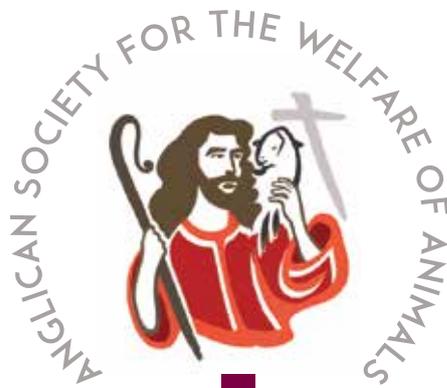


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Spring 2022

Price £2 (free to members)



animalwatch

PUTTING ANIMALS ON THE AGENDA OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

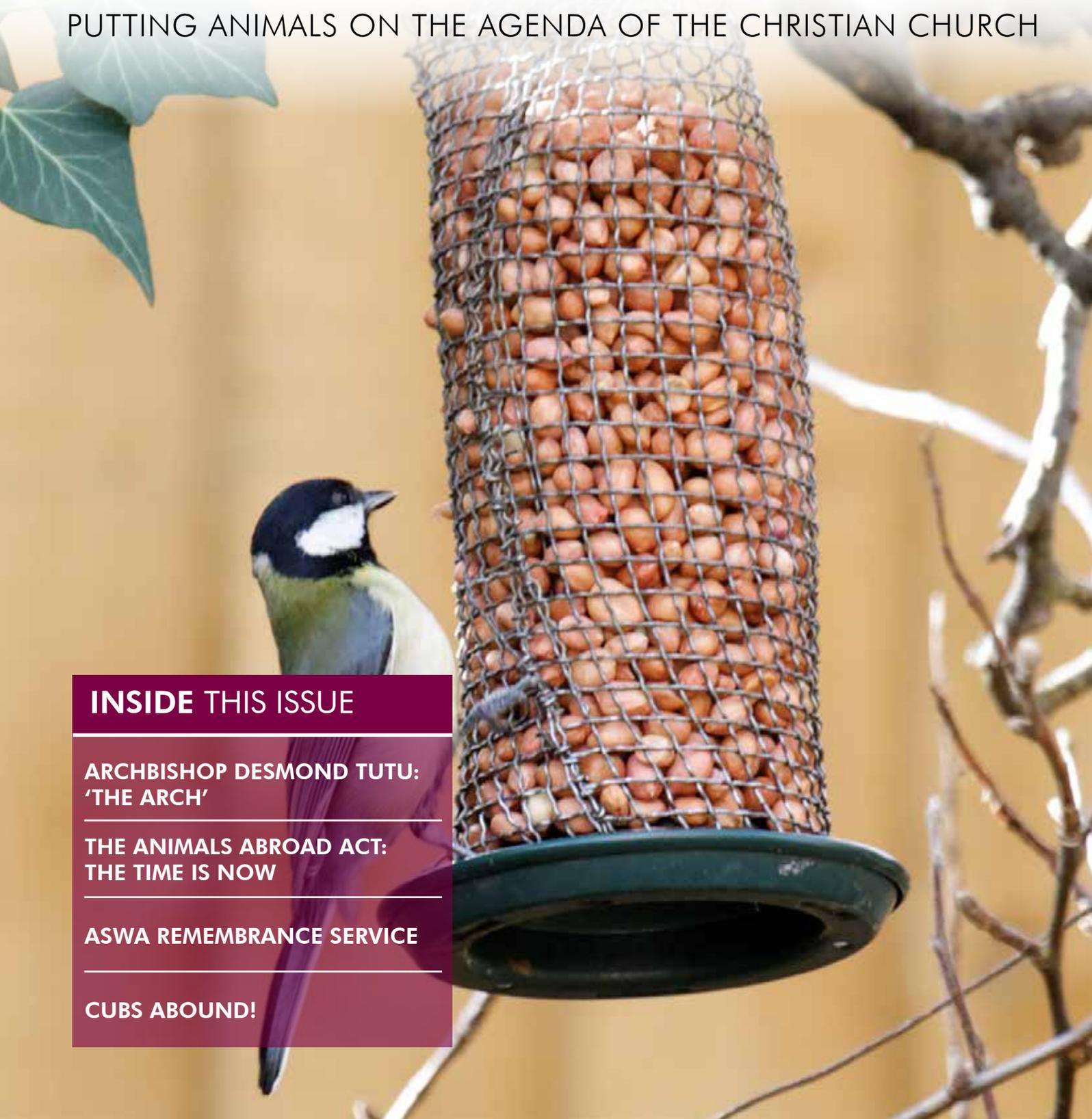
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'THE ARCH'

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CUBS ABOUND!



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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!

Wednesday 11 May

ASWA AGM, 3.30pm. The meeting will be held via Zoom. Please contact the Secretary for details and the link to attend.

Sunday 12 June

Animal blessing service, Craigiebuckler Church Hall, Springfield Road, Aberdeen, 3pm. Service led by the Revd Kenneth Petrie. Animals welcome with their human companions.

Sunday 2 October

Animal Welfare Sunday.

ASWA Annual Service, St Mary-at-Latton, Harlow, 3pm. Preacher: ASWA Secretary, the Revd Samantha Chandler. This will be a service of thanksgiving with blessing of animals. Please do join us and bring your animals to be blessed.

Sunday 13 November

ASWA Remembrance Service for Animals in War, The Animals' War Memorial, Brooke Gate, Park Lane, London, W1K 7QF, 3pm. Speaker to be confirmed.

