

Survivor

(First Presbyterian Church, Anacortes, Washington)

The dark gathered in the sanctuary was water.
God moves through the stillness of pond water
unhurried by a frog's escape.
Little boys' hands are quick as light
but not quick enough. The dark
stilled in the sanctuary was cool,
clear, like current unspooled downstream
from riffles among the glooms of spruce,
green as the infinite, or like a tide pool tinge-ed
with drizzle, unhurried by crabs
scuttled to escape small hands.
The dark in the sanctuary
trickled over palms.
God moves through prayer
clotted like water in a throat. A little
boy peers into tide pools and frog ponds,
memorizing Scripture. The water-dark
sanctuary thickens with hymns, with benedictions
escaped from hands to slide along cords
in wrists. In the sanctuary
the little boy swims. God moves
as if shoved by an artery.

from LOVE POEM