

FUNERAL PLANNING
IN THE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



the PARISH^h of St. Clement

Funerals in the Episcopal Church

Services for those who have died are found in the Book of Common Prayer between pages 468 and 507. There are Rite I and Rite II services titled: *The Burial of the Dead*. General rubrics concerning each service are found on pages 468 and 490. A third general order for a burial service is found on page 506. Our theology of the burial service as a resurrection, or Easter, service is explained on page 507.

When death is imminent, it is important to call your priest so that she or he may provide the final rites, anointing and prayers of the church to the dying. This information is found in the Prayer Book on pages 462 through 467.

Why have any kind of service after a person dies?

"I don't want a service. No one would come anyway." "Just take my ashes and spread them into the water (*off the mountain/in the backyard*)." "I don't want anyone going to a cemetery and crying at my grave." "Just give my body to the medical school and move on with your life." "I'd like there to be a half-hour of Mozart piano concertos/Hawaiian music/show tunes/Beatles songs before the funeral starts." "Please make sure the acolyte is a girl." "Use Rite 1 with an open mike for anyone who wants to say anything." "Yes, have communion." "Use a picture of me from my teenage years." "Divide my ashes for inurnment in these 4 places." "I'd like to have [*this kind of food*] at the reception." "Make sure you display my bowling trophies/baby shoes/medals/books by the photo boards."

The best way to put the reason for a service of some kind is this: A funeral is 10% for the person who died and 90% for those left behind. That 10% is the honoring of a person's life and legacy; it's a time when we acknowledge the importance of someone's life among us and how their life affected ours and those whose lives were touched. The 90% is about the need of those left behind to talk about their memories; to acknowledge the final absence, the hole, that has been left in their lives; to come together as friends and family to comfort one another and to share memories; and to say goodbye verbally and physically and finally to the one who has died. It's really about the needs of family and friends who have been left behind.

It's important before one dies to accept that, no matter who we are, our lives have made a difference to others. That's a fact. It's not boasting or prideful and self-centered. It's a fact that needs to be acknowledged so that those left behind may honor their time with the deceased and help one another accept the loss and move on to the next stage of their lives.

The Parish of St. Clement, Honolulu, Hawaii

FUNERAL PLANNING AND INFORMATION

TODAY'S DATE: _____

FULL NAME OF DECEASED: _____

INFORMATION FOR PARISH RECORDS:

GENDER: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

BAPTIZED: _____

DATE OF DEATH: _____

CONFIRMED: _____

CAUSE OF DEATH: _____

COMMUNICANT: _____

LAST RESIDENCE: _____

PLACE OF INTERMENT (IF C.O.P., INCLUDE NICHE#): _____

DATE OF FUNERAL/BURIAL: _____ TIME OF FUNERAL/BURIAL: _____ Put on Calendar: _____
DATE

CONTACT PERSON: _____

RELATIONSHIP TO DECEASED: _____ Address: _____

Phone #: _____ / _____
(HOME & CELL OR ALTERNATE)

MORTUARY: _____ PHONE #: _____

NAME OF PARTICIPATING CLERGY:

OFFICIANT: _____

PREACHER: _____

CELEBRANT: _____

READINGS:

OLD TESTAMENT: _____

NEW TESTAMENT: _____

GOSPEL: _____

OTHER: _____

MUSIC: _____

SPEAKERS: _____

COMMUNION: YES _____ NO _____ RITE I _____ RITE II _____

ST. CLEMENT'S ASSISTANCE NEEDED FOR SERVICE BULLETIN: YES _____ NO _____

REVIEW DRAFT: _____ FINAL BULLETIN NEEDED BY: _____

FEE FOR USE OF CHURCH.....
CLERGY FEE.....
ALTAR GUILD FEE.....
ORGANIST FEE.....
PARKING ATTENDANT.....

