

Blessing of Animals



*St. James Episcopal Church
Essex Junction, Vermont*

All stand as able

Presider In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity.

People **Amen.**

Presider May God, who is wonderful in all works, be with you all.

People **And also with you.**

Presider

The animals of God's creation inhabit skies, earth, and the seas. They share in the fortunes of human existence and have a part in human life. God, who confers gifts on all living things, has often used the service of animals or made them symbolic reminders of the gifts of salvation. Animals were saved from the flood and afterwards made a part of the covenant with Noah; the Paschal Lamb brings to mind the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt; a giant fish saved Jonah; ravens brought bread to Elijah; and animals share in Christ's redemption of all God's creation.

We therefore invoke the divine blessing on these animals as we celebrate their lives with us. Let us praise the Creator giving thanks to God for our place in the created order and for all creatures of the earth.

Presider and People

O God, you have done all things wisely; in your goodness you have made us in your image and given us care over other living things. Grant that these animals may serve their purposes and that your bounty in the resources of this life may move us to seek more confidently the goal of your realm of peace, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presider

Generous God, whose self-giving is reflected in the love and devotion of these animal companions; we ask that you bless them and make us mindful of the great responsibility we bear for all creatures dependent

upon us for their welfare; help us to use any power we may have over them for their benefit, not simply for our own selfish gain. **Amen.**

People say all together using the name of their animal or lovey

O God, I present [Name] and I give you thanks for her/him. Help me to understand my responsibility for her/him as a pledge of my response to you for the love you show me, our community and all your creatures, great and small. Amen.

The people bring their animals or loveys forward for a blessing. As the animals and their people approach the Presider the person says,

I present [Name] to be blessed.

Presider

Bless this creature [Name]
and help us to delight in all the works of your hands.

All the people say after each blessing

Amen.

Dismissal

Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia!
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!