

# *The Blessing of the Animals*

*at*



**October 10, 2021 , 2-4 P.M.**



1015 Holman Street, Houston, Texas 77004

Phone 713.528.4100

Fax 713.942.0117

[www.TrinityMidtown.org](http://www.TrinityMidtown.org)



St. Francis, pray for us

*In Memoriam:*

*Big Ears Miquon-Bradley*

*Spanky Miquon-Bradley*

*Belle Cullum*

*Daisy Dawg McClellan*

*Adam Merullo*

*Wiggles Morgan*

*Ollie Robertson*

*Jona Sennewald*

*Cubbie Starbark*

*Dominick Starbuck*

*Junior Starbuck*

*Little Girl Starbuck*

*Nick Starbuck*

*Ozzie Starbuck*

*Schatzie Starbuck*

*Chloe Stasney*

*Duke Woodson*

*Lady Avery Foxx Zemanek*

*In Honor of:*

*Paco Cipitio Romero-Atkins*

*Roreaux Rayo del Sol Romero-Atkins*

*Blackberry Caldwell*

*Blaze Caldwell*

*Clea Bruton*

*Frida Bruton*

*Coco Von Halton*

*Lily Von Halton*

*Smoke Marsh*

*Emily Mathis*

*Lou Matteucci*

*Lucy Matteucci*

*Tucker Matteucci*

*Curby McClellan*

*Coogie Montes*

*Luna Montes*

*Flora Sennewald*

*Sonny Stewart*

*Shilo Varteressian*

*Ernie Zemanek*

*Lord Fennyson Merullo-Zemanek*

*Paul Merullo-Zemanek*

*Ringo Merullo-Zemanek*



## ***The Story of St. Francis of Assisi***

One day Francis and his followers came to a valley where birds of many kinds were gathered. When he saw them, Francis left his companions and ran toward the birds. They were apparently waiting for him. Instead of taking wing as they would normally do, they stayed while he spoke to them. "My companions, the birds," he said, "you should praise your Creator very much and always love him; he gave you feathers to clothe you, wings so that you might fly, and everything else that you need. God has made you most noble of his creatures, giving you a home in the purity of the air; and though you neither sow nor reap, he protects and governs you without any anxiety on your part."



The birds began to crane their necks, extend their wings, open their mouths, and gaze at him. Then he blessed them, and making the sign of the cross over them, he gave them permission to fly away to some other place. Then he went on his own way rejoicing and giving thanks to God whom all creatures venerate humbly and in their own way.

From that day on, Francis solicitously admonished all birds, all animals, and all reptiles, and even creatures that have no feelings to praise and love their Creator. Daily, when the name of the Savior had been invoked, he saw and experienced their obedience.

### **A Prayer for the Feast of St. Francis**

By Sheila Forsyth

Remember, in our prayers today  
All creatures wild or tame;  
Exotic, unfamiliar ones  
And household pets you call by name;  
The bold, the shy, the slow or swift,  
The ones with teeth and claws,  
The ones with scales or shells or fins,  
The ones with hooves or paws;  
The shaggy-maned, the silken-furred,  
The winged and feathered of the skies,  
All those with antler, horn, or tusk,  
All those with gentle eyes;  
The caged, the free, the ones who toil,  
The ones who crawl or swim or sting,  
The ones most loved, the ones most feared,  
The ones who howl or buzz or sing;  
All dwellers of the sea or plain,  
Of desert, mountain, jungle, farm;  
Pray for the creatures of the earth  
To keep them safe from harm.

## ***The Rainbow Bridge***

Just this side of Heaven is a place called The Rainbow Bridge. When each animal dies they arrive at The Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor; those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing: they each miss someone very special, someone who was left behind either in reality or the dreams of what should have been for those that never had a special bond, a special friend. Our friends that shared our lives comfort the friendless ones, promising them that their time will come.

Over the hill one by one come many people. They each stop and stare, hearts caught in throats by the majesty of the view. For many there are friends waiting, but more than a few have faced life's burdens alone and come to this haven expecting no one and falling to the ground in despair. As each huddles in his separate, silent misery a small silent form approaches. Soft muzzles are tentatively placed on clenched hands. Tender caresses from paws and fingers, gentle whispers of love pass back and forth. Loneliness meets loneliness and dissolves in joy. Friendless no more, the person and animal unite in joyous contemplation of their new-found special friendship.

God in His Wisdom has allowed another chance for those that had none on this earth.

As for the other animals, they all run and play together, but the day comes when they too suddenly stop and look into the distance. Their bright eyes are intent; their eager bodies begin to quiver. Suddenly, they break from the group, flying over the green grass, faster and faster. You have been spotted, and when you and your special friends finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress their beloved heads, and you look once more into those trusting eyes, so long gone from your life, but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross the Rainbow Bridge together.

## Fifth Day: A Pet Blessing Tale

### By Theresa D. McClellan

"On the day you were born God looked into your face, smiled, and left God's signature in your eyes."

This is the Creation story every animal has learned from its parent since the beginning of time.

According to Scripture, God created everything. The creatures of the water. The beasts of the land. The wild ones. The tame ones. Every crawling thing. Every creeping thing. Every flying thing. Every thing.

The seen and the unseen. God created it all. And it was good.

According to Scripture the creation of animal life occurred on the fifth day; before God created humans on the sixth day.

