in his heart a rising tide of gratitude, captured by such beauty? The Ancient Book of our Creator never tells.

As Adam beheld the offerings of the world in hues of dusk and brightness of dawn, did there rise a growing swell of thanksgiving, a song in his bosom waiting to bloom into love: a bulwark building against the coming snake’s warlike intrusion? The Ancient Book of our Creator never tells.

And did our ancestor, the very first human being in the world, when walking in the garden with his Creator naming all the animals, did he know that God had created them? He probably did.

But Adam fell; party to deception. He was felled through the clever devices of the Destroyer: failing to turn to his Creator for Wisdom and Love. Yes, he fell, as the Ancient Book clearly recounts.

But today, centuries later, where is **our** bulwark of defense against the now very experienced devices of the Destroyer who now comes to **our** garden and is in our midst? Are we still playing a game of “Truth and consequences” or have our games become sinister, withering us.

We have available to us all human history now, in our clever century; to learn from. We have the willingly available Eye and Ear, the Wisdom and understanding; we have the Love, Justice and Mercy of our Maker, of His Son, and His Holy Spirit to revere and to call upon! We have our Creator’s love letter, His owner’s manual, His traveler’s guide: The Ancient Book! We have His Son’s final Testament.

These are His gifts to us, if we seek them and receive them at *any* stage of life! These are our guides through the storm and chaos of the fallen world. These bring hope leading us to eternal life in our Creator’s presence.

O bring and keep these wonders alive in our hearts as we pass through this world, this fallen world, we pray. Amen.

# WILL-O-THE-WHISP

*Wandering in the Wilderness in 1950*

Where, O where shall I ever be able to find you  
though I search your beloved image...  
the life, the meaning, the belovedness in it...  
until my eyes fail me?

Each moment that comes contains  
the nostalgic reminder of your eternal elusiveness;  
and neutral everydayness proclaims  
great ignorance of you though containing  
somewhere the quality of your presence.

Must it be that all through my one life  
I must make a search for you... fruitless  
save revealing parts of you in all things  
but never you your self?

WHO ARE YOU?

*Many decades later the identity of Will-O-the-Whisp  
became clear!*

*My husband and I became Christians in our late  
sixties. This is my ninth decade. I recommend old age  
heartily. Each season has its particular beauty as well  
as challenges.*

# DESTINY

Today our Service to You  
is in suffering; learning to obey.

In Heaven, our Service to You?  
fulfilling; in ways unknown today.

Praise to Creator of Heaven and Earth:  
O Lord of all, who gives us birth.



*No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. (Revelation 22:3-5, NIV)*

## NEWER HEIGHT

He who knows our great Creator  
Sees that clashing with the World  
Is prelude to a greater wisdom  
And a newer height;

Sees that battle brings a stirring  
For the gathering of strength,  
While quiet leads to freshened steps  
Toward the beckoning Light;

And Light is where Eternity can speak.

There, all doings can partake  
Of color, tears and laughter  
Freely flowing from the heart:  
Coherence conquering blight.

*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into  
divers temptations; Knowing this, that the  
trying of your faith worketh patience. But let  
patience have her perfect work, that ye may be  
perfect and entire, wanting nothing.  
(James 1:2-4)*

## UNDER THE SUN

Under the sun there's nothing all new;  
nothing of me and nothing of you.  
Our love our fear, our wonder, hate  
stirred the breast, roused the mind  
and formed the patterns of fallen Mankind.

The Devil, in Time, awaits his cue:  
One by one the new shall find  
his bold attempts to own their mind.  
Brand new forms of heathen themes  
use brand new Time for pagan dreams.

Help us, O Lord, in this ancient plight.  
Unblind our eyes to Your Heavenly Light.

God's Living Light which blazes forth  
has aim that's true, its beam is clear.

This is the Light which we obstruct  
or else, against all else, hold dear.

*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may  
be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.  
(Ephesians 6:11)*

# THOU IN THE FLESH

Christ Jesus

was willing sport

to foolish men.

Thou in the flesh,  
thy passing prison:  
follow only  
Him,  
risen.

## THE MOTE IN THE EYE

He couldn't detach himself  
from himself  
and embrace Your loving Word.

He could not see what You said:  
The mote in his eye  
was himself. Himself.



Intoxicated by SELF.



Snared by the unholy trinity of:  
“Me — MYSELF — and I.”

*For men shall be lovers of their own selves  
(2 Timothy 3:2)*

## THE IN-BETWEENS

There are “new people”: all energy, questions and jumps.  
There are “old people,” much slower and careful —  
And then there are the “in-betweeners”  
burdened and weary experiencing bumps.

So here’s to the times of love and laughter  
on our way to the bright and holy Hereafter!

*A merry heart doeth good like a medicine (Proverbs 17:22)*

## THE VERY FIRST MAN

God created Adam with His very own hands  
using dust that He had made.  
God breathed into Adam, His very first Man,  
His very own breath from His very own person.

Our Triune GOD, knowing perfect LOVE  
In His vast Eternity that knows no clocks  
Was beginning to prepare for the Wedding Feast  
Of His Only Begotten Son: THE LAMB.

And the very first MAN  
Was the greatest great granddad  
Of God's only begotten Son: THE LAMB.  
And we, His Church, are the Bride  
In the wedding-feast of the LAMB.

Praise to our God of lovingkindness.

## OLD AGE WITH BINOCULARS

The wide eyed passion of innocence in youth  
under Adam's curse, struggles toward Truth:  
victory and defeat vying every day.

Old age reviewing, sees lust and destiny.  
Was destiny the plaything of the World and youth?  
Or did we learn to learn and obey in love.

Can you see the LORD, in the history of your flesh?  
(Binoculars please.) He's been in our lives all along.  
Old age is the best for heavenly joy.

Holding to reason:

we yet dream anew.

Beauty comes

to every season.

## DEATH APPROACHING

“Life is ending soon for me.  
This comes as a surprise.”

Yet every life, begun, is on the way;  
We cannot stop the coming of that day.



“Whether short or long, dear Lord,  
We praise you for each span.”

The Life and breath, created by Your hand  
Cannot be lengthened by our own command.



“I trust to You the way it comes  
I know that You are near.”

In Life or Death Your Presence is the Prize.  
To all that live, please open up their eyes.

## REFLECTORS

We are reflectors seeking to reflect  
the glorious brightness of our living Lord  
who asks us to be bearing fruit  
revealed by His own Holy Spirit  
and by His Word.

We cannot reflect the fullness of His Glory  
lacking His astonishing power  
to breathe-out Heaven  
to breathe-out Earth!

Our limited breath (given by His very own,  
first to Adam, our ancestor)  
cannot aspire to such, though we might strive  
(and we have striven) and striving to be gods  
have suffered much, imposing great suffering on others.

What then?

Let God be God in His power.  
Let men be men, reflectors of His Light  
each given hour.

# **Our Times**



# KALEIDOSCOPE

We see the world through the small eye  
of a Kaleidoscope:

Dazzling shapes  
sparkling color  
moving and mingling  
everywhere.

“O stop! This place is so spectacular!  
These shapes and sizes, these brilliant colors so beautiful!”  
But, just a little jerk of the elbow,  
and it is gone. Gone.

