

Sunday, October 28, 2007
3 o'clock P M

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS



Covenant Presbyterian Church (USA)
230 E. Jefferson Street ~ Butler, Pennsylvania
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Rev. Dr. James E. Swanson, Pastor

A SERVICE OF WORSHIP FOR THE BLESSING OF THE PETS

Greeting and Welcome

Litany of Gathering

Leader: We are each wondrously made,
People: **Fashioned with care by God, our Creator.**
Leader: We are eternally linked to the holy source of
Life and Love,

People: **Children of the Heavenly Father.**
 Leader: We are called to be stewards of God's good Creation,
 People: **Caring for all creatures, great and small.**
 Leader: Some animals live in the wildness of nature;
 People: **Some animals live in our homes;**
 Leader: They sleep on our window sills and on our beds;
 People: **They cuddle us on cold evenings and comfort us in times of sadness,**
 Leader: And follow us everywhere we go on quiet, padded feet.
 People: **We provide them shelter, food and affection,**
 Leader: And they offer us unconditional love and contentment.
 People: **We thank God for these precious gifts!**
 Leader: Let us be reminded of our duty, not only to them but to their wild cousins –
 People: **Who pull the nectar from large blossoms,**
 Leader: Lie in meadows and marshes and mud,
 People: **Flutter through the air with the flapping of wings**
 Leader: Or glide silently through water with silvery fins.
 People: **We thank God for these precious gifts!**
 Leader: Together let us pledge to care for the animals of our homes and for the creatures of forest, desert and ocean,
 People: **One wondrous creation, given by a Loving God, who has promised never to leave us alone. Amen.**

Old Testament Scripture Reading: Genesis 1: 24 - 31

Responsive Psalm: selected verses from Psalm 148 (NIV)

L: Praise the Lord from the heavens,
 praise him in the heights above.
 P: **Praise him, all his angels,
 praise him, all his heavenly hosts.**
 L: Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars.
 P: **Praise him, you highest heavens
 and you waters above the skies.**
 L: Let them praise the name of the Lord,
 P: **For he commanded and they were created.**
 L: He set them in place for ever and ever;
 he gave a decree that will never pass away.
 P: **Praise the Lord from the earth,
 you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,**
 L: Lightning and hail, snow and clouds,
 stormy winds that do his bidding,
 P: **You mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars,
 wild animals and all cattle, small creatures
 and flying birds,**
 L: Kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers
 on earth, young men and maidens, old men and children.
 P: **Let them praise the name of the Lord**
 L: For his name alone is exalted;
 P: **His splendor is above the earth and the heavens!**

Remembrance & Introduction of the Animals

Each person will be given an opportunity to introduce by name the animal or animals brought here today...

or a sick animal left at home...

or to remember an animal who has died.

The Blessing of the Animals

"N. (name of animal) receive this blessing in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... May you enjoy life and health and find joy with the God who created you.

Prayers of the People

L: God trusts us to care for God's creation. Creatures are a part of it, and special ones come into our lives -- often by choice, sometimes by accident or chance -- all in need of our care.

P: **We pledge to care tenderly and faithfully for these animals we love, and to remember that we are not alone on the earth.**

L: O God, Creation is yours, with all its beauty and goodness, its rich and overflowing provision. You have surrounded us by the animals we most love. We remember now with gratitude the pets, protectors, and animal companions who have blessed our lives, especially those departed...

A Time of Silence will be observed for pets who have died

And now, Gracious God,

P: **Help us to remember, as we live and work and love among the animals, to be their friends, to care for them with diligence, to protect them from harm, and to thank them when we use their lives for our strength and survival.**

L: On this day now and for all days to come, O Spirit of God, bless your servants and the animals who have gathered here.

P: **Dismiss us in peace, and grant that your love and grace will help us to transform the world in which we live, bringing glory to you.**

All: **Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Benediction

May God, who created the animals of this earth as a help and comfort, Bless and protect and sustain you, together with the special ones whom you love and who love you, both now and in the life to come. Amen.