

“IT’S THAT TIME AGAIN. . .”

For three years now, we have had the joy of gathering together for a brief time of worship in which we celebrate God’s gift of our fellow creatures. Blessing of the Animals services such as ours have their origin with the friar who founded the Franciscan order of monks known as St. Francis or Francis of Assisi. Here are a few tidbits about his life.

St. Francis was born on Oct. 3, 1181 or 1182 in Assisi, Italy. He died on his birthday in 1226 at the age of 44 or 45. He became an itinerant preacher who led a life of self-imposed poverty. He was a peacemaker who, in 1219, went to Egypt in an attempt to convert the sultan and end the Fifth Crusade. This attempt turned out to have far-reaching consequences long past his death, since after the fall of the Crusader Kingdom, the Franciscans were the only ones who were allowed to stay on in the Holy Land.

Francis is thought to be the one who first thought of, and put together, a live nativity scene as a part of the annual Christmas celebration in Greccio. He wanted to use real animals so that worshipers could contemplate the birth of Jesus making use of their senses, especially sight. He is most associated with his patronage of animals and the environment, so churches

eventually began to hold services to bless animals on St. Francis’ feast day, which is October 4.

St. Francis preached the Christian doctrine that the world was created good and beautiful by God and that we should love all of God’s creation and care for it. He believed that nature itself was the mirror of God and called all creatures his brothers and sisters. There are charming legends of how he preached to the birds, to which they reputedly stopped chirping and listened. Another one that was told was that he supposedly persuaded a wolf to stop attacking the locals because he had gotten the locals to agree to feed the wolf. Aren’t those wonderful stories?

When Francis was canonized by the Catholic church in 1228. The pope said his example was a challenge to Christians to *“not behave like predators where nature is concerned, but to assume responsibility for it, taking all care so that everything stays healthy and integrated.”* It has also been said of him, “The poor man of Assisi gives us striking witness that when we are at peace with God, we are better able to devote ourselves to building up that peace with all creation, which is inseparable from peace among all peoples.” Most recently, Pope Francis said of him, *“He was the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable, and of integral ecology, lived out joyfully and authentically.”*

In appreciation for St. Francis’ cherished beliefs, on October 4th we will have our Blessing of the Animals Service in our picnic shelter. I invite you to bring your

beloved “furballs” and winged friends (etc) to what will be a celebration of them, and a time of blessing for them. . . and I trust, for you as well. Please plan to keep dogs and cats on leashes, in carriers, or firmly in hand. All “critters” are welcome, like hamsters, guinea pigs, turtles. . . and even spiders and snakes, but they will all need to be kept in carriers. We will sing a couple songs from our hymnal in gratitude to God for all of creation, meet each of our furry (or non-furry) congregants, and pray a prayer of blessing on each of them. Please invite your friends to bring their pets too. The service should not be more than 30 minutes long.

I once blessed a hamster named “Bobby” – and I can’t describe how moved I was by the experience. . .to look down into the trusting eyes of that tiny creature and say a prayer for him. Take my word for it, this service is a very special and unique experience. Come and see!

I sure do love you! Susan

SEPTEMBER 2026 EVENTS

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS

WEDNESDAYS:

Community Bible Study: 11 a.m. to noon in the pastor's office

Choir Rehearsal: 5:30 p.m. in the choir room

SUNDAYS:

Coffee & Conversation: 9:30 a.m. in the Rakestraw Fellowship Hall

Adult Sunday School: 10:00 a.m. also in RFH

Worship Service: 11:00 a.m.

Children's Church: during worship, after the Children's Sermon

REGULAR MONTHLY EVENTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS FOR SEPTEMBER

BASSETT HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Saturday, September 5th

Location: Our PBBC booth is generally located behind the Wells Fargo Bank.

PBBC meeting time: 8:00 – 8:30 a.m.

Schedule of Events:

Bassett Volunteer Fire Department **Ham and Egg Breakfast:** 7:00 a.m. **Booths / Vendors in place:** 8:30 a.m.(also: all vehicles moved to parking area.) **Opening Ceremony:** 8:45 a.m. **We take our PBBC booth down:** 1:00 p.m. **Parade on Main Street:** 2:00 p.m. **Event is over:** 3:00 p.m.

We will be giving out balloon animals and little cards and charms with our church schedule of regular events on them, so know that your help will be needed with those efforts, and especially, to meet and greet the folks of our community. This event also features craft booths and live music. Hope to see you there!

