

# Georgia Baptists, Mercer settle on separation terms

by [J. Barrie Shepherd](#) in the [January 23, 2007](#) issue

Close to an hour more of light  
since December's solstice stood  
the calendar on edge, balancing  
my dwindling days between the here  
and the hereafter.

This late January thaw  
has turned thoughts to spring again,  
those Holland-ordered bulbs I bedded  
late into November already showing  
green above the gray and crusted soil.  
You'd think, with seventy winters now  
beneath my crust, that I'd know better,  
learn to stay hunkered warm against those drifts  
that still must slump against the garage door.  
Yet an old, insistent summoning,  
wiser than winter's experts,  
sends me back to the seed catalogs,  
makes me check trowel, fork and leaf mold,  
bends my head to bloom and blossoms yet unseen  
but lending never-ending fragrance  
to every lifeless, frigid scene.