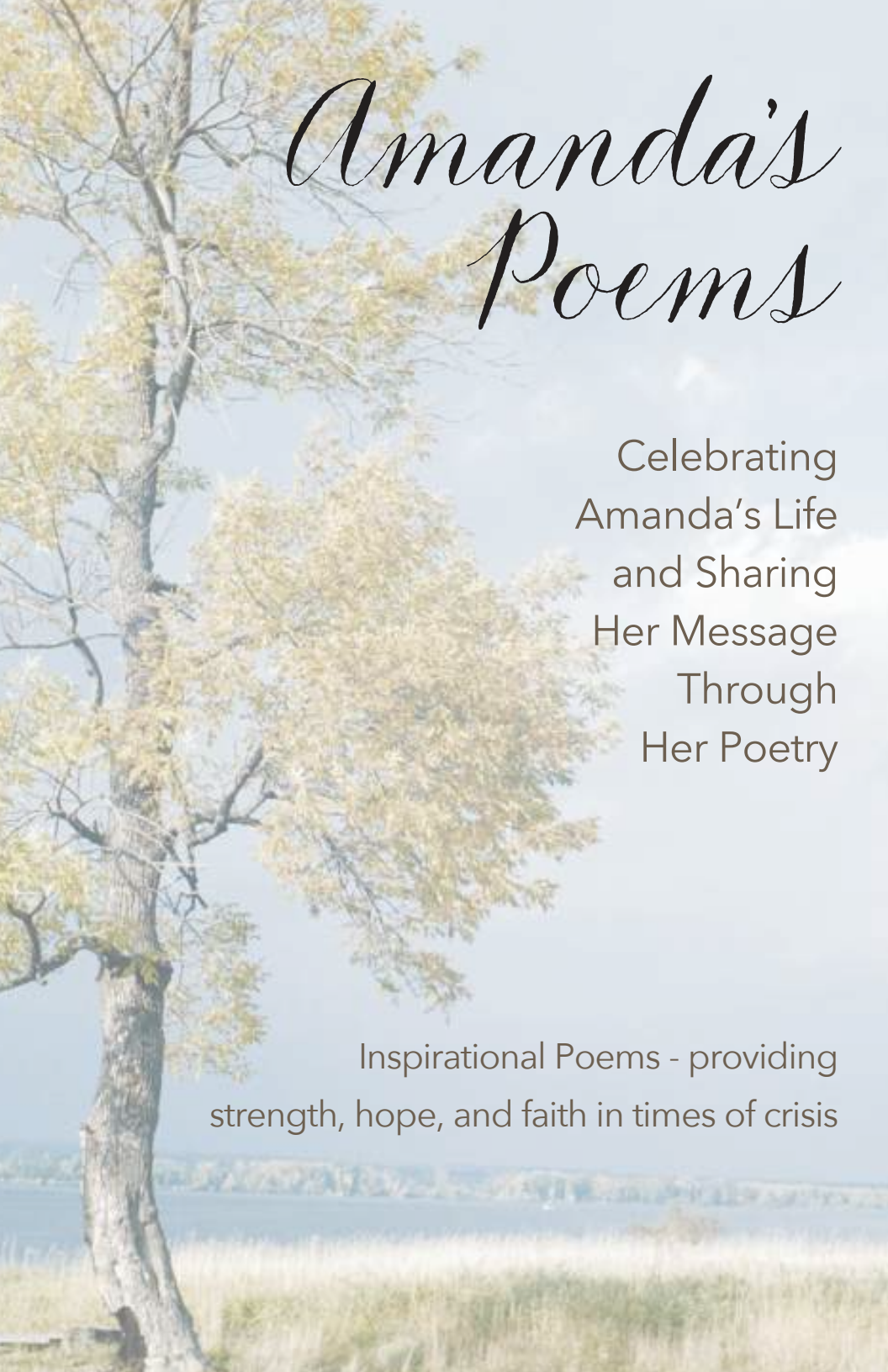


Amanda's Poems

Celebrating
Amanda's Life
and Sharing
Her Message
Through
Her Poetry

Inspirational Poems - providing
strength, hope, and faith in times of crisis

Live by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7



The poems on the following pages are the expression of Amanda's range of emotions. Her words communicate how her relationship with God helped her through the tough times and to be grateful, even under extreme challenges. It was Amanda's wish that her poems be published and given to others to inspire them and to demonstrate how she drew her strength from her faith – this is Amanda's message.

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Amanda's life was shattered by the news three days prior that her cancer had returned. She was trying to pick up the pieces and put her life back together. It was heartbreaking to read Amanda's poem, so the family responded with the following three poems of encouragement.

28 PUT DOWN THE PIECES
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Amanda was still waiting for God's Angel to take her to heaven. God answered her prayer, as she passed away a month later, after she wrote this poem.

35 A SISTER'S LOVE
This poem says it's better to have loved and lost, than never have loved before. This wedding photo is of Amanda and her twin sisters, Lisa and Laura.

36 NEVER GIVE UP
Amanda suffered complications while undergoing treatment at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. Her Dad wrote this poem to lift her spirits and give her the strength to endure the flight back home to California.

37 CONSUMED BY LIFE, DRIVEN BY DESTINATION
This poem was written by Amanda's Dad to remind her that this life is not the end and that we need to focus on where we are going after our last breath.

38 UNDERSTANDING CANCER WITHOUT GOD
Amanda wrote about all the things she lost because of cancer (worldly view).

39 EXPERIENCING CANCER WITH GOD
Amanda wrote about all the things she gained because of cancer (eternal view).

Celebrating Amanda's Life

These words were read by Amanda's father, Tom, at her memorial.

For the last few days I've struggled to find the words to honor Amanda's memory. I've prayed that God would guide me, but how can anyone prepare for a day like today? How do I describe a lifetime of memories in only a few minutes? I could tell you about Amanda - our little girl, from bedtime stories, to losing her first tooth, from soccer games, to spelling bees, from graduation, to her wedding...or I could share with you about her incredible faith in God. Ultimately, I decided to do both.

Amanda often used poetry to pour out her soul and put her raw emotions on paper. In honor of Amanda, I'd like to begin by reading her first poem, written at age 16, shortly after being diagnosed with cancer. It's titled - Little Things.

Have you ever closed your eyes at night
And savored every dream
Looked into your father's eyes
Just to see that gleam?

Have you ever taken a walk on the beach
And felt the soft sand between your toes
Memorized a loved one's smile
Down to the tiny crinkle in their nose?

Have you ever felt the light inside you
Suddenly spark and brightly shine
Or traced the palms of your hands
Each and every intricate line?

Have you ever cherished mom's sweet touch
As she tucked you in at night
Thanked God for all the little things
For friends, for life, for sight?

We are here to celebrate the life of our daughter, Amanda. It is often said that parents aren't supposed to outlive their children and that burying your child is one of the most painful experiences a parent will ever endure. But, after 23 years of life, Amanda taught us that today is not a funeral, it is a celebration; a celebration of her life and, more importantly, a celebration of her victory over death through Christ.

Amanda was born June 10, 1982 just a few miles from home, in Newport Beach. On that day, Linda, and I had no idea about the journey we were about to begin or how much our lives were about to change forever. Amanda was our first of four children and quickly became a "daddy's girl". Linda was a little jealous, but from the time Amanda could fit into a car seat, she went everywhere with me. We were joined at the hip and she quickly learned to like pickup trucks and country music.

I'll never forget how she would jump out of bed every morning when she heard the garage door open and run to the window and wave to me as I left for work. She never missed a day. We were inseparable and everyday I couldn't wait to get home from work to spend time with her. She was my little Shelle Belle. I never missed a parent teacher conference, a recital, an award ceremony, soccer game, or any other event. I was a Mr. Mom and proud of it. She was my Sugar Plum and I was her Sour Peach.

