

In the End



is the Beginning

Contents

In the End is the Beginning: Fifty photos and prayers for the Christian Year from Easter to Easter

By Janet Lees and Bob Warwicker

Easter onwards

Son rise
Morning meal
God, who knows our location
Sheep aspirations
Seagulls rise

Ascension

Blue sky thinking

Pentecost

Blow wind, blow

After Pentecost

Pattern of the tides
For life
Butterfly summer
Awareness
Lead me
The playground of possibilities
On the streets
God bless Huddersfield
Not aquarium keepers
The bell rings
As the year changes
When every bush is burning
Still growing
Rising

All Saints and Remembrance

Whether in sorrow or joy
We that are left grow old
With me – Christ! (version of St Patrick's Breastplate)

Advent

Turning the year around
Advent God
For the ones who go ahead
Slow moving sun
About this time of year

Christmas to New Year

Christmas
For wonders beyond our knowing

Epiphany

Travel on
God who brought order
Through the wood
Still travelling
We pray for meteorologists
We rejoice for the emptying of bins
I will lift mine eyes unto the hills

Lent

The rocks are cracked and split
Baptism
Still calling
Here's to women
The wasteland

Holy Week

Passion
The long road
Dismal day
One day
Easter again!
Emmaus road

Son rise

We welcome the morning.
We call you dawn greeter
as you make our day
into your day
with this sunrise.





Morning meal

Fishing One, you call us still
to breakfast and beyond.
As we rise up
may we follow the wind and the Spirit.

God, who knows our location
closer than even a centimetre,
move us from how things used to be
to an advanced global position
where eagles soar.
Open our hearts and minds
to the possibility of new ventures
that will move us and the world.





Sheep aspirations

To play with wolves and whatnot is our aspiration.
To be out there in the great outdoors,
hefting on a steep, rough fell in all weathers.
or so we think.

But how many of us are really up for it?
Isn't the timidity of our species,
the herd instinct and our preference for the familiar
what keeps us in here?



Seagulls rise
over cliffs and cities,
beaches and rubbish tips.
Body-wise God,
may we rise with seagulls
through the clouds.

Blue Sky Thinking

Only one who knows the skies
inside out
can be companion
in the drizzle,
propelling us skywards
even without a thaw,
to risk the burning,
breath-taking,
lung-bursting
gasp of recognition
that sets us on
our next adventure.



Blow wind, blow;

Blow wind, blow,

Be you bonny breeze or gale.

Blow from east and west,

Blow from north and south.

Blow wind, blow

and bring the Pentecost promise.

Turn the turbines that energise us again;

Blow wind, blow;

Fill the sails that tack and turn your course.

Blow wind, blow;

Blow away the dust that has settled on dried up fellowships.

Blow wind, blow;

Stir us into life again, as the tree-tops wave, green with leaves.

Blow wind, blow;

Freshen us with your vision of life fullness

Blow wind, blow;

Unite our diverse voices like birds singing in chorus,

Blow wind, blow;

Be our advocate, our renewer, our life giver.

Blow wind, blow.

Be you bonny breeze or gale.

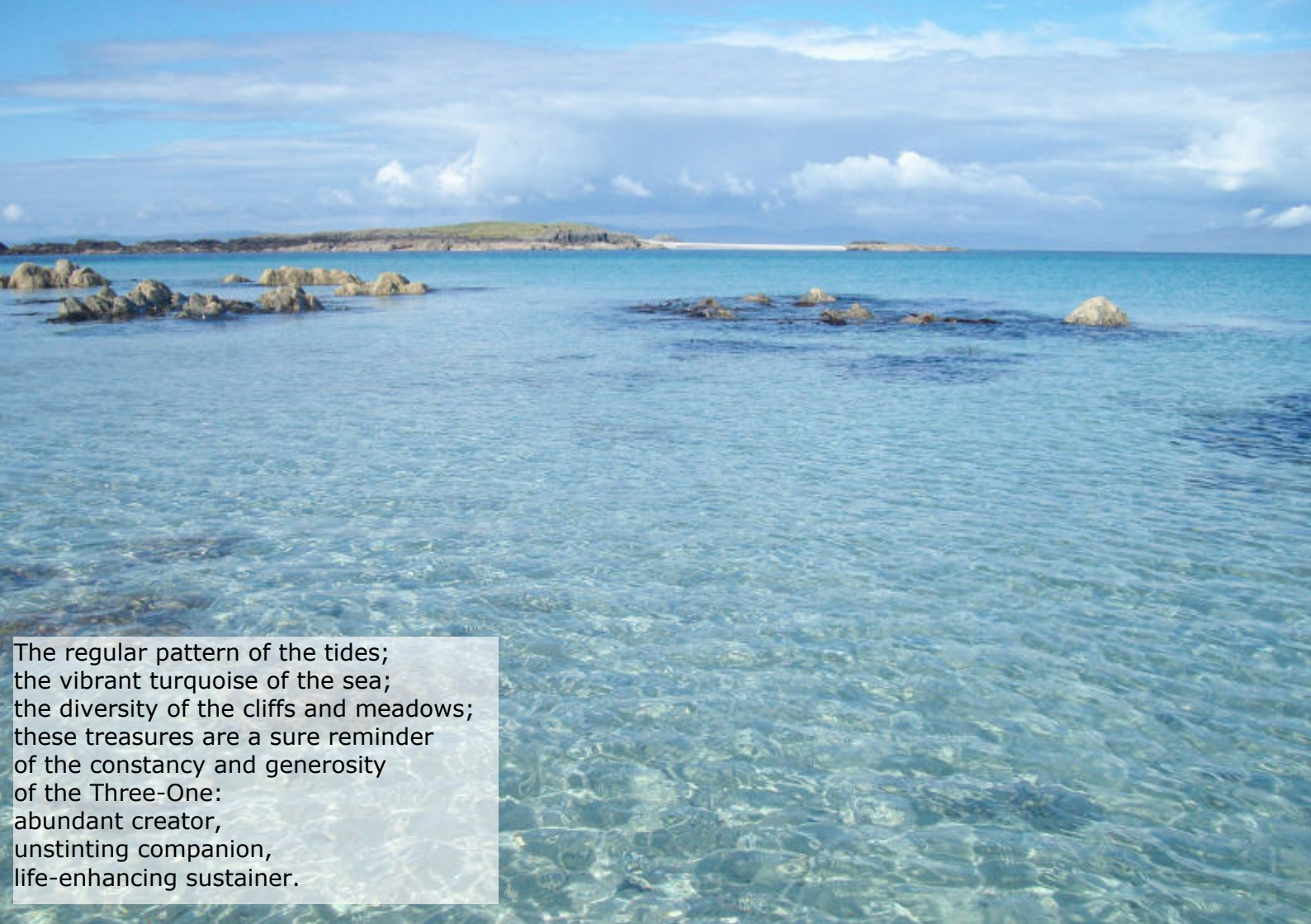
Blow from east and west,

Blow from north and south.

