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Spring 2014

Price £2 (free to members)



# animalwatch

PUTTING ANIMALS ON THE AGENDA OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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ASWA COMMITTEE  
ELECTIONS

VICTIMS OF THE  
SYSTEM

PAW A COFFEE FOR  
ASWA



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Cover image courtesy of Mateusz Stachowski

## DORIS' DIARY

Hello! My name is Doris, and I am a Border Leicester ewe with very large ears! I was rescued by ASWA secretary Sam Chandler, as I had outlived my usefulness as a breeding ewe.

Below are some great events ewe may enjoy!

**Wednesday 12 March**  
Inaugural meeting of the ASWA Suffolk Group, Stowmarket Parish Church, 7.30pm  
Contact: Peta Whiting

**Saturday 10 May**  
ASWA AGM, St Michael's Church, Chester Square, London SW1W 9HH, 11am.  
Speaker: Ian Birchall, Kent Action Against Live Exports

**Monday 12–Wednesday 14 May**  
Ecumenical Animal Welfare Retreat. Noddfa, Penmaenmawr, North Wales.  
Contact Mrs Irene Casey, irene.casey@talktalk.net for more information.

**Sunday 1 June**  
Animal Blessing Service, St Michael and All Angels, Watford, 3pm.  
Speaker: Revd Dr Martin Henig.

**Sunday 8 June**  
Animal Blessing Service, Craigiebuckler Church Hall, Aberdeen, 3pm.  
Springfield Road, Aberdeen, AB15 8AA.  
Telephone: 01224 315 649.  
Email: office@craigiebuckler.org.uk.

**Sunday 15 June**  
Animal Service, St Lawrence Church, North Hinksey, Oxfordshire, 3pm.  
Speaker: Revd Dr Martin Henig

**Sunday 29 June**  
Animal Welfare Service, All Saints Church, Snodland, Kent, 5pm.  
Easily accessible by rail to Snodland station.

**Sunday 6 July**  
Sung Eucharist, St Mary's Church, London Road, Ewell, Surrey KT17 2AY, 9.30am.  
Speaker: Revd Dr Martin Henig, followed by All Age Pets' Service at 11:00 am.

**Saturday 4 October**  
Pet Service, Thomas à Becket Church, Pagham West Sussex, 3pm.

**Sunday 5 October**  
Animal Welfare Sunday

ASWA Annual Service, St Woolo's Cathedral, Newport, Wales, 10.30am.  
Preacher: TBC  
Please note that this is NOT an animal blessing service.

Animal Blessing Service, St Michael's, Sheerwater, Woking, Surrey, 3pm.

Pet Blessing Service, Kirton Church at St Andrew's, Kirton-in-Lindsey, North Lincolnshire, 3pm.  
Further details from Revd Kathy Colwell, katherine.colwell@btinternet.com, 01652 640552 or via the church website [www.the-umc.org.uk](http://www.the-umc.org.uk).

Animal Blessing (Pets) Service, Great Malvern Priory, 3pm.  
For further details please contact the Priory Office on 01684 561020 via email [office@greatmalvern priory.org.uk](mailto:office@greatmalvern priory.org.uk) or via the website [www.greatmalvern priory.org.uk](http://www.greatmalvern priory.org.uk)

Animal Service, Raglan Group of Churches, Monmouthshire.  
Contact: 01291 690330 for further details.

Blessing of Animals, St Paul's Episcopal Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA  
Time TBA.

**Sunday 9 November**  
ASWA service of Remembrance at the Animals' War Memorial, Park Lane, London, 3pm. Led by Revd George Ochola.

for further details of events, please visit the website: [www.aswa.org.uk](http://www.aswa.org.uk)



# HELLO AND WELCOME TO ANIMALWATCH

Welcome to *Animalwatch*. In this issue, we look at some of the frustrations we, as people who care about animal welfare and animal rights, can face. We have a report on the sad case of Lloyd and Leila, and a powerful reflection on Psalm 23 that tackles head-on the frustration we all often feel at the slow, or sometimes apparently non-existent, progress towards a cruelty-free world. On a more upbeat note, we also have a report on the Annual Service that took place at Truro Cathedral in October, and profiles of those standing for election to the ASWA committee.

Don't forget that our next issue will include our Young Members' Page. If you know of any young people interested in animal welfare, do encourage them to submit stories, poems, artwork or reports of animal welfare activities in which they are involved.

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 the AGM taking place in May. We hope to see you there.

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](mailto:animalwatch@jenbrown.org.uk). Please note that, owing to space restrictions, it may not be possible to print all contributions, and that letters and other contributions may be edited for length.

**Jennifer Brown, Editor**

The deadline for the Spring magazine is **Monday 12th May 2014**.