MEMBER: DONATION NON-MEMBER: \$300
MEMBER: DONATION NON-MEMBER: \$200
MEMBER: DONATION NON-MEMBER: \$50
MEMBER: DONATION NON-MEMBER: \$125
MEMBER: DONATION NON-MEMBER: \$50

OF EXPECTED GUESTS: _____
(PARKING ATTENDANT REQUIRED FOR 30+ CARS)

SEXTON CONTACTED: _____
DATE

ORGANIST NEEDED: YES _____ NO _____

ORGANIST CONTACTED: _____
DATE

FLOWERS: PROVIDED BY FAMILY _____ USE CHURCH FLOWERS _____

Altar Guild Contacted: _____
DATE

PARISH HALL NEEDED FOR RECEPTION: YES _____ NO _____

NON-MEMBER FEE \$ _____

INCLUDES KITCHEN USE: YES _____ NO _____

NON-MEMBER FEE \$ _____

PLACED ON OFFICE CALENDAR _____
DATE

SPECIAL SET-UP REQUIRED: YES _____ NO _____

NON-MEMBER FEE \$25.00

SEXTON CONTACTED: _____
DATE

INTERRED IN CHAPEL OF PEACE: YES _____ NO _____

IF YES, NICHE #: _____ URN NEEDED: YES _____ NO _____ (COST \$100)

PLAQUES ORDERED: 1) NICHE _____ DATE 2) URN _____ DATE

Official book to be signed by Priest/Clergy officiating services - to be left in sacristy.

NOTES OR SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

DONATIONS/COSTS FOR PARISH HALL & PARKING

DEPOSIT REQUESTED: _____ DEPOSIT RECEIVED: _____

BALANCE DUE: _____ PAYMENT IN FULL RECEIVED: _____

COMPLETED BY

Traditional music played at funerals:

1. A mighty fortress is our God
2. Abide with me
3. Amazing grace
4. Christ is made the sure foundation
5. Christ the victorious
6. Come, labor on
7. Eternal Father, strong to save
8. Faith of our fathers (mothers)
9. For all the saints
10. Holy, holy, holy
11. How lovely is thy dwelling place
12. I am the bread of life
13. I come with joy to meet my God
14. Jerusalem, my happy home
15. Jesus Christ is risen today
16. Jesus, son of Mary
17. Lord of all hopefulness
18. Nearer my God to thee
19. God, our help in ages past
20. Rock of ages
21. The king of love my shepherd is
22. The strife is o'er, the battle done
23. Kanaka Waiwai
24. Aloha 'Oe
25. Hawaii Aloha
26. The Queen's Prayer
27. When the Saints go marching in

Many Easter hymns are also appropriate.

If there is a favorite secular piece of music that means something to the family of the deceased or is related in some way to the deceased, it's not unusual to ask the organist to play it quietly and softly in a "churchy" style before the service. It's not appropriate, however, to play secular music during the service itself.

Important information at the time of death

Name _____

Family members who will make phone calls concerning death and to whom

Callers

Will Call

Mortuary/Hospice

Instructions regarding disposition of body

Primary decision maker for arrangements

Contact info for priest and lawyer

Location of important documents and items (wills, insurance policies, banking information, funeral plans, safe deposit box key, valuables, cash, etc.)

Final resting place

Recipients of memorial donations

Other specific instructions

Obituary and photo

Along with date of birth and date of death, other information is often included such as survivors, time and day of service, and where to send memorial contributions. Funeral directors will often provide these standard obituaries to the newspapers and the cost will be added to the funeral bill.

Sometimes families will write the obituary and pay the newspaper to print a longer article. These articles often include a photo of the person, and they describe a person's life in professional and avocational terms. They sometimes include family anecdotes or memories, and relate how important the deceased was because they were warm and funny and compassionate or other descriptors.

It is a custom at St Clement's to have a 10x12 photo of the deceased in a frame and sitting at the front of the church. This is often the same one used in published obituaries. If you want any say in this, pick one out and let your family know.