Blow wind, blow

and bring the Pentecost promise.

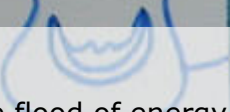




The regular pattern of the tides;
the vibrant turquoise of the sea;
the diversity of the cliffs and meadows;
these treasures are a sure reminder
of the constancy and generosity
of the Three-One:
abundant creator,
unstinting companion,
life-enhancing sustainer.

For life

You are the flood of energy that sweeps us along, enabling us to do things we can't quite believe possible. We rejoice that you created us for this moment, knowing that together we can move the world.



Rebecca
11

Sarah
age = 10

9

Cow
Age: 10



MARK
age 11

Hannah
age 11



LUPPAINE + LIS A

Send a Cow





Butterfly summer

Butterflies live short lives
with great beauty.
We who recall the faces
of those who filled our empty spaces,
and remember the echoes
of voices now silent,
also think of beauty cut shorter
than we would have liked or hoped.

Christ of the three-day mystery,
entice us on into autumn
to face Remembrance and other dark days again.
Remind us that the stuff of life
cannot be contained or cocooned by death,
but forever breaks out amongst us,
to surprise us on the path
and bring us back to being.

Awareness

As each leaf breathes,
as each flower exhales:
help us not to choke our neighbours.

As each bee hums,
as each bird sings:
help us not to deafen our neighbours.

As each dormouse squeaks,
as each bittern booms:
help us not to extinguish our neighbours.

As each raindrop falls,
as each tide rises:
help us not to drown our neighbours.

As each isotope decays,
as each cloud converges:
help us not to overwhelm our neighbours.

As we each consume,
as we each dispose:
help us to be aware of our neighbours.



Lead me, Path maker,
Route planner,
Step watcher.

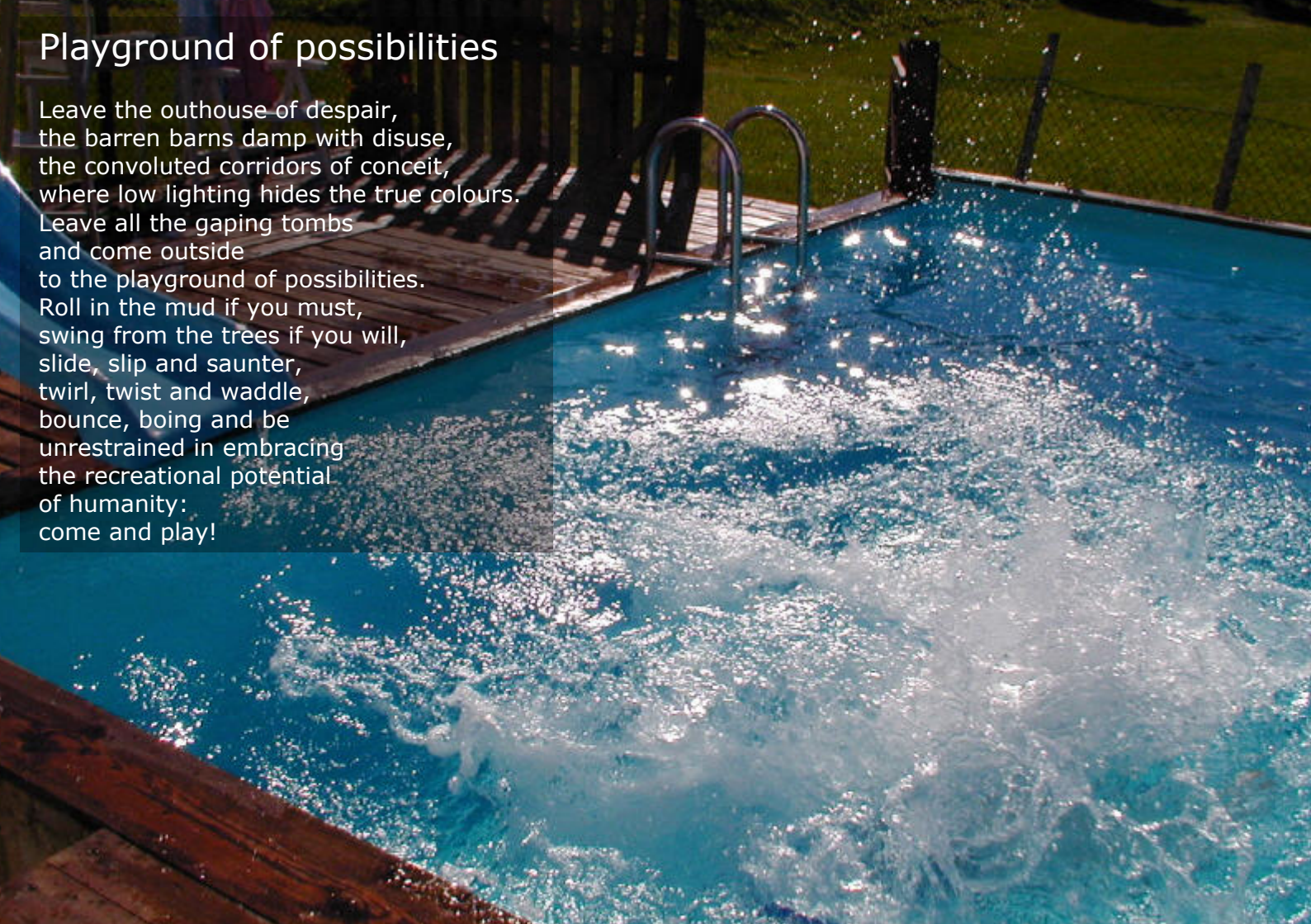
Lead me your way,
the straight way,
the way you direct.

