

†HYMN OF RESPONSE

“O God Your Creatures Fill the Earth”

(Sung to the tune of “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”)

1. 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.
2. 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.
4. 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.

✠ CLOSING PRAYER (in unison)

Eternal God, in Your love You create all things, and within Your great purpose provide for every kind of animal. May the whole of creation rejoice in You, and every creature experience the joy and wonder of the life for which You have made it. Give to all Your people an attitude of care and consideration for animals, that we may honor You, the creator, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

†POSTLUDE

“Fur Elise”

- Monica Whitehurst



Today's service is being broadcast on Facebook Live at 11:00 am. You can access the service through the Oaklette Church Group on Facebook. You must be a member of that group page to see it however. Please send Dr. Tim a Facebook request to join the group if you are not already a member of the group. You can also access the sermon through the Oaklette UMC Facebook page. If you are unable to use Facebook Live a link can be sent to you by email after the Facebook Live Worship has been recorded, but we will need your email address to do this. The Facebook Live service will also be downloaded to our website on Monday morning.

The flowers on the altar today are presented to the glory of God by Ann and Jimmy Lee in memory of Billy McDonald, Jr., always remembering him with love.

The Food Basket on the altar is presented to the glory of God.



Oaklette United Methodist Church

"God's Body in this Community"

"Oaklette United Methodist Church through worship, education, and outreach, seeks to make the gospel of Jesus Christ real, as we minister to all people."

Website: www.oakletteumc.org

Office's Email: oaklette@oakletteumc.org, Pastor's Email: dr.tim@cox.net

520 Oaklette Dr., Chesapeake, VA 23325

Telephone: (757) 545-7434 Fax: (757) 543-2222

Parsonage: (757) 494-9369

July 31, 2022 ~ 11:00 A.M.

The Blessing of the Animals



Welcome in the name of our Lord. A nurturing and well-supervised nursery is available for infants and young children. A Crying Room is also available. Please ask the greeter for further assistance and direction to these rooms.

[†] = Invites persons to stand as they are able.

PRELUDE

“Prelude in C Major”

- Monica Whitehurst

THE MORNING WELCOME

- Dr. Tim Hazlett

CENTERING PRAYER (in unison)

In Your infinite wisdom, Lord God, when You created the universe, you blessed us with all living creatures. We especially thank you for giving us our pets who are our friends and who bring us so much joy in life. Their presence very often helps us get through trying times. Kindly bless my pet. May my pet continue giving me joy and remind me of Your power. May we realize that as our pets trust us to take care of them, so we should trust You to take care of us, and in taking care of them we share in Your love for all creatures. Amen.

†Hymn

“All Things Bright and Beautiful”

#147

1. 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,
God made their glowing colors, and made their tiny wings.
2. All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful: the Lord God made them all.
The purple-headed mountains, the river running by,
the sunset and the morning that brightens up the sky.

4. All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful: the Lord God made them all.
God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty, who has made all things well.
- All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful: the Lord God made them all.

THE PSALTER - an adaptation of Psalm 148

Lay Reader: All dogs and cats, large and small:
People: Praise the Lord!
Lay Reader: All rabbits, hamsters, and guinea pigs:
People: Praise the Lord!
Lay Reader: All goldfish, guppies, and swimming creatures:
People: Praise the Lord!
Lay Reader: All robins, wrens, and singing birds:
People: Praise the Lord!
Lay Reader: All racoons, squirrels, and deer:
People: Praise the Lord!
Lay Reader: All horses, cows, and sheep:
People: Praise the Lord!
Lay Reader: All lizards, snakes and creeping things:
People: Praise the Lord!
Lay Reader: Every animal in the sky, the sea, and the forest:
People: Praise the Lord!

SPECIAL MUSIC “Bless the Beasts and the Children” - Monica Whitehurst

SCRIPTURE READING Colossians 1:15-23 (MSG)

¹⁵⁻¹⁸ We look at this Son and see the God who cannot be seen. We look at this Son and see God’s original purpose in everything created. For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank after rank of angels—*everything* got started in him and finds its purpose in him. He was there before any of it came into existence and holds it all together right up to this moment. And when it comes to the church, he organizes and holds it together, like a head does a body.

¹⁸⁻²⁰ He was supreme in the beginning and—leading the resurrection parade—he is supreme in the end. From beginning to end he’s there, towering far above everything, everyone. So spacious is he, so expansive, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding. Not only that, but all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe—people and things, animals and atoms—get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the cross.

²¹⁻²³ You yourselves are a case study of what he does. At one time you all had your backs turned to God, thinking rebellious thoughts of him, giving him trouble every chance you got.

But now, by giving himself completely at the Cross, actually *dying* for you, Christ brought you over to God’s side and put your lives together, whole and holy in his presence. You don’t walk away from a gift like that! You stay grounded and steady in that bond of trust, constantly tuned in to the Message, careful not to be distracted or diverted. There is no other Message—just this one. Every creature under heaven gets this same Message. I, Paul, am a messenger of this Message.

THE RESPONSE TO THE SCRIPTURE READING

L: This is the Word of God for the people of God.
P: Thanks be to God.

SERMON “All the Earth Is God’s Sanctuary” - Dr. Tim Hazlett

†THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

(At the pastor’s invitation people may bring their pets forward to receive a blessing.)

Pastor: We often quote Matthew 10:29-31 to emphasize God’s concern for humans. In this passage, Jesus helped His listeners grasp the extent of God’s concern for them. This isn’t all we learn from this passage, however. Jesus also gave us insight into God’s attitude towards animals. True, humans are “more valuable” than a common little bird, but Jesus didn’t say animals have no value to God. In comparison to humans, the little sparrow has little value, but God still values the life of that little sparrow enough to be moved by its death. Everything that happens is according to God’s plan:

People: Dearest God, maker of all living creatures, I ask You to bless my pet that brings so much joy into my life. By the power of Your love, enable my pet to live according to Your plan. May we always praise You for all Your beauty in creation, who lives, and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit. Blessed are You, God, in all Your creatures. Amen.

†A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE FOR OUR PETS WHO HAVE DIED

Pastor: Most of us share an intense love and bond with our animal companions, so it’s natural to feel devastated by feelings of grief and sadness when a cherished pet dies. The pain of loss can often feel overwhelming and trigger all sorts of painful and difficult emotions. We pause now to remember our beloved pets who have crossed over the Rainbow Bridge:

People: Almighty God, we were fortunate to receive the gifts of our beloved pets from You. Now that they have left this life, please help us cope with our loss with strength and courage. We know that our beloved companions no longer suffer, and will live on in many fond memories. As they helped to enrich our lives while they were alive, we pray, that we may be able to return their love by enriching the lives of others. Amen.

PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Nursery Care Providers: Linda Tandy & Jane Basnight

Lay Reader: Megan Carroll

Organist/Director of Music: Dana Moody

Guest Pianist: Monica Whitehurst

Prayer Partner: Brenda Swoope

Audio-Visual Operator: Ericka Litten

Facebook Live Recorder: Bright Tsevi

Greeter: Joanne Rooks

July Altar Guild: Ann & Jimmy Lee

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Timothy D. Hazlett

Administrative Assistant: Eileen Ballance

Financial Secretary: Edna Bess

Costal Virginia Dist. Superintendent: Rev. Dr. Cecelia Brooks

Resident Bishop, Richmond Area: Bishop Sharma D. Lewis