

## BEFORE PRAYER

Before we kneel,  
before we bow and bend  
and search in the dark  
for words of the heart...

Lifetimes ago  
the stars gave you  
their kindness:  
like a hand  
to graze your brow,  
to raise your head,  
to lay you back  
and wash your eyes clean.

Earth ever turns,  
past failure, past frost,  
past shadow and harm.  
Frozen fields break  
each spring  
and are blessed  
in rain, in dawn.

These stars, this sun...  
Before you kneel,  
before you bow and bend –  
see all this light.

Brian Newhouse  
October 2022

I have known Brian since the early 1990s when he was a member of the Dale Warland Singers and I was their composer in residence. For many years I have enjoyed hearing his voice on Minnesota Public Radio, and now it is a delight to set his own words in this piece honoring his long service to choral music.

Duration: c. 3:30