

I Am God's Song



The Inspired Wisdom of
James Dillet Freeman

CONTENTS

2	I Am God's Song
3	The Power of Words
7	The Hilltop Heart
8	If You Reach
10	One Step More
11	Be!
12	How Strong Love Is
14	Still the Glory Is Not Gone
15	Grace
16	Fragile Things
17	Wisdom
18	A Beauty on the Land
19	Homeward
20	Once Upon a Christmas
23	If Every Day Were Christmas
24	Jesus: The One We All Might Be
25	If Thoughts Had Shapes
26	Change
27	Rivers Hardly Ever
28	The Pollyanna
29	I Journey On
30	Prayer Is Life
32	Faith: "Help Thou Mine Unbelief"
34	The Immortal Journey
36	Prayer for Protection
37	The Traveler
39	Our Eternal Friend
42	I Am There

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Our ministry is supported primarily by the freewill offerings of friends like you. Your generosity helps make it possible for us to offer this inspirational booklet. Our desire is to make Unity literature available to everyone who wants it, especially those most in need of spiritual encouragement.

Dear Friends,

Inspired words inspire us. Poetic lines, sacred rhyme, eloquent prose give us not just an understanding of the Divine, but an experience of it.

James Dillet Freeman is the only poet laureate the Unity movement has ever had. His prose and poetry have touched millions of people, lifting their hearts and inspiring their spirit. Jim loved Unity, and Unity loved him. But his audience stretched far beyond to readers all around the world. Two of his poems were even taken to the moon!

Freeman devoted his life and his writing to sharing the Unity message because he wanted people “to hurt less.” May this special collection of some of his most memorable writings serve as a guide and a gift for you—a healing balm in the tough times and a sweet reminder in the peaceful ones. As you read his words, may angels sing in you—as they did in him.

Love to you on your journey,

Your Friends in Unity



I Am God's Song

Perhaps I am most like a song.

What is a song?

A song is a thought in the imagination of its composer, an unheard music of the mind.

A song is words and notes set down on a sheet of music paper.

A song is a sweet undulation of sounds for a little time in a certain place.

And a song is also the singer singing, a mind and body expressing themselves.

I am the song and the sound and the singer.

You will hear me again and again in different keys, in different voices, whistled and chanted and hummed, sometimes only a few bars, sometimes sung over and over. The singer may sing imperfectly, yet I am always the same perfect song, imagined music in the mind of my Composer, written down in the Eternal's music book, flawless and complete.

I am God's song.

Listen for me.

You are God's song.

Listen.

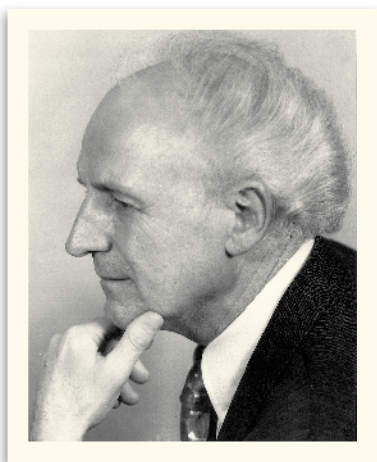


The Power of Words

By Philip White

For nearly the last 10 years of his life, James Dillet Freeman had lunch with me almost every Friday. I was the editor of *Unity Magazine* and was fortunate to have Jim as our principal columnist, writing the popular “Life Is a Wonder.”

Needless to say, Jim’s writing set the tone for all that we did in the magazine. He was in his mid-80s and would often pop into my office before the due date and run ideas by me, assuring me that an article was coming. But the time came when he would call me and tell me the words weren’t there for him that month. He would ask if we could substitute one of his previous pieces, which we always did.



James Dillet Freeman

Editors want to keep their excellent writers writing, so I proposed to him that we have lunch every Friday. We could talk of Truth ideas that he might put to paper and, frankly, help him retain the creative motivation to keep writing. It started as a pragmatic relationship—editor to writer—but ended as a deep friendship.

Intuitive spiritual insights and significant meanings, “angels” as he called them, were the lifeblood of his

writing. Without them, Jim could not write. But with them came the inspired words he knew could help people and change lives. In mid-conversation, as we ate lunch together, he would suddenly pull a small pad from his pocket and begin furiously scribbling a small paragraph. As he wrote in the poem “Angels Sing in Me,” “I must get it down quickly and turn it into words and phrases before it passes away, leaving no trace.”

I was thrilled when it happened and never interrupted, but he would never share the content with me. “It’s only the bones,” he insisted. “No flesh—just a minor tune.” With a devilish smile, he said it was too fresh to be commented on, “especially by an editor like you!” Laugh, we did! He was always poking fun at editors who in his estimation were perfectly capable of missing the point of a piece of his writing.

After a while, when I started picking him up at home, he would occasionally share with me over his favorite lunch of grilled shrimp how much trouble he was having with a piece of writing. On one occasion it was a poem that was due that week for *Daily Word* for which he couldn’t find a last line. It is every writer’s plight that Jim had put to verse: “And I must turn this celestial strain I have caught, as the angels flew through my head, into a poem ... This is hard. The heavenly sounds get mixed with earthly ones—the angel song with my own.”

We both knew that it was good he had someone with whom to share his sudden intuitive drought. For a

writer, an inspirational deficit can paint the horizon dark. “The whole thing must be scrapped,” Jim said, “if that last line does not come.” Ever the editorial optimist, I intruded, “Oh, I’m sure it’ll come.” He leaned across the table, waving a grilled shrimp on his fork, and with that same devilish smile, growled, “But you are not writing it!” More laughter. It wasn’t that he didn’t appreciate encouragement. He did. But he was at a place where he could not allow himself to depend on my assurance in place of his own complete openness to whatever was the destiny of that poem—to be determined, not by human intervention, but by his angels.

Of course, his heart knew the answer, which he had already put into words in “Angels Sing in Me”: “All I can do is pray that my angels will return and look over my shoulder where I write and whisper a few more words in my ear. So that the singing I heard you may hear too.” A week later, a smiling Jim told me the line came to him in the middle of the night. “It woke me up and I scrambled to write it down,” he said. The angels had returned.

