

All You Servants of the Lord

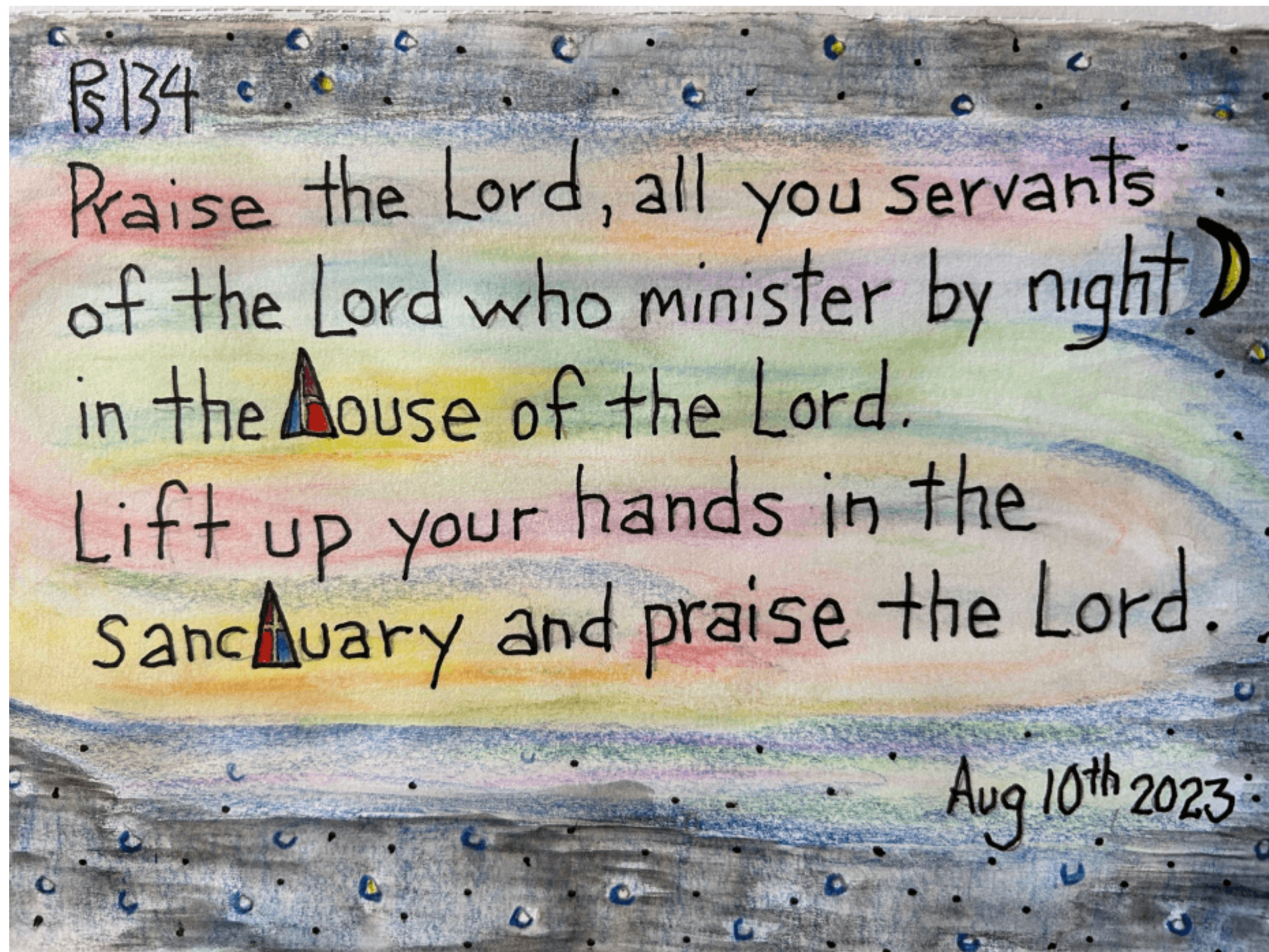


DEVOTIONAL BASED ON PS 134:1

Terry Smith, Senior Associate, Strategic Initiatives



2 min read



Drawn by Heather Smith

My wife was taken to the Emergency Room of Toronto General Hospital suffering from multiple complications from cancer. This time, it was her gall bladder and she was in incredible pain, so much so that she asked the admitting nurse if she could lie down on the floor in the ER because there were no beds. (He politely but firmly denied her request, claiming it was likely way dirtier than anywhere else she could lie down on).

She suffered throughout the night – both from the pain but also from the incessant disruptions typical of any ER ward. Nonstop traffic, endless noise, constantly having her gurney bumped by someone in a hurry to get somewhere. And the intercom blaring out **ER CODE BLUE STAT ROOM 105** or **ER CODE WHITE SOUTH CORRIDOR**. And over and over again, “Paging Doctor _____, Please report to the nurses’ station.”

With a dose of painkillers in her and a promise of a CT scan in the coming hours, she was able to calm herself a wee bit as she listened to her nightly devotion (Lectio365). Amidst the clamour swelling around her, she found peace and comfort in the words of Psalm 134:1 “**Praise the Lord, all you servants of the Lord who minister by night in the house of the Lord. Lift your hands in the sanctuary and praise the Lord.**”

We can easily imagine Israelite priests ministering in a tabernacle. It seems rather obvious.

But what stuck Heather and me since that night in the ER was a very different thought: These healthcare providers – nurses, doctors, lab technicians, EMS drivers, PSWs and janitors are also ‘ministers of the Lord’ and this ER room was Heather’s sanctuary. These people, using their science, skills and human touch, were ministering throughout the night in a different type of sanctuary – a holy place filled with God’s grace when and where needy people can be healed. Whether they realised it or not, God was using them as his ministers to bless and heal her and countless others.

Since that fitful first night, Heather has spent nearly four months nonstop in the hospital. She has been cared for by dozens of different medical personnel. And instead of seeing them as merely ‘service providers’ she began to see them as God’s ministers, serving through the night – and day – in what became her sanctuary.

Too often, we dichotomise the spiritual and temporal realms of our life. The things we do for God in church are spiritual. Our workplace is temporal. When we act of grace, we are being spiritual. When we use human talents, we are material beings. But as **VENNTURE** claims, there is no such duality. All of life and all of work is for God.

Abraham Kuyper, the famous Dutch journalist, theologian and Prime Minister once commented, “*There is not one square inch of the entire creation about which Jesus does not cry out, ‘It is mine’.*” The entire cosmos is God’s sanctuary! And if all of creation is God’s, then all of our work is for God and unto God. And we are all his ministers, in the daytime in our schools and stores, offices and gardens, and at night, in our factories, hospitals, maintenance yards and our homes. “**Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and praise the Lord.**”

Rev. Dr. Terry Smith