

119

Spring 2025

Price £2 (free to members)



animalwatch

PUTTING ANIMALS ON THE AGENDA OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH



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EASTER LAMBS

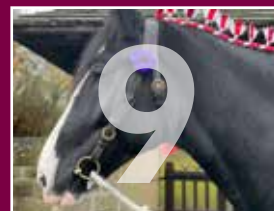
FOLLY WILDLIFE RESCUE

LEGACY HONOURED

ANIMALS' ANGELS

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Front Cover Photo courtesy of C.A. Brown.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please make a note of the events happening in the coming months. The diary will be updated in the next issue as we receive information about other events taking place.

May

4th to 10th

Hedgehog Awareness Week – information available from the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/>

Tuesday 13th

ASWA AGM, 7pm, on Zoom. Please contact the Secretary for link to join the meeting.

October

5th

Animal Welfare Sunday

Annual Service, location, time, and preacher TBA

November

9th

ASWA Remembrance Service for Animals in War, The Animals' War Memorial, Brooke Gate, Park Lane, London, W1K 7QF, 3pm. Speaker: Drew Tootal, MRCVS



HELLO AND WELCOME TO ANIMALWATCH

Welcome to *Animalwatch*. In this issue, our focus is on the welfare of farmed animals, but we also have a report on Folly Wildlife Rescue, and an update from the charity Save The Asian Elephants. This issue also contains information about our upcoming AGM and committee member election.

We hope that you enjoy keeping up-to-date with news and information on our website. Do check regularly for resources and information about upcoming events. Please do make a note of the dates in Doris' Diary, especially Animal Welfare Sunday and our Annual Service.

Please send any items for consideration for *Animalwatch* to Revd Jennifer Brown, Editor, PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT. Email is even better – animalwatch@jenbrown.org.uk. Please note that, owing to space restrictions, it may not be possible to print all contributions. Please refer to the information about contributions to *Animalwatch* for further details and restrictions on submissions.

Jennifer Brown, Editor

The deadline for the Spring magazine is **Monday 26th May 2025**.

ASWA SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

If you have a group or service that would welcome an ASWA speaker, we would love to hear from you! We often travel a fair distance so please call to discuss it. We usually bring a stall and literature and always liaise with our hosts to ensure the talk is appropriate for their particular audience. Keep the invitations rolling in!

A WARM WELCOME

to our new members. We look forward to hearing from you.

We are pleased to welcome 12 new members who have joined since the publication of the spring issue.

To all our new members we extend a warm welcome and we would ask that you, along with our existing members, encourage others who share your concern for animal welfare to join. Introductory leaflets are available from the Secretary.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ANIMALWATCH

We very much welcome contributions to *Animalwatch* from our readers. We are interested to hear about the positive things being done for animals in your churches and communities. We also welcome informed pieces on specific areas of animal welfare, such as items relating to animal welfare law, the history of animal welfare, and theology. Articles should be submitted to the Editor

either as typed manuscripts by post or by email as Word documents, with any accompanying photos sent as high-resolution jpg files. Items submitted as pdf files or email text cannot be accepted. Submissions must be the contributor's (sender's) own original work, and (unless otherwise agreed) not published elsewhere. Items may be edited for length, readability, and

appropriateness of content. Publication of submitted items is at the Editor's discretion. In submitting an article, the contributor assigns copyright for the piece to ASWA. For items submitted by email, please assume your item has been received unless you get a delivery failure notice. The Editor is unable to acknowledge receipt of individual submissions.

ASWA MERCHANDISE

Available from the ASWA web site

ASWA literature: a range of literature on a variety of animal welfare subjects available.

PAWS for Prayer cards: paw shaped cards with a prayer for companion animals printed on one side. £0.20 each.

Egg Cards: egg shaped cards with a prayer printed on one side. £0.20 each.

ASWA bags: handy cotton shopping bag with the ASWA logo. £4 each.

ASWA badges: show your support for ASWA by wearing a lapel badge with the ASWA logo. £1.50 each.

Sticker sheets & books: Activity sheet with stickers (ravens or bees), £2.00 each.



GOOD NEWS

Animals not forgotten

Devastating natural disasters have struck in many places around the world in the past year. While this is far from good news, it is heartening to see that in the midst of crisis, animals have not been forgotten. In the recent Los Angeles fires, animal shelters took in animals that couldn't be evacuated with their human families, or that had become lost or separated from their humans, volunteers mobilised to rescue animals, and ABC news reported that Aquarium of the Pacific was able to rescue endangered goby fish after the lagoons they call home were contaminated by ash and debris from the fires. Sadly, many animals did perish in the fires, and in other natural disasters around the world, but the good news is that there are people who care about saving animals in these situations and don't hesitate to spring into action when they are needed.

NEWS & NOTICES

You can now find us on Facebook by searching Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals. Don't forget, you can also follow ASWA on X (formerly Twitter) – @aswanews.



You can also keep up with what's new via our website – www.aswa.org.uk. Check the web site for the latest resources, including materials for children & youth.



Animal-Friendly Church award

Is your church animal friendly? ASWA sponsors the Animal-friendly Church award to recognise those churches that take animal welfare seriously as part of their ministry and mission. Churches can apply at any time and those meeting the necessary criteria will be awarded animal-friendly church status. Information is available on the website or from the Secretary.

ASWA Annual Service

This year's annual service will be on Sunday 5th October. Further details will be published in the summer issue.

Keeping in Touch

Interested in keeping up-to-date with what ASWA is doing? Want to hear about campaigns and activities relating to animal welfare? If so, please make sure we've got your email address so that we can send you occasional updates on what's happening. To join our mailing list, please send your email address to aswamembership@btinternet.com.

