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All Creatures, Great and Small

Cathy Dausman

Cats, dogs and even a chicken named Beatrix took advantage of a Blessing of the Animals offered October 2 following St. Giles Sunday service at St. Mary's College.

The chapel plaza held dogs large and small, friendly and not so friendly, and a pair of cats safely confined in their carriers. Reverend Teri Gilmore presided over the brief prayer service. Each animal was sprinkled with water when blessed; more than a few dogs tried to drink from Gilmore's bowl. A basket of stuffed animals was also presented for blessing; the church runs a "comfort ministry" and distributes stuffed pets to children involved with the Contra Costa court system.

The service was just winding down when one participant noticed a late arrival. Her name was Dolly, and she made a grand entrance galloping up the long green chapel lawn. "Am I too late?" rider/owner Kate Sullivan asked breathlessly. Sullivan wanted to include her Belgian mare in the service. Gilmore was happy to oblige. And as Dolly cast a wistful look back at the delicious green grass she'd just trod, the other participants gathered 'round for a meet and greet.



Dolly and her new friends



Bless this Labrador... Photos Cathy Dausman



Blessing of the animals, St. Giles Episcopal congregation



Nellita Antezana, of Lafayette, with her chicken Beatrix



One cat ready for a blessing

Dolly outside St. Mary's chapel. Don't worry -- she didn't go in!...

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[back](#)

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