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



HELLO AND WELCOME TO ANIMALWATCH

Welcome to *Animalwatch*. In this issue, we focus on human interactions with wild animals, and look back to activities that occurred in the autumn, including our annual service and Remembrance activities.

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 our upcoming AGM.

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

Jennifer Brown, Editor

The deadline for the Spring magazine is **Monday 30th May 2022**.

ASWA SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

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

A WARM WELCOME

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

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

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

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ANIMALWATCH

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

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

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

ASWA MERCHANDISE

Available from the ASWA web site

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

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

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

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

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

Sticker sheets & books: Activity sheet with stickers (ravens or bees), £2 each.



GOOD NEWS

Strengthening the law against hare coursing

In January, the UK Government announced plans to introduce stricter penalties for those convicted of hare coursing – a cruel sport that sets dogs to chase and kill wild hares. Hare coursing is already illegal in the UK, but the proposed changes to the law will make it possible for unlimited fines and/or a prison sentence to be imposed for those convicted of hare coursing or related activities, such as trespassing with the intent of using a dog to pursue a hare.



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 materials for children & youth.

Animal-friendly Church award

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



ASWA Annual Service

This year's annual service will be on Sunday 2nd October at St Mary-at-Latton, Harlow. See the diary for more details.

Supporting Evacuations from Afghanistan

ASWA was able to provide financial support to Nowzad and Kabul Small Animal Rescue to aid their efforts to evacuate from Afghanistan. We are pleased that we were able to help fund these amazing charities in their attempt to rescue staff and animals.

Keeping in Touch

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

I thought I would share our new pet memorial statue that we had erected at our church. I am a pet bereavement support person and contacted our vicar about having a special place, C of E regulations allowing, and we now have this statue of St Francis where people can come and remember their beloved pets. We supply pebbles for people to write names on and place around the statue. It was dedicated on October 10th with a pet service by our vicar.



The accompanying photo is of Bailey, owned by our Reader.

Maria Brett

St Augustine's Church, West Sussex

Dear Editor

Sheep-grazier warnings are increasing and biodiversity is declining. These are of deep concern to those of us who believe livestock and wildlife are intrinsically valuable. Ultimately, they belong to and are loved by our Creator God.

Shelter Belts are carefully designed plantings of trees and shrubs – species indigenous to the area are best. Their uses often include the maximising of shade and shelter for livestock and the promotion of safe wildlife habitat for species threatened by climate-change and inappropriate development. To further our aim of promoting the good stewardship of God's creatures, our Animal Welfare Group within the Anglican Parish of Gisborne (Victoria) applied to the Macedon Ranges Shire's Community Grant Scheme for a grant to assist Macedon Ranges farmers in the planting of Shelter Belts. Our group learned in late 2021 that the grant application was successful. Consequently, we will be able to assist 12 Macedon Ranges farmers in the planting of Shelter Belts during the Australian autumn of 2022.

Janine Mc Dougall,

Co-convenor, Anglican Parish of Gisborne Animal Welfare Group

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

AUSTRALIA

Signs of progress on animal welfare legislation



The New South Wales State Government is currently reviewing animal laws which have been in place for decades. There are so many issues that need addressing, and the hope is that an Office of Animal Welfare will be set up within the Government, completely set apart from the Department of Agriculture, so that farm animals will be treated more humanely, in line with domestic animals. There is a great deal of work to do, that's for sure. There will be State and Federal elections next year, and the Animal Justice Party will be fielding candidates.

Readers will be sorry to learn that Australia's adorable koalas are reported to have decreased by about 30% over the last three years, due to fires and continued logging of habitat.

All states in Australia ban jump racing (steeplechasing) except for South Australia and Victoria. This week South Australia announced that there will be no jump racing from next year, so now there is only Victoria to go!

The decades-long struggle to get rid of battery cages (there are still over 8 million hens kept in these hideous conditions) is coming to a head (hopefully!) as Agriculture Ministers across the country are about to make decisions on the battery system. Today, 40% of eggs are still produced this way, and the industry fights hard to keep the facts from consumers. Animals Australia has a powerful TV ad running at the moment to show the reality of what it means to be a hen in a battery cage. As far as the live export of sheep to the Middle East is concerned, there is a slight improvement. No sheep go from Australia from 1st June to mid-September, due to this being the hottest period, so a million sheep will be spared over that time.

Olga Parkes

SOUTH AFRICA

Introducing Beauty Without Cruelty (South Africa)



Beauty Without Cruelty (South Africa), established 1975, is an animal rights organisation with a primary objective to educate and inform the public about the exploitation, abuse, and suffering of animals and to offer humane, non-animal alternatives to replace cruel and harmful lifestyle choices. BWC runs a progressive educational programme, aimed at informing people about the suffering of animals and has initiated a number of campaigns which focus on exposing animal abuse, specifically in the areas of vivisection/cosmetics testing, the exploitation of wildlife, and in factory farming. Methods used to draw the public's attention to these issues also include legal intervention, protests, lobbying central, regional, and local government, and other peaceful means.