## A Warm Welcome to our new members. We look forward to hearing from you.

Janet Benfield - Coggeshall, Essex  
Revd Chris Brice - Kentish town, London  
Mrs Mary Buckland - Mold, Flintshire  
Gary Burnett - Billbrook Codsall, West Midlands  
Dionne Carey - Truro, Cornwall  
Kathryn Mary Darby - Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincolnshire  
Joyce Day - Oxford  
Pauline Grant - Uckfield, East Sussex  
Mrs Christine Hamer - Irby, Wirral Merseyside  
Aaron Henzley - Bracknell, Berkshire  
Patricia Holmes - Tamatea, Napier, New Zealand  
Penelope Lethbridge - Exeter, Devon

Jenny McKay - Great Budworth, Cheshire  
Val Osborne - Wolverhampton  
Mrs Margaret Pinder - Burntwood, Staffordshire  
Mary Richards - East Ham, London  
Ros Smith - Yeadon, Leeds, West Yorkshire  
Mr Roger Taylor - Bridgnorth, Shropshire  
Hilary Vivian - Holsworthy, Devon  
Sandy White - Walsden, Todmorden, Lancashire  
Rob Woodward - St Albans, Hertfordshire  
Charles Yates - Bromley, Kent

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

## EMAIL ADDRESSES PLEASE!

ASWA is updating its membership records to include email addresses. This will keep the ASWA membership better informed of our activities and expand our influence to help animals. Just put "ASWA email address (and your name)" in the subject line and send it to:

**[aswamembership@btinternet.com](mailto:aswamembership@btinternet.com)**

Thank you to all those who have already done this in response to the appeal in previous issues.

## ASWA NEWS

### Meat-free Lent

Lent is nearly upon us, and ASWA is once again supporting the 'give up meat for Lent' campaign. Recent articles by Isabel Oakeshot and Philip Lymbery in the *Sunday Times* and *Daily Mail* respectively, based on their book, *Farmageddon\**, highlight the impact of the world's increasing demand for meat, especially cheap meat. They describe industrial farm units creating air pollution greater than that found in a major city, animals subjected to cruel practices and unnatural conditions, obliteration of wildlife, and the diverting of food resources to provide animal feed, leaving the world's poorest populations without affordable and reliable food sources. Meat consumption has both ethical and spiritual dimensions, especially when industrial-scale farming is involved. Consequently, fasting by abstaining from meat during Lent is both a spiritual discipline and a witness to our concern for our fellow creatures, and our fellow human beings who also suffer as a result of these intensive farming practices. It also provides an opportunity to think again about our own habits, and the impact that we have on others.

If you had your first meat-free Lent last year, or are having a meat-free Lent this year, please let us know about your experience.

\* A review of *Farmageddon* can be read on the ASWA web site.

# GOOD NEWS

## Archbishop speaks up for animals

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, known throughout the world for his campaigning against apartheid in South Africa and his work to bring reconciliation between communities following the ending of the apartheid system, has now spoken up for animals. In his introduction to the new book, *The global guide to animal protection*, he says, "I have seen first-hand how injustice gets overlooked when the victims are powerless or vulnerable, when they have no one to speak up for them and no means of representing themselves to a higher authority. Animals are in precisely that position. Unless we are mindful of their interests and speak out loudly on their behalf, abuse and cruelty goes unchallenged. Churches should lead the way by making clear that all cruelty – to other animals as well as human beings – is an affront to civilized living and a sin before God." Having such a prominent and well-respected leader in the Church speaking up for animals in this way is surely good news, as it will encourage others to consider animal welfare as urgent Christian issue.

## NEWS & NOTICES

**Don't forget, you can follow ASWA on Twitter – [aswanews](#)**



You can also keep up with what's new via our website – [www.aswa.org.uk](#). Check the website for the latest resources for youth & children.

### ASWA AGM

**Saturday 10th May 2014, 11am**

The AGM will be held at St Michael's, Chester Square, London SW1. Please do join us if you can. Our speaker this year will be Ian Birchall from Kent Action Against Live Exports.

### Animal Welfare Sunday Sunday 5th October 2014

Animal Welfare Sunday resources will be available via the web site later this year.

### ASWA Annual Service Sunday 5th October 2014, 10.30am

ASWA's annual service this year will take place at St Woolo's Cathedral, Newport, Wales.

### ASWA Local groups

Don't forget that there are ASWA local groups in different areas. The Oxford group meets quarterly in different locations around the Oxford diocese. The contact for the group is Revd Martin Henig ([martin.henig@arch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:martin.henig@arch.ox.ac.uk)). The Surrey/South London group meets monthly and alternates between a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday evening. The contact for this group is Janice Hoyle (01372-842884).

The Watford group meets monthly. Members come from as far as Tring, Milton Keynes and Chesham to this group. The contact for this group is Sarah Dunning (01923-467502). In addition, there is an Ecumenical group, the Three Counties Animal Welfare Prayer Group, who meet for a service at Gloucester Cathedral at 12.15 on the first Saturday of each month. The contact for the ecumenical group is the Revd Helen Hall (01633-677775 or [helen.hall123@ntlworld.com](mailto:helen.hall123@ntlworld.com)).

A new local group is starting up in March. The Suffolk group will have its first meeting on Wednesday 12 March, 7.30pm at Stowmarket Parish Church. The contact for this group is Peta Whiting.

ASWA is always keen to support the formation of new groups. If you are interested in starting a group in your area, please contact the Secretary.

## ASWA Remembrance Sunday Service

On Sunday 10th November, ASWA held its third Remembrance Service for Animals at the Animals' War Memorial in Park Lane, London.

Yet again, we had a marked increase in numbers this year, which was lovely, and we were also delighted that Pen Farthing from Nowzad Dogs was able to join us again and give a short talk about his work.

This is now a firm date in the ASWA diary, so please come along and support us this year when we meet again on Sunday 9th November at 3.00pm. We realise that there is another similar service that takes place in the morning, but as many of our members are clergy or church members who like to attend their own churches in the morning, we feel that by holding a service in the afternoon it enables our supporters to honour both humans and animals who served and continue to serve. We always lay a special ASWA wreath at the memorial but please feel free to bring your own wreaths or flowers if you so wish.

### Samantha Chandler



# ASWA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

It is that time again – time to elect members of ASWA’s committee. There is, however, no postal voting form inside this issue of *Animalwatch*. This is because at the time of going to press, there were only three candidates for four vacancies. The three candidates are Rita Donovan, Janet Murphy and Philip Petchey. In addition, Helen Hall is the sole candidate for the position of chairman.

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 candidates below.

## Rita Donovan

Rita has been concerned about animal welfare from as far back as she can remember. She has served on the ASWA



committee for a number of years and is a volunteer for a cat rescue and rehoming charity, both at the shelter and fundraising shop and as a pre-homing visitor, and is a school speaker for Animal Aid and occasionally for Compassion in World Farming. She shares her home with 4 rescued cats.

## Janet Murphy

Janet has been a Christian and a member of ASWA for over fifteen years. She believes that the animal kingdom is an important part of God’s creation. Janet has served on the ASWA committee since 2008, and has found it to be a great privilege. During her time on the committee, Janet has been finding creative ways actively to promote ASWA. ‘Paw a Coffee for ASWA’ and other events, including sponsored walks in London and a Musical soirée have helped raise much needed funds and encouraged new members. In addition to ASWA, Janet is a member of many animal welfare Charities and has been speaking to her local Christian community on the recent badger cull situation. She has been the proud owner of many ex-battery hens as part of a re-homing scheme from the British Hen Welfare Trust. She is also a Garden History tutor and garden designer by profession and works for the Charity, Mind.



## Philip Petchey

Philip is a barrister specialising in local government, planning and ecclesiastical law. He is Chancellor of the Diocese



of Southwark and a member of the congregation at St Mary’s, Woodford, Essex. His legal skills are of great value to the ASWA committee.

## Helen Hall for the position of Chairman

Helen works as a parish priest in Newport, South Wales. She also runs an ecumenical animal welfare prayer group which meets at Gloucester Cathedral.



Helen is a solicitor by background and is a member of the Association of Lawyers for Animal Welfare. She has a special interest in the emotional and cognitive capacity of animals and believes that society often underestimates animals in this regard and that this needs to be appropriately challenged. For the past year, Helen has been acting as interim chair of ASWA.

Any ASWA member who is interested in standing for election to the ASWA committee next year (2015) should contact the Secretary by the end of December 2014. Candidates must be willing to attend three committee meetings a year which are held in London.

## 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!

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### From Linda Bodicoat

Animal Welfare Prayer Cards, hymn leaflets and price list available directly from Linda J Bodicoat, Rose Cottage, 51, Highfield Street, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire, LE9 7HS Or by email – linjbrosecottage@aol.com. Please use “ASWA/Prayer Cards” as a subject heading if using email.

Animal Welfare Prayer Cards & Hymn Leaflets are also available from the ASWA website.

## OBITUARIES

### Mrs Mabel Cleaver

of Walberton, West Sussex, a long-standing supporter of ASWA.

### Mr Tony Moore

member of FAACE and prominent campaigner to end bull fighting and other animal cruelty in Spain and elsewhere. Tony was known to many in ASWA, having once been a speaker at the ASWA AGM. He will be remembered for the important work that he did for animals.

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

## AUSTRALIA:



Two Nobel Laureates in a fortnight!  
That's got to be good!

### Powerful voices speak out

All our usual issues continue – factory farming and live exports to name but two. However, this has been a good week for animals, as two very influential and famous individuals have spoken on their behalf. J.M. Coetzee, Nobel Laureate in Literature and Patron of Voiceless, the animal protection institute here in Australia, had an excellent piece in our major national newspaper, *The Australian*, on 9th January, calling for an end to live exports. He says that government and industry should dismantle this appallingly cruel trade as quickly as possible. To quote him, “If we must subsidise graziers as they are weaned from this disgrace, so be it.”

And as if that isn't enough, as many readers will already know, the greatly loved Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, 1984 winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace, has also spoken out for animals. As he says, he has seen oppression all his life, and fought against it, and he believes that animals, oppressed and utterly voiceless as they are, need us to fight for them too.

In my own diocese of Newcastle, New South Wales, I can report that last October, St Francis' Day was celebrated with a lovely service in our Cathedral. Many animals, including dogs, cats, fish, and donkeys were brought along. Afterwards the Dean, the Very Revd Stephen Williams, observed what a special moment it was for each owner as their animal was blessed. Such special love we share with our animals.



