

Second Reading: "Go Faithful Friends" by Cindy Cummins Read by Dr. Michael Strickland
"What is Dying?" by Bishop Charles Henry Brent

Our tribute to our colleague Cindy Cummins, who passed away in 2017. Safe journey, Cindy! Thank you for your love of music and the animals and all the ways you helped to make this ceremony special!!

Legend of the Rainbow Bridge DVD Montage:

Courtesy of Eternal Companions Pet Memorial Center

"The Rainbow Bridge"

There is a bridge connecting Heaven and Earth.

It is called the Rainbow Bridge because of its many colors.
Just this side of Rainbow Bridge is a land of meadows, hills, and valleys,
all of it covered with lush green grass.

When a beloved pet dies, the pet goes to this lovely land.
There is always food and water and warm spring weather.
There, the old and frail animals are made young again.
Those who are maimed are made whole once more.
They play all day with each other, content and comfortable.

There is only one thing missing. They are not with the special person who
loved them on Earth. So each day they run and play until the day comes
when one suddenly stops playing and looks up!

Then, the nose twitches! The ears are up! The eyes are staring!
You have been seen, and that one suddenly runs from the group!

You take him or her in your arms and embrace. Your face is kissed again
and again and again, and you look
once more into the eyes of your trusting pet.

Then, together, you cross the Rainbow Bridge, never again to be separated.

Final Reading: "A Bill of Rights for Grieving Animal Lovers" by Marty Tousley, APRN, BC, FT
Read by the Candlelight Ceremony Volunteers

Closing Prayer and Farewell: Rev. Tiffany Towberman

As you exit, please make sure to take a carnation in honor of your pet!

Special thanks to all those who helped to make this ceremony possible!

St. James Episcopal Church; Rev. Tiffany Towberman; Marcia Keene M. Ed., LPC;
Monique Robertson; Thrivent Financial; GAM Printers; all of our volunteers and readers;
and- most importantly- all of your and your special pets!



Loudoun's 10th Annual
**Pet Remembrance
Candlelight Ceremony**

**"In remembrance of our pets that their warm,
soft light may glow forever in our hearts."**

St. James Episcopal Church
7:00pm
Thursday, April 12, 2018

Program of Events:

A Journey of Hope, Celebration, and Love

Preludes: Selections for Celtic Harp Performed by Monique Robertson

Welcome: Dr. Krisi Erwin

The Nikki Hospice Foundation for Pets founded this ceremony in 2004 so that people all over the world would pause together to celebrate the lives of our beloved pets each year. We hope tonight's program will provide healing and inspiration to each and every one of you.

Opening Prayer: Rev. Tiffany Towberman

First Reading: "A Prayer for the Animals" by Albert Schweitzer Read by Deborah Stewart

"Dear Friend...": Have you ever wondered what a beloved pet may say to you? Author Jon Katz examines this and many other facets of pet loss in his book *Going Home: Finding Peace When Pets Die*. Through his examination of his life experiences, he realized that "in our love for animals, in our compassion and empathy for one another, we are all one. We will all encounter the universal experience of loss and death, one way or the other." He found great peace in sharing his experiences of the loss of his dog, Rose, and the nearly 4,000 emails from all over the world offering him sympathy. This vast outpouring of support reminded him that "grief is, in so many ways, the ultimate celebration of life, community, and love." This video, made for his book, was compiled from images and testaments offered by his readers on behalf of animals they have loved and lost. Hear the wisdom of his words and find peace in the amazing human-animal bond that is celebrated the world over.

Words and Inspiration: Marcia Keene, M. Ed., LPC

The Candlelight Ceremony and Presentation of the 2018 Roll of Honor:

When lighting your candle, hold the lit candle upright and tilt only the unlit candle!

Introduction: Rev. Tiffany Towberman

In some beliefs, the flame represents the soul and its nature. Humans respond to this kind of light and, in a time of extended darkness, actually crave it. Adults and children alike are absorbed by looking at a flame and the visual warmth that this flame represents can become healing.