OLD TESTAMENT

At the Burial of the Dead

(He will swallow up death forever)

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

(To comfort those who mourn)

Isaiah 61:1-3

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

(The Lord is good to those who wait for him)

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. For the Lord will not reject forever. Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

(The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God)

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

(I know that my Redeemer lives)

Job 19:21-27a

Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me! Why do you, like God, pursue me, never satisfied with my flesh? "O that my words were written down! O that they were inscribed in a book! O that with an iron pen and with lead they were engraved on a rock

forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

Psalm 42

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, *
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.
My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God; *
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
My tears have been my meat day and night, *
while they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God?
Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself; *
for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into
the house of God;
Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why art thou so disquieted within me?
O put thy trust in God; *
for I will yet thank him, which is the help of my
countenance, and my God.

Psalm 46

God is our hope and strength, *
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, *
and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea;
Though the waters thereof rage and swell, *
and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.
There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, *
the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most Highest.
God is in the midst of her,
therefore shall she not be removed; *
God shall help her, and that right early.
Be still then, and know that I am God; *
I will be exalted among the nations,
and I will be exalted in the earth.
The LORD of hosts is with us; *
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalm 90

LORD, thou hast been our refuge, *
from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever the earth and the world were made, *
thou art God from everlasting, and the world without end.
Thou turnest man to destruction; *
again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men.
For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday
when it is past, *
and as a watch in the night.
As soon as thou scatterest them they are even as a sleep, *
and fade away suddenly like the grass.

In the morning it is green, and groweth up; *
but in the evening it is cut down, dried up, and withered.
For we consume away in thy displeasure, *

and are afraid at thy wrathful indignation.
Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee, *
and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.
For when thou are angry all our days are gone; *
we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told.
The days of our age are threescore years and ten;
and though men be so strong that thy come to fourscore years, *
yet is their strength then but labor and sorrow,
so soon passeth it away, and we are gone.
So teach us to number our days, *
that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills; *
from whence cometh my help?
My help cometh even from the LORD, *
who hath made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, *
and he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel *
shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD himself is thy keeper; *
the LORD is thy defence upon thy right hand;
So that the sun shall not burn by day, *
neither the moon by night.
The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil; *
yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.
The LORD shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, *
from this time forth for evermore.

Psalm 130

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O LORD; *
Lord, hear my voice.
O let thine ears consider well *
the voice of my complaint.
If thou, LORD, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, *
O Lord, who may abide it?
Fore there is mercy with thee, *
therefore shalt thou be feared.
I look for the LORD; my soul doth wait for him; *
in his word is my trust.
My soul fleeth unto the Lord before the morning watch; *
I say, before the morning watch.
O Israel, trust in the LORD,
for with the LORD there is mercy, *
and with him is plenteous redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel *
from all his sins.

Psalm 139

O LORD, thou hast searched me out, and known me. *
Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising;
thou understandest my thoughts long before.
Thou art about my path, and about my bed, *
and art acquainted with all my ways.
For lo, there is not a word in my tongue, *
but thou, O LORD, knowest it altogether.
Thou hast beset me behind and before, *
and laid thine hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me; *
I cannot attain unto it.
Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit? *
or whither shall I go then from thy presence?
If I climb up into heaven, thou art there; *
if I go down to hell, thou art there also.
If I take the wings of the morning, *
and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there also shall thy hand lead me, *
and thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, Peradventure the darkness shall cover me, *
then shall my night be turned to day.
Yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee,
but the night is as clear as day; *
the darkness and light to thee are both alike.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; *
therefore can I lack nothing.
He shall feed me in a green pasture, *
and lead me forth in the paths of righteousness for his
Name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; *
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
Thou shalt prepare a table before me in the presence of them
that trouble me; *
thou hast anointed my head with oil,
and my cup shall be full.
Surely thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the
days of my life; *
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 23 King James Version

The LORD is my shepherd; *
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: *
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: *
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: *
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of
mine enemies: *
thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life: *
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 27

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear? *
the LORD is the strength of my life;
of whom then shall I be afraid?
One thing have I desired of the LORD, which I will require, *
even that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the
days of my life,
to behold the fair beauty of the LORD, and to visit his temple.
For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his tabernacle; *
yea, in the secret place of his dwelling shall he hide me,
and set me up upon a rock of stone.
And now shall he lift up mine head *
above mine enemies round about me.
Therefore will I offer in his dwelling an oblation with
great gladness; *
I will sing and speak praises unto the LORD.
Hearken unto my voice, O LORD, when I cry unto thee; *
have mercy upon me, and hear me.
My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face. *
Thy face, LORD, will I seek.
O hide not thou thy face from me, *
nor cast thy servant away in displeasure.
I should utterly have fainted, *
but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the LORD in
the land of the living.

