

## Opening Poem: Late Fragment

And did you get what  
you wanted from this life, even so?  
I did.  
And what did you want?  
To call myself beloved, to feel myself  
beloved on the earth.

—Raymond Carver

### from **Psalm 90**

O God, You have been our home in every generation.  
Before the mountains were brought forth,  
Before You formed the earth and the world,  
From everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

You say, "Return, you children of humanity."  
A thousand years in Your sight  
Are as yesterday when it is past,  
As a watch in the night.

You carry the days away like floodwaters, like sleep.  
And we are like grass springing forth.  
In the morning the grass flourishes and grows,  
And in the evening it is cut down and withers.

Our years are threescore and ten  
Or given strength, fourscore,  
But even the best years contain hard work and vanity.  
Our time is gone, and we fly away.

Teach us to treasure each day  
That we may open our hearts to Your wisdom.  
Gladden us in the morning with Your mercy.  
Let Your graciousness be upon us.

Establish the work of our hands  
And may the work of our hands establish You.

## Call-and-response

We gather today to remember our beloved. She was daughter, mother, grandmother, wife, and friend.

*Let her memory be a blessing for us.*

Her stories, her laughter and her tears, have become part of us. When we remember her, she lives on in our hearts.

*Let her memory be a blessing for us.*

Help us, O God, to care for one another in our sorrow. Guide us to to take comfort in shared remembrance.

*Let her memory be a blessing for us.*

## A Reading: Things Shouldn't Be So Hard

A life should leave deep tracks: ruts where she went out and back to get the mail or move the hose around the yard; where she used to stand before the sink, a worn-out place;	beneath her hand the china knobs rubbed down to white pastilles; the switch she used to feel for in the dark almost erased. Her things should keep her marks.	The passage of a life should show; it should abrade. And when life stops, a certain space— however small— should be left scarred by the grand and damaging parade. Things shouldn't be so hard.
---	--	---

—Kay Ryan

## Psalm 23

A psalm of David:

God is my shepherd, I shall not want.

God makes me lie down in green pastures,

God leads me beside still waters

To restore my soul;

God leads me in paths of righteousness for the sake of God's name.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil,

for You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You set a table before me

in the presence of my enemies

You anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

Truly goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life

And I will dwell

in the house of the Lord forever.

### A Reading: Poem for My Mother

Not having her in the world  
is the strangest thing. Right now,  
a winter wind is blowing sunlight  
against the treetops, smashing it  
into a million atoms of joy.

She herself found joy in every  
lucent leaf, each kiss of transient  
breeze against the cheek of  
the earth. She watched the short,  
sweet month of February with its  
red hearts, lace and lengthening  
light, the promissory note  
of spring, come due with  
interest every year, never jaded,

always mailing a card with  
Xs and Os to her middle-aged  
daughters. When she died we said  
it was time, at eighty-eight, no  
broken hearts here, she had a full  
life, she was ailing, she was failing.

But in this light, with the snow  
dripping off the roof and the branches  
tossing, this light like a voice calling to  
the sleeping bulbs, the burrowing  
roots, this breath of fresh wind with  
its sting and its kiss, as much as I  
honor the spirit, I ache to touch flesh.

—Nancy Brewka-Clark

## **Prayer before the Eulogy**

In Scripture, we find the words of the long-suffering Job: *God gives, and God takes away; blessed be the Name of God.*

We know that God gives. God gives us loved ones, the light of our days. God gives us beloved parents, beloved children, beloved companions and friends.

We know that God takes away. And we are never prepared to truly let go when our loved one moves beyond this world which we know into a place we cannot reach.

The challenge is responding to this—to the giving, and to the taking-away—with the third line from Job: *blessed be the Name of God.* May we find it in our hearts to offer blessing, even in this moment of sorrow.

*(eulogies)*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who Art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil  
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory  
Forever and ever, amen.

## **God, Full of Compassion**

God, full of compassion, who dwells on high:  
Grant peace beneath the shelter of Your presence  
To this beloved soul.  
Let her rest in the heights of the holy and pure  
Who shine with the splendor of the heavens.  
May she rest in the garden of Eden.  
Please, Source of Mercy,  
Guard her beneath the protection of Your wings  
For all eternity.  
Bind her soul in the bonds of life.  
You are her inheritance.  
May she rest in peace.  
And let us say: Amen.

## **Closing Blessing**

May the Source of Peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort to all who are bereaved. And let us say: Amen.