

Advent Fire

By **Chris McDonnell**

(To Jim Forest* in celebration of many years of friendship)

The silent ballet of snowflakes
swirling under street lights
and a long bus journey up the Hudson Valley.

The movement of memory, that
long journey from 'fifty nine
since exchanging letters, getting a lift on

the way, till now. A new time in
another place, this second day
in December, damp and dark, is an anniversary

of that first fire. There in a cinder block
building, high in the woods,
distant from brothers' prayer-sung voices,

flames flared. Some thirty five years on,
his words still drift and
dream in our unending dialogue with silence.



Chris McDonnell

Chris McDonnell recently retired as head teacher of a primary school in Staffordshire, England. He is author of six volumes of poetry and a frequent contributor to *The Merton Seasonal*, *The Merton Journal* [UK] and other publications.