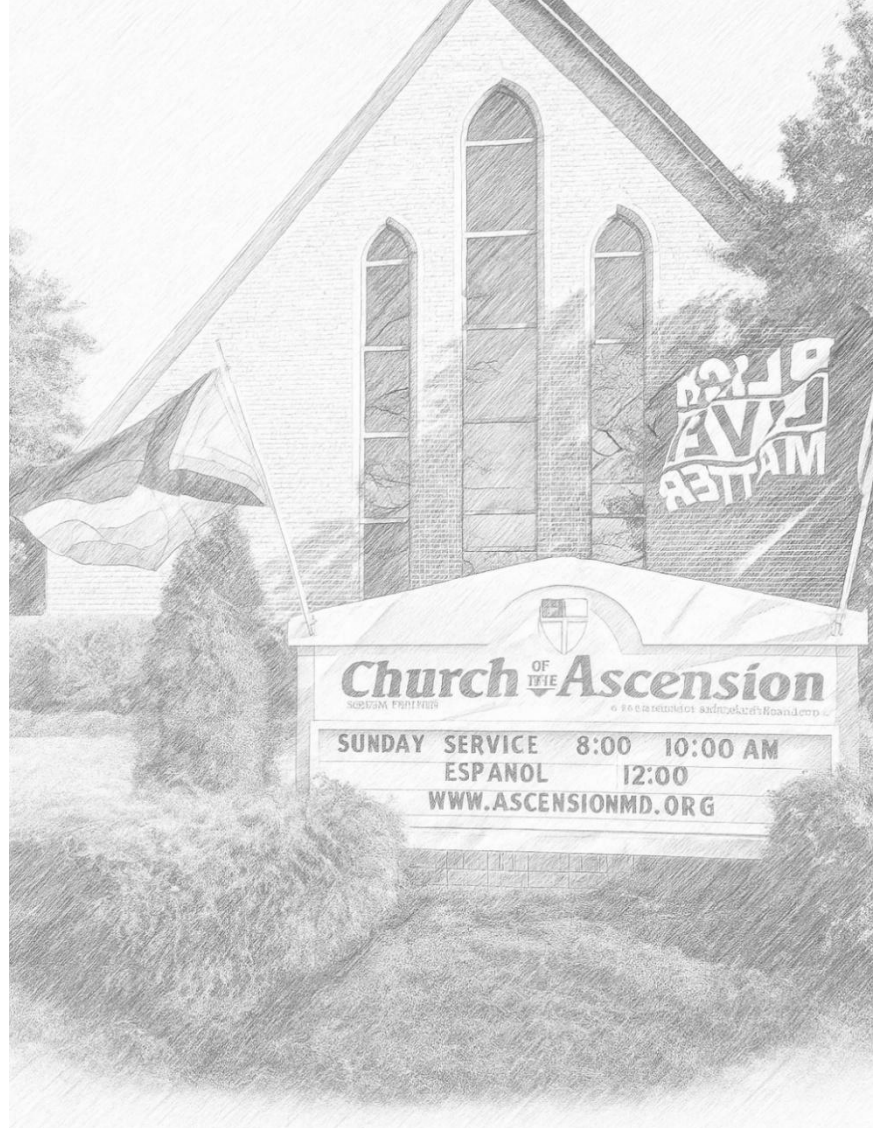




# Episcopal Church of the Ascension

## Blessing of the Animals

*Contemplative Eucharist* – October 5, 2025



*The people's responses are in bold.*

## 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 St. Matthew 11:25-30.  
**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

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.*

*Celebrant:* The Lord is here.

*People:* **God's Spirit is with us.**

*Celebrant:* Lift up your hearts.

*People:* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People:* **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 work 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.**