

October 7, 2018

3:00 p.m.



# St. James Episcopal Church

Greeneville, TN

organized 1842

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## Blessing of the Animals



*St. Francis of Assisi*

### **WELCOME TO ST. JAMES!**

A special welcome to **EVERYONE!** We are glad you are here and we pray that God will bless our time together. Please meet with us after the service for conversation. You will find us to be a growing and active community of friendly people who will welcome you. If you have any questions, wants, needs, or if you would like information about participating more fully in the life of the church, we invite you to take a Welcome Booklet, complete the card inside and give it to the priest. You may call us at **423.638.6583** or visit us on-line at **[www.StJamesGreenEville.org](http://www.StJamesGreenEville.org)** to see how we might be able to respond to your needs. We hope to see you again soon!

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## THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

*Priest* Bless the Lord, all you his creatures,  
*All* **And forget not all his benefits.**

*Priest* Let us pray.

Most High, Omnipotent Good Lord, grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may, for love of you, delight in your whole creation with perfectness of joy. O God, you have made us and all living things, but you are even more wonderful than what you have made. We thank you for giving us these pets who bring us joy. As you take care of us, so also we ask your help that we might take care of those who trust us to look after them. By doing this, we share in your own love for all of creation. We ask this in Jesus' name.

*All* **Amen.**

**Hymn: “All things bright and beautiful”**

***Refrain:***

***All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,  
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.***

**Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings,  
he made their glowing colors, he made their tiny wings. *Refrain***

**The purple-headed mountain, the river running by,  
the sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky. *Refrain***

**The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun,  
the ripe fruits in the garden, he made them every one. *Refrain***

**He gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell  
how great is God Almighty, who has made all things well. *Refrain***

## Reading

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Genesis 1:24-31

“Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ‘As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.’”

*Reader* This is The Word of the Lord.

*All*     **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm** 104:10-25 (*said responsively by full verse, men = even verses, women = odd verses*)

- 10 You send the springs into the valleys; \*  
they flow between the mountains.
- 11 **All the beasts of the field drink their fill from them, \***  
**and the wild asses quench their thirst.**
- 12 Beside them the birds of the air make their nests \*  
and sing among the branches.
- 13 **You water the mountains from your dwelling on high; \***  
**the earth is fully satisfied by the fruit of your works.**
- 14 You make grass grow for flocks and herds \*  
and plants to serve mankind;
- 15 **That they may bring forth food from the earth, \***  
**and wine to gladden our hearts,**
- 16 Oil to make a cheerful countenance, \*  
and bread to strengthen the heart.

- 17 **The trees of the LORD are full of sap, \***  
**the cedars of Lebanon which he planted,**
- 18 In which the birds build their nests, \*  
and in whose tops the stork makes his dwelling.
- 19 **The high hills are a refuge for the mountain goats, \***  
**and the stony cliffs for the rock badgers.**
- 20 You appointed the moon to mark the seasons, \*  
and the sun knows the time of its setting.
- 21 **You make darkness that it may be night, \***  
**in which all the beasts of the forest prowl.**
- 22 The lions roar after their prey \*  
and seek their food from God.
- 23 **The sun rises, and they slip away \***  
**and lay themselves down in their dens.**
- 24 Man goes forth to his work \*  
and to his labor until the evening.
- 25 **O LORD, how manifold are your works! \***  
**in wisdom you have made them all;**  
**the earth is full of your creatures.**

## **Gospel**

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

Matthew 6:25-33

Jesus said, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you--you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed

your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

*Reader* This is the word of our Lord

*All*     **Thanks be to God.**

## **Reflection**

### **The Prayers**

*Leader* Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us; for the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea;

*All*     **We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader* For the richness of the mountains, plains and rivers;

*All*     **We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader* For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women;

*All*     **We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader* For all creatures that breathe, and move, and have life;

*All*     **We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader* For the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers and trees;

*All*     **We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader* For the trust you have shown in giving into our care these, our pets;

*All*     **We thank you, Lord.**

*Leader* That each pet here may be treasured with care;

*All*     **We pray to you, Lord.**

*Leader* That we may love and honor all your works, O God;

*All*     **We pray to you, Lord.**

*Leader* That we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation;

*All*     **To the honor and glory of your name, now and forever, we pray to you, Lord.**

## The Blessing of the Animals (*individually*)

*You are invited to bring your pet forward for an individual blessing.  
Please introduce yourself and your pet to the priest.*

“*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 owner)* enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you.”

