One of the many pleasures of life on the Cathedral Close is bearing witness to the lives and unfolding personalities of the young people with whom we share these majestic grounds. The kids of ACT (Advancing the Community of Tomorrow) and the Cathedral School bring life and boundless curiosity to the campus, and particularly in troubled times, it’s a privilege to see at-first-hand how today’s children and teens are grappling with and finding responses to the big-picture issues of our times.

This spring, the Cathedral was filled with artworks comprising The Value of Sanctuary: Building a House Without Walls, the latest in a series of Cathedral-wide art initiatives. The Value of Sanctuary features works by over thirty contemporary artists spanning the interconnected themes of immigration, housing, religion, identity, and community. In doing so, the exhibition asks visitors to engage with the complexity of sanctuary—including what sanctuary means for each person.

The exhibition provided the Cathedral community with many opportunities to delve into the meaning of “sanctuary” and explore what it means for the Cathedral to be a sanctuary for the communities it serves. The School is one of those communities—a bustling hive of activity from September through June each year, packed with young thinkers, ponderers, and creators.

After visiting The Value of Sanctuary, Cathedral School second graders this past April crafted a special Evensong to share what they learned with their schoolmates, teachers, and parents. After sharing definitions of sanctuary—including “a place where everybody feels protected”—the students led their peers in music, poetry, and prayers. As the Evensong came to a close, one student in the audience reflected, “I didn’t realize that any place where you feel sound and safe could be a sanctuary.”

Visitor and community engagement is central to the mission of the Cathedral and to its relationship with sanctuary. Although The Value of Sanctuary will close at the end of June, the themes and questions explored in the exhibition will, we hope, continue to resonate for a long time to come. Drawing all who consider the Cathedral their home—be they students, members of the Congregation, Cathedral Community Cares clients, or visitors from far and wide—into the larger community, where we may encourage, sustain, and learn from one another, is but one way of strengthening and deepening Cathedral sanctuary.

Four poems written by our second-grade friends are printed below. We hope they’ll encourage you to think about how you define your own personal sanctuary and work to create and safeguard sanctuary for all those around us.

**Oh Sea**
by Joseph B.

Oh sea, your dolphins are so nice to me
Your manta rays sing with me
Oh sea, your waves are so fun to surf on
You make me feel at home when I splash in your water
And you make me feel better when I’m sad
You’re always on my side
Sea, you sing at night and your sand is so soft
Like a pillow for your bed
Oh sea, you’re my sanctuary

**Untitled**
by Justin H.

Your eyes glistening in the moon light.
In the dark you’re as sleepy as me
That’s why we are meant to be
You’re the angel of my life
Even though I have lots of strife in my days
You’re the one who makes it better.
You light my day.
God, you did a great job choosing
Your eyes glisten in the moonlight.
My dog is my sanctuary.

**My House**
by Amaya J.

My house feels locked up.
I feel very safe in my house.
I feel toasty and warm in my house.
I love my house.
My house feels safe, so I can be loud!
I can even jump on my bed.
I love you, house.
My house feels like sanctuary.
My stuffed animal is sanctuary.
Best house ever!
My house is my sanctuary!

**My Room**
by Ella S.

Reading books peacefully
Resting in my room
Putting my feet on the soft rug
Peacefully without my brothers
I stay in my room until I’m hot
I feel a nice breeze through the air
Nice things never go until I’m done
My room is my sanctuary

**WHAT’S INSIDE**

Dean’s Meditation
The American Poets Corner
ACT Camp
Spirit of Pride

Looking Back
Looking Ahead
The Cathedral Invites You to Take a Pause to Consider Poetry as Sanctuary
From the Archives: Celebrating Pride Month

stjohndivine.org  Summer 2019
The American Poets Corner: What is the grass?

A child said What is the grass? fetching it to me with full hands. How could I answer the child? do I know not what it any more than he? Does it then sing in my ear with a hidden mouth? I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.

But this is a kind of Aeolian harp: I do not hear the sound. I was on the earth’s surface not the air; and there were many other leaves and grasses, and leaves of the same plant, which had been carried away by the wind. The grass was not the sound that was to be heard. But the wind was the sound that I heard.

