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In God's house
By Elise L. Moore, CSB

Lucy lives in the country. Her house is in the woods next to a pretty lake. There are lots of animals that visit Lucy's yard. Deer come to drink out of the lake. Wild turkeys raise their families in the woods. Ducks and geese stop to rest. Possums even come onto the porch at night to visit. And sometimes people leave cats in the woods. Lucy found two cats that way (or they found her!). The one cat she named Ben and the other Carlito.

Ben was a sleek black cat, and Carlito was a fluffy black cat with white paws, white on his face, and a little black chin. Lucy loved both kitties and played with them every afternoon and evening. When Lucy wasn't playing with them, Ben and Carlito liked to be together and explore.

One day, a dog in the neighborhood killed Ben. Lucy's family went to the dog's owners and told them what had happened. At first, the owner didn't believe it. But his son spoke up and told his dad it was possible. He'd seen the dog kill rabbits in the woods. Then the dad was very sorry that he had let the dog play in the woods. He agreed to keep the dog chained in the yard, as the rules said. And he did.

Although Lucy was grateful that the dog wasn't going to hurt any more cats or other animals in the neighborhood, she felt very sad. Lucy missed Ben. She decided she needed to pray. This is how Lucy prayed.

First, she prayed to not be afraid of the big dog. Lucy found a verse in the Bible that talks about animals being friends instead of fighting. "In that day the wolf and the lamb will lie down together, and the leopard and goats will be at peace. Calves and fat cattle will be safe among lions, and a little child shall lead them all" (Isa. 11 :6-7, The Living Bible).

The little child in the Bible verse wasn't afraid of the lion and the wolf, because he saw them as God's creatures. To Lucy, this meant that even the

scariest animal could be tamed by God. God, who is Love, doesn't create animals to be aggressive. God makes all His creatures gentle and good.

Then Lucy looked in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy, a book she reads often, and found this sentence: "All of God's creatures, moving in the harmony of Science, are harmless, useful, indestructible" (pg. 514). This was very comforting. Lucy looked at that sentence and thought, "Ben is indestructible!" Ben is a creature of God, and nothing can destroy an idea or creation of God.

Then Lucy remembered the 23rd Psalm, where it says, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." So Ben wasn't really dead. He was indestructible and had walked through the shadow into the sunshine of God.

Ben was still living and playing and being loved by God. Lucy began thinking about Ben as living in God's house instead of her house. This was a happy thought.

But there was one more thing. Lucy needed to pray for the dogs in her neighborhood. She was worried that some dog might hurt their other cat, Carlito. So Lucy prayed to know that God loved dogs too. He made cats indestructible and dogs harmless. Just like the wolf and the lamb in the Bible, all animals can feel the grace of God governing them and be gentle.

Now when Lucy remembers Ben, she knows he is happy and being petted and loved in God's house. She isn't afraid of big dogs, and she knows that God loves all His creatures.

And God said, Let the earth
bring forth the living creature
after his kind, cattle, and
creeping thing, and beast of
the earth after his kind:
and it was so. And God made
the beast of the earth after
his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that
creepeth upon the earth after

his kind: and God saw
that it was good.
Genesis 1 :24, 25