PBBC BUDGET CARDS INGATHERING **Sunday, September 6th in our worship**

service. We will be turning in our budget pledge cards in preparation for planning our 2027 church budget.

LABOR DAY

Monday, September 7th: Church Office closed

PICKERS & FIDDLERS MUSIC FEST **Saturday, September 12th from 10:00** **a.m. to noon in the Rakestraw**

Fellowship Hall. Come and hear some of the best in bluegrass and gospel music! Have some tasty breakfast treats while enjoying wonderful fellowship. Maybe you'll even win a delicious dessert made by our own professional baker, Linda Bullock. Meet up with old friends and make some new ones! It's a great time!

ALMA HUNT INGATHERING

Sunday, September 13th in our worship
service: We will receive our offering for state missions.

DEACONS' MEETING

Tuesday, September 15th at 7:00 p.m. in
the Rakestraw Fellowship Hall.

COMMUNITY MEAL

Thursday, September 17th at 5:30 in the
Rakestraw Fellowship Hall, (and every
3rd Thursday of the month.) *For this particular community meal we'll have some special music by the group "Blue Grits and Grace."* All are welcome to come serve and eat, and fellowship with our neighbors of Henry County and Bassett. Invite your neighbors, friends and relatives! Workers should arrive at 5:15. If you'd like to contribute a dessert, contact Lindy Koger at 276-734-2096.

CHURCH MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, September 18th on the church
tennis court shortly after sunset (8:00
p.m. You'll want to bring a beach or camping chair for each of those in your family, and you may wish to bring bug spray. We'll have a family movie, popcorn and drinks. Invite your friends!

EMMAUS TEAM MEETING

Saturday, September 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Rakestraw Fellowship Hall.

If you go up to the church for any reason, please avoid using the middle floor during these hours.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Monday, September 21st from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Rakestraw Fellowship Hall.

If you are able to give blood, please make this event a priority.

ALSO Monday, September 21st STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room.

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, September 22nd from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 pm at Melrose Baptist Church in Roanoke. Pastor Susan and her husband Keith will be attending.

PARENT'S NIGHT OUT

Friday, September 25th from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the Rakestraw Fellowship Hall.

What's Happening?: Our church is offering the parents of our church and the parents of our Little Angels children a night out, while we take care of their little ones.

The Plan: All parents who participate will not pick up their children from Little Angels that evening. They will send them to LA that morning with their pillow, blanket, and pajamas. We will feed and entertain the children for 2 1/2 hours while their parents have some free time.

Cost: No charge! It is a love gift to these families.

Workers: If you would like to help serve for this wonderful event, please let Donna Anthony know. The more the merrier!

FEED AMERICA FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Tuesday, September 29th, at the Light Electric Building, 24A Governor Stanley Hwy, 12:30 – 1:30. There is also a worship service beforehand at 9:00 a.m. and a lunch, free of charge, is offered at 11:30 a.m. at the same place. All are welcome to worship, work and eat afterward.

HEADS UP: OTHER EVENTS ON THE HORIZON!!

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

SERVICE: Sunday, October 4, 4 p.m. in the picnic shelter

TRUNK O' TREATS: Saturday, October 31, 5:30 p.m. in the church parking lot.

Start planning your costume as well as what your car decorations! This is always

a great night for us with hundreds of kids who come!

COMMUNITY PRE-THANKSGIVING

SERVICE: Sunday, November 22nd at 3:45 p.m. at the EMI Building (former Bassett H.S.) We will once again be led in worship by the ladies' vocal ensemble "Branches".

RECENT EVENTS: THE HOMEPLACE

On Saturday, August 22nd a group of seven from our church went up near Roanoke to Catawba to The Homeplace. The Homeplace is a big, beautiful restaurant within a country house, which is surrounded by sprawling farmland inhabited by Highland cows. The food is served family style and includes fried, chicken, roast beef and ham, corn, pinto beans, cole slaw and green beans, big fluffy biscuits, and fruit cobbler with ice cream for dessert. It was all served fresh, and delicious, and they kept it coming. The entire meal was basically \$25 each for all you can eat, and included a drink. All of us who went would go back in a heartbeat. It was a great time of fellowship for all. You'll want to be sure to go next time. . .and there *will be* a next time!