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Autumn 2017

Price £2 (free to members)



animalwatch

PUTTING ANIMALS ON THE AGENDA OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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A RESOURCE FOR MISSION?

ST FRANCIS AND ANIMAL
BLESSING SERVICES

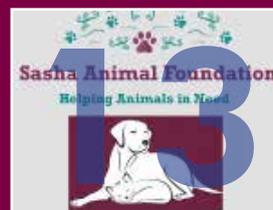
ANNOUNCING THE JOHN
AUSTIN BAKER CREATIVE
WRITING CONTEST

FREE INSIDE: PURPLE POPPY



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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!

Sunday 1 October
Pet Service, Great Malvern Priory, 3pm.

Sunday 8 October
Animal Welfare Sunday

ASWA Annual Service, St Peter's Church, Nottingham, 10.45am. The preacher will be the Revd Jennifer Brown, Science Missioner in the Churn Benefice, Oxford Diocese, ASWA committee member and editor of *Animalwatch*.

Saturday 14 October
Animal Blessing and Thanksgiving Service for Pets, St Martin's Church, Kensal Rise, London, 2pm.

Saturday 21 October
Animal Blessing Service, St Anne's Church, Eastville, St Leonard's Rd, Bristol, BS5 6JN, 3pm.

Sunday 12 November
ASWA Remembrance Service at the Animals' War Memorial, Park Lane, London, 3pm.

Sunday 3 December
Animal Aid Christmas Fayre, Kensington Town Hall, London, W8 7NX, 10am to 5pm.

For further details of events, please visit the website: www.aswa.org.uk



HELLO AND WELCOME TO ANIMALWATCH

Welcome to *Animalwatch*. In this season of creationtide, harvest and Animal Welfare Sunday, the focus in this issue is on animals and worship. We also report on this year's winner of the Prisons Wildlife Award. You will also find in this issue a free gift – a purple poppy from the Sasha Animal Foundation. The purple poppy commemorates the lives of animals who have served in war.

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 annual service in October. 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. 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 **22nd January 2017**.

ASWA MERCHANDISE

ASWA 2017 Christmas card

Once again, this year's beautiful Christmas card has been designed exclusively for ASWA by Thea Olrog. Cards cost £5.50 per pack of 6 (including postage). Made from good-quality stiff card with high-quality envelopes, each card is printed with a Bible verse and has ASWA's details on the back. Sending an ASWA Christmas card is a great way to help raise the profile of ASWA and the work that we do. Cards are now available for purchase on-line or from the ASWA Secretary.



Also 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. £0.35 each (minimum purchase 10)

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

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.

Our Wild World, an ASWA resource for children is now available to purchase from the ASWA web site for just £3. This sticker book is a fun way to help children learn about the creatures that populate our world and God's love and care for them.

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.

Julie Betterton-Trew, Hayling Island, Hampshire

Kate Billingham, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire

Rebecca Butt, Coggeshall, Essex
Laura Fenner, Onslow Village, Guildford

M Godden, Dorchester, Dorset

Adam Kelk, Boston Lincolnshire

Simon Kittle, Leeds, W. Yorkshire

Andy Wilkes, Selsey, West Sussex

Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, Upland, California, USA

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.

GOOD NEWS

CCTV to be installed in all abattoirs in England

The British government has announced that the installation of CCTV in abattoirs in England is to be made compulsory. This is good news as it will allow monitoring of the treatment of animals awaiting slaughter as well as slaughter practices. Abattoirs that are found to be in violation of animal welfare standards can be fined or lose their licences. Let us hope that this move forward proves to be a win-win, improving animal welfare in the last hours and moments of animals' lives, and also guaranteeing good working conditions for the humans who staff England's abattoirs.

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 web site for the latest resources, including those for youth & children.

Animal-friendly Church awards

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 held at St Peter's Church, Nottingham on Sunday 8th October, 10.45am. The preacher will be ASWA committee member and editor of *Animalwatch*, the Revd Jennifer Brown.

John Austin Baker Creative Writing Prize

This competition is open to all (with categories for adults and children). Submissions should be poetry or a piece of prose not longer than 500 words on the subject of Marine Life. Submissions must be original and not previously published. Entry fee of £5 per entry. Submissions must be received by 31 May 2018. Please see the ASWA web site (www.aswa.org.uk) or contact the Secretary for terms & conditions and addresses for submission by post or email.

ASWA Local groups

Don't forget that there are ASWA local groups in different areas.

- 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).
- The Revd David Austin has recently started an ASWA prayer group in the Norwich area. If anyone is interested in joining, David's contact details are 01603 469112 or dsj.austin@hotmail.com.

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.

EMAIL ADDRESSES PLEASE!

ASWA want to keep our membership informed of our activities and expand our influence to help animals. If you are an ASWA member, please ensure that we have your up-to-date email address. If you've changed your email address, or you haven't previously given us your email, please do so.

