

## Small things and miracles

By [Ron Adams](#)

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*For more commentary on this week's readings, see the [Reflections on the Lectionary](#) page, which includes Adams's current Living by the Word column as well as past magazine and blog content. For full-text access to all articles, [subscribe](#) to the Century.*

I am not a particularly confident pastor and preacher. I don't think I am neurotic about it, but I do harbor my own sense of doubt. It's not that the doubt freezes me in place and keeps me from functioning. It's more the kind of doubt that sits off in the corner somewhere, creeping up now and then to poke at me, asking questions like, Does anything you do really make a difference?

Yeah, I know. It's not about me. I get that. I also get that I am not now, nor will I ever be, Jesus. But I sometimes wish I had some mighty superpower, some dramatic gift, with which I could help our congregation and our community be better than they are. To do something for a dying member, something more than just saying a prayer. To say something to a member in pain, something more than just, "I am here for you."

[In my Century lectionary column for this week](#), I chose the Acts and Luke readings because they get at me at one of my weaker points. I believe that we really can talk ourselves into faith--that the best response to doubts is not to squelch them but to name them. But I don't think we should stop there. I try to move beyond the doubt to claim what seems to be the promise of these texts: that even small things can be used by God to bring about a miracle.

I guess I used this writing opportunity to preach to myself. Frankly, it's not the first time this has happened, and it probably won't be the last. But, Lord willing, someday it won't be necessary anymore.