One day, as we lunched, Jim spoke of his days in Silent Unity, the 24/7 prayer ministry of Unity. Except for a few years in the 1960s and after he retired in 1984, he had spent most of his writing life working there. As we talked, the source of his passion for words came clearly to me. In Silent Unity each month, Jim, along with 100 letter writers, worked tirelessly to put together words of truth, faith, spiritual insight, love, and comfort to answer the needs of thousands of correspondents.

In 1945 he started the residential ministerial school, and it was there I came in 1961 to study for the ministry. Jim was our speech teacher. By that time he already had an impressive body of writing to his credit. In class one morning he told us that he wanted us to find words in our speeches that had power and meaning. “Don’t settle for weak words!” he exclaimed. “Find the ones with life and intensity!” Then he shared that throughout the years he had developed what he said was his “inner critic.” And he encouraged us to develop our own. “If there is any success in my own writing, I owe it all to my inner critic, which rejects much more than it accepts.” It was a simple, self-evident, but profound discipline. Only by passing over and setting aside weak words were you making the necessary inner spiritual room for powerful ones to emerge.

As we reminisced that day about those long-ago ministerial classes, he reminded me of a story he told his students in those days. It was about a letter written by a prayer associate at Silent Unity a few years earlier that had been received by a man contemplating suicide. The

This is the heart of our Unity
movement—words that
change lives.

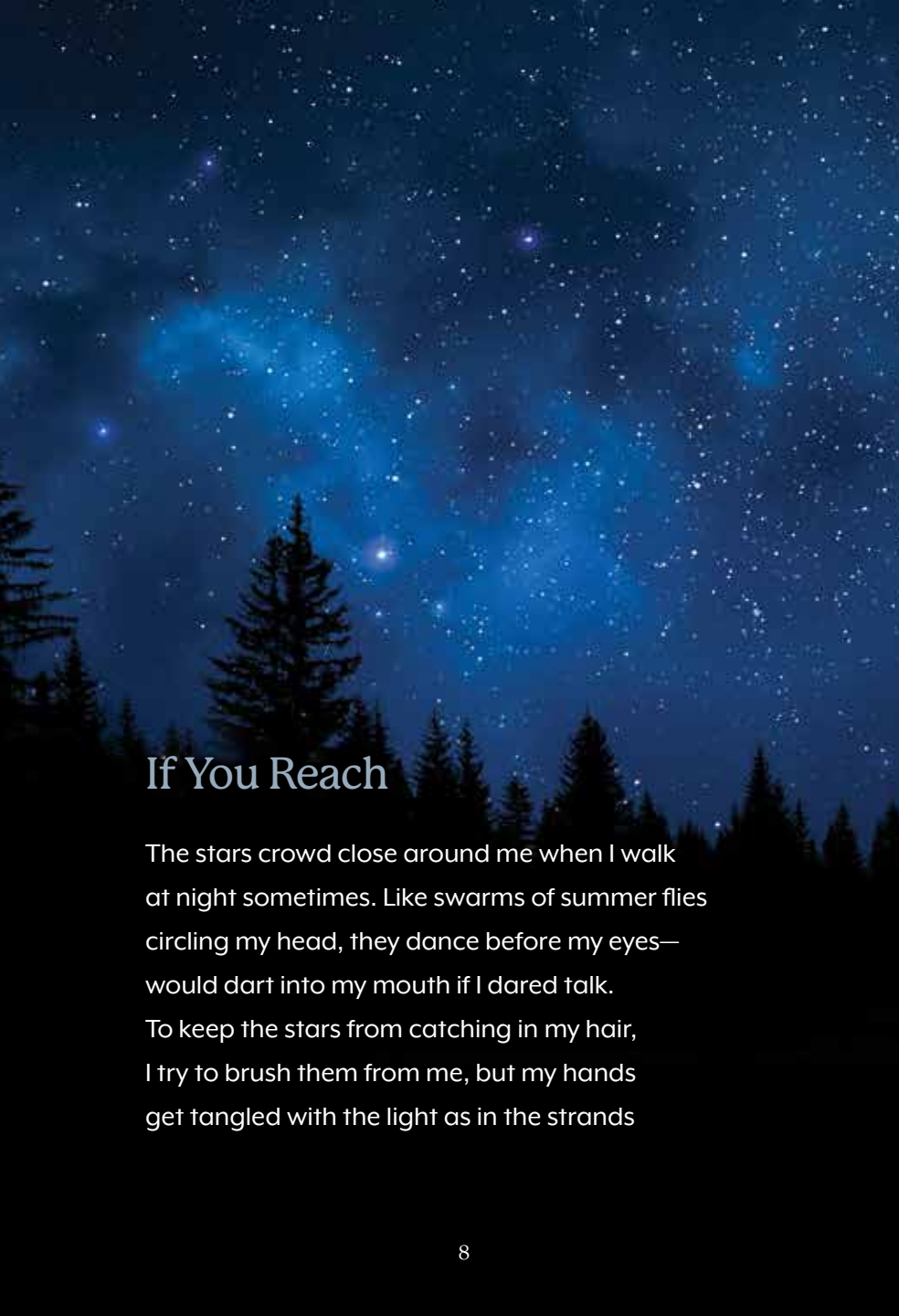
letter sat quietly on the man’s desk as he set his papers in order for those who would be left behind. Then, as he prepared to write a final goodbye note, he picked up the Silent Unity letter and read: “What one heart cannot bear alone, a hundred loving hearts can bear in faith.” The man decided to keep living.

“Phil,” Jim said earnestly, leaning across the table, “this is the heart of our Unity movement—words that change lives. Let’s never forget it!” I never have.