We currently, after years of work, have a Bill before the National Portfolio Committee of the SA Government, to ban animal use for cosmetics testing. We have had successes which include rescuing feral cats due to be shot on our local Robben Island, we have persuaded the Cape Town venue that did annual fireworks displays to make environmentally friendly changes, and there have thus been no public fireworks displays at New Year for the last two years – we are still working on National Government to ban them entirely. In recent years we have provided positive input for several matters, including mandatory sterilisation of animal companions at local Government level, rhino farming, the Meat Safety Act which saw several wild species being reclassified, caused positive language change describing animals in a national vivisection guidelines project, stopped a church fundraising wild goose hunt, recorded suitable animal supporting stories shared with 45 local schools during lockdown, had positive input on local baboon issues, covered the hefty food bill for 13 relocated baboons saved from medical research, for their lifetime, saved racehorses from slaughter, and

more. BWC presented submissions to the High Level Panel on the issue to ban lion cub petting, the farming of lions, the sale of their body parts and other planned wildlife exploitation restrictions and made contact with a housing estate in a wildlife setting to implement humane options regarding foraging baboons. They are now using monitors on bicycles and implementing waste management measures, both of which will deter baboons.

We receive no government funding and rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to continue our work for animals on behalf of the public.

Toni Brockhoven

SWEDEN

Smuggling, slaughter, and rays of hope



Together with The Animals' Friends and the National Centre, the Swedish Animal Rights Organisation arranged a symposium in December 2021 on how to stop the smuggling of dogs. The smuggling of dogs is a vast problem that causes animals horrific suffering as well as financial losses for many unsuspecting buyers. It is also a health hazard, as many dogs suffer from illnesses or are carriers of

contagious diseases, some of which are not known in the destination country. The symposium wanted to shed light on this problem and make the general public more aware of it.

Since 1937, slaughter without anaesthesia has been illegal in Sweden as it is in many other European countries. According to a new poll, nine out of ten Europeans maintain that anaesthesia should be applied prior to slaughter. This has caused some confusion as ritual slaughter for religious reasons may be opposed to pre-slaughter anaesthesia. This

is a misunderstanding, according to the general secretary of the Swedish Animal Protection Organisation, Johan Beck-Friis. There may be, for extreme religious reasons, exceptions but overall no animal should suffer prior to slaughter. Freedom of religion is important but must not permit slaughter without some form of anaesthesia. Åsa Hagelstedt, general secretary of Animal Care in Sweden suggests that it is quite possible for animals to die as comfortably as possible while still respecting religious traditions.

A haven of peace and kind care may be found in one of the few convents in Sweden, Alsike Kloster. Here the sisters have taken in two donkeys and a few sheep as pets. They are well-kept, well-loved, and well-fed. The donkeys and sheep bring extra calm to the convent and people staying for retreats and self-care time find the donkeys especially great at offering consolation and warmth in times of distress.

Sandra Kinley

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU: 'THE ARCH'

For most people, Desmond Tutu will be remembered as a man who bravely fought to end apartheid in South Africa, but he was also a man who was vocal in speaking against the abuse of animals and urged churches to lead the way in showing that all cruelty to animals and to humans is, as he put it in his introduction to the *Global Guide to Animal Protection*, edited by Andrew Linzey (2013), "an affront to civilised living and a sin before God." In that same work, Archbishop Tutu wrote, "I have spent my life fighting discrimination and injustice, whether the victims are blacks, women, or gays and lesbians. No human being should be the target of prejudice or the object of vilification or be denied his or her basic rights ... But there are other issues of justice – not only for human beings but also for the world's other sentient creatures. The matter of the abuse and cruelty we inflict on other animals has to fight for our attention in what sometime seems an already overfull moral agenda."

I had the privilege of meeting Desmond Tutu on a number of occasions, in the UK, in South Africa, and in Canada. I first knew Desmond and Leah when Desmond was studying for a Master of Theology degree at King's College

London. He was a leader with a fine theological mind, and he wrote, again in the *Global Guide*, "It is a kind of theological folly to suppose that God has made the entire world just for human beings, or to suppose that God is interested in only one of the millions of species that inhabit God's good earth. Our dominion over animals is not supposed to be despotism. We are made in the image of God, yes, but God – in whose image we are made – is holy, loving, just. We do not honour God by abusing other sentient beings."

I was with 'the Arch' in Cape Town just days after he had been arrested for taking part in a demonstration. He called a Sacred Synod of his clergy that I attended. It took place in a church on a coloured township and began with a Eucharist. Half-way through the Eucharist, the doors of the church were flung open and the security police stood there. Desmond saw them and changed to praying in Afrikaans. It was a frightening moment but a brilliant move and the police just slipped away. Desmond was fearless in fighting injustice and cruelty.

A few years ago, I was preaching in Toronto Cathedral and Desmond was there for an international gathering

of the Order of St John. He came to a service in his purple cassock and I walked back to his hotel with him. As we waited to cross the road outside the Cathedral, a woman on a bicycle jammed on her breaks and said, "Has anyone ever told you that you look just like Desmond Tutu?" to which he replied, "I am Desmond Tutu. I am Desmond Tutu." She asked, "What are you doing here?" He replied, "I have been to pray. I have been to pray." Desmond was a great man of prayer. He prayed deeply and wept at the sins of the world. Writing in the introduction to the *Global Guide*, he lamented, "If it is true that we are the most exalted species in creation, it is equally true that we are the most debased and sinful. This realisation should give us pause ... There is something Christ-like about caring for suffering creatures, whether they are humans or animals."

We give thanks to God for Desmond Tutu, and for his passion for peace and justice, his love of God's creation, and for his gifts as a prophet, a pastor, and a person of prayer.

Dominic Walker, OGS

OBITUARIES

Sheila Twine

It is with sadness that we report the death of long-standing member Sheila Twine. Sheila was a supporter from ASWA's beginning. She will be much missed.

Revd Ken Hewitt

ASWA founding member and former treasurer, Ken Hewitt, died in October 2021 after a period of deteriorating health. He was a bachelor and lived with a succession of Siamese cats whom he adored.

THE ANIMALS ABROAD ACT: THE TIME IS NOW



The Government has announced a new Animals Abroad Bill, “to ban the advertising and offering for sale here of specific, unacceptable practices abroad.” A public enquiry relating to the bill ended in September 2021.

Why is this law important? Because tourism is driving animal cruelty.

I founded Save The Asian Elephants (STAE) to fight for this ancient, wondrous species, having witnessed extreme violence to them in India. To supply tourist attractions, baby elephants are brutally snatched from the wild, the mother killed trying to protect it. To compel submission for easy use in tourism, the babies are isolated, starved, beaten, stabbed, and ripped to, “break the spirits”. My shock at the screaming and crying of the babies was eclipsed by my feelings on learning of the UK market’s leading role in driving this atrocious trade.

Asian elephants play a unique ecological role as “mega-gardeners of the forests” which they nourish and sustain and on which untold species, including humans, rely for survival. Forests are the lungs of the Earth that lock in our carbon output, combat climate change, and maintain biodiversity. We destroy them at our peril. Whilst revered by the world, numbers of Asian elephants have crashed from their millions to 45,000 today, 40% of them in cruel captivity.

What’s gone wrong? The 1960s’ explosion in package tours accelerated elephant tourism in Southeast Asia, promoted with indifference to the terrible price paid by little elephants. Their daily lot is unnatural tricks, rides and games enforced by brutal violence. A life of torment, pain, and loneliness endured for tourists’ entertainment. Held down by chains and fierce wire bindings, without shade or water, malnourished, worked relentlessly in burning heat, they die broken by illness, exhaustion, and psychological distress.

Tourists, too, pay heavily for this exploitation. Elephants when provoked attack and kill. STAE’s evidence shows hundreds of tourists attacked, 242 fatally. Further, held in dank fetid captivity, when they exhale, sneeze, and spray water elephants transmit lethal airborne viruses like TB, and seemingly Covid-19, both global pandemics killing millions – dangers of which tourists are unaware.

Unethical elephant tourism fosters human trafficking. Uneducated, vulnerable ethnic minority groups are trafficked to handle elephants at unethical venues. Without training or experience they fall victim to many dangers, are often unpaid and, being stateless, face intense rights violations.

The UK’s shameful role in this atrocious trade is vast: there are many UK companies selling visits to brutal venues through hundreds of adverts. The figures keep rising. Industry self-regulation has proved futile for decades: voluntary, full of holes, with no monitoring or sanctions, and widely ignored. Both the industry fuelling the abuse and its profits are enormous.

Public and specialist backing for a ban is growing: polling in 2020 showed 90% support, and in a 2021 poll, 99.1% wanted penalties for those profiting. One hundred leading influencers back this proposed law, including the RSPCA, the Royal Veterinary College, veterinary schools, biologists, conservationists, churches, businesses, and leaders of Southeast Asia’s faiths.

STAE considers this law entirely suitable for all species and for adoption across the world, steering the market to ethical sanctuaries where elephants are observed from a respectful distance as they exhibit natural behaviour in herds.

Who knows the destiny of this ancient species, inhabitants of Earth long before humanity? What human beings have previously done so wrong, we can put right. We should see all species and their habitats as integral to Earth and its balance, their value intrinsic and not dependent on their utility to humans. We pray there is time for the elephants, and better days for all species, our brothers and sisters.

If you would like to find out more about STAE’s work or to make a donation, please visit our website (below). A petition for change can be found online at bit.ly/STAEpetition.

Duncan McNair, KHS

**Founder and CEO
of Save The Asian
Elephants**

stae.org



THE BIBLE AND...

Human encounters with wild animals.

This Bible study is designed to help an individual or small group to explore what the Bible says about our interactions with wild animals.

Mark 1.12–13

“And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.”

What does it mean that Jesus was “with the wild beasts?” Mark includes this detail in his account of Jesus’ time in the wilderness, but doesn’t explain in what way Jesus was with the wild beasts. Some interpret this as simply meaning that Jesus was deep in the wilderness, others that it highlights the fact that Jesus faced worldly danger as well as spiritual danger (wild

beasts being potentially dangerous). But others look at this line in a very different way – that right at the start of his ministry, Jesus, the new Adam, was restoring the way of life known in Eden, where humans and wild animals lived peaceably together. This idea has been taken even further, with the suggestion that, like the angels who waited on him, the wild beasts provided Jesus with comfort and companionship.

The idea of Jesus beginning his ministry by recreating Eden makes sense. Jesus is the new Adam, the model of humanity and what human behaviour should be. We know both from the creation narratives in Genesis 1 and 2 and from passages such as Isaiah 11.6–9 that God desires human beings to live in peace with other creatures, and for all creation to flourish together. Jesus doesn’t go into the wilderness and kill the wild beasts

or drive them away. He doesn’t exploit them or destroy their habitat. Instead, Jesus it seems is able simply to be alongside non-human creatures.

Questions for Groups:

How would you interpret Jesus being with the wild beasts?

What do the different interpretations, both those given in the reflection above and from your answer to the previous question, imply about how humans are meant to interact with wild animals?

Does the Church (or do individual Christians) have a responsibility to model an ‘Edenic’ way of living with other creatures?

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

COMMEMORATING ANIMALS IN REMEMBRANCE ACTIVITIES



As a rural church, animals are an important part of daily life. So, as we remembered 100 years of the British Legion Poppy we also wanted to pay tribute to the purple poppy. What resulted was a two week exhibition called ‘Remembering’.

