

PARISH OF ESHER
Christ Church, Esher with St George's, West End

Blessing our Pets Celebrating God's Creation



*'God saw everything that he had made,
and indeed, it was very good'*

Genesis 1.31a

The Gathering

The minister greets the people.

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you:
and also with you.

The Greeting

Words of welcome or introduction may be said.

Hymn

*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

Each little flow'r that opens,
each little bird that sings,
he made their glowing colours,
he made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,
the river running by,
the sunset, and the morning
that brightens up the sky.

The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden,
he made them every one.

He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well.

Opening Prayer

**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;
O Divine Master,
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.**

Adapted from St. Francis of Assisi

Readings & Address

Isaiah 11.6-9

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

John 12.31-32

Jesus said to the people standing by: Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself.'

Revelation 21.5

The one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.'

The Sermon of St. Francis to the birds

O birds, my sisters, you owe much to God your creator, and you must praise him always and everywhere. For he has given you freedom to fly wherever you like, he has given you thick feathers, and he has preserved your species in the ark of Noah, so that your kind should not grow less on the earth.

Also, you must thank him for the air which he has given to you to fly in.

What's more, you neither sow nor reap, and God feeds you, and has given you the streams and fountains to drink from, the mountains and the hills to shelter you, and the high trees where you can build your nests. And, although you can neither spin or sew, God clothes you and your children. Therefore, the Creator loves you dearly, as he has given you so many blessings, and so, my sisters the birds, beware of the sin of ingratitude and always be eager to praise God.

Hymn

All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam,
thou silver moon with softer gleam:

*O praise him! O praise him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
ye clouds that sail in heaven along,
O praise him, Alleluia!

Thou rising moon, in praise rejoice;
ye lights of evening, find a voice:

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
make music for thy Lord to hear,
Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou fire so masterful and bright,
that givest man both warmth and light.

Dear mother earth, who day by day
unfoldest blessings on our way,
O praise him, alleluia!
The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,
let them his glory also show:

Let all things their creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness;
O praise him, alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One:

Prayers

Gracious God, you created the earth and all that is in it and proclaimed it good. All this belongs to you, and yet we harm your creation. Forgive us, we pray, and help us to be champions of all those who suffer, so that we may be channels of your goodness.

Hear us, O Lord!

We give you thanks, O God, for the life and witness of the prophets who remind us of your true purpose and for those special people who minister with tenderness to all living beings.

Hear us, O Lord!

We give you thanks, O God, for animals who live in our homes, on farms, in the wild, and in havens of refuge. Make us ever aware of our stewardship of creation, and help us to be faithful in caring for all you have created.

Hear us, O Lord!

We pray today for animals who are mistreated in any way ... for those who are tortured, deserted, abused, exploited and used for unnecessary experimentation, and for any whose lives are spent in extreme confinement. Help us to stop abuse in any form. Open our mouths to the defence of the defenceless, and above all, open our lives to your ways.

Hear us, O Lord!

We ask forgiveness for the part we have all played in systems that employ violence and promote hardness of heart.

Hear us, O Lord!

We remember before you our companion animals who have died. We remember at this time also, those animals who are lost or separated from their owners.

Hear us, O Lord!

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and for ever.**

Amen.

Blessing our Pets

O sweet maker of all, we ask your blessing on every creature gathered here today, the large and the small.

May they live peacefully in praise of you.

Bless us all to love your creation, and revere its sacredness.

We ask this blessing in the name of the one who was,

is, and always will be, our Creator,

to whom every creature belongs.

Amen.

The priest will come to you, to bless each pet individually:

Bless O God, this your creature,

and all who are involved in its care and protection.

Amen.

Hymn

O God, your creatures fill the earth with wonder and delight,

And every living thing has worth and beauty in your sight.

So playful dolphins dance and swim; your sheep bow down and graze:

Your songbirds share a morning hymn to offer you their praise.

You made the pets we welcome in – they're wondrous blessings, too:

With paws and whiskers, wings and fins, they offer praise to you.

O Lord, you call us to embrace these creatures in our care:

May we show kindness, love and grace to all pets everywhere.

Your creatures live in every land; they fill the sky and sea.

O Lord, you give us your command to love them tenderly.

We're called to have dominion here – to care for them always:

By loving creatures you hold dear, we offer you our praise.

The Blessing

May God bless the sun that is above us,
the earth that is below us,
the creatures all around us,
and lead us all into his peace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

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