ASWA NEWS

ASWA Gains New Patron and New Animal-Friendly Church Winners Announced

ASWA are pleased to announce our new patron, the Rt Revd Lynne Cullens, Bishop of Barking. A message from Bishop Lynne can be found on p.11.

We are delighted to announce that, once again, two churches have been named as joint winners of the Animal-Friendly Church Award. The winners for 2024 are St Stephen's, South Shields and St Andrew's, Trowse, Norwich. Congratulations to both churches! Interviews with representatives of the winning churches will appear in the summer issue of *Animalwatch*.

AUSTRALIA

Looking forward to new legislation



The New South Wales Government is preparing draft legislation to update the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, and has called for submissions. The current legislation is mostly decades old. Animal protection organisations large and small have made submissions on the big issues, e.g. to bring forward the banning of battery cages (due to happen by 2036 across the country – far too long to wait), and the small ones, e.g. requiring fine mesh nets to cover fruit trees instead of larger mesh, in which bats and small birds can become trapped. The submissions are currently being reviewed by the Government, and the updated Regulation is due to be finalised on 1st February, 2025.

Rodeos continue in Australia, involving horses, young calves, bull-riding, use

of electric prods, and so on. They operate under a 36-year-old Code of Practice. Regulations are flimsy and virtually ignored. They are opposed by all animal protection organisations in Australia because they cause stress, fear, and pain to the animals. Rodeo will feature in the submissions to the NSW Government as it considers new legislation. It is very sad that this kind of cruelty is advertised as "family entertainment."

Australia has a flourishing and lucrative greyhound racing industry, which is under severe pressure from animal groups. It is heartening to see that New Zealand will end greyhound racing within the next twelve months.

Animals Australia is still waiting to hear when/if they will be granted a trial date for their case taken to the Supreme Court of Victoria against the practice of gassing pigs destined for slaughter.

Puppy farms have been banned in New South Wales from November 2024. However, there are several circumstances at this stage which allow continuation under certain conditions. Other states are taking similar action. I suppose one would have to say, this is a good step in the right direction.

Things take a long time!

Olga Parkes

SWEDEN



Starting the New Year with some encouraging news!

The small town of Hällefors is making headlines not only in Sweden but in the world. Dog Campus is attracting organisations, authorities, and professionals from near and far. Here in the deep forests and by the beautiful lakes, two-leggers and four-leggers are learning new methods to detect scents. Yes, it is all about the nose, and life-changing nose-work.

Envisage the main hall in the centre, and on one of the tables a dog called Tiger is sitting. She is waiting for a command from her trainer. She is rewarded with a treat every time she makes the right choice. Some tasks are very easy and others are extremely complicated.

Dog Campus has been up and running for about ten years and has attracted specialists from many different areas, mostly from the Police and Customs. The training is done in labs where different scents have been sprayed. Through positive reinforcement the dogs quickly find what they are sniffing for. They always start with tea because it is easy to dilute into different doses and is accessible in tea-leaves and liquid form. Fungal scents, such as mould, minerals, humans, mobile-phones, and vermin are the usual scents used. For the past seven years, however, a very interesting research project has been up and running. This is a project designed to detect lung cancer, soon to be summarized and the results presented. Karolinska Institute and Gävle Hospital are working together on this and the dogs are trained to recognize the scent of lung cancer molecules.

So many gifts we have been given, so many cures and such healing powers we have been entrusted as stewards of creation. Let us bring all our

good intentions and sincere prayers for those in power to cherish, with compassion and love, the wonderful graces we have been given by the Creator, for benefit of all life. A life in balance, cooperation and joy.

Sandra Kinley

UGANDA



Pig Tales

When I visit my Starfish charity in Uganda I spend the greater part of my time checking up on the families of our sponsored children.

My last visit was in September and October 2024. The poor attitude to and treatment of animals always pulls at my heart-strings and I do what I can to try and change attitudes, albeit amidst great amusement from my African friends. During this last visit, I was able to improve the lives of two pigs.

Both homes I visited were in village locations. In the back yard of the first family I was upset to find a black pig tied to a tree on a piece of rope no longer than 5 feet long. All she could do all day was encircle the tree. Scraps of food were thrown to her. What a life! An all-too-common scenario, unfortunately. I asked the father if he would be willing to have a pig pen constructed if I could find some money. He immediately said he knew a friend who could "easily" make one. He called the friend and – long story short – when I returned to the home a couple of days later the pig was happier in a decent pen, although still being thrown in scraps to eat.

Apparently they wanted to breed from her. With piglets, she would be far happier in the new pen. A small measure of success. The other pig whose life I was able to improve belonged to another of our Starfish families. This poor pregnant sow was similarly tied up, but by her hind leg, with the rope cutting into her, next to a crumbling brick wall. She must have lain next to the wall to stop the pain from the rope whenever she moved.

She looked most uncomfortable and again was just thrown scraps to eat. With the offer of help to build her a pen, the father readily agreed, help was found and another reasonable pen quickly constructed. Piggy Two was off her tether and far more comfortable.

Changing the mind-set of people in Arica to the plight of their animals is not easy, but the offer of a comparatively few Ugandan shillings can persuade them to act and makes the difference to some poor beasts.

Our Starfish motto is *making a difference one by one*. Putting that motto into action means at least two poor pigs in Uganda are now living a more comfortable life.

I will check up on my next visit.

Mary Mills



EASTER LAMBS

As winter continues, with cold rain, wind, and grey skies, springtime seems more and more appealing. I am eager for snowdrops, bluebells, daffodils, glimpses of lambs grazing in pastures, and Easter. This year, I am taking the wait for spring and the Lenten wait for Easter as an opportunity to pay particular attention to lambs: the grazing lambs, roast lambs on some Easter dining room tables, and the wide range lambs that appear in the Church's scripture and tradition.



My earliest memories of Easter feature the Easter lamb cake a kind neighbour made for my family each year. It was roughly in the shape of a sitting lamb, covered with white icing and lots of coconut to represent a fluffy white fleece. I was utterly captivated by the lamb cake, especially by the superabundance of icing and coconut. Roast lamb was the designated focus of Easter dinner, but I have no memories of how it tasted. It was the lamb cake that marked the feast day for me. For the first time, I am trying to produce an Easter lamb cake myself—this time a gluten-free, vegan version. My initial effort looks a bit sad, and I failed in the fluffy white coconut fleece department, but I hope to get it right by Easter!

As a small child, I was given a plush lamb to cuddle, and my own identity as a lamb of Jesus the Shepherd's flock was reinforced nightly, as I sang my bedtime prayer, which began:

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me;

Bless Thy little lamb tonight;

Through the darkness be Thou near me;

Watch my sleep till morning light.

The cake, the plush toy, and the prayer were the ground from which I began to encounter the sheep and shepherds of scripture, theology, and liturgy.

References to sheep in scripture present a distinctive relationship between shepherds and sheep, God

and God's people. People, like lost lambs, need to be found. People, like groups of sheep, need to be gathered, led, protected, and cared for.



My favourite visual representation of the Good Shepherd is the granite statue in the Good Shepherd Chapel of the National Cathedral in Washington, D. C. The renowned sculptor, Walker Hancock, sculpted Jesus as The Shepherd, who carries and comforts a lamb in his arms. The lamb is more realistic than a cake or a toy, and the shepherd is strong and gentle. Visitors to the Chapel often reach out to touch the shepherd's hands, to feel that shepherd-lamb relationship. His hands have been transformed by that contact, from grey to a warm and flesh-like colour.

I now see that fabulous Easter lamb cake of my childhood not only as a sweet version of the Good Shepherd's lamb, but also a (faint) reflection of a sacrificial lamb. The Passover meal of scripture commemorates God's rescue of God's people from slavery to the Egyptians. At God's direction, Moses instructed God's people in slavery to select the finest lamb from each family flock, kill it and mark the door with its blood, roast it, and then eat it, all while ready to leave at any moment. God's people did as instructed, God kept safe the marked households, and Moses led the people out of Egypt toward freedom. In commemoration, according to scripture, each Jewish household in Jesus' time took an unmarked lamb to the Temple for sacrifice, before eating it and re-narrating the Passover meal and escape to freedom.

When the second Temple was destroyed, in 70 CE, the Jews and earliest Christians had nowhere to offer sacrifices. They developed alternative practices, and Jews and Christians ended the practice of animal sacrifice. Later on, Christians established an understanding of Jesus Christ himself as the ultimate and perfect lamb, the Lamb of God, who presented himself as sacrifice for the sake all sinners, leading them through death, to resurrected life. In the Eucharist, we pray to the Lamb of God in the *Agnus Dei*, which comes directly before the congregation moves forward to receive Christ's body and blood:

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.



My favourite representation of the Lamb of God is a 13th c statue in the church of St Mary the Virgin Church, in Iffley, Oxfordshire. By the Middle Ages, representations of the Lamb of God, the fully human and fully divine Jesus Christ, show a perfect sacrificial lamb who is—at the same time—the triumphant and lionised lamb who conquered sin and death and now leads all to life beyond death. This statue was once the head of a preaching cross in the burial ground outside the church. Now it is inside, on the north sanctuary wall. The lamb is worn, missing legs, an ear, and facial details, but the its victorious stance and the banner persevere.





My own interactions with living sheep are few. I have spoken to several sheep who were uninterested in me and continued grazing or lazing in the sun. I have observed sheep farmed in smaller and larger farming systems. And I have visited an abattoir where I was able to watch closely how the sheep were gathered and guided toward their slaughter and how they were killed quickly and moved along to be processed. In each case, I could see that the particulars of the sheep's care greatly affected their comfort and well-being.

You will have had your own engagements with sheep and lambs, in text, food, images, and pastures. One great challenge we share is how to draw connections between Christian references and representations of sheep and the lambs currently consumed by humans for Easter dinner. The practices of ancient nomadic and agrarian sheep-raising, and the value of a healthy, beautiful, year-old lamb inspired the images of lambs in scripture and theology. Can today's farmed sheep live up to the standard of those images? Are today's lambs plausible symbols for the subjects of divine care and for the human and divine Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God?

Current sheep farming practices share some similarities with older methods; for example, sheep in the UK today still spend much of their time outdoors, and lambs are allowed to stay with their mothers for their early months. Over the years, breeding and improved nutrition have considerably increased the health and size of sheep. At the same time, contemporary mutilations for health and hygiene management diminish lambs' opportunities to flourish. Lambs' tails are now routinely docked (a tight ring is placed high up on the tail, so that the loss of circulation causes the tail to fall off); previous lambs (and adult sheep) kept their long tails. Tail-docking is designed to protect sheep from fly and maggot infestation in the difficult-to-clean area beneath their tails. In addition, many male lambs are castrated (with a similar ring method), to prevent unplanned mating and to produce a more appealing taste of meat (without testosterone).

Both tail-docking and castration cause lambs pain (documented by lamb behavioural studies), at and after the event. There are successful alternative methods to address fly strike and flock mixing, but these changes would require additional financial and

management resources, which seem too costly to most farmers.