Just put "ASWA email address (and your name)" in the subject line and send it to:

aswamembership@btinternet.com

TALKING POINT

Harvest festivals and animals

As we move into autumn, churches in the UK will be getting ready for harvest festivals, and it won't be long before Americans are celebrating Thanksgiving. These and other, similar, celebrations of the harvest are an important reminder of our dependence on the earth and on God for our most basic needs. But as we see displays of wheat, squashes, sweetcorn and other autumn vegetables, it's easy to forget the role that animals play in feeding us (although in America the Thanksgiving turkey will be prominent on many tables in November). Many vegetarians still make use of eggs and dairy products, and even vegans, like the rest of us, are dependent on the pollinating insects that ensure crops produce fruit. Is it time for our harvest celebrations to acknowledge more openly the importance that animals play in keeping us fed? Are we ready to admit how dependent we are on the other creatures with whom we share this world, and to thank them and give thanks for them?

LEAGUE AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS SUMMER RECEPTION

It was my pleasure to represent ASWA at this annual event which was held on the Terrace Pavilion at the House of Commons and attended by over one hundred people.

Procedures started with a speech by Philippa King, the League's Chief Operating Officer, who welcomed everyone and then elaborated on two main themes. The first being the surprise announcement during the general election campaign by Theresa May of the pledge to allow a free vote to repeal the Hunting Act. Surveys by the League show that 84% of the public are against hunting and that 81% of those who live in rural areas also oppose it. The campaign to motivate their members to write to their MPs resulted in 70,000 e-mails. Her second focus was on dog fighting which is prevalent in this country. The maximum sentence is six months (compared with five years for fly-tipping) and there is no national register of offenders which results in those convicted being able to reoffend

with ease. Currently the League, in line with their motto to 'investigate, educate, protect,' is researching the situation and gathering facts. We can expect a campaign later this year.

Heidi Allen MP (Conservative, South Cambridgeshire) endorsed the need for a campaign to stop dog fighting. Reinforcing the public opinion surveys, she also told us she had been inundated with e-mails lobbying against repealing the hunting ban even though she represents a rural constituency. Her last point was encouraging confirmation that there is strong cross-party support for the League's causes.

Bill Oddie spoke about his dialogue with SPANA (Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad) and how they found that most living overseas regard the UK as having exemplary standards concerning animal welfare matters. Yet we know that is not the case and there is so much more to do even after so many years of campaigning.

Philippa returned to the podium to thank supporters. She also urged anyone travelling to the South-West to visit the League's haven of 550 acres which is devoted to the protecting the environment and, in particular, stags.

It was a lovely afternoon mixing with so many like-minded people and I was encouraged by the number of Christians present. There was also a lot of warmth expressed about unity of our cause and that we should all try to work together more often.

Keith Cottrell

DIANA HULME – A WONDERFUL LEGACY



The animal welfare sector is mourning the loss of Diana Hulme, who served as working animal charity SPANA's Education Director for 27 years. Diana passed away this summer, following a short illness. She had retired from the charity, which helps working animals in developing countries around the world, in 2016. Diana was the wife of SPANA's former Chief Executive Jeremy Hulme. In her three decades with SPANA, she transformed the charity's education programme and made an enormous contribution to improving animal welfare in developing countries around the world.

In 1989, when Diana started leading SPANA's education work, the programme only consisted of talks delivered in schools in Morocco. Diana quickly built up the Moroccan education programme, working with the government to create extra-curricular materials, animal welfare lessons for schools and humane education training for teachers. Two years later, Diana established an education programme in Jordan, and this was the start of rapid expansion of the programme into many other countries. This growth included the building of classrooms and exhibition spaces, as well as the launch of mobile exhibition units and animal handling centres. She also developed an educational outreach programme, which helped carry SPANA's message of humane care to remote communities worldwide. By the time of her retirement, the SPANA education programme was reaching more than 58,000 school children each year and operated in 16 countries worldwide, from Ethiopia to Costa Rica.

SPANA's education programme aims to promote positive attitudes and behaviours towards animals amongst school children from a young age. It is bringing about lasting improvements to animal welfare by helping children in developing countries to develop empathy and feelings of respect and compassion for animals.

Professor Tim Greet, Chairman of SPANA, said, "We are shocked and saddened by this devastating news. Diana's warmth, compassion and energy changed so many people's lives. Her incredible legacy is the many hundreds of thousands of people who, thanks to SPANA's education programme, today have a healthy respect and compassion for hardworking animals. She will be greatly missed and her achievements will benefit working animals for many years to come. We would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Jeremy and their family."

Tom Urpeth, SPANA

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

AUSTRALIA



Parish caring for animals

The Anglican Parish of Gisborne in regional Victoria has a Parish Animal Welfare Network which was formed in mid-2016.

The Network's rationale is in line with the aims of the Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals, and is to put animal welfare and in particular animal abuse, on the agenda of parishes and Anglican Institutions throughout the world. It also seeks to highlight and add support to the 4th and 5th Marks of Mission, accepted by the worldwide Anglican Communion. These two Marks pertain specifically to transforming unjust structures wherever we may find them, as well as seeking to safeguard the integrity of all creation.