The animals felt special being the first living things and showed their appreciation of God's blessing by spreading across the land and sky, the sea and the earth filling the world with their songs and sounds, their howling and woofing, their purring and their snoring; displaying for God their many textures and temperaments.

And when God created human, God said, "take care of this great earth I have created. You have dominion over the animals."

Now one of the animals named Dog heard this and became filled with fear. What is this dominion? What does it mean? God went to all the animals, and no one knew.

Dog was brave and curious. So Dog decided to go straight to the Source. Dog decided to talk to God.

Dog started the journey to God and realized there were no words. What would Dog say? But as Dog got closer to God, Dog's fear vanished. Dog felt calm. Dog felt a sense of peace.

Dog realized that even though Dog could not communicate with words with God the way the human could, Dog had something special, yet another gift from God.

Dog stood before God and peered into the face of God. God smiled. Dog remembered the look in God's eye and recognized the gift from God. Dog knew that there needed to be a message that all would understand.

So Dog spread the following words to all who would hear: "On the day you were born, God looked into your face and smiled, and left God's signature in your eyes."

Dog did not have to fear humans who kept their eyes on God because God gave Dog and all the animals the gift of God's unconditional love as a reminder to humans that dominion was not power over all, but rather that we are all God's creations.

Love God. Love All.

But Dog still wanted to feel special. So Dog only told this to all the Dogs on the earth: "I peered into the face of God and saw my reflection. This is why when you see Dog backward in the mirror. You see God."

(c) 2018



(Illustration by Calejdart)



# ST. FRANCIS DAY EUCHARIST

## OPENING HYMN

### COLLECT OF THE DAY

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

#### *Collect for St. Francis*

Most high, omnipotent good Lord, grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may for love of you delight in your whole creation with perfectness of joy. O God, you have made us and all living things. You are even more wonderful than what you have made. We thank you for giving us these pets who bring us joy. As you take care of us, so also we ask your help that we might take care of those who trust us to look after them. By doing this, we share in your own love for all creation. We ask this in Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

### Song of Praise

### LESSON (*Seated*)

The Creation Story (Abbreviated from Genesis 1:1-34)

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and a great dimness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. On the first day, God created light and darkness. On the second day, God created the sky above and the waters below. On the third day, God formed the land and called it Earth, and gathered the water and called it Sea. God blessed the earth with vegetation and food. On the fourth day, God separated the day from the night, creating the sun, the moon, and the stars. On the fifth day, God brought forth swarms of living creatures in the air, in the water, and on the land, and God bid them to be fruitful and multiply. On the sixth day, God created humankind in God's image, giving them dominion over the animals. God blessed them and bid them to be fruitful and multiply. On the seventh day, God saw that everything that God had made was very good and God rested and blessed the seventh day and made it sacred.

#### Prayer of St. Francis (*to be said in unison or sung*)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light; and  
where there is sadness, joy.

O, God, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

## ST. FRANCIS DAY RESOURCES

Blessing of the Animals Service  
St. Francis Day Eucharistic Service Outline  
Other Resources for St. Francis Day

### THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**All :** And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

#### *Collect for St. Francis*

Most high, omnipotent good Lord, grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may for love of you delight in your whole creation with perfectness of joy. O God, you have made us and all living things. You are even more wonderful than what you have made. We thank you for giving us these pets who bring us joy. As you take care of us, so also we ask your help that we might take care of those who trust us to look after them. By doing this, we share in your own love for all creation. We ask this in Jesus' name.  
**Amen.**

#### **Prayer of St. Francis** *(said in unison)*

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light; and  
where there is sadness, joy.

O, God, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

#### THE BLESSING OF EACH PET (INDIVIDUALLY)

*The blessing is usually done with the sprinkling of water over the animal and the owner.*

"N., (name of animal, i.e. "Smokey", not cat/dog) may you be blessed in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May you and (the name of the "owner") enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you."

*or this*

"N., may you be blessed in the Name of God who created you, and may you and (owner's name) enjoy life together with our God."

## OTHER RESOURCES

### **Liturgy and Blessing of the Animals**

St Francis Day Blessing of the Animals and Other Resources from Episcopal Relief and Development (<http://www.er-d.org/children>)

Liturgy for St. Francis Day in English and Spanish from the Diocese of Texas  
<http://www.epicenter.org/curriculum-resources-for-congregations/>

Blessing of the Animals Service  
<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/sr-bless-animal.php>