In addition, methods of moving sheep to slaughter and managing the moments of slaughter can be more or less distressing to the animals, again depending on the resources of the sheep handlers.

This Lent, please join me in considering the lives of farmed lambs along with the importance of lambs in Christian imagery. Find out how sheep indicate their comfort levels with their ears. Help children learn about what makes for a good sheep life, how lambs play, what social relationships are like for sheep, what faces they can recognise, and how they express their feelings with the position of their ears. Get to know sheep farmers, to find out what pressures and challenges they are currently facing and what support they need. Ask what they would like to do differently, if they had the resources. Explore which farms are trying non-mutilation health and safety measures for their sheep and what they would recommend to others. Find out about grocery chains' contracts with farmers. Write to your chain's management about fairer prices for farmers. Note where lambs in the market come from and if they were slaughtered on site, without having to travel far. Learn about sheep farmers' rates of injuries, poor mental health, and suicides.

At Easter, let's praise the Lamb of God and pay attention to the lambs raised for consumption around us. Invite some friends for a plant-based feast—and an Easter lamb cake!

You can find information, photos, and recommendations in:

The Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare: A Policy Framework for Churches and Christian Organizations.

FREE download: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/dhpa/disciplines/divinity/research/christian-ethics-of-farmed-animal-welfare/>

Margaret Adam

St Stephen's House, Oxford

Image credits:

Lamb cake; AKM Adam. Lamb of God, St Mary's, Iffley, and adult sheep; Margaret Adam. Good Shepherd, Washington National Cathedral; jnschaumeyer, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0. Lamb: Evelyn Simak, CC BY-SA 2.0.

FOLLY WILDLIFE RESCUE



Folly Wildlife Rescue is situated in the Broadwater Forest near Tunbridge Wells in Kent. Folly Wildlife Rescue Trust is a charity dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of injured, orphaned, and distressed wild animals and birds throughout West Kent, East Sussex, and the surrounding region.

Every year, thousands of wildlife casualties are treated after being injured in accidents involving some form of human activity, such as entanglement in plastic netting, fencing, or fishing line, road-traffic accidents, injury caused by garden machinery, poisoning, shooting, and attack by domestic cats and dogs, to name just a few. A lot of these accidents, combined with loss of habitat and increasing urbanisation, are bringing some of these wildlife species ever closer to extinction.

The Trust specialise in the hand-rearing of mammals, including hedgehogs, badgers, foxes, mice, rabbits, and even deer, as well as over

two thousand nestling and fledgling birds of many species. In addition, it works tirelessly to dispel the myths and misconceptions surrounding many wild animals (for example, magpies are killing our songbirds, foxes are ruthless killers, all badgers carry TB, etc) with a view to reducing much needless and often fatal persecution. Through its education programme in schools, community groups, and clubs, it looks to highlight these man-made problems (that nationwide are killing and maiming millions of animals and birds every year), as well as demonstrating to people how they can help prevent such accidents from happening in the first place. It also promotes respect, understanding, and appreciation for our wonderful wildlife heritage.

The Trust's new wildlife hospital at Fairview Lane, Broadwater Forest, Tunbridge Wells, with its own veterinary and x-ray unit, is one of the most modern facilities in the country.

Having been a volunteer in 2016, and returning to work at Folly in recent months, I have been amazed to see all their new animal units and facilities to help treat the growing number of wildlife casualties and hopefully return them to the wild.

Folly Wildlife Rescue receives no funding from any local authority or lottery grant and relies entirely on public donations, grants, legacies, and fund-raising activities. In the Autumn of 2024, Folly was at risk of closing down due a lack of funds, fortunately after an appeal they raised enough to continue.

If you would like to learn more about or support the work of Folly Wildlife Rescue, please visit their website: <https://www.follywildliferescue.org.uk>.

Janet Murphy

ASWA Committee Member

Photos courtesy of Folly Wildlife Rescue.

LEGACY HONOURED

Jilly Cooper, in a letter to my mother, Dorothy Townsend, referred to her as being, "a brave and humane person". Indeed she was, as she worked tirelessly and with unwavering determination in the 1990's, researching the fate of horses in The Great War. Her work was frequently heart-rending but she regarded it as being a labour of love and remembrance. W. F. Deedes, in the Daily Telegraph, referred to her as being, "an authority on the fate of horses in the First World War." The ultimate aim of her campaigning and research was to gain recognition and commemoration, both nationally and locally, for those animals who, in war, endured great suffering and died in service for us.

During her research she was privileged to meet scores of people, amazingly eager to recount their stories of war horses. Sons and daughters of men who served on the battlefields of France gave their depressing details of the horses' fate, stories passed onto them by their fathers. Serving soldiers and ex-military men and women who supported my mother in her research, unreservedly and without exception, were in favour of a national commemoration for horses, mules, and a wide range of other animals who served with the Armed Forces.

During the course of her research, she was in contact with politicians, the Ministry of Defence Veterinary and Remount Services, The Household Cavalry Regiment, several members of high-ranking military personnel, including Colonel McCrum, MVO (Executive Director of the Animals In War Memorial Fund), and many others from various organisations. She even received a letter from Buckingham Palace.

In July, 1998, she received a letter from Colonel McCrum conveying the most welcome news that an 'Animals In War' memorial would be erected in London. Finally, innocent victims of war, millions of horses and other animals which died tragically and painfully in areas of human conflict would be remembered by way of a majestic memorial.

