

## CALL TO WORSHIP

The poet W. S. Merwin encapsulated grief in these words, spoken to someone he had lost: “Your absence has gone through me like thread through a needle. Everything I do is stitched with its color.” W. H. Auden was a little more intense in his poetic description: “He was my north, my south, my east, and west. My working week and my Sunday rest. The stars are not wanted now. Put out every one. Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun. Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood. For nothing now can ever come to any good.”

Good grief. Is there anything worth saying about this darkness, other than, “it is so dark?” . . . Yes, there is. James Dittes, who wrote the best text ever on pastoral counseling, calls grief “the badge of membership in a community of faithful aspirers.” What reason is there to accept the wearing of this awful badge? What bearing does it have on our aspirations as a spiritual community? Come, let us live in the questions again today. Come, let us worship together.