

January 29, 2019

Dear Grace Church Family and Friends,

*When death comes
like the hungry bear in autumn;
when death comes and takes all the bright coins from
his purse*

*to buy me, and snaps the purse shut;
when death comes
like the measles-pox*

*when death comes
like an iceberg between the shoulder blades,*

*I want to step through the door full of curiosity,
wondering:
what is it going to be like, that cottage of darkness?*

*And therefore I look upon everything
as a brotherhood and sisterhood,
and I look upon time as no more than an idea,
and I consider eternity as another possibility,*

*and I think of each life as a flower, as common
as a field daisy, and as singular,*

*and each name a comfortable music in the mouth,
tending, as all music does, toward silence,*

*and each body a lion of courage, and something
precious to the earth.*

*When it's over, I want to say all my life
I was a bride married to amazement.
I was a bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.*

*When it's over, I don't want to wonder
if I have made of my life something particular, and
real.*

*I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened,
or full of argument.*

I don't want to end up simply having visited this world.

(Mary Oliver, who died on January 17, 2019)

See you in church,
Andrew