Sadly, my mother has now passed and having spent time recently reading through an abundance of her research notes and articles I felt compelled to

raise awareness locally in relation to animals in war. Subsequently, I made contact with local councils, the local church, and others and requested that purple poppy wreaths be laid at war memorials on Remembrance Sunday. My endeavours were successful and purple poppy wreaths were laid at remembrance services at six locations in Lancashire and one location in North Yorkshire. In Mellor, Lancashire, arrangements were made for 'Thunder', a Shire horse from 'Thwaites' to lead the church parade to the war memorial where he remained throughout the service. (For more on Thwaites' participation, please see <https://www.thwaites.co.uk/horses/purple-poppy-wreath/>).

In 1995, my mother sought approval from the local Council to personally lay a wreath, during the remembrance

service, in her home town. She considered it a great privilege to do so for many years.

A plaque is displayed at the local RSPCA animal centre in memory of my mother. She was a dedicated committee member. The plaque mentions that she was, "an extraordinary and truly inspirational lady". I am incredibly proud of her. My mission is to continue honouring her legacy and reach out to a wider audience next year in the months leading up to Remembrance Sunday.

In the meantime, and as a new member of ASWA, I look forward to promoting the wonderful work of this charity.

Andrea Townsend



THE BIBLE AND...

Farming and Animal Welfare.

This Bible study is designed to help an individual or small group to explore what the Bible says about the welfare of farmed animals.

Proverbs 27:23-27

"Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds; for riches do not last forever, nor a crown for all generations. When the grass is gone, and new growth appears, and the herbage of the mountains is gathered, the lambs will provide your clothing, and the goats the price of a field; there will be enough goats' milk for your food, for the food of your household and nourishment for your servant girls."

The very existence of farming, and perhaps especially the farming of animals, gives rise to complex moral questions. Just a few weeks ago, naturalist Chris Packham and former Green party MP Caroline Lucas made the headlines with their resignations as President and Vice-President of the RSPCA over alleged failures of animal welfare at some RSCPA 'Assured' farms and abattoirs.

As the selected passage from the Book of Proverbs demonstrates, this concern for the well-being of farmed animals is not unique to the modern era. In these verses, the farmer is instructed to know their animals well and to be attentive to them. The well-being of the human household is inseparable from the well-being of the herd, and in this way the safeguarding of the animals is akin to the safeguarding of the family. While the value of the flock is partially connected to the wool, milk, and meat that they provide, the farmer's practices are to align with the seasons of the year, and the emphasis is on there being 'enough' (verse 27) rather than on maximising productivity or profit.

Some commentators suggest that the instructions in these verses were really intended for the king, and that the flocks are in fact a metaphor for his people. This interpretation shines a light on the dynamics of power and dependency that run through the passage: who really has the power here? Who really relies upon whom? These are questions we can easily apply to our relationships with animals and with the natural world.

Questions for Groups:

How do you respond to the picture of human power over and dependence upon animals that is painted within these verses?

Many of us are not farmers or shepherds. How might the instructions to 'know well' and 'give attention' be applied to our wider decisions about food and clothing?

The author of Proverbs assumes that human lives are shaped around the seasons of the year. How true is this for you and the communities that you are part of? Is there anything about this that you would like to change?

If you would like to learn more about higher welfare farming in the UK and around the world, you may wish to visit the Compassion in World Farming webpage: <https://www.ciwf.org.uk/>

Bible quotation from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicized Edition ©1989, 1995 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

ASWA REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

On Sunday 10th November, ASWA once again gathered at the Animals In War Memorial in Park Lane, London for our annual Remembrance service.

The service was led by ASWA Secretary, the Revd Sam Chandler, and once again we were delighted to see so many people in attendance including some four legged guests. We also had a Chelsea Pensioner join us from the Royal Hospital in Chelsea.

Our speaker was David Hill from Nowzad, who spoke movingly about Nowzad's work in both Afghanistan and Ukraine. ASWA has a longstanding friendship with Nowzad and its founder Pen Farthing. We made a donation towards their work in thanks for their support of this service over the years. For those of you who might not have read Pen Farthing's book about the animal airlift of 2021 from Afghanistan, I would wholeheartedly recommend it. It is called *Operation Ark* and is available from the Nowzad website for £12.99. It is a great read!



Barbara Gardner from Animals Interfaith Alliance read the prayers for us and it was lovely to see many ASWA friends and supporters, including Duncan McNair from Save the Asian Elephants.

Do join us again this year on Sunday 9th November at the usual time of 3.00pm. The reason we gather in the afternoon is so that our supporters

can still attend the Remembrance services in their own churches first. For those of us who are clergy, it means we can still come up to London in the afternoon and remember the animals after taking services in the morning.

Sam Chandler

ASWA Secretary

FROM OUR NEW PATRON



Albert Einstein wrote, "If a man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals."

Sadly, if the estimate of the growing number of animal cruelty cases in this country is anyway near accurate, we have many for whom such righteousness is a long way off. It is truly shocking, and deeply upsetting, to see and read of such cases, and I'm sure we all applaud and support the work of the many charities, both large and small, that seek to rescue and care for the broadest range of animals, and to educate – and, where necessary, prosecute – humans.

We are truly blessed in sharing the planet with so many animal species, and we have a moral duty to treat them with respect and kindness. As Christians, that duty forms part of two of the five marks of mission: firstly, in our calling to challenge violence of every kind; and, secondly, in our responsibility to safeguard the integrity of creation.

The animal kingdom supports our very existence, and the companionship of millions of pets across the world provides vital emotional support and love to people of all ranks, ethnicities, and cultures. Animals are central to the life of our world and to our physical and emotional health. But are animals part of the world to come?

N T Wright, author and leading New Testament scholar, was asked in a 2021 interview with a Christian magazine, "So will we see animals and pets in the new creation?"