Lead me, Path crosser
Step climber,
Treasure finder.

Lead me your way,
the way I am looking for,
the surprising way.

Playground of possibilities

Leave the outhouse of despair,
the barren barns damp with disuse,
the convoluted corridors of conceit,
where low lighting hides the true colours.
Leave all the gaping tombs
and come outside
to the playground of possibilities.
Roll in the mud if you must,
swing from the trees if you will,
slide, slip and saunter,
twirl, twist and waddle,
bounce, boing and be
unrestrained in embracing
the recreational potential
of humanity:
come and play!





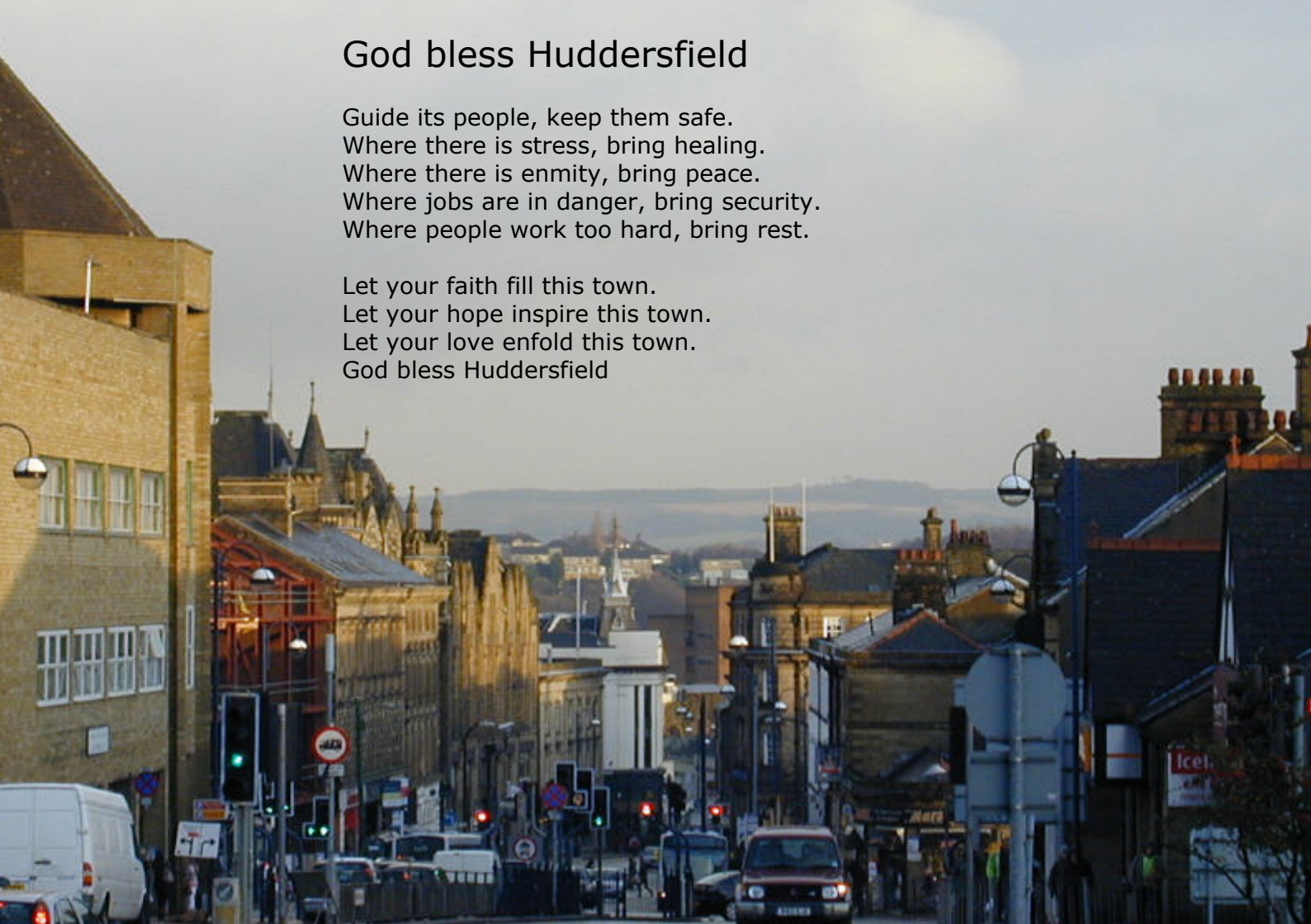
On the streets

God, we need liberating:
may the pedestrian crossing be our Red Sea.
Christ, we need company:
may the car park be our Easter garden.
Spirit, we need affirmation:
may the High Street be our place of Pentecost.
Be there for us, Holy Spirit,
in every created thing,
in every human interaction,
in every life giving encounter.

God bless Huddersfield

Guide its people, keep them safe.
Where there is stress, bring healing.
Where there is enmity, bring peace.
Where jobs are in danger, bring security.
Where people work too hard, bring rest.

Let your faith fill this town.
Let your hope inspire this town.
Let your love enfold this town.
God bless Huddersfield





Not aquarium keepers

We do not live here
in this cold, empty shell
which will remain firmly shut
for the next seven days.

We live out there
where the blaring siren calls
and the green man beckons,
where faith and unbelief
live side by side
and prayer matters
on a daily basis.

Whatever else we are
we are not aquarium keepers.

The bell rings and we move
with a mission towards our next goal.

Sometimes eager, keen and enthusiastic,
we rush along corridors
ready for the next challenge.

Sometimes hesitant, uncertain
we wonder what lies ahead.