Isn't it interesting that most things we encounter in life are enclosed in a container- solid and limited within a defined boundary? However, the flame has a boundary that is not defined. It changes. It doesn't have a wall to it. Two flames can blend and be separated. One can feel the effects of it- see it and not yet hold it. A flame defies containment and it can become almost as mysterious as the soul and the deepness of the love that we feel for our animal friends.

Today, you want to hear from your pet angel that they are now well and are at the Rainbow Bridge waiting on us. Take comfort in this flame and feel its meaning in your heart.

"In the Candle's Glow"

~ Author Unknown

Warm light coming from far below,
Twinkling, sparkling is the candle's glow.
All is well up on the ridge,
The place we know as Rainbow Bridge.

Furbabies sleeping in heaven's light,
Tended by candles in the night.
Peaceful dreams be theirs to keep,
As they slumber in this night so deep.

Hearts on earth that miss them so,
Take comfort in the candle's glow.
Watching for them in skies above,
Bound eternally by a cord of love.

Reading of the 2018 Roll of Honor: Dr. Bill Tyrrell

Music: Selections for Celtic Harp Performed by Monique Robertson

Verse/Response based on a Jewish Remembrance: Rev. Tiffany Towberman

V: In the rising of the sun and in its going down,

R: We remember our pets

V: In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,

R: We remember our pets

V: In the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring,

R: We remember our pets

V: In the warmth of the sun and the peace of summer,

R: We remember our pets

V: In the rustling of the leaves and the beauty of autumn,

R: We remember our pets

V: In the beginning of the year and when it ends,

R: We remember our pets

V: When we are weary and in need of strength,

R: We remember our pets

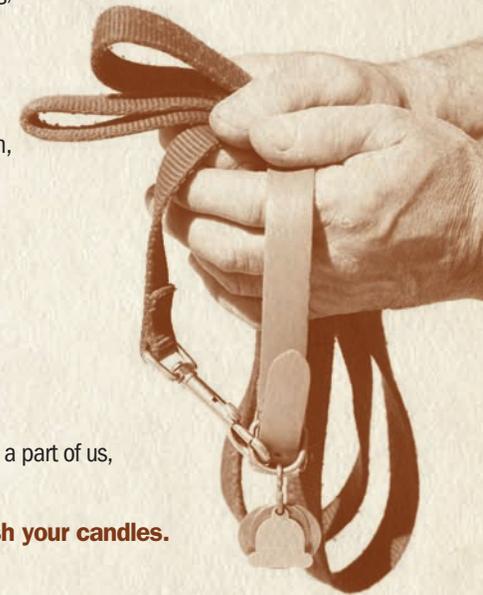
V: When we have joys we yearn to share,

R: We remember our pets

V: So long as we live, they too shall live for they are now a part of us,

R: We remember our pets

You may now extinguish your candles.



continued on reverse

A Bill of Rights for Grieving Animal Lovers

Marty Tousley, APRN, BC, FT

It is Hereby Declared that Grieving Animal Lovers have the Right:

To feel the pain of grief when the bonds with our pets are broken. The bonds we have with our companion animals are deep and strong; the pain we feel when those bonds are broken is real and worthy of our grief.

To feel shocked and overwhelmed by the intensity of our grief. Since our animals' life spans are so much shorter than our own, it is inevitable that eventually we will experience the loss of our beloved animal companions. The grief we feel at such times can be far more intense than we ever expected, no different from that of losing another special family member or cherished friend.

To understand our grief reactions, feelings and behaviors as normal. Grief is a natural, spontaneous response to the loss of a significant relationship.

To express our grief in our own unique way, within our own time frame. The course of grief is unpredictable and uneven, with no specific time frame. How we express our grief will vary among individuals, but we all get through it in personally meaningful ways.

To have our grief recognized by others as significant and legitimate. Since grieving over animals isn't generally accepted in our society, we may feel uneasy or embarrassed, as if we have no right to feel or express our grief because our loss is not significant enough. But we're not grieving "just an animal." Since we're the only ones who know how much our animals meant to us, when they're gone we're the only ones who can measure how very much we've lost.

To feel supported by others in our grief. When our companion animals die, there are no formal, public rituals where we can express and share our sorrow, talk about our loss and obtain the sympathy and support of others. At the very time when we need to be with others who understand, we feel isolated and alone. We need to find someone with whom we can openly acknowledge our feelings, express and work through our pain, and come to terms with our loss.

