

**FROM THE RABBI**  
*Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz*

“Cold and dark,  
Night overtakes day,  
Frigid air settles over the earth.  
The land waits while Your creatures rest.  
Then, a shift.  
Small, imperceptible,  
The days slowly lengthen  
And mornings surrender to light.  
Bless this day, God of seasons.  
Bless the winter with rest, renewal, and love.  
Be present with us as we prepare  
For another cycle of seasons  
With dignity and purpose.

God of time and space,  
May this season be a blessing and a teacher.  
Make me like the long, deep night,  
A blanket of solace and comfort.

*Make me like the returning sun, a source of  
quiet hope.*

As I quote these words from ‘This Grateful Heart, Psalms and Prayers for a New Day’ written by Alden Solovy, one of the Reform movement’s prolific and promising liturgical poets, sunlight is streaming through the window. Light bounces off light, as sun, ice and snow embrace.

Truth be told, I’ve never encountered cold like this in my life. The Iowa climate doesn’t only bring new habits (getting dressed takes an age) but also new perspectives. I am grateful for the feats of energy and engineering, for fuel and food in ways I’ve not had to think about previously in my life.