

Worship Bulletin - Bethel Congregational Church UCC

October 18, 2026 – 21st Sunday after Pentecost
“Blessing of the Animals”



Centering Words

CENTERING WORDS (Exodus 33, Psalm 99, 1 Thessalonians 1)

Hear God's call to be more than we have become. Be inspired anew to live in God's service.

www.bethelucontario.org



536 N Euclid Ave Ontario CA 91762
In Person & Live Streaming Sundays at
10am
Facebook & YouTube

*Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's
journey, you are welcome here.*

Bethel Congregational Church, UCC

Sunday – October 18, 2026

Prelude

Music for Gathering

Sandy Gunn

Call to Worship:

Responsive

Leader *Let us give thanks to our Creator for the gifts so freely bestowed upon us.
For the beauty and wonder of creation, in earth and sky and sea;*

All We thank you, God.

Leader *For the richness of the mountains, plains and rivers;*

All We thank you, God.

Leader *For all creatures that breathe, and move, and have life;*

All We thank you, God.

Leader *For the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers and trees;*

All We thank you, God.

Leader *For the trust you have shown in giving into our care these, our pets;*

All We thank you, God.

Leader *That each pet here may be treasured with care;*

All We pray to you, God.

Leader *That we may love and honor all your works, O God;*

All We pray to you, God.

Leader *That we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your
abundant creation;*

All Amen.

Unison Opening Prayer

Holy One, we gather to sing your praises!

We are grateful for the gift of this day

and all the ways you make your presence known.

Lord, everywhere we look we see the imprint of your creative love.

The wondrous works of nature show your majesty.

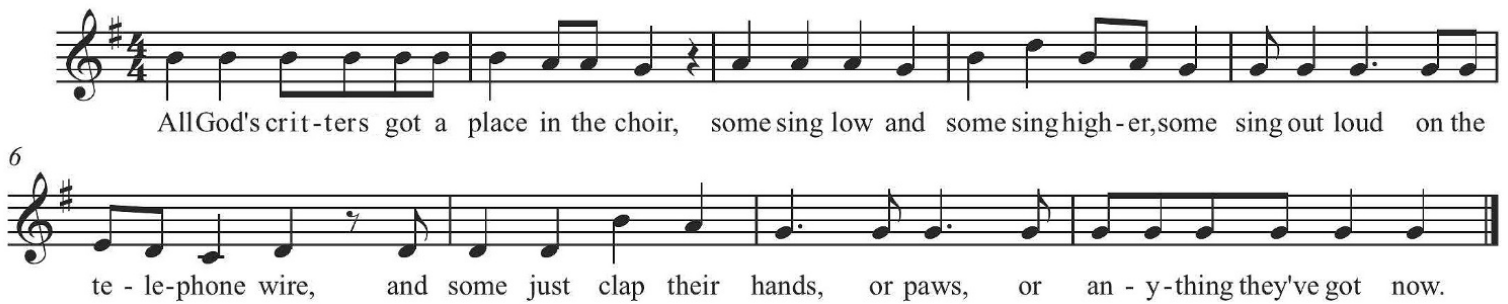
As we gather today to celebrate your love and creation,

keep us mindful that we are part of that created order,

meant to be stewards and not destroyers.

Prepare us to work for you in ministries of peace and justice.

AMEN.



REFRAIN:

***All God's critters got a place in the choir,
Some sing low, some sing higher
Some sing out loud on the telephone wire
And some just clap their hands, or paws or anything they got now***

Listen to the bass, it's the one on the bottom
Where the bullfrog croaks and the hippopotamus
Moans and groans with a big to do
And old cow just goes 'moo'

Well the dogs and the cats they take up the middle
The honeybee hums and the crickets fiddle
The donkey brays and the pony neighs
The old coyote howls (**REFRAIN**)

Listen to the top where the little bird sings
The melody with the high voice ringing
The hoot owl hollers over everything
And the jaybird disagrees