O Creator of all shapes, colors, and Life;  
whose Providence touches all struggle, joy and sorrow:  
we pray:

Take our eye from the jeweled Kaleidoscope’s eye  
that we may see clearly through our very own eye:  
unencumbered, un-mesmerized,  
Seeking You in all colors and shapes

finding You and Your Love everywhere;  
in its tenderness and severity  
portending grace, face-to-face in Glory:  
the consummation of our mortal story.

*Open thou mine eyes (Psalm 119:18)*

# CAMOUFLAGE

O Lord, the earth is wrapped in Camouflage:  
Everywhere and everything is blanketed  
under the banner of BUSINESS AS USUAL.

But underneath there is decay.  
Empty factories cry out in anguish; to silence.  
Once busy hands are idle now.

Everywhere the senses are celebrated:  
in drink in song and foolish crime.  
Global mammon is favored in secret manner and plots.

Somehow Valley Forge has been obscured;  
Somehow our pioneers are not remembered;  
“Glory,” “Valiance,” “Loyalty” aren’t spoken.

The young focus on techy entertainment.  
Death is shouting at them in thumping “music.”  
Self absorbed, their playgrounds are deserted.

BUSINESS AS USUAL? Not **everyone** bears that banner.  
“Business is **not** as usual.” This they say  
and pray for our country’s Godly foundation.

Please help us Lord in this contentious day  
To live in a Godly, helpful way;  
to see more clearly, even today.

Thank you Lord for your Providence;  
Thank you for the strength you give;  
Thank you for showing us how to live.

Praise to our holy Creator.

*Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.  
(1 Peter 5:7, NIV)*

## THESE TIMES

These days are days to search,  
to think, to see, to know—  
reaching out to You to find  
This Hour clarified:  
    all History being available  
    to new Perspective, greater range.

This Time is the time  
to know and do;  
a time of Portent:  
    unknown future  
    stirring into suddenness  
    of drastic change.

These Times are times for strength,  
strength to receive the faithfulness  
coming forth from You:  
    the Hour, indeed,  
    to Hear and Do.

## A SNAPSHOT OF AMERICA: 2005

Alas. She slides ever faster, down the slippery slope  
into unknown darkness:  
down, without panic,  
(for fleeting awareness is dim  
on the way).

The Trumpet heralds the raucous chorus of “**MOI**”:  
“**My** desires,” “**my** rights,” “**my needs**”!  
(The size of **my** importance.)  
“**My** bills,” “**my games**,” “**my taxes**”!  
Hey! Act! Today!

Our godly inheritance, thankful obedience,  
are plummeting: sneered at and shorn.  
Other Great Nations have Declined.  
Is this to be **our** way?

Yet some celebrate, what remains of godly substance  
with intensity, love and purpose,  
guarding pure youth from corruption;  
shoring up faltering leadership,  
keeping more Death at bay.

We share a Biblical Fellowship  
carried through Time and Hope  
lamenting that Truth is withheld,  
knowing that Truth has been blighted.  
Lord, help us to know  
Your Love, Your Voice, and Your Mercy

We pray.

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom:  
and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.  
(Proverbs 9:10)*

*All they that hate me [wisdom] love death.  
(Proverbs 8:36)*

# TRUST

Suddenly the Everyday  
is wrenched away.

Lord, please guard and grow  
the fullness of my love and trust in You.

When all I know  
is set afloat today,  
pilot my boat and nudge me to  
the harbor of the Narrow Way.

There let me find a clearer, newer view  
where all that's upside down  
resolves; makes sense;  
steady in the light of love and Trust in You.

## WHY

God prepared the Heavens and the Earth,  
Then, by Hand, the flesh and soul of Adam  
Never telling us the reason why.

I think I know the reason: it was LOVE,  
Love to share with Man, not only Three.  
No one knows for sure; I like to try.

## A JINGLE

Hansel and Gretel were no more lost than we  
Picking our way through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.  
It was said, “Only God can make a tree.”  
Yes, and He makes its wind-blown leaves so free!

“More life, more life” young children shout!  
“Life! Life!” the lungs cry out.  
“Lord, bring me strength when I’m up and about!”  
“Lord, let me serve You when my body’s snuffed out!”

Only God, lights an infant’s smile with joy  
(so fresh from Creation, not a toy).  
Only God creates all Life  
Or hones the needed skill of the surgeon’s knife.

Lord, Lord, You make things new;  
You bring us sunshine and the dew;  
You care for the many and the few.  
Lord, You’re our Life, and we love You!

## COMING STORM

Glory, in heightened splendor, hovers over hearts  
Plunged into visions of darkening future  
Hidden now, behind storm clouds  
Driven by quickening change.

Time stumbles.

The ear attunes to music  
In each passing day.

The eye sees color  
Never seen before.

Laughter comes out breathless.

Friends grow more dear;

Glory comes

Closer.

# **CRISIS**

*For S.E.*

Bless him, LORD, we pray.

Let him hear the bird song  
When the bird is singing;

Let him hear the child laugh  
When the child is laughing;

Let him greet the hot food  
When the food is cooking.

Let him sleep profoundly  
When night's clock is ticking,

Sustain him with your great strength  
While his heart is beating.

Thank you, LORD, thank you.

## ECHOES FROM THE BOOK OF JOB

I must be puzzled by Job again  
to learn the mouth that forms the words:  
whether it forms them in the dark  
(as for Job's compassionate friends)  
or forms them valiantly for Light.

I must listen close, once more,  
to learn the heart that offers words:  
whether its secrets are offering Truth  
(this from men of this present world)  
or are glittering masks, hiding blight.

*Please help me, Lord, to discern;  
help me, Lord, as I learn.*

# FREE!

“God doesn’t exist!”

Sing, ha ha ha and hollerbaloo.

He couldn’t have made this mountain peak  
or stretched out the heavens  
or started that creek;

He couldn’t have made this mighty oak tree —  
He doesn’t exist, so he can’t see me!

He can’t see me, therefore I’m free  
to do what I want, **whatever** I want.  
So whatever I want I’m bound for to do —  
ha ha ha and hollerbaloo!

Yep —

**Shout:**

HA HA HA and HOL . . . .

*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.  
(Psalm 14:1)*

# FUTURE MEMORY

O LORD

the clouds and darkness increase and envelop.

There is so much we human beings cannot understand because we live by clocks but in Your dimension of Eternity is no need of clocks.

Yet our Creator is the Almighty Teacher, among His attributes, and knows what is best to tell us and what is best to save until mortality becomes immortality; meanwhile, O Lord, help us know what we don't know and respect it, viewing the future as Your Gift to us.

We can be comfortable, whatever the circumstances, knowing You love us in wisdom with unfathomable LOVE — ever encouraging us in our struggles to be able to grasp Your Hand in that place where You descend from Heaven to meet our trembling hands reaching up to You from this sinking World.

O Lord of Goodness — we bless and thank You for stooping to us graciously to reach and rescue us from Your enemy, Satan, and the minions of **his** trinity; the **unholy** trinity of “Me Myself and I”: who gather and gather victims to boast defiance of You.

Your worshiping Remnant praises You.

*Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)*

# HAWKING WARES

Here comes a roaring tidal wave  
splashing us daily, everywhere:  
HAWKING!

“Gulp *our* food. It’s spicy cheap and fast.”  
“Be shocked! (But you can buy in privacy.)”  
“Sports people buy our sporty goods.”  
“Dine, in our elegant first class restaurant.”  
“Avoid calamity. *Sign with us.*”  
“Restore your youth with clever surgery.”  
“Escape! Travel with *us.* Just *relax*” .....



