

SERVICE NOTES

***The First Congregational Church
of Essex Junction
United Church of Christ***



***Partnering with the A.W Rich Family Offers
A Pet Remembrance Service
December 8, 2019***

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A Welcoming Community, Accepting and Serving All
In the Spirit of Christ

Order of Worship

Prelude

During the opening music, everyone is asked to pick up an electric candle at the rear of the church. Later in the service, people will be asked to light them as we remember each beloved pet.

An Extravagant Welcome.....Rev. Mendes & John Workman

*No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome in this place.*

Opening Tributes and Candles

A Candle Lit in Memory of Roscoe and all pets who suffer
A Candle Lit In Memory of all K-9's who serve
A Candle Lit for all God's Creatures

The Playing of Taps

Call to Worship

Leader: In the beginning, before any human being planted a foot on the earth, God created animals of every shape and size. Then God said that they were inherently good.

Once all the deceased pets have been remembered and mentioned, then we will have a moment of silence.....

***Hymn**

All God's Critters Have a Place in the Choir

[insert, left]

Benediction

The Reception and the Giving of Gifts

There will be a time of refreshments after the service downstairs. During that time, there will be gift bags for every participant which will include an ornament with your pet's picture in it [for those who sent their picture in previously] and a copy of the Rainbow Bridge. You are also free to take the electronic candle home with you.

If you did not send a picture of your pet beforehand, you are welcome to do so and A.W. Rich will create an ornament for you for pick up.

The Offering of Gifts

As you exit the service, there will be a basket for donations. All donations will go to Emma's Foundation for Canine Cancer, a non-profit organization. None of the donations will go to defray the costs of the service.

***Postlude**

* = Please stand if you are able.

A Place in the Choir

Bill Staines



① All God's crit - ters got a place in the choir, ② some sing low,



③ some sing high - er, some ④ sing out loud on the tel - e - phone wire, and



⑤ some just clap their ⑤ hands, or paws, or ⑦ an - y - thing they got now. ⑧



1. Lis - ten to the bass, it's the one__ on the bot - tom where the
2. The dogs__ and the cats they__ take__ up the mid - dle while the
3. Lis - ten to the top where the lit - tle birds__ sing__ on the
4. It's a sim - ple song of liv - ing__ sung__ ev - 'ry - where__ by the



bull - frog__ croaks and the hip - po - pot - a - mus moans__ and__ groans__ with a hon - ey bee__ hums and the crick - et fid - dles, the don - key__ brays__ and the mel - o - dies with the high notes ring - ing. The hoot__ owl__ hol - lers o - ver ox__ and the fox and the griz - zly bear,__ the grump - y al - li - ga - tor and the



big__ t' do, and the old cow just goes__ "Moo."
 po - ny neighs and the old coy - ot - e__ howls.
 ev - 'ry - thing and the jay - bird dis - a - grees.
 hawk__ a - bove, the__ sly__ rac - coon and the tur - tle dove.

People: Animals are sacred creatures with the actual imprint of God etched into their very fabric of life. We love our pets and all creatures and so does God.

Leader: Before the law was given at Sinai or prophets spoke of justice or Jesus walked the earth teaching about love, God the Creator commanded us to care for the earth and her creatures.

People: When we invite creatures into our homes to become members of our families, we are following the most ancient of God's callings.

Leader: Come, let us celebrate the animals of creation, our calling to welcome them into our lives and the love they so freely give back to us. Come, let us honor their lives during this sacred service.

*Opening Hymn *All Things Bright and Beautiful* #31
 [insert, next page]

Sacred Readings

Old Testament Genesis 1:20-26 [page 1]
 New Testament John 15:12-17 [page 84]
 The Rainbow Bridge: A Unison Reading

Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water, and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor. Those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Refrain (Unison)

All things bright and beau - ti - ful, all crea-tures great and_ small,

all things wise and won - der - ful: the Lord God made them_ all.

1 Each lit - tle flower that_ o - pens, each lit - tle bird_ that sings,
 2 The pur - ple - head - ed mount - tains, the ri - ver run - ning by,
 3 The cold wind in the_ win - ter, the plea - sant sum - mer sun,
 4 God gave us eyes to_ see them, and lips_ that we_ might tell

God_ made their glo - wing co - lors, and_ made their ti - ny_ wings.
 the_ sun - set and the_ mor - ning that_ brigh - tens up the_ sky.
 the_ ripe fruits in the_ gar - den: God_ made them e - very_ one.
 how_ great is God Al - migh - ty, who_ has made all things well.

to Refrain

and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. His bright eyes are intent. His eager body quivers. Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster.

You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross Rainbow Bridge together.

Brief Reflection by Rev. Mendes

Do Animals Get Into Heaven???

A Prayer for Our Pets - Past and Present

The Blessing of the Christmas Tree

An Invitation to Light a Candle in Memory of Your Pet

During this time, there will be a slide show of all the pictures received beforehand of pets that have died this past year. When your deceased pet is pictured, please light your candle as a memorial. If you would like to say your pet's name out loud when you light the candle, please feel free.

After the slide show is complete, then everyone is invited to light a candle for those pets whose pictures were not shown. If you are able, please stand, light your candle and say your pet's name out loud.