His answer was as follows:

"The Bible doesn't have much to say on this, but I think we can carefully respond: 'Yes.' When a human being loves and cares for an animal, and when that animal responds to that love and care, there is a bond between them, which is part of who that human being is. Just as when somebody loves God, there is a bond between them and God, which we call the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit looks after that person until the resurrection. I don't see any reason at all why looking after that person shouldn't include, by a kind of overflow of grace, looking after all of the animals, birds, and whatever that person has loved and brought joy to in this life."

Animals bring to our lives something of the grace of God himself, and they also teach us much.

Several years ago, when my children were young, we lived on a small-holding. Alongside chickens and geese, we quickly acquired four healthy piglets. Being firmly in the

body of people who move to a small-holding with lots of urban dreams but little awareness of rural realities, I consulted my neighbour Geoff, a life-long farmer, to ask what I needed to know about farming pigs.

Geoff was a man of very few words, so after some moments he looked me in the eye and said, "Ya can't push a pig." I was a little bemused by that answer, so I asked for some clarification. And Geoff patiently went on to explain that if you wanted to move a pig from one place to another, planting your hands on its rear end and pushing will get you nowhere. The pig will simply dig in with a determination to remain even more firmly planted where it is.

He then picked up an old piece of plywood, waved it in my direction, slapped it soundly and said, "ya need a pig board." And he proceeded to show me how you used the board to come alongside the pig, gently manoeuvring it by ushering it forward from one side and then the other... slowly, step by step, the pig ends up where you want it to be, almost despite itself. Needless to say, I have found this philosophy and thinking of great help in many meetings since.

In all that we are called to be as Christians, being people who treat animals well and who advocate for them when others don't is a fundamental aspect. I'm therefore delighted to be taking up a role as a Patron of ASWA and I look forward to joining you, to learning more about what you do, and to lending my voice in support.

With my best wishes,

Lynne

OBITUARY

Tony Campolo

It was with great sadness that we learned in November last year of the death of our longstanding Patron, Tony Campolo, at the age of 89.

Tony was a wonderful support to ASWA. He spoke for us at two of our annual services – once at St James's, Piccadilly and once at St John's, Waterloo. He also spoke at the SARX Creature Conference in 2017 and that talk can still be found on-line.

He was the most amazing speaker, passionate and also using humour to

make his points. He was not afraid to tackle difficult topics, such as hunting, which he did in one of his early books, *20 hot potatoes that Christians are afraid to touch*.

It is always so encouraging when a high-profile Christian speaker is prepared to speak out about animal welfare, and we will miss him.

The service to celebrate his life is still available to watch on-line on the Eastern University website.

His overriding message was always that the Gospel should inspire us

to take action against injustice in whatever form that might move us. He encouraged us to be courageous in speaking out for the vulnerable and that includes the animals who share this planet with us. A memoir about his life called *Pilgrim* is due out at the end of February.

Our thoughts are with his widow, Peggy, and his children and grandchildren, and all who knew and loved him.

Sam Chandler

ANIMALS' ANGELS

Every 'farm' animal is transported at least once in its lifetime – a process that often causes immense suffering after a short and miserable life, exploited for its meat, milk, skin, or fur. At Animals' Angels, we have been dedicated to improving conditions for 'farm' animals during transport for over 25 years. Since our founding in 1998 by Christa Blanke, a former pastor, our mission has remained unwavering: to be there for the animals. Today, we work around the world: in Europe, Australia, and the Middle East, because animal transport has become an international matter with huge economic interests involved. This global issue requires a global response, and we are committed to being wherever the animals need us most.

We are a small, specialized team committed to working on-site, documenting the realities of animal transport, and advocating for change. Whether it's on roads, at markets, or in slaughterhouses, we stand in solidarity with the animals, providing a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves. Our work includes

raising awareness, filing complaints, conducting welfare training for police officers and animal keepers, and educating the next generation through our animal welfare lessons in schools.

Our approach is twofold: being present with the animals in their suffering and advocating for better standards at the policy level. We collaborate closely with authorities, veterinarians, and the agricultural industry to address welfare violations and push for systemic change. Through firsthand documentation, we bring transparency to the often hidden world of animal transport.

Despite existing animal welfare laws, gaps persist worldwide. Animals are often treated as commodities rather than sentient beings. In our experience, lasting change comes through dialogue and education, not just confrontation. That's why we work with local communities and organizations, respecting cultural contexts while promoting humane practices.

One of our guiding principles is recognising the individuality of every animal. During our missions, we give the animals names to honour their lives and acknowledge their suffering. We believe this simple act reinforces their dignity and reminds us of their inherent worth.

As an independent NGO, we rely entirely on donations, which allows us to remain focused and impartial in our advocacy. This financial independence ensures that our commitment to the animals is never compromised.

We dream of a world where animals are respected as sentient beings, with the right to live free from unnecessary suffering. Until that day comes, we will continue to stand by their side, bearing witness and demanding change. Together, we can create a future where compassion guides our treatment of all living beings.

Yasmin Hohn

Animals' Angels

UPDATE FROM SAVE THE ASIAN ELEPHANTS

2025 – a year of real hope after decades of horror

In 2000, a young student nurse was sitting between her father and her sister in the front row of an elephant rodeo show in Thailand. Dozens of Asian elephants and their babies were being forced to perform endless tricks and games at the point of a bullhook, a wooden pole with a fierce hook and spike at the end, used to stab, rip, and terrify the animals into all manner of unnatural acts. Day after day without end, the creatures were forced to perform for tourism fun and profits, to the point of exhaustion and despair. One mighty tusker elephant was stabbed one time too many, rushed the small group of spectators and tore its tusks several times into the student nurse's chest and her sister's abdomen. One sister died two hours later, the other just survived. Their father survived with lesser injuries, but the trauma would lead to his own death three years later. Twenty-five years later, a 22-year-old Spanish student died following an attack by an elephant at another notorious tourist resort, also in Thailand. In the quarter-century between these two incidents, many other elephant attacks on humans have occurred, resulting

in injury and death. Yet the market in brutal animal tourism ever expands, the UK playing a disproportionately large and shameful role.