Hawking!

“Ours”! *No.* “OURS”!! (*It’s a battle.*)



There’s hawking in waiting rooms, restrooms and bars.  
There’s hawking on billboards, in messages printed on shirts.  
For strap-hangers riding the bus there are multiple posters.  
There’s hawking on taxicabs, lobby signs, theaters and tags.  
They use telephones, sky writing, rockets, computers and pencils.  
Changing statements flash from moving trucks.  
What vehicle will they be using to tempt us tomorrow?

*The baby’s rattle?*  
It is a mighty battle!

*No man can serve two masters... Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*  
(Matthew 6:24)

# HOPSCOTCH

We chalked the marks for hopscotch, and we hopped.  
We hid and sought, behind the bushes and trees;  
We rode the swings with flying legs to sky  
And ran in circles, dizzying trees: breathless  
And O, the sun and wind on bounces of hair.  
We fought the coming dusk on splinterless slide  
And brought our bumps, and bug bites for comfort inside.  
And in those fast-vanishing days you were there.  
Sharing His Light; and now you are where?

Behind steep walls, among real and imagined horrors:  
Your spirit in darkness, clinging to His Light.

Cling. Receive. Breathe.

This world's caustic Citizenship  
Is a temporary one for you  
Waiting to claim the Godly, and the True.



We are separate now, but surprisingly close:  
Sharing a Fatherhood made more real  
moment by moment in the Now.

# KUDZU

Kudzu, kudzu,  
Kudzu growing everywhere:

Kudzu fills our Congress  
Kudzu's in the newsroom.  
(Kudzu's gone political,  
Politically correct.)

Kudzu, kudzu  
Kudzu covering everything.

Kudzu climbs the courthouse  
Kudzu's on the soap box  
(Or where it used to be)  
And it's kudzu on the altar, now.

Dear, O dear —

KUDZU!

# LOOKING DOWN

*In a Car*

Red light.

See him there.  
One leg is gone.  
Wobbly wheel chair  
looking frail, too.

His outstretched cup is stationed where  
the cars must wait,  
then can turn.  
Who will pity? *You?*

Many other men  
are scruffy like him too;  
can't help them *all*.  
(Eyes now closed to view.)

“As you do it for the least  
You do it unto Me.”  
Is *he* one of *them*?  
Not sure *what* to do.

Green light at last. Whew!

## PAGAN “GODS” IN MODERN GARB

New Age delusion  
pollutes God’s Truth  
and does suppress  
the beauty of  
its holiness.

Many an old and pagan god  
served in lovely modern ephod  
cannot erase, and can never replace,  
our Creator’s patient, loving Grace.

Eternal Creator’s wrath on Sin  
guards us from decay within;  
helps us in our fragile place  
prepare to meet Him face to Face.

Come, O come, mortals all!  
Fight against old Adam’s Fall.

Reverse the Curse: court our Creator’s loving Grace!  
Yearning for the day of greeting Him face to Face.

*And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. (1 Kings 18:21)*

# POWERS IN THE WORLD

## *Conference*

In cosmetic “youth” we stand:  
(Puffed, with coffee power)  
Righteous; through much verbiage “grand;”  
Carefully eyeing the hour.

## *Social*

Tense, under other’s glances we stand:  
Lipsticked, high heeled, coat and tie all grand;  
(Cocktailed, with cocktail power);  
Sharp and wary; more bleary each hour.

## *Sports*

Rising and shouting with Yankee fans we stand:  
(Strong with hot dog power)  
Sports appalled, rained-on; grand;  
Loyal every minute and every hour.

“Can we go home?  
**My feet hurt.**”

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil,  
as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may  
devour. (1 Peter 5:8)*

## SAILING

O Lord!

My ship rides on perilous seas.  
Please show me the cargo  
to throw in the waves;  
please show me the sails to pull down  
on the mast.

O lead me to know  
that Your masterful hand  
is never commanded  
by fear that I feel,  
is never impacted  
by things of the past.

Captain!  
stalwart on the bridge:  
You command from perspective  
denied to Your children  
shared only in part,  
only in season  
with those who are seeking  
those who are teachable  
when taught what will last.

You alone know  
the direction;  
the seas and the winds;  
the timing; the darkness and day  
that are right;  
the tightness of ship,  
trim  
for all sails to be flown  
on high,  
blown to full roundness —  
    bows to be cutting the waters:  
        cleanly; steadily; fast.

# THE IVORY DOOR

*For J.V.*

O mourn mourn mourn for the once Perfect World  
now trampling precious gifts  
heedless of cost.

O mourn mourn; mourn for our now dying world  
flaunting its well sharpened tongue;  
sightless: but flaunting itself.

Be mourning.  
Mourn for the world destroying its very own Life,  
lost in deception:

Dulled-down minds and hearts;  
strange spectacles for seeing;  
minds ablaze with irrelevancies,  
trampling precious gifts.

Where is quietness?  
Where nobility?  
Where discovery?



The restless sea  
swallowing husbands and sons;

the insatiable TV  
swallowing Time and minds;

the mind-glue-ing computer  
swallowing consciences:

These:  
hiding the ivory door in our mountain  
leading to the passage of the Narrow Way:  
the passage through haze to His Glory.

Mourn. Yes mourn.  
Then awake and get going.  
Such is our story.

## THE TERRIFYING COSMOS

A Man, given by God a sharp mind and gift of drama, once created a Christian saint from written history and was successful in society by authoring an admired dramatic production. His hero wrestled with his own conscience in the complicated face of possible execution, and in the process he chose death. But dealing with the complexity of vivid word pictures of the world of King Henry VIII in England, the drama caused the author to reveal that he himself had faced what he called “God and Devil nakedly at war.” He expressed it in his preface as: *“That larger concept we all inhabit, the terrifying Cosmos. Terrifying because no laws, no sanctions, no mores obtain there: it is either empty or occupied by God and Devil nakedly at war. The sensible man will seek to live his life without dealing with this larger environment, treating it as a fine spectacle on a clear night, or a subject for innocent curiosity. At most he contemplates his own relation to the Cosmos, but will not try to live in it; he will gratefully accept the shelter of his society.”\**

The main character in his historical drama contributed to history by influencing King Henry VIII in England to hunt William Tyndale throughout Europe for many years until Tyndale finally was betrayed, seized and returned to England to be burned at the stake for the “crime” of translating early manuscripts of the Bible into English.

Not long after Tyndale was executed, King Henry VIII began changing his mind about translating the Bible, which was the answer to Tyndale’s dying prayer.



Of such is our dark abrasive World.  
And the task of carrying a tender heart  
in the Light of Heaven, despite the dark.

*Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:  
be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.  
(Matthew 10:16)*

\* Page xiv of Preface to *A Man For All Seasons* by Robert Bolt  
(Vintage Books, 1962).

## THE PHARMER IN THE DELL

The Pharmer in the Dell,  
The Pharmer in the Dell,  
Hi ho genetics O,  
Will crops such as these serve us well?



Mommy:  
When my brand new sister finally arrives  
You *promised* me:  
“She will have blond hair and lovely blue eyes!  
Those are just what she needs  
as she grows and she thrives.”

Son:  
It will be.  
You shall see.

This is the land  
of the smart and the free.  
We know what to do with *our* technology.

