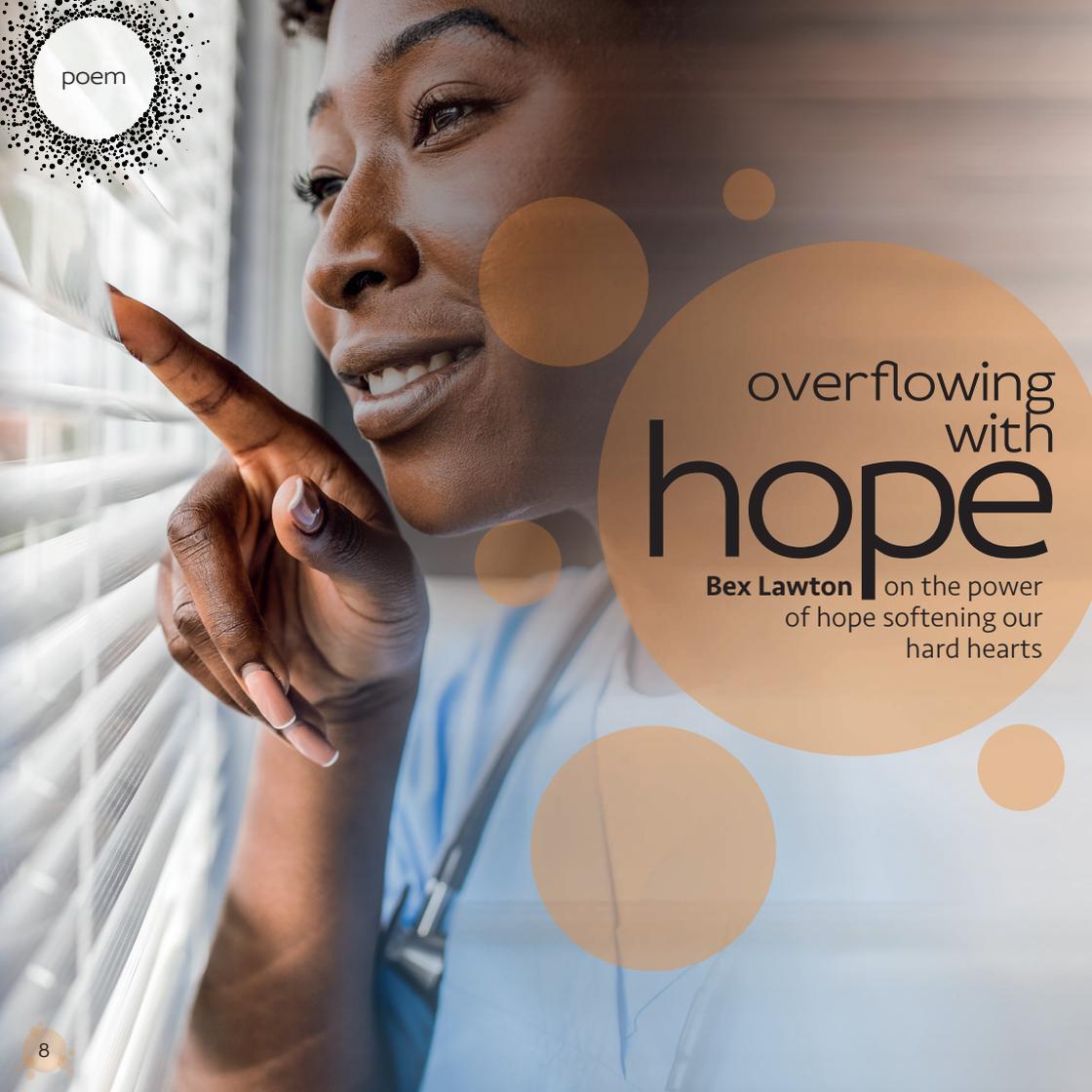




poem



overflowing  
with  
**hope**

**Bex Lawton** on the power  
of hope softening our  
hard hearts

In Romans 15:13, New Living Translation,  
it says:

*'I pray that God, the source of hope will fill  
you completely with joy and peace because  
you trust in him. Then you will overflow with  
confident hope through the power of the  
Holy Spirit.'*

Not overstretched. Not overrunning.  
Not overworked, over, and over again

But overflowing with confident hope

Can I confess that hope can sometimes seem  
like a dangerous thing?

Because it might open me up

Open me up to disappointment or let-down  
It makes me feel vulnerable

But then I read in Proverbs that hope deferred  
makes the heart sick

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, and if  
that's the case, I need to be referred to  
my God quickly

Before my heart gets hard, calcified with  
cynicism, necrotic with pessimism

Before hopelessness spreads and I become  
a sarcastic soul

Joyless, dark humour, with a sharp and bitter  
tongue

I need to be seen by the Great Physician before  
I become a weary old nurse

Paralysed by doubt

Always expecting the worst

Resigned, accepting the worst

Forgive me Lord!

And I pray that you, being the very source  
of all hope, would fill us today

Like the sun on a sudden hot day in winter

Would you flood our hearts again?

Would you stream in through the slats  
of office venetian blinds

Stream in through waiting and clinic room  
windows

Into bays and cubicles and onto wards into  
labs and theatres

Into our community and into people's homes!  
Light us up!

Thaw frosty scepticism

Soften hard ground

Let what has lain dormant, buried deep down  
and unseen

Let it stir again

Let's see what new life might emerge

Fill us with hope again today we pray, amen. 🙏