To honor the memory of our pets in whatever way we see fit. To memorialize our beloved companion animals is to honor and acknowledge the important role they played in our lives, to bring comfort to ourselves and to help us keep their love and presence in our hearts. Among other things, we can memorialize our pets by writing about them, making an album or a scrapbook, planting a living memorial in our garden, having a meaningful memorial service, funeral or ritual, or making a donation to a charitable animal organization in our pet's name.

In an effort to decrease our carbon footprint, we are no longer creating CD-Roms for our ceremonies. Instead, we are posting the ceremony content and the Roll of Honor at this address: http://wholisticpawsvet.com/candlelight_ceremony.html

This website will provide a record for all previous year's ceremonies as well. Please let us know if you have any questions at: candle@wholisticpawsvet.com.

Resources:

Online

Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement: www.aplb.org

World by the Tail, Inc: www.veterinarywisdompetparents.com

Beezer and Boomer: Transforming Pain into Peace, Doug Koktav: www.beezerandboomer.com

Day by Day Pet Caregiver Support: www.daybydaypetsupport.com

Books and Articles for Pet Loss Support

- Allen Anderson (July 28, 2008), *Saying Goodbye to Your Angel Animals: Finding Comfort after Losing Your Pet*
- Brown, Robin Jean (Aug. 2, 2010), *How to ROAR: Pet Loss Grief Recovery*
- Bunting, Eve (Oct. 18, 2004), *Rudi's Pond*
- Buscaglia, Leo (June 1, 1982), *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story of Life for All Ages*
- Cotner, June (Sept. 5, 2005), *Animal Blessings: Prayers and Poems Celebrating our Pets*
- Hanson, Warren (Sept. 1997), *The Next Place*
- Hickman, Martha Whitmore (Dec. 1, 1991), *Healing After Loss: Daily Meditations For Working Through Grief*
- Holland, Cannon Henry Scott (August 1, 1994), *Death is Nothing at All*
- James, John W. (June 4, 2002), *When Children Grieve: For Adults to Help Children Deal with Death, Divorce, Pet Loss, Moving, and Other*
- Johnson, Joy (June 1998), *Remembering Rafferty: A Book About the Death of a Pet for Children*
- Katz, Jon (August 21, 2012), *Going Home: Finding Peace When Pets Die*
- Kowalski, Gary (March 13, 2012), *Goodbye, Friend: Healing Wisdom for Anyone Who Has Ever Lost a Pet*
- Kuman, Sameet M. Phd., (2005), *Grieving Mindfully*
- Kurz, Gary (April 1, 2008), *Cold Noses at the Pearly Gates*
- Kurz, Gary (June 1, 2011), *Wagging Tails in Heaven: The Gift of Our Pets' Everlasting Love*
- Lewis, Maggie Mei, (2009), *Moonlight Memories*
- London, Jonathan and Long, Silvia (1994), *Liplap's Wish*
- Mellonie, Bryan (Oct. 1, 1983), *Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children*
- Nieburg, Herbert A. (Feb. 16, 1996), *Pet Loss: A Thoughtful Guide for Adults and Children*
- O'Day, Devon (Feb. 13, 2007), *Goodbye, My Friend*
- Reynolds, Rita M. (Jan. 25, 2011), *Blessing the Bridge: What Animals Teach Us About Death, Dying and Beyond*
- Severino, Elizabeth, D.D. DRS. (2002), *The Animal Viewpoint on Dying, Death and Euthanasia*
- Dr. Seuss (Aug. 20, 1996), *My Many Colored Days*
- Traisman, Enid (August 2, 2010), *My Pet Remembrance Journal*
- Varley, Susan (1984), *Badger's Parting Gifts*
- Viorst, Judith (1971), *The Tenth Good Thing About Barney*
- Weaver, Susan B. (Feb. 28, 2011), *Forever Friend: Activities for Kids Who Have Lost a Pet*
- Wintz, Jack (April 1, 2010), *I Will See you in Heaven*
- Wolfelt, Alan D. (Feb. 1, 2004), *Understanding Your Grief: Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart*