



# Paradise Life

## January 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Samuel Shepler * Ross and Rachel Pifer	2 Rachel Pifer Tyler Hanzely	3
4 <i>Installation of Officers</i>	5 Dustin Pifer	6 Emmalyn Rice <i>Consistory 6pm</i> <i>Feeding His Flock 6:30 pm</i>	7 Genevieve O'Harah <i>Bible Study 7pm</i>	8 Harold Eastman	9 Floyd Askey Sherry Keller Madilyn Fye	10
11 Kelly Keller Karen Peace Dave Yohe  <i>Covered Dish Dinner to greet Vince Davis</i>	12	13 Ty Bittner Holly Reinsel Joe Shick Jesse Schindley	14 <i>Bible Study 7pm</i>	15	16 Glenn Perry Zane Pifer	17  <i>Game Dinner 5pm</i>
18 <i>Congregational Vote on Pastor Davis</i>	19 Carla Filman Haylee Neal	20	21 <i>Bible Study 7pm</i>	22 Kylan Stockdale Jason Weber	23 Diane Askey Doug Blinn  * Royce & Charlotte Sprague	24  <i>Feeding His Flock Meal 4:45-6pm</i>
25	26	27 Molly Rowan Mike Trithart	28 <i>Bible Study 7pm</i>	29	30 Carl Pifer	31

Our Paradise Blessings Christmas Card collection exceeded all expectations. We collected 115 cards that were distributed between DuBois Nursing Home, Nelson's Golden Years, Christ the King Manor, and Mulberry Square. Special Thanks to all who contributed to make someone's Christmas a little brighter.



## Paradise Community Church Consistory

December 10, 2025

Those in attendance for the December meeting were Bob Roy, Diane Carlson, Brenda Weber, Bobbi Becker, Brooke Limrick, Wendy Perry, and Holli Polito.

President Diane opened the meeting with prayer. We then heard a search update from Holli. On January 10 the Search committee and Consistory will meet with Pastor Vince Davis at Hoss's at 5 pm. Bob made a motion and Wendy seconded the consistory picking up the tab for Hoss's. Pastor Davis will then preach for the January 11 service followed by a covered dish dinner. The vote to potentially offer employment to Pastor Davis will be on January 18.

The secretary report was read and approved with a motion from Dean and second from Bob. The treasurer's report was reviewed and approved with a motion from Brooke and a second from Bobbi.

Voting ballots are prepared and done. The nominees for Elder are Dean Reed, and Lane Weber; Deacon- Bobbi Becker, Mike Carlson, and Matt Smith, and cemetery- Annette Roy, Larry Shepler, Jeff Pifer, and Lane Weber. Installation of officers will be on January 4, 2026. Dean made a motion and Bob seconded paying the installation officiant \$50.

There is a new light installed on the pole. The insurance company is still pending on the pole incident.

Bethlehem had 655 people journey through and collected \$2,433.23. There was a request for a small step to be added at the backdoor for next time.

Tear down for Bethlehem will be January 17 from 1-4, and January 18 if needed.

Properties committee has fixed the receptacle in the office and will weld 2 chairs from downstairs.

Men's group will meet December 17, at 7pm, and the Women's Service group will also meet on the 17<sup>th</sup> at the Crazy Horse.

The Church collected 60 boxes for Operation Christmas Child.

The Solid Rock Church is inviting anyone interested in a bus trip in July to Sight and Sound. Details are in the lobby.

Bob made a motion and Dean seconded a \$500 donation to the Salvation Army of Punxsutawney.

Brooke made a motion and Dean seconded a \$500 donation to B.R.A.N.C.H.H.

The next consistory meeting will be January 6, 2026 at 7pm.

This week I lingered in Malachi's words and I felt the unbearable weight of what followed. When the prophet finished speaking, heaven did not answer. The echo of his voice faded... and then... nothing. Four hundred years of silence. No open vision. No burning word. No prophet rising with fire in his bones. No "Thus says the Lord" breaking the darkness. Four hundred years of waiting. Of longing. Of groaning. Of hearts lifted toward a heaven that seemed sealed shut. Generation after generation was born into the quiet.

They lived. They died. And still – no voice. Until one night. On a dirt floor in a forgotten place... In a stable that did not look holy... in the shadows of obscurity and insignificance... a sound was released. After four hundred years, heaven spoke again – not with thunder, not with fire, not from a mountain – but from the lungs of a newborn. A cry pierced the silence. A cry that split history in two. A cry that carried eternity within it. In that moment, the King of Glory stepped down into the dust of His own creation. The Eternal wrapped Himself in skin. The Word became flesh – and cried. The Son laid aside His throne and chose a manger. Heaven's highest treasure placed in a feeding trough. He came low. He came meek. He came breakable. Wrapped in swaddling cloths, laid where animals ate, born beneath the looming shadow of a cross. A Lamb born to be slain.

The Hope of a hopeless world breathed His first breath in the dark. A weary world rejoiced as a young virgin labored and delivered its redemption. In that manger, the Great I Am made Himself vulnerable. Touchable. Killable. And with one cry, the silence was shattered. The separation was broken. The way was opened. Then suddenly, heaven could not remain quiet.

The skies erupted with angelic voices declaring, "Glory to God in the highest!" Wonderful. Counselor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace. With the cry of an infant, heaven invaded earth. Behold – our Redeemer. Behold – our King. Behold – the fulfillment of every promise. Behold – the sound that broke four hundred years of silence. Not the roar of an army. Not the shout of a king claiming His crown. But the fragile cry of God-with-us.

He did not arrive with a sword in His hand, but with nails already written in his future. He did not enter wrapped in royalty, but in cloths that foretold a burial. The silence was not just broken, it was answered. Every unanswered prayer. Every tear cried in the dark. Every generation that waited without seeing. Every promise that seemed delayed but not denied. All of it converged in that single cry. That night, heaven did not just speak – heaven gave.

God did not send another prophet. He did not send another sign. He sent Himself. And in that stable, eternity took its first shallow breath. Omnipotence learned weakness. Glory learned humility. Love made itself small. The cry that shattered the silence would one day be echoed again – not from a manger, but from a cross.

The first cry said, "He has come." The final cry would say, "It is finished." From swaddling cloths to grave clothes, from a feeding trough to a borrowed tomb, He came to be broken so we could be made whole. And even now, that sound still reverberates. It calls the weary. It awakens the forgotten. It reaches into the places where heaven has felt silent again.

If God could speak through the cry of a baby, He can still break the silence in our darkest night. So, behold Him. Not distant. Not touchable. Not unmoved. But Emmanuel. God with us.

-Jessica Jecker

## Bethlehem Walk 2025 – In Review by Lori Yohe

Another Bethlehem Walk is now in the archives. From the planning meeting on October 6, during the set up and preparation times and throughout the performances on December 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, you all continued to come together to produce another memorable experience for so many visitors. We had 655 registered guests in our 2025 Census and received generous donations of \$2,433 to be used to bless those in need.

Each time we prepare for the Bethlehem Walk we try to incorporate changes so that the experience is a little bit different from the previous one. This year we had some awesome brain storming and creative juices flowing which resulted in some significant improvements. The entrance where the Census Taker sits and guests register was repainted a lighter color to give more light to this area where the lighting is muted (Thank you, Annette Roy). The starry sky was changed from hanging rows and rows and webs of wires and light strings and hours of pinning tulle to installing several sheets of blanket lights. While this still took some planning and ingenuity to work through, and the result was well worth it.

We also opened up the 'stage' area and moved the manger scene to front and center, giving the Holy family more room. The basketball hoop framework above the manger scene was revamped into a much more stable and attractive soloist angel perch.

In addition, some of the painted paneling scenes that were fading, were removed and scenes were repainted directly on the walls. We hope to continue to remove all of the old paneling and repaint upgraded scenes on the walls in the future. Erica States also painted a beautiful dramatic heavenly starry night scene behind the angel choir.

In the basement, some of the paneling walls were reinforced and stabilized. Lisa Triponey repainted the bathroom area. Meghan Weber engineered and constructed an elaborate and amazing miniature lighted Bethlehem City landscape across the kitchen counter that provided an interesting and peaceful pathway as guests exited the busy market place and made their way upstairs to the open meadows and manger scene.

There are over 70 people that come together during the two days of performances and additional people that provided baked goods, members of the Women's service group that made hundreds of ornaments to hand out to every guest, all that helped to get the word out with posters, invitation cards, and Facebook posts, those who helped serve the pizza on Sunday between the afternoon and evening shows and still more that offered donated items for use during the Bethlehem Walk, those that will help with clean up and others that I'm sure I missed. To all of you I would like to say you have been a blessing so many people during this Christmas season and pointed them towards the Christ child, the true reason for our celebration. Thank you for allowing Jesus to shine through you to produce this unique experience.

