



# All God's Creatures

**SNEAK  
PEEK!**

Take a look  
inside

DAILY DEVOTIONS

for ANIMAL LOVERS

2026



# Introduction

A few months back, overwhelmed with troubles, I poured them all into a prayer list. Before bed, I turned them over to the Great Healer. As I drifted off to sleep, the one worry I kept in my heart was about Reggie, our charmingly defiant, big-eyed, chocolate-colored 15-year-old Chihuahua, who adopted us 5 years ago.

As Reggie has aged, he's become less tolerant of visits to the vet. We discontinued his nail trimmings because he got so aggravated by his paws being touched that he would attack the vet tech. No harm was ever done (he's toothless and weighs only 5 pounds), but I worried that he would hurt himself in his fits of rage. I bought a sandpaper nail trimmer, and we eased into a routine (including so many treats that he gained an extra pound).

This was effective except for one nail—his right paw dewclaw. I simply could not reach it from any angle without his trying to twist out of my grasp and becoming hostile. For 18 months I tried, and it had grown to the point of curling around and touching the pad. It had to be cut, or it would start growing into his skin.

It weighed on me. Should I take him in to be sedated for a nail trim? It would be potentially dangerous, considering his age and health, as well as an expensive measure for a simple nail clipping, but I had exhausted all other ideas.

The alarm clock went off at 5 a.m. I reached over to turn it off and heard a voice. The voice was not so much in my ears as it was in my heart.

*It said, Why don't you ask Me for help with Reggie?*

I was startled. I was groggy. I tried to get my bearings, reaching down to pat Reggie, who was snuggled by my hip.

"What?" I whispered. (Since I don't often hear ambient voices, I strongly suspected where this message was coming from.)

*Don't you think I can help you with Reggie?*

My heart pounded. Of course, I knew with complete confidence that God could help me with Reggie. My thoughts swirled. I hadn't included Reggie in my prayers because there were more important things for God

to focus on, right? I had the list, and I had it prioritized. I should be able to take care of Reggie. He is such a small responsibility (literally). Why should I bother God with Reggie's nail care?

That was as far as I got before I realized the silliness of my thinking. I paused and listened for the voice. Nothing. My heart was calm.

I sighed at my foolishness. First Peter 5:7 tells us to cast all our anxiety on Him because He cares for us. All our anxiety—not just some.

Before I got out of bed, I prayed over Reggie and asked that God give me the strength, ingenuity, and patience to trim that dewclaw.

I was talking to a friend about it later that day, and she mentioned a video she saw of someone dealing with an irritable cat who did not want his nails trimmed. She described how the person successfully managed the feline, and I thought the technique might work for Reggie. What a blessing . . . there was hope!

It would take precise timing and assistance, so I enlisted my husband's help. He stood in front of Reggie while I held him in my lap with the traditional nail clippers. As I twisted myself around to address the dewclaw, my husband focused only on feeding Reggie peanut butter smeared on a big spoon. As Reggie slobbered his way through it, I gently maneuvered his nail into place, and CLIP! It was done—with only a minor growl. Hallelujah!

The authors of this year's special collection of devotions have found hope, inspiration, and delight in all the ways God shows Himself to us through His magnificent creations we call animals. I pray these stories are an encouragement. May they open our eyes to not only the grand ways but also the small and subtle ways our good Lord watches over us, our pets, and all those dear to our hearts.

Many blessings,  
Jean Alfieri, author, speaker, dog fan,  
and *All God's Creatures 2025* contributor

January



JANUARY 1

## *Wings of Comfort*

*The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." . . . After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.*

—1 KINGS 19:11–12 (NIV)

**E**MERGENCY HEART SURGERY and a weeklong hospital stay not long after Christmas didn't start the new year off very well. Already feeling tired and discouraged, we arrived home to empty bird feeders, a bad thing in cold January weather when other food sources for our feathered friends were scarce. The empty feeders were an apt picture of our empty emotional and physical reserves, and we prayed that God would show us He cared.

When we refilled the feeders, we had visitors that we had not seen before. A group of six common ground doves arrived. One or two mourning doves had visited before, but these were different, and they exhibited unusual behavior. They stayed close together underneath the feeder, as if they were a flock rather than individuals. One day we found them sitting in two rows facing the house, like people attending a lecture. They remained seated when we opened our back door to go outside, an encroachment into their territory that usually startled the birds away. At other times they wandered onto our patio and seemed unafraid when we joined them.

This visitation perplexed me until one day I remembered the words of an old country song, "Wings of a Dove," written by Bob Ferguson and recorded by Ferlin Husky—"He sends down His love on the wings of a dove."

I asked my wife, "Could the doves be messengers from God telling us that everything will be OK?" When I asked our preacher the same question, his simple response was, "That's how He does." After we had that realization, the doves left and did not return.

