



Kenilworth Union Church
Order of Worship
January 1, 2023, 10 a.m.
First Sunday after Christmas
A Service for Blessing the Animals
In Honor of St. Francis of Assisi

CONNECT TO WORSHIP at 10 a.m.

Prelude

Intonazione e Ricercare

Andrea Gabrieli

In Preparation for Worship

The creatures of the sense world signify the invisible attributes of God, partly because God is the origin, exemplar, and end of every creature, and every effect is a sign of its cause, the exemplification of its exemplar, and the path to the end, to which it leads ... For every creature is by its nature a kind of effigy and likeness of the eternal Wisdom. Therefore, open your eyes, alert the ears of your spirit, open your lips, and apply your heart so that in all creatures you may see, hear, praise, love and worship, glorify and honor, your God lest the whole world rise up against you.

—St. Bonaventure, 1221–1274

Call to Worship

Mary Oliver, 1935–2019

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**

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.
Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Prayer for the Day

Lector: Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe. In your infinite wisdom you created the universe and blessed us with all living creatures.

People: We especially thank you for entrusting us with our pets, friends who bring us so much happiness and help us get through trying times.

Lector: Bless our pets and make us responsible stewards of all your creatures. May we continue to give each other joy and remind us of your power.

People: As our pets trust us to take care of them, help us to remember to trust you to take care of us, for in so doing we share in your love for all your creatures.

Lector: And especially, we remember all endangered species and ask your help in taking care of them so that we may continue to appreciate all of your creation.

All: Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ministry of Music

God of the Sparrow

Carl Schalk and Jaroslav Vajda

God of the sparrow, God of the whale
God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say awe
How does the creature say praise
God of the earthquake, God of the storm
God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry woe
How does the creature cry save
God of the rainbow, God of the cross
God of the empty grave
How does the creature say grace
How does the creature say thanks
God of the hungry, God of the sick
God of the prodigal
How does the creature say care
How does the creature say life

God of the neighbor, God of the foe
God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say love
How does the creature say peace
God of the ages, God near at hand
God of the loving heart
How do your children say joy
How do your children say home

Proclamation of the Word

Scripture and Sermon

In the Meantime

11/27	Matthew 24:3–44	<i>The Already and the Not Yet</i>
12/4	Matthew 3:1–12; 11:2–5	<i>Are You the One?</i>
12/11	Isaiah 9:6	<i>I Long for Thee Always!</i>
12/18	Genesis–Revelation	Service of Lessons and Carols
12/24	Luke 2:1–14	<i>A Barn Shall Harbor Heaven</i>
12/25	Matthew 2:1–12	<i>Bringing Shiny Gifts to Dark Places</i>
1/1	Genesis 2:18–24	Blessing of the Animals

Blessing of the Animals

The Blessing

May God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you and protect you. May you have a full and happy life with your family, and may you share in the redemption of all creation. Amen.

Thanksgiving for Friends Who Have Crossed the Rainbow Bridge

Rabbi Barry H. Block

God of all creatures, thank you for sending our departed friends into our lives. Help us to remember the good times with them. Remind us to rejoice in the happy times they brought to our home. Let us be thankful for the good life we were blessed to give to each of them.

Thank you for creating them, and for entrusting them to our care. We understand that all that lives must die. We knew that this day would come.

O God, as we have taken care of them in life, we ask that you watch over them in death. You entrusted them to our care; now, we give them back to you. May they find a happy new home in your loving embrace.

As we remember them, may we love each other more dearly. May we care for all your creatures, for every living thing, as we protected their blessed life. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;

Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;

Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.

Christ is born today!

Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;

Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!

He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.

Christ was born for this!

Christ was born for this!

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!**

***Benediction**

The Prayer of St. Francis, 1181–1226

Friends, may God make you instruments of God's 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;
and where there is sadness, joy.
Let us 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.
All praise be to the Triune God: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer; Amen.

Postlude

Grand Choeur

Théodore Salomé

Please stand as you are able

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PARTICIPANTS:

William Evertsberg, Senior Minister, Preacher
Joel Fox, Director of Media Production
Eun Joo Ju, Organist
Squire Prince, Director of Youth Ministries, Liturgist
Austin Sanders, Soloist
Audio and Video, Lilly Hunsader, Kevin Kemp, Eric Tran-Ton

FRONT DESK

GREETERS

Cam Avery
Lynn Donaldson

USHERS

Jim Fritz
Beth Fritz

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Milestones: We extend the sympathy of the congregation to the families of Gail Pascus and her brother-in-law, Jim Chrystal upon the death Gail's sister and Jim's wife, Nancy Chrystal on December 22; and to the family of Annemarie Bales upon her death on December 23. The white rose on the altar celebrates their lives.