And finally, it is always encouraging to hear from others who share in our concerns. I would love to hear from any ASWA members living in Australia. Please feel free to contact me at the email address below.

**Olga Parkes**

ocp@idl.com.au

## SOUTH AFRICA:



### World-wide cooperation in Animal Welfare

The Bear Group S.A. Trust is a charity with an international reach. It was formed in 1997 following a television broadcast of bear-baiting in northern Pakistan. Horrified by this barbaric sport, South Africans in their hundreds wrote letters to the television station, and a group of those appalled by what they had seen got together to form the Bear Group S.A. In addition to continuing to work to rescue bears subjected to bear-baiting in Pakistan, the Trust also contributes funds to Animals Asia to support their work in rescuing bears kept in bile farms. The trust also contributes to the World Society for the Protection of Animals to support their work to rescue bears that have been used in bear dancing acts in northern India, and the International Fund for Animal Welfare for the work of Professor Pathitnovin in Russia, rescuing orphaned wild bear cubs.

**Anne Hemmings**

## VICTIMS OF THE SYSTEM

Many readers will have heard of the plight of Lloyd and Leila. Lloyd and Leila were two cows who were kept at Stepney City Farm and were a visitor attraction. As they grew to maturity, however, there wasn't room for them. It seems likely that that they should never have been brought to the farm in the first place, although since their arrival it has lost land to Crossrail. On the basis that they might subsequently have to be moved, they should have had “passports”.

The City Farm, which is now under different management from the time that the cows arrived, tried to find ways to keep them at the farm, but their veterinary advice was that

they should be moved. The Hillside Animal Sanctuary was happy to take them. In law they couldn't be given passports but the Minister for Agriculture could make an exception to the requirement for a passport for the journey to Hillside. He was urged to do so on the basis that there was no way in which the cows would be able to enter the food chain, the protection of which is the reason for passports. He declined to do so. Unable to be moved from City Farm to Hillside, Lloyd and Leila were “culled”.

This is a sad story. Many people, including ASWA members, had written to both the City Farm and the Minister and will be shocked that there wasn't a happy ending. The City Farm pointed to its advice; the Minister said that he hoped that Lloyd and Leila would continue to be kept at the City Farm (to which

there was no legal objection). There are practical lessons to be learned, of course, and it is to be hoped that they will be learned. It is not clear to me why the Minister felt unable to make an exception and issue the passport. But Lloyd and Leila matter in themselves. This is what all those people who wrote about their case were saying and the story should serve to emphasise this. Whatever view you take about the keeping of cattle to provide meat and milk, they require our respect. No-one should think that it is ok to treat two cows as pets (in effect) for more than five years and then cause them to be killed in circumstances such as these. Neither Stepney City Farm nor the Minister was saying this, of course, but the animals ended up being killed just the same.

**Philip Petchey**

# ANIMAL WELFARE SERVICES

## ASWA's Annual Service



In October 2013, on Animal Welfare Sunday, the ASWA team were invited to Truro Cathedral to share our message. We had never visited the West Country before, and it was a great opportunity to meet a whole new bunch of people and talk to them about animal welfare.

Truro Cathedral wanted to keep the service as their Harvest Festival but allowed us to provide the speaker for the sermon and we had some input on readings. We also had a stand displaying our literature. Our very own Revd Hugh Broadbent preached (the full version of his sermon can be found on our website under 'Sermons', or a printed copy can be obtained from the secretary).

Our new Chair, Revd Helen Hall took the opportunity while the service was on to spend some time with the children and youth and so ensure that they were not left out of our message.

As we were not able to have the usual amount of input into the service as we have been used to in the past, we also organised an evening reception with drinks and vegetarian food in the cathedral Chapter House on the Saturday evening before the service. We invited local Church representatives of all denominations, local animal welfare groups and members of the public, as well as the Mayor, Councillor John Tamblyn, and the MP for Truro, Sarah Newton. The evening was a great success and we will definitely consider doing a similar event again. It enabled us to talk to fellow animal welfare folk about the specific mission of ASWA and also enabled us to talk about animal welfare to those who might not have given it much thought before.



We would like to thank Canon Perran Gay for his help with our visit to Truro and especially Marilyn and her team,

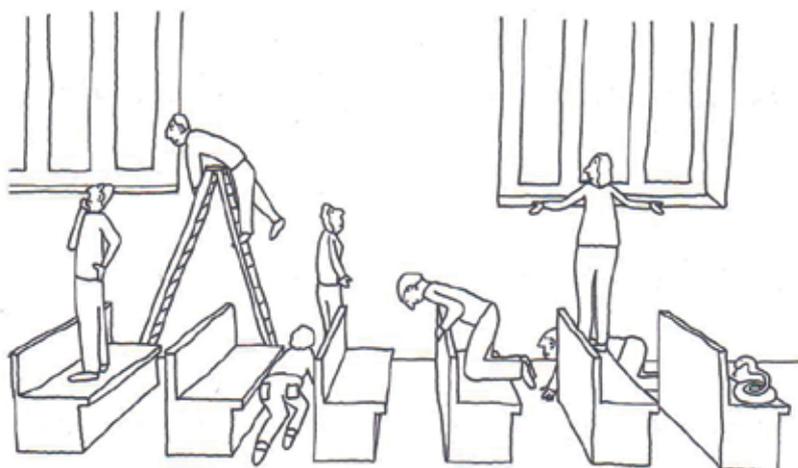
who organised the evening event. It always helps when visiting a new area for an ASWA service to have an ASWA member to help with arrangements and we would like to thank Claire Carter for all the contacts she provided us with.