## Bethlehem Walk 2025 (continued)

Time and space do not allow me to list every individual that has participated, however, there are a few to which I would like to give special recognition:

To Matthew, Dustee and Baby Jack Carlson for their role as the Holy family.

To Cassie Becker, Jay Dennison and Baby Anna for their role as the Holy family. (PS: *Full circle here as Cassie also played the role of Baby Jesus when she was born.*)

To Brenda Weber and Annette Roy for their input and hard work and brainstorming and great ideas.

Also, to Brenda Weber for taking on the monumental task of recruiting and casting and scheduling everyone.

To Karen Villella and Meg Weber for organizing and reorganizing and sorting and resorting all of the costumes and accessories.

To Linda Blosch for taking on the advertising and promotions.

To Lorretta Shepler and Lisa Triponey for their coordination and Angel Choir production.

To Lane Weber, Bob Roy and Dave Yohe for being on call to help in implementing all of our ideas.

To Brad and Tina Peace for providing the ever-popular donkeys.

To Sue Breth, the Wingert's, Tracy Weber and Marissa Douthit for bringing animals loved by all the kiddos.

To Hallstrom Construction for donating many gallons of paint.

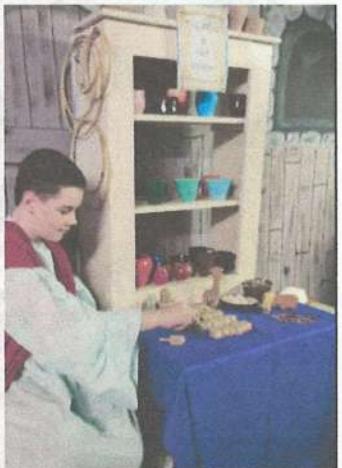
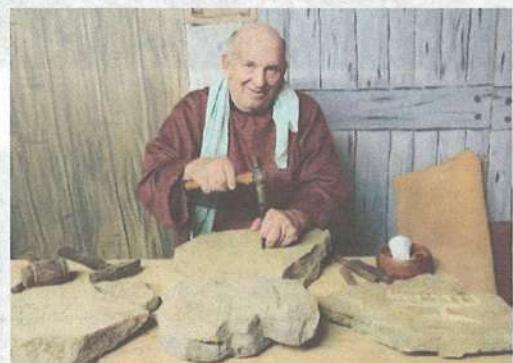
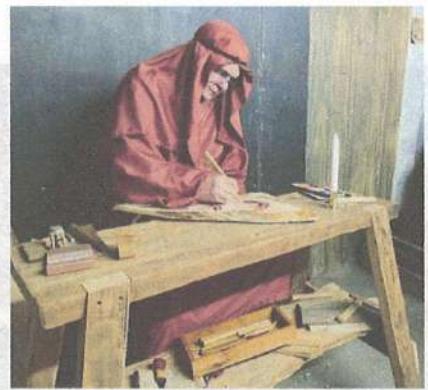
To the Big Run Fire Department for their help and equipment to assist in parking and traffic control.

