

Ordinary time

by [J. Barrie Shepherd](#) in the [January 9, 2007](#) issue

These midwinter days that bridge
Epiphany to Lent
can seem anything but ordinary
as the steady waxing light reflects
across old December's glaze of ice,
a biting wind hisses across
the stark bones of the bracken,
and treetops signal sparse
against a sky expecting still
more snow before nightfall.
Scarlet and speckled birds
announce themselves about
the brightness of the holly,
spray from the creek creates
bright frosted chandeliers among
the tangled overhanging branches,
and dusk draws down its spangling
of stars so crystalline they lift the eye—
heart too—toward a principality
that banishes any vestige
of routine predictability.
Ordinariness exists—if at all—
within the desiccated soul,
too distracted by its fearful self
to notice.