I have so many wonderful memories of Amanda growing up. But, I also remember a date that will forever be etched in my mind. The date was November 10, 1998 and Amanda was only 16 years old. On that day I heard four words that a parent never wants to hear, "Your daughter has cancer".

It was devastating news to the entire family, but Amanda was a fighter and more importantly, she possessed an amazingly strong faith in God and Jesus Christ - a gift she got from her mother. I remember taking her home after the bad news and talking with her about the upcoming treatment. Amanda wasn't afraid because she knew that "dad would fix everything".

She and I went out for an evening walk and she looked at me and said, "I'm so glad that I got cancer at such a young age." I was stunned by her comment and she explained to me: "Having cancer has opened my eyes and I can see life so clearly now. I used to worry about things like what kind of clothes I wore or what kind of car I would drive. Now, all of that doesn't' seem so important. *I don't want to spend one minute of my life on a negative thought.* Most people live to old age and never figure it out. But I've figured it out at 16 and now I have my whole life to live differently." That was my Amanda. We often think that we lead our children, but from that point on, Amanda was leading me.

The poems she wrote show the constant growth she underwent during her 7-year battle with cancer, as her faith was constantly tested and strengthened. Amanda always wanted to be remembered by her faith and never played the victim. She wanted God to use her in any way He chose, even if that meant showing others how she drew upon His strength during her illness.

Amanda told me that she didn't want to be a passive Christian. She read the Bible daily and supplemented her studies with books, prayer, and bible studies in an effort to reach what she called the next level in her faith.

I'd like to read one of her poems that describes who she was and what she stood for. It's kind of an in-your-face, faith poem, where Amanda goes on the offense for Christ. It's titled - Live by Heart.

You sit there aimlessly waiting
Letting life pass you by
You say my God is not for you
Can you give me a good reason why?

You tell me that my faith
Is a helpful little crutch
You won't be fooled so easily
You need evidence, proof, something you can touch

Some claim there is no God
When they serve one everyday
It takes the form of self
And always wants its way

You feel a sense of emptiness
Tormenting you inside
You wallow in self pity
Controlled by selfish pride

Investing in things that are meaningless
Things that will never last
You refuse to surrender your life
Because you were hurt in the past

Refusing to acknowledge God
You pick my faith apart
You live by your mighty intellect
As I live by my joyful heart

My faith is a powerful catalyst
Your faith in self, a hindering block
You build your life on sand
As I cling to my Eternal Rock

Cling to your own intelligence
And you'll drown in a selfish soul
Trying to fit everything but God
Into an empty, God-shaped hole.

Stop wasting your precious time
Purposeless and blind
Escape from the prison of pride
So on that day, when God delivers evidence, proof, something you cannot deny –
You won't be left behind.

Amanda Dieppa, 2004

Many are heartbroken about Amanda and the difficult life that she lived. I often wondered what life would have been like if she were never sick. But she cherished her life, filled with love for God, and family, and friends, and her loving husband, Aaron. Her quality of life was not measured by the number of years she lived, but by what she accomplished in those years. We all may wonder if our lives have made a difference to anyone. From that perspective, Amanda lived a full life, accomplished so much, and made a difference in more lives than many who live to old age.

From her first diagnosis to the day she passed away, God blessed us with seven more years with Amanda and for that I will be forever grateful. During that time we enjoyed a high school graduation, an 18th and 21st birthday, and I got to walk her down the aisle at her wedding. Those are some of the precious memories that I will cherish forever.

Before she died, Amanda said that if she had helped even one person turn towards God, then the last seven years of pain and suffering was all worth it. I can tell you that she turned me toward God and made me want to be a better person and a better Christian. That is part of her legacy and will live within me for the rest of my life.

Amanda shared her dying wishes and they were:
- I want to have the song "How will they remember me" played at my memorial.
- I don't want you to forget me.
- I want my poems published and given out for free to inspire others and show them the source of my strength, from my faith.
- I want to thank everyone at work who helped me and my family for so many years. I want them to know that I will always be grateful for their support.
- I want my family and friends to accept Christ as I did, that I will see them all in heaven.

I can only imagine God embracing Amanda in heaven and saying to her, "Well done my good and faithful servant."

I miss you, Amanda.
In my heart, I will love you forever.
Dad



Little Things

Have you ever closed your eyes at night
And savored every dream
Looked into your father's eyes
Just to see that gleam?

Have you ever taken a walk on the beach
And felt the soft sand between your toes
Memorized a loved one's smile
Down to the tiny crinkle in their nose?

Have you ever felt the light inside you
Suddenly spark and brightly shine
Or traced the palms of your hands
Each and every intricate line?

Have you ever cherished mom's sweet touch
As she tucked you in at night
Thanked God for all the little things
For friends, for life, for sight?

Amanda Twellman, 1999





Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." **Matthew 19:14**

Blessed Brokenness

Content in my comfortable life
I'm living everyday
Taking life for granted
Doing things my way

My life was mediocre
Lord, I was standing still
Trotting down my path
Ignoring Your perfect will

All came crashing down
That dark and sobering day
God, I can't stop crying
Don't take it all away

Everyday I'm waiting
Questions stir my mind
The Lord gives me answers
Father, I've been so blind

In my utter darkness
To me He still draws near
Child I've been calling you
God, I didn't hear

Slowly I am drowning
I weep every night
Lord, I need Your strength
Does He really hear my plight?

But then He lifts me up
While dusting off my back
Filling me with hope
And the faith that I lack

Lord, it's getting tough
I want to run away
But He's by my side
So I find the strength to stay

God I'm on my knees
You're whispering my name
You've given me new life
I'll never be the same

You've lit my heart on fire
Redeemed me with Your grace
Your love is like a flood -
God, I see Your face

–Amanda Twellman, June 2002



O Lord, you have searched me and known me! ***Psalm 139:1***

Unforeseen Blessing

Face to face with my Maker
My eyes are open wide
New pieces of me come to life
But what about the ones that died?

Knowing how I'm supposed to feel,
I struggle in my mind
Slowly, I step forward, hold my breath
Glancing back at what I left behind

All eyes are set upon me
Wondering what I'll do
I toss out the old hesitantly
As God proudly hands me the new

The new is stronger, joyful, mature
More than I ever dreamed
Ready to never look back
Or at least, so it seemed…

