

111

Summer 2022

Price £2 (free to members)



animalwatch

PUTTING ANIMALS ON THE AGENDA OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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Cover image courtesy of Colin Marshall. <https://www.instagram.com/colinmarshallnaturephotography>

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!

Saturday 17 September

Online preaching workshop from the College of Preachers, 'Preaching Farmed Animal Welfare', led by Prof David Clough. For details and booking link, visit www.collegeofpreachers.co.uk/events

Saturday 1 October

Online preaching workshop from the College of Preachers, "'Preach the Good News to All Creation": Preaching to Promote Creation Care', led by *Animalwatch* editor, Jennifer Brown. For details and booking link, visit www.collegeofpreachers.co.uk/events

Sunday 2 October

Animal Welfare Sunday

ASWA Annual Service, St Mary-at-Latton, Harlow, 3pm. 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.



HELLO AND WELCOME TO ANIMALWATCH

Welcome to *Animalwatch*. In this issue, we focus on creating a kinder world. We also have an interview with the joint winners of the 2021 Animal Friendly Church Award and a report on our AGM, which was held in May.

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 Autumn magazine is **Monday 5th September 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 7 new members who have joined since the publication of the spring issue.

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

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ANIMALWATCH

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

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

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

ASWA MERCHANDISE

ASWA Christmas card now available!



This year, we are offering a mixed pack featuring some of the most popular designs done for us by Thea Olrog. The cards are now available to order, either on-line via our website or by sending a cheque made payable to ASWA. The price for this year's cards is £5.50 for

a 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.

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

The move to kinder farming

In May, the BBC (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-61565233>) reported on meat and dairy farmers in the UK who are transitioning to vegan farming. There are many factors driving this change, including labour shortages, costs associated with livestock farming and, in some cases, a desire to be more animal-friendly. Although the number of farmers making this move is small, it is a step towards a kinder world.

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 Church, Harlow, Essex. See the diary for more details.

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

Recently I was fortunate enough to be able to purchase a really interesting and informative book at our local SPCA book sale. The book is titled, *The travelling vet: from pets to pandas, my life in animals*, by Jonathan Cranston (2018, Allen & Unwin). The author is a veterinary surgeon based in the Cotswolds. He has treated over a hundred different species across five continents, including giant pandas in China and all types of wildlife in South Africa. The author has worked with a truly amazing range of species around the world, and his book includes a wonderful selection of stories about his experiences as a vet. There are also interesting facts about each animal. Anyone who is interested in animals will enjoy reading this book.

Anne Hemmings

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Once again, this year we met on Zoom on Wednesday 11th May at 3.30pm. We have found that more of you can attend when we have an on-line meeting.

Samantha Chandler agreed to another three-year term as Secretary and Keith Cottrell was also re-elected for a further three years. We are delighted to report also that Revd Professor Martin Henig has confirmed his willingness to serve a further three years as Vice President.

In her report, the Chair commented on the adverse effect the current economic climate is having on many animal charities. ASWA has donated £6,000 this year to animal charities here in the UK, in Afghanistan, and in Australia.

If anyone who did not attend would like to view a copy of the accounts and financial summary for the year, please contact the Secretary.

This year, we were pleased to welcome Mark Randell from Naturewatch Foundation as our guest speaker. In particular he spoke about his work in Ukraine, where he, as an ex-police officer, has been working with the

police force and campaigning to increase penalties for animal cruelty in the country. Naturewatch have a longstanding relationship with Ukraine and if our members are looking for a reliable animal welfare organisation to support working in Ukraine, we would wholeheartedly recommend Naturewatch.

Thank you to all who attended the AGM. It is great to have your support.

Samantha Chandler

ASWA Secretary

ASWA NEWS

Animal Friendly Church Winner Receives Eco Church Award

Congratulations to St Mary, Ticehurst, one of the churches to have won our Animal Friendly Church Award in 2020, as the church has now also been awarded The Eco Church Gold Award. St Mary's is the first church in their diocese to receive this distinction. The story of their journey and receiving the award can be found on p.10.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

AUSTRALIA

Positive moves for animal welfare



In the last *Animalwatch* I mentioned that the Ministers for Agriculture for the various States and Territories of Australia were considering, as they have been for many years, the future of the battery system for laying hens. I'm sorry to say, that this issue is ongoing, despite the fact that the cages are old and not being replaced. Hopefully that indicates that the Ministers will bear in mind that the battery system is now lacking investment and also that almost 50% of eggs sold in Australia are from free range production.

