

Song of the University Worker

If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, "Here lived a great street sweeper *who did his job well.*" Martin Luther King Jr.

Who builds this world?
All manner of men and women.
Some in their heads.
Others behind the saw.
Some with money and paper.
Others with motors and tendons.
With sweat and fear and a bowl of beans.
With rest and hope and a cup of cool water.
With gratefulness for work.
With the work of gratefulness.
With Grace and gratitude.

**You can taste us in the wind
Hear us in the water
See us in the red clay
Smell us in the rainbow
Feel us in our singing**

*I cut the grass
I scrub the floors
I type the letters
I push the papers*

Behind you before you beside you with you

*I design the system
I repair the system
I design the process
I manage the process
I aid the process
I conduct the process
I write the report*

Behind you before you beside you with you

*I care for patients
I tighten bolts
I order parts
I pay bills
I take what's owed
I direct traffic
I observe and speak*

Behind you before you beside you with you

*I mother the students
I father the students
I teach the students
I am a student*

Behind you before you beside you with you

I paint the rooms

*I lay the bricks
I lay the stone*

Behind you before you beside you with you

**I have been here 200 years
I will always be here**

*In bitter cold
In hot weather
In hurricane and snow
In sweet-smelling Spring days
In crisp bright Fall ones*

**You can taste us in the wind
Hear us in the water
See us in the red clay
Smell us in the rainbow
Feel us in our singing**

From the board rooms to the classrooms.
From the dining halls to the gardens.
From the libraries to the laboratories.

Behind you before you beside you with you

From the offices to the gymnasiums.
From the repair shops to the computer rooms.
From midnight till morning.
From morning to midnight.

Behind you before you beside you with you

When fire burns and ice freezes.
When friends call and strangers come.
When enemies threaten and allies praise.

Behind you before you beside you with you

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With gratefulness for work.
With the work of gratefulness.
With Grace and gratitude.

Behind you before you beside you with you

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