White was inducted into the American Poets Corner at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in 1890. He had been a friend of Whitman’s, and had written a tribute to him in the New York Times shortly after his death.

Whitman was inducted into the American Poets Corner in 1984. The inscription on his plaque reads: "Whitman was inducted into the American Poets Corner in 1984. It was a great joy and comfort to me to be able to grow spiritually in a place that was as far from the world as possible."

From the Archives: Celebrating Pride Month

In celebration of Pride Month, here are some pieces from the archives of the cathedral and the Episcopal Diocese of New York, which share the struggle for acceptance in the church and city.

Reflections on the Spirit of Pride

By Deacon Lyle, Member of the Congregation of Saint Savour

I first moved to New York in May of 1994, just on the eve of Stonewall 25, and I cannot believe that WorldPride | Stonewall 50 is just a few days away. I was immediately drawn to this city and its energy, and I knew that I wanted to be involved in the LGBTQ community.

In the category of our mission to make Christ known, Palm Sunday services were moved outside with Bishop Dietsche celebrating Eucharist on the Pour Desert for about 400 people, while the soup kitchen served meals to about 200 people on the lawn. The church was filled with smoke and the organ silenced, but our mission went on unchanged. And on Easter Sunday, a crowd of approximately 5,000 gathered to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, Habakkuk!

All of this, begun by a steady stream of daily Eucharist and prayer in the Cathedral, welcoming thousands of tourists and visitors, concerts and performances, and graduations. The mission of the Cathedral continues in its pursuit of making all persons Christ and to make Christ known.

Thanks be to God!

David Rider, Member of the Congregation of Saint Savour
Summer events 2019

Divine Saturday Celebrations
Celebrate good times with A.C.T.’s view and improved Divine Saturday Celebrations, with a variety of festive activities for kids to enjoy! It’s a great time for parents and children alike. Speak to a party manager for details at (212) 316-7530.

CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY CARES (C.C.C.)
All programs meet in the CCC office, the Sunday Soup Kitchen on the Cathedral’s 6th floor unless otherwise specified. Please visit stjohndivine.org for more information on CCC programs.

Nutrition, Health and Clothing Center
The Center hosts monthly health fairs in partnership with Care for the Homestead, as well as blood pressure, heart health, and other screenings throughout the course of the year. Please visit our website for upcoming screening dates or contact (212) 316-7581, ccc@stjohndivine.org.

Clothing Closet
Gently used mens, womens, and children’s clothing can be donated to the CCC office Monday through Friday, 10am-5pm. Tax receipts upon request. Contact: (212) 316-7581, ccc@stjohndivine.org.

Sunday Soup Kitchen
Every Sunday in the A.C.T. gym, breakfast, 10 am, lunch, 12 pm. Contact Robert Finn, Food Program Manager, at (212) 316-7579 (Tuesdays only after 5 pm).

SNAP/Food Stamps Program
In partnership with the Human Resources Administration, The Food Bank for New York City, New York City Coalition Against Hunger, and Columbia University-SHIFT (Tuesdays and Wednesdays, appointment only). Pre-screening and eligibility help with white applications and rescreening is available. Contact: (212) 316-7581, ccc@stjohndivine.org.

June
Divine Grace: Elements of Christian Mysticism at the Cathedral
Saturday, June 2, 11:30 am
From the perspective of time, people have tried to connect with the divine. In what ways in the Christian faith has this been expressed? Explore the foundations in the Jewish tradition, Christian mystics, and how it translates to this 21st-century building. Learn about the complex ideas of The Tree of Life, the Fibonacci Series, and a connection from Olmsted to the Great Organ. Led by Cathedral Guide Dany Gaillet. Tickets are $25 per person, $20 per student/senior.

Divine Grace: Elements of Mysticism at the Cathedral
Saturday, June 2, 11:30 am
This popular annual event is back! In celebration of the 125th anniversary of the completion of the Cathedral, join A.C.T. in the open airy nave to celebrate the beauty of the building, the architectural details, and the incredible acoustics. The program includes the lighting of the stained glass windows, the organ solo by Peter Serkin, and the complaint “Laudate Dominum” sung by the Sixth Street Chamber Singers. The performance is presented in conjunction with the Cathedral’s summer program for youths ranging from toddlers to teens! For tickets, visit stjohndivine.org.

Care Beyond Borders: Centering Women and Girls in Humanitarian Response Efforts
Saturday, June 22, 10 am
Join us for an interactive conversation about the experiences of women and girls in crises, conflict, and displacement. Through dynamic discussions, this program is presented in conjunction with The Value of Sanctuary: A Visual Thinking Strategies Salon. For more information, visit stjohndivine.org.

Value of Sanctuary Closing Celebration
Sunday, June 23, 10 am
Kicks off all of June is kicked into the Cathedral for a fun-filled afternoon celebrating the spirit of summer! Exploring architecture and exploration stations focusing on Cathedral architecture and the arts. A.C.T. building: House Without Walls will be open for all.

Divine Grace: Elements of Mysticism at the Cathedral
Friday, July 6, 11:30 am
Join us for a celebration of Divine Grace: Elements of Mysticism at the Cathedral! For more information, visit stjohndivine.org.

Cathedral Cereal!
Saturday, June 29, 8 am
Join us as we celebrate the Value of Sanctuary, Building a House Without Walls and Pride Month! Visit stjohndivine.org for more information.

July
Divine Grace: Elements of Christian Mysticism at the Cathedral
Saturday, July 13, 10 am
This popular annual event is back! In celebration of the 125th anniversary of the completion of the Cathedral, join A.C.T. in the open airy nave to celebrate the beauty of the building, the architectural details, and the incredible acoustics. The program includes the lighting of the stained glass windows, the organ solo by Peter Serkin, and the complaint “Laudate Dominum” sung by the Sixth Street Chamber Singers. The performance is presented in conjunction with the Cathedral’s summer program for youths ranging from toddlers to teens! For tickets, visit stjohndivine.org.

August
Harlem Hogan
Sunday, August 5, 8 am
Harken Week 2019 kicks off at the Cathedral with an afternoon of performance. Visit stjohndivine.org for more information.

I Love NY: Spotlight on the City
Saturday, August 24, 10 am
A special tour of the Cathedral. Learn how the Cathedral and City serve as places of diversity, tolerance, and human achievement. Hear stories of New York’s immigrants, inventors, and artists who have helped shape the City and the world. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide John Simms. $15 per person, $12 per student/ senior.

Gateway to the New Jerusalem: Spotlight on the Iconography of the West Front
Saturday, August 24, 10 am
Visit stjohndivine.org for more information.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Sunday, August 25, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Sunday, August 25, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, August 3, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, August 3, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, August 10, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, August 10, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, August 17, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, August 17, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, August 24, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, August 24, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, August 31, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, August 31, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, September 7, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, September 7, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, September 14, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, September 14, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, September 21, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, September 21, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, September 28, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, September 28, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, October 5, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, October 5, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, October 12, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, October 12, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, October 19, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, October 19, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, October 26, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, October 26, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, November 2, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, November 2, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, November 9, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, November 9, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, November 16, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, November 16, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, November 23, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, November 23, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, November 30, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, November 30, 10 am
See details for June 23.

The Cathedral in Context: Spotlight on Morningside Heights
Saturday, December 7, 10 am
See details for June 23.

Cathedral Through Time: Celebrating 125 Years!
Saturday, December 7, 10 am
See details for June 23.
I feel blessed to have the opportunity to share my poetry, to give back in hopes that someone might be enlightened with a fresh vigor for life and its meanings through love expressions of the arts of all kinds. Thank you for the time you spend in this.

You are my voice while I cannot speak and my energy while I am confined.

The cathedral invites you to take a pause to consider poetry as sanctuary

The cathedral invites you to take a pause to consider poetry as sanctuary. Many great minds have shared their love of poetry with us over the years, and we are pleased to continue the tradition. Whether you are a seasoned poet or just starting out, we encourage you to visit the cathedral and explore the world of poetry.

