Blessing of Pets and Animals



Millcreek Lutheran Church
Newmanstown, PA

October 11, 2026
The Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost

We Worship Together

Prelude of Entrance

Announcements

Prelude of Preparation

***Call to Worship**
We gather in the name of the Father, and of the Son (+), and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

***Confession and Forgiveness**
In the beginning, the Spirit over the deep; new life daily unfolding at God's call. Darkness and light: Good. Skies, lands, and seas: Good. The earth and all that fills it—plants and rocks, the finned, the feathered, the furry: Good. At the last, humankind in God's image: Very good.

Yet we have failed to draw from that goodness in care for God's creation.

Forgive us, God, for the ways we have exploited earth and its creatures.

We have misunderstood our calling to be protectors of God's creation.

Forgive us, God, for the ways we have exploited earth and its creatures.

We long for new relationships with God's creation that has been entrusted to us.

Help us, God, to make a new community with all that lives alongside us.

May the merciful God who calls us to tend earth and all its creatures, deepen our knowledge of creation's interweaving, so that our lives are shaped in wholeness and peace with all living things; in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

***Opening Hymn** His Eye Is on The Sparrow

Greeting and Prayer
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Let us pray together.
Holy God, we lift to you the animal inhabitants of the earth. For those seen and unseen creatures and living things that attest to your creative power, we ask your blessing. We pray for victims of animal cruelty. Bless all who care for injured and abused animals. Comfort those who mourn for their pets and for endangered and extinct species. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Children's Message

First Reading Isaiah 25:1-9
After a hymn of praise acknowledging God as a shelter for the poor, the prophet portrays a wonderful victory banquet at which death—which in ancient Canaan was depicted as a monster swallowing up everyone—will be swallowed up forever. The prophet urges celebration of this victory of salvation.

1 O Lord, you are my God;
I will exalt you; I will praise your name,
for you have done wonderful things,
plans formed of old, faithful and sure.
2 For you have made the city a heap,
the fortified city a ruin;
the palace of foreigners is a city no more;
it will never be rebuilt.
3 Therefore strong peoples will glorify you;
cities of ruthless nations will fear you.
4 For you have been a refuge to the poor,
a refuge to the needy in their distress,
a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.
When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm,
5 the noise of foreigners like heat in a dry place,
you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds;
the song of the ruthless was stilled.
6 On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.
7 And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the covering that is spread over all nations;
8 he will swallow up death forever.
Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,

for the Lord has spoken.
9 It will be said on that day,
"See, this is our God; we have waited for him,
so that he might save us.
This is the Lord for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Psalm 23

1 The Lord | is my shepherd;
I shall not | be in want.

2 The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me be side still waters.

3 You restore my soul, O Lord,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
ou anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Second Reading Philippians 4:1-9

Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God's peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.

1 My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for,
my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way,
my beloved.
2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the
same mind in the Lord. 3 Yes, and I ask you also, my
loyal companion, help these women, for they have
struggled beside me in the work of the gospel,
together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers,
whose names are in the book of life.
4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say,
Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone.
The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything,
but in everything by prayer and supplication with
thanksgiving let your requests be made known to
God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all
understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds
in Christ Jesus.
8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true,
whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is
pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is
commendable, if there is any excellence and if there
is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.
9 As for the things that you have learned and
received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and
the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel Acclamation Alleluia Verse

The Gospel According to Matthew **Glory to You, O Lord**

***Gospel** Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God's kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.

1 Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables,
saying: 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared
to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 3
He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited
to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 4
Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who
have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner,
my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered,
and everything is ready; come to the wedding
banquet.' 5 But they made light of it and went away,
one to his farm, another to his business, 6 while the
rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed
them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his troops,
destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8
Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but
those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore into the
main streets, and invite everyone you find to the
wedding banquet.' 10 Those slaves went out into the
streets and gathered all whom they found, both good
and bad, so the wedding hall was filled with guests.
11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he
noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding
robe, 12 and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get
in here without a wedding robe?' And he was
speechless. 13 Then the king said to the attendants,
'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer
darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing
of teeth.' 14 For many are called, but few are
chosen."
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Sermon

Hymn of the Day O God, Your Creatures Fill the Earth

***The Prayers**

Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

Holy God, we remember your promise of unity on your holy mountain. Empower the World Council of Churches and all those working across religious difference, that the world may know your undivided love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember your promise of green pastures and quiet waters. Preserve all places of natural beauty and restore our relationship with the land. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember your promise to not abandon us amid storm and disaster. Renew all communities facing disasters (regions in crisis may be named) and give your courage to those leading relief efforts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember your promise to wipe away every tear. Heal and console all who are sick or suffering. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember your promise of a banquet open to all people. Challenge this congregation to open wide our doors and welcome everyone to the table. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember your promise to swallow up death forever. We give thanks for those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing of Pets and Animals

People of God, let us live gently alongside other living creatures and with the whole creation.

> Those who have animals with them, or have brought photos or cremated remains of beloved animals as well as stuffed animals may bring them forward for a blessing.

*Holy God, we thank you for the gift of these animals in the life of these people. Through these animals you have brought many blessings. Today we pause to name our gratitude, and to pray a blessing on them. For the companionship of our pets we say thanks. Bless this animal's life in our care; may they know love through all their days. **Amen.**

***The Lord's Prayer**

***Blessing**

The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus. The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit. The God of grace bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

***Sending Hymn** Let All Things Now Living

Postlude

Dismissal

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.**

His Eye is On the Sparrow

Why should I feel discouraged?
Why should the shadows come?
Why should my heart be lonely
And long for heav'n and home,
When Jesus is my portion?
My constant Friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

Chorus

I sing because I'm happy;
I sing because I'm free
For His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

"Let not your heart be troubled."
His tender word I hear,
And resting on His goodness,
I lose my doubt and fear.
Though by the path He leadeth,
But one step I may see:
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

Whenever I am tempted,
Whenever clouds arise,
When songs give place to sighing,
When hope within me dies,
I draw the closer to Him;
From care He sets me free:
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

O God, Your Creatures Fill the Earth

Carol Winfrey Gillette

O God, your creatures fill the earth with wonder and delight,
And every living thing has worth and beauty in your sight.
So playful dolphins dance and swim; Your sheep bow down and graze.
Your songbirds share a morning hymn To offer you their praise.

You made the pets we welcome in — They're wondrous blessings, too.
With paws and whiskers, wings and fins, They offer praise to you.
O Lord, you call us to embrace These creatures in our care.
May we show kindness, love and grace To all pets everywhere.

You made the creatures on each farm; You know the things they need.
May they grow healthy, safe from harm, And safe from human greed.
Just as a shepherd loves the sheep, You know their joy, their pain.
Lord, bless the animals we keep; May all farms be humane.

Your creatures live in every land; They fill the sky and sea.
O Lord, you give us your command To love them tenderly.
We're called to have dominion here — To care for them always.
By loving creatures you hold dear, We offer you our praise.

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 on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us,
His light goes before us,
A pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
'Til shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.

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

Millcreek
LUTHERAN CHURCH
"The Church on the Hill"

Our Mission:
Motivating Lives Through Christ and our community, our congregation, & ourselves.

Interim Pastor: Rev. Frank Terhune
Cell: 610-751-5472
Email: frankterhune@gmail.com
In Office: Tues. & Fri. 9am-12pm

www.millcreeklutheran.com
Secretary: Jennifer Miller Email: secretary@millcreeklutheran.com
Lay Leader: Jennifer Rosengrant

Sunday, October 11, 2026

You can **listen to the worship service** over the phone patch at **10:15 AM.** Just dial **717-628-0125**. You will hear a message welcoming you to Millcreek. At that point you are connected to our church sound system, so just stay on the line**.** You may also watch the service later on You Tube.

Motivating Lives Through Christ and our Community

TRUNK OR TREAT: This year's trunk or treat event will take place on Sunday, October 25th from 1-3pm (rain or shine). To make this event a success we need volunteers to decorate their vehicles to hand candy or treats out to the children. We are looking forward to another successful trunk or treat event, but we wouldn't be able to do it without all your help! Sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex starting September 27th.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE- OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD:
We will be participating in Samaritan's Purse- Operation Christmas Child this year by filling shoe boxes for children who would otherwise not receive any gifts at Christmas. There are brochures and labels in the narthex with instructions. (Please read them carefully as there are restrictions as to what can be included in the shoe boxes.) There are also pre-printed shoe boxes that can be assembled, or you can wrap a shoe box of your own, just make sure the lid can be opened. Finished shoe boxes should be placed on the table in the multi-purpose room. If you are including the shipping charges, it is $10 per box, payable to Samaritan's Purse (put your check in an envelope inside your box) or you can refer to the instructions in the brochure to donate online. The deadline for completed boxes is Sunday, November 8, 2026. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Martin (610) 589-5501.

Motivating Lives Through Christ and our Congregation

FLOWER AND BULLETIN SIGNUP SHEETS for 2026 are available on the bulletin board in the narthex. Flowers-$30, Bulletins- $10.

UPCOMING SERVICE SCHEDULE & EVENTS:

- Sunday October 11- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am Blessing of the Pets outside service, weather permitting
- Sunday October 18- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am regular service
- Sunday October 25- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am communion service. Trunk or Treat 1-3pm

Motivating Lives Through Christ and Ourselves

WE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) WITH CARDS & PRAYERS:

Mrs. Elaine Hemperly
Linden Village, Stoy Cottage
100 Tuck St.
Lebanon, PA 17042

PRAYER LIST: Please make requests to Jen M. by noon Wed. each week: secretary@millcreeklutheran.com or call: 610-589-2570. *Please provide updates when our prayers have been answered, so this list can be kept current.*

MILLCREEK MEMBERS:

Violet Hepler	Liz Leibig	Michael Yiengst, Jr	Stewart Wolf
Portia Lindermuth	Brian Ream	Devon Yiengst	Norm Sharp
Gerry Strickler	Julie Strickler	Aaron Yiengst	Greer Zellers

NON-MEMBERS:

Gary Beatty, brother in law of Debbie Hartman
JoAnn Deahl, Brandy Gahres' mother
Linda McMullan, sister in law of Greta McMullan
Jennifer Clinton, daughter of Renee & Layne Strickler
Alethea Grissinger, friend of Deb Buffington
Kevin Kochinsky, family friend of Stephanie Seldomridge
Kaylee Gordon, family member of Jamie Keener
Candy Hibshman, friend of Rachel Mock
Pat Ontkos, friend of MLC
Gary, friend of Kristin Bender