



**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS  
September 30, 2018  
4 p.m.**

*Priest:* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **AMEN.**

May God who is wonderful in all His works, be with you all.

*Minister or appointed lector:*

The animals of God's creation inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the fortunes of human existence and have a part in human life. God, who confers His gifts on all living things, has often used the service of animals or made them symbolic reminders of the gifts of salvation.

Animals were saved from the flood and afterwards made a part of the covenant with Noah (*Genesis 9: 9-10*). The paschal lamb brings to mind the Passover sacrifice and the deliverance from bondage in Egypt (*Exodus 12: 3-14*); a giant fish saved Jonah (*Jonah 2: 1-11*); ravens brought bread to Elijah (*1 Kings 17: 6*); animals were included in the repentance enjoined on humans (*Jonah 3: 7*). And animals share in Christ's redemption of all of God's creation. We, therefore, invoke the divine blessing on these animals through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi. As we do, let us praise the Creator and thank Him for setting us over other creatures of the earth. Let us also ask Him that, remembering our human dignity, we may walk always in His law.

*Minister (M) and People (P) recite Psalm 8 (Good News Translation) responsively :*

*M:* O Lord our God, how wonderful is your name in all the earth.  
O Lord, our God, your greatness is seen in all the world!  
Your praise reaches up to the heavens;  
it is sung by children and babies.

You are safe and secure from all your enemies;  
you stop anyone who opposes you.

*P:* O Lord our God, how wonderful is your name in all the earth.

*M:* When I look at the sky, which you have made, at the moon  
and the stars, which you set in their places . . .  
what are human beings, that you think of them;  
mere mortals, that you care for them?

*P:* O Lord our God, how wonderful is your name in all the earth.

*M:* Yet you made them inferior only to yourself;  
you crowned them with glory and honor.  
You appointed them over all creation: sheep and cattle,  
and the wild animals, too;  
the birds and the fish and the creatures in the seas.

*P:* O Lord our God, how wonderful is your name in all the earth.

**PRAYER OF BLESSING**

*Priest:* The Lord be with you

*All:* **And also with you.**

*Priest:* Let us pray.

Almighty God, the author and giver of every gift,  
Animals also are a part of the way you provide help for our needs  
and labors.

We thank you for that blessing, and we pray through the prayers of  
St. Francis of Assisi, that you will continue to make available for  
our use the things we need to maintain a decent human life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

*(After the prayer of blessing, as circumstances suggest, the priest  
or other ordained minister may sprinkle those present and the  
animals with holy water)*

**THE BLESSING OF EACH PET (INDIVIDUALLY)**

*Priest or other ordained minister:*

“N. *(name of animal)*, may you be blessed in the Name of the  
Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

May you and N. *(name of the guardian)* enjoy life together and find  
joy with the God who created you.”

**CONCLUDING RITE**

May God, who created the animals of this earth as a help to us,  
continue to protect and sustain us with the grace His blessings  
bring, now and forever. **AMEN**

**DISMISSAL** *(Priest or Deacon)*

Go in peace and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia

*All* Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia