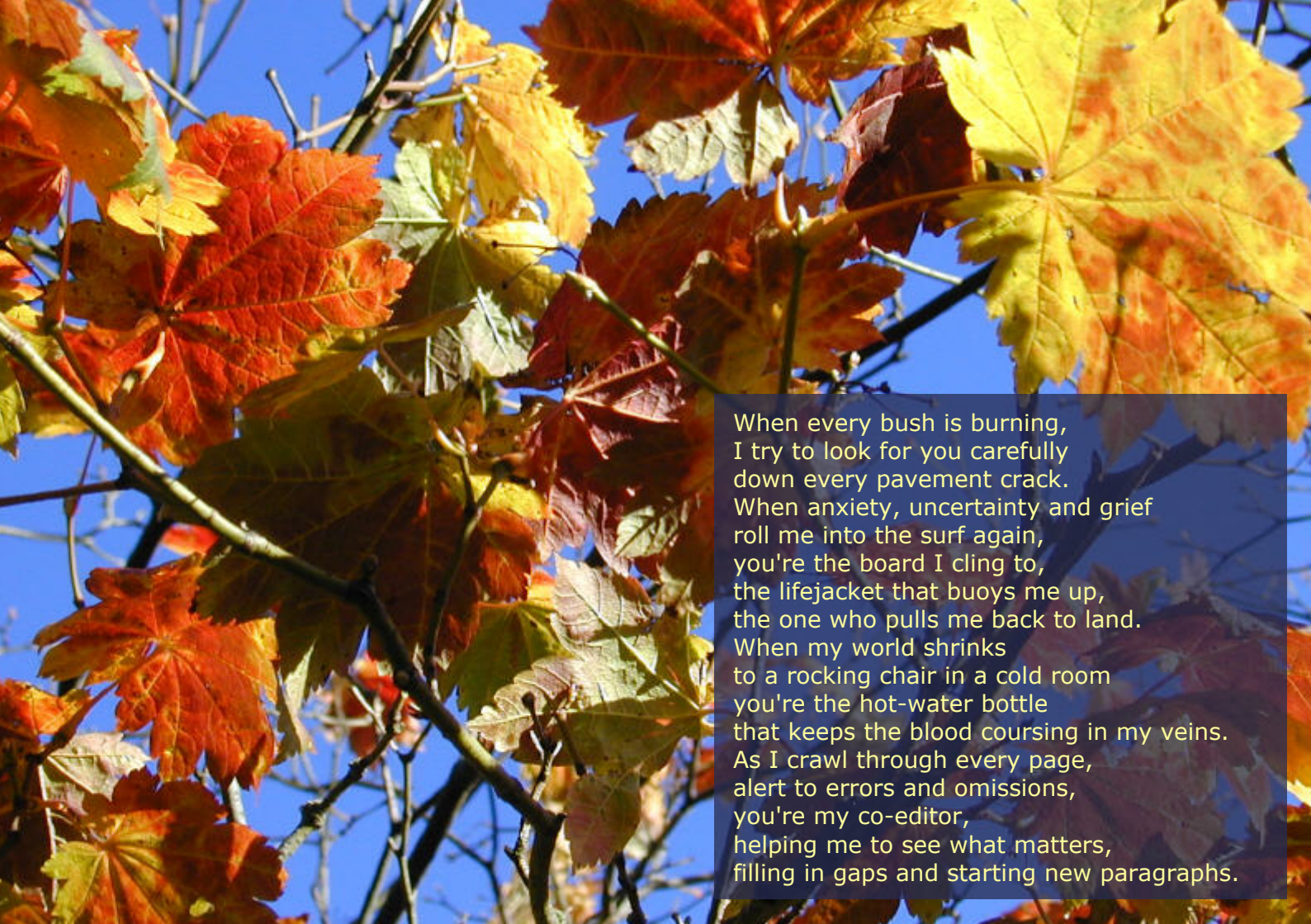
Accompany us in our growing up:
stick by us all our school days.

Under your guidance we will emerge
to take on the world.





As the year changes from green to purple to brown,
we are refreshed, renewed, transformed, converted.
We turn again to embrace the world,
ready to recognise the smallest signs
of life and hope and expectation:
ready to give faith another dance.



When every bush is burning,
I try to look for you carefully
down every pavement crack.
When anxiety, uncertainty and grief
roll me into the surf again,
you're the board I cling to,
the lifejacket that buoys me up,
the one who pulls me back to land.
When my world shrinks
to a rocking chair in a cold room
you're the hot-water bottle
that keeps the blood coursing in my veins.
As I crawl through every page,
alert to errors and omissions,
you're my co-editor,
helping me to see what matters,
filling in gaps and starting new paragraphs.



Still growing

With the tide falling,
like persistent waders,
we probe the exposed mud flats:

Yet each of us knows
how hollow the feeling
when hounded on the empty shore
by the dogs of doubt.

Rising

Clouds obscure the moon's face.
In the darkness you sing.
I don't know how you do it.
You open your throat
and throw back your head
and sing and sing and sing and sing.
You hold our attention
in the space between
train announcements.
None remain unmoved
as the doors slide open
and we tumble inside;
witnesses one again
to the rising.



Whether in sorrow or joy,
in youth or age,
in wealth or poverty
may we carry in our earthly bodies
the everlasting hope
of Christ's resurrection and glory.





