

I like to imagine the salmon  
swimming across the ocean  
(as if that weren't daunting enough)  
and after that endless voyage  
it must face the mouth of the  
mighty river.

Does she hesitate, even for a moment?  
Does he want to turn back to less  
turbulent waters?

But there is something ripening in their bellies.

Perhaps your list of pressing tasks  
is still long.  
Leave it there fluttering in the breeze,  
uncrossed, undone, unfinished,  
to do the only thing you can do  
which is to swim,  
to be carried by the waves and tide  
and to know when to let the  
current carry you  
and when to fight it with all your strength,  
and to know even this yes will  
demand more than you were willing  
to give: your life for the new birth,  
what you think you know for  
the ancient call home.

#### Saint Francis' Words to Take Us Home in Celebration The Canticle of the Sun/Creatures

**Most High, all-powerful, good Creator,  
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honour,  
and all blessings.  
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,  
and no one is worthy to mention Your name.  
Praised be You, my Creator, with all your creatures;  
especially Brother Sun, who is the day,  
and through whom You give us light.**

**And he is beautiful and radiant with great  
splendour,  
and bears a likeness to You, Most Holy One.**

**Praised be You, my Creator,  
through Sister Moon and the stars;  
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and  
beautiful.**

**Praised be You, my Creator, through Brother Wind,  
and through the air, cloudy and serene,  
and every kind of weather  
through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.**

**Praised be You, my Creator, through Sister Water,  
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.**

**Praised be You, my Creator, through Brother Fire,  
through whom You light the night;  
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.**

**Praised be You, my Creator, through Sister Mother Earth,  
who sustains us and governs us and who produces  
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.**

**Praised be You, my Creator,  
through those who give pardon for Your love,  
and bear infirmity and tribulation.**

**Blessed are those who endure in peace  
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.**

**Praised be You, my Creator,  
through our Sister Bodily Death,  
from whom no living person can escape.**

**Blessed are those whom death will find in Your  
most holy will,  
for the second death shall do them no harm.**

**Praise and bless our Creator,  
and give thanks,  
and serve them with great humility.  
Amen.**

#### Postlude

**Minister** - Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts  
cameron.fairlawn@gmail.com

**Director of Music** - Eleanor Daley  
eleanor@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

**Administrator** - Joanne Christie  
joanne@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

**Admin. Support** - Xin Li  
xinlin@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

**Bookkeeper** - Heather de la Rua  
heather@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

**Website**  
<https://www.fairlawnchurch.ca/>

**Events Calendar**  
<https://www.fairlawnchurch.ca/events/>

**Online Worship**  
<https://www.fairlawnchurch.ca/spirituality/sermons/>

**Facebook**  
<https://www.facebook.com/FairlawnAveChurch>

**Instagram**  
<https://www.instagram.com/fairlawnavenueunited/>



**FAIRLAWN**  
Connect with what matters in life.

#### Blessing of the Animals

Fairlawn Avenue United Church  
Sunday, October 5, 2025  
Worship Service 10:30am

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts  
Eleanor Daley, Director of Music  
Soloist - Amy Dodington

Please ensure dogs are leashed, cats are in carriers and other pets are suitably contained.

\*Indicates when the congregation is to stand, as able.  
Congregational responses, singing and readings in unison are indicated in **bold text**.

## **Part I: The Blessing of the Animals**

### **Welcome and Acknowledgements**

#### **Don't Worry About the Noise** Psalm 148 CEB (adapted)

Praise the CREATOR!  
Praise the Creator wherever you are!  
On the heights!  
In the valleys!  
On the waters!  
In the sky!  
Sun and moon, praise the Creator!  
And all of you bright stars!

***The rain and clouds and snow remind us to be thankful for this universe, A universe filled with love. The power and order of this world remind us we are small, and we are care-takers.***

Caretakers of all creatures, seen and unseen,  
Caretakers of possibilities  
Caretakers of imagination  
Caretakers of a planet with enough resources to feed us all  
Caretakers of a planet of power and fragility.

***Trees and animals and fish and bugs remind us we are responsible to care. All of us, young and not so young. We have been created capable and compassionate. Praise the Creator!***

### **Pets Are Good For Us**

#### **Blessings**

#### **Prayer**

Jesus, we are here together with your creatures in this circle of life. Thanks for being in our circle to celebrate with us.

Jesus, we celebrate this Creation  
May it be blessed with peace,  
May our animals know how important they are to us

May all the world know how important it is to us.  
In the name of the Creator we cry with all in the circle of life,  
Thank you for this life!  
Thanks!

[Thank you, this concludes the Blessing of the Animals and service will now move inside.]

## **Part II: The Feast of Saint Francis**

### **\*Hymn** VU # 229 God of the Sparrow

**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 say 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 neighbour, 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?**

### **Words of Comfort** Matthew 11:25-29 (CEB)

Jesus said, "I praise you, Holy Parent, Creator of heaven and earth, because you've hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have shown them to babies. Indeed, Holy Parent, this brings you happiness.

"My Parent, who is your parent, has handed all things over to me. No one knows the Child except the Parent. And nobody knows the Parent except the Child and anyone to whom the Child wants to reveal Them.

"Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Put on my yoke, and learn from me. I'm gentle and humble. And you will find rest for yourselves.

**Solo** Come Unto Him (from *Messiah*) G. F. Handel (1685-1759)  
Amy Dodington – Soprano

Come unto Him, all ye that labour,  
come unto Him that are heavy laden,  
and He will give you rest.  
Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him,  
for He is meek and lowly of heart,  
and ye shall find rest unto your souls.  
(Matthew 11: 28-29)

**Words of Challenge** Following an Ancient Call C Valters Painter

What if we could listen  
like the great salmon  
who goes about its ordinary life  
when suddenly something shifts.  
It does not come as a thunderous  
revelation, but a quiet knowing  
you have been preparing all  
your life to trust.

The path lived until now no longer  
satisfies but the path ahead  
seems thousands of miles  
long, and your womb is heavy.  
There is no refusing this ancient call,  
and to know ourselves as not alone,  
but part of generations before us who,  
like the salmon, share in this  
Inheritance.

You now hear only the rush of energy  
that comes with starting the long  
return home and the pull in the  
blood which cannot be ignored.