

Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Blessing of the Animals
Contemplative Eucharist – October 6, 2024

INVOCATION

Glorify the Lord, all you works of the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

I The Cosmic Order

Glorify the Lord, you angels and all powers of the Lord,
O heavens and all waters above the heavens.

Sun and moon and stars of the sky, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, every shower of rain and fall of dew, *
all winds and fire and heat.

Winter and Summer, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O chill and cold, *
drops of dew and flakes of snow.

Frost and cold, ice and sleet, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O nights and days, *
O shining light and enfolding dark.

Storm clouds and thunderbolts, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

II THE EARTH AND ITS CREATURES

Let the earth glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O mountains and hills,
and all that grows upon the earth, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O springs of water, seas, and streams,
O whales and all that move in the waters.

All birds of the air, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O beasts of the wild, *
and all you flocks and herds.

O men and women everywhere, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

III THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Let the people of God glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O priests and servants of the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O spirits and souls of the righteous, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

You that are holy and humble of heart, glorify the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

DOXOLOGY

Let us glorify the Lord: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord, *
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

INVOCATION FOR AUTUMN

By the stamina of elk, cedar, and selenite,
By the action-taking of antelope, thyme, and onyx,
By the hunting of weasel, forsythia, and rhodonite,
By the camouflage of fox, coriander, and alexandrite,
By the sharing of owl, white cherry, and emerald,
By the abundance of buffalo, potato, and green
tourmaline,

By the gathering of squirrel, corn, and gold,
By the give-away of turkey, orange tree, and bloodstone,
By the nurturance of turtle, pineapple, and smoky quartz,
By the gentleness of deer, baby's breath, and blue quartz,
By the grace of swan, yellow jasmine, and jade,
By the teaching of wolf, olive tree, and coral,
By the power of horse, mistletoe, and pearl,

May the aid, blessing, and company of all the wild Autumn creatures be mine and thine this harvest season.

Silence

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke 17:11-19.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

PRAYER OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

**Lord, make us an instrument of Thy peace.
Where hate rules, let me bring love.
Where malice, forgiveness.
Where disputes, reconciliation.
Where error, truth.
Where doubt, Belief.
Where despair, hope.
Where darkness, Thy light.
Where sorrow, joy!**

**O Master, let me strive more to comfort others
Than to be comforted,
To understand others than to be understood,
To love others, more than to be loved!
For he who gives, receives,
She who forgets herself, finds,
They who forgive, receive forgiveness,
And dying, we rise again so eternal life.**

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Great Creator, we assemble with all your creatures in this circle of life.

We ask you to join our circle and celebrate with us.

Great Creator, as we join in celebration with you and all creation,

We ask for your blessing, your shalom, on the creatures present here that we love and on all creatures celebrating in the wild.

In the name of God, who creates all life, In the name of Jesus the Christ, who redeems all life,

And in the name of the Spirit, who renews all life, We cry with all in the circle of life:

Shalom! Shalom! Shalom! May your blessing come!

THE PEACE

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

People greet one another in the name of the Lord.

We offer gifts of money, bread and wine to show that all we have and all that we are comes as a gift from God.

The Holy Communion

It is recommended that people stand as they are able throughout the following prayer.

The Lord is here.

God's Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to offer thanks and praise.

*We give thanks for the wonderful gift of reflective awareness that allows us to recognize and name the presence of a Creator Spirit, we call God, that is beyond all imagining in our universe.

Everything we have everything we see, everything we do, everyone we love and everyone who loves us reveals the Sustaining Presence of God and our total dependence on it.

We marvel and wonder at the size and complexity of our universe. We marvel and wonder at the development of life on this planet. We give thanks for the Creative Presence that "charges" this life and all that exists. We recognize that human life gives God a particular way of coming to expression, and that in us the Spirit can sing and dance, speak and write, love and create.

Conscious that we live, move, and have our being in this Spirit, we give thanks for people throughout history who have affirmed this loving presence in all people and who have challenged people to give witness to this by lives characterized by mercy, gratitude, compassion, generosity, and forgiveness.

We especially give thanks for Jesus of Nazareth who loved so greatly and taught so clearly and courageously the he was able to set people free from images and ideas and religious practices that bound them by fear and a false sense of separation from the Spirit of all Life.

Through him we have learned how our loving is a sharing in the life of this Spirit, In him we see the Spirit of Life challenging all of us to make its presence on earth more visible.

We remember the night before he died, When he took bread, gave thanks for everything he had, broke the bread and shared it with his friends asking them to remember his total surrender to the Spirit of Life and Love and his enduring love for each of them.

We take this bread and eat it, Mindful of the Spirit at works in our lives, in the ordinary, in the everyday and in our desire to love as generously as Jesus loved.

Likewise, knowing his life was to be poured out Jesus shared the cup of wine with his friends. We drink now, mindful of our bonding with Jesus and with all people through the Spirit at work in our lives.

We believe that like all people who lived in love and died in love Jesus died into God's eternal loving embrace.

We are thankful that the story of his life and death helps to ground our belief in the eternal, loving connectedness with the Spirit of Life and with all our relatives and friends who have died.

We pray for all who allow the Spirit of Life and Love motivate their actions. We pray that all religious leaders and non-religious leaders may be open and affirming, creative and challenging. We pray that we might better recognize, acknowledge, and acclaim God's presence in all people, at all times, in all places.

We give thanks that we have gathered here today to celebrate the life of Jesus and to remember to live and love as he did. We rejoice in the giftedness of each person and are grateful for who we are for each other as a community. May we continue to be the Spirit of Life and Love in the world. **Amen.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray:

(*From a New Zealand Prayer Book, p,181*)

Celebrant and People

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer,
Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all.
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echoes through the
universe! The way of your justice be followed by
the peoples of the world!**

**Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your
commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and
come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In
times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too
great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil,
free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love.
now and forever. Amen.**

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.
A period of silence is kept.*

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
We who are many are one body, for we all share the one bread.

*The Celebrant invites the people saying
Celebrant:* God's Holy gifts for God's holy people.

The ministers say the following words:

The Spirit of Christ, the bread of life.
The Spirit of Christ, the cup of life.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in Jesus and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Life is short, and we do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love, and make haste to be kind. And may the blessing of the one who made us, who journeys with us, who breathes us into life moment by moment, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit, be upon you, and all your loved ones, this day and always. Amen.

THE DISMISSAL

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**