IN MEMORY OF
ALL THOSE
SILCOATIANS WHO
GAVE THEIR LIVES
IN THE SERVICE OF
THEIR COUNTRY

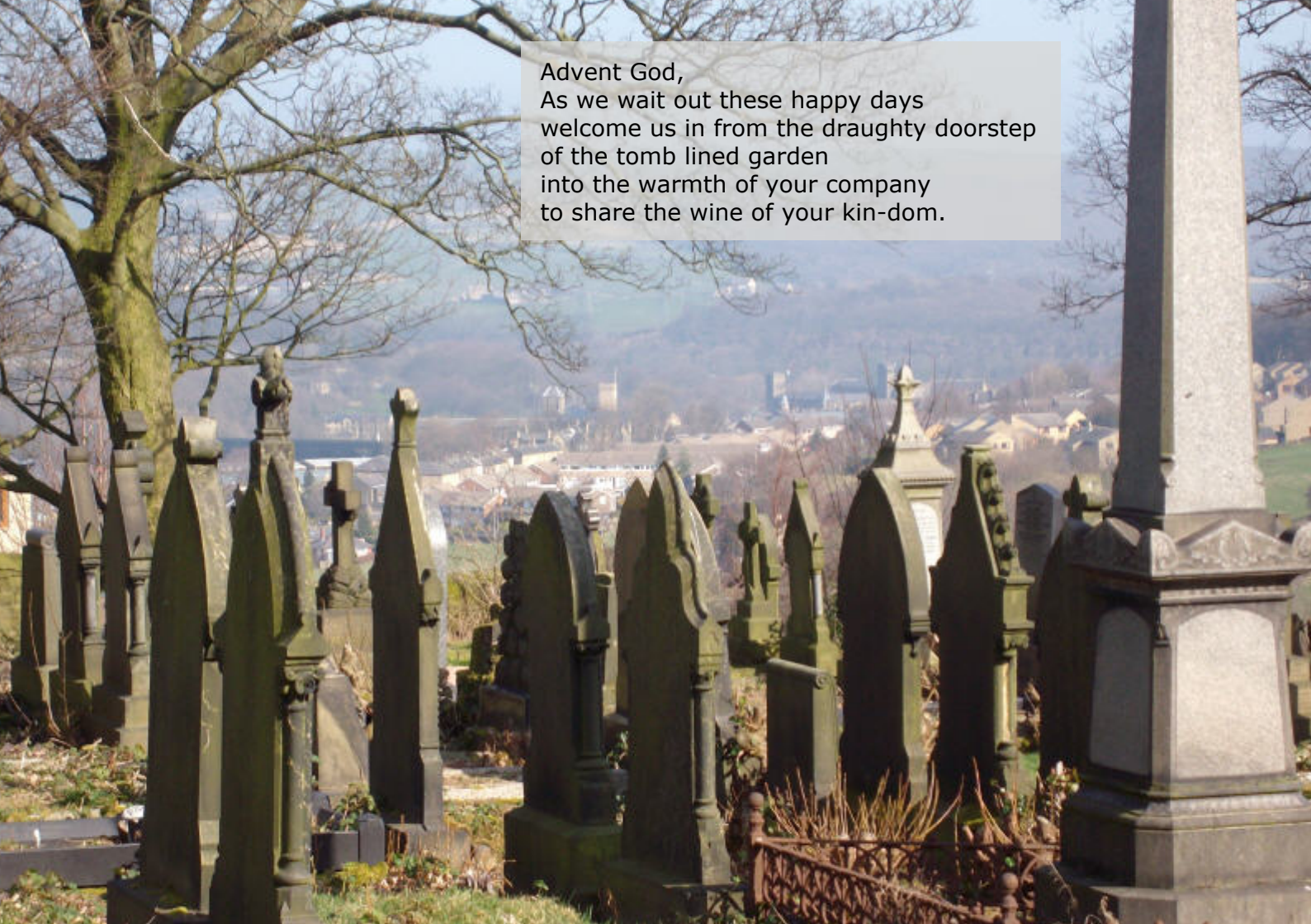
We that are left grow old,
submerged in the messy business of mourning.
Age-less One, dream catcher,
hold hard to us that are left
that new futures may be forged
in your fierce embrace.
In the mourning
we shall remember.

With me - Christ!
In me - Christ!
Behind me - Christ!
Before me - Christ!
Beside me - Christ!
Beneath me - Christ!
Above me - Christ!
Winning and restoring Christ,
Quiet and confirming Christ.
In heart - Christ!
In mouth - Christ!






Turning the year around,
Advent is here again:
long dark nights waiting
for cold frosty dawn.
Into this cold dark world
we'll welcome Christ again:
flesh of our flesh
right through to the bone.

A photograph of a cemetery with numerous Gothic-style tombstones in the foreground. In the background, a town with a church spire is visible, set against a backdrop of rolling hills under a clear sky. A large, leafless tree is on the left side of the frame. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid in the upper right quadrant.

Advent God,
As we wait out these happy days
welcome us in from the draughty doorstep
of the tomb lined garden
into the warmth of your company
to share the wine of your kin-dom.



For the ones who go ahead,
who blaze the trail:
the awesome pioneers,
the edgewise ones
with their wacky dress and diets
who keep us on the straight and narrow:
we are thankful.

A photograph of a cable-stayed bridge at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare. The bridge's tall pylon and numerous stay cables are silhouetted against the sky. In the background, city buildings are visible, including a prominent skyscraper. The water in the foreground reflects the light from the sun.

Slow moving sun

All hail to you, slow moving sun
symbol of creation's energy.
All hail to you, full setting moon
making dawn so awesome.

All hail to you, slow moving One,
plodding on with us daily.
From sunrise to sunset,
moonrise to moonset,
may we be Son-wise people.



About this time of year there are angels visiting, which is just as well for those of us who have slipped up or down. They come with surprising news in unlikely circumstances which is just as well for those of us who have difficult decisions to make. They come with a message of reassurance and hope which is just as well for those of us who are feeling hopeless or fearful. Look again for the message bearer, wound healer and hope sharer: about this time of year angels are visiting.

Christmas

The darkness does not win.
Sometimes it comes close.
At those moments you'd give anything
for a seven branched candlestick,
an overzealous security light,
or the twinkling stuff on the neighbour's house.
Who is still awake at the house across the road?
Where have those car headlights come from?
Laws of physics mean longer days,
but this frozen landscape
does not yet yield to the green blade.

God of darkness,
deep mid-winter One,
keep vigil with us
who hold onto your promises.



For wonders beyond our knowing,
for the breath of life,
for coincidence and consequence,
we thank you, God of mystery.





Travel on


Travel on,
all you survivors
of doubt, deluge or despair.

Travel on
all you carriers
of joy, delight and happiness.

Travel on
all you rememberers
of love, life and longing.
And may the blessing of God
who creates, redeems and renews all of life
remain with you for ever.



God who brought order
to the waters of chaos,
let your voice speak to us today
and give shape to our lives.



