

A SERVICE FOR



ANIMAL WELFARE SUNDAY

Written & Compiled by Revd. H. Broadbent

ANIMAL WELFARE SUNDAY

OPENING SENTENCE:

“How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all.”

(Psalm 104:24)

HYMN:

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation’.

INTRODUCTION:

Praise the Lord in the heavens,

All: praise him in the heights above.

Praise the Lord from the earth,

All: wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, young men and maidens, old men and children.

All: Let them praise the name of the Lord. (Psalm 148:7-13)

(Words of welcome may be included at this point)

We have gathered together in the name of Christ, the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation.

We have come to praise our Maker and Redeemer, to hear and respond to his holy word, to pray for the welfare of all of his creatures, and to seek forgiveness for the cruelty and suffering we have caused, so that by his grace and power we may be enabled to further his universal reign of peace.

CONFESSION:

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith:

“A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel.” (Proverbs 12:10)

Lord of all,

we confess to you our pride and selfishness.

You have called us to share in your dominion, to rule over the animals, the birds and the fish.

But we have abused your power.

We have blinded ourselves to their beauty and goodness.

We have caused them needless suffering through our ignorance, callousness and failure to act.

We have behaved like tyrants and we have betrayed your Son, the Servant-King.

We are truly sorry.

Forgive us for what is past and transform our hearts and minds, so that we may become what you would have us be.

Renew us in the image of your Son and make us worthy to reign with him.

For he died to reconcile all things in heaven and on earth.

He is our Saviour and our Lord.

May the Father of all mercies cleanse you from your sins, and restore you in his image to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COLLECT:

Almighty God,

you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father:

give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all your creatures may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.'

(CW, The 3rd Sunday after Trinity, adapted)

OLD TESTAMENT READING:

Genesis 1:1-3, 24-31a: 'God creates living creatures'

or Isaiah 11:1-9: The Messiah's reign of Peace'

PSALM:

104:[1-4, 10-15, 24],

or 148

NEW TESTAMENT READING:

John 1:1-14: 'God's creative Word made flesh in Christ'

or John 10:11-16: 'The Good Shepherd'

or Romans 8:18-23: 'The redemption of Creation'

or Colossians 1:15-20: All things reconciled in Christ'

ADDRESS:

HYMN:

'The King of love my shepherd is' or 'All things bright and beautiful'

INTERCESSIONS:

Loving God, Creator and Redeemer, you made us in your image and called us in Christ, to be instruments of your just and gentle rule;

enable us so to work in your world and to care for it, that our lives may conform to the pattern of your Son, the Servant-King.

Pour your Spirit upon us

All: And renew the face of the earth.

We bring before you the millions of animals, who are abused for sport and entertainment, or who suffer in our laboratories, in our abattoirs and on intensive farms (especially at this time we pray for...).

In their suffering ease their pain and fear by making them aware that you are with them, and show us how we may alter our lifestyles the food we buy and the products we use - to lessen the pain and the cruelty that they endure.

Pour your Spirit upon us

All: And renew the face of the earth.

We thank you for the companionship, which so many creatures afford us in our homes.

Make us sensitive to their needs as well as to our own, and guide us as to how we may support the work of animal welfare organisations, especially...

(mention by name local animal welfare organizations) as they seek to combat cruelty and to promote the well-being of all domestic animals.

Pour your Spirit upon us

All: And renew the face of the earth.

We praise you for the wonder and beauty of your world.

‘How many are your works.

In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures’.

Strengthen our resolve to protect endangered species in the wild.

Move in the hearts and minds of people throughout the world, that there may be a growing reverence amongst us for the life you have given them, and a growing desire, that Creation may enter into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Loving God, Creator and redeemer,

All: Pour your Spirit upon us and renew the face of the earth.

As we seek God’s coming kingdom, we pray together:

Our Father...

HYMN:

Loving Shepherd of Creation,
Hear us, as we cry to
Thee In defence of all Your creatures.

Lift the veil, that we might see
How our silence feeds their suffering;
Hunted, tortured and destroyed.

Give us courage, make us fearless,
Speak through us, Your healing word.
Lamb of God, your wounded nation,

Pains of birth, groans in travail.
Long awaits her liberation,
Halt, the silent scars revealed.

Lift to heaven our supplications,
Borne on candle’s flickering flame.
Deeds of wickedness exposing,
Witness to God’s saving name.

Jesus, Lord of all Creation,
Send your Spirit from above.
Let the Dove of Peace embrace us
Gently, as your Spirit moves.
Bringing healing to this nation,
Turning darkness into light.
Let the flame of love grow brighter,
All Your creatures, Lord, unite.