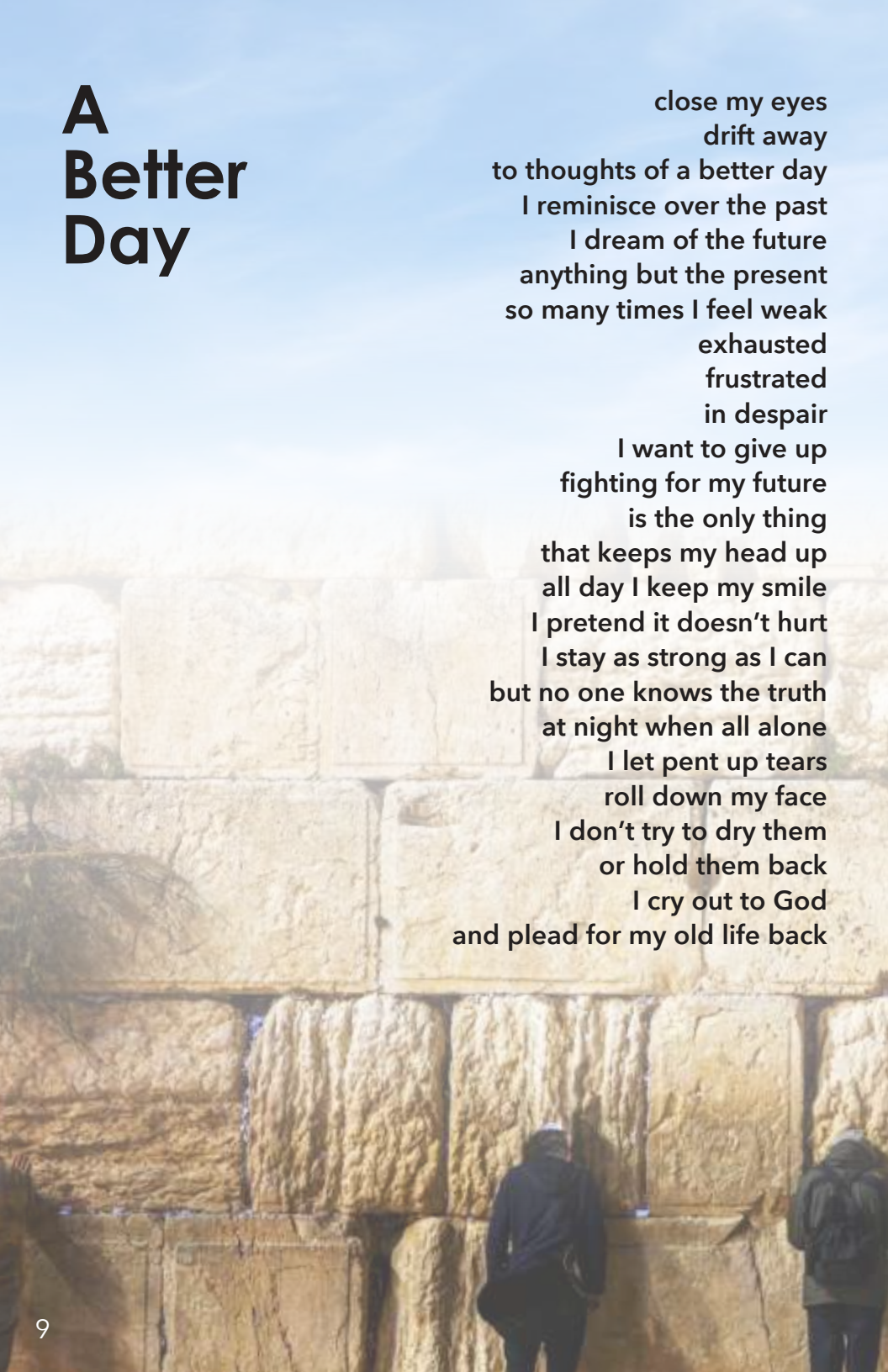
Sometimes I miss the good old days
A childlike innocence lost
But He replaced it with a resting faith
Knowing it was well worth the cost

So when I feel I'm drowning in this world,
Attempting to settle for less
I'll turn my back and lift my eyes
To the only One I care to impress

Amanda Twellman, 11/29/02

A Better Day

close my eyes
drift away
to thoughts of a better day
I reminisce over the past
I dream of the future
anything but the present
so many times I feel weak
exhausted
frustrated
in despair
I want to give up
fighting for my future
is the only thing
that keeps my head up
all day I keep my smile
I pretend it doesn't hurt
I stay as strong as I can
but no one knows the truth
at night when all alone
I let pent up tears
roll down my face
I don't try to dry them
or hold them back
I cry out to God
and plead for my old life back





everyone wants to help
offers to hold my hand
but no one quite understands
what it feels like…
my hair keeps falling out
I feel so ugly
my body isn't mine,
I can't plan my future
I feel so weak
I barely feel alive
my heart is hurting
my eyes can't cry anymore
I hate this
I hate what this does
to me
to my family
to my soul mate
to my friends
just please be over soon
make it go away
God, just give me strength
don't leave my side
until thoughts of a better day
aren't just thoughts

Amanda Twellman
12/29/02



Not The Answer I Wanted

On my knees every night
Beseeching You with the same prayer
Hoping for just one answer
The waiting impossible to bear

Finally Your answer comes
So undeniable and clear
But it's not the one I wanted, God
And at first I'm filled with fear

For a split second sorrow,
countless tears followed by doubt
God, what is Your plan?
I was so sure You'd help me out

Then He speaks gently to my heart
Reveals His perfect will
My constant weakness glorifies His strength
So in awe I just stand still

I wake up every morning
The biggest smile on my face
Completely uncertain of tomorrow
But always confident in His grace

So never will I lose faith
As He teaches me to persevere
Even in trials I overflow with joy
Knowing one glorious day
He will wipe away every tear!

Amanda Twellman
1/16/03

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.
2 Corinthians 12:9

PRAYERFUL PATIENCE



Tired and utterly broken
Weathered from the storm
Struggling with prayerful patience
My faith so tired and worn

Fighting to keep my head up
Is the finish line moving farther away?
My eyes question the silent heavens
But my lips never cease to pray

As He molds me for His purpose
My faith becomes refined
Suddenly every dark cloud
Is abundantly silver lined

No longer afraid of the future
Or things beyond my control
I focus on the eternal
The condition of my soul

Then…

The answer that I wanted
To a prayer from long ago
In awe I just stand speechless
Basking in the glow

Lifting my eyes to the heavens
When I'm thankful and not just afraid
Amazed I fall to my knees
Because I am fearfully and wonderfully made

Living life as a privilege
Suddenly makes perfect sense
As I wait for what He has planned
Smiling in sweet suspense

by: Amanda Twellman, 9/1/03



Caught Up



Caught up in a rush
You wake up everyday
Are you really thankful
Do you have the time to pray?

Overwhelmed and frantic
As trials come your way
Worry can't control you
If you have the faith to pray

Wrapped up in the future
Forgetting to savor the day
The past is gone, you're forgiven
Just stop, take a breath, and pray

Silently you're working
Waiting for that Day
Well done, good and faithful servant...
Is all He has to say

Amanda Twellman
9/18/03

Unbroken Promises

Amanda Dieppa, 2003

When everything's going smoothly
And I have a perfect day
How easy it is to praise You
And so joyfully I pray

Slowly I forget You
"I can do this on my own"
Emptiness creeps in
And I start to feel alone

Consistently You're knocking
But my heart won't let You in
Because I'm too distracted
By stress and selfish sin

Too lazy and too stubborn
To admit that I am weak
Instead I wander in darkness
When it's You I need to seek

Carrying my own burdens
So heavy, I crash and stumble
Sadly, it takes falling on my face
To teach me to be humble

Life's road turns rough and rocky
And I have a terrible day
Am I upset with God
For letting trouble come my way?

Then I think of His promises
For eternity He's kept them all
He said that He'd never leave me
But never promised I wouldn't fall

He'll lead me through the flames
Give me strength to face a trial
Alone I can't go an inch
With Christ I can go a mile

So when everything's going wrong
And I'm facing my darkest days
A loving, faithful God sustains me
Who deserves ceaseless praise!



