
DUKE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL
A Service of Worship for the Blessing of Animals



Sunday, October 5, 2014
three o'clock in the afternoon

PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL

INTROIT

Durham Children's Choir

O God, Your Creatures Fill the Earth

ELLACOMBE

O God, your creatures fill the earth with wonder and delight,
And every living thing has worth and beauty in your sight.
So playful dolphins dance and swim; Your sheep bow down and graze.
Your songbirds share a morning hymn To offer you their praise.

You made the pets we welcome in — They're wondrous blessings, too.
With paws and whiskers, wings and fins, They offer praise to you.
O Lord, you call us to embrace These creatures in our care.
May we show kindness, love and grace To all pets everywhere.

Your creatures live in every land; They fill the sky and sea.
O Lord, you give us your command To love them tenderly.
We're called to have dominion here — To care for them always.
By loving creatures you hold dear, We offer you our praise.

GREETING

OPENING PRAYER

**Lord, make us instruments of your peace,
where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy;
O Divine Master,
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.

—adapted from St. Francis of Assisi

ANTHEM

Durham Children's Choir

For the Beauty of the Earth

Traditional
arr. John Rutter

For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies,

*Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.*

For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower,
Sun and moon and stars of light:

For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild,

For each perfect gift of thine
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of heaven:

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Genesis 2:7-8; 18-20a

Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field.

Luke 15:3-6

So Jesus told them this parable: "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.'

Lector: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HOMILY—Blessed by Association

LITANY ON BEHALF OF GOD'S CREATURES (*read responsively*)

Leader: Gracious God, you created the earth and all that is in it and proclaimed it good. All this belongs to you, and yet we harm your creation. Forgive us, we pray, and help us to be champions of all those who suffer, so that we may be channels of your goodness.

People: Hear us, O Lord!

Leader: We give you thanks, O God, for the life and witness of the prophets who remind us of your true purpose and for those special people who minister with tenderness to all living beings.

People: Hear us, O Lord!

Leader: We give you thanks, O God, for animals who live in our homes, on farms, in the wild, and in havens of refuge. Make us ever aware of our stewardship of creation, and help us to be faithful in caring for all you have created.

People: Hear us, O Lord!

Leader: We pray today for animals who are mistreated in any way... for those who are tortured, deserted, abused, exploited and used for unnecessary experimentation, and for any whose lives are spent in extreme confinement. Help us to stop abuse in any form. Open our mouths to the defense of the defenseless, and above all, open our lives to your ways.

People: Hear us, O Lord!

Leader: We ask forgiveness for the part we have all played in systems that employ violence and promote hardness of heart.

People: Hear us, O Lord!

Leader: We remember before you our companion animals who have died. We remember at this time also, those animals who are lost or separated from their owners.

People: Hear us, O Lord!

THE BLESSING

O sweet maker of all, we ask your blessing on every creature gathered here today, the large and the small. May they live peacefully in praise of you. Bless us all to love your creation, and revere its sacredness. We ask this blessing in the name of the one who was, is, and always will be, our Creator, to whom every creature belongs. Amen.

*Animals will be blessed individually. The worship leaders will come to you.
You may depart in peace after your animal companions have been blessed.*

MINISTRY OF WORSHIP

Presiding Minister	The Rev. Meghan Feldmeyer <i>Director of Worship, Duke Chapel</i>
Preacher	The Rev. Brad Troxell <i>Associate Pastor to the Congregation at Duke Chapel</i>
Lector	Ms. Savannah Ponder <i>Divinity '16, Chapel Worship Intern</i>
Other Participants	The Rev. Dr. Carol Gregg <i>Pastor to the Congregation at Duke Chapel</i> The Rev. Robin Arcus <i>Co-founder of Blessing of Animals Service</i> The Rev. McKennon Shea <i>Duke Divinity School</i> Ms. Rondy Elliott <i>Founder of Blessing of the Animals Service</i>
Violinist	Mr. Jordan Thomas <i>Trinity '15, PathWays Chapel Scholar</i>
Choir	Durham Children's Choir <i>Ms. Dena Byers, Artistic Director</i> <i>Ms. Vangie Poe, Accompanist</i>

A PRAYER FOR ANIMALS

Hear our humble prayer, O God, for our friends the animals, especially for animals who are suffering; for any that are hunted or lost, deserted, frightened, or hungry; and for all that will be put to death. We entreat for them all Thy mercy and pity; and for those who deal with them, we ask a heart of compassion, gentle hands, and kindly words. Make us, ourselves, to be true friends to animals, and so to share the blessings of the merciful.

—*Albert Schweitzer*

THE HISTORY OF BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS AT DUKE CHAPEL

In 1989, Duke Divinity student DeRonda (Rondy) Elliott proposed the idea for the service based on her belief that people of faith should acknowledge the blessings we receive from the animals of the earth and also be advocates for their well-being. Each year since then we have welcomed a grand menagerie to the lawn of Duke Chapel along with their owners and friends on the Sunday in October closest to the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. Several of the worship leaders are wearing pins brought from the Basilica in Assisi, Italy. Many animal protection and advocacy groups have also participated in the service and educated us about the needs of animals in our community. Through the years we have blessed many wonderful creatures of all shapes, sizes, and species. Rondy also crafted the original framework for the Litany on Behalf of God's Creatures, which has had some revision over the years, but largely remains intact. Today we remember those who have died, giving thanks for their lives and for all our finned, feathered, furry and fur-less friends.

ABOUT THE DURHAM CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Durham Children's Choir is a community organization made up of outstanding young singers from elementary and middle schools, public and private, and home-schooled children, in the Durham and neighboring communities. Their mission is to learn a wide variety of high quality choral music, both sacred and secular, and to share that music with the community through public performances. The choir is under the direction of new Artistic Director, Dena Byers and was founded in 2004 with generous support from the Durham Arts Council, Duke University Chapel Music, Durham Public Schools, the BIN Charitable Foundation and supporters from the community.

The service today has been coordinated and supported by Duke Chapel and the Congregation at Duke Chapel Endowment. We would like to thank the organizations below who are joining us today for their work to help animals and to educate people.

Animal Protection Society of Durham
Coalition to Unchain Dogs
The Green Iguana Society
Rob Gierka, "The Pet Chaplain"
Triangle Vegetarian Society



