

So God Made a Farmer

On the eighth day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said, "I need a caretaker." So, God made a farmer.

God said, I need somebody willing to get up before dawn, milk cows, work all day in the fields, milk cows again, eat supper and then go to town and stay past midnight at a meeting of the Farm Bureau. So, God made a farmer.

I need somebody with strong arms to wrestle a calf, yet gentle enough to deliver his own grandchild. Somebody to call hogs, tame cantankerous machinery, come home hungry and have to wait until his wife is done feeding visiting ladies, then tell the ladies come back soon. So, God made a farmer.

God said, I need somebody willing to sit up all night with a new born colt and watch it die and then dry his eyes and say maybe next year. I need somebody who can shape an ax handle from a persimmon sprout and shoe a horse with a hunk of car tire. Who can make harness out of a hay wire, feed sacks and shoe scraps. Whose planting time and harvest season will finish his 40 hour week by Tuesday noon. Then, with the pain from tractor back, he will put in another 72.
So, God made a farmer.

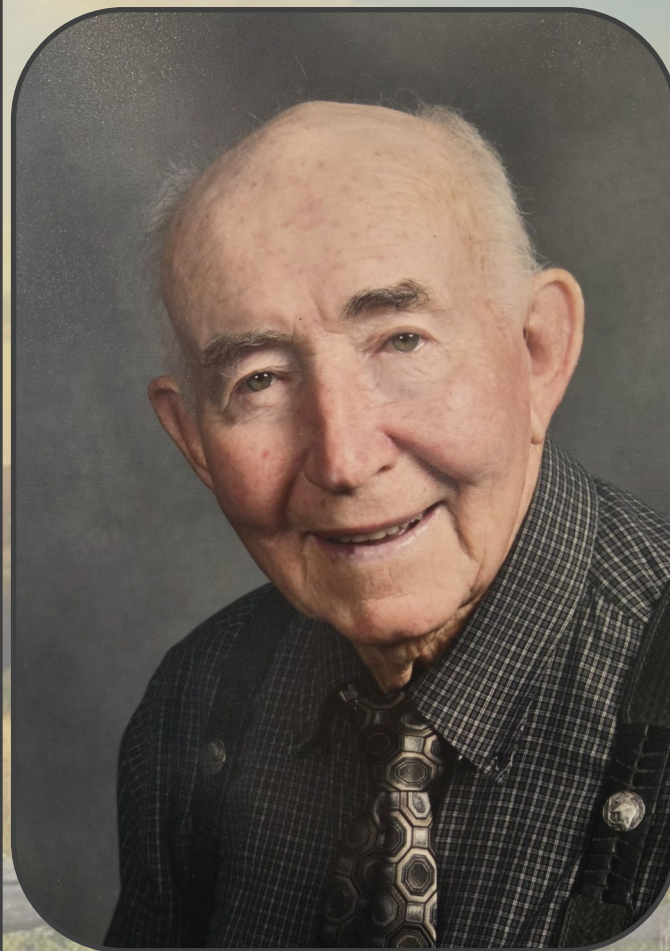
God had to have somebody willing to ride the ruts at double-speed to get the hay in ahead of the rain clouds and yet stop in mid-field and race to help when he sees the first smoke from a neighbor's place. So, God made a farmer.

God said, I need somebody strong enough to clear trees and heave bales, and yet gentle enough to wean lambs and pigs and tend the pink combed pullets. And who will stop his mower for an hour to splint the broken leg of a meadowlark.
So, God made a farmer.

It had to be somebody who would plow deep and straight and not cut corners. Somebody to seed, weed, feed, breed, and rake and disc and plow and plant and tie the fleece and strain the milk and replenish the self-feeder and finish a hard weeks work with a five mile drive to church. Somebody who would bale a family together with the soft strong bonds of sharing. Who would laugh, then sign and reply with smiling eyes... When his son says he wants to spend his life doing what Dad does! So, God made a farmer.



