

*Gathering Table*  
*a Faith Community*  
*in the Anglican Church of Canada*



**St. Francis Day - Blessing of Pets**

‘Greetings In The Name Of The Risen Lord !  
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Gathering Table  
a Faith Community in the Anglican Church of Canada

**Officiant:** Rev. Ann Camber  
**Preacher Honorary Assistant:** Rev. Gail Clifton  
**Music:** Donna and Ted Hamill and GT Singers & Djembe  
**Lay Reader:** Brenda O'Neill

**St. Francis Day - Blessing of Pets Liturgy**

October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

7:00 p.m.

**WELCOME TO GATHERING TABLE**

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Welcome to all our visitors and newcomers. We're glad you're here! We invite you to sign our Visitors Book at the back of the church.

*For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of life and spirituality. We are gathered as treaty people on the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg of the Fort William First Nation and acknowledge this people's stewardship of this land through the ages.*

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

We gather in the name of God, Creator, Redeemer, and sustainer of the Earth and all creatures! **Amen**

## **St. Francis Day - Blessing of Pets Liturgy**

Each year on or near the Feast Day of St. Francis, which falls on October 4th, there are requests for a liturgy of blessing for animals.

*The Rev. Robert P. Morrison of the Episcopal Parish of St. James in Lincoln City, Oregon responded to these requests in 1998 by posting a liturgy to those subscribed to "Propertalk" (see our "RCL List Servers" page). With the Rev. Morrison's permission we have adapted and edited that service for presentation here.*

### ***Call to Worship***

**Leader:** Bless the Lord, all you his creatures,

**All:** **And forget not all his benefits.**

**Leader:** 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 perfectness of joy. O God, you have made us and all living things. You are even more wonderful than what you have made. We thank you for giving us these pets who bring us joy. As you take care of us, so also we ask your help that we might take care of those who trust us to look after them. By doing this, we share in your own love for all creation. We ask this in Jesus' name. **All: Amen.**

**Hymn:** **"All Creatures of Our God and King"**

All creatures of our God and King  
lift up your voices, let us sing  
**al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!**

*Bright burning sun and golden beams*

*pale silver moon that gently gleams*

**Refrain:**

***al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia***

***al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia***

***al-le-lu-ia!***

Great rushing winds and breezes soft  
you clouds that ride the heavens aloft

**O sing now, al-le-lu-ia!**

*Fair rising morn, with praise rejoice  
stars nightly shining, find a voice* **Refrain**

Earth ever fertile, day by day  
unfold your blessings on our way

**O sing now, al-le-lu-ia!**

*All flowers and fruit that in you grow  
God's glory let them also show* **Refrain**

**A Reading from the Book of Genesis**

**Genesis 1: 24 – 31 (NRSV)**

And 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.

25. God 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.

26. Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the

air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

27. So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

28. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

29. God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.

30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.

31. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

This is The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM 104:10-25**

10. You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills,

11. giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst.

12. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.

13. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.
14. You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth,
15. and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.
16. The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
17. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has its home in the fir trees.
18. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the coney.
19. You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.
20. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.
21. The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God.
22. When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie down in their dens.
23. People go out to their work and to their labour until the evening.
24. O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.
25. Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.

This is The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**The Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

## **Matthew 6:25-33**

"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?"

26. 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?

27. And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?

28. And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin,

29. yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

30. 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?

31. Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'

32. For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

This is the gospel of our Lord  
**Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Homily:      **Rev. Gail Clifton**

## The Prayers of the People

*Lay Reader*

*Leader:* Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us.... for the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea;

**All: We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader:* For the richness of the mountains, plains and rivers;

**All: We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader:* For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women;

**All: We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader:* For all creatures that breathe, and move, and have life;

**All: We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader:* For the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers and trees;

**All: We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader:* For the trust you have shown in giving into our care these, our pets;

**All: We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader:* That each pet here may be treasured with care;

**All: We pray to you, Lord.**

*Leader:* That we may love and honour all your works, O God;



**All:** We pray to you, Lord.

*Leader:* That we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation;

**All:** To the honour and glory of your name, now and forever, we pray to you, Lord.

### **The Blessing of Each Pet** *(Individually)*

"N. (*name of your animal, i.e. "Smokey"*) may you be blessed in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

May you and N. (*the name of the "owner"*) enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you."

alternate form - useful for those of other faith traditions

"N., may you be blessed in the Name of God who created you, and may you and N. (*the owner*) enjoy life together with our God."

All Most high, almighty Lord, our Creator, yours are the praise, the glory, the honour and all blessings! To you alone do all things belong. Be praised for giving us the animals, birds and fish which fill your world.

May we think of you and thank you when we play with and care for our pets. Be praised for making us so happy to have our pets and to have them to play with. We ask you, Lord, that we may be good to our pets always, so that they may be happy also. Help us always to take care of them so that they will be healthy. O God, your world is wonderful. May we all come into your even greater world of the kingdom of heaven where we shall

see even more wonderful things and where we shall live and love for ever. This we ask to your eternal praise, and to our blessing. Amen.

Hymn:           **Make Me a Channel of Your Peace**

Make me a channel of Your peace  
Where there is hatred, let me bring Your love  
Where there is injury, Your pardon, Lord  
And where there's doubt, true faith in You

Make me a channel of Your peace  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness, only light  
And where there's sadness, ever joy

Make me a channel of Your peace  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned  
in giving of ourselves that we receive  
and in dying that we're born to eternal life

O, Master, grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul

*Prayer of St Francis of Assisi*





Gathering Table

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Frances Bennett-Sutton, Rose Jardine, Brenda O'Neill,

Richard Pepper, Jim Sutton, Kim Bienvenue,

Rector's Warden: David Reid

People's Warden: Jim Sutton

Deputy People's Warden: Sheila Chisholm

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**Archbishop Anne's Motto for 2023**

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4: 18 - 19*