(Words: Linda J. Bodicoat; Tune: Hyfrido)

BLESSING OF ANIMALS:

(If there are animals which are to be blessed, they may be brought forward and the following prayer used)

Bless, O Lord, this creature, and all who are involved in its care and protection.

(After the individual animals have been blessed, or if all the animals are being blessed together, the following prayer is said by all)

Bless, O Lord, these creatures, and all who are involved in their care and protection.

May our awareness of their needs make us sensitive to the needs of every creature, for we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE PEACE:

To crown all things there must be love, to bind all together and complete the whole.

Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

(Colossians 3:14,15) CW p.326

The peace of the Lord be always with you and also with you.

(A sign of peace may be exchanged)

HYMN:

Lord of life and love unbounded,
Blessèd Holy Trinity,
From the dark primeval chaos
You have brought your world to be.
May we glimpse in all your creatures
That same goodness which you see.

Called to share in your dominion;
Exercising royal rule,
We must follow you in Jesus,
Servant-king, not tyrant cruel.
Help us tend the world, your Garden,
Groaning, waiting for renewal.

May our minds embrace the vision
Of the prophet's holy hill: -
Wolf and lamb at peace together,
Love's shalom, your perfect Will.
Like an ocean, come salvation!
All Creation flood and fill!

Tune: 'Regent Square' or 'Rhuddlan'

Words: Hugh Broadbent

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

For those, O Lord, the humble beasts,
that bear with us the burden and heat
of day, and offer their guileless lives for
the well-being of humankind;
and for the wild creatures, whom Thou
hast made wise, strong, and beautiful,
we supplicate for them Thy great
tenderness of heart,
for Thou hast promised to save both
man and beast,
and great is Thy loving kindness, O
Master, Saviour of the world. Amen.

St. Basil the Great

THE BLESSING:

Christ, who by his incarnation
gathered into one all things earthly
and heavenly,
fill you with his joy and peace;
and the blessing...

APPENDIX:

*Special Preface (If the service is taking
place in the context of a Communion):*

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you
thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
For with the oil of gladness
you have anointed Christ the Lord,
your only Son,
to be our great high priest and king of
all creation.

As priest, he offered himself once for
all upon the altar of the cross
and redeemed the human race by this
perfect sacrifice of peace.

As king he claims dominion over all
your creatures,
that he may bring before your infinite
majesty

a kingdom of truth and life,
a kingdom of holiness and grace,
a kingdom of justice, love and peace.

And so with angels and archangels
and all the heavenly host,
we proclaim your glory
and join in their unending hymn of
praise:

(CW,p.327)

ALTERNATIVE PRAYER OF INTERCESSION:

A prayer for Animal welfare

Almighty god, maker of all living things, in whose Fatherly wisdom we trust and depend. Enable us, by the power of your Holy Spirit, to recognize the works of Your hand in all things.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the opportunity to worship You on this special day, set aside as Animal Welfare Sunday. We remember with joy and gratitude, all your creatures, whose beauty and diversity enriches our lives beyond measure.

We ask your forgiveness for the many ways in which animals are abused and exploited, through both ignorance and greed and we confess before You our part in their suffering, acknowledging the times we have remained silent, lacking the courage to speak out in their defence.

Strengthen us in our resolve as we aspire to lead the 'simple' life of faith and obedience, free from all earthly entrapments and material wealth, using earth's resources wisely and thoughtfully, faithfully following the example of Your servant, St Francis of Assisi.

Help us, O Lord, as we endeavour to live in harmony with all Your creatures, leaving only the footprints of true discipleship upon this earth when we leave and not the deep scars of greed and exploitation.

Encourage and inspire each one of us to grow in Your likeness and to be remembered for our simplicity of heart and generosity of spirit and for our 'oneness' with all creation.

Grant us, O merciful God, humble and contrite hearts and a clear vision of Your purpose for us in Your world, that we may become faithful stewards of Your wondrous creation.

These things we ask in Jesus' name.
Amen

Copyright: Linda J.Bodicoat



Putting Animals on the Agenda of the Christian Church

President: The Rt Revd Dominic Walker OGS

Chair: Revd Dr Helen Hall

Vice President: Revd Prof Martin Henig

Registered Charity No. 1087270

Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals,
PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT, UK.

T: +44 (0)1252 843093 • **E:** AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com

www.aswa.org.uk

Cover Picture: St Francis of Assisi preaching to the birds - Giotto di Bondone (c. 1266-1337)

Courtesy of The Bridgeman Art Library, London, W2