The Hilltop Heart

If only you have a hilltop heart,
life's compass points lie far apart;
what heights and deeps life has, how far
the hilltop heart's horizons are!
Hills have a way of stretching minds;
lured-on imagination winds
up over crests and down through hollows.
Hills tug at the heart, and the heart follows,
dares the undared, tries the untried.
Hills always have another side;
if you make the climb up and descent,
you may find the valley of content.
Though a hilltop heart may never stand still,
yet the heart was meant for the top of a hill!

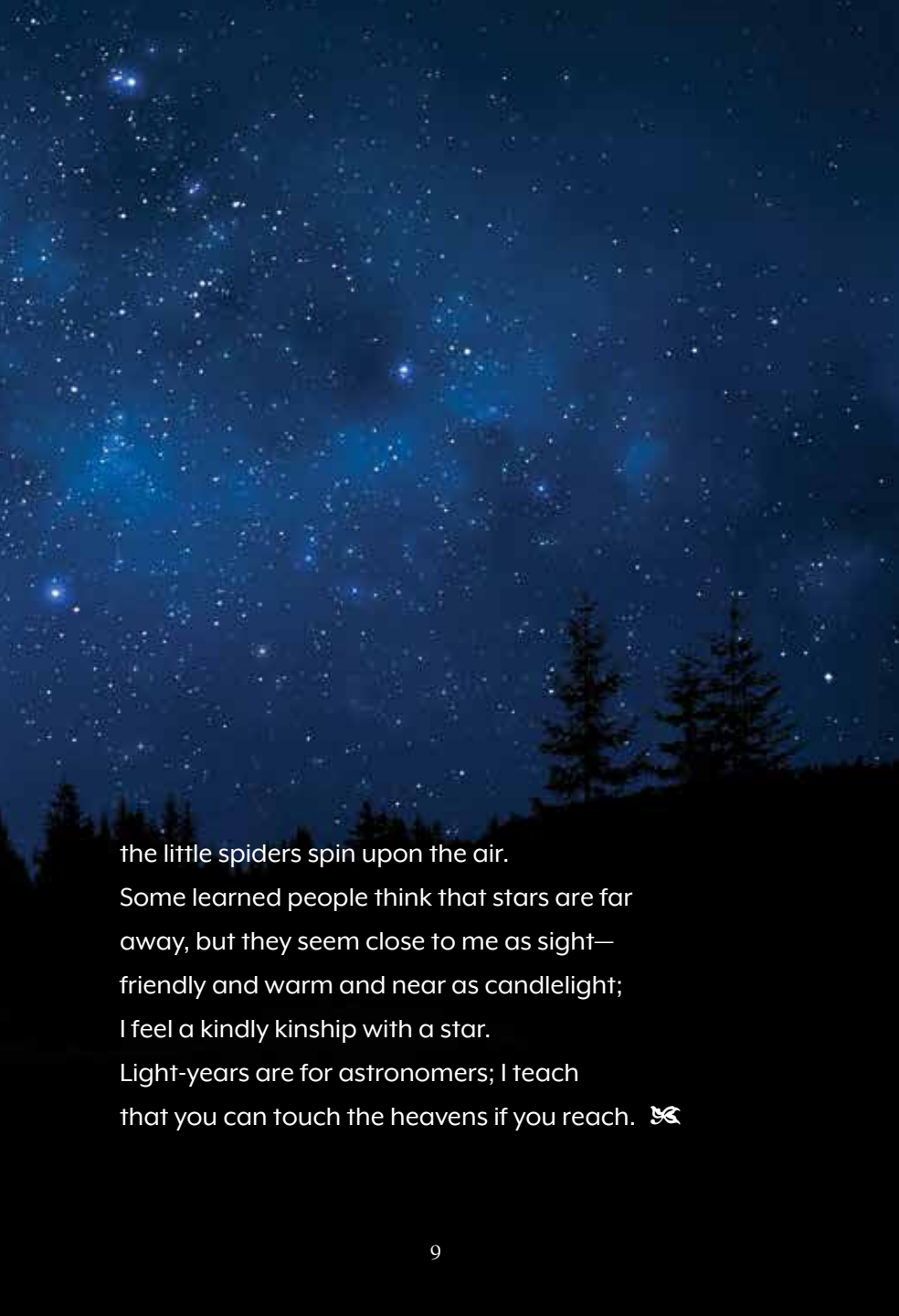




If You Reach

The stars crowd close around me when I walk
at night sometimes. Like swarms of summer flies
circling my head, they dance before my eyes—
would dart into my mouth if I dared talk.

To keep the stars from catching in my hair,
I try to brush them from me, but my hands
get tangled with the light as in the strands



the little spiders spin upon the air.
Some learned people think that stars are far
away, but they seem close to me as sight—
friendly and warm and near as candlelight;
I feel a kindly kinship with a star.
Light-years are for astronomers; I teach
that you can touch the heavens if you reach. 🦋

One Step More

A hill is not too hard to climb
taken one step at a time.

One step is not too much to take;
one try is not too much to make.

One step, one try, one song, one smile
will shortly stretch into a mile.

And everything worthwhile was done
by small steps taken one by one.

To reach the goal you started for,
take one step more, take one step more!



Be!

Listen to life, and you shall hear the voice of life crying, *Be!*

What shall you be?

Be what you were made to be!

You were made to be alive. You were made to be joy. You were made to be a son of God. God made you in His image. The impress of His Spirit is on your every living cell ...

Aim at the highest, though you may not hit it. If you never aim beyond your reach, you will not grow. To be is to grow, and to grow is to aim beyond your reach. Growth is aspiration, and aspiration is the impulse to be what you were born to be.

Life is made for the high aimers. They are the true aimers. It is they who make all growth possible.

O Man, you are the spiritual seed of God! Grow as a tree grows, rising out of yourself as a tree rises out of itself.

A redwood seed is very small to grow into such a gigantic tree. You are more than a redwood tree. For it has height and breadth and depth, but you have other dimensions. You are Mind. You are Spirit.

O Man, you were made to be the perfect man of God!