Stripped Away

Stopped dead in my tracks and speechless
My heart feels completely smashed
Life seemed so stable, so perfect
Until my hopes were dashed

Left feeling empty handed
My faith is shocked and shaken
Frozen in fear and confusion
Suddenly stripped, I feel forsaken

Deep down I know the truth
His love is always there
Yet a piece of me cries in frustration
Because life just isn't fair

I struggle to set an example
Falling completely short of the mark
I collapse to the ground in despair
Feeling left out in the dark

But a little ray of faith
Creeps into my mind
Developed in trials of my past
Continually refined

Stripped and starkly bare
Faith, the only thing left in my hand
Joyful with nothing else needed
To run the race and firmly stand

Amanda Dieppa 2/26/04



Overflowing Cup

So tired of this life
Lord, let me just give up
Take away the pain
Empty out my cup

The anguish of my soul
Still pent up deep inside
Holding back a flood of tears
I'm not allowed to cry

Human weakness overcomes me
I'm blinded by emotion
Drowning in the unknown
Life, a tumultuous ocean

My face, a smiling facade
Betraying what's within
My heart, broken from disappointment
Fighting a battle I can't win

Help, my only hope
The same today, yesterday, tomorrow
Don't let the light inside me
Wash away in a wave of sorrow

My clinging faith so frail
My courage all used up
But I believe, I trust, I wait
For one day...
When He'll overflow my cup



Amanda Dieppa
3/3/04

LIVE by HEART

By Amanda Dieppa 3/24/04

You sit there aimlessly waiting
Letting life pass you by
You say my God is not for you
Can you give me a good reason why?

You tell me that my faith
Is a helpful little crutch
You won't be fooled so easily
You need evidence, proof, something you can touch

Some claim there is no God
When they serve one everyday
It takes the form of self
And always wants its way

You feel a sense of emptiness
Tormenting you inside
You wallow in self pity
Controlled by selfish pride

Investing in things that are meaningless
Things that will never last
You refuse to surrender your life
Because you were hurt in the past

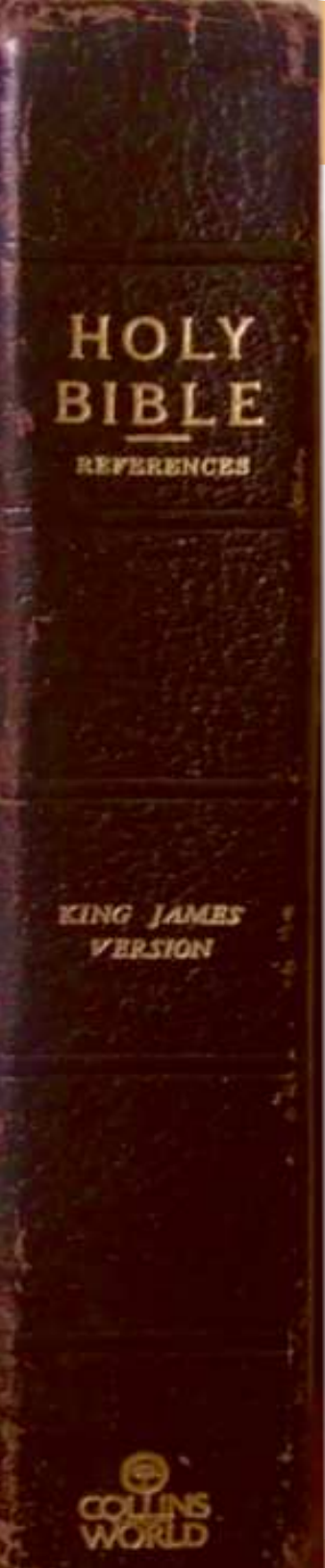


Refusing to acknowledge God
You pick my faith apart
You live by your mighty intellect
As I live by my joyful heart

My faith is a powerful catalyst
Your faith in self, a hindering block
You build your life on sand
As I cling to my Eternal Rock

Cling to your own intelligence
And you'll drown in a selfish soul
Trying to fit everything but God
Into an empty, God-shaped hole.

Stop wasting your precious time
Purposeless and blind
Escape from the prison of pride
So on that day, when God delivers evidence, proof, something you cannot deny–
You won't be left behind.



Continual Surrender

A long, long time ago
My life I did surrender
Aware of my shortcomings
So clearly I remember

Giving Him total control
Confident in His care
Relying on His strength
No weight I couldn't bear

But somehow I slowly wander
Out of His precious sight
Taking back what I once surrendered
Carrying a burden that's no longer light

Caught in an endless cycle
This life so confusing, complicated
My continual weaknesses, imperfections
Leave me fed up and frustrated

Yet the Lord lovingly waits
He's patient with my pace
He continually assures me
I'm never a hopeless case

By Amanda Dieppa 6/16/04

DESPERATE MOMENT

What happens when I look within?
I feel hopeless and filled with sorrow
What happens when I look around?
I'm depressed and dread tomorrow

If this life is really a test
I'm afraid I'm horribly failing-
So weak, confused, lost when it rains…
And now it's relentlessly hailing

And when I hit rock bottom
Some try to tear me down
They turn their backs, ignore me
All alone I slowly drown

Caught in this desperate moment
Blinded by streaming tears
What happens when I look up at Him?
He understands me and He hears

He provides eternal hope
On family and friends I can depend
The one and only comfort
This life is <u>not</u> the end

Amanda Dieppa, 6/18/04



In a Moment's Notice

So thankful, thankful, thankful
For blessings that overflow
Though I don't deserve a single one
His love I feel and know

So loved, loved, loved
As His star I want to shine
He sees me, smiles, claims me
Child, you are Mine!

So filled, filled, filled
With His joy and with His Spirit
I see His perfect glory
And desperately want to mirror it

So peaceful, peaceful, peaceful
Knowing He is the One in control
Living a life He intricately planned
The Designer of my very soul

I'm waiting, waiting, waiting
For my Lord to keep His promise
Sustained by certain hope
Ready in a moment's notice

By Amanda Dieppa, 7/14/04



Open My Eyes

Blinded by tears
Blinded by fears
There seems to be no way out
Trapped in a cage
Gasping for breath
Too weak to scream or shout

My heart and soul
Sapped of strength
My faith feels all used up
I cry out over
And over again
"Please take from me this cup"

Time slips past
Days fly by
The world moving as I stand still
Get me out of this cage
Take away this pain
Open my eyes to your puzzling Will

I fall right down
And get back up
To be knocked down again
I'm losing this race
Losing my mind
Is there really a way I can win?
Trust is fading
Hope is waning
Though I fight to hold it close

Why are you distant
Why are you silent
When I really need you the most?

You created this soul
You breathed it to life
Which is why I question away
I'm frustrated, angry
Worried and broken
Is there any other way?

A heart on fire
A faith unshaken
Once stirred deep inside
Now I'm left
With emptiness
And nowhere left to hide

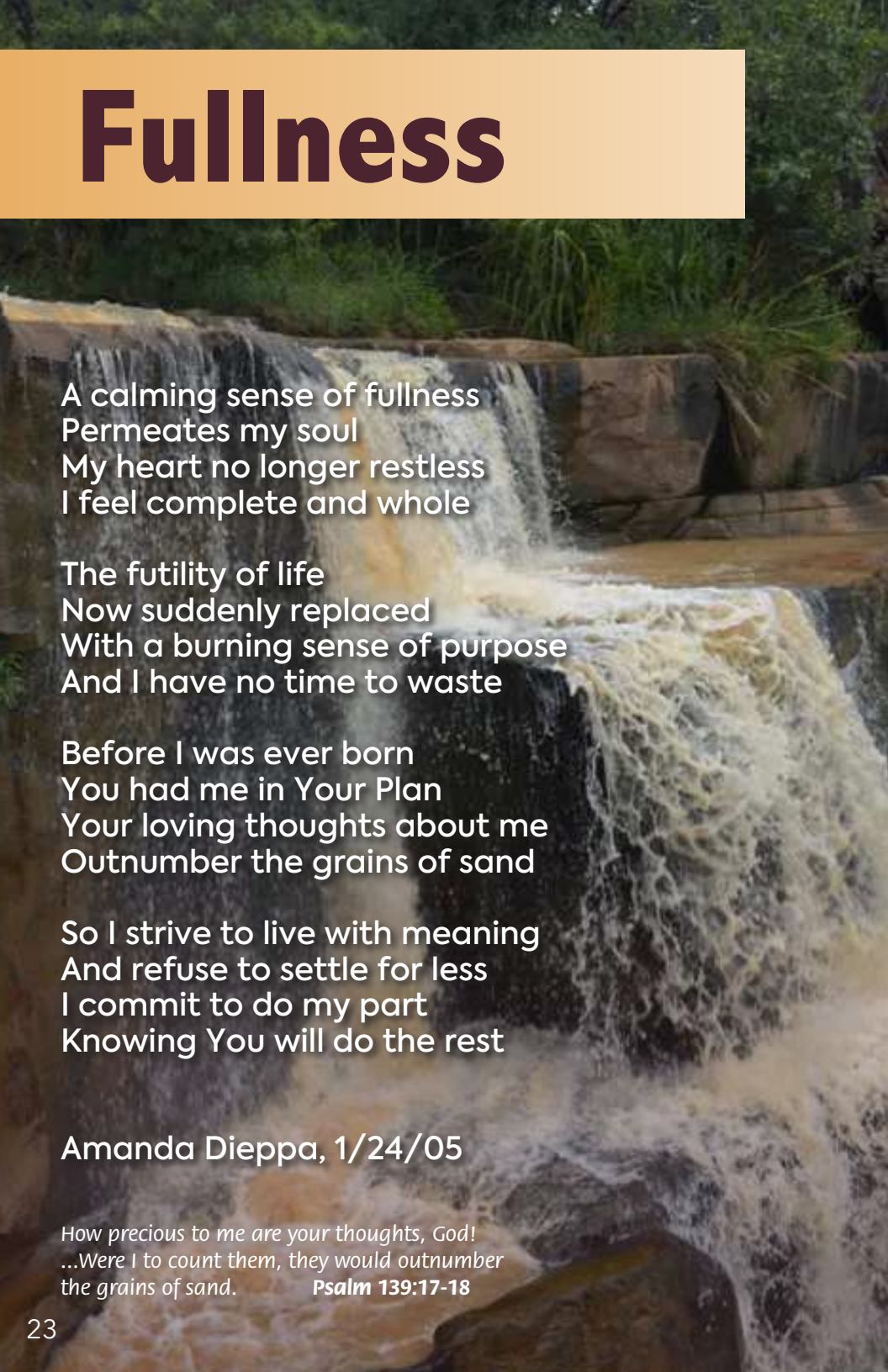
Take it away
Take it away
Please, please hear my cries
Whatever it is
You're planning to do---
Open up my eyes.

Amanda Dieppa
12/27/04



Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see..."
***John* 9:39**

Fullness



A calming sense of fullness
Permeates my soul
My heart no longer restless
I feel complete and whole

The futility of life
Now suddenly replaced
With a burning sense of purpose
And I have no time to waste

Before I was ever born
You had me in Your Plan
Your loving thoughts about me
Outnumber the grains of sand

So I strive to live with meaning
And refuse to settle for less
I commit to do my part
Knowing You will do the rest

Amanda Dieppa, 1/24/05

How precious to me are your thoughts, God!
...Were I to count them, they would outnumber
the grains of sand. ***Psalm 139:17-18***

TEMPORARY TRIALS



Trial after trial
On every side I'm pressed
Quietly enduring
Another of life's tests

Day after day
I struggle and I try
To face temporary troubles
Without asking, "Why?"

Season after season
I go through highs and lows
Whether I succeed or fail
My faith always grows

Time after time
My faith becomes lukewarm
Then it's reignited
When You meet me in a storm

Triumph after triumph
I give you all the credit
Every need I've ever had
You've seen it and You've met it

Amanda Dieppa
2/2/05

UNDYING HOPE



Breathless in fear
I can't feel my heart
Watching my own dreams
Shatter, fall apart

The very same battle
I've fought for years
My greatest fear, a reality
My only response, tears

Still strong in Christ
Yet my weakness shows through
When it's all up to Him
And there's nothing I can do

For but a moment I am weak
Then faith kicks in
I know I'm in His hands
That's where I've always been

Take everything away
Face me with certain death –
I'll say that God is good
With my very last breath

My life is brief and fleeting
But my hope is undying
No matter what happens,
I won't forget…
It's Him I'm glorifying

Amanda Dieppa 2/7/05

Forever Burdened

Help me to understand, God
I am afraid to ask You why
Why there is so much pain, Lord
So much to make me cry?

My face is stained with tears
And I gasp for breaths of air
I feel trapped and forever burdened
With too much for one to bear

Despite my every effort
To remember You are there
I still buckle under pressure
Still give in to despair

My head tells me "be still"
But my heart screams within
It's tired of being hurt
And says I'll never win

Sorrow is too familiar
Hope feels far away
So weighed down by this life
I'm afraid to even pray



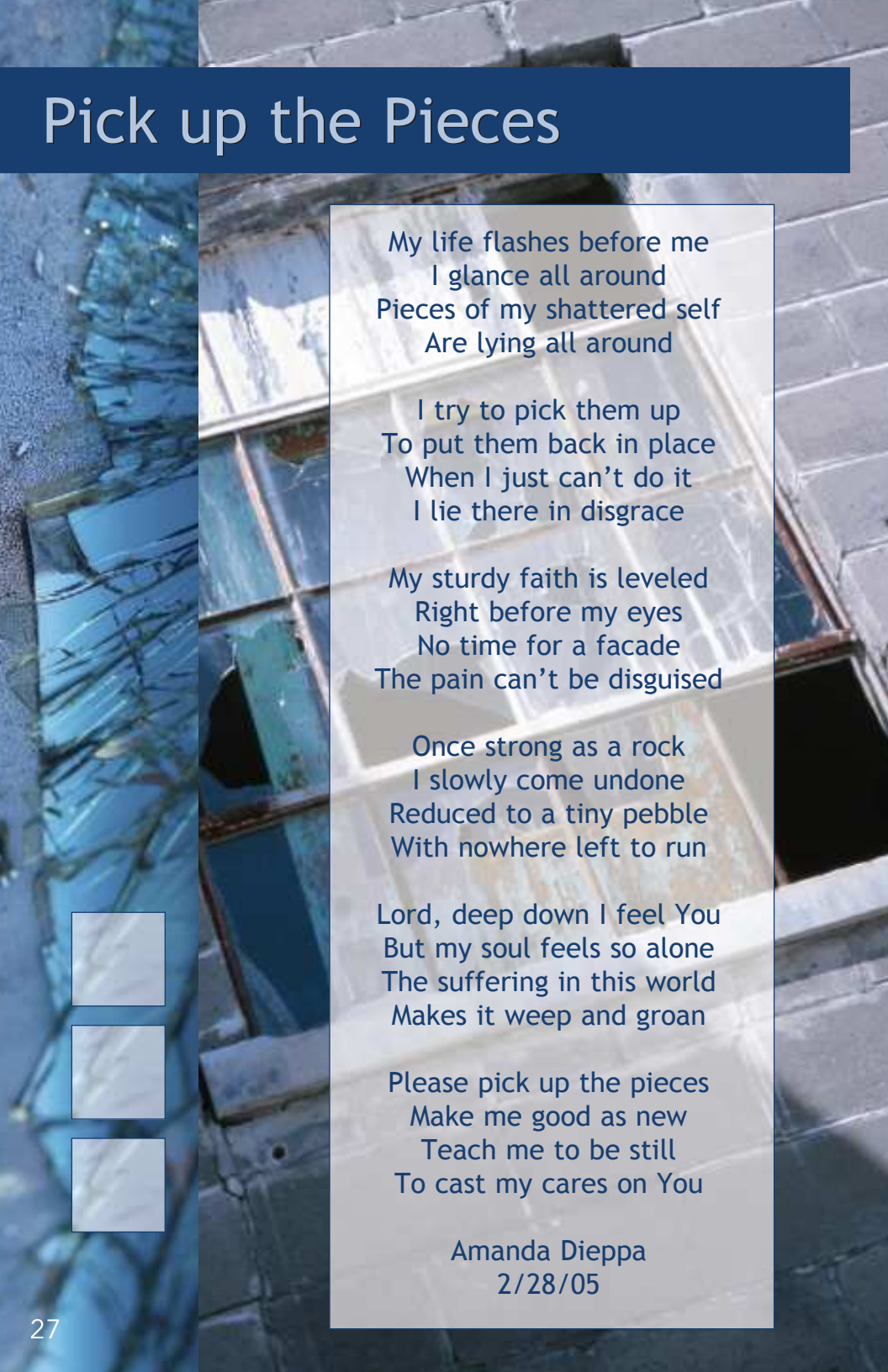
I know there is a plan
But I am afraid to live it out
I want to turn away
And give in to my doubt

Help me to believe, God
I am afraid to let You down
I'm ashamed to ever waiver
So silently I drown

Amanda Dieppa
2/25/05

Give your burdens to the Lord and he will take care of you. ***Psalm* 55:22**

Pick up the Pieces



My life flashes before me
I glance all around
Pieces of my shattered self
Are lying all around

I try to pick them up
To put them back in place
When I just can't do it
I lie there in disgrace

My sturdy faith is leveled
Right before my eyes
No time for a facade
The pain can't be disguised

Once strong as a rock
I slowly come undone
Reduced to a tiny pebble
With nowhere left to run

Lord, deep down I feel You
But my soul feels so alone
The suffering in this world
Makes it weep and groan

Please pick up the pieces
Make me good as new
Teach me to be still
To cast my cares on You

Amanda Dieppa
2/28/05

A poem to Amanda
from her sister, Laura.



Put down the Pieces

When your life flashes before you,
No need to look around
Along with the almighty God,
In family your comfort is found.
Put down the pieces,
Don't put them back in place,
Pick up the phone and know I'll be there,
To help with what you face.
I am the one who lies in disgrace,
When I see there is so little I can do.
But I know you have so much faith,
You pull the entire family through.
I am so proud of what you've accomplished,
And how strong you've always been,
Though you think you are but a pebble,
What does that make me then?
A speck of dust before you,
Willing to be there when you've come undone.
Please don't feel alone Amanda.
I know I haven't been the sister I could,
But I want to let you know that I love you so much,
And if I was as strong as you,
I'd be a better supporter and Christian, I would.

Laura Twellman 2/28/05



God?

I cannot breathe
I'm gasping and holding in tears.
How long can I deceive
And fight back my fears?

Life is unraveling
One thread at a time
Faster and faster
I'm starting to unwind.

I'm searching for answers
They're getting harder to find
Soon, very soon
Complete sorrow will be mine.

I feel ungrateful
Do I constantly whine?
Not a month ago
I felt perfectly fine.

How quick things turn sour,
Where is my life going?
I feel I'm losing my grip,
I don't like not knowing.

Satan is skillfully stitching,
Rethreading my life post haste,
Stitching uncertainty and doubt
I feel like I'm losing life's race.

I am not in control,
I'm fighting to hold on
Please save me Lord Jesus,
Everything's terribly wrong.

Work is almost unbearable,
Daily disappointment keeps coming,
Give me patience, mine is terrible
The littlest upset and I'm off running.

Confused at a crossroad,
Which one do I take?
I'm stuck in the middle,
Afraid to make a mistake.

This weight on my shoulders
Is quite heavy to bear
I'm sinking in quicksand
God are You there?

I give to You my burden
Please Lord, take it all.
I am weakening God
I'm afraid I will fall.

I've heard if I ask,
That I will be able to receive,
It's a much harder task
Than I would have believed.

Okay You take them….
I'm shutting my eyes in suspense.
Did my prayers not reach You?
Life doesn't make sense.

I want to give You my worries,
What more can I do?
I know I'm missing something
I'm asking You…

"Where is this light,
In this tunnel?" I'm blinded
"If I give You my plight,
Will You help me find it?"

Frustration is nothing
This feeling I can't explain
It burns my inside
A source of constant pain.

I think it's my heart,
It's been broken too many times,
I'll take the lead of my sister,
And sort it out in rhymes.

I can sense in my family
A deep longing for peace
Struggling daily for something
To make their pain cease.

Sighs are constantly exhaled,
They speak of defeat,
Not able to express in words
We fall at Your feet.

We trust in You God,
You know what You're doing
But we yearn for some answers
To the pain we're enduring.

Why us?
Why now?
What haven't we learned yet?

Never Denying God - Just Questions For God

I know the answers are waiting
In heaven for us
We'll go through this struggle
Relying purely on trust.

Relying on faith
Is hard to do
Help me stay strong
And focused on You.

Faith like a mustard seed
That's about all I've got
That's all You need
And all I've brought.

I want to bring more
And sometimes I do
My fists hold it tight,
But it seems to fall through.

I've cried to You before
About what weighs down my heart
Why I cry to You at night
Alone in the dark.

I constantly think
I debate in my mind
I battle my logic
And question the divine.

I struggle with reason
Of things beyond my grasp
Why You do things
And jump us through circus rings.

You have a plan
Designed for us all
I do know You hear me
You answer my calls.

I chose not to hear them
Not just yet
You're dealing the cards
And I'm afraid what I'll get.

You see, there is something
I secretly wish,
A desire for my sister
To never finish.

I'm selfishly hoping
I secretly pray
Your purpose for her
Is not finished today.

I hope You need her here
For a long long time
Don't take her to Your world
I need her in mine.

I'm afraid how I'd take it
If You said she were through
If You took her from us
And said "That'll do".

That is what I think sometimes
In the depths of my heart
In those moments of weakness
That just tear me apart.

In the depths of my soul
Much deeper than this selfish position
I see beyond the fear of loss,
To my indecision.

Beyond the feelings I have
That want her to desperately stay,
I hope God, You sweep her to heaven
Because then she'll be okay.

No more pain and suffering
That's something I know You'll give her
But beyond getting a new body,
It's what she was meant for.

This is not where I am suppose to be
I would be delighted to reunite with
You and be free
If she has the chance to reach that goal
It won't be me who stops her soul.

We were meant for something better
Heaven is the place we should be.
So if she must go, I will let her,
Just not gleefully.