On a much happier note, I think this is a very encouraging development:

A new organisation has come into being in Australia recently- it is the Australian Alliance for Animals. The core groups forming this are: Animals Australia, Compassion in World Farming, Four Paws Australia, Humane Society International Australia, World Animal Protection Australia, and Voiceless. I have no doubt that the people involved are of the calibre to change things for the better for animals in Australia.

The RSPCA has not joined the Alliance at this point, though two high profile

members of staff of RSPCA Australia have left the RSPCA and become part of the Alliance.

Top of the list of concerns for many of the groups forming the Alliance is live exports. Interestingly, only in the last couple of days, Richard Mussell, appointed CEO of RSPCA Australia in January 2020, has come out strongly against live exports. Change is in the air? I hope so!

Last weekend we had a General Election and the result has given us a change of Government to the Labor Party, which has already committed to getting rid of live export of sheep to the Middle East. I expect there will be some opposition to this. We shall await developments.

Puppy farms – The New South Wales Government is currently conducting an inquiry into puppy farming, deputy-chaired by the Animal Justice Party's Emma Hurst MP. The inquiry recently concluded a series of hearings that featured testimony from welfare experts and animal rescuers. Before the hearings commenced, the inquiry received thousands of submissions from concerned members of the public expressing their opinion that puppy farming should be banned in NSW. The Animal Justice Party

will take their Bill to debate after the inquiry is completed.

So those are some of the things that are happening for animals in Australia. I feel there is hope, where there was very little previously.

Olga Parkes



SWEDEN

Return of sea eagles to Sweden

The sea eagle was common in Sweden a hundred years ago. They nested along the shorelines and were prolific all over Sweden. Unfortunately they suffered ruthless persecution and were hunted on a great scale. They were nearly extinct. In 1924 they were protected, just in time, as there were only 45 to 50 pairs left alive in Sweden. Thanks to protection they increased in numbers but in the 1950s they suffered badly under DDT, quicksilver, and PCB poisoning resulting in deaths and aberrations in their reproductive systems. Thanks to some extremely active volunteers the sea eagle population is now recovering and an estimated 700 birds are now living well in Sweden. They mate for life and their nest can be as big as 2 metres wide and weigh a ton!

Sandra Kinley

THE VEGGIE TRAVELLER

As we've emerged from covid lockdowns and travel restrictions, many people are once again travelling and eating out – and so the Veggie Traveller is back! Finding places to eat when away from home isn't always easy for the vegetarian or vegan traveller. But, if you know where to look, there's some great food to be had, even in unexpected places.

Woodstock, Oxfordshire – V-Giyan

For this instalment, the food came to the Veggie Traveller, rather than vice versa. V-Giyan is a vegan take-away based in Woodstock, Oxfordshire. They offer a range of vegan Punjabi dishes, and diners can choose from an a-la-carte menu or from their selection of meal boxes. We've ordered from them

several times and the food has always been excellent. Our favourites include the korma, the tofu saag, and the aloo tikki. If you live in or near Woodstock, you can collect your meal. Alternatively, V-Giyan deliver across Oxfordshire and to some areas in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire near the Oxfordshire border. Orders are placed on-line (www.veganpunjabi.delivery). It is possible to order several days, or even a week or more ahead, and they do recommend that you order in advance, as they have limited delivery slots in any given day. There are two other things to be aware of before ordering: there is a minimum order of £25, and it is a 'warm up at home' model – so there's no escaping the washing-up! It's worth it, though, for some great vegan curry.

If you've been inspired to try any of the places mentioned in the Veggie Traveller reviews, let us know. We'd love to hear about your experience, too.

*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.*



BECOMING VEGETARIAN - A PERSONAL STORY

I grew up on a traditional mixed family farm in the 1950s and 1960s, and loved all the animals we kept – cows, pigs, poultry, horses, dogs, and cats. From a very early age I would help my dad feed and bed down the animals. They grazed in the fields in summer and lived in the roomy traditional stone buildings on straw in the winter. I made pets of them, and as my dad treated them well, they were mostly very tame.

I got upset and cried when they went to market, and wouldn't eat meat from our own animals. I remember one bullock, Snowball, in particular. I loved Snowball, he was big and friendly and would let me cuddle up to him. We were sitting down for Sunday lunch one day when my dad announced it was Snowball. I couldn't touch my plate, and my dad was angry that I had ruined the occasion for everyone. However, I idolised my dad, and when he said we shouldn't be too sentimental, I just tried to accept it, and ate meat from other, unknown animals from the butcher.