The Network is a small group of people across the parish who care deeply about animal welfare. The activities of the Network have included a successful proposal for Parish Mission Giving (\$500) to support local voluntary farm animal rescue work, organising an annual blanket appeal for a regional animal shelter, and organising a speaker on animal welfare and a retiring collection at the annual Blessing of the Animals Service to go to an animal hospital.

Janine Mc Dougall

SOUTH AFRICA



Caring for donkeys



Donkeys are often the forgotten species in animal welfare, accorded inferior status by the public and many welfare organisations. Eselthjesrus Donkey Sanctuary in South Africa stands as a beacon of hope for better lives for these humble animals, promoting their welfare and status through a number of different avenues.

At the Sanctuary, rescued donkeys live out their lives in a peaceful setting, receiving best quality daily care. They no longer work for people, they now work with people, intuitively recognising humans in need. Under the watchful eyes of our trained guides, visitors may meet the donkeys. Every visitor leaves the Sanctuary as a Donkey Ambassador, sensitised and better informed. At the same time, the Sanctuary offers a pocket of peace, an escape from the fragmented, restless world in which we live.

However, we can never take in every donkey in need and further effectiveness clearly lies in outreach work. We offer advice and guidance daily to owners. We present regular workshops related to donkey welfare. We network closely with organisations with similar goals. We have established a communication platform, Donkeys for Africa, for organisations throughout Africa working towards improved donkey welfare, with a quarterly newsletter carrying information about shared problems, solutions, projects and challenges. See <http://www.donkeysforafrica.org/>.

All in all, Eselthjesrus Donkey Sanctuary has established itself as a respected centre for promoting donkey welfare through a number of different avenues. This is made possible through the generous support of the public, and impeccable governance by the board of this registered charity. For more information, visit our web page <http://www.donkeysanctuary.co.za/>.

Annemarie van Zijl

SWEDEN



From horror to some hope



After the horrible incident of a cat starving to death at home whilst his owner was treated in hospital, a

new animal protection law has been introduced in Sweden. The tragic death of the much-loved cat was a consequence of the extreme strictness of confidentiality which prohibited hospital and social care staff from breaking patient confidentiality and alerting the police and animal protection to the cat being alone without food or water due to his owner having been rushed to hospital for care. The law, called *lex Maja* after a well-known cat in a classic Swedish children's book, makes it not only possible to break patient confidentiality when a pet or an animal is at risk in connection with an owner's hospitalisation, but it also requires authorities to enter the home to check up on the animal. Very, very good news indeed!

Birdlife in Sweden includes about 250 different nesting species, the majority of them migratory. In addition to that, about 25 species pass through without nesting whilst on their way to the Siberian tundra. It is estimated that 70 million pairs of birds nest in Sweden every year. The willow warbler and chaffinch are the most common birds, with 13.2 million and 8.4 million pairs, respectively, believed to nest here per year. People with gardens tend to feed birds during the winter with nuts and birdseed. Town people, although they give feed, tend to give bread and other nutritionally unsound feed. Some municipalities also feed birds, such as mallards and swans, during the harsh winters. Generally people seem to care about birds although they know very little about them. A recent TV show has helped to increase public awareness and knowledge. The show was set as a quest to search and take pictures of certain birds. The contestants were well known, and each week they were given a new 'bird-quest'. The winner won a trip to South America to study bird life on fabulous guided tour.

Finally, a new and inspirational way to learn more about nature, both flora and fauna, has been introduced. Created by Daniel Thorell, it is a game, in classic board-game format, called *The Forest*. The objective is to collect and build a vibrant forest by matching the correct 'puzzle' pieces that fit in a certain forest environment.

It seems great fun and is a brilliant way to impart knowledge and nurture empathy for the forest and its manifold life.

“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” (Job 12:7-10)

Sandra Kinley

USA



Forever homes for lots of lucky animals

In August, the Humane Society shelter in Waterville, Maine took part in ‘Clear the Shelters’. This is an annual event, sponsored by the television network NBC, to encourage people to adopt a pet. At our shelter this year, over 50 cats and kittens, as well as 10 dogs, found forever homes as a result of Clear the Shelters.

Our shelter staff were amazed at the response, and there were tears of joy

when we saw how many people were coming to adopt the animals that we had been caring for and hoping to rehome. Before the Clear the Shelters weekend, our shelter had been at capacity, causing worry and stress for our staff. We are delighted that so many animals, including some with special needs, have found homes with families who will love them, and who they can love in return.

Joann Brizendine

ANIMAL BLESSING SERVICES – A RESOURCE FOR MISSION?

Over the past few decades, animal blessing services have grown in popularity and these services, sometimes called pet services, are now part of the regular calendar of events in many churches across a range of denominations.

The main purpose of these services is, or at least should be, to give thanks for the animals with whom we share our lives and to ask God to bless them and our relationships with them. One benefit that these services provide is to acknowledge the value of non-human animals as sentient beings, made and loved by God, and to recognise that they are central to so many of our lives. These services can help to build empathy with and concern for not only the animals that we know, but for those that may be more distant from us – farm animals, those in laboratories, zoo animals, and animals residing in shelters, waiting to be homed and loved.