God said, *Be!*



How Strong Love Is

By Rev. Michael A. Maday

Most of my favorite writings by Jim Freeman can be found in *Love Is Strong as Death*, his book about loving and losing his first wife, Katherine. Perhaps all great writing does what this book does for me: I can feel the sometimes harsh reality in my bones and still feel uplifted in my heart. Such writings are deep and true and memorable.

Jim's book on grief is also a book on love, a love made profound because of the grief. As we read it, Jim's loss becomes ours; his journey to healing is redemptive for all of us.

Jim told me that the poems in this period of his life were the best he ever wrote, and I agree. Out of his immense grief he allowed his spirit the full expression of sorrow. Often he was understandably numb and couldn't write a word—but then something would shift and the words would flow, as if they were coming from a presence much larger than he.

James Dillet Freeman was a man much larger than life. Yet he was no saint and he would be the first one to admit his foibles. I think that is why I admired him so much and why I found his writing so compelling.

If you only see the sunny side of life, you never appreciate the reflections here, or the grace

revealed in the silvery shine of the moon. To me, it is no accident that Jim Freeman is the only person to have two poems planted on the lunar surface. For it is our dark sides that reveal all that is hidden, and much of that is precious to the soul.



Jim and Katherine



Still the Glory Is Not Gone

One night I lay down by my wife
so tired that I was tired of life,
so close to love, so close to death
I lay, almost too close for breath.

There from the midnight cliffs of mind,
leaving all things and thoughts behind,
I looked at everything on Earth
and saw what everything is worth.
I saw then what life's meanings are,
what I am doing on this star,
citizen of the universe,
meeting the better and the worse,
whether willing or whether loath,
for the law of life is the law of growth.
I saw the secret in the seed,
saw the lily in the weed,
saw life in death, saw in the tomb
only the resurrecting womb!
I looked at life and saw it plain,
and saw the meaning of the pain,

Saw heaven's rim, thought it was hell,
and though I had no words to tell
what I had seen, I understood—
saw through the pain and saw it good!
And knew that somehow I am part
of being, heart of the inmost heart!

Then through my hell of helplessness,
I felt an unseen presence press,
and when I rose it lingered on,
and still the glory is not gone.



Grace

Though God, God only, can create,
I till and weed, and then I wait,
and in the thicket of my thought
bloom flowers that I never wrought.
I stand in wonder and behold
beauty I never sowed unfold,
visions of faith, insights of love,
truths that I had no forethought of.

Somehow there is in me yet more
than I myself might settle for,
a faith that brings perfection out
past my own powers. I have no doubt
one day all unexpectedly
the rose of Christ shall bloom in me.



Fragile Things

How fragile is a flower!
It may not last an hour;
even more fragile are imaginings.

Yet thoughts and flowers both
possess the gift of growth.
I wonder at the strength of fragile things:

on a harsh peak, where rock
is shattered by the shock
of wind, a fragile flower survives

and one Christ-centered thought,
too tenuous to be caught,
alters the whole direction of our lives.



Wisdom

The wise and learned sage
on the pretentious page
writes: "In two words defined,
God is divine mind."

But infants' helpless wiles,
mere cockleshells of smiles,
say without words or art,
"God is the human heart."





A Beauty on the Land

There lies a beauty on the land,
but it is hard to understand
what is the glory in the sky
and on the stranger passing by.
The small sun does not rise or set;
the pavement glistens onyx-wet;
the little lights shine here and there;
a winter damp is in the air.
Yet all the gray familiar places,
all the streets and all the faces,
wear a look of faraway.
It is an ordinary day,
yet everywhere I look I find
a beauty that I passed by blind
an hour ago. Sometimes I think
we spend our life on beauty's brink
and never open up our eyes
to see how warm, how close it lies.



Homeward

Home the shepherd and the sheep
Come at evening from the hill,
Through a silence kind and deep,
Full of shadows soft and still.
Still and soft and deep and kind
The gentle blessing of a prayer
Falls like evening on the mind.
Homeward from the hills of care
Now my thoughts return like sheep
I shall pray and pray until
Peace comes dropping down like sleep,
And I am home, and I am still.



Once Upon a Christmas

By Peggy Pifer

James Dillet Freeman and his second wife Billie were key influences in the beginning of my Unity education. Billie was my supervisor in the letter writing department of the Silent Unity prayer ministry. Jim served as the director of Silent Unity, which meant he was also involved in the editorial portion of the work.

When I began at Unity in 1978, part of my training was to become familiar with the pamphlets that were mailed with prayer letters. As I read the philosophy, the teachings, and the history of Unity, I had a deep sense of belonging. I felt as though I was intertwined with the evolving history of Unity.

Jim's writings contributed to that feeling, especially his column in *Unity Magazine*. It was my favorite part of the magazine and provided great food for thought. Jim enjoyed bringing up hot topics that sparked much discussion, but always the subject expressed his love for Unity.

Jim could tell a story like no one else. He shared experiences of his early days at Unity, including youthful antics for which he had been reprimanded. His talks and stories in our *Daily Word* meetings and other employee meetings made working at Unity like a family gathering. He regaled Silent Unity staff with anecdotes and tales that entertained us, taught us, and kept us wanting more.

Christmastime was no exception. The holiday season at Silent Unity was filled with joyous song and celebration, usually with Jim right in the middle of it. His love of Christmas and his gift for weaving a story with a message were apparent in his yearly Christmas stories in *Unity Magazine*. When Unity published a compilation of these stories, each employee received a copy of the book, *Once Upon a Christmas*. Reading some of the stories with my daughter Jackie became a Christmas tradition.

“The Tale of a Pig” was one of my daughter’s favorites. What child doesn’t love a story

where the animals can talk? It touched on prejudice against the

outcast barnyard animal who was the only one to bring a smile to the face of the baby born in a manger. I would often find the book in her room at Christmastime. She was enthralled with the stories, but also with the idea that I worked with the author and that he lived in our town. She would even point out Jim’s house to her friends as we passed by. When I pulled the book from the shelf recently, I found a bookmark still holding her page.



