

# **“We are Raw Nerves”**

## **Rev. Sarah Speed**

We are raw nerves, exposed and tender.  
We are weary bones, hunched and fragile.  
We are silent prayers, lips saying your name.  
We are wedding rings we can't take off, even though time has passed.  
We are the same pew, but it feels different now.  
We are a brave face when we have to be strong.  
We are tears in the shower when grief roars its head.  
We are setting the table, but there are empty seats.  
We are stuck in the swell, caught in the storm.  
We are moving on, caught in our guilt.  
We are okay some days, but some days we're not.  
We are familiar with the night, we know it by name.  
We are night-walkers, dream-makers, star-chasers.  
We are close to home, but home has changed.  
We are close to the surface, but the waters are rising.  
We are all of this, plus everything else, and we are here.  
We are here. Grief is here. God is here. The night is here.  
And all of this is true, and we are not alone.  
Take my hand. Take these words. Let them be your life raft.  
Let this be the longest night, and let it be whatever you need it to be.  
We are here. Grief is here. God is here. Take what you need. Amen.



# **“A Liturgy of Lament for a Loss”**

## **from Every Moment Holy: Volume II**

How long, O Lord,  
must your people grieve?

How long must we weep, bereft,  
bereaved, and suffering separation?

How long must we endure such piercing loss,  
such staggering blows, such pained goodbyes,  
such wrenching cost for simply loving those  
you’ve given us to love?

How long must we wear  
these mourner’s clothes?  
How much must we suffer, before we know  
the redemption of this suffering?

How long must we drink from this  
well of sorrow? How long till our tears  
are tended by your own hands?  
How long, O Lord, until you have finished your  
final work, crushing all evidence of the darkness  
that overshadows us in these blighted lands?

How long till your glorious, quickening light  
reaches every corner of creation, and all things  
are at last released from their bondage?  
How long until the nightmare and the ache  
and the fear and the horror of death  
are no more?

How long, O Lord, until the very fabric  
of this sagging creation is mended and  
your redemption drives forever from these  
shores all tides of suffering and decay?

How long until the working of your grace  
renews these blighted hopes,  
and makes of our grieving families,  
our wounded cities, and our broken lands  
an unbroken festival of joy,  
an eternal restoration and reunion?

How long till your sovereign will  
is finally fulfilled as perfectly and completely  
on this earth, as it is in your heaven?  
Let it be this year, this day,  
this hour, O Christ!  
We have suffered in this night so long.  
Call forth your light. Bring on the dawn!

How long until we—now grieving and  
bereaved

—see those we once thought lost  
waking from their slumber  
in your fields of harvest  
shrugging off their grave shrouds  
as children shedding coats  
to feel the warming sun,  
running, leaping, calling merrily as they  
rush to join the celebration  
streaming through the gates of  
that enduring city with cries of gladness,  
with shouts of joy and recognition,  
with upwelling affections and warm  
embraces,  
joined to us again, nevermore to be parted,  
all eternal citizens of beautiful and  
holy habitations, of perfect and eternal  
communion between all the peoples of God,  
and their God, and his creation? How long?

How long until all that is lost is found again?

O Lord, how long  
until death is destroyed forever  
and never-ending songs of gladness and  
praise  
fill these redeemed fields and rebuilt streets?

How long, O Father,  
until your children are gathered?  
How long, O Redeemer,  
until our loss is redeemed?  
How long, O King,  
until your kingdom is established?  
How long, O Comforter,  
until we grieve no more forever?

Comfort, O comfort your people.  
Come quickly, Lord Jesus.  
We believe your promises.  
We watch for your return.  
O Lord, come quickly!

Amen.