I founded Save The Asian Elephants (STAE) 10 years ago to try to change things. Every year millions of vulnerable animals suffer agonising harm and death in exploitative tourist venues. STAE has so far identified 1,200 travel businesses in the UK profiting from the advertising of 300 brutal elephant venues abroad. In addition, other species, such as apes, lions, tigers, bears, horses, donkeys, and dolphins are brutally beaten, stabbed, and worked to death. Many of these are species are driven now to the brink of extinction. All the legacy of a reckless, unregulated market.

STAE has pioneered world-first new measures into law to replace brutal animal tourism with ethical practices and compassionate sanctuaries. The Animals (Low-Welfare Activities Abroad) Act attracted overwhelming public and Parliamentary backing, becoming law in 2023. When implemented, the new law will prohibit the sale or advertising of venues abroad that harm vertebrate animals. Other countries are then likely to introduce similar bans. But despite passing into law nearly 18 months

ago, and detailed evidence submitted to the Environment Secretary, Steve Reed, early last year, the Act is still to be implemented. Why the delay? Attempts to persuade and encourage ethical practices in the travel industry have been in vain. The compulsion of law is long overdue.

STAE NEEDS YOUR HELP. If you would like to help bring an end to tourism that perpetuates the mistreatment of elephants and other wild animals, please visit stae.org/help-us, where you can:

- 1 email our suggested letter to the Environment Secretary;
- 2 sign our world-record petition;
- 3 donate to STAE. We are all volunteers. We take no pay but incur many expenses in keeping our work going.

Thank you!

Duncan McNair, CEO

Save the Asian Elephants

See this short guide to the Act, its meaning, scope, and global importance: <https://stae.org/landmark-new-animal-protection-law-explained/>

RIP BETTY

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of lovely Betty, the dog ASWA helped to bring over from her sad life in Uganda 6 years ago. Betty found a loving, very comfortable home in Derby with an elderly widow. Latterly she has been living in a very smart retirement village – a real ‘rags to riches’ story.

Her owner had to move into a care home in the summer and Betty was not allowed to move with her. A very kind man from the same retirement village had been helping with Betty’s walks and he offered to take her on. He loved her very much and she was very happy with him.

In November she became ill and a scan revealed a massive tumour in her bladder – taking up 80% of the space! She had previously been operated on

for a large cancerous growth whilst in Uganda and over the years it must have spread and gradually increased. There was nothing the vet could do, so she was put peacefully to sleep on November 5th. She enjoyed a handful of treats just beforehand and had not seemed at all distressed and has been spared future inevitable suffering.

We thank God for her last few very happy years.

Mary Mills

Editor’s note: We don’t usually print pet obituaries, but we have been following Betty’s journey since she came to the UK from Uganda and thought readers would like to know about her last days.



ASWA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

It’s election time again! There is, however, no postal voting form in this issue of *Animalwatch* because at the time of going to press the number of candidates for committee places does not exceed the number of vacancies. The candidate looking to stand for another three-year term is the Revd Samantha Chandler, standing for Secretary.

ASWA committee members are trustees, which means they have legal duties and responsibilities. The tasks of the committee are to manage the day-to-day running of ASWA, including the planning of ASWA services, commissioning and producing informational material, managing the budget, organising fund-raising events, and the

production of *Animalwatch*, to name but a few. You will find information about the candidate below:

Samantha Chandler: Sam has been Secretary since 1996. She has been involved in animal welfare for over 30 years, supporting many organisations such as Compassion in World Farming, Animal Aid, and the Born Free Foundation. Samantha says that working for ASWA gave her the opportunity of combining her Christian faith with her love for animals and concern for their welfare. Samantha was ordained in 2020 and ministers in a parish in Hampshire. She is married with three adult children and lives in Hampshire with a small flock of rescued sheep and an elderly terrier.



TALKING POINT

Rewilding farms

The re-wilding of farmland has gained traction in the UK in recent years, and is held up by some as a remedy for both the climate impact of farming and biodiversity loss. There are many positives to re-wilding, such as preserving vital habitats for native wildlife, the introduction of species previously driven to extinction who themselves can contribute to land management (beavers) and population control (predators). Rewilded farms may provide higher levels of welfare for livestock than traditional farming. But is it really the miracle cure that some claim? Not all farmers can afford to sacrifice parts of their land to go wild, and not all farms will be suitable for the re-introduction of wild animals. There is also the risk that promoting the rewilding of farmland may be used as an excuse not to tackle other environmental threats. How far should we go with rewilding farms? Should farmers who are willing to rewild be given greater financial support to do so? And should farmers carry all the burden – how willing are we to rewild our gardens, parks, and road verges, sacrificing tidy and pretty for the sake of wild plant and animal neighbours?

ASWA ANNUAL SERVICE

In 2024, ASWA's Annual Service was again held on Animal Welfare Sunday, 6th October. We were delighted to be the guests of Bridlington Priory in Yorkshire. The Priory is a past winner of the Animal Friendly Church Award, and we were pleased to see that this was highlighted in various places around the church. The service was a Eucharist with blessing of animals. The Priory is clearly very comfortable having animals in the congregation, as they hold an annual carol service to which people are invited to bring their dogs, called 'bark the herald'. The sermon for our annual service, which is printed in full below, was preached by the Priory's Rector, the Revd Neil Bower, and the prayers were led by *Animalwatch* editor, Jennifer Brown.