Jim and his second wife Billie

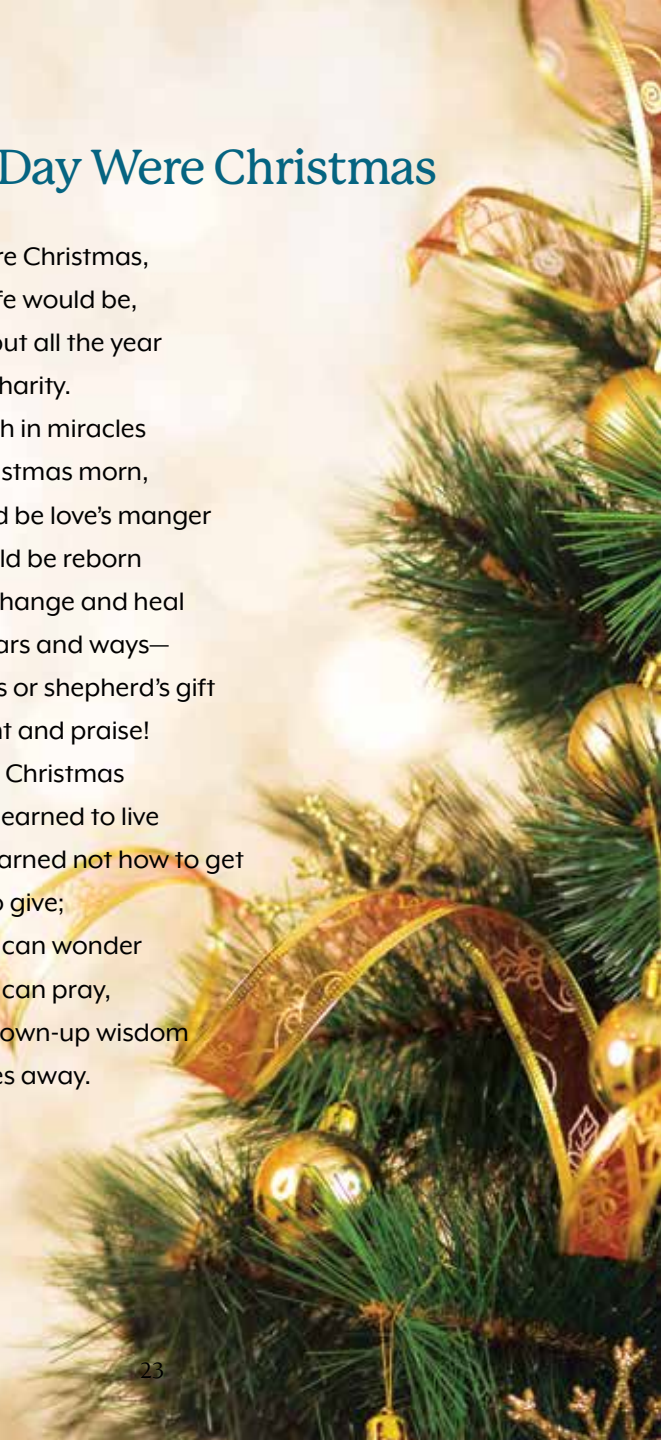
I discovered just how much she liked that book one Christmas. While my husband and I were away and Jackie was spending the day with her grandparents, they decided to surprise us by taking Jackie to a studio to have some Christmas photos made. When we received the photos on Christmas Day, imagine my surprise and delight! My favorite photo was the one of Jackie reading *Once Upon a Christmas*.

That photo always evokes precious memories of my daughter and her loving grandparents, but also of someone who was teacher, mentor, and a bit of a hero. Thank you, Jim.



If Every Day Were Christmas

If every day were Christmas,
how different life would be,
if not one day but all the year
were ruled by charity.
Had we the faith in miracles
a child has Christmas morn,
each day would be love's manger
and Christ would be reborn
in us again to change and heal
our outworn wars and ways—
had we a child's or shepherd's gift
for wonderment and praise!
Yet every day is Christmas
when we have learned to live
by love's law, learned not how to get
but only how to give;
and like a child can wonder
and like a child can pray,
but have the grown-up wisdom
to give ourselves away.



Jesus: The One We All Might Be

The One we all might be saw through life's imperfections—through sickness and doubt, through poverty and fear, through hatred and pride, even through death—and he called forth wholeness, faith, joy, love, and life. He showed us what life might be—lived to the utmost of its possibilities. He showed us what a person might be who held to the highest and best in himself.



If Thoughts Had Shapes

If thoughts had shapes like things,
I wonder what they'd be—
would wonder not be wings
and reverie a sea?

If hope looked like a seed,
would lilies grow for grace,
would worry be a weed,
despair a barren space?

Would thoughts of Truth not find
a rainbow's radiant form,
and would not peace of mind
be sunlight after storm?

And love, what shape would show
love patient, warm, and true?
All you I love, I know
that love would look like you.



Change

I have resisted change with all my will,
cried out to life, "Pass by and leave me still."
But I have found as I have trudged time's track
that all my wishing will not hold life back.
All finite things must go their finite way;
I cannot bid the merest moment, "Stay."
So finding that I have no power to change
change, I have changed myself. And this is strange,
but I have found out when I let change come,
the very change that I was fleeing from
has often held the good I had prayed for,
and I was not the less for change, but more.
Once I accepted life and was not loath
to change, I found change was the seed of growth.



Rivers Hardly Ever

Rivers hardly ever run in a straight line.

Rivers are willing to take ten thousand meanders

and enjoy every one

and grow from every one—

when they leave a meander,

they are always more

than when they entered it.

When rivers meet an obstacle,

they do not try to run over it;

they merely go around,

but they always get to the other side.

Rivers accept things as they are,

conform to the shape they find the world in—

yet nothing changes things more than rivers;

rivers move even mountains into the sea.