*Professing themselves to be wise, they became  
fools (Romans 1:22)*

## UNWELCOME DARKNESS

O Lord, dear Lord, this child of ours  
is hidden in a cruel cave.  
It's dark in there, so *densely dark*  
she has become its slave.

O Lord, dear Lord, please show to us  
the way to help her spirit turn  
to face Your radiant loving Light.  
Help her heart for You to yearn.

O Lord O Lord, it's only You  
who overthrows the Enemy.  
Please come and crush him there  
and set our dear child free.

We thank you now O Lord;  
We praise You evermore.  
In sorrow and in joy  
we pray with one accord.

# WORLDLINESS

Worldliness: delusions and venom! Exploding before us!  
Around us, and trying to invade us.

But we ever have before our eyes  
Eternal Life in His Presence.

We have in us the song of Life itself,  
Imbued with redolence of Loving.

# AWASH

## *We are awash in wickedness*

tossing on treacherous seas, battered:  
main mast smashed and lying on the deck  
weary captain, hands clenched on the wheel  
drenched crew, strenuously manning the pumps  
ship hopelessly pulled toward sturdy lighthouse  
hoping for seasonal currents to carry our ship  
away from hidden rocks by remaining sails.  
Sliding on slippery deck then finding and clinging  
to un-named parts of the foundering ship  
we look beyond the exhausted face of the captain

## *knowing: we are the LORD's*

*And we know that all things work together for good  
to them that love God (Romans 8:28)*



# **Some Animals**



# CHRYSALIS ON HORSEBACK

*(For Kim Meeder and Crystal Peaks Ranch)*

Hard work, harnessing wisdom;  
rising hope, finding its way,  
heart and eye being intense;  
these propel them every day.

Cleaving wind and rain  
formerly damaged horse  
bearing hopeful child  
yield to this campaign:

discovering their Creator.

Triumph shown in joyful faces  
eagerly plunging into view  
reveal their newly freshened hearts;  
“sad” and “joyful” changing places.

*...to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead  
of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of  
mourning, and a garment of praise instead of  
a spirit of despair (Isaiah 61:3, NIV)*

## DANCING WITH TURTLES

I seem to have an affinity with turtles since I lived in a turtle shell for about twenty years. Or so it seems looking back. But about sixty years later we were tourists in some sort of a sea museum and — well — I danced with one.

Turtle swam as I side-stepped my way parallel to the glass, he pushing aside the weight of the water with his large wing-like leg muscles while looking me in the eye. His tank was the length of our living room and when we got to the end he turned to the depths, reappeared eventually, and we started off again. But it was never exactly the same. He might stop for a while and maneuver in one place. (“If I turn away will she still be there?”) He was **big**. His eye had knowledge. Then off we’d go again. I think he was laughing. (But how can you tell.)

Other creatures were in there — but you’d have to consult “Information” to discover their names. Turtle (**big** turtle) was definitely who he was. Eventually I ran out of breath (he could swim fast) and followed others to a different exhibit. But this had not been an “exhibit.” It had been temporary companionship and play with a fellow living being whose life was a very different kind from human life and whose being was supported all his life by water which we could live in only by technical strategy and not for long.

However all this reminds me of very small turtles that used to be sold in pet stores. Our small son wanted to have one, so we arrived home complete with a little tank, some pet store landscaping and a tin labeled “turtle food” with instructions which we followed. But alas. His tiny turtle introduced son to death and we quickly supplied another one who also perished to a flood of tears.

Well — we lived in Washington DC, and they had a zoo, and the zoo had a reptile house, and the reptile house had a knowledgeable zoo keeper, and the zoo keeper had a telephone and over his telephone we learned that pet store “turtle food” was merely a very small appetizer. Not only that, our turtles were infants and all turtles require meat and vegetables, very clean water and calcium which we could get by scraping off the chalk they use on blackboards. They also need rocks to sit on.

So we got **another** turtle and did all that, named it “Go Go” and Go Go kept needing bigger and bigger containers to live in, and the zoo keeper who gave advice during the years, met her when she weighed one pound and pronounced her a very fine turtle although the bottom of her shell was just a little rough. She laid one leathery egg!

When we moved to Virginia Beach, Go Go came with us. Our son by then was in high school and one day we thought Go Go might enjoy some time out doors in the sunshine and we provided her with a large laundry basket, water and food, but alas, she was a climber and disappeared. We never found her.

Now, over my desk is a large turtle climbing a rock and facing us from his photograph. And on another photo are two relaxed turtle companions sunning themselves, relaxed legs dangling down, on a slanting rock, heads upright, close together. Pleasant reminders of turtle life.

## SQUIRRELS

Beyond my wide second storey window  
tall oak trees reach for sky:  
habitat for acrobatic squirrels  
negotiating interlacing branches  
(twigs a-twitter)

Climbing purposefully, on their bark,  
this one reconsiders, backing up  
with flurry of tail, progressing upwards again.  
(towards his nest?)

They don't run. They loop —  
up in the air, then down again;  
forward with bushy tail waves,  
changing direction, hurrying onwards.  
(going where?)

Close by the window, there's a section of trunk  
bearing a right angled projection,  
probably for a flag, of long ago.  
Now and again it hosts a squirrel  
sitting motionless on its narrow surface  
(surveying the world).

Tail resting comfortably up on the bark  
he sits. Never a twitch; staring intently  
at our little forest: a statue.

One squirrely twist and he stares in our window,  
motionless; continuing to ponder.

Oops! He galvanizes energy  
climbing with claws deftly grasping the bark  
(he goes on his journey).

There is another one!  
high, among distant lacy branches  
silhouetted high, against the sky  
(hinting of rain now).

Once in a while the tree-filled scene  
erupts into motion: small dark forms  
looping, vanishing, reappearing  
(playful athletes).

Oh the secrets of the trees!  
The countless lives among them!  
Moss, birds, spiders, ivy —  
and others we never thought of.  
City life scarcely notices:  
Nearby cars are rushing to destiny daily  
(right past unseen forest).

## SPARROWS

Look! I saw a sparrow there!  
Where does he find his food in such a city place?  
And how to carry on with nesting and the small ones?  
How to find a place to bathe among so many people?  
Now he's hiding in a bush.

In some countries sparrows bear the name of  
“church birds.” It is said that flocks of them  
have taken up in high stone cathedrals  
in such numbers that they challenge  
choir and preacher.

They've springs in little feet for hopping —  
Close or far. Hop and nip. Stop and sit.  
Spring and fly away. (They're shy.)  
Offer tid bits to the ground. Nothing.  
Offer more. Suddenly they come from unexpected places;

Then are gone.

Inside and outside grocery stores they hide  
and nest in ceilings that you've never noticed.  
But wait. I hear their voices. Saw a tail;  
Spied motion up there that might be from a nest.  
Encouraging.

In the cold of winter, their tiny pink feet endure.  
In the heat of summer, they find shade.  
Somehow they carry on.

In bird books, sparrows take up many pages.  
Studied, they show much difference in color, even shape.  
Their habitats are varied on the map.

And do we notice?  
It's only another sparrow,  
out from somewhere.

Hop and nip.

Stop and sit.

Spring and fly away!

## THEOLOGIANS and CENTIPEDES

### *Portrait of a Student*

The theology professors here speak to us earnestly and knowledgeably in well constructed sentences using history, illustrations, their hard-earned academic degrees and also of course the Scriptures, and even personal experiences and some sharp humor — all in efforts to reach our hard-working brains — and hearts too — and also to startle us when we need it. I do enjoy these classes.