**Samantha Chandler**

## All Saints' Church, All Hallows, Mealsgate, Cumbria

We had a lovely service on Animal Welfare Sunday, and are glad this has become an annual event for us. This year one of our Lay Ministers, Mrs Pat Hirst, led us in worship and she talked about endangered species. She acknowledged the many species around the world that are in trouble, but concentrated on our own endangered creatures, red squirrels, many farmland birds, etc. We sang our usual hymns that have been set aside for this special service and our collection was in aid of ASWA, which was just brilliant. The service also came in the middle of our flower festival. The exhibits featured the rural life of our parish past and present, and our young people created a lovely exhibit on animal welfare that included an ASWA poster as part of their display. This was great because it brought ASWA to the attention of the many visitors.

**Helen Wallage**



Other people's Pet Services look like such a good idea, don't they? But yours will be the one where the snake escapes.

by Jeremy Fletcher, illustration by Dave Walker, from Rules for Reverends, published by BRF [www.brfonline.org.uk](http://www.brfonline.org.uk), 2013, used by permission

## ASWA MERCHANDISE

**A variety of items are available from the ASWA web site**

**Egg Cards:** perfect for Easter – egg shaped cards with a prayer printed on one side. £0.35 each (minimum purchase 10).

**PAWS for Prayer cards:** paw shaped cards with a prayer for companion animals printed on one side. £0.35 each (minimum purchase 10)

**ASWA postcards:** 2 designs sold together in a pack of 6. £4 per pack.

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

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Dear Editor

It was reported in *The Independent* 17th September 2013 "Fracking sparks food safety concern as expert warns of serious risk to livestock." Professor Robert Oswald, an expert on molecular medicine at Cornell University, said his findings of deaths and deformities in American livestock are so alarming that Britain should halt the practice 'until its impact is assessed.' Fracking for gas and oil in the British countryside poses such a significant risk to livestock that a moratorium should be imposed on the industry until its impact on food safety can be assessed, a leading researcher has warned. Prof Robert Oswald, co-author of the first study into links between hydraulic fracturing and sickness in farm animals, said his findings of deaths and deformities in US livestock are so alarming that Britain should halt growth of the practice while further research is conducted. The warning comes as planners prepare to consider applications to expand exploratory drilling operations around Sussex, a prime dairy farming area. Prof Oswald compiled 24 incidents across six US states where livestock on farms adjacent to drilling sites died or suffered illness, including reproductive and neurological problems potentially following exposure to fracking chemicals. While proponents of fracking have pointed to its possible advantages, including making Britain less reliant on gas imports, opponents have highlighted incidents of pollution affecting groundwater in America. Among the incidents investigated by Prof. Oswald and a colleague was a leak in Louisiana of waste water from fracking – the process to force gas from rock by blasting it with a chemical fluid – which allegedly left 17 cows dead from respiratory failure. In Pennsylvania, a herd suffered a

50% stillbirth rate after cows grazed in a field contaminated with chemicals spilling from a waste pit. Prof. Oswald told *The Ecologist*: "[British] farmers living in intensively drilled areas should be very concerned about potential exposures of their crops and herds to shale-gas contaminants in the water, air and soil." The scientist said that all fracking should be halted in Britain until a testing programme is put in place to assess the impact on farmland, livestock and food supplies of the chemical cocktail used to force gas and oil from shale deposits. Campaigners have said an array of chemicals, including carcinogens (cancer-causers), is deployed during fracking. Unlike in US, British operators must release details of the chemicals they use. Prof. Oswald said: "Farmers have a right to know what their families and their herds are being exposed to. The components of fracturing fluids and drilling muds to be used in a well near a farm should be reported. We are reporting short-term health changes but no one knows what the long-term health changes may be, especially those caused by low doses of chemicals." The debate on fracking in Britain has yet to consider any potential impact on food production, with protesters focusing on environmental pollution and possible damage to property.

**A. Wills, Ruislip, Middlesex**

## Dear Editor

Thank you for your article on endangered species (*Animalwatch*, Autumn 2013). Your words, "The demand for more and cheaper sources of oil and gas and other resources mean that many wild areas are at risk of being exploited for their fossil fuel resources," speak so eloquently of the dreadful price at which these

resources are being bought. All it would take would be one overturned fracking waste-water lorry spilling its contents into the Ribble, and its tidal estuary and the Sight of Special Scientific Interest of the Moss would also be contaminated for good.

**Sandra Bigley,  
St Annes-on-the-Sea, Fylde**

## Dear Editor

I found this quote by the 19th century Native American Chief Seattle in a woman's magazine some time ago and wish to share it with your readers.

"If all the animals were gone, man would die of a great loneliness of spirit. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it."

