



**Kenilworth Union Church
Order of Worship
December 27, 2020 Online
First Sunday after Christmas
A Service for Blessing the Animals**

Call to Worship*Making the House Ready for the Lord*

Mary Oliver

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
 still nothing is as shining as it should be
 for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
 uproar of mice—it is the season of their
 many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves
 and through the walls the squirrels
 have gnawed their ragged entrances—but it is the season
 when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And
 the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard
 while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;
 what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
 in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
 up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will
 come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox,
 the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know
 that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,
 as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.

Opening Hymn*What Child Is This?*

#53

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest,
 On Mary's lap is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
 While shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the king,
 Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 Haste, haste to bring him laud,
 The babe, the son of Mary!

2. Why lies he in such mean estate
 Where ox and ass are feeding?
 Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
 The silent word is pleading.
 This, this is Christ the king,
 Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 Haste, haste to bring him laud,
 The babe, the son of Mary!

3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;

Come one and all, to own him.
The king of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the king,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

Opening Prayer

Andrew Linzey, b. 1952

Help us to wonder, Lord
to stand in awe;
to stand and stare;
and so to praise you
for the richness of the world
you have laid before us.
God of the universe
all creatures praise you;
the sun rising on the lake,
the birds flying upward toward the heavens;
the growl of the bear;
the darting of the swallow;
the purring of the cat,
the wide eyes of the tiger;
the swift legs of the cheetah,
the dance of the hare;
the fetching of the dog,
the descent of the dove.
God of a thousand ears
the music of your creatures
resounds throughout creation
and in heaven a symphony is made.
Help us to wonder, Lord
to stand in awe;
to stand and stare;
and so to praise you
for the richness of the world
you have laid before us.

³ Our God comes and does not keep silence,
before God is a devouring fire,
and a mighty tempest all around the Lord.

⁹ I will not accept a bull from your house,
or goats from your folds.

¹⁰ For every wild animal of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.

¹¹ I know all the birds of the air,
and all that moves in the field is mine.

¹² “If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and all that is in it is mine.

¹⁴ Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and pay your vows to the most high.

Ministry of Music *Creator God, We Give You Thanks*

J. B. Dykes and Colin Gibson

Creator God, we give you thanks
for those who live in nest or tank,
in basket, kennel, bowl or shed,
on sofas, perches, straw for bed.
Through them we learn of nature’s bond
with all of life, in field or pond.

To you it matters not at all
that they are very large or small,
or blue, or green, or patched, or pied,
or feathered, furred or finned outside.
How dull if all the world was us,
without a Rover, Fluff or Gus.

O loving God, we bring our praise
for these who gladden all our days,
who show us gratitude indeed
for milk or water, bone or seed.
They teach us how to care for those
without our fingers or our toes.

Bless all the creatures who depend
on us to be their special friend.
At one before you here today,
we make an Eden world – and pray
a life of shelter, kindness, care,

for every creature everywhere.

Blessing of the Animals via Slide Show

Benediction

Go out as instruments of God's peace;
where there is hatred, sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

Seek not so much 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.

Postlude

All Creatures of Our God and King

arr. Barbara Harbach

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Participants:

William Evertsberg, Senior Minister, Preacher
Joel Fox, Audio and Video
Bill Jenkins, Guitarist
Jennifer Jenkins, Duet
Max Jenkins, Duet
Susan Klotzbach, Organist
Matt Leske, Videography
Kelsey Sandefur, Soloist

Milestone: We extend the sympathy of the congregation to the family of John and Vicki Martin upon the death of Vicki's daughter, Jane Alexander.