Most of the farmers I knew were fond of their animals and coped by not thinking about their death. My dad was a good, kind person and treated his animals well. He was outraged by the cruelty of slaughter without pre-stunning, and I think he really did believe modern humane slaughter was possible. I can't explain how he reconciled himself with sending animals to market. I suppose he just did as his father and grandfather had done before him, without thinking too deeply about it, in the same way that many people accepted slavery in the past. He might have been upset if I'd become vegetarian in his lifetime, as if I were somehow criticizing his life's work, but I really wish I'd had the courage to think for myself and become vegetarian while he was alive so that I could have debated the issue with him and discovered what he really thought about it.

I later became a psychologist by profession, and looking back it is inconceivable how I could hold such contradictory views: I claimed to love animals, yet accepted the need to eat them. Classic cognitive dissonance. It was just the way I was brought up, and I respected my dad so much that I internalised all his views without question.

I remember one occasion when I accompanied my dad to Barnsley market, which had an abattoir attached. Anyone could wander in and out to watch the animals killed. This was in the late 1970s. I remember my cousin saying she often took her young daughter because the girl was amused and entertained by the killing, laughing as the bleeding pigs fell over.

I was shaken by this experience, and even my dad looked pale and shocked, though he would have actually helped with killing pigs at home during the War. He later told me that the older he got, the more soft-hearted he became, giving up earlier pastimes such as shooting rabbits. Even after all this, it never occurred to me to become vegetarian. I suppose I believed the outdated teaching we received in nursing school on the importance of meat in a balanced diet.

I first became aware of factory farms in my teens, and was shocked and disgusted when a neighbour started using battery cages for hens. I couldn't understand how his daughter could collect eggs without any apparent concern. To me it was a living hell for the hens. My dad refused to keep animals in such cruel conditions, and we gradually kept fewer and fewer animals. When the milk marketing board refused to collect small churns and demanded instead intensive production with tankers, we stopped selling milk and just drank it ourselves. We continued keeping a few cows and hens, because we liked having them around, but turned more to arable farming. I wasn't involved in the business, but liked helping on my days off. When we stopped keeping animals, I bought only free-range and organic milk, eggs, and meat, as mainstream farming became more industrialised and intensive.

Looking back, I'm not sure now if our animals were as happy as I had liked to think they were, but they look content enough on old photographs. It is amazing how our minds avoid cognitive dissonance by believing what we want to believe. Certainly, my dad and grandad took pride in their stockmanship and would have been ashamed to own ill, neglected, miserable-looking animals.

While my dad was alive, I never seriously questioned his vocation as a farmer. I clung to the myth of humane slaughter, like most people do if they even think about it. I have recently visited slaughterhouses again, and now know there is no such thing as humane slaughter.

As I became better paid, I supported financially more and more animal and environmental charities. At a Dogs Trust event several years ago, I was given a Viva! Leaflet. I'd never heard of Viva!, but it seemed a worthwhile charity doing good work, so I joined it without even realising that it promoted veganism. When I realised from the magazines that it did, it was as if the scales had fallen from my eyes and I consciously accepted what I had known deep down all my life – we have no right to kill and eat animals, they deserve to live happily as much as we do. I was then 60, and in this "road to Damascus" moment realised I couldn't justify killing animals for their meat any longer. I became vegetarian immediately, and once I had decided meat-eating was immoral, I had no subsequent doubts, second thoughts, or cravings for meat. I became ashamed of my former self-delusion and hypocrisy, and resolved to make up for lost time and my late conversion.

I obtained Peter Singer's books from Viva!, and realised just how appalling and unbearable the situation had become for animals. I couldn't believe how blind I'd been for nearly 60 years. I was also surprised to find I'd done a degree in English and Philosophy after my retirement without hearing of Singer's work on animal rights.

I was in hospital receiving cancer treatment when I saw on TV the undercover film taken by Animal Aid in the Thirsk slaughterhouse, which showed appalling torture inflicted

on sheep. I vowed there and then that I would devote what was left of my life to helping animals.

I just wish my enlightenment had come much earlier, so that I could have brought up my son as a vegetarian and campaigned for animals when I was younger and fitter. I still don't fully understand why it took me so long to stop eating animals, when I knew at some level even as a child that it was wrong. I now think children's aversion to meat is natural, something that has to be quashed by well meaning parents. I want now to put my insight and knowledge of farming to good use by describing the cruelty of slaughter to the uninformed public, and persuading farmers to change their practises for better welfare. They are not all bad people, just products of our meat-eating culture who have to be persuaded to face the implications of how our society treats animals. Not all care about their animals,

but some do, especially those who have managed to cling on to traditional ways of farming despite the pressures of agribusiness and the economy.

Of course I would like to see the entire world become vegetarian overnight, but it's going to take a lot longer, and in the meantime I want to grasp every opportunity, no matter how small, to improve conditions for animals here and now. I made a start with rescue sheep, but unfortunately my cancer became too disabling for me to get out and about, and I have to restrict myself now to financial support for animal charities. My son is now vegetarian, and my hope is that his generation will achieve what mine has failed to do, and create a world that is kind to animals and the planet.

Elizabeth Hurry

OBITUARY

Marcelle Williams



It is with great sadness that we report the death of Marcelle Williams, who passed away peacefully on 1st February this year. Marcelle was passionate about caring for animals. This was evident in all kinds of ways throughout her life, including the many years' work she did as an ASWA committee member.

Marcelle grew up with a keen interest in nature and animals, and achieved a degree in Horticulture at Wye College, Kent. All through her life she owned various animals, mainly dogs and cats for which she loved to care.

Marcelle felt very strongly about any kind of ill-treatment or cruelty to animals, and spoke out and wrote in condemnation of such issues, for example foxhunting. In particular, she would point out that research showed how cruelty to animals often led to cruelty to people too.

In keeping with her concerns she supported several charities working for animal welfare, such as Cats Protection League, Cinnamon Trust, and, of course, ASWA. Marcelle also supported The Dr Hadwen Trust (later renamed Animal Free Research). She even volunteered to take part in an experiment for the latter, as a 'human guinea pig'.

Marcelle believed that care for animals is absolutely in keeping with Christian faith, and was inspired by the vision of Isaiah 11. 6–9 speaking of a future where, 'The wolf will live with the lamb' (v6) and 'They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain' (v9).

This led to her organising Animal Blessing Services for over 20 years at All Saints Church Wokingham. In her later years, Marcelle was involved with The Pet Bereavement Support Service run by the Blue Cross and, with her dog, Rajah, 'Pets as Therapy'.

Marcelle received a credit from studying a course in 'Understanding the Feline/Human Interface' with the Animal Care College; she also received an Animal Benefactor Award from the Pal network for animals for helping to protect animals from cruelty.

Among her other interests were watercolour painting and cake making and decorating, which she was commissioned to do for various special occasions.

Marcelle's most enduring passion, however, was her concern for the welfare of animals, meaning the work of ASWA was very close to her heart.

INTERVIEW WITH ANIMAL FRIENDLY CHURCH WINNERS, THE RECTORIAL BENEFICE OF NEATH & ST MARY'S NEWTON WITH FLOWERY FIELD



We invited the two churches who were joint-winners of Animal Friendly Church 2021 to talk to us about winning the award. Here we share the responses to our interview questions from Lynda Newman of the Benefice of Neath and Sheila O'Flaherty of St Mary's Newton with Flowery Field.

Congratulations on winning this year's Animal-friendly Church award. What does it mean to you that your church has received this award?

Lynda: It was a great thrill to have even been considered, let alone know that we had won a national award. I realised that over a period of years we had been doing a lot with animals and praying for and visiting parishioners whose pets had died etc. It wasn't until I started correlating photos of various events that I realised we might have something which could go forward for consideration. I didn't think we would come even close! The joy it brought to the church community was wonderful and certainly gave us something to celebrate after the dark days of the pandemic.

Sheila: We're shocked, amazed, and delighted in equal measure. I remembered hearing about ASWA in the distant past and went on your website to see if I could find a suitable "animals welcome" sign or poster or something similar so that animals would bring their humans to church or to events in the church, as there's a belief that no animals are allowed, just like in shops etc. I still haven't found a poster. But I found your application form and we sent off our application to join. We didn't realise there was a competition until we won! Awesome!

Is being an animal-friendly church something that is important to a majority of the congregation?

Lynda: We are a nation of animal lovers, and the community around St Teilo's Church have strong links with farming and looking after horses. We would often

have lambs brought into church, and have been asked to bless farms and livestock. It seemed a natural progression to start holding an annual pet service in the village of Tonmawr. Pets from all other areas and churches within our Ministry Area have been brought along for a blessing and it's grown from strength to strength.

Sheila: The whole congregation is animal crazy so being animal friendly is important to us. The application form made us think about the things that we do, as well as opportunities for improvement, especially in our vast open graveyard and being more sustainable and eco-friendly.

Has winning this award helped to raise the profile of animal welfare in your church? Has it had any impact on how your church is viewed in the community?

Lynda: I think the Christian community is very much aware of the responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation. We acknowledge that life is sacred and that we have a great dependence on animals. We frequently talk about the wonder of creation and the responsibility we all have to look after it. Having animal friendly status has definitely impacted upon how the church is seen within the community, there is a sense of great joy that occurs when things evolve naturally and people can share in that joy together.