**Kathleen Stephenson,  
Huddersfield**

## Dear Editor

I am a 66-year old Christian animal rights activist who lost my freedom for those who cannot speak for themselves. I was one of the Oxford Two. I think that if Jesus were here now, he would be disgusted at what is done to animals today. I have bad health, but would not want an animal to be put through medical research for my benefit. It is not right to make animals suffer. I wish more people would at least stop and think about what happens in the labs. I hope that one day it will stop and all animals will live in peace and have love.

**Robert Lewis, Ilkeston, Derbyshire**

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## TALKING POINT

How can we keep the lights on? Over the past few months, energy and energy sources have been much in the news, in the UK and elsewhere. In the USA, the proliferation of fracking (extracting natural gas from shale by forcing the rocks apart using a mixture of water and chemicals injected under high pressure) has led to a drop in energy prices that has benefited both consumers and businesses. But this is not without controversy. There have been many claims of contamination of ground water as a result of fracking, and the drilling of wells can disrupt vital habitats and damage areas of natural beauty. There is also the question of continued reliance on fossil fuels while neglecting the (admittedly more expensive) development of renewable, low-carbon energy generation. As the UK and other nations explore the possibility of fracking to meet their own energy needs we must ask the question, "how far can we go to keep the lights on?"

# A REFLECTION ON PSALM 23 FOR CHRISTIANS EXHAUSTED BY THE FIGHT FOR ANIMAL WELFARE.

**<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.**

**<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,**

**<sup>3</sup>he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**

Often my soul badly needs restoring. I suspect that emotional exhaustion is an inevitable part of the struggle for animal welfare – if we are not often shattered and distressed and profoundly frustrated in our fight then we are just not paying attention. God knows we need the rest and the restoration that it brings so we can't afford to neglect our green pastures if we are in for the 'long haul'. Everyone is different, so I can't say what works for you, but we all need to locate this 'soul space' and visit it regularly in order to refresh our souls. If we don't have those green pastures in our lives, then we need to pursue them before we engage in the fight or we will burn out.

So, first the restored soul and then the action. What does God want you to do? Where is your battle field? Note that it is God who leads us there – he is the orchestrator of our lives and the commander for the fight. Our job is to allow ourselves to be led by him. We might feel alone or insignificant but we are not – we are part of his battle plan.

**<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

And where is darker and more death like than some of the evil places where animals are abused with little or no hope of reprieve? We can fill in an example here for ourselves from the constant accounts of animal mistreatment we hear about on a daily basis. One group walking through countless dark valleys is the Animals' Angels, founded by German Christians. They follow long distance animal transports across borders, into the slaughter houses, to do what they can to shine a light into the darkness of the lives of these animals waiting for their deaths.

It is real evil we are surrounded with – make no mistake. We are entitled to be afraid of some of the people and overwhelming indifference we are up

against. I like the mental picture this verse conjures up – God with a big stick (rod) and a long shepherd's crook (staff) steering us and keeping us safe. We don't know what the final outcome of all our struggles will be and too often our battles do not appear to end in victory. However, although we might look and feel like mice we have a lion protecting us (or a shepherd with a big stick to be more literal!).

**<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**

This is a really attractive picture. So when will it happen? In this life would be amazing, but probably not. Our Christian hope is a real one and we are fortunate to be able to draw on our belief in a God of justice who will judge those responsible for the evils in this world. This knowledge provides us with extra strength compared with the non-believers who struggle with us for animal welfare.

Personally I find it really hard to deal with the indifference and ignorance of most Christians when it comes to animal suffering and animal needs given the clear teaching in the Bible about care for our Creator's earth. I rather like this quotation from Gandhi:

'First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.'

As a Christian called by God to struggle for animal welfare, I've felt ignored, laughed at, argued with but never had the experience of winning so far when it comes to any main-stream church or Christian movement. Excuse me if I sound a little bitter, but I am guessing that the church as we know it is not going to be first in line in fighting for a better attitude to animals in our society. However, things are slowly changing for the better and our message is getting out there and, one day, I hope the church will see this too and, you never know, maybe our cup will be overflowing in our lifetime – it is all we can work for.

**<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**

I think that this is the most powerful part of this powerful psalm, and it is easy to miss as rather a lot is lost in translation,

particularly the translation of two words:

Love is 'hesed' in the original Hebrew text. This is no ordinary love – it is maybe better translated 'covenant love'. It is the word used to describe the covenant relationship between God and people. This is a legal agreement binding on both God and people. God has made a covenant with me, through Jesus, which is unbreakable and for ever. God cannot walk away from me and I cannot walk away from him, which brings me to the next astonishing word: follow. The word in Hebrew means to pursue or chase someone as hard as you can in order to catch them. The creator God of the whole universe is chasing after me.

To paraphrase: "Because of God's absolute commitment to me he will chase after me to catch me in order to be good to me all the days of my life"

However hard I find the issues, however much I struggle with society and the church to put animals on the agenda, God is right in front leading us and right behind us, chasing after us even when, especially when, we want to walk away from him.