Lisa Twellman, 2/28/05

According to Plan

by Dad: 02/28/05









What would it be like
A life without pain
A spiritual body
Without wrinkle or stain

How does a caterpillar
Know in a cocoon
It will emerge a butterfly
That can flutter and swoon

God does have a plan
But fear keeps me blind
From the beauty and glory
Of a new body divine

I'll trade in my earthly one
For one made by His hand
It awaits my arrival
According to plan

So why do I fear
And cry in distress
Is God really real
Is life just a test

I pray and I struggle
But continue to grow
Closer to You Lord
And the warmth of Your glow

I'm nervous and excited
To see what heaven holds in store
A perfect spiritual body
and so much more

Those who believe
Find true inner peace
Conquering all fears
Of death and disease

Someday we all die
Every child, woman and man
So live your life wisely
According to His plan

Palm of Your Hand

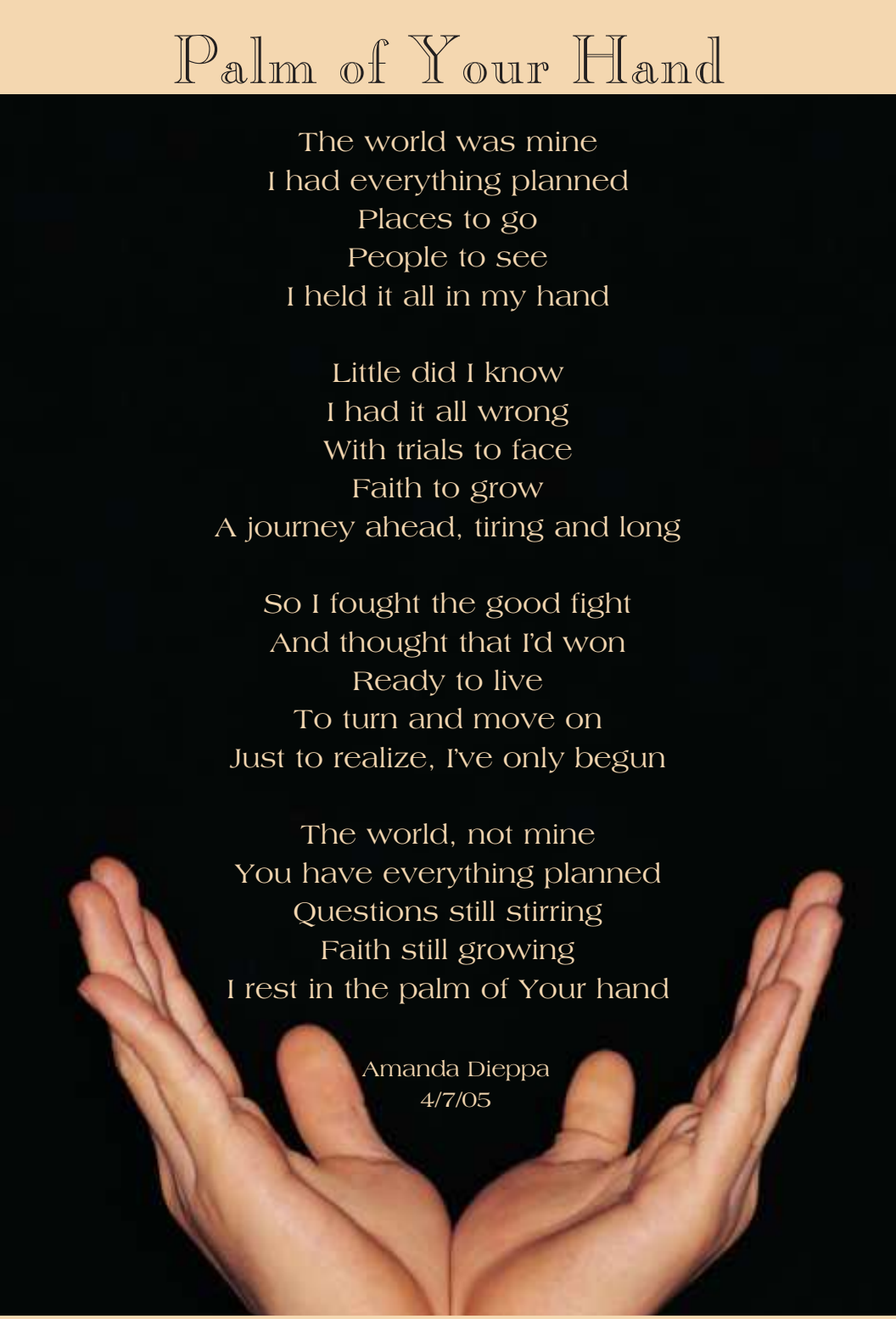
The world was mine
I had everything planned
Places to go
People to see
I held it all in my hand

Little did I know
I had it all wrong
With trials to face
Faith to grow
A journey ahead, tiring and long

So I fought the good fight
And thought that I'd won
Ready to live
To turn and move on
Just to realize, I've only begun

The world, not mine
You have everything planned
Questions still stirring
Faith still growing
I rest in the palm of Your hand

Amanda Dieppa
4/7/05



Not Yet

I doubt not that You're in control
Yet something burns within my soul
My will to live
More than a flame
It blazes forth
Refusing to wane

Your will be done- just not yet
I have too many dreams, too many regrets
I didn't mean to waste
Each precious day
Seeking my own will
Wandering astray

Now the clock continues to tick
And I'd give anything to not be sick
I beg and plead
To just be healed
Sometimes afraid
My fate is sealed

Please don't take me, at least not yet
I've been blessed with so much, my future's all set
My youth cries out
My heart is on fire….

But wait---
Your love is all I require.

Amanda Dieppa
04/20/05



Still Waiting

Why, Lord, why?
Do I fight so long and hard
Just to gain one inch
And be taken back a yard?

Where, Lord, where
Can I run and safely hide
Just to get away
From this thorn in my side?

When, Lord, when
Will this nightmare ever end?
Waiting for an angel
I'm scared You'll never send.

How, Lord, how
Do You allow so much pain
When I'm crying out in faith
And You let it just remain?

Who do I turn to
When it feels like You're not there?
What do I do
When it feels like You don't care?

I'm still waiting for that angel
But doubt chips away
At a once joyful heart
That longs for that Day

Amanda Dieppa
6/13/05





A Sister's Love

Is it better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all?
Do I dare give all of my heart knowing her chances are so small?
Wouldn't it be easier not to get close, to protect my vulnerable heart,
So if she slipped away, my soul wouldn't be ripped apart?
It hurts so much already because I've let myself get close
If it pains me to see her sick, what will it feel like if she goes?
When she first got sick I ran because I was afraid of getting close,
I figured I could save myself by weakening sorrow's lethal dose.
I was told I would regret it if I didn't get to know her the best I could,
To love her while she's on this earth, every precious minute.
I listened to those I thought knew best, from those who'd lost before.
So I've loved my sister with all my heart, and I couldn't love her more.
So now I go to bed at night, praying she'll see tomorrow,
Hoping God will spare her life to keep me from such sorrow.
I watch her and the pain she's in and I admit I think of the choice I've made
To love unconditionally with a heart that is vulnerable but unafraid.
So looking back I can say I don't regret risking my heart,
If I didn't love like I do, it wouldn't be much of a heart that rips apart.
For if I hadn't loved her and given her my all,
I could not imagine the feeling of loss of not knowing her at all.

Lisa Twellman, 6/19/05

Never Give Up



you must never give up
the will to live
there are many who need you
you have so much to give

I know life can be tough
and there are days when you drown
when the burden is enough
to bring anyone down

now look to the Lord
Who stands by your side
and pray that His word
will swell up inside

you have battled before
and faced your fears
living one day at a time
you have extended the years

so put on your armor
and pick up your sword
for negative thoughts
we can not afford

I will be there with you
each step of the way
and celebrate the triumphs
as we conquer each day

by dad: 6/20/05





Consumed by Life, Driven by Destination

You ask what's life about
Why on earth are we here?
In anger we scream and shout
Our purpose is not so clear

Some say that it's the journey
Only time will tell
Others argue it's the destination
Will it be heaven or will it be hell?

When things go wrong in life
And bad things happen all around
Will you give up on Christ
Or will you stand on Solid Ground?

No one promised it would be easy
To turn the other cheek
To overlook the bad in life
And strive to be so meek

Jealousy and desire
Consume our material mind
Wanting what others have
Is part of satan's design

So when you're consumed by life
And worried that it's a test
Hold on to your faith forever
And don't worry about the rest

by: dad: 6/23/05

Understanding Cancer WITHOUT God

God, why is this happening? I can't move I can't breathe. My heart hurts, it feels like it's being twisted and squeezed and pulled in ten different directions. I can't see. The tears keep closing my eyes. I'm trying to blink them away, I am trying to be strong. But on the inside I am crumbling, God. On the inside I am falling to pieces. My life flashes before me. Questions drown me. God I can't do this. Not again.