St Michael and All Angels in Chalton is in Hampshire, and we were fortunate to have on loan the 18000 ‘Hayling poppies’ which were hand crafted in 2018. The panels of poppies were rearranged both inside and out to create an eye-catching display. In addition, we created displays on the origin of the poppy in remembrance, war poetry, those who died in service from our church, and the history of our area. Many individuals and groups, such as the Mothers Union and SAAFA contributed to our exhibition.

One of our feature exhibits was our display about animals that died in military service. A local primary school,

Kingscourt, set a project for their years 1,2, and 3 to find out about the purple poppy, which led to an amazing display of their work. Members of the church created a display of purple poppies and two purple wreaths that were laid at our lychgate memorial on Remembrance Day. The purple poppy display led to many interesting conversations and those visiting our exhibition have gone away much wiser.

To open our exhibition we held a Songs of Praise which featured elements of our exhibition, including a focus on the animals that died in military service. On the second Sunday of our two-week exhibition, we held a pet service to which we welcomed dogs, small animals, a goose, a chicken and some horses. For those too timid to come, their two-legged friends were invited to bring their photo so that all the animals that mean so much in our lives could be blessed.

Every day at lunchtime throughout the two weeks we had concerts, recitals, talks, crafts (for children and adults) along with lots of cups of tea over some very interesting conversations.

And how did this all start? A throwaway line in a PCC meeting about the colour of remembrance poppies. From that small beginning we have had such an amazing time and feel we have done something very worthwhile to raise the profile of the importance of animals in our lives.

Dr Coleen Jackson

Event Co-ordinator, Licensed Lay Minister

ASWA ANNUAL SERVICE

For Animal Welfare Sunday in October, we were delighted that one of the previous Animal Friendly Church winners, St Botolph's in Boston, Lincolnshire, agreed to host our special service.

St Botolph's or the Boston Stump as it is known locally, is a beautiful building. It is one of the largest Parish churches in England with one of the tallest medieval towers. The Rector, Revd Canon Alyson Buxton, made us very welcome and many of those with whom we had corresponded when St Botolph's submitted their entry for our Animal Friendly Church scheme were present.

It was lovely being able to gather again to celebrate the wonder and diversity of our animal friends in such a beautiful setting. ASWA's Chair, the Revd Dr Helen Hall, preached and ASWA Secretary, the Revd Sam Chandler, led the intercessions. There were also some very well-behaved

canine friends in the congregation which added to the occasion. A large population of birds congregate around the site of St Botolph's and at one point during the service the shadows of them all in flight reflected all around the cathedral which was very moving. It felt as if they were joining us in our celebration.

We are planning to be in Essex this year on Animal Welfare Sunday (Sunday 2nd October) at St Mary-at-Latton, Harlow. This is the Church where the Revd Lynn Hurry, one of our committee members, is Vicar, and also a previous Animal Friendly Church winner. In contrast to the Eucharist service we held at St Botolph's last year, this will be an afternoon animal blessing service, so do come and join us and bring your companion animals with you.

Sam Chandler



ASWA REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

It was wonderful to gather again at the Animals' War Memorial in Park Lane on Remembrance Sunday. With Covid still around, we were not sure how many people would turn up and were delighted that so many did, including lots of new faces. The service was led by ASWA Chair, the Revd Dr Helen Hall. ASWA Secretary, the Revd Sam Chandler read a poem, the Revd Professor Martin Henig led the prayers, and Dr Christina Nellist from Animals Interfaith Alliance read from Isaiah. Many had brought wreaths to lay at the memorial. Sam Chandler laid a wreath on behalf of ASWA and representatives from the Army Dog Unit of Northern Ireland were once again represented and laid their wreath.

We were delighted to be joined by PC Dave Wardell who spoke movingly about his amazingly brave retired police dog, Finn. Most of you will know that Dave has written a book called Fabulous Finn about this wonderful dog who was stabbed whilst on duty

and recovered. After returning to life as a police dog he eventually retired to live out the rest of his life with Dave and his family. On this occasion, Finn was unable to be at the service because he was undergoing veterinary treatment for a problem with his hind legs. He is being looked after by vet Noel Fitzpatrick of TV fame and those who follow Dave and Finn on social media will have seen him having his water therapy. We wish Finn well and will continue to pray for his recovery.

Do join us this year at the Animals' War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, 13th November at 3.00pm. We meet in the afternoon because the ASWA clergy who organise the service have commitments in their own churches in the morning. We would encourage you to attend this incredibly moving service and do feel free to bring your own wreath or tribute to the animals who serve during times of conflict.

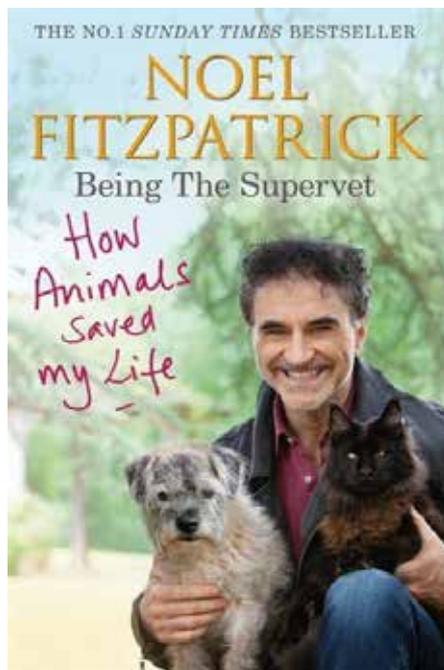
Samantha Chandler



BOOK REVIEW

BEING THE SUPERVET
How Animals Changed My Life
by Noel Fitzpatrick

Orion
ISBN 978-1-4091-8381-5
432 pp
Paperback
Price £7.99



Strictly speaking, this *Sunday Times* bestseller does not need a review, any more than its author, TV *Supervet* Noel Fitzpatrick, needs an introduction. If you watched *Supervet* on TV and want more animal stories from the same source, *Being the Supervet* is definitely a book for you, containing, as it does, several stories of very close and very special human and animal relationships. These stories are interwoven, as they invariably are in real life, and are dramatic, informative, and inspiring. I am not sure whether anyone has yet said “21st