Sometimes I would really like to 'jack it all in' – to walk away from the church and the widespread indifference to the welfare of the animal world. Concern and work for animal rights is tough enough without having to deal with attitudes of rather large sections of the church not to mention the question of why a loving creator God is allowing even half, even a tenth of all the animal suffering we see at the hands of people. But I can't and this verse explains why – the hound of heaven won't let me.

We have a hope – however frustrating the fight and hopeless our struggles, this life and this suffering is not the end – not ever. There will be justice and victory and that table full of vegan goodies in front of those who opposed us and didn't listen. Hence there is no space and no need for despair however desperate the struggle for consideration for animals both in the church and in the world.

**Jill Winslow**

# BOOK REVIEWS

## LET MY PEOPLE GO

**Claiming the Bible for the Animals**  
By Revd Christa Blanke



Published by  
**Animals'**

**Angels Press**

**ISBN 978-3-9814946-6-2**

**117pp Paperback**

**Price £4.00 from ASWA**

From the outset, Christa Blanke makes it plain that this is not a theological survey of what the Bible says about animals and their rights (there are other books on this, for example Andrew Linzey and Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *After Noah. Animals and the liberation of theology*, 1997), but rather, it is a forthright attempt to show how the implications of justice issues in the Bible, notably in the story of the Exodus and in the words of Jesus recorded in the Gospels, might be extended as a freedom manifesto to embrace all creation. As such, it is a timely echo of Archbishop Desmond Tutu's recent endorsement for the *Global guide to animal protection*, in which he states that, 'We do not honour God by abusing other sentient creatures'. If I have any criticism of Blanke's book, it is that the author might have added that much of the specific abuse of animals that she details is in fact strictly contrary to several compassionate provisions detailed in Biblical texts, notably Exodus and Deuteronomy. These enjoin humane treatment of domestic animals by ensuring they are adequately fed and watered and demand that the owner let them enjoy a Sabbath rest.

Christa Blanke's focus is the work of *Animals' Angels* which exposes the gross cruelties which human beings, motivated by greed, are still inflicting on countless animals sold for slaughter both in the marketplace and when they are then transported over long distances to a terrible fate in often unsupervised slaughterhouses. They try to provide a loving presence alongside the animals on their final journey and where possible to

ameliorate their lot, and this little book sets what is happening now against Biblical texts which proclaim God's love and express a yearning for the freedom of creation. Each section ends with a prayerful, poetic reflection. While the writing is gentle, compassionate and often very lyrical, I found this quite a difficult and, indeed, tearful read because of the appalling suffering witnessed on a daily basis by Christa and her fellow workers.

Like some of the psalms, the book is shot through with a pious questioning of God, rooted in prayer. Why is such terrible large-scale suffering allowed to happen? This is a question which of course exercises all of us, often in relation to abuses against human beings, such as the Nazi Holocaust. Like the author, I think one simply has to trust in the loving purposes of God, and like the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn answer the question 'where was God?' with another question: 'where was Man[kind]?' Christa Blanke fearlessly tackles the evil our species does while persisting in the faith that God loves all his creatures and, as she says, 'He himself is with them, in slavery and during the mass killing.' Although 'humans can kill and eat non-human animals... they will never succeed in killing God's love for His children.'

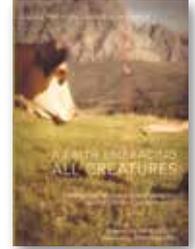
The extended message of what should be seen as a powerful manifesto for animals is that Christians should go much further than simply ensuring half-adequate welfare standards for them on the way to slaughter. Killing and eating animals is ultimately an offense against the love enjoined on us by Christ, an offense against the freedom which all creation is destined to share. Moreover it is one aspect of the way in which we are destroying the earth and its delicate ecosystems, though rather more might have been made of the fact that the clearance of tracts of forest in order to facilitate meat-production is one of the major factors in environmental degradation and species extinction. The Anglican church, indeed the church as a whole, has been silent for far too long in condemning the callous way in which our fellow creatures are reared in industrial squalor and slaughtered as a commodity in their millions. I am strongly recommending this book

to my congregation for Lent reading this year, for its stark exposure of suffering in this world, for its helpful meditations and prayers, and finally for its Easter vision of a brighter future for us humans together with the other animals in the light of Christ.

**Martin Henig**

## A FAITH EMBRACING ALL CREATURES

By Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker (editors)



Cascade Press

**ISBN 978-1-61097-701-2**

**194pp Paperback**

**Price £15**

If you are a Christian and frequently find yourself being challenged by other Christians to defend your stance on animal welfare (and/or being a vegetarian), then this book is for you. It is a collection of essays designed to answer the questions that are often asked of Christians who speak up for animal welfare or choose a vegetarian/vegan diet. These cover a range of topics, from the concept of dominion, to the practice of animal sacrifice in the Old Testament, to questions of whether or not Jesus ate meat, and questions about the relative value of humans and animals.