O tarry thou the LORD's leisure; *
be strong, and he shall comfort thine heart;
and put thou thy trust in the LORD.

Psalm 106

O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is gracious, *
and his mercy endureth for ever.
Who can express the noble acts of the LORD, *
or show forth all his praise?
Blessed are they that always keep judgment, *
and do righteousness.
Remember me, O LORD, according to the favor that thou
bearest unto thy people; *
O visit me with thy salvation.
That I may see the felicity of thy chosen, *
and rejoice in the gladness of thy people,
and give thanks with thine inheritance.

Psalm 116

My delight is in the LORD, *
because he hath heard the voice of my prayer;
Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, *
therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.
The snares of death compassed me round about, *
and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.
I found trouble and heaviness;
then called I upon the Name of the LORD; *
O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.
Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; *
yea, our God is merciful.
The LORD preserveth the simple; *
I was in misery, and he helped me.
Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul, *
for the LORD hath rewarded thee.
And why? thou hast delivered my soul from death, *
mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.
I will walk before the LORD *
in the land of the living.
I will pay my vows now in the presence of all his people; *
right dear in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

NEW TESTAMENT

(The glory that shall be revealed)

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Things that are unseen are eternal)

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling. So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

(God will wipe away every tear)

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" ¹⁴I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

(Behold, I make all things new)

Revelation 21:2-7

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said

to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

THE GOSPELS

(He who believes has everlasting life)

John 5:24-27

Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life. "Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

(All that the Father gives me will come to me)

John 6:37-40

Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day."

(I am the good shepherd)

John 10:11-16

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

(I am the resurrection and the life)

John 11:21-27

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

(In my Father's house are many rooms)

John 14:1-6

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Death is nothing at all.
 I have only slipped away into the next room.
 I am I, and you are you.
 Whatever we were to each other, that we still are.
 Call me by my old familiar name, speak to me in the easy way
 which you always used.
 Put no difference in your tone, wear no forced air of solemnity
 or sorrow.
 Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes
 we enjoyed together.
 Pray, smile, think of me, pray for me.
 Let my name be ever the household word that it always was,
 let it be spoken without effect, without the trace
 of a shadow on it.
 Life means all that it ever meant.
 It is the same as it ever was; there is unbroken continuity.
 Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?
 I am waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near,
 just around the corner.
 All is well.

-Henri Scott Holland
 1887-1918
Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral

Love is a Stranger

On that fatal day my casket rolls along,
 don't think my heart is in this world.
 Don't cry, don't wail in anguish; that surely would be sad.
 When you see my procession, don't say I am gone.
 It will be my reunion. As you lower me into the grave,
 don't say, "Good-bye". The grave is a veil before the
 gathering of paradise. When you see that lowering down,
 think of a rising. What harm is in the setting moon or sun?
 What seems a setting to you is a dawning.
 Though it may seem a prison, this vault releases the soul.
 Unless a seed enters the earth, it doesn't grow...
 Unless the bucket goes down, it won't come up full...
 Close your mouth here and open it beyond,
 and in the nowhere, air will be your song.

-Rumi

Debtor

So long as my spirit still
Is glad of breath
And lifts it plumes of pride
In the dark face of death;

While I am curious still
Of love and fame,
Keeping my heart too high
For the years to tame;

How can I quarrel with fate
Since I can see
I am a debtor to life,
Not life to me?

-Sara Teasdale

Merger Poem

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

-Judy Chicago

from 'The Dinner Party' project, 1995