century James Herriot,” but we probably should say exactly that.

Being the Supervet is also a book for you if you happen to enjoy celebrity gossip – not that we expect anyone to admit to it, of course. Noel Fitzpatrick is very open about his personal life and his struggles. One unexpected and dramatic narrative strand that runs throughout the book has to do with high-level professional complaints made against this veterinary hero.

As for me, I read *Being the Supervet* for a very personal reason, and a reason I would not wish upon anybody. My dog Fenra, an 11-year-old Belgian Malinois, was diagnosed with soft tissue sarcoma, and the only way to save her life was to amputate her leg. Our “GP” vet sent us to Fitzpatrick Referrals, and now Fenra turns many heads on our walk as she runs around with a leg implant, fitted by Professor Fitzpatrick.

From my personal experience, I can certainly confirm that all you read in *Being the Supervet* is true: the empathy, the innovation, the tenacity – true not only for the cases that made their way into the book, but for all who walk through the doors of Fitzpatrick Referrals with a tragedy on their hands. The *Supervet* fights like a tiger for the life of every animal, and supports the whole family in a very holistic and personal way. The first time he called on the phone late at night, I thought it must be bad news, for the man himself to ring, and to ring so late. It turned out that it is his custom to update the families personally, and he does work very long hours.

One thing I did not, frankly speaking, expect from *Being the Supervet*, and the thing that makes it not just an interesting, but a fascinating read, is the ideas. The

animal stories and celebrity revelations serve as a dramatic framework for ethical, metaphysical, and social ideas. Noel Fitzpatrick is a true visionary, and his book is, quite simply, bursting with ideas. I will give one example, and leave you to discover the rest.

The idea has, as its final goal, the elimination of animal experiments, and consists in acquiring scientific knowledge not from controlled experiments that require the death of the participating animals, but from naturally occurring animal diseases. If a structure could be established for reporting, analysing and systematising data from actual clinical veterinary practice, knowledge can be obtained that would make controlled (and contrived) animal experiments obsolete. On the one hand, it is easy to see how challenging such a project would be. It requires no less than a paradigm shift in science. It can antagonise animal protection campaigners who build their public message on the dissimilarity between animal and human diseases. It can alienate Christian believers that maintain an absolute ontological gap between humans and animals. But, on the other hand, it is a ground-breaking and thought-provoking idea that should, at the very least, start a dialogue in society, something that Professor Fitzpatrick would, by his own admission, welcome. As Plutarch famously pointed out, education is not about filling a vessel, it is about lighting a fire. And this is one thing that *Being the Supervet* does for those who care to read it with attention. It educates by lighting the fire of further thought and further dialogue.

Natalia Doran

TALKING POINT

Eco-tourism

Those of us who love nature and animals can delight in visiting places with spectacular vistas and amazing wildlife, both near and far. When managed carefully, there are many benefits to such ‘eco-tourism’ – vital income to local communities, funds that can be used to preserve and care for habitats and animal populations, an increased appreciation for the beauty of the natural world and for our fellow creatures. But there is also a downside – the carbon footprint involved in getting to these places, the strain put on resources by the presence of tourists (especially in peak

seasons and in particularly popular destinations), intrusion into the lives of wild animals, and the risk of reducing the lives of the local human communities to mere tourist attractions. So the question is, do the benefits of eco-tourism outweigh the risks? Or, perhaps, can the risks be managed and reduced until we’re left with nearly all benefit and no harm? How can we both encounter the magnificence of the natural world in its many diverse forms around the world and also respect the needs of the land, the animals, and the human communities in these places?

CUBS ABOUND!



I'm lucky enough to have a huge vicarage garden with a small copse and a large yew tree under which foxes dig out an earth in readiness for their cubs, or in extremely cold and wet weather.

For a number of years, I've left scraps of food out for them at night and have been privileged to see these beautiful creatures on a regular basis, although sometimes it's been a case of my torch just catching sight of their stunning amber eyes peering out of bushes at me.

But 2021 was quite different. In spring, I noticed two heavily pregnant vixens coming nearer the house during the day looking for food. I'd give them some dog food and then they'd snooze near each other in the warm sun. And then it happened. Both mamas began to take the food away with them or cache it in the garden among our flowers or vegetable patch, only to retrieve it later after they'd finished enjoying their siesta. I knew their cubs had arrived.

I almost exploded with joy the first time I caught sight of 10 adorable cubs in early May. Six of them belonged to one mama and four to the other. Our garden suddenly sprung into life with 14 foxes appearing on a daily basis, as two papas also began to come out and watch over their youngsters. The parents worked so hard with those mischievous little cubs who knocked over bird baths, dug up plants, and stole our dogs' balls and frisbees. But it was worth it for the great joy they brought with them, and I could barely wait to see them each day.