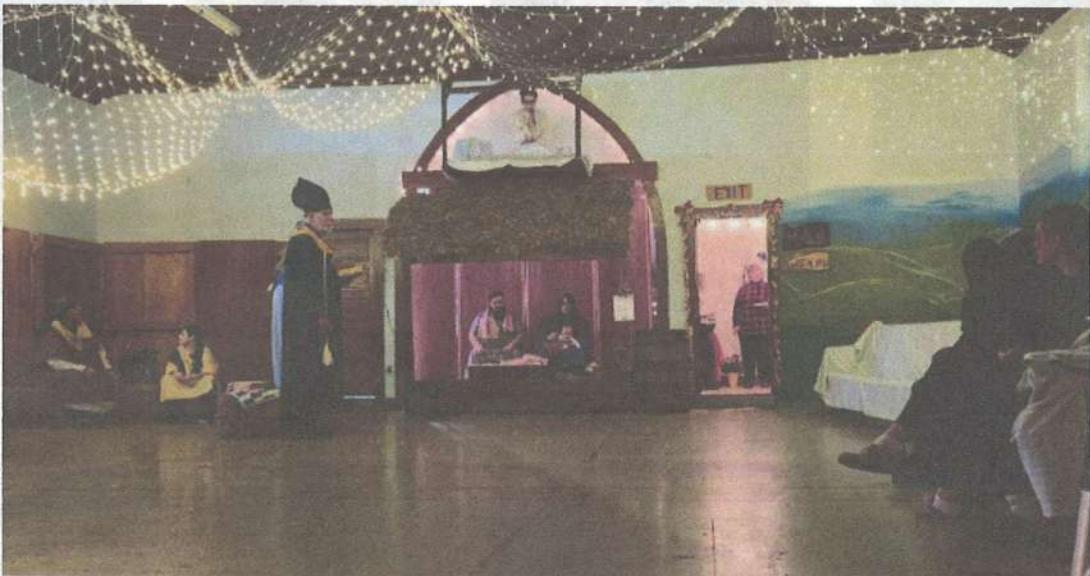
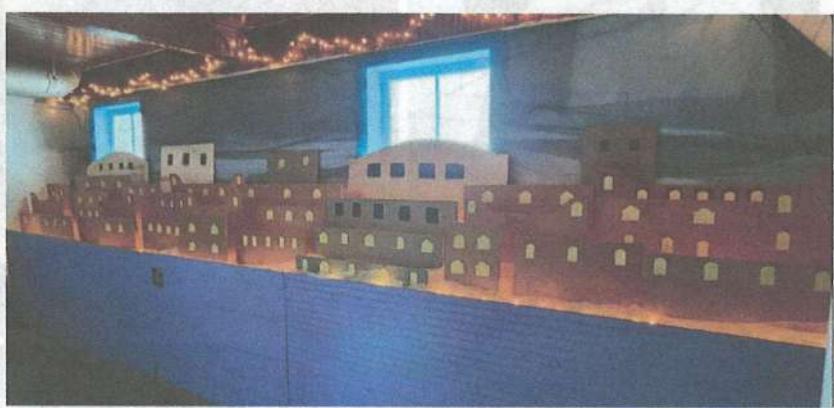
To all of the children that willing and actively participated.

May you all find peace and joy in the sharing God's great love through this special event and beyond. And may our awesome God receive all of the honor and glory!!

*We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to Lori Yohe who dedicates so much time, talent, and love into the Bethlehem Walk! We could not do it without you!*

\*Please watch the bulletin for dates when we will be cleaning up and tearing down the Bethlehem décor, and getting the Youth Center back together and ready for the kids.





## CAROLING, CAROLING NOW WE GO!

On December 12, we donned our woolies to go out and bring some cheer to our congregation by singing some Christmas carols. We were able to split into 2 groups, so one started at Christ the King Manor while the other went to DuBois Nursing Home. Joe Villella and Donna Wachob were very appreciative that we came by to sing! The King group was thankfully led by northerner Dan McClelland who knows the roads in dead zones, and they were able to sing for Floyd and Diane Askey and Judy Reed before coming back to Paradise to sing at the homes of Royce and Charlotte Sprague and Bob Love. The other group gained Bri Triponey as we zoomed by Fox's Pizza and sang for Barb Buhite, Millie Villella, Sam and Donna Trithart, and Donna Pifer. Ty Limrick arrived in time after his grueling day of finals to sing one last song for Donna – but we were grateful to have him!

We all arrived back at the church at exactly the same time and had many heart-warming stories to share. Many of us want to see this become a tradition for years to come as we were ALL blessed! Those who attended were Gail and Abbi Pifer, Tom, Janet, and Marissa Douthit, Lori Yohe, Holli Polito, Craig, Brooke, and Ty Limrick, Bri and Lisa Triponey, Diane Carlson, Dan and Leanna McClelland, Dick Reed, Annette Roy, and Teagan Flanders.



## Christmas Eve in Paradise

The Christmas Eve service is always a special one, and this year was no exception! God put together a perfect set of songs which gave new meaning to the birth of Christ, and many people were blessed by the offering. The special music was woven together with narration, and we had a rousing start with the Paradise Men's Choir singing "Good Christian Men Rejoice." The John Reed family supported the choir with four generations! "Breath of Heaven" was a touching duet by Abbi Pifer and Ty Limrick, followed by a beautiful trio of Holli Polito, Gail Pifer, and Brooke Limrick singing "No Room." Mei Bogardus brought her amazing rendition of "O Holy Night," while the Angel Choir sang "Lying in a Manger" followed by the Adult Choir's version of "Mary, Did You Know?" The many questions were asked by soloists Larry Shepler, Gail Pifer, Holli Polito, Annette Roy, Brooke and Craig Limrick, Diane Carlson, Adrienne Barr, Darcie Grenier, and Rosanne Fillman. "Christmas Eve in Bethlehem" was a beautiful song sung by Morgan Shepler, Adrienne and Bretley Barr, which helped us to personalize the Christmas story. This was a great lead-in to our candlelight service, singing "Silent Night" and thanking the Lord for His wonderful gift of Jesus!

Loretta Shepler and Lisa Triponey provided organ and piano duets for the service, and Diane Carlson accompanied the hymns on her flute. Thanks so much to ALL of you for the hours spent making this music beautiful! Thanks also to Adrienne Barr and Diane Carlson for pitching in to help read scriptures and pull the service together in Barry's absence. Prayers for healing, Barry! We also are grateful for Annette Roy, Bobbi Becker, and Elaine Fillhart, who put their own personal spin on the narrations. Beautifully done!

Following the service, we enjoyed a time of fellowship in the basement, greeting those we haven't seen in a while and welcoming some new faces also. What a special Christmas night it was!

## Special Presentations

On Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup>, the congregation was treated to a light-hearted Christmas skit put on by the Adult Sunday School classes. "The Twelve Months of Christmas" showcased the self-made troubles we experience when we focus on materialistic things at Christmas time. It concluded with the message that perhaps the best way to celebrate Christmas, is to honor the birth of Jesus and focus on what the true meaning of Christmas is.

We were also presented with the "ABC Nativity" program by the Children's Sunday School classes. The children sang songs describing the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, concluding with the birth of baby Jesus. Many of the younger ones made their acting debuts, and we were even honored to hear a solo by Olivia Minns. Thank you to all the adults and children who put together these special performances!



## Ordination of Eloise Kosko

Lori Yohe

In a beautiful service at the Troutville Trinity United Church of Christ, Eloise Pifer Rice Kosko was ordained as a minister of the United Church of Christ and installed as the pastor of the Troutville Church on Sunday, December 28, 2025.

Amid the congregation, Clarion Association representatives, friends and family Eloise was glowing with joy as she received her certification and ordination after months of hard work.

In true Eloise-fashion the service was filled with much singing and special music. A special message was offered by Rev. Dr. Donna Jarrell wherein she emphasized the call to being a pastor is a special, God-ordained, honor and privilege but also can be difficult and requires the pastor to be a servant to God and to all.

The Service of Ordination was conducted by Rev. Barry Fillman, as Chairman of the Committee of Ministry and Rev. David Ackerman, Penn West Conference Minister.

Many congratulations to Rev. Eloise Kosko on such an awesome accomplishment and achievement. She has become the answer to the prayers of the Troutville Trinity UCC Church and they have welcomed her with open arms and gladness. May God pour his blessings on her and her congregation.



Pastor Eloise and sisters, Cynthia, Faith & Lydia

## HOPE

### FOR THE NEW YEAR

**HOPE** is a dynamic force, a concept full of power. It can bring the weak back to strength. It can bring the sick back to health. No wonder St. Paul included it as one of the three great principles of Christianity: faith, hope, and love. What's the condition of hope in your life at this very moment? Does it get you up every morning? Does it carry you confidently through the day? Is it still there, soothing and sustaining you as you fall asleep? That's what God intended when He created this shining quality and poured it into us at birth. If cares and worries and fears and discouragement have gained ascendancy in your mind, then you need to open the windows of your soul and let a strong fresh current of hope come surging in. When you hope **really hope**-then a magic ingredient comes into play. Expectancy says, "This desired outcome *can* happen. Right now it *may* be just a dream, but it is a realizable dream." When you start hoping instead of just wishing, then expectation is stirring in you. St. Paul sums it up in just six words (Romans 8:24) **For we are saved by hope.** If you can reach the point-and you *can* reach it-where hope and expectation blend into faith and conviction, **nothing** can defeat you. The nearer a person comes to the Savior, the more hope he or she has. You just cannot live with Jesus Christ and be defeated. You cannot live with Him and say, "Tomorrow is not going to be any good." Because He is the Lord of tomorrows. As you move into the New Year, **HOPE** that difficulties will pass. **HOPE** that storms will cease. **HOPE** that pain will end. **HOPE** that weakness will be overcome. Remember you do not go into the New Year on your own, but with the loving God who has walked with you ever since you were a young child. Light the **Flame of Hope** and watch the shadows vanish.

Author unknown

### **Take Time**

*Take time to pray... It helps to bring God near and washes the dust of earth from your eyes.*

*Take time for friends... They are the source of happiness.*

*Take time for work... It is the price of success.*

*Take time to read... It is the foundation of knowledge.*

*Take time to laugh... It is the singing that helps with life's loads.*

*Take time to love... It is the one sacrament of life.*

*Take time to dream... It hitches the soul to the stars.*

*Take time to play... It is the secret of youth.*

*Take time to worship... It is the highway to reverence.*

*-Author Unknown*

### **When Can I Break the Rule?**

When, oh when, can I break the rule,  
And no longer go to Sunday School?  
This is the question I asked one day  
And my teacher answered in this funny  
way...

When the water is gone from all the  
seas,  
And gooseberries grow on apple trees,  
When horses sing and donkeys dance,  
And pigs wear hats and coats and pants.  
When the pussycat grows on the  
pumpkin vine,  
And three times seven is twenty-nine,  
When black is white and red is green  
And children's faces are always clean.  
When boys and girls no longer eat  
Cookies and candies and cakes so  
sweet—  
Then, oh then, you can break the rule  
And no longer go to Sunday School!

### **Everyday Thanksgiving**

Even though I clutch my blanket and growl when the alarm rings each morning, thank you, Lord, that I can hear. There are many who are deaf.

Even though I huddle in my bed and put off the effort of rising, thank you, Lord, that I have the strength to rise. There are many who are bedridden.

Even though the first hour of my day is hectic, when socks are lost, toast burned and tempers are short, thank you, Lord, for my family. There are many who are lonely.

Even though our breakfast table never looks like the pictures in magazines, and the menu is at times unbalanced, thank you, Lord, for the food we have. There are many who are hungry.

Even though the routine of my job is often monotonous, thank you, Lord, for the opportunity to work. There are many who have no job.

Even though I grumble and bemoan my fate from day to day and wish my circumstances were not so modest, thank you, Lord, for the gift of life

### **A.S.A.P. Always Say A Prayer**

*Theres's work to do, deadlines to meet;*

*You've got no time to spare,  
But as you hurry and scurry...*

*ASAP- Always Say A Prayer.  
In the midst of family chaos,  
"Quality Time" is rare.*

*Do your best; let God do the rest...*

*ASAP- Always Say A Prayer  
It may seem like your worries  
Are more than you can bear.  
Slow down and take a breather...*

*ASAP= Always Say A Prayer  
God Knows how stressful life is;  
He wants to ease our cares,  
And He'll respond to all your needs.  
A.S.A.P – ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.*

# OUR DAILY BREAD: THE DAILY GRIND

Nov 3, 2015/in [Our Daily Bread](#)/by [YMI](#)

**November 3, 2015**

READ: [Ephesians 6:5-9](#)

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters. [Colossians 3:23](#)*

The high school I attended required 4 years of Latin instruction. I appreciate the value of that discipline now, but back then it was a grind. Our teacher believed in drill and repetition. “*Repetitio est mater studiorum*,” she intoned over us several times a day, which simply means, “Repetition is the mother of learning.” “*Repetitio est absurdum*,” we muttered under our breath. “Repetition is absurd.”

I realize now that most of life is simply that: repetition—a round of dull, uninspiring, lackluster things we must do again and again. “Repetition is both as ordinary and necessary as bread,” said Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard. But he went on to say, “It is the bread that satisfies with benediction.”

**It's a matter of taking up each duty, no matter how mundane, humble, or trivial, and asking God to bless it and put it to His intended purposes.** In that way we take the drudgeries of life and turn them into holy work, filled with unseen, eternal consequence.

The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins said, “To lift up the hands in prayer gives God glory, but a man with a pitchfork in his hand, a woman with a slop pail, give Him glory, too. God is so great that all things give Him glory if you mean that they should.”

**If whatever we do is done for Christ, we'll be amazed at the joy and meaning we'll find in even the most ordinary tasks.**

— David Roper

*Remind us today, Lord, that You are in the dull and ordinary tasks of life in a most extraordinary way. Let us not forget that we do even the smallest tasks for You.*

*A willing spirit changes the drudgery of duty into a labor of love.*

*Source: [Our Daily Bread](#)*

2 Corinthians

5:17 KJV



“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”