ASWA Annual Service Sermon

In my life and ministry I've had many encounters with animals.

Like the time at one Palm Sunday procession around a pit village in South Yorkshire, when the donkey on meeting me for the first time, looked me up and down and gave me a South Yorkshire donkey look, as if to say there's no way that I'm going to carry thee, even though that was never going to happen. But as we processed around the pit village I walked beside the donkey and just so that I knew who was in charge, the donkey would keep giving me a bump on the side of my hip with his head, by the end of the procession, though, we were the best of friends, but he had left his mark on me.

There was also a time when I was surrounded by newly born lambs in a farmer's barn, celebrating a lambing service. There were so many lambs around me that at times it was difficult for me to move and I also found out later that the lower parts of the surplice I was wearing had been gently nibbled.

But at one point during the lambing service, just before praying for a blessing, I decided to lean down and carefully pick up one of the lambs and hold it in my arms. As I did so the lamb started to bleat very loudly and as I held it close to my chest I could feel its heart beating very quickly, and I share with you, so was mine. But as I continued to hold the lamb close to my chest and talk calmly to it, after a few moments it stopped bleating and then nestled into my arms, and its heart and mine began to beat much slower, I could almost feel that our heart beats had begun to beat in rhythm.

Now today we are celebrating, celebrating the welfare of all God's creatures, of all God's animals, those that have wonderfully been created, in all of their magnificent shapes, sizes, colour, and beauty, from the gregarious and at times showy peacock, to the humble and mostly hidden earthworm.

God's wonderful tapestry of animals is interwoven upon earth.

From our animal companions, our dogs, cats, rabbits, budgies, that have been and continue to be such a part of our daily lives, to the wildest of animals, all are part of God's kingdom.

Here at Bridlington Priory we've always been closely aware of the welfare of animals, and the importance of them in the world and creation. They are not separate from God's kingdom.

Animals are very much a part of the golden cobweb that runs throughout the Bible stories we read and listen to.

From the dove that brings back the olive branch signifying the end of the flood to Noah to the donkey that Jesus rides on into Jerusalem, animals have played and continue to play a significant part in our collective story, the collective story of God's kingdom upon earth.

It was of course St Francis who, whilst walking with his companions, as recorded by a story of Thomas of Celano at the end of the 12th century, was said to have spotted a great number and variety of birds in a field, he didn't walk past them, he didn't ignore them, thinking they were just birds, no, he went into the field, into the midst of the birds, that did not fly away. It's said that St Francis asked them if they would stay a while and listen to the word of God which he spoke with them about and the birds, it's said, just stood around him listening. At the end Francis didn't just walk off, he then prayed for them and prayed for a blessing upon them. From this moment St Francis was even more aware of the importance of the welfare of animals in God's kingdom, and in his case, particularly birds, to God and to us.

The importance of the welfare of animals to us here at Bridlington Priory can't really be understated, it almost could be thought of as being a part of our DNA. A former Rector here, Reverend Henry Barnes Lawrence, was integral to the establishing and passing in 1869 of what's said to be the first wildlife protection laws in the world, with the passing of the seabirds preservation act.

Wildlife and its welfare then should not be viewed as being separate, or an add on, to our Christian faith, it is a part of, or should be thought of, as being part of our DNA, a DNA that we share with animals across species.

As you look at me now can you believe that I share 60% of my DNA with a chicken and even 44% of my DNA is the same as a bumble bee, but not just me, so do you.

If we take a moment to think about our relationships with animals, then the welfare of all animals should be always at the forefront of our minds rather than an afterthought.

Jesus says in our gospel reading, "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me"

Jesus goes on to show also how the welfare of his sheep are paramount, so much so that ultimately the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.

So as we celebrate the welfare of animals today, let us be reminded that animals in all of their diversity and uniqueness, in all of their beauty, if we truly believe that as people and as humanity we are made in the image of God, then ultimately all animals also and how we care for them and look after them, are a reflection of God's beauty upon earth, to cherish and to love.

As I continued to hold the lamb that I'd picked up in the barn as part of the lambing service, the farmer then said to me that the lamb's mother was just about to be released into the barn and with that I realised that the maternal care of a mother to its new born lamb was a very powerful thing and one not to be messed with, especially when there was nowhere to escape to.

But also the farmer then asked me if the following year I would like to take part in the lambing season and I said I would. He then said he had something for me in preparation and he then produced the largest pair of gloves that I'd ever seen. I was true to my word and took part in the lambing season the following year, which will live with me forever.

Let us then today give thanks to God for all animals and pray for all of their welfare and care.

Amen.

Neil Bower

Bridlington Priory

THEY ALSO SERVED

Remembering the Animals of War



Join us at the Animals War Memorial,
Park Lane, London

Sunday 9th November – 3.00pm

Speaker: Drew Tootal MRCVS - Veterinary Surgeon

Further details:

Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals

Email: secretary@angsocwelanimals.net

www.aswa.org.uk

ARE YOU AN ANIMAL FRIENDLY CHURCH?



Christians have a sacred duty to care for God's Creation

The Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals is now awarding 'Animal Friendly Church' certificates to churches which practise and promote a compassionate attitude towards God's creatures.

Applicants will also be automatically entered into our annual '**ASWA Animal Friendly Church of the Year Award**'

The Winner will receive a hamper full of ethical and useful goodies for your Church and a plaque to display on your wall.

For further details visit our website

www.aswa.org.uk

or apply in writing to: PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT

E: secretary@angsocwelanimals.net

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