Visitors, too, would pop by for a quick peek, whilst others asked for photos. Reverend Geoffrey from our church, St Mary-at-Latton, began writing a regular blog about the foxes and now these two sets of cubs are known by people all over the world, thanks to email and social media.

They are such a delight, although in truth it's been quite hard watching them catch the odd pigeon or squirrel who once resided in the garden. The cubs weren't that interested in the captured creatures, but would rather just play with the feathers left behind. Luckily, there's no sign of them harming our many hedgehogs.

Foxes are such beautiful creatures, with their golden or red coats and magnificent brushes, and are surprisingly small animals when you get up close to them, which I often do when they come forward for a raw egg. They love eggs and the sight of one in my hand will cause any of them to lick their lips. Despite a bit of extra grub, these foxes remain wild, as they should do, and with the exception of one vixen, who has been around for three years, they will run away the moment I walk into the garden.

Sadly, as we entered the autumn season, two of the cubs were shot by someone using a pellet gun. Impossible to catch, they soon disappeared into the undergrowth beyond the garden and probably died from infection. We've not seen them since. I don't understand the mentality of people who would do this. It's not like there are millions of foxes roaming the streets of Harlow! I was in a supermarket recently when the cashier was moaning about there being more foxes. "Every night", she said, "I see yet another fox." My response was, "How do you know it's not the same fox you see every night?" "Mmmmm I hadn't thought about that" she replied, "but they're dirty creatures anyway, so I don't want them around here on our streets, we should get rid of them!"

I really don't understand that as they never cause us any problems and they are certainly creatures who have their benefits, for they provide excellent pest control as they prey upon mice, rats, and pigeons. They're also very

good at clearing up food they find lying around towns. I will admit that for some folk cubs may be seen as a nuisance as they will think nothing of digging up your prize flowers and veg, digging holes, stealing your dog's toys, and might even attempt to dig up a beloved buried pet. One of them brought a garden broom for us recently which they'd stolen from someone else's garden. Personally, I'd have been happier if they'd brought a spade to replant the potatoes and onions they had dug up. But for me the joys of seeing these magnificent creatures makes up for the odd bit of mess made by them. I don't suppose that cashier knew that foxes control their own population and that if we just get rid of them, (cull I presume she meant) then they'll breed even more. Wow, I could end up with hundreds in my garden! Now there's a thought.

Reverend Lynn Hurry



ANIMAL WELFARE SUNDAY SERMON

“Never work with children and animals” is an oft repeated piece of advice. Personally, I’ve always considered it somewhat unreasonable, given that in my experience, 99.9% of the world’s problems are caused by adult humans. Of course, it is true that animals and children have quite a lot in common. Both groups have a habit of being ruthlessly honest, direct, and difficult to completely control, which can lead to some embarrassment and puncturing of adult human egos, especially on stage.

However, the common traits of animals and children go deeper than this. Now, obviously, I am not, repeat, not, in any way implying that animals and children are identical, or even equivalent, for either practical or moral purposes. That should go without saying, and if anyone later complains that I have suggested in this sermon that animals and children are “the same”, they will be told very firmly that they haven’t listened! Having got that disclaimer out of the way, we can explore some of the characteristics which children and animals do, in fact, share and which the majority of adult humans sadly lack.

Both animals and children have a capacity to live in the moment, and to perceive and react to the world as it actually is, rather than buying into social norms and conventions. They do not collude with the convenient lies and fantasies that keep the rest of us from facing uncomfortable truths. Anyone who has ever worked with children in churches knows how quickly their questions get to the heart of issues, and the way they home in, like little heat-seeking missiles, on hypocrisy, or attempts at fudging any claims which don’t really stand up to scrutiny. Explaining to a perceptive eight year old why we can’t solve problems like food poverty or homelessness makes Prime Minister’s Question Time look like a walk in the park. They see answers like “well, it’s complicated”, or “it’s economics” for the pathetic and feeble excuses that they are.

Animals and children also know what it means to experience raw emotion like love and trust, and also, sadly, grief and pain, without filtering them

through reasoned analysis, or playing complicated games to keep powerful feelings at a distance. Anyone who has ever been close to a dog knows what unconditional love really looks like. Yet, how many of us still truly love unconditionally, without some transactional element? We might like to think that we do, but as already noted, adult humans have a talent for convenient self-delusion.

Frequently on Animal Welfare Sunday, we focus on the special position that human beings enjoy as stewards of God’s Creation. We remind ourselves of the burden of responsibility which this imposes, the immense trust which has been placed in our hands, and the frequent and catastrophic betrayals of that trust. This is appropriate, and sadly all too necessary. However, it is not the only important spiritual consideration to bear in mind when we address our relationship with animals. By its very nature, thinking about our position as stewards, entrusted with the care of other species and the planet that we all inhabit, means focusing on the position of power that we occupy. As stated, we need to do this, because it is part and parcel of confronting how we use and direct that power, and addressing where we fall short. Nevertheless, if we only think in those terms, we exclusively examine the abilities that we have, and that other animals lack. We are in grave danger of forgetting that other animals actually have capacities which many of us lack. This might not be flattering, but it is still true.

To make matters worse, we do not lack these capacities because we never had them. Interacting with children quickly teaches us that we once knew what it meant to see, and feel, the world as it truly is. The sad truth is that we abandoned this clarity of vision and openness of heart, we shielded ourselves behind walls of social conventions and polite fiction. I believe that part of Jesus’ message in today’s Gospel reading, in his challenge to his followers to become like little children, was an invitation to come out from behind those barriers. To see and experience and the beauty, and ugliness, of the current world, as children, animals and, indeed, God see it. Children and animals perceive

reality, as of course does God, but we so often choose not to.