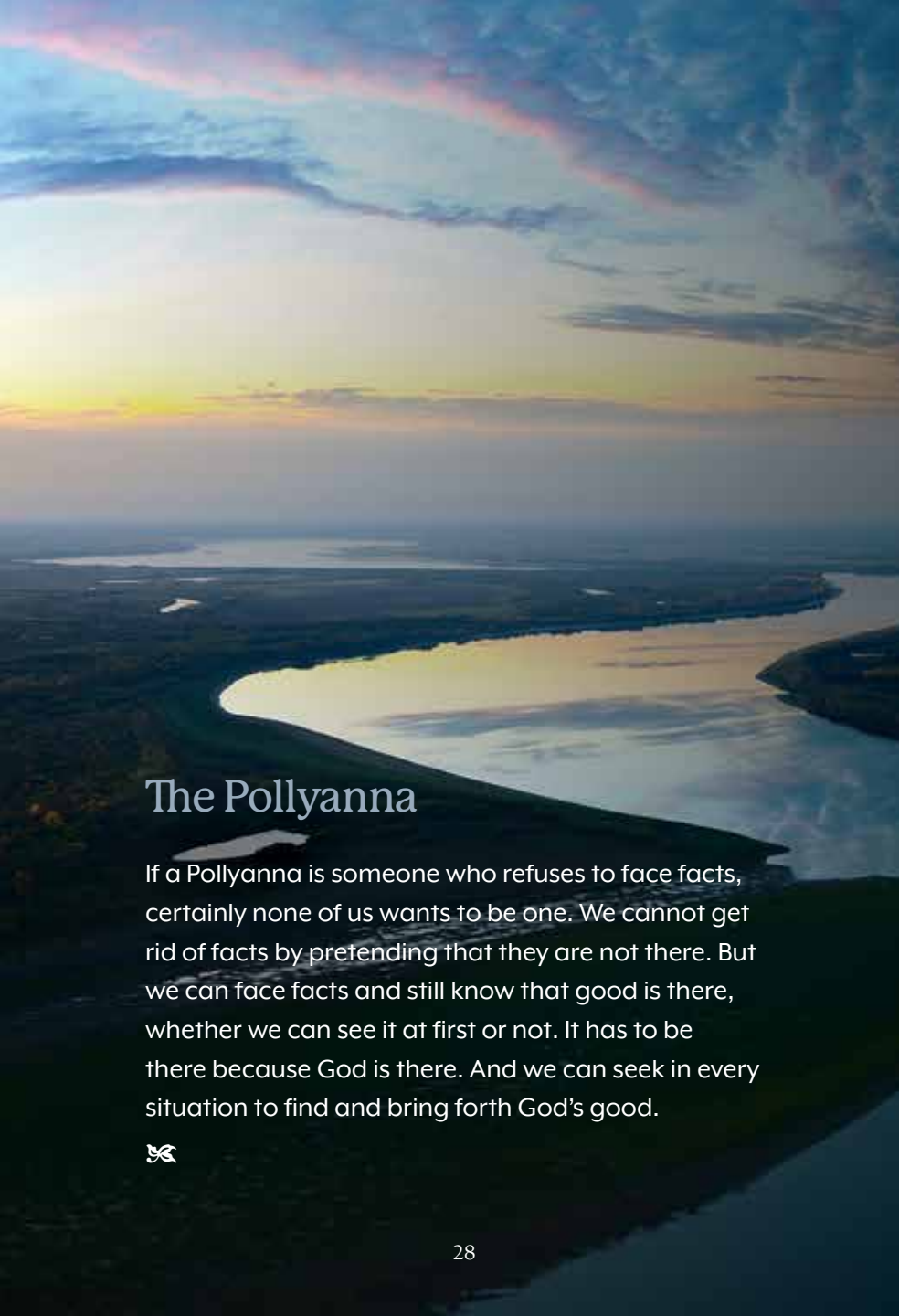
Rivers hardly ever are in a hurry,

yet is there anything more likely

to reach the point it sets out for

than a river?



An aerial photograph of a wide, winding river, likely the Pollyanna, flowing through a dark, forested landscape. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the sky and reflecting it on the water's surface. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds in shades of blue, purple, and orange. The river curves from the lower right towards the upper left, eventually disappearing into the distance.

The Pollyanna

If a Pollyanna is someone who refuses to face facts, certainly none of us wants to be one. We cannot get rid of facts by pretending that they are not there. But we can face facts and still know that good is there, whether we can see it at first or not. It has to be there because God is there. And we can seek in every situation to find and bring forth God's good.



I Journey On

I am on an immortal journey, and I have yet more journeying to do.

Through chance and change, by way of worlds forgotten and courses unremembered yet graven in my soul, I came up to here, and from here, by ways unknown yet ways my soul has drawn me to, I journey on.

This is the human condition.

I have risen on innumerable mornings.

I have slept through innumerable nights.

I have journeyed on innumerable journeys.

I have lived in familiar and unfamiliar worlds.

I have had brave and beautiful companions, lovely friends. I shall have them yet again.

I have been weak and strong, wise and unwise.

I have come on much curious knowledge, some remembered, some forgotten.

I have done many deeds, some worthy, some unworthy.

What I am undertaking I am not sure—but somehow I am sure it is an enterprise worthy of my effort.

Where I am going I am not sure—but I am sure it is a destination worthy of myself.





Prayer Is Life

Prayer is survival power. Though the night may come down dark around and the faith with which we face the night seem small, perhaps no faith at all; yet, if we pray, always some spark leaps up through the tinder of our hearts, a little light to show us our way. Prayer is life.

Prayer is a reaching, and every act of prayer stretches the soul. Prayer is spiritual exercise.

There are many ways to pray, as there are many ways to God. The way of the bird is not the way of the fish. The way of the babe is not the way of the adult. The way of the beginner is not the way of the master. Yet there is no atom of creation that does not have access to God. Each soul finds its way to God at the level of its own experience.

For some, prayer is thought; and for some, it is feeling too inarticulate for thought to express. Communion with nature may be prayer, or the enjoyment of art and poetry and music. An act of kindness may be a prayer, a smile, a friendly hand. Work is often a prayer, for work is an affirmation of creative power. Praise is a kind of prayer. So is zeal. There is the prayer that is the distillation of a moment, passionate and intense, and the prayer that is the whole life of a man, the living prayer of what one is ...