Singing in the nighttime, singing in the day
The little duck quacks and he's on his way
The 'possum don't have much to say
And the porcupine talks to herself (**REFRAIN**)

Everybody here is a part of the plan
We all get to play in the great critter band
From the eagle in the sky
to the whale in the sea
It's one great symphony (**REFRAIN**)

Welcome, Passing the Peace – Announcements

- **Sundays** – Worship! (Bethel 10am Sanctuary/Parlor; FCCO 11:30am)
- **Sundays 9:15am** – Pop-Up Choir practice!
- **Thursdays 10am** - Qi-Gong/Tai Chi
- **Sign up to join Bethel's Relay Team!**
- <https://secure.acsevents.org/goto/BethelOntario>

Song: *GoD and DoG*, by Wendy Francisco

Sylvia & Sandy

Remembrance of the Animals

(Candle lighting for our animal companions no longer with us.)

This is a special time in our service where we can remember animals that are no longer with us. If you brought a picture of your animal friend that you no longer have with you, you may bring the pictures up and set them on the table and light a candle in memory of him or her. If you do not have a picture or memento to bring up, but would still like to remember an animal friend, you may write his or her name and years of life on the cards supplied here. Let us begin (in silence).

(People are invited to bring remembrance items forward to table)

Unison Meditation:

O Lord, we pause and give thanks for the memories of those pets we have lost.
We pray for their owners who continue to mourn their loss.
But most of all, we give thanks for their memory and for the ways
in which they enriched our lives. Amen.

Gloria

C G/D C G/B G C G/B Am/C

Glo-ry to the Cre-a-tor, the Christ the Ho-ly Spi-rit

5 G/D D⁷ G C G⁷ G⁷

three in one; as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and ev-er

10 C G G/F C/E C/G G⁷ C

shall be, world with-out end. A-men. A-men.

1. TERRY WEATHERBY

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

2. PAMELA WEATHERBY

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Gospel Reading Matthew 6:25-33**Dr. Mann**

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you--you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Prayers of the People – *Sharing our Joys and Concerns*

Silent Prayer – *bring your personal prayers to God*

The Lord's Prayer (*Unison*)

Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power,

and the glory forever and ever. Amen

Offering

Invitation to Generosity (*Pastor*)

Giving Options: In person – *We are not yet “passing the plate”. You may leave your offering in one of the offering plates (front of the sanctuary, or usher’s table in the rear).*

Give online at www.bethelucanario.org,



To use a credit or debit card, use the yellow “Donate” button (processed by PayPal – no PP account required), or green Tithe.ly button (Processed by Tithe.ly)



Use **ZELLE** to transfer your offering to



us directly from your bank. When you use Zelle, we are “Bethel Congregational Church” Our verified Zelle email is info@bethelucanario.org



MAIL - Just mail your check to Bethel Congregational Church 536 N Euclid Ave, Ontario CA 91762.

QR Code – Scan the code to send your offering to us through PayPal



Scan. Pay. Go.

Blessing and Dedication of the Gifts (*Unison*)

Generous God, thank you for the gift of love. You bring joy to our hearts! Help us to respond to your grace by sharing our faith, talents, and monetary blessings through the ministries of this church. May your loving Spirit shine through all that we say and do. Accept these gifts that we offer through Jesus, our risen Lord. Amen.

Before we begin the Blessing of the animals, let me expand your understanding of the word “blessing”. A blessing is a wish of gratitude or happiness towards a person or animal or thing. It is for this purpose that we come together today, to acknowledge how our lives have been blessed by our animal friends and to express our happiness and gratitude that they make this so.

Blessing the Animals: *Pastor invites the animals to come forward for blessing with their humans, then circulates among the congregation for those unable to come forward, stopping for each animal.*

Now, it is time to celebrate and bless our animals. I now invite animals and their human friends to come up. Those who cannot come forward I will come to you. I will ask the name of your companion and then bless them. If you brought a picture or other item to represent your animal friend, you may also bring that forward at this time and I am happy to bless that as well.

“What is this [*refer to the kind of animal*]'s name?”

“Bless [name]. And may [name] and those who care for her/him be held lovingly in the hand of creation.”

[Name of animal], may you live a long, happy, and blessed life—may there be food in your belly, a warm place to sleep and joy in your days. *[touch the animal on the head as the blessing is spoken]*

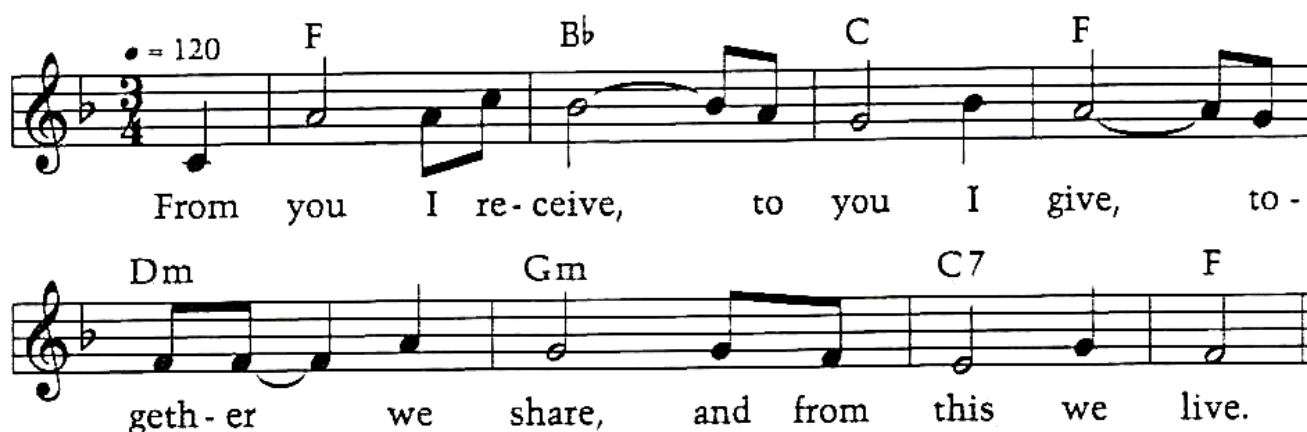
Unison Reading: *"Blessing for All"* by L. Annie Foerster (adapted)

My furry, feathered and scaled friends, I greet you. You come from the same life force of creation that I do and I greet you as a sister or brother. May your days be filled with love and whatever else you may desire. May your tummy always be full and may you always have a place to rest. May you have many days of love with your human friends. May you play together and work together in gentleness and respect for one another...My furry, feathered and scaled friends, I say farewell. I am happy to have met you. May your life be blessed.

Closing Song: *"From You I Receive" (sing three times)* Screen

From You I receive, to you I give,

together we share, and from this we live.



Unison Benediction

Gracious Creator, Hear and bless the beasts and singing birds,
 And guard with tenderness small things that have no words.
 As we go our own ways may we be seeking peace,
 Sharing love and giving comfort as we go, knowing we are all connected,
 We are all one.
 Go in Peace, Go in Love, Go in Joy. Amen.

Postlude

Carillon



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Live Stream Worship Sundays at 9:55am
 on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitch](#) - (Videos remain available for access any time)

Also available on [Roku](#) and [Amazon Fire TV](#).

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God sends us to serve, but God does not send us alone.

The Spirit is with us in the world, guiding our steps and protecting our paths. Christ yearns for us to be one in ministry and service, and one in community and faith—a unity that we discover through the Spirit's miraculous power in our lives. Sent to serve, we are sent not only with the power of the Spirit, but also with the power of unity with one another.

Embracing this unity with both the Holy Spirit and one another opens a path to the "complete joy" that Christ prays we may one day know.