

# 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.