I do not pray to change God. How would I change the wholly good? The breeze of God blows steady all the time; I pray so that I may avail myself of it. It is not God but I who needs to change. This is why I use affirmative prayer. At the center of things there is a harmonious will. This will is life; this will is joy; this will is order; this will is love. Affirmative prayer harmonizes us with this central will of being.

This is affirmative prayer—to know in the face of sickness that underneath are the everlasting arms of wholeness and in the truest part of us we are inseparably one with life; to be able to hear through the discords of daily living the music of immortal love and to strike its chords from the key of our own being; to be able to look at lack, yet to drink deep from unseen wells of plenty. It is the ability to see the facts and flaws, yet know that they are not reality.

True prayer is apprehension of the changeless Truth, which abides at the heart of the changeful world, the Truth of life and joy and order and love, the Truth of God.



Faith: “Help Thou Mine Unbelief”

Faith is not so much a matter of the mind as of the heart. Sometimes in seeking to understand God as principle, we lose sight of God as a presence. Theologians and philosophers can know God as words to set down in books, but a child that cannot even utter the name of God may have a faith beyond that of learned priests. To have faith is not to theorize about God or even to imagine God, but to experience God ...

Faith is the power to see in the disappointment of today the fulfillment of tomorrow, in the end of old hopes the beginning of new life. Faith is the inward power to see beyond the outward signs, the power to know that all is right when everything looks wrong.

When our fondest dreams seem to go amiss and our dearest prayers seem to remain unanswered, faith is a vision of life that soars beyond the limitations of the self—these narrow senses, this imperfect reason, this drift of circumstance—and sees that our life is a part of something more than we have ever understood. In spite of all that may seem and all that may happen there is an ultimate fulfillment, that all is truly well, that all must be well. Life has an eternal meaning, we are one with the infinite, and whatever may befall us, in the all-infolding, all-unfolding everness of God, life will work out for good ...

If you cannot believe in much, then believe in the little that you can. Start where you are and grow. What seed can have a foreknowledge of the tree it will become? What thorny bush can prophesy the rose? What worm can tell of the butterfly? Faith grows ...

Though there be no shouts of praise, no laurels, we bear the whole race forward in our great stride, and the compassion that infolds the world catches us to ourselves and presses us even into the inmost heart of life, even into the love of God Himself.

“Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

When from your heart the troubled cry goes up, know that there is no cry but that somehow there is an answer. There is a love. There is a power. There is a wisdom, and there is a way to go. Let your heart hold fast; the way will be made plain.



The Immortal Journey

We make an immortal journey. Through chance and change, by way of worlds forgotten and courses unremembered yet graven in my soul, I came here and I journey on.

This is the human condition.

I have risen on innumerable mornings.

I have slept through innumerable nights.

I have journeyed on innumerable journeys.

I have lived in familiar and unfamiliar worlds.

I have had brave and beautiful companions, lovely friends.

I shall have them yet again.

I have been weak and strong, wise and unwise.

Ordinary things are the house of the beautiful.

Usual life is the fullness of living.

Every child is a holy infant.

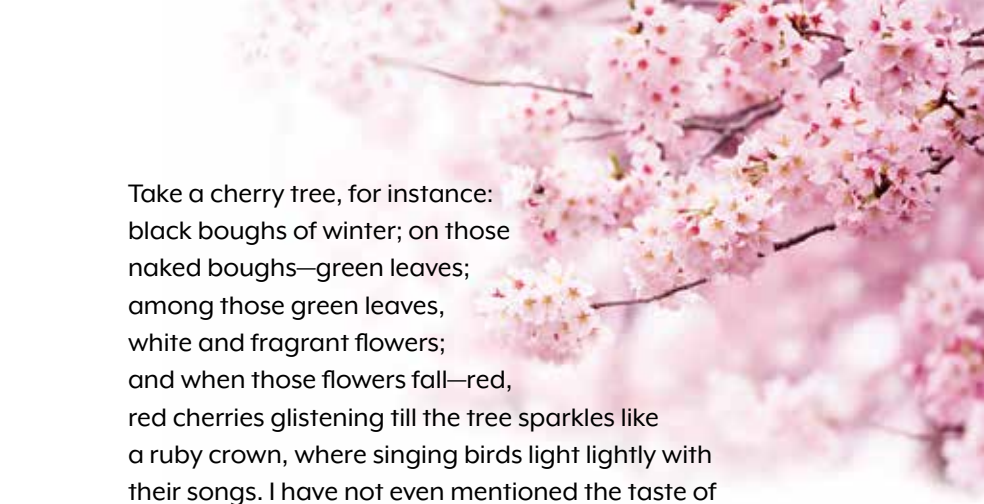
Every one of us is a child of God.

Now we call a few extraordinary happenings wonders and miracles, such as the works of Jesus.

We say they are miracles because we cannot explain them and cannot duplicate them.

But what can we explain and what can we duplicate?

What is an ordinary thing?

A close-up photograph of pink cherry blossoms in full bloom, with delicate petals and visible stamens, filling the upper right portion of the page.

Take a cherry tree, for instance:
black boughs of winter; on those
naked boughs—green leaves;
among those green leaves,
white and fragrant flowers;
and when those flowers fall—red,
red cherries glistening till the tree sparkles like
a ruby crown, where singing birds light lightly with
their songs. I have not even mentioned the taste of
cherries baked in a pie! I can only say, what delightful ways
God has of revealing Himself to us.

Or take the starry sky. Go out of doors tonight and look at
it, the glittering night aflame with stars—not one so large as
candlelight, still tapers, but with a power to move the spirit
more than any summer fireworks show!

Or a baby!

Little Jesus, O Holy Infant, do we need to ask you if a baby is
a wonder and a miracle?

If a genie suddenly materialized, we would be struck dumb
with astonishment.