Sheila: We've an increasing number of pets (mainly dogs), joining us for church services and social events and the word is going around that all are welcome. If I'm talking to an animal's human caretaker, I make a point of inviting them both in for a look round. Once their fur baby goes in, their humans follow and they realise we mean it, relax and enjoy the experience.

We spend time talking to as many humans and fur babies as we can wherever we meet them – how could we not? Most of our regulars knows the mad vicar has a treat in her pocket for them and sometimes for their humans too.

Can you tell us about some of the animal-friendly things that your church does?

Lynda: We have had donkeys at Christmas and Palm Sunday, chicks at Easter, lambs in the spring and ducklings. We hold bug weeks in one of our churches where we invite school children to engage with the wildlife in the church yard. We have held 'walk and talk' sessions and people come along with their dogs as we walk together; we have been used as a venue for the training of Guide dogs for the blind; we have blessed farms and livestock, visited those parishioners whose pets have died, and we hold an annual pet service.

Sheila: Pet shows and pet services. The community are still talking about the last pet show. Animals are welcome to funerals and weddings. We hold baptisms during the morning service so there might be a dog or two. Covid meant our graveyard became overgrown which encouraged more wildlife, flowers, birds, and insects. We don't use any products that might affect this, and those tending family graves know this.

We use local produce and locally grown where possible. A number have chickens, so eggs are always plentiful. We have solar panels on the church hall, which also serves the church. We've become more rigorous about our recycling.

What advice would you give to other churches that want to be more animal friendly?

Lynda: It doesn't have to be a huge list of things, just have an awareness of what can be achieved with a minimum of effort. Start off small – God will do the rest!

Sheila: Join ASWA – the form covers areas we, as a church, hadn't considered so it made us stop and think and make changes.

Does the church have any plans to expand what they do for animals?

Lynda: We are always looking for new ways to be guided and open to ideas.

Sheila: Many people with mental health issues rely on their animals for support in many ways. By chatting to their animal, we're building a relationship with their human. We're exploring ways to develop this in conjunction with local services.

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your church?

Lynda: We are part of a large Ministry Area, and there is a great contrast between each of the churches. St Teilo's is in a rural area and on the far end of a small village. For such a small congregation is has a remarkable 'can do' attitude, open to new ideas. It is well supported by the rest of the community.

Sheila: We're registered as an Inclusive Church for humans and we're trying to be even more inclusive and welcoming until people realise bringing their fur babies with them is the norm.



ECO CHURCH GOLD AWARD – A FIRST FOR THE DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER



The church community of St Mary's, Ticehurst, in East Sussex, has for many years been aware of its connection with and responsibility to care for the natural world, its habitats and all its creatures. For over 30 years they have hosted a small flock of sheep in fenced off areas of their churchyard, to the delight of visitors. Three years ago, in the context of climate change and biodiversity loss, they wanted to explore this connection in a more focused way, theologically and spiritually, as well as through practical action, and this led them to register on A Rocha's Eco Church scheme. In 2020 they received ASWA Animal Friendly Church status, and were surprised and delighted to become joint winners of the Animal Friendly Church of the Year Award. Today they are the proud owners of the first Gold Eco Church Award in their Diocese of Chichester.

The small Eco Church team did lots of homework – learning from experts and from other churches – before embarking on an ambitious churchyard project. Areas of sheep pasture in the churchyard are full of ants' nests and other insects, and so already there was plenty of food for small mammals. To build on this, they created areas of summer meadow, which not only look stunning, with ox-eye daisies, meadow buttercups, lesser knapweed and other wildflowers, but the flower seeds provide lots of food for the birds. The local Scout Beaver group have put together bird and bug boxes and a bat roost, and by the time you

read this, will have constructed an impressive bug hotel. The bird boxes are always full of cosy sheep's wool. All the animal homes, including a hedgehog house and owl box, were handmade and donated by a local woodworker. The next challenge is to install swift boxes in the belfry.

Any actions that they take provide opportunities to inspire wider reflection on individual lifestyle choices. They invited the community to help them count wildlife during the Churches Count on Nature event, which was trialled for the first time last June, and they used this initiative to encourage a bit of rewilding in gardens. Last September they were determined to raise awareness around climate change and biodiversity loss as the world approached COP26, and so they started Creation Season with a Climate Sunday service and held a green festival, The Great Big Green Week, which is a Climate Coalition initiative. This was hard work for a small rural community, but hugely rewarding. They ran swap shops, provided forums for discussion, put on nature-themed film shows (*My Octopus Teacher* and *Fantastic Fungi* are particularly recommended), hosted talks, held a tree planting event, invited community groups to put on activities in the churchyard, and inspired the local primary school to take part with environmentally-themed art and poetry competitions. Their best attended event of all was a COP26-themed workshop led by their local MP. They were so inspired by the community's response – which has also resulted in partnering to create a new environmental group for the village – that they are planning to be even more ambitious this year.