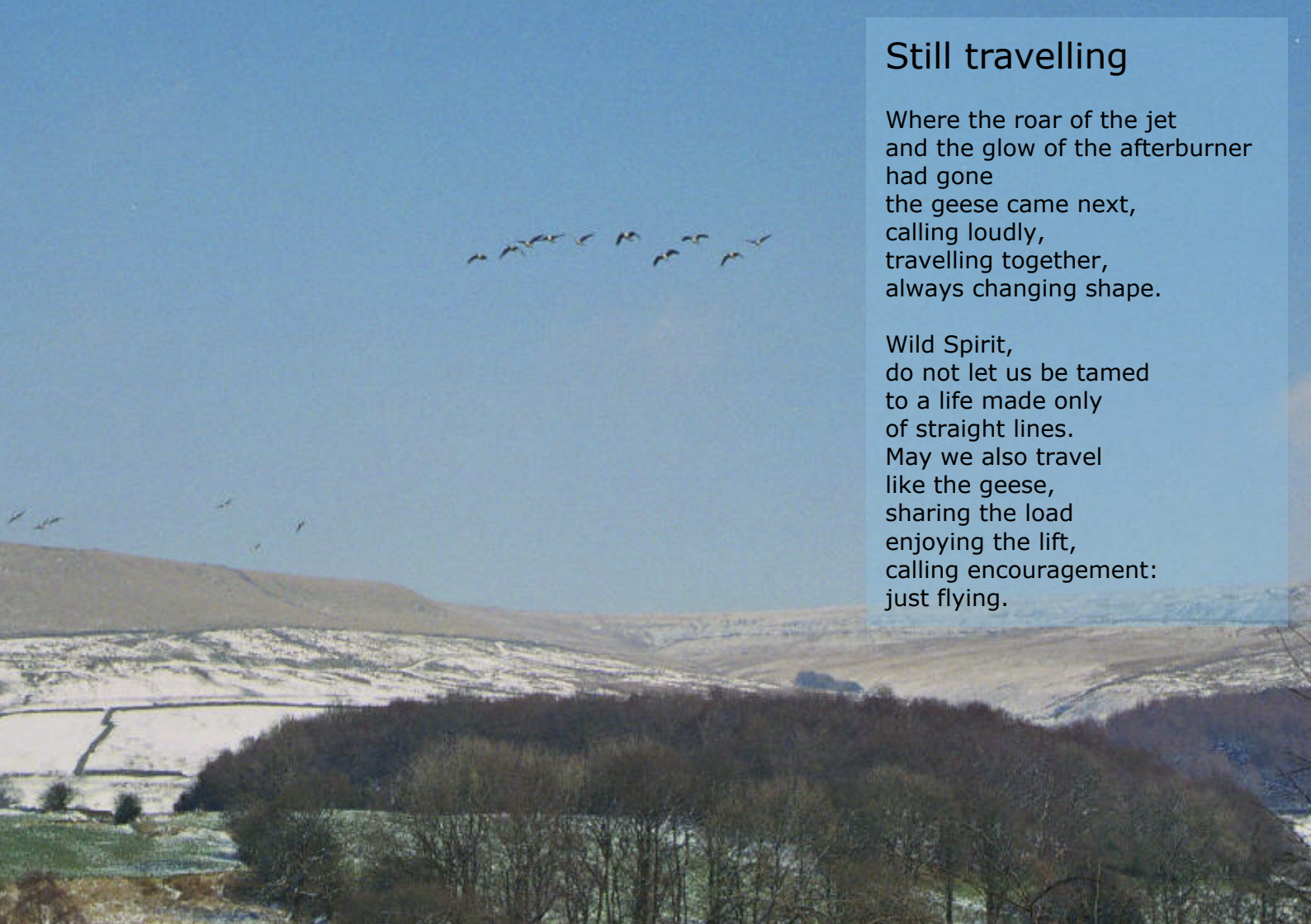
Through the wood

God you call us through the wood;
through the wood you speak to us.
May we, your wood-wise ones,
touch wood with you,
hang onto your promises
and help shape the dreams of community
that only cross-wise commitment brings.

Still travelling

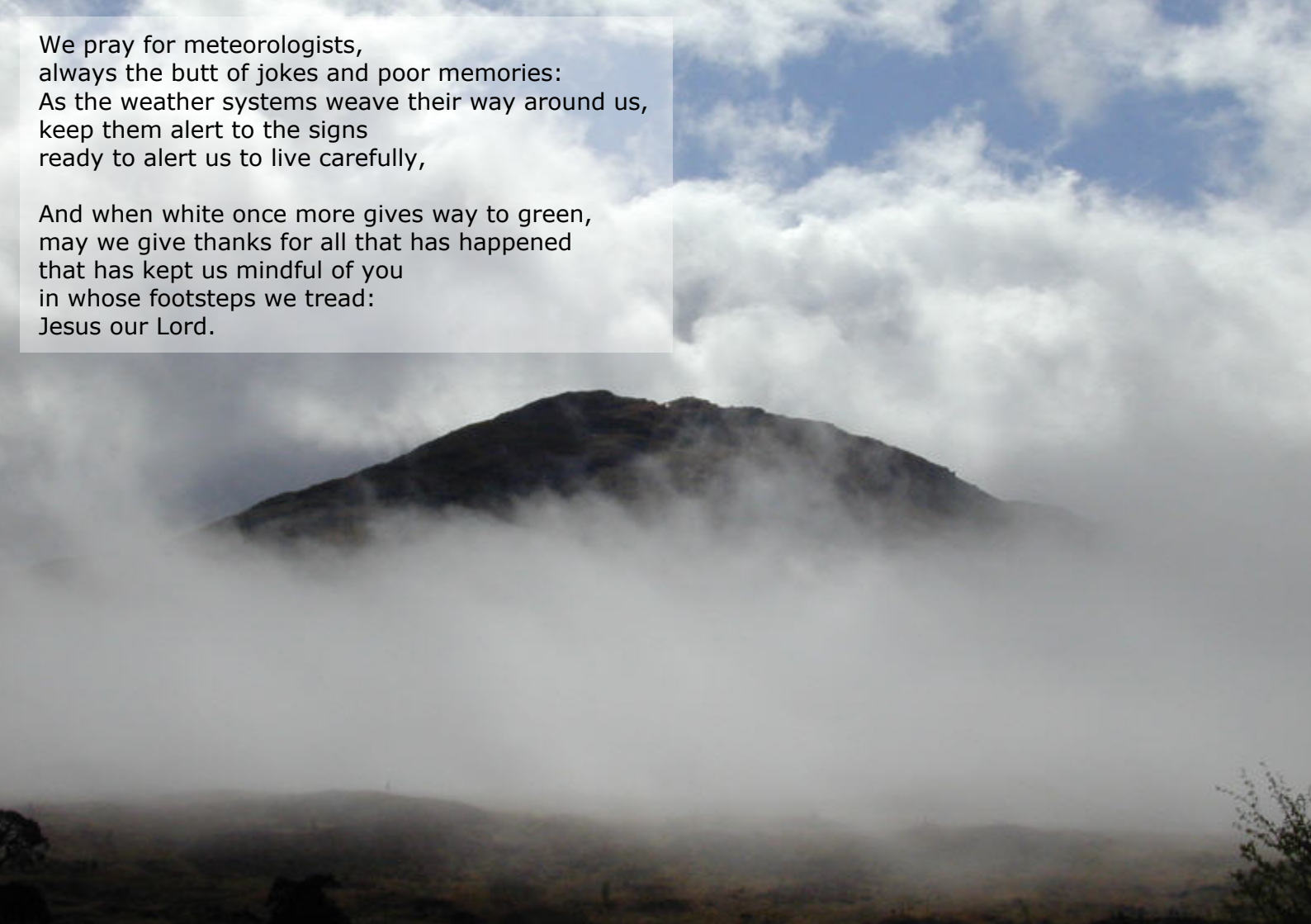
Where the roar of the jet
and the glow of the afterburner
had gone
the geese came next,
calling loudly,
travelling together,
always changing shape.