Animal blessing services have another, perhaps unrecognised,

benefit. They attract people who might otherwise find church unattractive or irrelevant. In other words, animal blessing services are missional. By acknowledging and demonstrating the love of God for all of his creatures, these services show the inclusiveness of the good news and welcome offered by Jesus. By making welcome people’s pets, we by extension make welcome the humans that accompany them, young, old and every age in between. This sometimes includes those who at other times might not feel that they are welcome in the Church.

Animal blessing services are missional in another way, too. Companion animals are, to those who love them, not just ‘pets’ or ‘animals’. They are persons, and valued members of the families to which they belong. By showing that God and the Church also value them as individuals, we help to affirm the relationship that people have with their companion

animals. Animal blessings take this relationship seriously and do not belittle the feelings and bonds that exist between the human and non-human members of a household. In doing so, we acknowledge that the love of God is present in the love found with companion animals.

Demonstrating God’s love for his world is at the heart of any mission. Animal blessing services are one way that we can do that, both in offering to bless humans and their companion animals in God’s name, and by making them welcome to the service and, where possible, following this up with the offer of hospitality and fellowship.

He may not actually have said it, but St Francis is often credited with saying, “Proclaim the Gospel at all times. Use words if you have to.” In both word and deed, animal blessing services proclaim the Gospel – the good news for all creation.

Jennifer Brown

PET SERVICES AND OTHER EVENTS



Pet Service at Norwich Cathedral

The Celebration of Animals and Pets service was held in the Cloisters at Norwich Cathedral on Sunday 23rd July. The service was led by the Very Revd Jane Hedges, Dean of Norwich, and supported by local and national animal charities. About 200 members of the public joined the afternoon service with their pet dogs, cats and one parrot. The charities included the North Norfolk Association for the Blind, Pets as Therapy, Cats Protection League and Suffolk Horse Society, and we had the pleasure of being joined by a donkey and two local rare breeds, a Suffolk Punch mare with her foal and three Norfolk Horns (sheep). The service was also attended by a Guernsey goat called Littleman, who brought his kid friend with him as well.

Alison Porter

photo by **Andrew Shepherd**

Animal Blessing at St James' Picadilly

"All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing, Alleluia, Alleluia..."

With the opening lyrics of the hymn based on the words of St Francis of Assisi, St James' Church Piccadilly held their first Animal Blessing on 27th August 2017. Four-legged friends and their humans gathered in a semi-circle in the courtyard for a service led by the Revd Lindsay Meader. The sun shone brilliantly on this happy gathering. As the people gave thanks for the companionship of their furry friends, Revd Lindsay gave each pet a blessing. Dogs come regularly to Sunday services at St James', so naturally they



came for this special service of blessing too. Honey, an intrepid cat from Islington also joined them to receive her blessing.

There were prayers, reading from scripture, singing and a roll call of remembrance. Joey, a musically gifted dog, sang harmony during the opening hymn, adding special joy to the occasion.

St James' Church is increasingly integrating animal welfare into all its activities thanks to the presence of an active animal welfare church group. We hope this service will be the first annual event where we can give thanks in such a special way for the important role animals play in our lives.

Joan Ishibashi

Paw a Coffee Events

This year, I held my Paw a Coffee event in my local community of Tunbridge Wells, at the Langton Green Fête. There were other charities nearby, including the RSPCA. I had a lot of support from my local church friends and family. The *Animalwatch* magazine seemed to be popular and there were some positive remarks about the work of ASWA.

We raised three hundred pounds for ASWA and the Turkish Animal Group.

Holding a 'Paw a Coffee' event is not just about raising funds but is also a great way to advertise the work of ASWA. If you wish to host a fundraising event for ASWA in 2018, a pack including invitations and ASWA napkins are available. Please contact the ASWA secretary for details.

Janet Murphy



ST FRANCIS AND ANIMAL BLESSING SERVICES

St Francis of Assisi (1181–1286) is popularly known as the patron saint of animals, although St Anthony Abbot, a fourth-century saint from Abruzzo in southern Italy, is the traditional and official patron and protector of animals. Farm and domestic animals have for centuries processed in front of churches and cathedrals in Mediterranean countries to receive blessings from priests and bishops on January 17th, the saint's feast day. Free veterinary services are also provided that day, to the delight of farmers.

In 1979 Pope John Paul II declared St Francis to be the patron of people who promote ecology, but for Christians around the world, God's love, and theirs, for animals is best represented by the Poverello (Little Poor Man) of Assisi. Legends that were related in the centuries after his death include the well-known stories of Francis' preaching to the birds, his negotiating a deal with the wolf of Gubbio, of his saving lambs from the slaughter and releasing a rabbit caught in a trap. Francis is known to have installed

the first crib scene, a live tableau including animals, and taught the world to consider all creatures our brothers and sisters, children of the same Father-Creator.

