



ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS in Honor of the Feast of St. Francis

October 2, 2016

4:00 P.M.

The People and Animals gather on the Plaza.

SALUTATION

Celebrant: Blessed be the God of all creation.

People: **And blessed be God's holy Name for ever and ever.**

The People and Animals process into the Church. When all are inside, all sing the Hymn of Praise.

Music during the Procession

HYMN OF PRAISE *(sung by all)*

All creatures of the earth and sky

Music: *Lasst uns erfreuen*

Words: Jennifer Brown, New Haven, CT (October 7, 2008)

All creatures of the earth and sky,
Lift up your voice to heaven on high,
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship God in humbleness,
Sing Praises! Alleluia!
Sing Praises! Alleluia, Alleluia.

Birds of the air on fleeting wing
Herald the day and timely sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Great is your beauty, sweet your song,
Awesome your patterns when you throng.
Sing Praises! Alleluia!
Sing Praises! Alleluia, Alleluia.

Canine companions true and brave
Working for human lives you save
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Greet us with joy when we come home
Stay loyal, true, and never roam.
Sing Praises! Alleluia!
Sing Praises! Alleluia, Alleluia.

Ye feline friends with fur so soft
Purr in contentment, spring aloft
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Steady of gaze as if in trance
Playing with string and lights that dance
Sing Praises! Alleluia!
Sing Praises! Alleluia, Alleluia.

Without condition they love us
Giving affection, joy and trust
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Open our eyes to see thy hand,
In every creature small or grand.
Sing Praises! Alleluia!
Sing Praises! Alleluia, Alleluia!

All creatures of this planet earth
Safe habitat their right by birth
Alleluia! Alleluia!
May we be loving stewards of
All God's creation made in love
Sing Praises! Alleluia!
Sing Praises! Alleluia, Alleluia.

COLLECT

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Most high, omnipotent, good Lord: Grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may for love of you delight in your whole creation with perfect joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

People and Animals: Sit!

THE PSALM

PSALM 104:10-15, 25

You, LORD God, send the springs into the valleys; *
they flow between the mountains.
All the beasts of the field drink their fill from them, *
and the wild asses quench their thirst.
Beside them the birds of the air make their nests *
and sing among the branches.
You water the mountains from your dwelling on high; *
the earth is fully satisfied by the fruit of your works.
You make grass grow for flocks and herds *
and plants to serve humankind;
That they may bring forth food from the earth, *
and wine to gladden our hearts,
O LORD, how manifold are your works! *
in wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

THE LESSON

MATTHEW 6:25-33

Jesus said, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Intercessor and People

For the beauty and wonder of God's creation, in earth and sky and sea; **we thank you, O God.**

For the richness of the mountains, plains and rivers; **we thank you, O God.**

For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women; **we thank you, O God.**

For all creatures that breathe, and move, and have life; **we thank you, O God.**

For the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers and trees; **we thank you, O God.**

For the trust you have shown in giving these pets into our care; **we thank you, O God.**

That each pet here may be treasured with care; **we pray to you, O God.**

That we may love and honor all your works; **we pray to you, O God.**

That we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation; **to the honor and glory of your name, now and forever, we pray to you, O God. Amen.**

THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

COME! forward with your Animal to receive a blessing. You may then take a St. Francis medal and return to SIT!

Music during the Blessing

After all Animals have been blessed, the presider concludes

Almighty and everlasting God, Creator of all things and giver of all life: Let your blessing be upon these and all animals. May our relationships with them mirror your love, and may our care for them follow the example of your bountiful mercy. Strengthen us to love and care for them as we strive, like God's servant Francis of Assisi, to imitate Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

DOXOLOGY *(sung by all)*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Celebrant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Please STAY! for People and Animal treats on the Plaza.



Serving Today

Celebrants: The Rev. Keri Aubert, the Rev. Jakki Flanagan

Organist: Thomas Williford

Intercessor: Sue Richmond

Please Donate!

In honor of St. Francis and in gratitude for our companion animals, please consider donating to your local animal shelter. If you are in need of a pet companion, please consider adopting a rescue animal.

Concerning the Service

The Prayers are from The Episcopal Church St. Francis Day Eucharist

(http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sites/default/files/st_francis_day_resources.pdf). The prayer concluding the Blessing of the Animals is from Liturgical Materials Honoring God in Creation and Various Rites and Prayers for Animals, The Episcopal Church Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, November 2011.



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