Hospice Communion

We sit,

the two of us,

half facing,

round the low table

in the Quiet Room.

Pray and make confession

over the plated bread and tiny chalice with wine.

And,

on the surface of the wine

are circles,

ripples,

like a miniature pebble

has been dropped into a miniature pond.

Strange.

But I know what makes it so

and also what makes the gentle hum

constantly in the air.

Beneath our lighted altar,

in the cellar,

are the mortuary fridges.

The living and the dying sit above

the quiet rhythms of the dead

which shake the room

and our Holy Communion.

If she knew how the dead

are made present in the wine

she might be comforted.

Or, comforted to know

that one day,

she likewise,

may make her presence known,

sealing the covenant of life.

David Buck