It is difficult to open our eyes to the pain, suffering and injustice surrounding us, without trying to grab onto fabricated justifications and explanations that somehow make it more palatable. Unfortunately, in hiding from the full horror of the cruelty and unfairness of the world, we make it easier to avoid taking action to bring about meaningful change. Equally sad, we often find it surprisingly hard to enjoy ourselves. Children and animals play, and have happier and richer lives because of it. They don’t worry whether they are somehow undermining their dignity, or looking unintelligent. They are also open to wonder and fascination in everyday things that we often shrug off or fail even to notice. For example, falling snowflakes and dancing sunbeams are part of God’s Creation and taking delight in them is a form of worship, but we often ignore these gifts, or even reject them as an irritation. In this regard, a pack of wolves in the forest has retained a level of spirituality that most of us have thrown away, or at least push to one side most of the time.

So my invitation this Animal Welfare Sunday is not only to focus on what we can and should do for animals and the world we share with them, but also to be open to the lessons that our fellow creatures have to teach us. Amen.

Helen Hall
Chair, ASWA

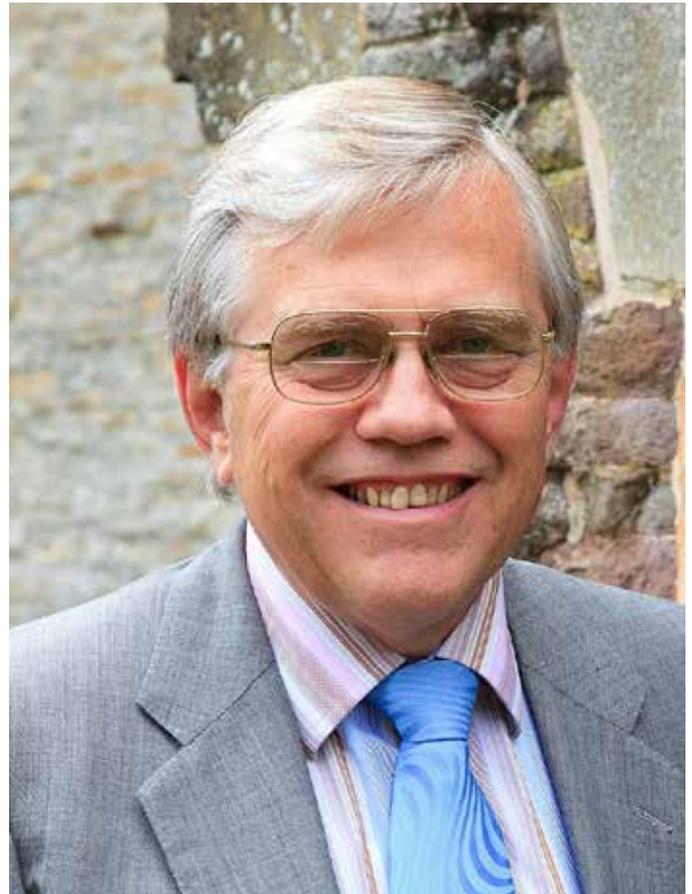
ASWA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

It's Election time again! There is, however, no postal voting form in this issue of *Animalwatch* because at the time of going to press the number of candidates for committee places does not exceed the number of vacancies. The two candidates looking to stand for another three-year term are the Revd Samantha Chandler standing for Secretary and Mr Keith Cottrell standing to be a committee member.

ASWA committee members are trustees, which means they have legal duties and responsibilities. The tasks of the committee are to manage the day-to-day running of ASWA, including the planning of ASWA services, commissioning and producing informational material, managing the budget, organising fund-raising events and the production of *Animalwatch*, to name but a few. You will find information about the candidates below.



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



Keith Cottrell: Keith's lifelong passion for animal welfare started as a child in Singapore. He joined ASWA some 25 years ago and has served on the committee since 2013. Since retiring he has been able to devote more time to God's animal kingdom and is encouraged with the progress and growing interest nationwide in animal welfare matters. He is also a trustee and actively involved with several other Christian charities. Married with one adult daughter, he lives happily near Bristol with his wife, three cats and a dog.



ANNUAL SERVICE FOR ANIMAL WELFARE SUNDAY

Sunday 2nd October at 3.00pm



All welcome

A family friendly service for Animal Welfare Sunday
with Blessing of animals included

Please bring your companion animals along

PREACHER: REVD SAM CHANDLER - ASWA SECRETARY



Venue: St Mary-at-Latton
The Gowers, Harlow, Essex
CM20 2JP



ARE YOU AN ANIMAL FRIENDLY CHURCH?



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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.

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For further details visit our website

www.aswa.org.uk

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ANGLICAN SOCIETY FOR THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS

PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire
RG27 8GT, UK. www.aswa.org.uk

Correspondance Secretary:

Revd Samantha Chandler

Tel/Fax: 01252 843093

Email: AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com

Treasurer: Dr Chris Brown

Editor: Revd Jennifer Brown

Email: animalwatch@jenbrown.org.uk

Membership Secretary:

Mr Keith Plumridge

Email:

aswamembership@btinternet.com

Patrons:

Dr Tony Campolo

Mr David Coffey MRCVS

Most Revd Stephen Cottrell
(Archbishop of York)

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