

The Lady on the Third Pew

is quiet in church.

There is singing, hand clapping, dancing going on around her.
When she thinks of it or is instructed, she raises her hand
in praise.

She is known as a good sister, but not too involved.
She likes church, wishes it had more silence though.
On the radio, she heard that women need silence,
20 minutes, everyday.
Twenty whole minutes of silence
sounds delicious, almost decadent.

The preacher wants people to worship,
jump up and down, high five other people,
but what she likes about church is stillness.

At work, she must work. At home, she must work,
Even now, things that must be done
seep into her thoughts but at church,
in the sanctuary,
She can be quiet, settle into herself,
tune out surroundings. Sometimes, she even slips off her
dress shoes and rub her feet in the carpet.
She reclines back in the padded pew and thinks.
Sometimes mediating on what the preacher is saying,
But mostly she follows her own thoughts.

Her daughter shows her a picture book.
She smiles and motions for her to pay
attention to whatever the preacher is saying.

A woman somewhere said that God is as close
as your next breath –right here beside your cheek,
she motioned to her face.

The good sister had chills thinking
God is so close. She often imagined
God in church. Perhaps, He rides in on music
or praise. She imagines Him sitting beside her,
When the sadness comes, He reaches over and pats
her hand, maybe even slips His arm around her shoulders.
Yes, she often wishes that church had more silence.
So, that she can be still, be quiet
and know that He is.