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# Pro Rege

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Volume 34  
Number 2 *Fine Arts Issue 2005*

Article 26

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December 2005

## On Gathering

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### Recommended Citation

Elgersma, Bill (2005) "On Gathering," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 34: No. 2, 36.  
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A quarterly faculty publication of  
Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa

# On Gathering

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*Bill Elgersma*

He said, the minister,  
we gather the prayers to offer to you.  
I think about gathering  
in the Midwest.

In springtime,  
new shoots, old sticks of last fall's harvest.  
we gather our prayers of promise,  
of rebirth and weddings and plantings  
and resurrection gathering.

When we gather summer prayers . . .  
the clippings of our mind,  
fresh-flower prayers  
and ripe tomatoes,  
pseudo farmers gathering  
pseudo crops in town  
amid gathered flies and cicadas  
as crows gather above us.

In fall  
we gather our prayers of your faithfulness  
through covenant.  
Harvest of children in schools and churches,  
buildings full and crops in fields  
washing green to brown  
as sunlight fades.

The wind collects late  
to move us to winter prayers,  
that hardest of seasons in  
the gathering of our years.  
As we gather  
around the manger again,  
to collect our prayers of thanksgiving and praise,  
we see you gather yourself,  
and we bow.

Oh brightest and best of kings,  
gathered to you, Alleluia.