In Loving Memory of



*Robert "Dale"
Norfleet Sr*

January 24, 1935

February 9, 2026

Robert “Dale” Norfleet Sr

Robert “Dale” Norfleet Sr., 91, of Houstonia, Missouri, passed away Monday, February 9, 2026, at the Sylvia G. Thompson Residence Center in Sedalia, Missouri. He was born January 24, 1935, in Sweet Springs, Missouri, the son of Frank Norfleet and Myrtle (Ringen) Norfleet, who preceded him in death.

On May 26, 1956, at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Emma, Missouri, Dale was united in marriage to Dorothy Fay Bredehoeft. She preceded him in death on September 18, 2024.

Dale was a proud graduate of Houstonia High School, Class of 1953, and continued his education at Missouri Valley College in Marshall, Missouri. He later served in the Missouri Army National Guard. Returning home, Dale devoted himself to the family farm, raising row crops, cattle, and hogs, work he approached with steady determination and pride.

A man of many interests and deep community commitment, Dale enjoyed traveling with Dorothy, especially to Branson. He loved racing and first competed in go-carts before becoming the trusted mechanic for his son, son-in-law, and grandson Ryan in Micro Sprints and Sprint Cars. Dale also dedicated 30 years as a high school basketball official and had the honor of officiating Missouri State basketball championship games for the MSHSAA.

Dale’s service extended well beyond the court. He served as a Director for the Federal Land Bank, was a Pettis County R-V school board member, a 4-H project leader, an Emma Co-op Elevator board member, and a Pettis County Soil and Water board member. He also served on the board of the Sweet Springs Motor Sports Complex and was a National Board Member of the NMMA. Faith was central to Dale’s life, and he was a devoted member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Emma, where he served as an Elder, Trustee, Chairman of the Congregation, and on the Finance Board.

Dale is survived by one son, Robert Norfleet Jr. (Sharee) of Houstonia, Missouri; three daughters, Jennifer Schlender (Robert) of Sedalia, Missouri, Janna McQueen (Randy) of Sedalia, Missouri, and Janel Locke of Houstonia, Missouri; ten grandchildren, Rori Comstock (Scott), Mallory Norfleet, Ryan Schlender (Cindy), Meredith Beykirch (John), Matthew Locke (Jessi), Megan Underwood (Blake), Mary Paige Wilson (Andrew), Caitlyn McQueen, Morgan Locke (Cori), and Mason Locke; eighteen great-grandchildren, Marion and Tyler Comstock, Ainsley Schlender, Whitley and Hadley Underwood, Elliot, Tatum, and Astor Locke, Robert “Bo” Wilson, Dorothy “Dottie” Beykirch, Austin, Alec, and Ashley Sloan, Alyssa and Matt Hudson, and Alexis and Heston White; four great-great-grandchildren, Lucas and Cayden Sloan, and Reagan and Cambrie Hudson; and numerous nieces and nephews.

In addition to his wife and parents, Dale was preceded in death by a son, Ricky Allen Norfleet; a daughter, Cynthia Sue Norfleet; a granddaughter, Marissa McQueen; and a sister, Frances Runge.

Funeral Service

10:00 a.m., Saturday, February 14, 2026
Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Emma, MO

Officiant

Pastor Paul Rempfer

Special Music

“How Great Thou Art”

“Jesus Lives! The Victory’s Won” # 490

“What A Friend We Have In Jesus” # 770

“Why I Farm” - Video Tribute

Vocalist - Lori Price

Guitarist - Harlan Reid

Organist - Tammy Benson

Interment

Holy Cross Lutheran Cemetery, Emma, MO

Pallbearers

Grandsons: Ryan Schlender, Matthew Locke,
Morgan Locke, Mason Locke, Scott Comstock,
Blake Underwood, Andrew Wilson, John Beykirch

Honorary Bearers

Janice and Gary Howard, Rick and Lonna Arnold,
Clark and Larue Higgins, Robert and Sharon Gregory,
David and Linda Brown, Dean and Diane Ringen

Memorial Contributions

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Emma, Missouri
Northwest Alumni Scholarship Fund, Hughesville, Missouri