



"Whatever you did for the **least among my brothers and sisters**,  
you did for me." —MATTHEW 25:40

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Galen Davis  
Associate Lead Pastor  
Cornerstone Nashville

Dear Pastor Davis,

I'm writing on behalf of [LAMBS](#), People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals' Christian outreach division, regarding your congregation's recent "Mascots Live 2018" program, which used animals provided by Hollywild Animal Park. I respectfully ask that you prayerfully consider the information below and refrain from including animals in Cornerstone's future events.

All animals are individuals, created by [God's wondrous hand](#), and they feel joy, sadness, loneliness, and fear, just as humans do. Using them in these types of displays undermines what it means to be a good steward of God's creation. Indeed, in [Matthew 25:40](#)—the verse that inspired LAMBS—Jesus says, "Whatever you do unto the least among my brothers and sisters, you do as unto me." With so few legal protections, animals are some of "the least" among us—and in desperate need of our compassion and mercy.

You are likely unaware of Hollywild's *notorious* [history of failing animals](#). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has repeatedly cited it for failure to provide animals with veterinary care, failure to provide primates suffering from psychological distress with environmental enrichment, failure to provide animals with shelter from inclement weather, failure to provide animals with minimum space, improper feeding and watering, filthy and foul-smelling enclosures, and failure to maintain enclosures—among many other issues. In 2015, the USDA issued a penalty of \$18,964 for violations committed over a two-year period. In 2015, a fire at the roadside zoo killed more than two dozen animals, and the next year, passersby had to round up some animals who had escaped from the facility and corral them back inside. Hollywild officials didn't even know that they had escaped.

We hope that, upon reflection, you'll agree that this cruelty doesn't reflect the tenets of your church and that you'll decide to leave animals out of your future events. Please join us in working toward the peaceable kingdom described by Isaiah, in which the lion browses with the calf—not a kingdom of mockery in which animals are caged and hauled on stage as props for the flock that you shepherd. Thank you for your time and your service to God's world and His people. I look forward to hearing from you.

Wishing you and your congregation all God's blessings,

Colleen O'Brien  
Vice President, Communications  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals