

Prayer of Blessing

(The animals may form a procession to be blessed.)

Pastor: *Bless, O Lord, this (these) creature(s), and fill our hearts with thanksgiving for its (their) being. Amen.*

†Hymn "All Things Bright and Beautiful" #147

†Benediction (in unison)

May God, who created the animals of this earth, continue to protect and sustain us all, now and forever. Amen.

†Choral Response "Amen" – Chancel Choir

†Postlude "My Father's World" – Dana Moody

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 65:17–25 (The Message)

"Pay close attention now: I'm creating new heavens and a new earth. All the earlier troubles, chaos, and pain are things of the past, to be forgotten.

Look ahead with joy. Anticipate what I'm creating:

I'll create Jerusalem as sheer joy, create my people as pure delight. I'll take joy in Jerusalem, take delight in my people:

No more sounds of weeping in the city,

No cries of anguish;

No more babies dying in the cradle,

Or old people who don't enjoy a full lifetime;

One-hundredth birthdays will be considered normal— anything less will seem like a cheat.

They'll build houses and move in.

They'll plant fields and eat what they grow.

No more building a house that some outsider takes over,

No more planting fields that some enemy confiscates,

For my people will be as long-lived as trees, my chosen ones will have satisfaction in their work.

They won't work and have nothing come of it, they won't have children snatched out from under them.

For they themselves are plantings blessed by GOD, with their children and grandchildren likewise GOD-blessed.

Before they call out, I'll answer.

Before they've finished speaking, I'll have heard.

Wolf and lamb will graze the same meadow, lion and ox eat straw from the same trough, but snakes—they'll get a diet of dirt!

Neither animal nor human will hurt or kill anywhere on my Holy Mountain," says 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."

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April 22, 2018 ~ 11:00 A.M. Blessing of the Animals Sunday

*If you are visiting us today, we welcome you. We are grateful we have found each other. And, if somehow, there is something in you, some still small voice seeking a place to live out your faith, to ask important questions, and to serve beyond yourself, we invite you into our community. For more information about the church or membership, please contact Dr. Tim (see above for contact information) or text him at 757.373.0005. A nurturing and well-supervised nursery is available for infants and young children. Please ask an usher for further assistance and direction to this room. Royal Kid's (a children's church experience) is offered for children in grades Kindergarten through 6th grade. Children will be directed to leave during the singing of the first hymn. **As the Prelude begins, let us quiet our voices and cell phones as we prepare our hearts and spirits for worship.***

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

Prelude "Let All Things Now Living" – Dana Moody

(Acolytes will light the candles during the Prelude)

†Choral Introit "We Have Come Into His House" – Chancel Choir

†Call to Worship (responsively)

Lay Reader: The animals of God's creation inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the fortunes of human existence and have a part in human life.

Pastor: *God, who confers gifts on all living things, has often used the service of animals or made them reminders of the gifts of salvation.*

People: **Animals were saved from the flood and afterwards made a part of the covenant with Noah.**

Lay Reader: The paschal lamb recalls the Passover sacrifice and the deliverance from slavery in Egypt.

Pastor: *A giant fish saved Jonah.*

People: Ravens brought bread to Elijah.

Lay Reader: According to Jonah 3:7 animals were included in the repentance of Nineveh.

Pastor: *And animals share in Christ's redemption of all God's creation.*

People: We, therefore, invoke God's blessing on these animals. As we do so, let us praise the Creator and thank God for setting us as stewards over all the creatures of the earth.

Greetings, Announcements, Joys & Concerns and the Passing of the Peace

(Please sign and pass the blue Welcome Pads at this time.)

(Whenever the risen Jesus appeared to disciples, he said, "Peace be with you." These are Jesus' words we share with one another. Jesus promises to be with us; and greeting each other with a touch reminds us Jesus is present.)

†Hymn "Let All Things Now Living"

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God the Creator triumphantly raise;
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
who guides us and leads to the end of our days.
God's banners fly o'er us; God's light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.

The law God enforces, the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
the deeps of the ocean proclaim the Divine.
We, too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise,
till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
To God in the highest hosanna and praise!

A Prayer Remembering the Work of St. Francis of Assisi (responsively)

Lay Reader: God created us and placed us on the earth to be stewards of all living things, therefore let us proclaim the glory of our Creator, saying:

People: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.

Lay Reader: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you create the animals and give us the ability to train them to help us in our work.

People: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.

Lay Reader: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you give us food from animals to replenish our energies.

People: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.

Lay Reader: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; for the sake of our comfort you give us domestic animals as companions.

People: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.

Lay Reader: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you care for us even as you care for the birds of the air.

People: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.

Lay Reader: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you offered your Son to us as the Passover lamb and in him willed that we should be called your children.

People: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.

We pray this and all our prayers in the name of the One who taught us to pray... [The Lord's Prayer #895]

Choral Anthem "Forest Trees" – Chancel Choir

The Presentation of Our Gifts to the Lord

Offertory "Let Everything that has Breath" – Dana Moody

†Doxology #95

†Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

Your abundance is without measure and cannot be defined or contained, gracious Lord. It spills out, overflowing into our world and our lives. May these offerings contribute to the peace and wholeness of your creation. Amen.

†Hymn "All Creatures of Our God and King" #62 (Verses 1 & 7)

Scripture Lesson Isaiah 65:17–25 (MSG)

(After the scripture is read, the leader will say: "This is the Word of God for the people of God..."

And the people shall respond: "Thanks be to God!")

Sermon "Dr. Doolittle Meets Jesus" – Dr. Tim Hazlett

PARTNER'S IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Acolyte: Jessica Weifert

Nursery Care Providers: Calvin & Linda Gallop

Lay Reader: Lori Hazlett

Guest Organist: Dana Moody

Audio-Visual Operator: Joe Peele/Preston Basnight

Greeters: Circle of Love

Prayer Partner: JoAnn Story

Lay Leader: Don Moody

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Timothy D. Hazlett

Administrative Assistant: Eileen Ballance

Financial Secretary: Edna Bess

Elizabeth River Dist. Superintendent: Rev. Wayne Snead

Resident Bishop, Richmond Area: Rev. Sharma D. Lewis



**Thank
YOU!**

Thank you to everyone for the recognition, cards, gifts and all kindnesses shown to us last Sunday on Staff Appreciation Day. We are truly blessed to be a part of this wonderful church family.

Dana, Edna, Eileen, Linda & Calvin