

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.