However, for centuries it was other qualities and teachings of the Franciscan Orders' founder that took priority in the Western Church – his emphasis on poverty, on devotion to the sufferings and death of Christ, his humility and attention to lepers, the poorest and the outcasts. After the 13th-century painting by Giotto of the saint preaching to the birds, no other representations of Francis included animals, until the twentieth century when that connection was rediscovered and such images abounded.

It was then that churches of all traditions in the English-speaking world began holding services on or around his feast day of 4th October. The largest of these is held in the Episcopalian Cathedral church of St John the Divine in New York City, when thousands of companion

animals and their carers process into the nave, plus a few exotic beasts such as, once, a giraffe and a bald eagle. The twentieth century in the West provided the conditions for both mass pet ownership and a new awareness of the value of animals for themselves and for God. That this is celebrated in commemoration of the man who expressed compassion for all creatures is fitting, and draws together people with strong faith and those with little. Even in synagogue animal blessings there are occasional references to St Francis, although these services tend to be held during either Passover week (April), or in October when the Torah portion being read covers the story of Noah and the ark.

Whether animals are blessed in January, April or October, the awareness of their special relationship with God rather than just with human beings, can help people to develop a heightened respect and degree of concern for all animals. A blessing indeed.

Deborah Jones

ANNUAL NATIONAL OFFENDER MANAGEMENT SERVICE WILDLIFE AWARD

This year's overall national winner was HMP Kirkham. Winners of the three category awards were HMP Whatton for the Closed and High Security category; HMP Kirkham for the Open and Semi-Open Category and the Kent, Surrey and Sussex CRC for the Community and Outreach Category.

ASWA was represented by Keith Cottrell. He and Chris Fegan, President of Catholic Concern for Animals (CCA), were joined by Paul Cooper, Head of Enterprise and Community Engagement based at HMP Grendon, and Clair Sorocynski from the Ministry of Justice in London were also present.

Graham Beck, the Governor of HMP Kirkham gave the welcome and introductions with Alan Scott, HMPPS Director of the North presenting the Wildlife Awards. In the audience of around seventy were representatives of the winners, the local mayor and other dignitaries.

Glorious sunshine enabled the excellent celebration lunch to be served in the open before tours of the Conservation areas.

Some 110 out of 600 men work on the land-based activities at HMP Kirkham, and can obtain qualifications in various land management activities including dry stone wall building. In their conservation areas, new hedging has been planted using native tree and hedge species, bee-friendly plants have been introduced, wildlife corridors have been created, two ponds established, bird feeding stations set up, a bug hotel built and even bat boxes have been installed. Livestock are kept, including Longhorn cattle, Hebridean sheep and Saddleback pigs. The two herdsmen were singled out for a special award.

On alternate Fridays, guides offer walks to staff and men around the livestock and conservation areas.

Information boards record the wild bird sightings and those involved take part in the RSPB Garden Bird Annual Survey.

The impressive Kirkham Farm Shop is open to the public and offers a wide selection of home grown vegetables, fruit, homemade jams and chutneys and a variety of fresh bread.

It was very encouraging to learn about all these activities and to see the enthusiasm and pride that the men have for their work.

We were very well received and it was clear to me how much this award is appreciated. It is wonderful that ASWA and CCA can contribute to such a positive initiative managed by the Ministry of Justice.

Keith Cottrell

THE BIBLE AND...

Psalm 148: Praise for God's Universal Glory (NRSVA)

1 Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;

praise him in the heights!

2 Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his host!

3 Praise him, sun and moon;

praise him, all you shining stars!

4 Praise him, you highest heavens,

and you waters above the heavens!

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD,

for he commanded and they were created.

6 He established them for ever and ever;

he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth,

you sea monsters and all deeps,

8 fire and hail, snow and frost,

stormy wind fulfilling his command!

9 Mountains and all hills,

fruit trees and all cedars!

10 Wild animals and all cattle,

creeping things and flying birds!

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,

princes and all rulers of the earth!

12 Young men and women alike,

old and young together!

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD,

for his name alone is exalted;

his glory is above earth and heaven.

14 He has raised up a horn for his people,

praise for all his faithful,

for the people of Israel who are close to him.

Praise the LORD!

This purpose of this psalm is very clear – it begins and ends with the call to 'Praise the Lord!'. Verses 5b–6 and 13 tell us the reasons why God is worthy

of this praise. Yet, unlike in Psalm 147, such reasons play a minor part here: the focus is instead upon who/what is carrying out this praise. The focus of this psalm is upon creation itself, and it is to the whole of creation that it is being addressed.

This long list of different beings, creatures and phenomena within the psalm is carefully ordered. It is perhaps easiest to spot the distinction between the 'heavenly things' (vv. 1–6) and the 'earthly things' (vv. 7–14), but the list can be split into further sections. We find similar lists in the writings of other Ancient Near Eastern cultures, so it seems likely that this represents something about the way in which the world was understood at the time that the Psalm was written. What is interesting here, however, is that there is something more occurring than the simple classification of creation: there is also the call to praise.

