

November, 2005

teach me

after this length of warm days,  
undeserved, unexpected  
a leaf nods thanks,  
turns at its node  
to catch the wind's rude pull  
and sails abrupt toward  
ash or hummous

a life becoming of the earth

does it really know when to let go? or how?  
must it be so roughly compelled?  
or does the will to hold  
turn slowly in an instant  
to nature's grace?  
or even are they one - beginning to end?

beneath our feet the world  
reels and tilts  
toward dusk  
we find our footing  
in the rustle which is the path at hand

in my own, my turning  
my eyes are fixed  
on you who know  
from whence this prayer

teach me, Jeanie, forever

Bill

Memorial Service  
Central United Methodist Church  
Jeanie Wylie Kellermann  
2:00 pm January 8, 2006

**Service of Ingathering**

Prelude: Chanting and drumming Lead by Julie Beutel  
Procession of the gifts

Greeting and Call to Worship - Ed Rowe

Hymn: 723 "Shall We Gather at the River" (Bobby Thompson piano accompanist)

**Service of Embodiment**

Litany: Pío Celestino  
(Adapted from *Por que canatamos*, Mario Benedetti, Uruguay, 1979)

**Voice:** if each hour brings death  
if time is a den of thieves  
the breezes carry a scent of evil  
and life is just a moving target

**People:** you will ask why we sing

Voice: if our finest people are shunned  
our homeland is dying of sorrow  
and the human heart is shattered  
even before shame explodes

**People:** you will ask why we sing

**Voice:** if the trees and sky remain  
as far off as the horizon  
some absence hovers over the evening  
and disappointment colours the morning

**People:** you will ask why we sing

**Voice:** we sing because the river is humming  
and when the river hums the river hums  
we sing because cruelty has no name  
but we can name its destiny  
we sing because the child because everything  
because the future because the people  
we sing because the survivors  
and our dead want us to sing

**People:** you will ask why we sing  
**Voice:** we sing because shouting is not enough  
nor is sorrow or anger  
we sing because we believe in people  
and we shall overcome these defeats

**People:** you will ask why we sing

**Voice:** we sing because the sun recognizes us  
and the fields smell of spring  
and because in this stem and that fruit  
every question has its answer

**People:** you will ask why we sing

**Voice:** we sing because it is raining on the furrow  
and we are the militants of life  
and because we cannot and will not  
allow our song to become ashes

**People:** we sing

Song: Shake These Bones - Bob O'Brien, Susan Newell, Julie Beutel

Dance: Lucy Wylie-Kellermann

(To "Breathe on Me Breath of God," sung by The Miserable Offenders)

Poetry: Jim Perkinson "For Jeanie of the Waters"

Poetry: DeeDee Risher "The Way Home" read by Joyce Hollyday

Song: Ancestors' Breath - Bob, Julie, Susan

### **Service of Remembrance**

Words: Lydia and Bill

Video - "Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann"

Time of Remembrance - sharing of memories

Prayer over the Ashes – Renewal of Baptismal Vows - Rose Berger

Song: Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken – Mary, Babs, and Misty Carter

### **Service of The Word**

Scripture: Isaiah 42:1-9 ReneBeth Rodgers

Meditation - Tom Lumpkin

Hymn: Be Thou My Vision

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art  
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,

Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;

I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou Mother- Father, a new life begun;  
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,  
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
Great God of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

Great God of Heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Contemporary Word: "On Baptising Lydia" by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann - reader Deb Choly

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:4-11 Theresa Choly-Zettner

Meditation: Ched Myers

Song: God's Eye is On the Sparrow - Ange Smith

### Service of Communion

Communion - Bill, Lydia, Lucy

Communion music

Julie Beutel and Karl Meyer

Unison Blessing

**Blessed be the ones who dance in the corridors of death,  
Who sing in the hallways of terror,  
Who laugh in the prisons of fear,  
Who shout across the silencing walls,  
Who love beyond the borders of hatred,  
Who live to welcome home freedom,  
Who die never turning their heads,  
Who return as the rising of hope.**

(Jan Richardson, *In Wisdom's Path*)

Recessional Hymn: 302 "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" (vs 1-4)

Closing Prayer Benediction - Coleman McGehee

Postlude: Vidor Toccata and Fugue - Edward Mackey-Schram

(Please be seated for the Postlude)

Following the Service there will be a fingerfood reception on the second floor. There will be time for quiet conversation and also a further opportunity for the sharing of memories. Please do join us.