What about my life? I just grew out my hair; it took me three years. Please don't take it away from me. What about my plans? I want to go back to San Diego. I want to go to school like everyone else. I'm supposed to graduate in 3 years. I'm supposed to be a teacher, what about the kids whose lives I'm supposed to touch? What about my family? My Mom. My Dad. My sisters. My little brother. I am supposed to be the strong big sister. I can't make them go through that again…I'd rather do it alone. I want to see Lisa and Laura get married. I want to be their bride's maid. I want to watch Michael graduate from high school. I want to take care of Mom and Dad when they grow old. I don't want them taking care of me…it's not supposed to be this way.

God I'm still drowning…it's getting worse…I am in a nightmare. This isn't my life. This isn't my body. I want a new one because this one is broken. This one has betrayed me.

God I can't wait. The waiting is killing me. Slowly and maliciously it eats away at me. God I don't want to have surgery, don't let them cut me open again. I don't want anymore scars Lord, how will anyone love me like that? God don't let them hurt me anymore, make me sick anymore. Tell them to stop giving me IVs, tell them to stop poking and prodding me, tell them to stop talking about giving me chemo again. Father, because I can't do it again. I don't want to do it again. I can't. Please don't let them poison me. I don't want to throw up everyday; I don't want to be sick; I don't want to watch my parents' faces as they hear me and have to come running to wash out my bowl. I don't want to have to sleep on the floor again curled up in a ball. I like my bed. I like my life right now. Please don't take everything away from me. Not now.

What about my future? God, what about my soul mate? Will he still love me when I am sick, will he still think I am beautiful when I am bald and white and wasted away? Will he still want to look into my brown eyes when they are dark and sunken and filled with tears? Will he stay by my side? Will he run away? What about the family I want to have someday, God? What about the kids I want? Little Hayley and Evan. God, will I ever get the chance to make their lunches everyday and write on their napkins, "I love you"? What about my youth? Will I be able to enjoy it? Live it to it's fullest? What about the beaches I haven't surfed yet, the mountains I haven't boarded, the friends I haven't made, the smiles I haven't given, the lives I haven't touched yet God? Lord, why me? God I can't do it, I feel alone, I feel discouraged, I feel broken, I feel lost. Help me.

Experiencing Cancer WITH God

O Lord, you are so awesome. I can't move or breathe because I am captivated by your love. My heart was in anguish and you rescued me from my fear. My heart is full and overflowing and I can't even contain how much I feel…God it's spilling all over the place, it's bubbling forth with so much joy. Your awesome presence in my life is exhilarating. In many ways, I still can't see Lord-because I am nearly blinded by your light! God, how can I be afraid now? How can I ask you why? How can I ever question You? For once I am right in the fact that I can't handle this, I am drowning. But with You, through You, and because of You I can do all things! You have taken my burden, I don't have to do this alone…it's not possible. But just knowing that my Lord will be ever faithful gives me a hope I could never imagine. I am so blessed, yet I deserve NOTHING. And I will hope in you Lord, I will hope in your plan for me, your will for me, your future for me…and the present you have given me. God, why me? Why have you blessed my life abundant with your goodness, love, and mercy? Why have you revealed yourself to me and given me the opportunity to be on my knees for you? Why have you blessed me with sight when for so long I was blind to your awesome plan and Holy purpose? Blind to the fullness of life. God, I will never stop praising you…in my darkest, lowest place I will praise your name and smile at your awesome love for me. I can barely even contain myself! I am a new person. Christ has changed my life in a way I never expected and that I could never comprehend. God you are so gracious! The love you have blessed me with is overflowing…a word I use so often right now, but nothing else can better describe me! I am overflowing with joy and peace and love and awe and fervor to serve God. It's bursting forth and I want everyone to know it and feel it, because it is the most amazing and beautiful thing ever and everyone should have the opportunity to experience it. God, how did you transform a broken, confused, and utterly lost child like me into a fully consumed and humbled follower of Jesus Christ, burning from the inside out with Your message of love and mercy? I never even knew I was blind. I never even knew I was missing out for so long. I never knew I had an outer shell of protection that only gave so much. And I NEVER fully understood how liberating and moving it is to die to self for Christ. How killing everything in me, surrendering every piece of me could fill my heart and give me absolute and undeniable LIFE. I will not be afraid with Christ Jesus by my side, I will not waver in my love and faith and devotion…no matter what is taken away from me. I have said this before and I grasp it even more now-you can take away my love and my health and my life, and I will never stop praising the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can silence the praise on my lips for my Father in heaven, no amount of fear or darkness or isolation or brokenness. In fact, I will only praise Him more. I fully put my heart and soul into His Word and purpose for me because I have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Praise the Father that I can honestly and joyfully proclaim,

"to LIVE is Christ, to DIE is gain."

Philippians 1:21

Favorite Family Bible Verses

Mom:
It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.
***Deuteronomy* 31:8**

Dad:
And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
***Romans* 8:28**

Laura:
Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit. ***Jeremiah* 17:7-8**

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. **2 *Corinthians* 4:16-18**

Lisa:
Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ***Romans* 12:15-16**

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.
1 *Peter* 4:8-10

Michael:
Live by faith, not by sight.
2 *Corinthians* 5:7



Jesus is Available to All

It was Amanda's desire and dying wish that her poems be put into a book and given to others to show them where she got her strength from her faith.

When she wrote Understanding Cancer WITHOUT God and Experiencing Cancer WITH God, you can see why she chose to put her faith in Jesus Christ. She no longer focused on how many breaths she would take, but where she was going after her last breath.

On the next page is an invitation – to encourage those who have been moved by Amanda's journey in faith. The same Power that strengthened Amanda and moved her hand to write these wonderful poems can also give hope, encouragement, and comfort to you. If Amanda has stirred your heart to know Jesus and to attain the power and strength that comes with a love that is beyond comprehension, I pray that in a quiet moment of reflection you commit your life to the only One who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Remind them, "I AM" is coming again.
Prepare the way, for the KING is coming!

Salvation Prayer

To begin your new life with Jesus as your Lord & Savior, the following prayer, spoken from the heart, is a good first step:

Heavenly Father,
I know that I have sinned against You and that my sins have separated me from You. I ask for Your forgiveness. I am truly sorry and now want to turn away from my sinful past. I believe that Your Son, Jesus Christ, died for my sins on the cross, that He was resurrected from the dead, is alive today, and hears my prayers. I invite Jesus into my heart and ask Him to be my personal Lord and Savior. Please send Your Holy Spirit to help me obey You and to help me understand and grow in the knowledge of who You are and Your great love for me. Please help me be the person that You have purposed me to be. Help me to follow Your example and do Your Will for the rest of my life.
I pray this in the Precious and Holy name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! Amen.

If you prayed this prayer, it is important to continue your spiritual growth and strengthen your faith. As a starting point, I recommend that you begin by reading the Gospel of Mark or the Gospel of John. It is also helpful to join a church or join a small-group Bible study, to further your understanding. If you have questions or just want to talk with someone, you are welcome to send an email and I will do what I can to help. My contact information is on the back cover of Amanda's Poems.
If you provide me your name, I can pray for you.

Love God - Love Others

One God
One People



In loving memory
Amanda Michelle (Twellman) Dieppa
June 10, 1982 – July 19, 2005

For additional poem books in: English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Greek, Hebrew, Russian, Arabic, Hindi, or Telugu please contact Tom Twellman at (949) 923-1047or allmo108724@gmail.com.
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