### **Story Books**

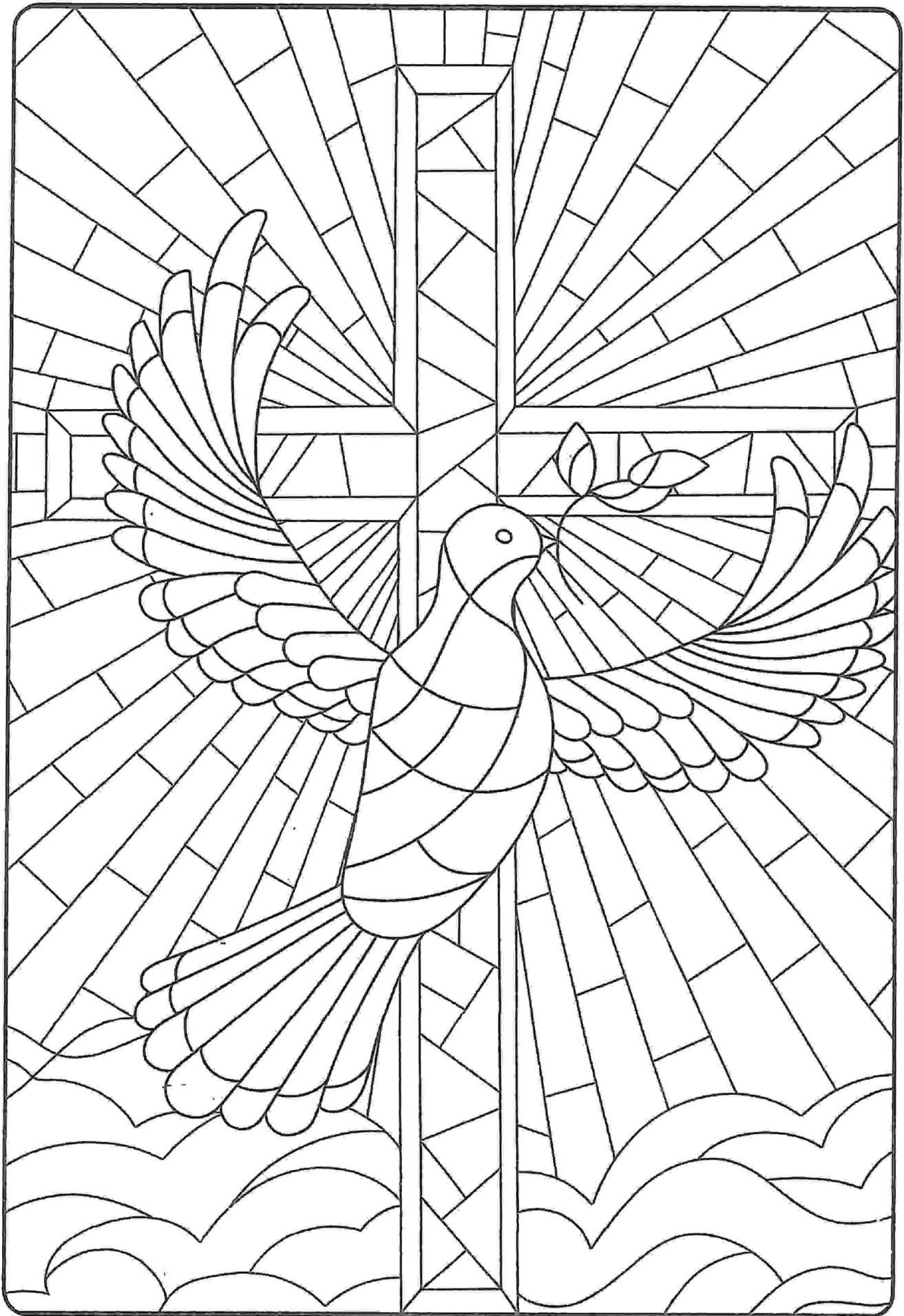
Francis: The Poor Man of Assisi by Tomie di Paola  
The Song of Francis by Tomie di Paola  
Saint Francis by Brian Wildsmith

