

Report to the 235th Diocesan Convention
Animal Welfare Ministry

Our Mission

Mindful of our responsibility to be stewards of God's creation, the mission of the Animal Welfare Ministry is to

- spread awareness of animal welfare concerns related to our food supply, medical research, and treatment of domestic companion animals,
- open a dialogue to discern and encourage "animal-friendly" lifestyle changes,
- foster pastoral care support for the loss of a companion animal,
- provide liturgical resources for the celebration of animal life, and for times of bereavement and loss of companion animals.

During 2018 the mission goals were progressed through

- being a presence at the 234th Diocesan Convention,
- exhibiting at the 2018 Rutgers Open Day, New Brunswick campus,
- forming a closer partnership with the Humane Society Faith Outreach program,
- producing material for nationwide publication through the Association of Episcopal Deacons.

2018 Animal Welfare Events

The Animal Welfare Ministry exhibit at the 234th (2018) Diocesan Convention attracted much interest, and many new names were added to our mailing list.

In 2018 the Animal Welfare Team sought to extend its message beyond church venues and into the wider world. The first opportunity to do this was at the Rutgers Day event in April. Through our exhibit table we were blessed to be in conversation with about 100 people during the course of the day, including students, faculty members and families. Much literature was distributed, and a Spirit-filled and joyful time was had by all!

To further extend the reach of our message and to generate new interest from a wider audience, we were pleased to write an animal welfare-related article for publication in *Diakoneo*, the quarterly magazine of the Association of Episcopal Deacons, with distribution to several thousand Deacons in North America. Publication is planned for February 2019, and we are hoping to learn of other animal welfare groups within the Episcopal Church, to inspire others to "take up the cause", and to possibly coordinate a national effort before the next General Convention.

During 2018 we also reestablished our connection with The Human Society Faith Outreach program, who provided us with material to distribute, and featured the DoNJ animal welfare activities on their website.

In 2019, we will maintain our outreach efforts into the local community and further afield, while continuing to offer parish-level educational and awareness forums and other resources to the Diocese. Please visit our website at www.dioceseofnj.org/animalwelfare for more information.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Bishop Stokes and members of the Diocesan staff for their support in this important work, and to all the faithful and caring members of the Animal Welfare Team who have contributed so much.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Christopher Cox, Deacon
Chair, Animal Welfare Ministry