Resolution Number: 2012-A054
Title: Authorize Rites for Care of Animals
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, **That the 77th General Convention make available the following liturgical materials, for use in a variety of settings to provide pastorally for people caring for animals.**

Service at the Loss of a Beloved Animal

The opening anthem may be said or sung.

Canticle 12 A Song of Creation *Benedicite, omnia opera Domini*
from Enriching Our Worship 1, page 25

Invocation
II. The Earth and Its Creatures
Let the earth glorify the Lord,*
sing praise and give honor for ever.
Glorify the Lord, O mountains
and hills, and all that grows upon the earth,*
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O springs of water, seas, and streams,*
O whales and all that move in the waters.
All birds of the air, glorify the Lord,*
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O beasts of the wild,*
and all you flocks and herds [and all you cats and dogs].
O men and women everywhere, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Doxology
Officiant **God be with you.**
People **And also with you.**
Officiant **Let us pray.**

God of grace and glory, we remember before you today N.'s beloved companion A. We thank you for giving her to us to be a source of abundant love, affection, and joy. In your compassion, comfort us who grieve. Give us faith to commit this beloved creature of your own making to your care, for you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

The Readings
One or more of the following passages may be read.

Job 12:7-10; Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 148:7-14; Tobit 5:21-6:2a; Matthew 10:27-31; Mark 16:14-15; Romans 8:19-25; Revelation 4:1-2, 6b-7, 9-11.

Psalm 104:24, 28b-30
O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

When you open your hand
they are filled with good things.

When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to their dust.

When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.

The Prayers of the People

Officiant	**God be with you.**
People	**And also with you.**
Officiant	**Let us pray.**

Officiant and People

Our Father in heaven,	**Our Father, who art in heaven,**
hallowed be your Name,	**hallowed be thy Name,**
your kingdom come,	**thy kingdom come,**
your will be done,	**thy will be done,**
on earth as in heaven.	**on earth as it is in heaven.**
Give us today our daily bread.	**Give us this day our daily bread.**
Forgive us our sins	**Forgive us our trespasses,**
as we forgive those	**as we forgive those**
who sin against us.	**who trespass against us.**
Save us from the time of trial,	**And lead us not into temptation,**
and deliver us from evil.	**But deliver us from evil.**
For the kingdom, the power,	**For thine is the kingdom,**
and the glory are yours,	**and the power, and the glory,**
now and for ever. Amen.	**for ever and ever. Amen.**

God, your blessed Son, Jesus, told us that not even one, tiny sparrow is forgotten in your sight. Strengthen our confidence in your love for all your creatures; in your goodness...
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

Loving God, you brought this beloved animal into the life of N. [and N.] to share kindness, joy, and faithful companionship: Receive our thanks and praise for the community between your animals and your people, and all the ways in which we bless each other's lives; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

Gracious God, you have given us the blessing and responsibility of caring for animals: If in any way we have failed in that responsibility, we ask for your pardon and trust in your mercy; in your goodness,

Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

These biddings may be used when appropriate.
Dear God, the source of all life, wisdom, and love, bring your peace to N., into whose hands was placed the decision to end A.'s suffering. Give her comfort in the knowledge of a loving decision well made; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

Holy God, we pray for N., for the loss of her companion, and for all pets and animal companions. Help us to care for their needs, to tend their injuries, to heal their illnesses, and to relieve their suffering. Grant us wisdom to care for all the creatures of the earth and to respect their place in your Creation; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

A period of silence may be kept.

The burial, or scattering of ashes, may take place here, followed by this prayer.

We return A.'s remains to the earth with gratitude for
your care for us and for all that you have made.
Your mercy is over all your works,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

The following hymn may be said or sung

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voices, let us sing, Alleluia, Alleluia
Bright burning sun with golden beams,
Pale silver moon that gently gleams!

O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!

O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Closing Prayer

God of creation, through your great mercy you renew us:
send us now back to the love and labor of this day
with joy and compassion in our hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

Officiant	**All life is interwoven.**
People	**All life is a gift from God.**

Then may be added

Officiant	**Let us bless the Lord.**
People	**Thanks be to God.**

Prayers Suitable for Use in Church or for Other Gatherings, at the Adoption, Illness, Loss, or Death of Companion, Service, or Other Beloved Animals

At the adoption of an animal
God, whose nature and whose name is Love: We thank you for this new relationship between N. [and N.] and this animal A. Let their home be filled with kindness and care; let them be the delight of one another's hearts; and watch over and keep them from this day forward in safety and peace; for your Name's sake. Amen.

For a lost or missing animal
Almighty God, you watch over every creature, every moment of every day: Hear our prayers for N. as she worries for the safe return of A. By the grace of your Holy Spirit, protect and keep them both, and bring A. quickly home. Amen.

For a sick animal
God, whose compassion and mercy are over all your works: Hear our prayers for A., this creature of yours, in her illness. Ease her suffering and help her not to be afraid. Help her to rest and heal, and comfort us who worry, [especially N. and N.]. We pray through your beloved Son Jesus and by the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

For one whose beloved animal has died
God, the refuge and strength of all who mourn: Hear our prayers for N. [and N.], who grieves the death of her beloved A. Bring comfort in loneliness, peace in distress, and joy in remembering; and lift her heart in thanksgiving for the gift of companionship she has known. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

At the euthanizing of an animal
God, your wisdom and mercy are over all your works: Be with us who have decided to end the suffering of A., this creature of yours entrusted to our care. Our power to heal has reached its end, and we put our trust in your mercy. Reassure and comfort us, that we make these decisions in compassion and kindness, as we pray through the kindness of Jesus Christ and the grace of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

For the suffering of animals during warfare
Eternal God, the comfort and peace of all your creatures: Hear our prayers for all animals that suffer in times of war, especially for those that bear burdens, those that serve as food, those that detect mines, those that search for the missing and the dead, and for all creatures in the path of war's destruction. May your divine assistance be with them according to their need; and may our swords be beaten into plowshares and our hearts be softened toward animals of every kind; for they are yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

For the loss of a farm animal
Gracious Lord, we are the people of your pasture and the sheep of your hand: We thank you for placing us among beasts of the field and for allowing us to care for them, and that through them, you provide us with food, clothing, and livelihood. We grieve this day the death of A., a creature of your own making, and a sign for us of your generosity and love; through Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd. Amen.

At the death of a wild animal

Almighty God, who make the beasts of the wild move in beauty and show forth the glory of your Name: We grieve the death of this creature, whose existence was a reminder to us of your creative presence in the world. We give you thanks for that which was never ours to claim, but only to behold with wonder; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 719-721.