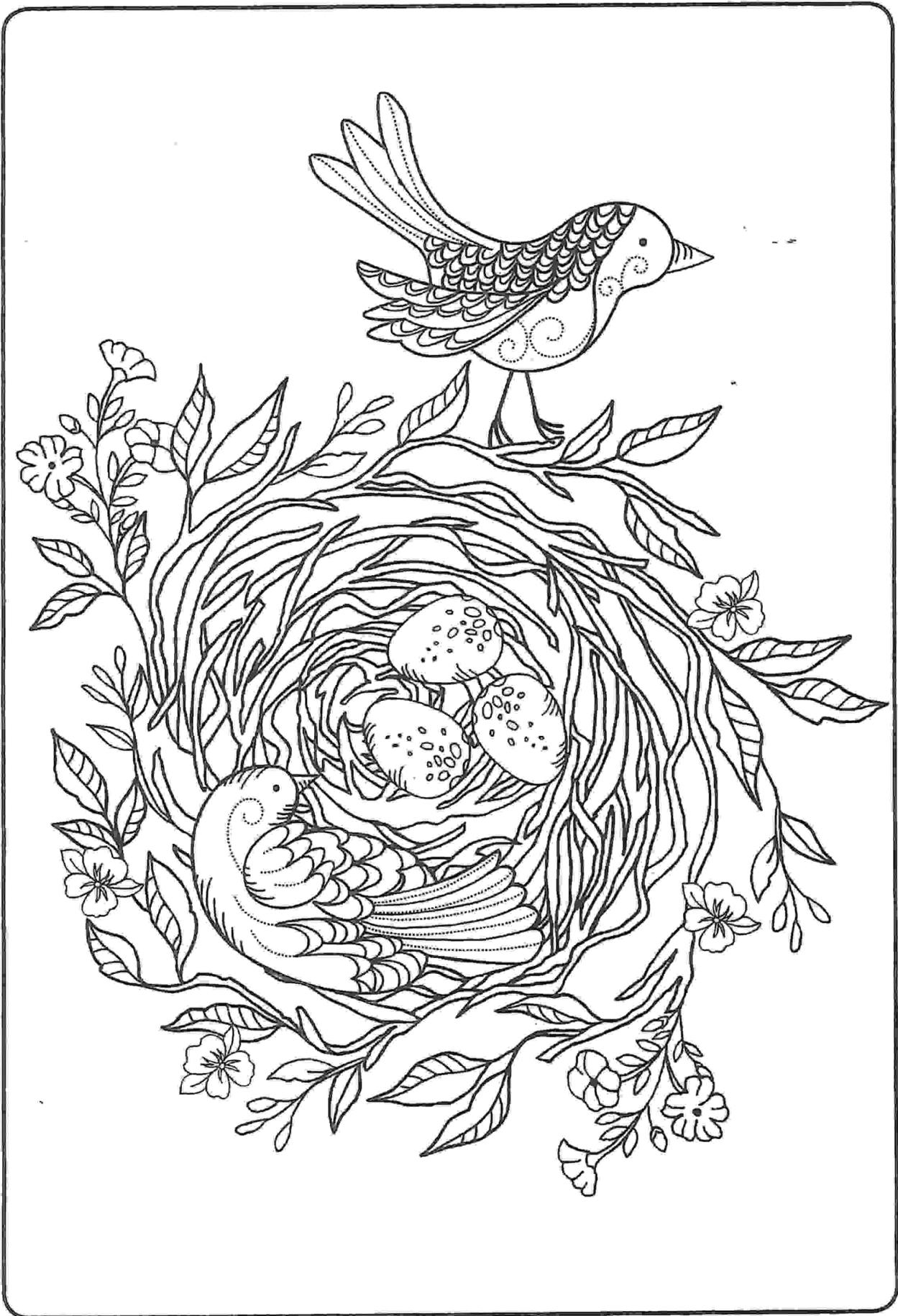
### **Stories of St. Francis Online**

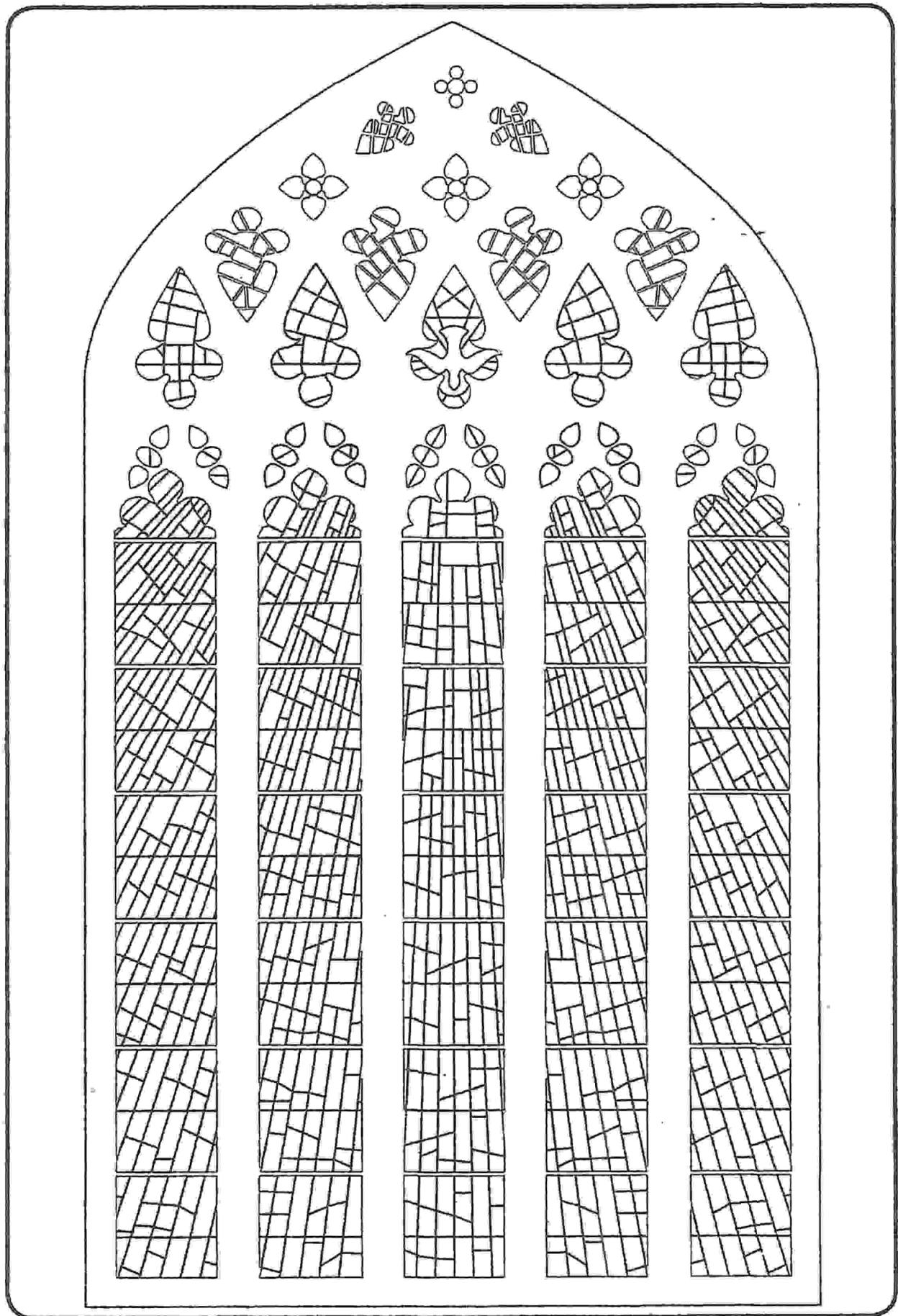
God's Troubadour, The Story of St. Francis of Assisi by [Sophie Jewett](#)  
<http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php3?author=jewett&book=troubadour&story=contents>

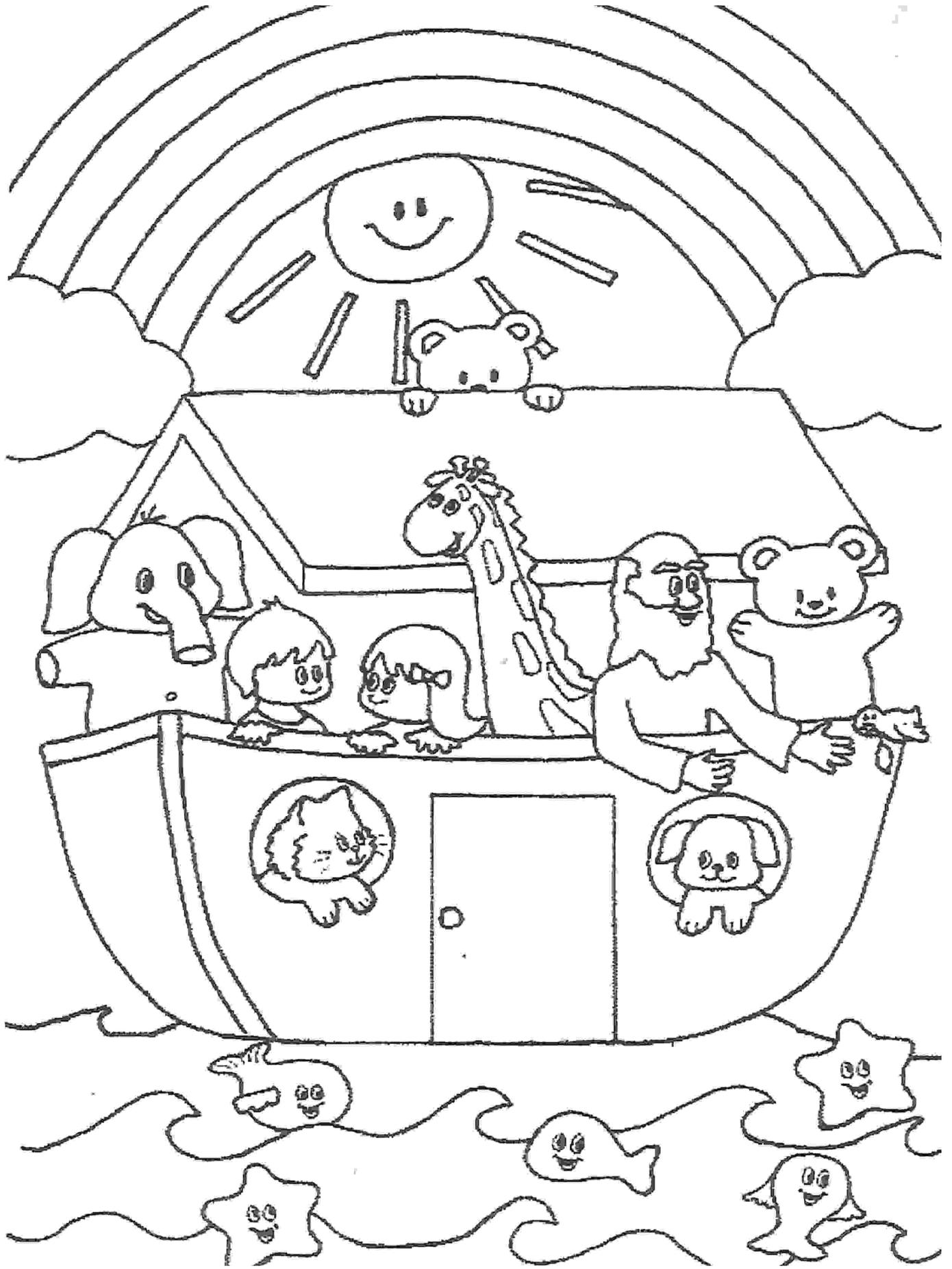
### **Stories about St. Francis and the Animals from American Catholic**

Stories abound of how St Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) could communicate with animals and felt at one with all creation. Many of these stories were first recorded by Thomas of Celano during the 13th century. Versions of them, retold by John Bookser Feister, can be found at:  
[www.americancatholic.org/features/francis/stories.asp](http://www.americancatholic.org/features/francis/stories.asp)







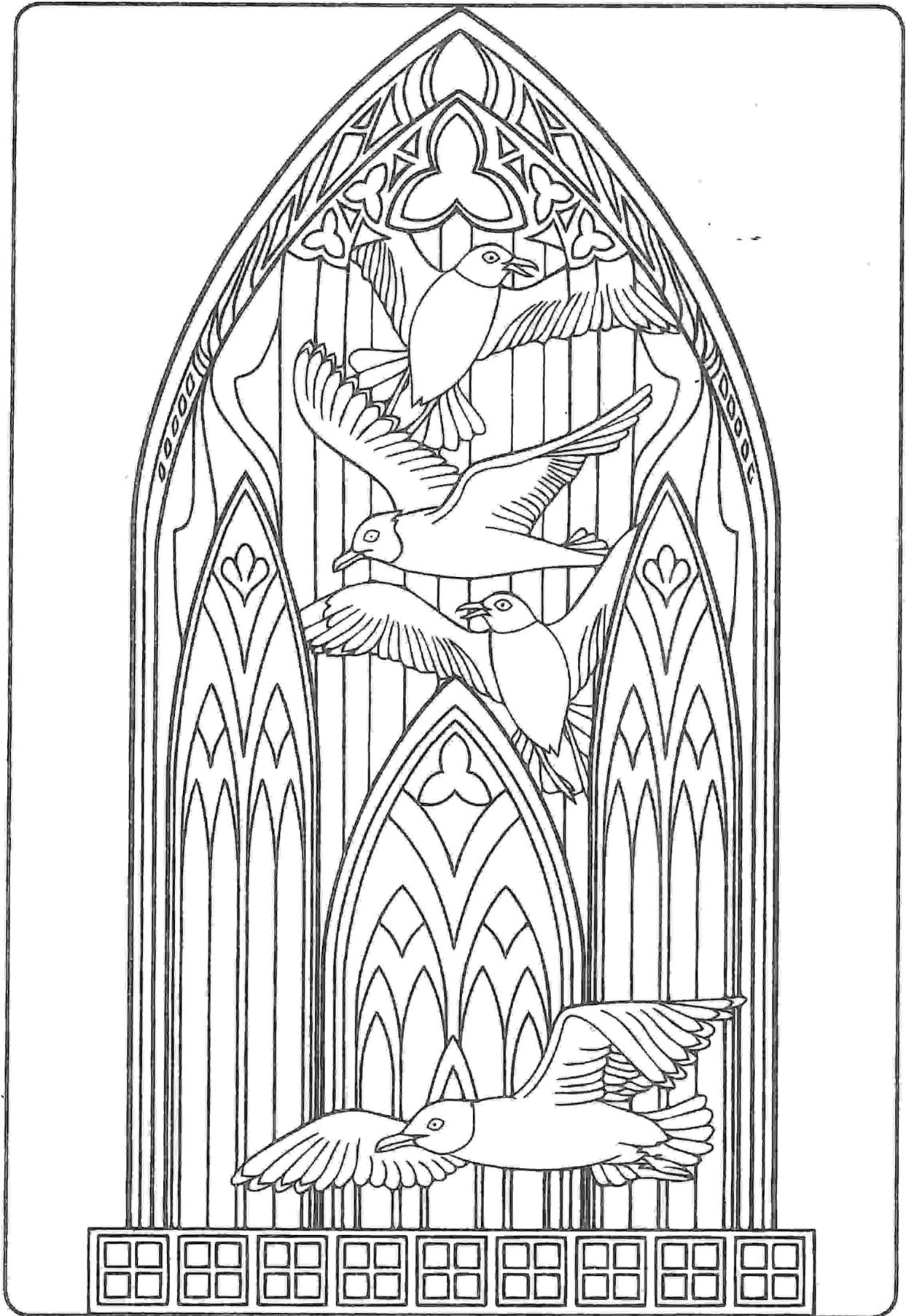


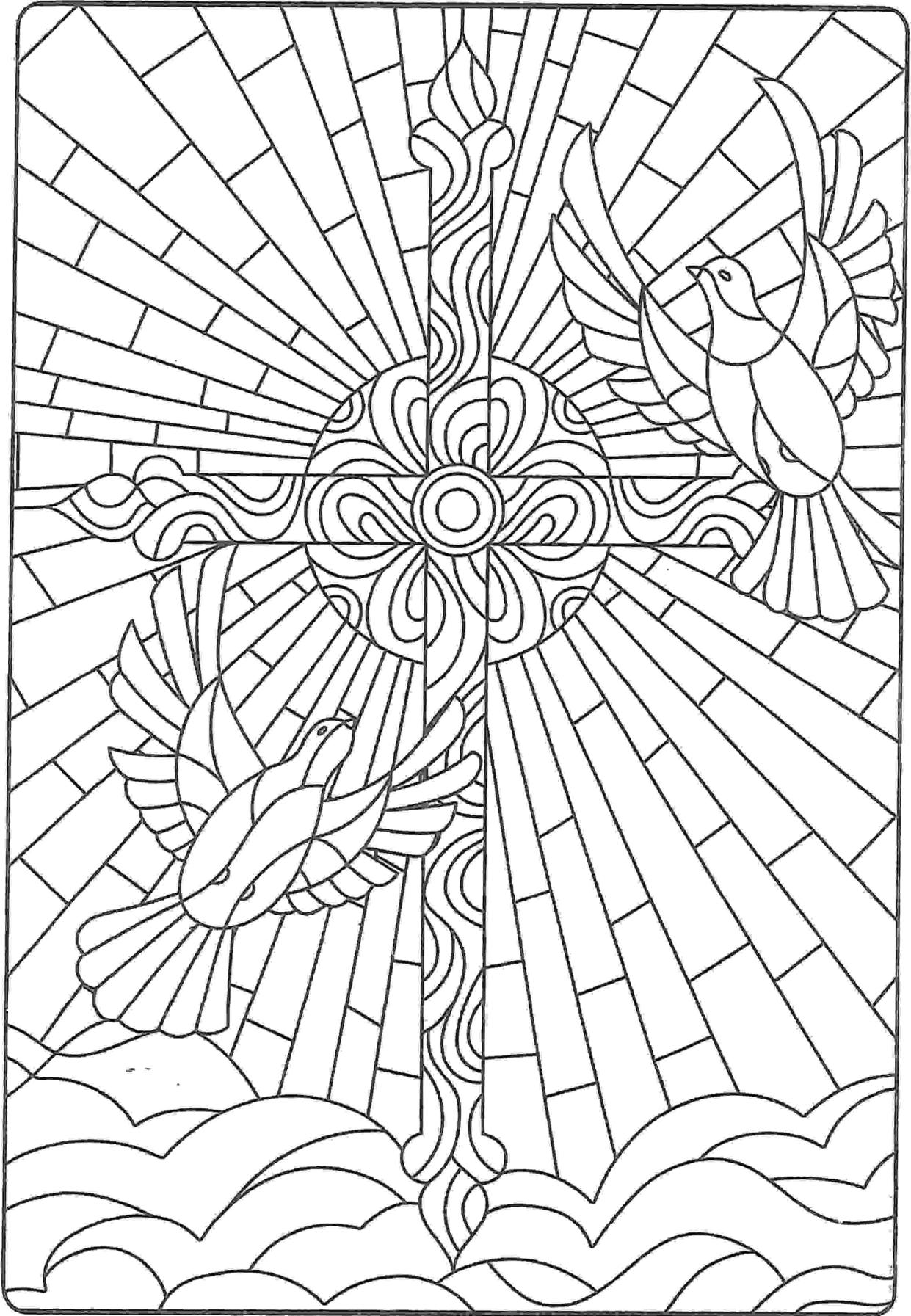
Small Tortoiseshell  
*Aglais Urticae*

Butterfly







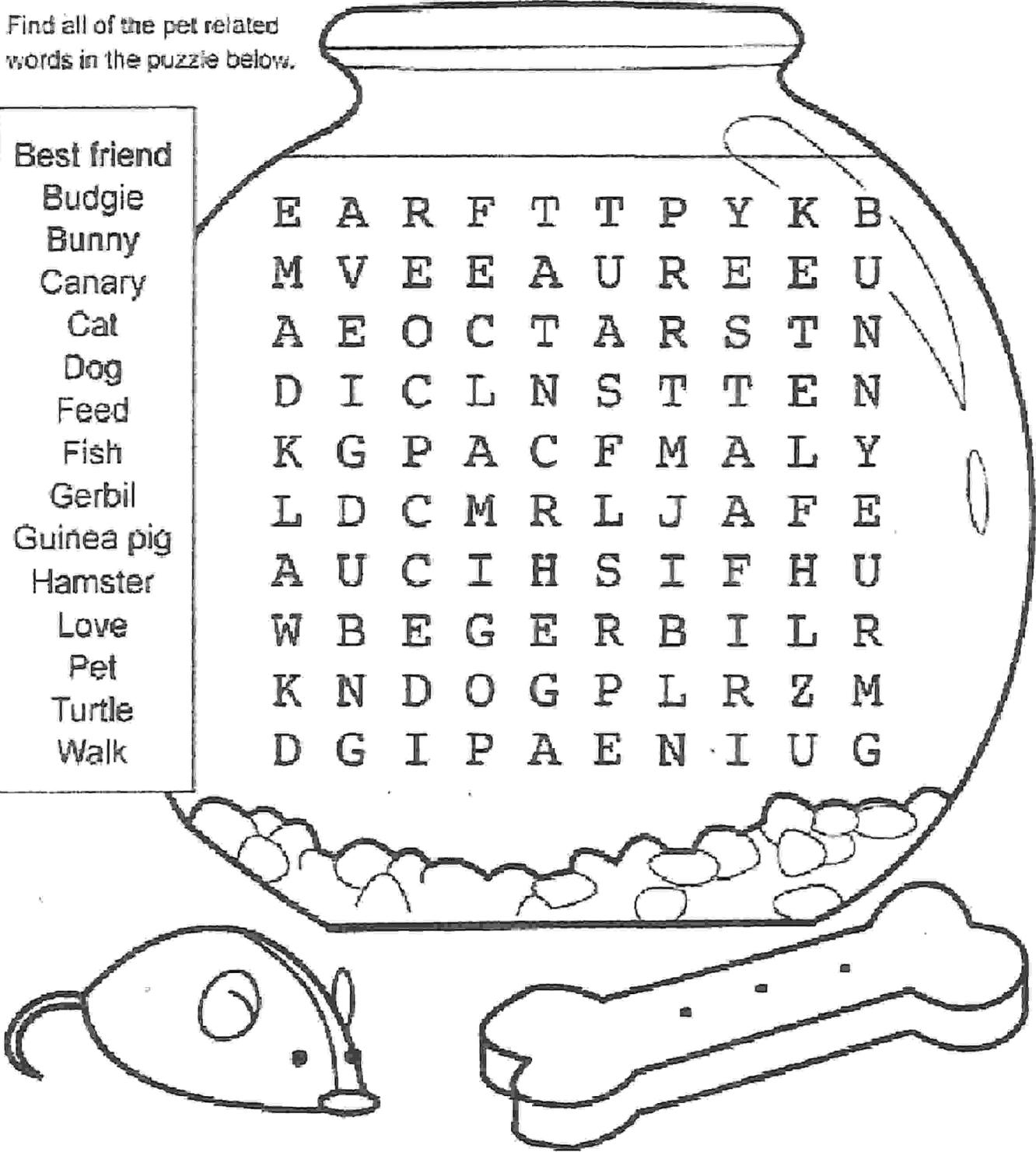


# Pet Word Search

Find all of the pet related words in the puzzle below.