The doves' visitation was a wonderful reminder that God was with us through all our troubles. It just took us a short time to recognize His constant presence. —Harold Nichols

*A song fluttered down in the form of a dove,  
And it bore me a message, the one word—Love!*

—Paul Laurence Dunbar

JANUARY 2

## *Stopping by Woods with Snowy*

*“Be still, and know that I am God!”*

—PSALM 46:10 (NKJV)

**S**NOWY, MY 2-YEAR-OLD golden retriever, overwhelms me with her joy. Her paw gently nudges me if I try to sleep beyond her breakfast hour. Her giant smile and wagging tail instantly respond to my every word. She greets me excitedly each time I return home from the shortest errand.

One thing that doesn't excite Snowy is riding in the car. The modern automobile perplexes and intimidates my furry sidekick. Perhaps the motion upsets her stomach. Maybe she just feels out of control riding along at 60 miles per hour. Whatever the reason, she dreads getting into the car.

On a cold winter day, Snowy and I headed for the veterinarian's office for a routine exam and vaccinations. Since my white hairy beast loves people, she doesn't mind at all once we arrive. Snowy warmly greets the schnauzer and beagle in the waiting room. She tries to climb over the front desk to love on the receptionist. She gives a welcome bark to the vet. Once in an exam room, she happily tolerates shots in exchange for a generous portion of treats.

After the visit, we head to the car, and I boost her heavy behind into my Nissan once more. A gentle snow has blanketed the car and lent a magical, clean scent to the air. Heading home, I can't resist turning into the parking lot of a wooded preserve. With my window down, Snowy sits up in the back seat and leans her head on my shoulder. Gone is the perpetual motion that defines our daily lives together. The peace and breathless quiet overwhelm me with God's presence.

Why can't I summon this stillness more often? It is often available. As they do for Snowy, certain parts of my life come with difficulty, but when I stop—be still—God reminds me that He has it all under control. He blankets me with His peace. —David L. Winters

*Walk of Faith: Stop periodically today to witness  
and recognize the glory of God.*

JANUARY 3

## *The Joy of the Jump*

*When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things.*

—1 CORINTHIANS 13:11 (NLT)

**M**Y HUSBAND AND I chose the timing of our trip to Maui so that we could see a particular endangered species—humpback whales. From January to March, females give birth to their calves in the largely protected waters of Maui’s southern and western shores. Every year these beautiful whales are visible even from the shoreline as they breach, blow, and slap their tail fins.

Taking a whale-watching tour is vital to get closer. We were thrilled to see a whale pod right away from our catamaran. An underwater microphone attached to the boat allowed us to hear the beautiful whale song being communicated beneath the surface.

As I walked to the side of the boat to search for more humpbacks, I saw three—a massive male principal escort, a female, and her calf. There was a splash as the calf leaped out of the water—our first breach! Over and over the calf jumped around the catamaran’s bow while we cheered. The calf would disappear and begin again from her starting point. She repeated this pattern, breaching dozens of times to the joy of all. Even our crew was shocked at how many times the calf leaped out of the water. The calf was like a kid learning to ride a bike, yelling, “Look, Mom! I can do it!”

I laughed, thinking how little kids want their parents to be proud of them while doing something big kids can do. As I slowly mature in my walk with Christ, sometimes I want to shout, “Look, God, I didn’t get angry that time!” or “Look, Father! I ignored that behavior and didn’t engage.” I wonder if God smiles at me and cheers me on, saying, “I am proud of you, My daughter.” —Twila Bennett

*Father, I long to please You in all I do, more and more each day.  
May my thoughts, words, and actions make You proud of me.*

JANUARY 4

## *Togo Makes the Front of the Pack*

*“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’”*

—MATTHEW 25:21 (NIV)

ONE WEEKEND I took my granddaughters to the library to meet some sled dogs and hear the story of Togo, a young husky who, in 1925, led a team of dogs to deliver lifesaving serum in Alaska. We patted the gray-and-white dogs, who were compact, energetic, and agile. One dog represented Togo. An actor dressed in heavy furs played the part of Leonhard Seppala, the musher. “Togo was a young mischief-maker when I first got him,” the actor said. “He wouldn’t listen to me or do as I said, so I put him in the back of the pack, where I could keep an eye on him.”

I thought of my relationship with God. *When He asks something of me, do I hesitate or balk? When I sometimes forget to listen, does He have to keep an eye on me?*

“Then Togo began to demonstrate his capabilities. He was fast and determined, so I put him in the middle of the pack,” the man continued, scratching the dog’s head.

It seemed like this is where I was on my journey—the middle of the pack, wondering which way to go, yet trying to be obedient to God.

“Finally, when it came time for the important journey, Togo became my lead dog. He had proven that he was strong and made good decisions.” The actor demonstrated by hitching the dog to a rope at the front of the pack. The dog wagged his tail happily.

This was where I strive to be in life’s journey—in a position of reliability, making good decisions, cheerfully following God’s directives, without doubt or question.

It turned out that Togo had traveled 260 miles in treacherous conditions, valiantly leading the sled dog team. Could it be because the musher trusted him and he trusted the musher? —Peggy Frezon

*Lord and Master, Almighty God, I long to be obedient  
and show You that I am dependable and strong. I trust You.  
Help me to be worthy of a place in Your pack.*

JANUARY 5

## *A Fur-Mom's Love*

*Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*

—PSALM 139:7–8 (NIV)

**B**RRR! DAY FOUR with no electricity, no heat, and subzero temperatures. Winter storms had hit hard, leaving 20,000 people in the same predicament. My husband could leave every day and go to work in warm customers' offices, drinking coffee. But not me, not our dog.

And there lay the problem. No family could allow me to bring the dog if I came. Oh, they loved him, but one's landlord didn't allow pets. Two others had dogs of their own. Another's community allowed registered pets only.

Today's twenty-nine degrees had me layered up—three shirts, two pairs of pants, hooded sweatshirt, hat, gloves, and several fleece blankets. I wasn't toasty, but I stopped shivering occasionally. Bundled in my rocking chair, I couldn't write because the computer's battery had run down, and I couldn't hold a pen with my shaking, glove-covered hands.

And Kenai! Poor baby! He had his heavy winter coat, but it didn't afford much help in this frigid house. Plus, his bones had always minded the cold, and he often groaned when he moved. I'd put his thickest blanket on the couch and used extra ones to cover him.

The problem? Kenai is not a dog to stay put. He likes to move around—couch, Daddy's chair, his memory-foam bed. Whenever he got up and changed places, I disentangled myself from my cocoon to move his blankets with him. EVERY TIME! At one point, I laughed aloud at the seeming senselessness of this activity. Get swaddled in blankets . . . see Kenai move . . . get out and cover him to keep him toasty . . . get settled in . . . and do it again.

Yet isn't that just like our God? Every time we move away, He stops what He's doing and draws closer to us, keeping us near to His warming love. I'm guessing Kenai knows I love him, just as I know God loves me. —Cathy Mayfield

*I could feel the warmth of His presence as if a soft blanket  
had been wrapped around my soul, around my heart.*

—Colleen Houck

JANUARY 6

## *The Squirrel's Treasure*

*“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

—MATTHEW 6:20–21 (NIV)

I LOVE WATCHING the squirrels in my yard chase one another and seeing their ingenuity as they try to break into my bird feeder. Just between you and me, I always leave a little extra birdseed on the ground just for them. But my favorite thing about my backyard squirrels is the way they use their small paws to quickly dig little holes and bury acorns. They scamper around, carrying these acorns, then stash them away like buried treasure. And somehow, when winter comes, they always seem to remember just where they hid these acorns in my yard.

As I watched one of my squirrels hide its acorn this afternoon, I began to think about my own treasure. Firstl, what *is* my treasure? Jesus said, in essence, that our heart resides where our treasure is held. Am I putting my efforts and time and heart into temporal returns that won't last by the time winter comes? Or am I seeking a heavenly treasure, carefully guarding and investing in God's gifts in my life? Do I see those heavenly treasures as valuable?

I find it so interesting that the Bible describes our treasure and our heart as intertwined. The location of my treasure shows the location of my heart, and the opposite also applies. Just as the squirrel remembers where it buries its precious acorns, my heart will lead me toward that which I consider valuable. May I find my treasure in the heart of God, so my paths will lead me home. —Ashley Clark

*Father, sometimes I catch myself storing up treasures in this world, but You have given me the chance to make a heavenly investment with my life. Show me how to do just that. Amen.*

JANUARY 7

## *All the Days of My Life*

*Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

—PSALM 23:6 (NIV)

ONE WINTER EVENING my husband, Kyle, suggested that we watch the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources eagle camera live stream. Earlier that day, he had read in the news that the mama eagle was preparing to lay her eggs. We don't watch much TV with our kids, so they were excited. The kids watched the live stream in awe and amazement, and what started that evening became a daily interest for several weeks.

Kyle kept reading updates about the mama eagle and sharing them with us. As soon as she started laying her eggs, our family watched and learned more about the eagle's journey to life. After the eggs hatched, our kids looked on in awe as the mama eagle fed the eaglets several times a day, until, eventually, the eaglets grew, matured, and left the nest.

The following year, we decided to make the eagle camera a family tradition, and once more we watched the mama eagle and her preparation for her family. Seeing nature unfold before our eyes again allowed my husband and me to talk more with our children about God and His loving care, like the mama eagle's care for her eggs and her hatchlings as they grew. We watched as the eagle parents cared for them, from the moment she laid her eggs until they grew up and left her nest.

As our family watched together and Kyle and I talked about these things with them, I was reminded anew that God has cared for me since He "knit me together in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:14, NIV), and He will care for me "*all the days of my life*" (Psalm 23:6, NIV; italics added)—not just until the time comes for me to leave the nest of this earth, but in heaven for all eternity. —Stacey Thureen

*Like a bird protecting its young, God will cover you with His feathers,  
will protect you under His great wings; His faithfulness will form  
a shield around you, a rock-solid wall to protect you.*

—Psalm 91:4 (VOICE)

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