



The Cathedral
Church of **Saint John**
the Divine

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stjohndivine.org

RELEASE

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**LLAMAS AND MONKEYS AND SNAKES, OH MY!
THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE HOSTS
33RD ANNUAL FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS AND BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1ST**

Signature Service Celebrates the Natural World and Stewardship of Creation

New York (September X, 2017) The Cathedral of St. John the Divine celebrates the beauty of the animal kingdom and the dignity of all creatures with a ceremony and special blessing for animals large and small, at the 33rd annual Feast of Saint Francis and Blessing of the Animals **on Sunday, October 1st from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, located at 1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112th Street) in Manhattan.**

This signature Cathedral service features the *Missa Gaia* (or Earth Mass), composed by Paul Winter and Paul Halley. The Paul Winter Consort is joined by a massed choir of hundreds of voices conducted by Director of Cathedral Music Kent Tritle, with modern and traditional African dance performances by Forces of Nature Dance Theatre. The unique ceremony concludes with the Procession of the Animals down the Nave of the Cathedral.

The day is a celebration of the life of Saint Francis of Assisi and his advocacy for harmony between human beings and the natural world. Following the procession, guests are welcomed to enjoy an outdoor fair from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., with pet blessings, activities, refreshments and performances.

Guests are encouraged to bring their pets to the Cathedral to be a part of the celebration and to receive a special blessing. In years past, thousands of dogs, cats, birds, reptiles and their owners have attended the event. Pet blessings begin on the Cathedral's outdoor Pulpit Green at approximately 1:30 p.m.

The event is free and open to the public, though contributions to help support the service are gratefully welcomed. Day-Of Passes will be available on the morning of the event. It is



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recommended that visitors arrive as early as possible for pass distribution. For more information, please visit <https://www.stjohndivine.org/visit/calendar/events/liturgy-worship/17707/the-feast-of-saint-francis-and-blessing-of-the-animals-2>.

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About The Cathedral

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine is the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. It is chartered as a house of prayer for all people and a unifying center of intellectual light and leadership. People from many faiths and communities worship together in services held more than 30 times a week; the soup kitchen serves roughly 25,000 meals annually; social service outreach has an increasingly varied roster of programs; the distinguished Cathedral School prepares young students to be future leaders; Adults and Children in Trust, the renowned preschool, afterschool and summer program, offers diverse educational and nurturing experiences; the outstanding Textile Conservation Lab preserves world treasures; concerts, exhibitions, performances and civic gatherings allow conversation, celebration, reflection and remembrance—such is the joyfully busy life of this beloved and venerated Cathedral.

The Cathedral is open 7 days a week from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please visit stjohndivine.org for more information and a schedule of public programs.