## Best friend

- Budgie
- Bunny
- Canary
- Cat
- Dog
- Feed
- Fish
- Gerbil
- Guinea pig
- Hamster
- Love
- Pet
- Turtle
- Walk



E	A	R	F	T	T	P	Y	K	B
M	V	E	E	A	U	R	E	E	U
A	E	O	C	T	A	R	S	T	N
D	I	C	L	N	S	T	T	E	N
K	G	P	A	C	F	M	A	L	Y
L	D	C	M	R	L	J	A	F	E
A	U	C	I	H	S	I	F	H	U
W	B	E	G	E	R	B	I	L	R
K	N	D	O	G	P	L	R	Z	M
D	G	I	P	A	E	N	I	U	G



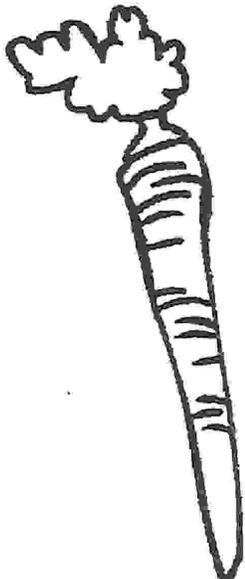
# Word Search Pet Words

### INSTRUCTIONS:

FIND AND CIRCLE THE PET WORDS IN THIS PUZZLE. WORDS MAY BE FOUND ACROSS, DOWN AND DIAGONALLY.

### PET TIP:

PETS CAN BE WONDERFUL FRIENDS IF YOU RESPECT THEM AND GIVE THEM LOTS OF PROPER CARE. BE GOOD TO YOUR PETS AND HAVE FUN WITH THIS PET PUZZLE!



T	K	U	B	P	K	B	Z	F	K	W	G	P	E	W
U	S	V	I	Z	U	I	E	R	O	I	A	B	J	K
L	G	S	R	M	E	P	P	D	A	T	T	T	L	I
I	K	Y	D	Z	K	I	P	V	D	B	C	T	E	T
Z	G	E	R	B	I	L	F	Y	F	I	B	A	E	R
A	S	P	C	A	V	U	T	K	F	O	N	I	T	N
R	M	G	R	A	L	E	A	S	H	Z	O	G	T	Z
D	O	B	W	J	R	O	K	K	V	K	P	D	H	E
W	U	G	U	W	G	E	A	T	Q	D	Z	I	A	X
F	S	Z	H	N	D	O	G	F	U	I	G	T	M	E
E	E	F	R	K	N	C	L	Q	H	V	F	R	S	R
R	N	L	I	A	P	Y	P	A	R	R	O	T	T	C
R	F	E	V	S	T	R	A	I	N	I	N	G	E	I
E	Q	P	R	T	H	T	R	E	A	T	S	A	R	S
T	K	N	T	T	C	O	L	L	A	R	H	C	S	E

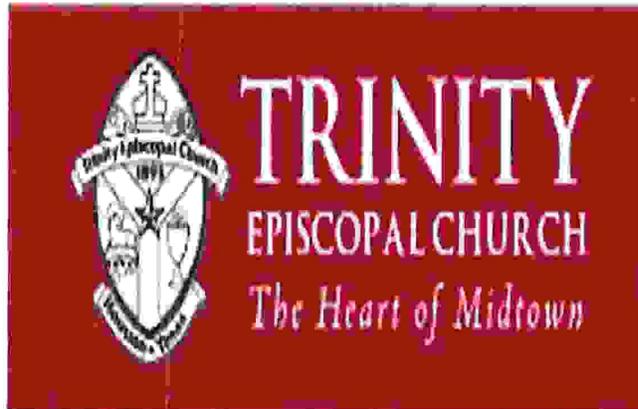
- |           |            |             |              |
|-----------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. DOG    | 7. HAMSTER | 13. COLLAR  | 19. BIRD     |
| 2. PUPPY  | 8. GERBIL  | 14. TREATS  | 20. FISH     |
| 3. CAT    | 9. FERRET  | 15. BEDDING | 21. EXERCISE |
| 4. KITTEN | 10. RAT    | 16. WATER   | 22. CARE     |
| 5. BUNNY  | 11. MOUSE  | 17. FOOD    | 23. TRAINING |
| 6. RABBIT | 12. LEASH  | 18. PARROT  | 24. LIZARD   |





# *The Blessing of the Animals*

*at*



**October 10, 2021 , 2-4 P.M.**



1015 Holman Street, Houston, Texas 77004

Phone 713.528.4100

Fax 713.942.0117

[www.TrinityMidtown.org](http://www.TrinityMidtown.org)