

THE BLESSING OF THE PETS

SUNDAY JULY 25, 2021

5:30 P.M.

VILLAGE GREEN, FISHERS ISLAND



READING

DHARMA

BILLY COLLINS

The way the dog trots out the front door
every morning
without a hat or an umbrella,
without any money
or the keys to her dog house
never fails to fill the saucer of my heart
with milky admiration.

Who provides a finer example
of a life without encumbrance—
Thoreau in his curtainless hut
with a single plate, a single spoon?
Ghandi with his staff and his holy diapers?

Off she goes into the material world
with nothing but her brown coat
and her modest blue collar,
following only her wet nose,
the twin portals of her steady breathing,
followed only by the plume of her tail.

If only she did not shove the cat aside
every morning
and eat all his food
what a model of self-containment she would be,
what a paragon of earthly detachment.
If only she were not so eager
for a rub behind the ears,
so acrobatic in her welcomes,
if only I were not her god.

A LITANY

Leader O God, in thanksgiving for your gifts to us, we remember in our prayers today all creatures wild or tame; exotic, unfamiliar ones and household pets you call by name;

Women The bold, the shy, the slow or swift, the ones with teeth and claws,
Men The ones with scales or shells or fins, the ones with hooves or paws;
Women The shaggy-maned, the silken-furred, the winged and feathered of the skies,

Men All those with antler, horn, or tusk, all those with gentle eyes;

Women The caged, the free, the ones who toil, the ones who crawl or swim or sting;

Men The ones most loved, the ones most feared, the ones who howl or buzz or sing;

All All dwellers of the sea or plain, of desert, mountain, jungle, farm; We pray for creatures of the earth to keep them safe from harm.

THE PRAYERS

O God, we thank you for all the creatures you have made, so perfect in their kind-- great animals like the elephant and the rhinoceros, humorous animals like the camel and the monkey, friendly ones like the dog and the cat, working ones like the horse and the ox, timid ones like the squirrel and the rabbit, majestic ones like the lion and the tiger, and for all the birds with their songs. O Lord give us such love for your creation, that love may cast out fear, and all creatures may see in us a sign of your welcome and peace.
Amen.

BLESSING OF THE PETS *Please bring animals forward for blessing.*

MINISTER: The Rev. Michael Spencer, *St. John's Episcopal Church*