For those who often encounter these types of questions, the essays titled *Didn't Jesus eat lamb? and Didn't Jesus eat fish?* together with the essay by Michelle Lloyd-Page titled *Doesn't Romans say that vegetarians have "weak faith"?* will prove very helpful. For me, however, the most powerful essay was on the concept of Christian hospitality, written by Laura Hobgood-Oster. Exploring both scripture and church tradition, this essay shows that Christians have an obligation to offer a radical hospitality, and that this extends not only to our fellow humans, but to all creatures, through the preservation of habitat, care for domestic and wild animals and the rejection of (at least) factory-farmed meat. Although it's not stated explicitly, Hobgood-Oster's essay seems to be interpreting the concept of human dominion in Genesis as that of host on earth, and it is from

this God-given hosting role that the requirement to extend hospitality to all creatures comes.

Far more difficult to read is the essay on factory farming. And yet it is important to have our eyes opened to the cruel practices that go on in factory farms, and the scale on which this cruelty is practiced. If more Christians could be persuaded to face the facts of where their food comes from, the Church as a whole might begin to ask the question posed by Carol J Adams in her essay on dominion: "What kind of God do we as God's representatives on earth make known through our [mis]treatment and killing of animals?"

Each of the essays in this book is well-written in language suitable for the average layman, and each would make an excellent basis for a Bible study or group discussion. Together, they present a very coherent argument for a Christian imperative to promote animal welfare.

**Jennifer Brown**

## POETS' CORNER

Following some very enthusiastic feedback from the inclusion of Poet's Corner in the previous issue, we have decided to include it in this issue, as well. We hope that readers will enjoy this original poem by Lynne Chitty, which took third prize in the Jack Clemo poetry competition.

### Morning Eucharist

A blackbird  
A robin at a fat ball,  
Another looking on,  
wondering whether to squabble  
or wait  
He waits!  
Sparrows on the ground  
Gleaning rich pickings  
Feasting on crumbs from under the  
table which  
previous messy eaters have  
flung out.  
Water trapped beneath the ice in an  
old bowl,  
waiting to be released.  
Plenty of early morning drinkers  
But no bathers  
Not yet!

Such is the congregation on this raw  
March morning  
Swelled by families of tits  
Great and blue.  
That zip in  
and out.

And as I pray  
'Thy kingdom come ...  
on earth as it is in heaven.'  
Just for a moment,  
I think it already has.

**Lynne Chitty**

## NEWS FROM PAW A COFFEE FOR ASWA 2013

In November 2013 Broadway Baptist Church in Buckinghamshire held two events to celebrate "Paw A Coffee for ASWA." During our Sunday service on the 6th November I spoke a little about the work of ASWA, focusing on the Christian animal advocates of the past. As a Church we also highlighted the work of the RSPCA our 'Everyday Heroes' by holding a coffee morning on a Saturday in our Church hall. We sold home-made cakes and gifts, raising funds and awareness for ASWA and the RSPCA.

The RSPCA was founded by a Christian, the Revd Arthur Broome. In 1824 he became the secretary of the new society, amongst whose founding committee were two other clergy: William Wilberforce, the chairman Fowell Buxton MP, and Richard Martin. Arthur Broome was the vicar of St Leonard, located near the horrors of Smithfield Market, where the society first concentrated its activities. He employed, at his own expense, a man to gather evidence of abuse and in the first year the society brought nearly 150

prosecutions. Money was always a problem and in 1826 Broome was imprisoned for the society's debts, but was released by the efforts of Richard Martin, himself in financial trouble. Broome had given up his living to concentrate on his SPCA work, and must have lived on his assets and savings or gifts from friends. In 1828 he was forced to take a job, and was thanked by an acerbic comment in a SPCA resolution "(regretted) he should find it inconvenient to attend to the duties of the office," and he was replaced as secretary. He remained on the committee until death in 1883.

It is not difficult to see the parallel between this self-sacrificial individual, treated badly by his friends, and the life of his Lord 1800 years before.

Information about the RSPCA from *Animal Advocates* ©ASWA.

Make a Difference in 2014, Paw A Coffee For ASWA (for invitations or information contact Janet Murphy – tel: 07793748634 or email [janjj1@ntlworld.com](mailto:janjj1@ntlworld.com)).



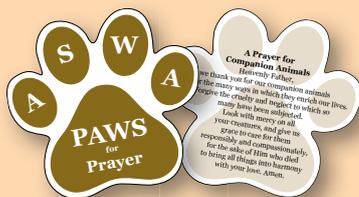
### ASWA Donation Envelopes

If you are planning an ASWA animal service, don't forget there are ASWA Donation Envelopes for you to give out at those services.

For more information please contact:  
**Tel/Fax:** 01252 843093  
**Email:** [AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com](mailto:AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com)

# A selection of ASWA merchandise

## PAWS for Prayer card



Originally produced for the service at Chelmsford Cathedral, these little cards feature a prayer for Companion Animals printed on one side.

Price: £0.35 each  
(minimum quantity 10)

## Egg Cards



Great for handing to people in your Church or leaving out in your Church at Easter time!

Price: £0.35 each  
(minimum quantity 10)

## Pack of Mixed ASWA Postcards

2 designs)

Six postcards in a pack with envelopes

Price: £4.00 per pack



## ASWA Cotton Bags

Price: £4.00 each

**(All these prices are inclusive of postage)**

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