The image that is sometimes used is of a chorus of all creation. We might think of the 'dawn chorus' of birds, and broaden this picture to add in the praise of animals, oceans, mountains, and stars. It is easier to imagine how some of those things listed might praise God than others. How does snow praise God, for example? What about cattle or fruit trees? One suggestion that is often made is that the created things offer this praise by fulfilling the functions that they were designed to carry out. This idea applies to human beings as much as to the rest of creation: the highest praise that we can offer to God is to fulfil the task for which we have been created.

In this particular psalm, we find inclusivity among the created things. While humankind may be listed last as (in the mind of the psalmist) the 'pinnacle' of creation, each group takes its place and has its part to play. This even stretches to some creatures that may typically have been understood as 'enemies' of human beings. Many wild animals, especially carnivores, were feared. They posed a danger both to humans and to their herds, including the cattle which the wild animals are listed alongside in this psalm. Here, however, they take their place as an important part of creation. Even the sea 'monsters' (occasionally translated as 'dragons'!) of verse 7 do not, here, represent the agents of chaos and enemies of God that they are occasionally used to symbolise elsewhere. In this

psalm, these creatures, too, are to be recognised as the work of God's hand and an awe-inspiring part of what He has made. The reference to 'creeping things' in verse 10 most likely refers to insects. These tiny creatures showcase the Creator's attention to the smallest details of his creation, and they, too, are to be remembered.

Human beings share this call to praise God with the rest of creation, from the largest to the smallest part. It may well be that we can learn something from them about how best to carry out this task: to recognise our Creator and, alongside all other living creatures, to fulfil the purpose for which we have been created.

Rebecca Dean

Activity: Sharing the Call to Praise with the Rest of Creation

Visit a favourite place and read the psalm there – out loud if possible. This might be a bench in a local park, a favourite walk, your own garden or even just a seat next to a window in your home.

Read the passage slowly, to allow yourself time to reflect on the words that you are speaking. Are there any particular words that stand out to you?

Pause for a moment after you have spoken each verse to look around you and pay attention to what you are experiencing: what can you see or hear? Think about the things that are harder to notice as well as the things that are more dominant.

(If you want to you could take a photo of your view as you read out the Psalm and send it in to *Animalwatch* to be printed in the next edition)

Study questions for groups:

- What is the purpose for which human beings have been created?
- If part of our purpose is to facilitate the praise given by all creation, as described in Psalm 148, what would that mean for the way that humanity currently uses, or misuses, the earth's resources and how we treat our fellow creatures?

THE VEGGIE TRAVELLER

Travelling can be difficult for vegetarians – especially if travelling to parts of the world that aren't traditionally veggie-friendly, or if one's mastery of the local language isn't quite up to deciphering the menu to check for non-veg ingredients. But sometimes, the veggie traveller gets lucky and happens upon some great vegetarian eateries.

One might not immediately associate Germany with vegetarian food, but it's becoming more popular and veganism has recently become popular there. Over the summer, I was in Munich, and discovered some great vegetarian places to eat.

Munich – Prinz Myshkin

Located in Munich's Old Town, this vegetarian/vegan restaurant is very central. The name is taken from the character of Prince Myshkin in Dostoyevsky's novel *The Idiot*.

The character of Prince Myshkin is supposed to be as close to perfect and perfectly good as it is possible to be. He is a model of Christian love for others. Among Prince Myshkin's defining characteristics are his love for and delight in creation and his peaceable nature. No wonder that his name was chosen as the name for a vegetarian restaurant.

The menu at Prinz Myshkin is varied, with vegetarian interpretations of traditional German food, pizza, pasta and other European cuisines represented. Although the restaurant was busy, the service was friendly and efficient. The main dining room is a large, open room, but there are also outside tables, great for warm summer afternoons or evenings. The dessert menu is not to be missed! Menus available in both German and English.

Have you found some great veggie-friendly restaurants or hotels while travelling, in your home country or abroad? If so, why not write a short review to send to Animalwatch and let others know about them. If you can, send a photo to go with your review.



ASWA NEWS

ASWA sponsors writing competition

Earlier this year, the ASWA committee agreed that we should sponsor the John Austin Baker creative writing competition (see information elsewhere in this issue). As well as raising funds for important animal welfare work – the money raised from entry fees will go to Animals Asia and Marine Conservation – it is hoped that the competition will help to raise awareness of animal issues within and outside the Church, and will demonstrate to those outside the Church that Christians, too, are passionately concerned with animal welfare and the environment. The competition is named for and in honour of former ASWA President, the Rt Revd John Austin Baker, who died in 2014.

NEW HOPE FOR BEARS IN ASIA

This summer, Animals Asia reported that they had signed an historic agreement with the government of Vietnam that will end bear bile farming in that country. Although Vietnam outlawed bear bile farming in 1992, it was still legal for farmers to keep bears already in captivity. This loophole, combined with a lack of available sanctuaries to take farmed bears, meant that many bears remained in captivity in terrible conditions. The Memorandum of Understanding signed by Animals Asia and the Vietnam Administration of Forestry this July creates a framework for the rescue of the approximately 1000 bears still held in captivity across the country.