They were doing all this one day in Spring when a centipede (centipedes are mythologically claimed to have a hundred legs — but we wouldn't want to count them) unexpectedly walked onto the notebook I was writing on. So I fell into day dreaming. “O excellent creature,” I said to him, “how do you manage to walk with all those legs? Did they teach you when you were new? Do you move them in series of pairs or individually — ones with threes, twos with fours and so on? How *can* you walk so smoothly having to manage all that anatomy?” The centipede listened attentively, got confused and stopped walking. (Analysis *can* cause paralysis.)



Still daydreaming I imagined a scene where I was walking along and all of the sudden a large potted plant fell from goodness-knows-where, and just missed my head before crashing in front of my feet! I began to recover from the shock and started to offer thanks when suddenly our theology professor appeared from nowhere saying, “Wait a minute! I saw all that. Who were you thanking? Was it the Father or Jesus? And was it Providence or Grace that took place? And if Grace, then what sort of Grace?” So I began puzzling hard and never did get back to offering thanks.



But whoa! Back to the voice in front of class. Goodbye, centipede.



It will be nice to start for home on spring break this afternoon, but I do enjoy this class, although it *is* difficult sometimes to reconcile theology with everyday doings on the spot. Oops! Dropped my Bible. (So many books to carry.) Oops again! It’s not just an ordinary book to carry. It’s a remarkable-thousands-of-years-old Treasure, and you don’t just drop a thing like that!

*...Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:2-3, NIV)*

## THE ODD COUPLE AND MOZART

Two birds, one large one small, are in our house  
in large white cages side by side.

“Large” is a sky blue budgie male with black and white  
striped wings: who sings and sings and sings — old “Whiskers.”

“Small” is a spry and hoppy lady finch of prominent orange beak  
and a little monotone voice she sometimes uses.

At night time, their perches being close,  
they press their feathered sides against those white cage bars,  
close as they are able.

Finchy wants to housekeep.  
She lays eggs and eggs and eggs, and then some.  
(She can count them — up to **three**.)

Such is their “keeping company.”

Then melodious Whiskers (old Whiskers)  
set about to learn her finchy song  
and sings it to her now and then as best he can.

But best of all, one day at last,  
their keepers gave them Mozart: flute and strings.  
At once old Whiskers took new life from that CD.

And so it goes: the happy two with Mozart all the day.  
(But sometimes Bach can have **his** say.)

## **PETS IN THE KITCHEN**

### *Practicing Being Cats*

Silent, with fluidity,  
two fiercely tumbling calico cats  
untwine in sudden peace, to groom —  
(poker-bodied, secretly).

Unwarned, they swiftly crouch-pounce-swat  
with hunter's skill among the pots.  
Storing up dignity by the fallen broom,  
they warm it in blissful majesty.

Refreshed, one stalks the kitchen mat  
begging a tidbit, or another room.  
O former Egyptian deity,  
how cornered you are:  
    What domesticity!

## THE LADYBUG

The ladybug appears from nowhere and seems to be walking; not in a hurry: black and red: a tiny color contrast with polka dots sharing space with me, and carrying on some chore beyond my comprehension.

Where does she sleep at night? What kinds of things does she eat? How does she provide for the young? Who are her enemies? She's not interested in my hand or clothes or this bench, and stops, deciding, "What next?"

Oops. She's gone. She can fly well!

## **THE BIRDS' CHORUS**

*Welcoming Dawn*

The birds do know their special voice You gave,  
Proclaiming now, the day's arrival  
Of sun or rain for living the hours of day  
In company with other feathered lives.  
Do you see the Dawning colors come?  
A new day, a different day is here.  
Its mysteries appear.

The bird's chorus blots out city's voice;  
There's no conductor, metronome, baton;  
No alphabet no guilty conscience.  
The world's alive; alive alive O.  
Breathe the breath that's lent for just this day:  
This time: Time pregnant with its space,  
Its timeliness, and grace.

*All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD  
(Psalm 145:10)*



# **Finale**



# YEARNING

Your Word is Truth.  
Lord, lead me where  
only truth is living there.

## I SAW YOU SEATED

Through the prophet's eye  
I saw You seated  
focus to explosions of jewelled light  
and thundering flashings  
coupled with the rushing sounds of waters  
causing prophet's tongue to stumble,  
causing trembling knees to seek in weakness  
the humbling fact of earth.

O holy, holy, holi-ness,  
crowns of gold, tossing, tossing;  
clouds of saints adoring.

Holy, holy, holi-ness;  
flashes of Ox, of Eagle;  
flashes of Man and Lion.

Holy, holy, holi-ness;  
the flow of gold-transparent  
flowing from the throne.

O holy, holy, holi-ness,  
    angels hovering, angels singing,  
    prayers as incense rising, rising.  
Holy, holy, holiness.

And we, O Lord, not prophets of old but saints of now  
straddling earth and heaven,  
embrace Your Cross, exultantly;  
trust in You,  
obedient,  
and give assent for all that is to be.

*O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear  
before him, all the earth. (Psalm 96:9)*

# THE IDIOT

*(Title of a novel by Anton Chekov)*

The prince, as ward  
growing up  
in peasant country,  
later, spoke Truth  
in the face of Image;

Spoke Life  
in the face of masked Death;  
calm in the face of harassment;  
and Trust in the face of Treachery.

So  
his aristocratic circle named him The Idiot

saying  
“A young man sensitive, eager and godly?  
Our halls will **not** be invaded by such as he.  
We demand his example be bound, not free.”

Then, being quickly escorted to his dungeon home,  
The Idiot thanked the Lord: for Treasure, Love and Grace;  
he thanked for Strength, as Creator’s Family runs its race  
mindful of our prize: the greeting of Him, Face to face.

*The LORD looseth the prisoners. (Psalm 146:7)*

# ENTROPY

Thorns, mildew, dust and rust:  
Adam's Fall made these a "must"  
and every living thing will die.

Hypocrisy and "make-up" try  
with strategies which they supply,  
unwanted facts to stall or deny.

But living, in God's Love and Light,  
brings hope of heaven in our Savior's presence:  
trumping every kind of blight.

*And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold,  
I make all things new. (Revelation 21:5)*

# SINS

Sins are graffiti  
on God's good order and Love:  
A sad sad story.

They are grasped, and spread  
by Men whose lives were born  
to share in God's own Glory.

## **HOLD ON**

O do not dare try tame our God  
in the throes of His unseen purpose.

In times of fire, in times of anguish  
hold on to trust and faithfulness;

*And we know that all things work  
together for good to them that love God  
(Romans 8:28)*

## **A PORTRAIT OF MY HUSBAND**

Once again I ponder the mystery of your sorrows.  
I hear the reassurance of your sturdy voice;  
I see your book, pored over with searching concentration  
being translated by your fingers, on the keyboard,  
for expression in words about the Book of books;  
its Words, entering all that is your essence,  
with delight, kindled in wonder at its vastness:  
small Words, on fragile paper, simple, but majestic;  
you, grasping in varying amounts, their cosmic Reality.

# LAST MOMENTS

*For JLM*

Billions have faded and gone before you since Adam  
Some never living a life beyond the womb  
And others enduring a life of nine hundred years:  
All of us living the span our Creator has given.

But now, having been at your side while you were fading  
Your portion of my particular world  
Was on the horizon eclipsing all else  
But your precious faltering breath,  
Breathing steadily;  
But O, the intervals:

Wider.

