



Eric Barsness of Puppies Behind Bars (here, with Dudley) will speak at Chelsea Community Church's Oct. 18 Blessing of Animals service.

Photo by Peggy Vance.

## BLESSING OF ANIMALS AT CHELSEA

**COMMUNITY CHURCH** | The nondenominational Chelsea Community Church (CCC) is really serious about that “all are welcome” policy — especially when it comes to their annual Blessing of Animals service, where the pews are full of paws (and feathers, and even scales).

The guest speaker is Eric Barsness, of Puppies Behind Bars — a program that trains prison inmates to raise service dogs. Tenor Otto Walberg, the service's longtime lay leader, will perform a new song composed by singer-songwriter and guitarist Phil Marsh, who will accompany Walberg. On Nov. 1, the church celebrates its 40th year with a service that includes special music and an overview of CCC's history.

*The Blessing of Animals service takes place on Sun., Oct. 18 at 12 p.m. at St. Peter's Chelsea (346 W. 20th St. btw. Eighth & Ninth Aves.). Free (a collection will be taken). Visit [chelseachurch.org](http://chelseachurch.org) and [puppiesbehindbars.com](http://puppiesbehindbars.com).*