We see a child, a cherry, or a star. We are delighted, but we
act as if these were not as great a marvel as a genie.

We have only to look inside ourselves or step outside
our door to see ten thousand wonders, each one as
implausible, unexplainable, and unique as a genie.





Prayer for Protection

The light of God surrounds me,
The love of God enfolds me,
The power of God protects me,
The presence of God watches over me.
Wherever I am, God is!



James Dillet Freeman wrote this prayer during World War II. Then in 1969, the prayer was carried into space on Apollo 11 by Lunar Module Pilot Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, who with Commander Neil Armstrong became the first men to walk on the moon.

The Traveler

He has put on invisibility.
Dear Lord, I cannot see—
but this I know, although the road ascends
and passes from my sight,
that there will be no night;
that You will take him gently by the hand
and lead him on
along the road of life that never ends,
and he will find it is not death but dawn.
I do not doubt that You are there as here,
and You will hold him dear.

Our life did not begin with birth,
it is not of the Earth;
and this that we call death, it is no more
than the opening and closing of a door—
and in Your house how many rooms must be
beyond this one where we rest momentarily.

Dear Lord, I thank You for the faith that frees,
the love that knows it cannot lose its own;
the love that, looking through the shadows, sees
that You and he and I are ever one!





Our Eternal Friend

By Rev. Phil Pierson

My wife Dorothy left Seattle to work at Unity School of Christianity in 1938 at the age of 18. She had met Charles Fillmore, cofounder of Unity, when he spoke in Seattle early that year. He had encouraged her to come to Unity Village to represent young people interested in the Unity work. She was considered Charles' protege.

When she arrived at Unity she met someone who was considered Myrtle Fillmore's protege, young Jim Freeman. Myrtle had been impressed by his poetic abilities, and he was given a job in the Silent Unity prayer ministry. As he was only four years older than Dorothy, he became a close friend of hers and her young husband at the time, Don. It was because of their lifelong friendship that when I married Dorothy in 1963, Jim became a very intimate part of my life too. Interestingly, it was Jim who was responsible for my deciding to become a Unity minister in 1957.

Dorothy was very close to most of the Unity movement's early leaders including May Rowland, director of Silent Unity; Martha Smock, editor of *Daily Word*; and Rosemary Fillmore Rhea, the granddaughter of Charles and Myrtle. This group included Jim, and they were often together. After I married Dorothy, I became part of the group as well. I mention this leadership group because in my years of sharing times with them, I observed that Jim was always held in very high appreciation. Based on my in-depth conversations with Jim, I am quite sure he won that special respect because of his

ability to attune himself to God's presence. Jim was very human, but he had the ability to step out of his personal self and evidence a flow of inspired thought and knowledge.

He could radiate compassion and love and express it beautifully in his poetry. Dorothy told me about Jim's courtship of his first wife, Katherine. She said Katherine was a very special person, and it was a major challenge for Jim when she became ill and passed.

As Jim shared publicly many times, it was her passing that made him reach out as never before in his young life to find the strength and understanding to go on. It was at this time, as he has written, that he went into the Silent Unity prayer room and reached out to God in prayer.



During this time of soul longing he heard inwardly the words to one of his greatest poems, "I Am There." The words that flowed to him were also the answer to his personal need. He needed to know that even though he could not understand why he had to lose his beloved, that somehow God presence was at work.

In that prayer time, Jim heard and knew that even in the midst of his deepest despair God was there in his life to support him and meet his soul and physical needs. Jim knew this message was for everyone and in 1947 he shared it as a poem.

Jim was the voice for Unity, and he would movingly express that Silent Unity was always there to help people who were hurting or in need. He knew that there are always people hurting the way he was when Katherine died. He wanted them to know they were never alone.

Unity flourished during Jim's leadership as the director of Silent Unity, after May Rowland. I believe it was because of the spirit he exuded that God is a vital presence in every life to meet whatever needs one might have.

I think Jim would join me in feeling that many metaphysicians get sidetracked thinking they are meant to "go it alone." That is, they are meant to create their lives by taking dominion of their thoughts, and "making it happen through right thinking." They are missing the message Jim conveyed that God is always there to help, to guide, to heal, to meet our every need.

Being positive and thinking "rightly" are important, but Jim would say you can also know that God is with you. "Do you need me? I am there!"

I Am There

Do you need Me?

I am there.

You cannot see Me, yet I am the light you see by.

You cannot hear Me, yet I speak through your voice.

You cannot feel Me, yet I am the power at work in your hands.

I am at work, though you do not understand My ways.

I am at work, though you do not recognize My works.

I am not strange visions. I am not mysteries.

Only in absolute stillness, beyond self, can you know Me as I am, and then but as a feeling and a faith.

Yet I am there. Yet I hear. Yet I answer.

When you need Me, I am there.

Even if you deny Me, I am there.

Even when you feel most alone, I am there.

Even in your fears, I am there.

Even in your pain, I am there.

I am there when you pray and when you do not pray.

I am in you, and you are in Me.

Only in your mind can you feel separate from Me, for only in your mind are the mists of “yours” and “mine.”

Yet only with your mind can you know Me and experience Me.

Empty your heart of empty fears.

When you get yourself out of the way, I am there.

You can of yourself do nothing, but I can do all.

And I am in all.

Though you may not see the good, good is there, for I am there.

I am there because I have to be, because I am.

Only in Me does the world have meaning; only out of Me does the world take form; only because of Me does the world go forward.

I am the law on which the movement of the stars and the growth of living cells are founded.

I am the love that is the law's fulfilling.

I am assurance.

I am peace.

I am oneness.

I am the law that you can live by.

I am the love that you can cling to.

I am your assurance.

I am your peace.

I am one with you.

I am.

Though you fail to find Me, I do not fail you.

Though your faith in Me is unsure, My faith in you never wavers, because I know you, because I love you.

Beloved, I am there.



A microfilm of this poem was left on the moon in 1971 by astronaut James B. Irwin on Apollo 15.

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—Your Friends in Unity



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