Wider.

Should Scripture be brought to your ear  
As you leaned more stiffly on my arm?  
Should it come now, as reminder?  
For underneath the mask on your face  
Was a new smile, beyond our Now.  
Speech would be interruption, to what was going on.  
We were no longer alone.  
The Presence of God was filling the room, more and more;  
And although you were carried away, the Joy has never left.  
Though darkness may intrude in time of learning  
It is there.

Praise and Thanksgiving to our Creator forever.

# LEGACY

*For JLM*

Time washes over you bearing me always  
beyond the clarity of your laden image;  
bearing me onward farther and further  
toward a “sea change” of your previous being  
which, helping to shape the future  
is partaking of Now and lending new substance  
out of the awesomely finite past.

All that we shared while you were on earth  
outlives your face, and is the soil  
for further flowering; further grace.

And evil perishes;  
but joy reverberates.

# LOVE BEYOND UNDERSTANDING

Our Creator's glorious Energy  
and all that was and is and is to Be  
that are LOVE and LIGHT are primary.

But all that is *not* His LOVE and its LIGHT  
is ponderous suffering hate and fright  
is wrestling and battling twixt Day and Night  
is scuffling wounding tears and flight  
(cast-off wreckage, cast-off blight).



God's LIGHT and His LOVE are primary  
from Himself to His far periphery.

In His LOVE, quiet can live;

Birdsong.

Reverie.

*God is love. (1 John 4:8)*

## A STARTLING HAPPENING

When we were brand new Christians, an interesting thing came about which increased our awareness that the Lord and His Holy Spirit, whom the Bible reveals, are indeed real and active today. It also gave us a warning about how good things can change directions and wind up being destructive.

My husband and I (as brand new Christians) were at a conference in Texas when the preacher, an evangelist, stated that he felt the Lord wanted him to pray for healing. Many went forward. Because I had been experiencing pain and limitations in walking for many months (diagnosed as spondylolisthesis) I finally decided to go up too, the last person to do so. “What do you need?” he demanded strongly. “It’s my spine.” He was a big man and put a heavy hand on the top of my head and shouted, “**LORD, please heal this woman’s spine!**” Immediately it seemed as though I was swimming under water; which lasted a short while. Then it was time to step down and catch the plane to Virginia Beach. Once there I realized there was a difference. No pain. Walk anywhere. So we walked two miles on the sandy beach and knew the change was clearly true and permanent. And so it proved in time to come.

Many years later, an X-ray was taken of my back and the doctor told me he had pain medicine for me. “And why is that?” “Why you have a spondylolisthesis.” So now we understood. The function had been completely restored, but the structure had remained as it was.

Years after *that* we were introduced to that same evangelist. (He looked not only older but different.) “Oh, I’m so glad to see you again. Years ago in Austin you prayed for my spine and I want you to know it was healed!” At once he turned to a nearby friend, “Did you hear this lady? At one of our conferences in Austin, I healed her spine!” (The Lord’s name was not mentioned.) I have since learned that his theology has become quite strange.

I am grateful for my healing, but above all, I am grateful for God’s Truth. Physical healing is only temporary, for this life only. But God’s Truth endures forever.

There is temptation to adulate the one through whom healing comes, instead of the Source: Our Creator, through Christ. And there is temptation for the one through whom the healing comes, to slide into thinking that he, himself, was the source: although he was the *faucet* and not the *well*.

*Lord, please help that evangelist to find Your Truth once again.*

## **“THE OCEAN OF GOD’S LOVE”**

*(Corrie ten Boom, Holocaust survivor, often referred to  
“God’s ocean of Love”)*

You gird us in wondrous Love, O God  
from the ocean of Your Love in the history of all Mankind.

You have made Yourself available to us  
when we seek Your Wisdom, Your Truth and Righteousness.

You magnify, by Your Word, our gratitude love and hope  
while we suffer here, as You did so greatly suffer.

But we look ahead to citizenship in Heaven;  
We look ahead to serving You, here and forever.

We seek to be like Adam before his sad fall:  
Made in God’s image, but not as deity.



Adam fell; and we are fallen by the Curse and our sin.  
But today we are raised in righteousness by our Savior  
Who bore the sins of the whole world on His crucified shoulders;  
Overshadowing the ancient laws of animal sacrifice,  
ushering in the newer Covenant, twixt God and Man.



Daily we walk together in the life You lend us,  
praise and thanksgiving in our hearts as we struggle to serve You;  
with Your Love, Your Word, and our hope  
eclipsing affliction and Death.



Daily we come: gaining ground toward our heavenly mansion  
which You in graciousness are preparing for us  
while we wait in patience to share in the New Jerusalem:



Praise and Glory, service and Love and Joy.  
Forever and ever, Amen and Amen.

*And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and the  
Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.  
(Revelation 22:3)*

## FROM EARLY DEATH

*For Carol, on the loss of her 16-year-old son*

He was in the flower of his youth —  
cognizant of Truth;

Vibrant to his many friends  
and filled with solid promise  
to the years that come;

yet he is gone —  
cut off.

The music that he made —  
The laughter he created —  
the love that he encompassed  
and sent out:

frozen in a moment;  
converted suddenly  
into memory.

Yet love remains;  
painful,  
powerful —  
energized to convert into goodness  
the wake of such a tempest.

His footsteps suddenly emerge as beginnings  
for his friends  
to pathways in the truth,  
truths that spring from God,  
reflected in his life —  
blazing now before them to be translated,  
made their own, in varied forms —  
to those with eyes now newly made to see.

And from this mist of swirling pain  
new knowing comes:  
    renewal of thanksgiving;  
    new eyes and ears to deeper comprehension;  
    new targeting of life:  
        out of death  
        new life arising.

Slowly, formlessly at first,  
but rising surely  
even as the pain subsides —  
life arising.

Slowly but surely:  
    Life.  
  
    Life.

## MEMORABLE SILENCE FOR TWO

A time of silence  
resounding with unspoken peace,  
bridging to fresh comprehension and  
stilling the pangs of anxiety:

Thoughts bringing closure,  
thoughts opening out, and  
freedom to be floating:

stillness; quietness; harmony;  
wrapped in Your Presence  
Time standing still.

No door bell please,  
no comment  
no shattering this:

nebulous questions are forming  
pointing to new horizons  
always imbued with harmony:

Prelude to all adventure,  
all memories, all griefs and joys to come:  
knowing the Son of Man is with us  
blessing our kissing spirits.



Silence for Two  
in their eighth decade  
side by side  
man and wife  
greatgrand parents.

And how did this all come about?

unexpectedly;  
unforeseen;  
blessedly:

kindling love and thankfulness  
to our merciful Creator.

## THE NEW WIDOW

The wrench is of being torn in half.

The mind says, the theology says  
(the heart, stunned, is trying to say):  
“It’s joy to be in heaven with God.”

But the body, wondering, says:

“Could this be tears of joy  
now that the frail, suffering body  
has failed as ballast for his soul  
keeping it  
on earth  
a little  
longer?”

Newly plunged into immediacy  
of eternity’s wide gulf,  
vitality exhausts itself  
clinging to anchors of every day.

All is catapulted into  
a realm unfamiliar —  
where places of priority  
change:

A game of musical chairs;  
but participants change places  
unwillingly, in strangest effort.

Daily things are  
no longer daily.

Friendships are velvet cushions  
from another world.