The Men's restroom is off the hall to the forward left of the sanctuary. The Women's room is on the second floor accessible off the left balcony or by elevator from the lobby.

*“At the still point of the turning world, there is the dance...” T.S. Eliot*

The thanks of our hearts

to Bea for imagining that God may have wanted her and Sam to have another child  
to the Detroit Peace Community for becoming even more itself  
to Jacob and Jeannie for building the oaken casket  
to Laura and Anita for the hand sewn stretcher  
to Jeff and Catherine and all at the LA Catholic Worker for the hospice quilt under which  
Jeanie passed - with prayers for all who have shared its warmth  
to godmothers, Kit and Grace, Marianne and Susan, for nourishing their charges to live  
lives that become the gospel  
to Jeanie’s goddaughter, Theresa, for loving so well (and reading the gospel)  
to Maryanne for caregiving and the hospitality of her home for the wake  
to the holy women of the community for washing and anointing the body  
to Paul Buchanan and Generations Funeral Home in leaving a wide berth for alternative  
burial practices  
to brothers Jimmy, Stevie, and Paulie, for standing by Billy in his grief  
to the entire Wylie clan for making the blessed Thanksgiving trek, and now again.  
to poets, Jim, Jacob, Lydia, Dan, Connie for paying attention to reality  
to dancer Lucy...for never ceasing the dance  
to liturgists of various stripe, Deb, Theresa, Rose, Pio, Joyce, Renebeth, Coleman  
to the givers and makers and finder of artifacts which appear on Jeanie’s altar  
to Ched and Elaine for opening up the old wisdom and body politics of communal burial  
practices  
to Vincent and Grace for their blessings (and the discipline of hope)  
to Jim, Joy, Luke, and Jack for bringing Jeanie’s last meal  
to darknight vigillers, Mary, Kim, Martha, Deb and John  
to Central Methodist for being a sanctuary of justice and peace; for years of support  
(pastoral and fiscal) and being to us a worship home  
to Laura and Ron for generous front funds still playing out  
to *The Witness* for posting our update letters online over the years - the entire saga is told  
at <http://www.thewitness.org/author.php?id=40>  
to Noah for his video production skills  
to Simone for coordinating the hospice community with the skills of an organizer and the  
deft presence of a zenmistress  
to Henry Ford Hospice for enabling Jeanie to breathe her last at home  
to cooks and bakers and hosts, dishwashers, tubscrubbers and casserolemakers  
to Herb and Joan for imagining, and with Day House as host, pulling off the Sunday  
brunch – plus the crew at Central, and all potluck contributors, for the fingerfood reception  
to airport runners, bus and rail meeters,  
to Jimmy and Ed and John for bringing the construction trades to hospice care  
to Joyce, Josie, Ched, Elaine, and Liz for experimenting with a model of serial intensive  
pastoral care  
to Tom for summoning the community’s story through Jeanie at the wake  
to drummers and chanters, and service musicians, among them: Julie, Bob, Susan, Ange,  
Ed, Richard, Joe, Rose, Ande, Mike, Bobby, Misty, Mary, Babs, and Miserable Offenders all,

to Patrice for the sobbing single-handed deadlift  
to Stevie and Carol for the impromptu casket run to Milwaukee, and then to Ypsilanti  
to artists who spread their colors with Jeanie in these recent months  
to Pat for massage  
to the photographic artists of the video for seeing when and where to point a lens, among  
them: Uncas and Tal McThenia, Patricia Beck, Ed Bobinchak, Steve Borla, Ron and Sigrid Dale,  
Clancy Dunigan, Herb Gunn, John Hutchinson, Rudy Simons, Jim West, Bill, Lydia, and Lucy  
to Tom for being such a priest and Ed such a pastor  
to Jeanie Wylie for being Jeanie Wylie, nothing more and nothing less...and for being  
even once again a witness to the resurrection

Memorial gifts may be made to the following options among others:

