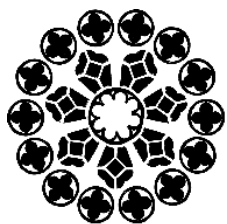


The Annual Service of Blessing and Thanksgiving for our pets



Truro
Cathedral

This service of the 'blessing of our pets' is an opportunity to thank God for the gift of animals, and for us to ask God's blessing on all that he has made. You are here because you have a pet who will bring joy and fun into your lives, giving thanks for them is a wonderful way of acknowledging that they are part of our lives and our families. A blessing involves the praise of God; the wish that spiritual goodness and love will go with what is blessed and dedicates someone or something for a sacred purpose. A blessing also reminds us that all good gifts are gifts from God.

Care must be taken that certain animals are kept apart!

Welcome and introduction

The minister says:

May God the Father,
Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

And also with you.

Words of welcome are said.

Carol

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Saviour reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.**

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

A time for saying sorry.

Today we are asking to God bless our families and especially our pets.
It is important to remember that we get things wrong and so we ask for forgiveness for the ways we hurt each other and our world.

Father God, you made everything around us
and gave us the power to make it lovely or ugly:
We are sorry for the times we didn't notice your beauty.
Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

We are sorry for the times we hurt your world,
the times when we forgot to look after each other,
the times when we were angry with our animals
or forgot to spend time with them.
Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

We are sorry for the times we failed to keep
people and their animals safe.
We are sorry that the rivers are dirty and the land is full of litter.
Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour forgive *us our* sins and make *us* holy
to serve him in the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

A time for saying thank you

Let us give thanks to God for the gifts so freely given us

For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea;

We thank you, Lord.

For the richness of the mountains, plains and rivers;

We thank you, Lord.

For all that is gracious in the lives of your children;

We thank you, Lord.

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

We thank you, Lord.

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

We thank you, Lord.

For the trust you have shown in giving our pets into our care;

We thank you, Lord.

That each pet here may be treasured with care;

We pray to you, Lord.

That we may love and honour all your works, O God;

We pray to you, Lord

Carol

O little town of Bethlehem,

How still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep

The silent stars go by.

Yet in thy dark streets shineth

The everlasting Light;

The hopes and fears of all the years

Are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in;
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

***The Friendly Beasts* by Robert David.**

Jesus, our Brother, strong and good,
Was humbly born in a stable rude,
And the friendly beasts around Him stood,
Jesus, our Brother, strong and good.

"I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown,
"I carried His mother uphill and down,
I carried His mother to Bethlehem town;
I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown.

"I," said the cow, all white and red,
"I gave Him my manger for His bed,
I gave Him hay to pillow His head;
I," said the cow, all white and red.

"I," said the sheep with curly horn,
"I gave Him my wool for His blanket warm,
He wore my coat on Christmas morn;
I," said the sheep with curly horn.

"I," said the dove, from the rafters high,
"I cooed Him to sleep that He should not cry,
We cooed Him to sleep, my mate and I;
I," said the dove, from the rafters high.

Thus all the beasts, by some good spell,
In the stable dark were glad to tell
Of the gifts they gave Emmanuel,
The gifts they gave Emmanuel.

Carol

**Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night,
Darkness flies, all is light;
Shepherds hear the angels sing,
"Alleluia! hail the King!
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born."**

**Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night,
Wondrous star, lend the light;
With the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born.**

The second reading is from the Gospel of St Luke and explains how the angels from heaven spoke to the shepherds about the baby Jesus

There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields. They were looking after their flocks of sheep. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid, but the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all people. This very day in David's town your Saviour was born—Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God:

(Everyone says together loudly!) "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in the manger. When the shepherds saw him, they told them what the angel had said about the child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said. Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them. The shepherds went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just as the angel had told them.

Thanks be to God

See him lying on a bed of straw:
a draughty stable with an open door;
Mary cradling the babe she bore
the prince of glory is his name.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord of love again:
just as poor as was the stable then,
the prince of glory when he came.*

Star of silver, sweep across the skies,
show where Jesus in the manger lies;
shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise
to see the saviour of the world!

O now carry me...

Angels, sing again the song you sang,
sing the glory of God's gracious plan;
Sing that Bethl'em's little baby can
be the saviour of us all.

O now carry me...

Mine are riches, from your poverty,
from your innocence, eternity;
mine, forgiveness by your death for me,
child of sorrow for my joy.

O now carry me...

*Michael Perry (1942 - 1996)
© Mrs B Perry/Jubilate Hymns
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The Prayers of the People

With confidence and trust let us pray to the Lord:

For all animals and creatures, their habitats and environment, their health and well-being, that they may continue to teach us of your wisdom and grace;

O Lord, our Creator, hear us.

For the care and respect of all animals, especially those used for food and for experimentation; **O Lord, our Creator, hear us.**

For those who support and care for bird and animal sanctuaries;

O Lord, our Creator, hear us.

For vets and all who are involved in the farming of animals;

O Lord, our Creator, hear us.

For growing awareness of our own responsibility for the care and nurture of all animal life; **O Lord, our Creator, hear us.**

For animal companions everywhere, that we may see reflected in them the goodness and love of God; **O Lord, our Creator, hear us.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come; thy will be done;

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

the power and the glory,

for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Procession to the High Altar

The Pageant of the Nativity processes from the South Quire Aisle to the West End and then down the main nave aisle of the Cathedral. As the procession passes, please follow them up, bringing your pets, through the Sanctuary to stand around the High Altar. Bring this order of service with you. As we process together, we sing the hymn:

**Away in a manger,
No crib for His bed
The little Lord Jesus
Laid down His sweet head**

**The stars in the bright sky
Looked down where He lay
The little Lord Jesus
Asleep on the hay**

**The cattle are lowing
The poor Baby wakes
But little Lord Jesus
No crying He makes**

**I love Thee, Lord Jesus
Look down from the sky
And stay by my side,
'Til morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus,
I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever
And love me I pray**

**Bless all the dear children
In Thy tender care
And take us to heaven
To live with Thee there.**

The Blessing

The minister says

Blessed are you Lord our God, Maker of all living creatures,
You called forth fish in the sea, birds in the air, and animals in the land.
We give thanks that all creatures great and small belong to you.
We give thanks for the joy our animals bring us.
Help us to look after our pets, who teach us how to care for each other.
May our shared lives together be full of joy and peace.

Holy water is sprinkled around as the priest says

May God bless you and your human family.

Amen

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
and may the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be upon you
and remain with you, and all those you love, forever and ever. **Amen**

Go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

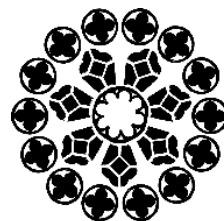
Carol

**Hark, the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'
Hark, the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.**

**Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see:
Hail, the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark, the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.**

**Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace:
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness.
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark, the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.**

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