Wild Spirit,
do not let us be tamed
to a life made only
of straight lines.
May we also travel
like the geese,
sharing the load
enjoying the lift,
calling encouragement:
just flying.



We pray for meteorologists,
always the butt of jokes and poor memories:
As the weather systems weave their way around us,
keep them alert to the signs
ready to alert us to live carefully,

And when white once more gives way to green,
may we give thanks for all that has happened
that has kept us mindful of you
in whose footsteps we tread:
Jesus our Lord.



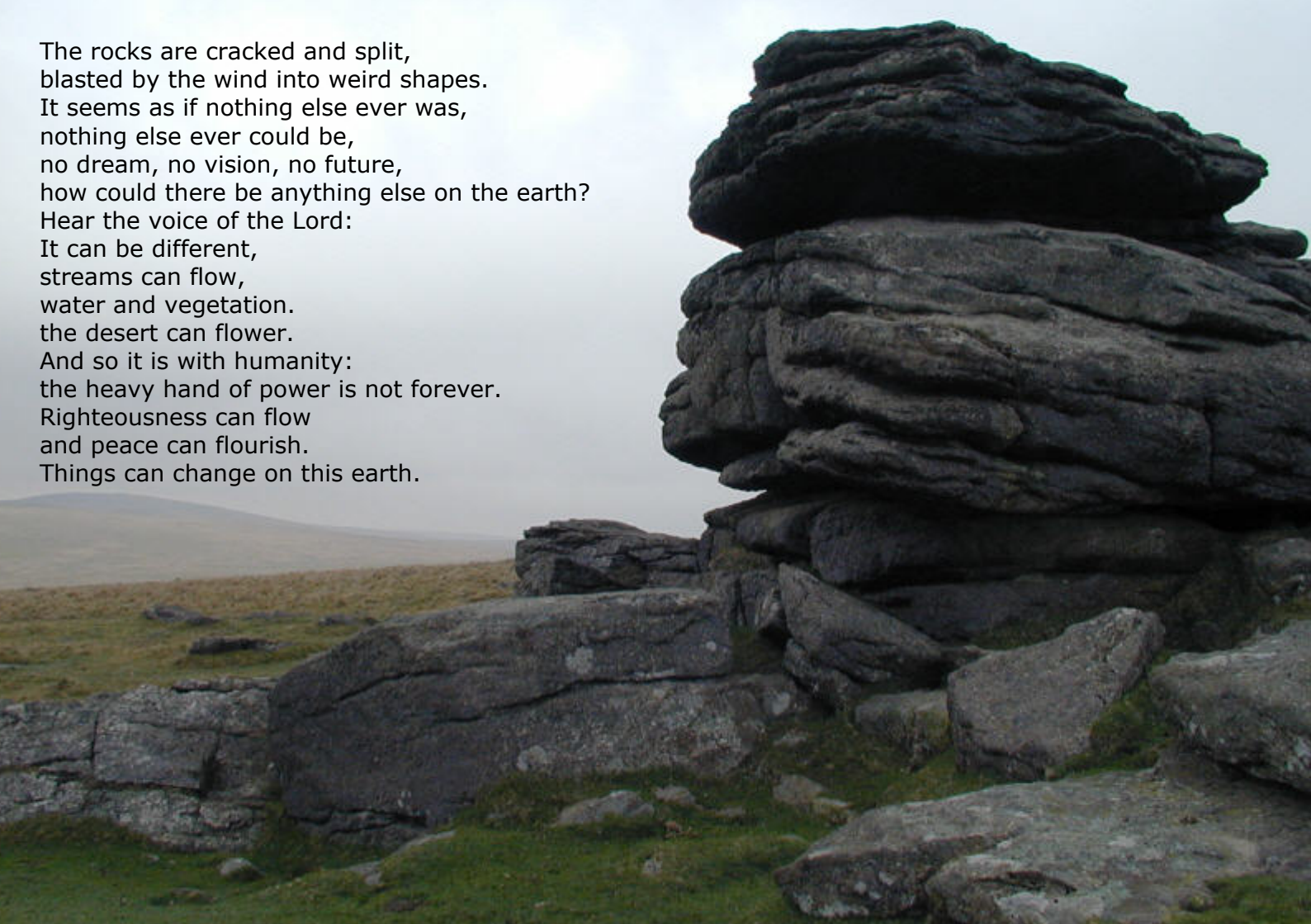


We rejoice for the emptying of bins,
the cleaning of streets
and the sorting out of communal space.
When the snow came everything stopped
and the white washed out our collective memory,
our rubbish and mess,
But now our lives are getting back on track.
The council workers are getting back on schedule
and our neighbourhoods are getting back in order
and we rejoice.

"I will lift
mine eyes
unto the hills"

psalm 121

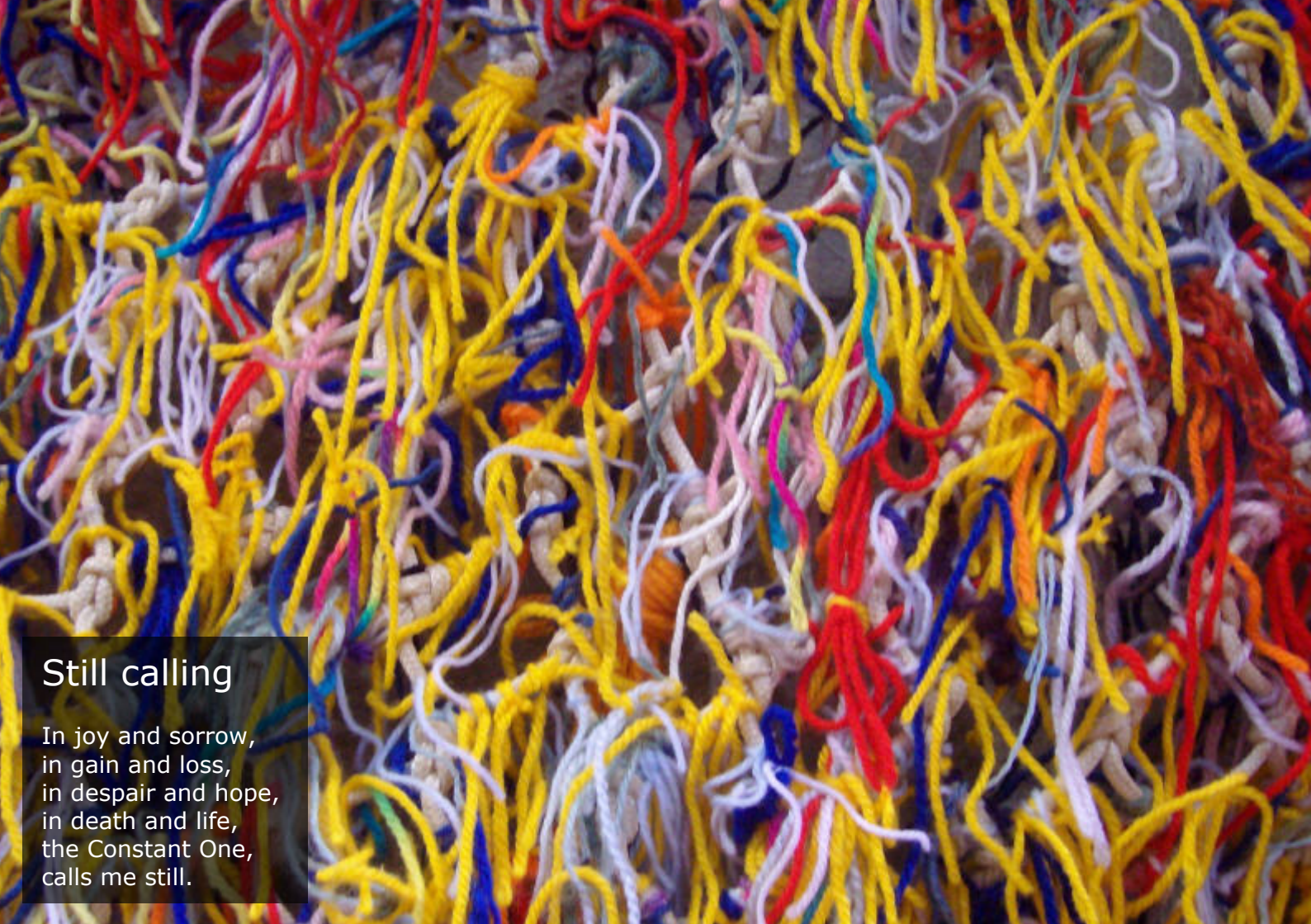
The rocks are cracked and split,
blasted by the wind into weird shapes.
It seems as if nothing else ever was,
nothing else ever could be,
no dream, no vision, no future,
how could there be anything else on the earth?
Hear the voice of the Lord:
It can be different,
streams can flow,
water and vegetation.
the desert can flower.
And so it is with humanity:
the heavy hand of power is not forever.
Righteousness can flow
and peace can flourish.
Things can change on this earth.





Baptism

May we, like Jesus
live wet:
wet from the waters of chaos
breaking over the earth;
wet from the waters of baptism
breaking over our bodies;
wet from the living water
breaking over our lives.
bless us in earth, air and fire
but most of all
bless us in water
that we may follow the Life Giver.



Still calling

In joy and sorrow,
in gain and loss,
in despair and hope,
in death and life,
the Constant One,
calls me still.



Here's to women

Here's to women,
Image-sharers, lovers,
parents, workers,
pray-ers, justice-makers,
God-bearers:
courageous, willing,
risk-taking
in every age and race.



The Wasteland

I will go listening for you
on the wind, in the traffic,
at the bus stop,
in the roar and the rubble.
the sigh, the splash
and the song,
I will go in your company.
Faith is not dimmed
but hope grows and shines out
across the wasteland.

Passion

It's no accident Jesus was a carpenter.
There's a lot to do when you're preparing a mission,
gearing up to be the Life Giver.
And I often wonder
how frequently he shuddered
when someone casually said
'Pass the nails'.

Companion Christ,
with us in the rough and smooth,
may the life we share with you
be marked out on us
so that none can mistake whose we are
and who we follow.



The long road

Christ of the long road,
you called us to discipleship
and call us again to renewed commitment.
Help us to sort out our priorities,
and deal with our disappointments.
Sustain us on the road that leads
from baptism to your just kingdom.
With your word alive in us,
give us life to live, life to share
and life to celebrate.



Dismal Day

Weep, city weep.
Weep stones and streets,
houses and alleys:
weep now.
Weep with the Weeping One.
Who knows what makes for peace?
He knows and shows
the way to peace
for this and every city.

One Day


There's a day coming:
you and me God
we know this day,
when everything hangs
in the balance
and the Life Giver
gives it all up
that we may live on.
I've got it in my sights now:
my heart is racing:
when only one day counts
this is the One we can count on.



Easter again!

There is no point
in looking for the living
among the dead.
He is not here.
He is risen!





Emmaus Road

Travelling Christ,
we remember so many roads.
As we prepare to go further,
may the fire of your presence
burning in us,
renew us to take your storytelling
down the next road.

In the End is the Beginning: Fifty photos and prayers for the Christian Year from Easter to Easter

Copyright information:

This contents of this book, photographs and prayers, are copyright to Janet Lees and Bob Warwicker. You may use them in churches, schools and projects not for commercial gain provided copyright acknowledgement is made.

If you wish to comment on this book or make further enquiries you can address them to **endbook@bobjanet.demon.co.uk**