

PHILLIP STERLING

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If Not

among presbyters gathered  
beneath a chancel-peaked porthole  
of stained glass, whose light,  
mid-sermon these early  
summer days, makes every white  
article of Sunday dress appear  
as if it had been laundered  
in a load of red sweatshirts,

you will find me amid tangles

of black raspberry shoots  
in the upper reaches of the pasture,  
clearing a way for grass. Such  
evangelism! The vines mean  
to spread the Word of God  
everywhere, even to the ponies  
grazing in the distance, unhaltered,  
imagining they are wild.



## ABOUT PHILLIP STERLING

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Phillip Sterling is the author of *Significant Others* (Main Street Rag 2005) and *Mutual Shores* (New Issues Press 2000), as well as *And For All This: Poems from Isle Royale* (Ridgeway Press forthcoming). His poems have appeared recently in *Poet Lore*, *The Comstock Review*, *TAB: The Journal of Poetry and Poetics*, and *Amethyst and Agate: Poems of Lake Superior*. He earned a PhD from Bowling Green State University and is now a professor emeritus of Ferris State University. He serves on the board of directors of the Great Lakes Commonwealth of Letters and teaches community workshops for that organization. He lives in Lowell, Michigan.

