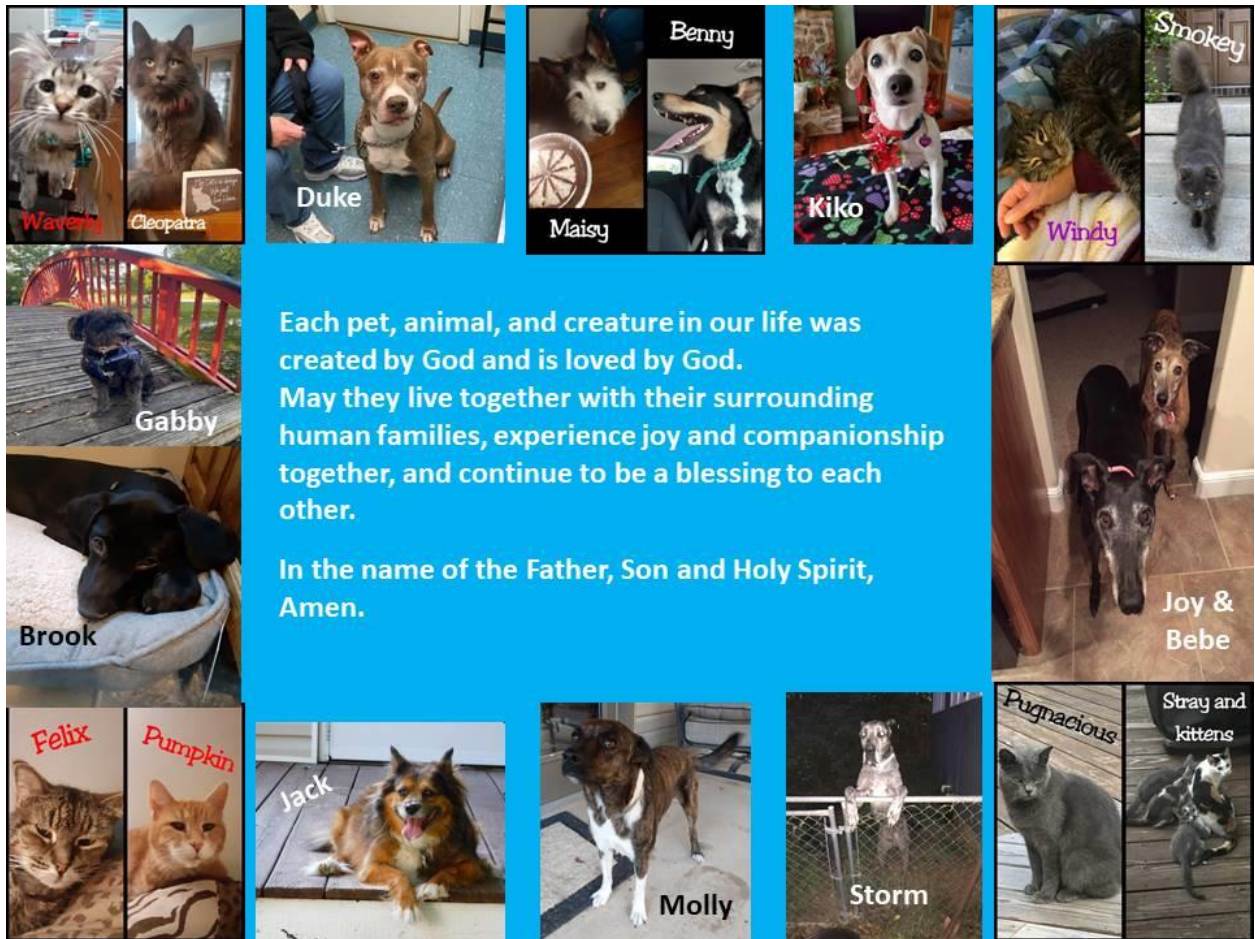


BLESSING OF ANIMALS

OCTOBER 4, 2020

WELCOME

Each year on October 4, the church remembers and commemorates the renewing ministry and work of Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226. Francis was the son of a wealthy cloth merchant. In a public confrontation with his father, he renounced his wealth and future inheritance and devoted himself to serving the poor. Francis had a spirit of gladness and gratitude for all of God's creation. This commemoration has been a traditional time to bless pets and animals, creatures Francis called his brothers and sisters.



Greeting and Prayer

The joy of our Lord Jesus Christ, the compassion of God, and the creative power of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Let us pray.

Source and sustainer of life, we cherish the myriad works of your hands.

Water, earth, and sky are yours, as are all their inhabitants, wild and tame.

We thank you for creatures that nourish and serve us, befriend, enrich, entertain, and protect us.

May we, who are made in your image, care for them well.

And may your groaning yet wondrous creation rally and thrive, revealing to all who come after us your wise, redemptive, transfiguring love; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Reading

Genesis 1:1, 20–25

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²⁰God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray.

Gracious Lord of love, we affirm our vital connection with all living creatures. Empower us to seek their welfare, intervening where needed, defending and tending your world with grace, compassion, and dignity.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Patient Lord of life, guide our choices so that we might safeguard habitats, ensuring, by your grace, that the mysteries and beauties of nature unfold for future generations.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Saving Lord of lords, your word foretells a day when the wolf will lie down with the lamb. Renew our vision for the peaceable kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Hear our prayers, gracious God, for the sake of Jesus, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Song

All Creatures, Worship God Most High! (ELW #835)

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/415965152>



All Creatures Worship God Most High

All Creatures Worship God Most High; Open Spirit Ensemble, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Davenport, Iowa

vimeo.com

(Led by members of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Davenport, Iowa)

Blessing of Animals

People of God, let us live gently alongside other living creatures and with the whole creation.

Let us pray.

Maker and master of all that lives, your animals provide us with sources of food and clothing, guidance and rescue, income, companionship, research and medicine, recreation, and so much more. We ask your blessing on those entrusted to us and we again pledge ourselves to their comfort and care.

Amen.

Each pet, animal, and creature in our life was created by God and is loved by God.

May they live together with their surrounding human families, experience joy and companionship together, and continue to be a blessing to each other.

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

God is the source and loving sustainer of all that lives—of species endangered as well as those newly discovered and named. Called as we are to wisely care for this diverse and imperiled web of life, let us again offer ourselves as advocates, donors, and active stewards, being reverent and mindful toward all creation.

Water, earth, and sky are home to us all. May we accept God's call, in the name of the Good Shepherd who taught us to 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.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

Compassion, creativity, and joy are ours
through Jesus Christ.

May the Holy Spirit

move us to preserve and enhance life on Earth,
giving clear witness to our loving Creator.

Amen.

Sending

Go out into God's world.

Live in peace with one another and with all God's creatures.

Thanks be to God.

