

Suggested Interview Questions for Dr. Laura Hobgood-Oster,
author of *The Friends We Keep: Unleashing Christianity's Compassion for Animals*
Baylor University Press

As we've seen in recent years with creation care, an issue that was considered a "liberal concern" has moved into the mainstream of Christianity. Do you see this with the issue of humane treatment of animals as well? Is it being embraced by Christians across the denominational spectrum?

Why do you think the number of Christians working for humane treatment of animals is growing?

How can Christianity be "good news" for animals?

You find a wealth of evidence in Christian history and tradition that animals are "good and worthy beings in God's creation." Tell us about some of that evidence.

Why do you think that animals appear in the stories of Christian saints with such amazing frequency? What are some examples?

Christians understand God as a God of relationship. How does that extend to animals and the rest of creation?

The Monks of New Skete are an example of a Christian community that emphasizes the sacred aspect of our relationships with companion animals, particularly dogs. Tell us about them.

How is God revealed in our relationships with animals?

What are some of the ethical and justice issues around animals that Christians should be concerned with?

One problem you discuss in the book is pet overpopulation and puppy mills. What should Christians do about this, and why?

How should Christians respond to the use of animals for sport and entertainment—both legal, such as horse racing, and illegal, such as dogfighting?

Is hunting for sport in line with Christian ideals?

You appear in the Human Society's documentary "Eating Mercifully" and include a chapter in the book on that topic. How can people "eat mercifully"?

Is there a Christian case for vegetarianism?

What are some ways animals are showing up in churches?

How might the Christian faith's tradition of "radical hospitality" be extended to animals?

How do Christian concepts such as The Word, sacrificial atonement, and speciesism create a "culture of sacrifice" that does not bode well for animals?

Your study of the history of the Christian tradition shows many resources for a theology of compassion for and connection to animals. How do we extend this theology of care and compassion to animals?

What have you learned from your work as a dog rescue volunteer?

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