Animals Asia has been working for almost 20 years in Vietnam to rescue these bears and to end the practice of bear bile farming. In 2015, they signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Vietnam's Traditional Medicine Association,

which agreed an end to the practice of prescribing bear bile by 2020. It is hoped that this will greatly reduce the demand for bear bile.

The new Memorandum of Understanding not only commits the government to preventing bears being kept by private households, it also ensures that those currently held captive will be released to sanctuaries. The problem, of course, is providing enough sanctuary space to re-home the bears. In 2008, Animals Asia set up a bear sanctuary at Tam Dao and, since that time, has rescued 186 bears in Vietnam.



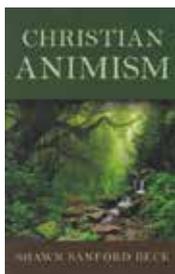
BOOK REVIEWS

CHRISTIAN ANIMISM

By Shawn Sanford Beck

Christian Alternative
ISBN 978-1-782799-658

51pp Paperback
Price £7.99



The first thing that struck me about this book was its title. Is such a thing as Christian animism even possible? Surely if one were to adopt an animist belief system within Christianity, that would be heretical. Wouldn't it?

The author himself acknowledges the problems inherent in using the term Christian animism, problems he hopes to address through his definition of the term. Beck defines Christian animism as a way of engaging with the world from a Christian perspective, but with the understanding that, "each creature [is] alive, sentient, and related, rather than soulless and ontologically inferior." Certainly for Christians who care passionately about non-human animals and the environment, this doesn't, at first glance, seem like an unreasonable stance to take. If we take seriously the notion that all creation is capable of worshiping and praising God, this

approach seems to make a lot of sense. There is, however, a problem with what Beck means by the terms 'sentience' and 'soul'. Sentience is usually defined as the ability to perceive and feel things, although in common usage it usually also includes some level of self-awareness. There is, of course, good scientific evidence to back up a claim of sentience among non-human animals. Animals feel and respond to physical sensations, including pain, and many species demonstrate learning, memory and anticipation of future events. I'm not sure, however, that there is evidence to support the idea that a plant or a rock is sentient. The idea of non-human souls, even for plants, is less of a problem. Thomas Aquinas spoke of vegetative souls (plants), sensitive souls (animals) and rational souls (humans), so the idea of all living things having a soul is well-established within Christian teaching.

Beck's Christian animism seems to be a way of describing an awareness of the souls that exist not only in human beings and in animals, but in all living things and recognising the 'spirit' of a place. He suggests that if Christians were to adopt this theology, this could have implications for ecology, interfaith dialogue and personal spirituality. Crucially, Christian animism could be a powerful antidote to dominion theology – the idea that the earth and all life on it exists to serve humanity, and that we

have the right to use, or misuse, it as we please. Beck's animist theology is offered as a more relational alternative. He also believes that this theology can benefit individual Christians in their spirituality, by helping them to connect with the spiritual in the natural world. While I would agree that the concept of dominion has, among many Christians, led to a wrong-headed approach towards the rest of creation and that a more relational theology is needed, I am not convinced that Christian animism is the answer. Although Beck suggests that Christian animism could help dialogue with other, presumably polytheistic, faiths, it could be a barrier to dialogue with other monotheistic faiths.

I admire what Beck is, I believe, trying to achieve with this book – namely, to encourage Christians to recognise the living essence of the natural world, and to acknowledge that it is a life that belongs not to us but to God. My worry is that, by using language and concepts that many Christians would argue the Bible says we must reject (think of Paul's words to the Galatians and the Colossians of the need to turn away from the 'elemental spirits'), he may alienate those who most need to be encouraged to embrace a more relational and eco-friendly theology.

Jennifer Brown

THE GROWING POPULARITY OF VEGANISM



Veganism is seen by many in society as a fringe philosophy and practice. It is, in the minds of many, the extremist version of vegetarianism. This image is further complicated by the impression that vegan food is uninteresting and unpalatable. As such, it is just the sort of approach to life that might be expected to have a limited popularity. But the appeal of veganism is growing.

In 2016, two UK newspapers, the *Telegraph* and the *Guardian*, reported that veganism in the UK had increased by more than 350% over the preceding

decade. It seems that a desire for a healthy diet and concern for the environment are largely responsible for driving the trend, although animal welfare is also an important concern for many vegans. The recent growth in veganism isn't confined to the UK. Veganism is also growing in popularity in Europe, with Germany reportedly being at the centre of Europe's vegan culture.

I witnessed a bit of this myself when visiting Germany earlier this year. Not only was it much easier than

expected to find vegan and vegetarian restaurants, my visit happened to coincide with one of Munich's vegan festivals. In the city's Marienplatz, the main square, several stalls were set up, offering literature, vegan products and lots of tempting vegan food.

To see that veganism was growing in popularity in the heart of Bavaria, and to know that this is also the case right across Europe, is very encouraging indeed.

Jennifer Brown

PURPLE POPPIES FROM THE SASHA ANIMAL FOUNDATION



In this issue of *Animalwatch*, you will have received a complimentary purple poppy. These poppies have kindly been provided by Sasha Animal Foundation.

Sasha Animal Foundation (SAF) was founded by Julie Betterton-Trew and her husband Adrian Trew in October 2015. SAF is a non-profit animal charity based on Hayling Island in the UK. The charity's patron is the TV Presenter and Journalist Wendy Turner-Webster.

The Purple Poppy campaign allows us to remember animal victims of war and human violence. Animals cannot volunteer, and have no choice in becoming involved in war when they serve alongside human military personnel. Like humans, animals living in war zones suffer from the effects of war – injury, stress, lack of food and water. Years after war has ended, some countries are still suffering hardship and this means in some cases animals are the ones that suffer the greatest.

Funds raised from the sale of the purple poppies will be used to help injured animals, provide rehabilitation and if required finding them loving homes, as well as providing memorial plaques to remember those animals who have lost their lives.

The aim of SAF is to bring local groups of people together to help with fundraising, not only during

the Purple Poppy campaign, but throughout the year. This serves to bring people together, as well as helping the animals.

The main Purple Poppy campaign for 2017 will run from Monday 23rd October to Sunday 12th November. The purple poppy can be worn alongside the Royal British Legion's red poppy and the Peace Pledge Union white poppy.

Please use the purple poppy provided free with this magazine to help raise awareness of the Purple Poppy campaign. Additional poppies can be purchased for £1.00 plus postage and packing, and can be bought online via the SAF website, www.sashaanimalfoundation.com, as well as at pet shops and veterinary practices.

If you would like more information, SAF can be contact by email to SashaAnimalFoundation@outlook.com.

URGENT HELP NEEDED FOR CAT SHELTER IN CRISIS

Chachi's Haven is a non-profit shelter for cats in Tel Mond, Israel. For over 30 years it has been run single handedly by Gail Joss. The sanctuary began 30 years ago in South Africa. Chachi was the name of the very first cat Gail rescued and the shelter is named in her memory. Chachi was found in the grounds of a factory and, along with many other cats, was rescued by Gail and that was the beginning of Chachi's Haven.

Fast forward 20 years and Gail has moved to Israel accompanied by 29 cats from the shelter. All the cats had health issues and were unable to be re-homed. Gail worked three jobs to provide for the cats until 4 years ago when, sadly, she became ill. Diagnosed with cancer and Graves Disease, she was forced to stop work. Chachi's Facebook page was then created to try to find homes for the cats and to obtain volunteers to help run the shelter. At that time,

there were 82 shelter cats and 100 street cats in Gail's care. Now there are 140 shelter cats and 250 street cats all reliant on Gail for support.

There are no volunteers and the dilapidated warehouse she is renting is not fit for purpose. It is literally about to collapse so another winter there is not an option. Things are now critical. Gail has dedicated her life to the cats despite her ill health. Chachi's Haven relies entirely on donations from kind supporters and well wishers. As well as feeding the cats, there are vet fees and neutering to pay for, and for that she needs help.

Gail feeds the street cats at various feeding stations usually setting off at 2am in all weathers. The cats wait for her and she never lets them down.

Although her cats start their lives as feral, with Gail's love and care they soon become like pets. We all

enjoy news of their progress and seeing the latest photos. Most of these cats could be considered for adoption and we feel this would be the best option for them. Gail has no help from the Government or the local population. Distressingly they see cats as vermin. The cats are not neutered and are often just dumped like rubbish. Donations go towards neutering which helps stop the cycle of unwanted kittens.

If you would like to help, please donate whatever you can spare. For those who are able, a donation given on a monthly payment scheme would be a great help – even £2 a month will help this amazing lady continue her work and ensure that Chachi's legacy lives on. If you would like to donate, please visit <http://www.chachishaven.com/donations>.

Jill Philpott
on behalf of Chachi's Haven

The John Austin Baker Creative Writing Prize



**A poem or piece of prose
not exceeding 500 words on 'Marine Life'**

Three categories, Adult, Youth 12-17 years and Child under 11 years.

Adult cash prizes

1st - £500 | 2nd - £250 | 3rd £100

Youth and Children's categories will have Voucher prizes.

£5.00 per entry. Payable online - www.aswa.org.uk
or by cheque payable to ASWA. T&C's available online.

Entries to be received by 31st May 2018.

**Winner to be announced on Animal Welfare Sunday
- 7th October 2018.**

Email entries: AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com

Or in writing (typed please) to Revd Lynne Chitty, Mill House
Retreats, Rocknell Manor Farm, Westleigh, Devon, EX16 7ES



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

T: 01252 843093 • **E:** AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com

ANGLICAN SOCIETY FOR THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS

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Revd Dr Helen Hall





SERVICE FOR ANIMAL WELFARE
St Peter's Church, Nottingham
Sunday 8th October 2017 at 10.45 Eucharist
Speaker: Revd Jennifer Brown



— All welcome. —

Enquiries to:

The Secretary, ASWA, PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT

www.aswa.org.uk • **E:** AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com

Please note this is not an Animal Blessing Service.