Looking forward, the cathedral will continue to bring you a variety of events and programs to celebrate the art of poetry. Stay tuned for more information on upcoming events and how you can get involved.

The scripture of-looking ahead

The scripture of-looking ahead, the funeral of looking forward, the page of looking toward the future... The word of looking ahead, the saying of looking ahead, the phrase of looking ahead... The image of looking ahead, the picture of looking ahead, the photo of looking ahead...

I feel blessed to have the opportunity to share my poetry, to give back in hopes that someone might be enlightened with a fresh vigor for life and its meanings through love expressions of the arts of all kinds. Thank you for the time you spend in this.

You are my voice while I cannot speak and my energy while I am confined.

Looking Ahead

The annually official beginning of summer here in New York City is, of course, the New York Philharmonic’s Memorial Day Weekend Salute to America. This year marks the first year of an all-star program featuring Anton Bruckner’s Symphony No. 8 in C minor, takes place at 8:00 p.m., May 28.

Performances of all sorts continue through the month of June. On Sunday, June 5, the Mikhail Kogan Singers and Russian Chamber Players present a New York premiere, featuring Martin Fedosov’s Kretschmer Choral, along with works by Rilke, Tchaikovsky, and the world premiere of Ehren Premo’s “Waldor” Piano Trio. On June 12, singers of all sorts are invited to participate in the cathedral’s choral festival, their hacking voices accompanying our annual event for anyone who’s ever wondered what it’s like to sing in the cathedral (or perhaps just lacks and enjoy).

Longtime friends of the cathedral can no longer remember the 50th anniversary of the cathedral’s renowned “Great Music in a Great Space” series, which began some 50 years ago in 1967, with a recital of organ music by women composers, including Harriet Souders, executive director of the cathedral. The cathedral also welcomes the Oratorio Society of New York for a concert featuring two extraordinary 20th-century composers, Paul Creston and Samuel Barber, on November 27. For more information, go to our website.

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The scripture of-looking ahead, the funeral of looking forward, the page of looking toward the future... The word of looking ahead, the saying of looking ahead, the phrase of looking ahead... The image of looking ahead, the picture of looking ahead, the photo of looking ahead...
Gifts from Cathedral friends and supporters allow the Cathedral to plan for the future. Please take the time to fill out the contribution envelope in the pages of the newsletter. Your generosity is needed and is always appreciated.

Summer 2019 at the Cathedral

Celebrate Summer with ACT Camp!

Summer at the Cathedral is here and, with it, the return of happy campers at Advancing the Community of Tomorrow (ACT)! Founded in 1971, ACT provides a safe haven where toddlers to teens from many faiths, cultures, and economic backgrounds gather to learn, play, and grow as they participate in a broad range of programs among highly-trained and caring adults.

Beginning on June 24, ACT offers a wide variety of specialty day camps for families with children in Pre-K through 9th grade. Over the course of eight weeks, families can choose between July Theme Camp, August Specialty Camp, and August Adventure Camp, with carnivals, art projects, sports, and daytrips in and around the city.

The summer camp is just one part of ACT’s year-round dynamic programming, which continues to grow in complexity and resources. ACT has launched several new classes in Spanish, yoga, soccer, drama, and storytelling. Thanks to volunteers and the donors, ACT’s newly renovated literacy lounge provides a new space for the community to come together.

One year since she joined the ACT team, Executive Director Jen Gowers is looking to find more ways to share ACT’s many resources with the city at large. “People don’t expect a many-pronged youth enrichment program under the Cathedral, but it’s here!” This year, ACT has expanded its free public programming to include outdoor movie screenings, a roller-skating party inside the Cathedral, and an upcoming Carnival on Saturday, June 29.

To learn about the many programs offered by ACT, please call (212) 316-7530 or visit stjohndivine.org/education/act.

Stay in Touch

We welcome your suggestions and thoughts on the newsletter. Please write us at editor@stjohndivine.org.