Life is frozen somewhere  
beyond these feet —  
forbiddingly remote.

Must bewilderment hide?  
Or, be allowed escape?

O let time be in abeyance,  
as once it was when the sun  
stood still for a day in history!

Let time and feelings cease just now.

And then?  
“Then” will come  
with new turf and strangeness.

God will have to take possession.

Gratitude comes later.



The years were long but brief.  
In wedding hush, amidst the glamour,  
words rang out to make us one.  
Oneness now has new condition:  
you in heaven, my feet still here.

Time wove us snug.  
The years entwined us like a garland  
'til this rude intruding severance  
leaves me scarred and healing over,  
wounded by familiar rooms.

No longer word or look  
reminding us of history shared,  
causing upward curve of lips —  
warming us to new perspective:  
stirring us to present action.

No longer old hurts  
surfacing to find new truths;  
new love breaking forth  
for new blunting of old pain,  
kindling up encouragement.

Now:

new singleness.

Regrets and appreciations emerge  
in dizzying fashion to challenge each moment.

Now:

searching for anchors,  
fast beating pulses seeking to slow,  
slowing at last to sweet oblivion.

And after oblivion?

Then?

“Then” is becoming “Now.”

God is taking possession.

I allow it;

Gratefully.

*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the  
God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all  
our tribulation (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)*

## REQUIEM FOR A YOUNG SQUIRREL

Venturing forth from his nest on high  
in our tall oak tree, comes a brand new squirrel: gingerly.

Hump and stretch, bark on his claw,  
down he comes, never down before.

Stop and look, wait a while;  
drink-in sight, without guile.

Gaining ground, he explores leaves of green.  
Then poking out his head, he's willing to be seen:

Here come grass, twigs and moss;  
up goes his tail, curl and toss.

On he goes, in curve-like motion;  
freer now, with tentative caution.

Later in the day, down by the street  
I'm shocked to find his furry little feet:

feet on the black top, severed from his head  
which crushed by a tire had flattened and bled.

O fresh new life, enticed by Spring,  
why should you discover such a dreadful thing!

Coming so new, fresh from the nest  
ready for adventure, forced to rest.

All the wide-world, now before him  
who could guess: tragedy, in store for him.

Soon the rain began to pour.  
Then sunshine erased all drama before.

O Adam! Why did you stumble on Death:  
causing curse to God's Creation; stealing our breath.

*And there shall be no more curse (Revelation 22:3)*

# SONG

O sing sing sing:  
Sing loud sing soft,  
Sing with the angels of long ago.

Sing of our great triunal God  
mighty in power, mighty in Love  
mighty in earthly translation:

from His mighty Love to our earthly song  
from His mighty Heart and Mystery  
to the pulse of our mortality.

Sing sing sing:  
Sing of our Cosmic Creator  
Sing of His Loving Son.

Sing *brotherhood*  
Sing *motherhood*  
Sing of the jeweled stars.

Sing of mirrored lakes.  
Sing of raging seas.  
Sing of harbor and anchor.

(But hush to the puzzling mystery of evil  
which time consigns to the lake of fire  
the fire of our complete forgetfulness.)

Sing to purity Truth and Reality:  
wings of Heaven, where God's own family serves:  
the crownéd apex of earthly mortality.

Sing, sing  
O sing.



*“And there shall be no more curse, but the Seat of  
God and the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants  
shall serve him: And shall see his face, and his  
name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall  
be no night there, and they need no candle, neither  
light of sun: for the Lord God giveth them light,  
and they shall reign for evermore.”*  
(Revelation 22:3-5, Tyndale Translation)

## SUMMING UP

Toward the end of his life someone asked my husband: “Now that your book is finally in print, would there yet be something you would like to continue to say to us?”

His reply: “Well I don’t think so. But if I had to sum things up, I would say three words: ‘Take God seriously.’”

So now I ask myself: “If you were in a similar situation how might *you* sum things up?” And I think my reply would be something like this: “As members of God’s family we are all ‘Works in Progress’ struggling to serve the Lord here as we prepare to serve Him in Eternity. The more we are able to depend on Him while we are here on earth, the more excellent our ability to serve.”

And here is God’s Word about serving Him in eternity:

*And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*  
(Revelation 22:3-5, King James Version)

## NESTLING IN SALVATION

Dare I nestle in Salvation,  
Lord of all Creation,  
feeling secure, proud though lonely,  
wary of all but You and Yours only;

Dare I claim to be separate from the world,  
Your banners unfurled,  
yet determined, “never forgive!”  
threatening the very life You would have me live?

Without You all is bleak,  
void of any clue;  
thick darkness, groping to seek  
threads, leading truly to Yours and to You.

# FORGIVENESS

Could there be beauty in forgiveness? We learned an unexpected example coming from the Holocaust, which came to be known as “the Ravensbruck Prayer.”

It came about like this: Ravensbruck was a German Nazi death camp which was eventually liberated by Russian soldiers. Corrie ten Boom, one of the Dutch prisoners, was kept there and managed to hide a tiny Bible which she wore around her neck and used secretly in the barracks to give a Bible study to other women living there. Through a clerical error she had been released before the Russians came and eventually she became a beloved evangelist to 60 countries.

When the Russian soldiers arrived, they noticed a stone wrapped in a piece of paper which they removed from the stone discovering this message:

*O Lord, remember not only the men and women of good will but also those of ill will. But do not only remember the suffering they have inflicted on us. Remember the fruits we bear, thanks to this suffering — our comradeship, loyalty, humility, courage, and the greatness of heart that has grown out of all this. And when they come to judgment, let all the fruits that we have borne be their forgiveness.*

## **BLESSED IN THE CRUCIBLE**

O be blessed, by our Creator:  
The One who stretched out the heavens  
by the breath of His mouth;  
and declared out of nothingness LIGHT! And all forms of LIFE!  
the One who woos us beyond the Curse and our resistance;  
the One who gives each life a glorious purpose.

O Lord:  
You gave us hearts, and breath, minds and limbs  
to welcome, and be nourished, by Your Love and Word;  
to seek Your Wisdom, strength and Ways;  
to carry Faith in Hope, to Your gates of Justice:  
washed in Your Love, strengthened by Your Mercy.

O Lord:  
How can we utter our praise high enough,  
deep enough, with fullest joy in harmony?  
How can we murmur our love beautifully enough?  
How can we bask peacefully enough in Your Presence?  
How can we spread Your message clearly enough?

But these we try, blessed in the crucible of living Life.

## A.S.K.

The Gospel of Luke tells us to ask, and keep on asking; seek, and keep seeking; knock and keep knocking. Then: it will be given to us; we shall find, and it will be opened to us. What a tremendous invitation and promise given by the Son of Man himself!

And that invitation-promise is given to all who know Him and to all who have not yet discovered who He is.

And there is forevermore more and deeper to receive, find and understand of Truth, LovingKindness, Wisdom and Justice! And these treasures are ours to possess, pass on and use while serving Him here on earth and later when we serve Him in Eternity in the presence of His Glory!

Such inexpressibly deep things are not light weight or easy to experience or bear. But then, how immeasurable and glorious they are! No wonder that the very end of the whole book of Psalms pictures everything that has breath praising the LORD!