“Day House” (not tax exempt)  
Detroit Catholic Worker  
2640 Trumbull Ave.  
Detroit 40216  
313-963-4539

”Word and World” (tax exempt)  
P.O. Box 1623  
Greensboro, NC 27402  
336-230-0330  
[www.wordandworld.org](http://www.wordandworld.org)

”SCUPE” (Tax exempt)  
Note: Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann Scholarship Fund  
200 N. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago IL 60601  
(A fund that may be drawn on by Lydia and Lucy as well as others)  
312-7261200  
[www.scupe.com](http://www.scupe.com)

## “Not triumphantly but somehow...”

Beatrice Jean Wylie (she never used her first name), arrived 11/26/56 in Providence RI. She was late born, when her mother, Bea, wondered aloud to Sam, if he thought perhaps God wanted them to have another child (thanks be, yes), hence younger by at least seven years than her siblings, Rene Beth, Mary, and Johnny (he gone on before her). Jeanie was raised in New York (Morningside Heights), Boston (Beacon Hill), and the lower west side of Manhattan where her father was Dean of General Seminary. As a child she attended a one room school for several months at Taize, in France, and read her first copy of the *Narina Chronicles* before the Bishop of Lincoln's fireplace in England. She attended high school in Menominee, Michigan when her father, against all conventional logic and prudent wisdom, happily accepted election as Episcopal bishop of the Upper Peninsula. At Girl's Nation she shepherded a war resisters' amnesty resolution through the mock Senate and left the DAR ladies aghast by refusing to shake the hand of President Richard Nixon. At the University of Michigan (74-78), she did her senior thesis on the poetry of T.S. Eliot. During this time she lived some weeks with the Lakota resisters at Yellow Thunder Camp in the Black Hills and joined anti-nuclear protests at Harrisburg, PA and Fermi II. For her journalism masters thesis at Columbia, she wrote on the life of an Episcopal congregation in the South Bronx. Her brief tenure at the Associated Press in Detroit included street level coverage of protest during the Republican convention and feature work on the Detroit's Arab community. With George Corsetti, she made *Poletown Lives!*, a documentary about the neighborhood destroyed by GM to build a Cadillac plant which won first prize at the American Film Festival. Her first arrest took place in that struggle. The film was followed by *Poletown: Community Betrayed* (University of Illinois Press, 1989). She also wrote feature articles for *The Village Voice*, *The Nation*, *Mother Jones*, *Detroit MetroTimes*, and Michael Moore's *Michigan Voice*. Jeanie became part of the Detroit Peace Community in connection with a Pentagon witness in 1980. Bill Kellermann subsequently fell in love with her when she rescued him from an east coast hitch hike, reading aloud (T. S. Eliot and *The Chronicles*) all the way across Pennsylvania. Their romance was carried forward when they were jailed together, facing conspiracy charges for an Advent liturgical action at Williams International, the cruise missile engine manufacturer. Jeanie and Bill were married Labor Day weekend, 1984. While serving as editor of *The Record*, the diocesan paper, she bore her two delights, Lydia Irene, and Lucia Jeanne at home. By way of travel, she took Lydia, in utero, to Nicaragua on a Witness for Peace delegation, and Lucy, at three months, on a human rights trip to Israel/Palestine. She believed that baptizing the girls meant they joined us on the path of discipleship, the way of the cross - but lest she sound reckless, know that she was a fierce defender and tender mother. She became editor of the *The Witness* in 1991, undertaking thematic issues on peace and justice often with a quirky take and always an eye for interesting art. There she evinced a shrewd theological aplomb. When the Detroit Newspaper workers went out on strike in 1995 she co-founded Readers United, reframing the strike as a community struggle and initiating a series of direct actions for which she was arrested more than once. On Labor Day weekend, 1998, she was stricken with a most aggressive brain tumor, one suggesting an ordinary life expectancy of six months. Through a sequence of unorthodox treatments and a wide community of prayer, she lived fully for seven and a half years more, crossing over to God, New Years Eve (Watch Night), 2005. Her body was held, washed, and anointed by her beloved community. According to her wish, ashes to ashes, she was cremated, and now awaits the resurrection of the dead. Alleluia and Amen.