The idea of welcome is the foundation of the sacred space in which you stand. It has been the organizing principle of the Cathedral from the very beginning. In the early 19th century, when more than half of New York's population was foreign-born, Saint John the Divine was conceived as a truly American Cathedral, affirming common ground between political ideals and the Gospel message. It was characterized as, “A house of prayer for all people, and a unifying center of intellectual light and leadership.”

“A house of prayer for all people, a center of intellectual light and leadership” is the Cathedral’s stewardship statement today, and the vision was penned in the 19th century. The Cathedral, consecrated in 1892, the year Ellis Island opened, the Founders, early in the American century, built the seven-acre estate to commemorate the major immigrant surge pouring into and building the city, and to be a place where people experience the possibility of the human spirit, the Cathedral actively seeks out different voices.

ANCHORED IN EPISCopal and Anglican traditions, the Cathedral is paradoxical. Its message is about the ideas and values of different faiths. Monks and Imams share the pulpit as together we seek understanding. Equally important are the instructions by artists, writers, musicians and pirates who help us to imagine the arts, the music, the spirituality.

From Martin Luther King, Jr. to Vaclav Havel, Nelson Mandela to the Dalai Lama, the Cathedral has, since its earliest days, helped the most prophetic and eloquent leaders to challenge injustice in America and abroad. These are the people who bring us to our feet and out into the streets, who change our lives.

The Cathedral also offers many experiences: personal, community with the arts, with the stones and echoing spaces, with the still, small voice within. The Cathedral is a sanctuary. It is where people come to take a quiet, still moment, each bringing the next, all of us, into building an abiding connection to each other and to God.

St. John the Divine celebrates both the everyday and the extraordinary with unique services, often accompanied by the music of the Great Organ, built in 1911. At the annual Blessing of the Bicycles, hundreds of cyclists, including the vulnerable bike messengers who keep our city moving, wheel into the Great Crossing. At the Feast of St. Francis, dogs and cats and even camels and bunnies are blessed. Private collectors are always pouring into and building the Cathedral’s collection, works of art of all ages for sleepovers at the Cathedral.

The Cathedral prides itself on being a Cathedral for all people, regardless of faith. The School prides itself on being an independent, Episcopalian, K-8 school for boys and girls of all faiths. The School is committed to a rigorous academic program that integrates the arts, athletics and leadership development. Located in the Cathedral’s 12-acre Cloister, the School prides itself in being a diverse community in partnership with families who take an active role in the student’s educational, social and emotional growth.

For information on services and programs please visit aduch.org or call (212) 316–7540.

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Discover the Cathedral

JOIN US
Please become a friend of the Cathedral. Your contributions help maintain this great landmark and make possible programs in study, art, and discourse and advocacy. There are many levels of joining the Cathedral including the Society of Regents, an association of men and women who provide annual leadership gifts for unrestricted operational support. If you would like more information on supporting the Cathedral, please visit stjohndivine.org or call (212) 316-7488.

Join us on Facebook, where previews of events are listed and the adventures of resident peacocks Phil, Jim, and Harry, can be followed in detail!

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The Great Bronze doors cast by Barbedienne of Paris, who dedicated to all firefighters in 1976. The 60 bas-relief panels are each 18 feet high, 6 feet by 6 feet, and range from the size of a pencil to 32 feet tall. The doors' design on the vases represents the hibiscus flower, a symbol from Asia, France, Italy, and Spain.

The Nave features 14 themed bays honoring various professions and human endeavor, including Religious and Secular images, including a 2002 veneration, a human skeleton, St. George and the Dragon, and Michelangelo's David.

The Nave knaves 14 themed bas-relief plaques. Among the writers honored are Mark Twain, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams.

The 24 bronze plates compose Peter gourfain's Peaceman Triptych, is carved by Cathedral artist, Adolph Ochs. The Life of Christ, a Pelagian statue, and gold altar in 1986. It was Nakashima's dream to provide "altars of peace" for each of the seven continents on Earth. Today there is also one in Russia and one in India.

The Chalices of the Twelve surrounding the high altar are dedicated to seven immigrant groups that settled in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Their architectural style range from Norman to High Renaissance from north to south. Sculptures representing Revered Icons of the first 2000 years of the Christian era.

The eight granite columns that surround the High Altar were quarried on the island of Vinalhaven, Maine. Each is 55 feet tall; 6 feet in diameter, and weighs 130 tons.

The 40-foot diameter Great Organ, includes the largest in the United States, the 8,500 pipes of German choir stalls, and the largest in the world. The organ pipes represent scenes depicting biblical stories.

Molder woodworker George nakashima's Altar of Peace was crafted from the trunk of a 300 year-old Black Walnut tree and consecrated to world peace in 1986. It was Nakashima's dream to provide "altars of peace" for each of the seven continents on Earth. Today, there is also one in Russia and one in India.

The 15th century German choir stalls are one of five on loan from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

The squarish Menorahs were given by His Excellency Ambassador Tsuneo Matsudaira on behalf of his country. The two cabinets required 2,000 hours of work by craftsmen especially selected by the King himself. The pair of teak Siamese Book cabinets were presented to the Cathedral in 1930 by the Minister from Siam (today Thailand), Major General Prince Amoradat Kridakara, a gift from His Majesty the King of Siam.

The Firemen Memorial sculpture is made from the remains of Ralph Feldman, a New York City firefighter, is dedicated to all firefighters in 1976. The 60 bas-relief panels are each 18 feet high, 6 feet by 6 feet, and range from the size of a pencil to 32 feet tall. The doors' design on the vases represents the Hibiscus flower, a symbol from Asia, France, Italy, and Spain.

The 15-foot diameter Great Rose window in the West Facade is the largest in the United States. Designed by Charles J. Choir, it contains more than 10,000 pieces of glass and a figure of Jesus in life-size.

The Nave knaves 14 themed bas-relief plaques. Among the writers honored are Mark Twain, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams.