

ST. BRENDAN THE NAVIGATOR
Deer Isle Maine

# The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi
and the
# Blessing of the Animals

October 4, 2020

Pastor Elaine Hewes, preaching
Connie Mayo, Music Director

**Prelude:** *The Peace* Dan Locklair

*Leader:* We gather to honor the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, and to honor the animals who share our lives. St. Francis is before us as an example of unalterable meekness and sincere love with regard to all of creation. He looked upon creation with the eyes of one who could recognize in it the marvelous work of the hand of God. His voice, his glance, his solicitous care, not only towards [human beings], but also towards animals and nature in general, are a faithful echo of the love with which God in the beginning ... had brought them into existence ...

**Litany**

Let us sing to the Lord a new song: a song for all the creatures of the earth.
**Let us rejoice in the goodness of God shown in the beauty of little things.**

Let us marvel at the little creatures who are innocent in God's sight.
**Let us extol God's handiwork in the complexity of their lives.**

Let us not be haughty or proud, too full of ourselves to praise the Lord of little things.
**Let us rejoice in the other worlds sublime and mysterious that God has made:**
the world of earthworms burrowing in the ground;
**the world of skylarks soaring above us;**
**the world of foxes playing around their dens**.

Let us hear the divine rejoicing throughout the whole earth: "the earth is mine and the fullness thereof."

**Opening Hymn ELHW 861** *When Long Before Time (back of the bulletin)*

**First Lesson:** A Reading from *The Canticle of the Sun*

Most High, Omnipotent, Good Lord, yours is the praise, the glory, the honor, and all blessing.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong.
Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially for Brother Sun, through whom you give us light. He is beautiful and radiant with splendor and his light teaches us of your Light O Most High.
Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon and all the stars who shine so clear,
so precious and so lovely in the heavens you formed.
Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, the cloudy or clear and every kind of weather, by which you give sustenance to your creatures.
Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is so useful and precious and so pure.
Be praised, my Lord, in Brother Fire, by whom you light the night.
He is beautiful and cheerful, full of power and strength.
Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother who sustains and nurtures us, and gives us all the fruits and flowers, and all the birds and beasts.
Be praised, my Lord, in all those who forgive others for your love's sake, and
bear weakness and tribulation.
Blessed are those that live at peace with all for love of you, for by you, Most High,
they will be crowned.
Praise and bless my Lord and give him thanks, and serve him with great humility.

*—St. Francis of Assisi, c. 1225*

**Second Lesson: Ephesians 1:3-14**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his

children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

*Reader:* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people
*Congregation:* **Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel: Mark 1: 9-13**
*Reader:* The Gospel according to Mark
*Congregation:* **Praise to you, O Christ**
In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

*Reader:* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people
*Congregation:* **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon** Pastor Elaine Hewes

## Presentation and Blessing of Animals

*At this point photos of animals will be shared on the screen, and each person who contributed a photo will speak the animal's name when their photo is shown. People in the garden will be invited to bring their pet forward and to speak the pet's name. People on Zoom will be invited to present their pet on the screen and to speak the pet's name.*

*Leader:* Almighty and everlasting God, Creator of all things and giver of all life, let your blessing be upon all these animals. May our relationships with them mirror your love, and our care for them be an example of your bountiful mercy. Grant these animals health and peace. Strengthen us to love and care for them as we strive to imitate the love of Jesus Christ our Lord and God's servant Francis.
*Congregation:* **Amen.**

## The Prayers

*Leader:* The Lord be with you.
*Congregation:* **And also with you.**
*Leader:* Let us pray.

**The Lord's Prayer**
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name,**
**Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**
**Give us today our daily bread.**
**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**
**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**
**For the kingdom, the power,**
**And the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People**

Let us pray with the whole church and in the words of its saints, poets, and theologians for all those who struggle against the abuse of animals and for the rebirth of compassion in our hearts:

"Every creature is by its nature a kind of effigy and likeness of the eternal." *St. Bonaventure*
**Almighty God, we pray for grace to perceive your creative hand in all things.**
**Increase in us, O God, a sense of fellowship with all your creatures. Help us to walk humbly and tread gently on your good earth.**

"What is a charitable heart? It is a heart which is burning with love for the whole creation...a heart which can no longer bear to see or learn from others of any suffering, even the smallest pain, being inflicted on a creature." *St. Isaac the Syrian*
**Almighty God, we pray for loving, sensitive hearts towards all your creatures.**

"A robin redbreast in a cage puts all heaven in a rage." *William Blake*
**Help us, O God, to set animals free from our own cruelty and greed.**
**Help us to recover humility in our relations with animals and to realize that it is the vocation of the strong to be gentle.**

"It must be remembered that we are required to practice justice even in our dealings with animals." *John Calvin*
**Almighty God, we thank you for the creatures who live alongside us as our companions and friends; for their loyalty, love, and trust which enrich our lives and give us joy; help us to deal justly with animals, living without wantonness and promoting kindness; teach us the power of mercy, the strength of gentleness; and create in us a new spirit of humility in the face of your creatures within whose covenant they live and die; we ask these prayers through your Son Jesus Christ whose new covenant of love gives life to us all.**

*You are invited to offer additional prayers or thanksgivings.*

**The Prayer of St. Francis**

*Leader:* Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
*Congregation:* **Where there is hatred, let us sow love;**
*Leader:* Where there is injury, pardon;
*Congregation:* **Where there is doubt, faith;**
*Leader:* Where there is despair, hope;
*Congregation:* **Where there is darkness, light;**
*Leader:* Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, Grant that we may
*Congregation:* **not so much seek to be consoled as to console;**
*Leader:* To be understood as to understand;
*Congregation:* **To be loved as to love.**
*Leader:* For it is in giving that we receive;
*Congregation:* **It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;**
*Leader:* And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
*Congregation:* ***A*men.**

**Benediction**

**Sending Hymn 405** *All Things Bright and Beautiful (back of the bulletin)*

**Postlude:** *Fugue in C Major* J.S. Bach

**Announcements**

**Dismissal**

*You are invited to stay for Virtual Coffee Hour*

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# 861 When Long before Time
## *The Singer and the Song*




Text: Peter W. A. Davison, b. 1936
Music: Peter W. A. Davison, b. 1936; arr. George Black, 1931–2003
Text and tune © Peter W. A. Davison, admin. Augsburg Fortress
Arr. © George Black

# 405

## Praise to God




Words: Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)
Music: *Royal Oak*, melody from *The Dancing Master*, 1686;
adapt. Martin Fallas Shaw (1875-1958); desc. Richard Proulx (b. 1937)

76. 76 with Refrain