They take every opportunity to reflect theologically (as well as creatively) on all their activities through worship and teaching. Just one example is their hugely popular Pet Service which enables deep reflection on our relationships and interconnectedness with all God's creatures and our deep moral failure in this regard. You can learn more about them by clicking on the Eco Church link on the home page of their website: <https://www.ticehurstandflimwell.church/>

Penny Evans



YOUNG MEMBERS' PAGE

Welcome to our young members' page. This page features in the summer issue of *Animalwatch* each year. We'd like to make this your space, and to do that we need contributions from our under-18s readers. We want to hear from you! And if you have a suggestion for a feature to add to this page, do let us know.

SHACKLETON SEARCHES THE SCRIPTURES



Hi! My name is Shackleton. I'm named after a famous explorer, and I've been asked to help you explore the Bible to learn more of what it says about animals. As we look at the Bible passage, younger readers may want to read the story and think about these three questions:

1. What is this passage about?
2. What does it tell us?
3. Why is it special?

Older children and teenagers may want to dig deeper (I love digging!) and tackle the questions that follow the passage. The important thing is to think about the story and what it means for your life and our life as a Church today.

Luke 10.25-37

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.'

The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

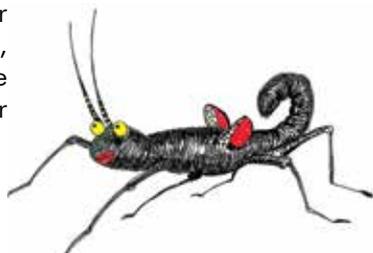
- What can this passage teach us about how important it is to be kind to others?
- The people listening to Jesus would have thought of Samaritans as, if not exactly enemies, then at least very different and 'other'. Humans also think that we are different and 'other' when compared to non-human animals. Can this parable help us to think differently about our responsibility to animals?
- Do you think that our duty to 'go and do likewise', that is to show kindness to those in trouble or need, is limited to other humans or does it also extend to animals?

Bible quotation from *The New Revised Standard Version*, copyright 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

HILDA'S HIGHLIGHT

Slow Worms

Now that it's summer and the sun is out, you might see reptiles basking in the sun, including the slow worm. Slow worms aren't worms and, although they look like them, they aren't snakes, either. They are legless lizards. They can often be found in gardens, so you've got a pretty good chance of seeing one if there are any in your area. Slow worms are prey for other species, including snakes, and they sometimes use their very stinky poo to deter predators!



ACTIVITY: CREATE A MINI-HABITAT

Even if you don't have a garden, you can create a mini-habitat to be a safe haven and space for wildlife to live. Your mini-habitat can be on a patio, balcony, or anywhere you have a bit of space outside. To create a bug house, all you need are some sticks and string. Bundle your sticks and tie the bundle with string so it doesn't fall

apart. Creepy-crawlies will happily make a home in it! Water is also great, and you don't need a big pond! If you have an old bowl or dish that's no longer used in the kitchen, you can put that out as a ground-level birdbath that will also provide drinking water for wildlife. That's really useful in hot weather! Just make sure the water is

clean and it's not too deep for small animals to get out if they fall in. If you can, you might also want to put some native flowering plants in pots around your mini-habitat. Look for things that are pollinator-friendly to attract bees, butterflies, and more! Once you've made your habitat, send us a photo to put in the next Young Members' Page.

DOMINION WITH COMPASSION?

Genesis 1:26 tells us that God gave us dominion over the animals of the earth. To have dominion is to master. True mastery requires us to understand that which we are to master. A musician cannot master the piano unless they understand the instrument. We cannot master the animal kingdom, unless we understand animals. And if we want to understand animals, shouldn't we consider our attitude toward them?

I choose to be a vegan. There are many reasons for being so, including health and ethical reasons. However, since becoming a Christian I now believe the most compelling reasons for this choice are found within the pages of the Bible. Right from the start, in Genesis 1, God was pleased with all his creation: "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). In the creatures of the sea and every winged bird God saw that it was good (Genesis 1.21); in the living creatures of the ground, livestock, and wild animals, God saw that it was good (Genesis 1.25). In Genesis 1.28 God calls human beings to be stewards over every living creature. The Bible reminds us that we are responsible to God for the way in which we treat God's creation. If, then, we treat God's creation with contempt, we are effectively treating God with contempt.

Genesis also has some challenging passages. For example, in Genesis 3:21, God, "made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them." This suggests that God must have killed an animal to provide clothing for Adam and Eve. Does that mean that because God did that, we can use animals how we wish? Perhaps not. Romans 8:32 tells us, "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave

him up for us all how will he not also, along with him graciously give us all things?" So we only have to look to Jesus to realise God's love for us. He made the heart-breaking sacrifice of his only Son because he loves us so much. God loves all of his creation, but could it be that his compassion for Adam and Eve was such that God chose to sacrifice something of his beloved creation for them? If so, does that give us the right to do the same? We should think carefully about the reasons we might choose to sacrifice parts of God's creation.

God's mercy is over all his creation, as described in Psalm 145.9, "The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made." If we are made in God's image, how can we reflect his mercy on all that he has made us responsible for? God gave us dominion over creation. What kind of God do we as Christians make known through our interpretation of 'dominion' and the way in which we treat animals? All of life on earth has been created through God's abundant love. We have a special calling to reflect that abundant love for all creation. Then, if we follow that calling, we can glorify God in true worship alongside all God's creation:

"Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, 'To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!'" (Revelation 5:13)

Jacqueline Wood

TALKING POINT

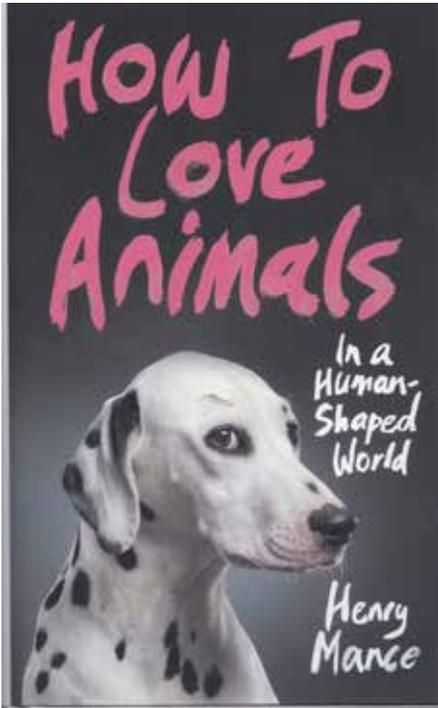
Is it what we say or what we do?

In this issue of *Animalwatch*, the focus is on creating a kinder world. We may want to live in a way that is kinder to our fellow humans, other creatures, and the planet, but how do we convince others to do the same, especially in times of financial hardship for many? There are many convincing arguments that can be made for a kinder lifestyle, both in terms of impact on the planet and our own wellbeing, not to mention arguments that can be made from scripture. But is that enough? Do we also need to demonstrate a kinder way of living and show through our own actions that such a lifestyle isn't about gloom, self-denial, and asceticism, but is genuinely joyful?

BOOK REVIEWS

HOW TO LOVE ANIMALS IN A HUMAN-SHAPED WORLD
By Henry Mance

Jonathan Cape
ISBN 978-1-787-33208-9
387pp Hardback
Price £20.00



This book is both challenging and inspirational; depressing and heartening. The early chapters are particularly difficult for anyone who is sensitive and has a powerful imagination, as Mance doesn't shy away from describing in some detail the horrors experienced by animals reared in factory farm conditions, and the realities of a slaughterhouse. There is, however, light in the darkness, as he also explores innovations being made in farming, such as work to sex chicks in the egg, so as to end the practice of killing male chicks soon after hatching. He also investigates the commercial alternatives to eating animals that are being developed, including lab-grown meat. There are positive stories out there, even if they are, for the moment, stories of small-scale endeavours.

Sadly, fishing is a large-scale business, as Mance demonstrates. The harms and horrors of both factory fishing and fish farming are plainly laid out in the chapter 'the ocean always loses.' This chapter is followed by a chapter on hunting, which those who are opposed to the killing of animals for food might find particularly difficult. This is not because the descriptions are particularly brutal, but simply because

Mance doesn't, as one might expect, reject hunting as unethical. He does make the case against trophy hunting, but comes to the conclusion that deer hunting, for example, is a less cruel way to obtain meat than farming, in that the animals are (ideally) killed quickly and prior to that have lived their lives in their natural habitat engaging in their natural behaviours. He also makes the point that humans have so unbalanced eco-systems that, in some places, we are the only predator left, and hunting, or culling, is less cruel than allowing animals to starve to death when their populations exceed food supply, or allowing a population of one animal to expand to the point where other species are out competed for food.

The later chapters of the book look first at ways in which we may think we're helping animals but might not be, such as zoos. The book ends on a rather ambiguous note – there are things we can do: we can change how we think about animals and we can change how we behave and live. The question is, will we. It is possible to love animals in a human-shaped world. Whether we embrace that possibility is, of course, up to us.

Jennifer Brown

PEOPLE FOR ANIMALS TRUST – ANIMAL WELFARE IN FARIDABAD, INDIA

We have been contacted by the People for Animals Trust in Faridabad, near Delhi in India. They have been working in very challenging conditions in the field of animal welfare since 2007. The organisation is headed up by a man called Ravi Dubey.

Ravi explains, "Here the plight of animals is very bad. Animals of all kinds are living on the streets: cows, donkeys, dogs, cats, and monkeys. The charity is always busy, treating sick and injured animals and providing them with shelter."

Ravi describes a typical incident, "Our animal ambulance rescued a cow who has been deliberately attacked with acid. Sometimes people do this to keep them away from fields of crops. There are few animal welfare laws here.

"Here in India, summer temperatures reach around 45 degrees centigrade and there is always a scarcity of water. We run 'Project Summer Lifeline' and provide fresh water to street animals year round, filling our water tubs with the help of our own water tanker. We

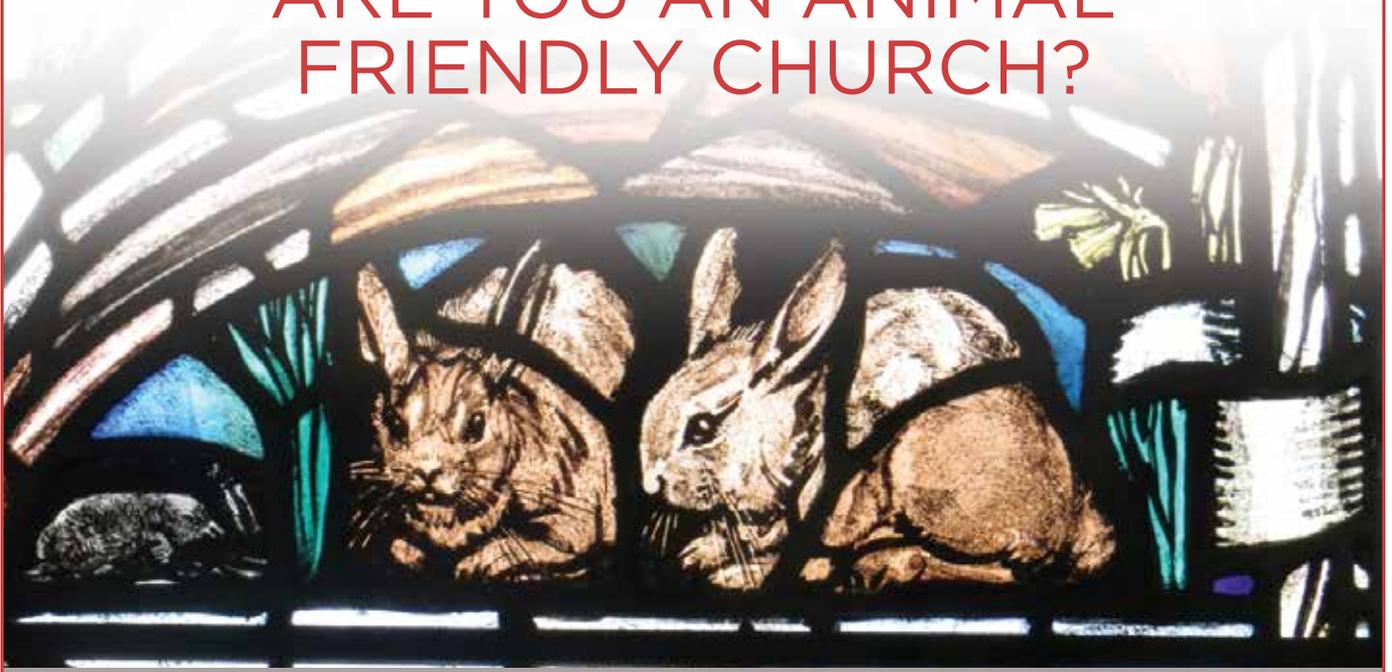
have also made an artificial pond in the forested area, using a base of bentonite clay providing water for wild animals."

For those of you who are on Facebook, People for Animals Trust, Faridabad provides regular updates on their page. If you would like to donate towards their work, you can do so via their Facebook page or on their website, <http://www.pfafaridabad.com>

Sam Chandler



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

THEY ALSO SERVED

Remembering the Animals of War



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

Sunday 13th November – 3.00pm

Speaker: Jenny Seagrove
Actress and Trustee of Mane Chance Sanctuary.

Further details:

Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals

Tel: 01252 843093 **Email:** AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com

www.aswa.org.uk

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



ANGLICAN SOCIETY FOR THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS

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