## The Blessing Prayer

*Priest* The Lord be with you.

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

*Priest* Let us pray

Most high, almighty Lord, our Creator, yours are the praise, the glory, the honor and all blessings! To you alone do all things belong. Be praised for giving us the animals, birds and fish which fill your world. May we think of you and thank you when we play with and care for our pets. Be praised for making us so happy to have our pets and to have them to play with. We ask you, Lord, that we may be good to our pets always, so that they may be happy also. Help us always to take care of them so that they will be healthy. O God, your world is wonderful. May we all come into your even greater world of the kingdom of heaven where we shall see even more wonderful things and where we shall live and love for ever. This we ask to your eternal praise, and to our blessing. **Amen.**

A prayer attributed to St. Francis: (*pray together*)

**Lord, make us instruments of your peace.**

**Where there is hatred, let us sow love;**

**where there is injury, pardon;**

**where there is discord, union;**

**where there is doubt, faith;**

**where there is despair, hope;**

**where there is darkness, light;**

**where there is sadness, joy.**

**Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;**

**to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.**

**For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;**

**and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.**

*(The Book of Common Prayer 1979, page 833)*

Hymn:        ***“This is my Father’s world”***

**This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears  
all nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought  
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas, his hands the wonders wrought.**

**This is my Father's world, the birds their carols raise,  
the morning light, the lily white, declare their Maker's praise.  
This is my Father's world: he shines in all that's fair;  
in the rustling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me everywhere.**

**This is my Father's world, Oh, let us not forget  
that though the wrong is great and strong, God is our Father yet.  
He trusts us with His world, to keep it clean and fair,  
all earth and trees, all skies and seas, all creatures everywhere.**

### **Benediction**

*Priest* May God, the Creator of all that is, God the Redeemer of all Creation, and God the life giving Spirit, bless you all, now and forever.

*All*        **AMEN.**

### **Dismissal**

*Priest* Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

*All*        **Thanks be to God!**

About St. Francis of Assisi (*from Lesser Feasts and Fasts*)

Francis, the son of a prosperous merchant of Assisi, was born in 1182. His early youth was spent in harmless revelry and fruitless attempts to win military glory.

Various encounters with beggars and lepers pricked the young man's conscience, and he decided to embrace a life devoted to Lady Poverty. Despite his father's intense opposition, Francis totally renounced all material values, and devoted himself to serve the poor. In 1210 Pope Innocent III confirmed the simple Rule for the Order of Friars Minor, a name Francis chose to emphasize his desire to be numbered among the "least" of God's servants.

The order grew rapidly all over Europe. But, by 1221, Francis had lost control of it, since his ideal of strict and absolute poverty, both for individual friars and for the order as a whole, was found to be too difficult to maintain. His last years were spent in much suffering of body and spirit, but his unconquerable joy never failed.

Not long before his death, during a retreat on Mount La Verna, Francis received, on September 14, Holy Cross Day, the marks of the Lord's wounds, the *stigmata*, in his own hands and feet and side. Pope Gregory IX, a former patron of the Franciscans, canonized Francis in 1228, and began the erection of the great basilica in Assisi where Francis is buried.

Of all the saints, Francis is the most popular and admired, but probably the least imitated; few have attained to his total identification with poverty and suffering of Christ. Francis left few writings; but, of these, his spirit of joyous faith comes through most truly in the "Canticle of the Sun," which he composed at Clare's convent of St. Damian's. The Hymnal version begins:

*Most High, omnipotent, good Lord,  
To thee be ceaseless praise outpoured,  
And blessing without measure.  
Let creatures all give thanks to thee  
And serve in great humility.*



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