*Ask, and it shall be given you*  
*Seek, and ye shall find*  
*Knock, and it shall be opened unto you*  
*(Luke 11:9, emphasis added)*

This is Illustrated by the following graphic design by Michael Podesta. Used by permission. You can see it in color at [www.GlimpsesOfLifeAndEternity.com](http://www.GlimpsesOfLifeAndEternity.com)

AND YE SHALL FIND

ASK AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN • SEEK



• KNOCK AND IT SHALL BE OPENED...

• SAINT LUKE • XI • LX



# **Eternity**



# ETERNITY

*In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to  
a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.  
(2 Peter 3:13, NIV)*

*The Lord himself will come down from heaven,  
with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and  
with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise  
first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be  
caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in  
the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.  
(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)*

*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there  
shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,  
neither shall there be any more pain:  
for the former things are passed away  
And he that sat upon the throne said,  
Behold, I make all things new.  
(Revelation 21:4-5)*

*Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty;  
just and true are thy ways  
(Revelation 15:3)*

*Blessing, and glory, and wisdom,  
and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might,  
be unto our God for ever and ever.  
(Revelation 7:12)*

*Blessed be his glorious name for ever:  
and let the whole earth be filled with his glory;  
Amen, and Amen.  
(Psalm 72:19)*



## About the Author



*With her husband, James*

Both my husband, James (“Jamie”) and I came from big city families: Chicago and Manhattan. We met as students in Columbia University chapel choir: baritone and soprano.

Jamie became Law Clerk to Chief Justice Harlan Stone of the U.S. Supreme Court for two years, and then practiced law in various sections of the U.S. Department of Justice. He was also a classical musician: cellist and singer, performer and choir director. I earned an M.A.T. in music, was a stay-at-home mother for three children, and did some teaching.

Finally, in our late sixties, my husband and I became Christians. May this fact encourage you if you have older friends and family who have not yet discovered Christ!

In retirement, Jamie earned a master’s degree in Biblical Studies and was privileged for eighteen years to be able to continue to focus on studying Scripture. He wrote

articles which are posted on his website (still active) called Scripture Insights,\* and also a book, *Standing Firm in the Faith,\*\** and I began spending some time writing.

Jamie died at age 88, one month before our 64<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I'm enjoying my ninth decade with its learnings and challenges. I hope you are also enjoying whatever decade you may be in right now: its ups and downs bringing you His Love, Wisdom, and Hope to brighten your story.

\* [www.ScriptureInsights.com](http://www.ScriptureInsights.com)

\*\* [www.StandingFirmInTheFaith.com](http://www.StandingFirmInTheFaith.com)

## Index of All Poems

A Diamond Among the Castoffs of the World.....	26
A Jingle .....	126
A Portrait of My Husband.....	174
A Question.....	88
A Snapshot of America: 2005 .....	122
A Startling Happening.....	178
After Serious Illness .....	84
Antique Ghosts at Birthday Time.....	32
Art Museums .....	43
Awash.....	147
Beauty.....	38
Beginnings.....	3
Beyond Christmas .....	8
Birds' Chorus, The .....	163
Blessed in the Crucible.....	197
Blest.....	16
Butterfly, The .....	19
Camouflage .....	120
Change.....	22
Choices .....	69
Chrysalis on Horseback.....	151
Coming Storm .....	127
Cosmic Choreography.....	12
Crisis.....	128

Dancing with Turtles .....	152
Dawn .....	57
Death Approaching .....	115
Destiny .....	107
Diamond Among the Castoffs of the World, A.....	26
Dress Rehearsal .....	72
Early Springtime .....	56
Echoes from the Book of Job .....	129
Echoes from Psalm 8 .....	5
Entropy .....	171
Evening Symphony .....	48
Evil at Bay .....	98
Exiled .....	74
Eye of the Beholder, The.....	86
Forgiveness.....	196
Free! .....	130
From Early Death .....	182
Future Memory.....	131
Games People Play .....	87
Glories and Shadows.....	76
God Has a Big Eraser .....	80
Grey Heads .....	31
Hats Off.....	47
Hawking Wares .....	132
Hidden Anguish.....	82
HIS LOVE.....	91
History .....	10
Hold On.....	173
Hopscotch.....	133

I Saw You Seated .....	168
Idiot, The .....	170
In the Company of Trees .....	52
In-Betweens, The .....	112
Infant Arrival.....	4
Invitation .....	90
Ivory Door, The.....	140
Jingle, A .....	126
Joy .....	39
Kaleidoscope .....	119
Kudzu .....	134
Ladybug, The .....	162
Last Moments.....	175
Leaves.....	59
Legacy .....	176
Life While Here.....	64
Little City Garden.....	65
Lonely.....	62
Longing .....	45
Looking Down.....	135
Love Beyond Understanding.....	177
Love Newfound.....	83
Marriage .....	99
Marty .....	33
Memorable Silence for Two.....	184
Metropolitan Mountains .....	55
Mote in the Eye, The .....	111
Mysteries .....	102

Nestling in Salvation .....	195
Never-Lived-Before Wednesday .....	60
New Widow, The .....	186
Newer Height .....	108
Night or Day .....	100
Night.....	37
No .....	46
Ocean of God’s Love, The .....	180
Odd Couple and Mozart, The .....	160
Old Age with Binoculars.....	114
Older Mall, The .....	20
Once Perfect World, The.....	104
Opera .....	51
Pagan “Gods” in Modern Garb .....	136
Pets in the Kitchen.....	161
Pharmer in the Dell, The .....	144
Photograph, The .....	21
Pleasing Him .....	71
Poetry, Poetry .....	ix
Portrait of My Husband, A.....	174
Powers in the World.....	137
Question, A.....	88
Reflections on Childhood.....	28
Reflectors .....	116
Relative?.....	81
Requiem for a Young Squirrel .....	190
Rorschach Revisited ( <i>Bears in the Boxwood</i> ).....	40

Sailing.....	138
Salvation.....	70
Seeking.....	95
Sins.....	172
Skyscapes.....	44
Snapshot of America: 2005, A.....	122
Soldier, The.....	34
Some Laughter.....	54
Song.....	192
Sparrows.....	156
Squirrels.....	154
Startling Happening, A.....	178
String Quartets.....	50
Summing Up.....	194
Terrifying Cosmos, The.....	142
The Birds' Chorus.....	163
The Butterfly.....	19
The Eye of the Beholder.....	86
The Idiot.....	170
The In-Betweens.....	112
The Ivory Door.....	140
The Ladybug.....	162
The Mote in the Eye.....	111
The New Widow.....	186
The Ocean of God's Love.....	180
The Odd Couple and Mozart.....	160
The Older Mall.....	20
The Once Perfect World.....	104
The Pharmer in the Dell.....	144
The Photograph.....	21

The Soldier .....	34
The Terrifying Cosmos .....	142
The Very First Man .....	113
Theologians and Centipedes.....	158
These Times .....	121
Thou in the Flesh.....	110
TIME and a Photograph .....	23
To Adolescence .....	7
Tribute to Meggie.....	24
Trust .....	124
Trusting .....	6
Under the Sun.....	109
Unrequited Love.....	15
Unwelcome Darkness.....	145
Various Perspectives .....	78
Vastness and Microtude .....	42
Very First Man, The .....	113
Vietnam in the Grocery Store.....	29
Visiting the Old .....	30
Welcome Home.....	13
Why So Narrow.....	14
Why .....	125
Will-O-The-Whisp .....	106
Winter.....	58
Worldliness.....	146
Yearning.....	167
You .....	96