**The Cathedral of St. John the Divine to Bid Fond Farewell to Feathered Friends**

*Trio of resident peacocks will retire to wildlife sanctuary Animal Nation*

(New York, NY) Birds nationwide are beginning seasonal migrations as they head to their wintering locations, and another change in the avian population of New York City will soon take place as the three peacocks of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine move into their well-deserved retirements at Animal Nation, an animal sanctuary in Chatham, NY, after twenty years of residence on the Cathedral Close.

They’re exotic creatures, but peacocks have been a familiar sight on the grounds of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine since 1972, when the first flock was introduced. Today, three of these majestic birds wander the expansive grounds. Jim, Harry, and Phil, the Cathedral’s current trio, were hatched in 2002 and were gifted to the Cathedral by students of The Cathedral School. The three peacocks, named after two of the Cathedral’s previous deans and a former Head of The Cathedral School, have lived long, peaceful lives on the grounds. Now that the birds are reaching their senior years, the Cathedral is planning for their retirement to a wildlife sanctuary to ensure that they receive the best possible quality of care as they age.

The Cathedral has cared for the three peacocks with the expert aid of the Center for Avian and Exotic Medicine. In recent years, Jim St. John suffered a foot injury which required months of recuperation. Harry St. John is currently a patient at the Center, and will receive surgery to repair a leg tendon on November 30.

Peacocks in the wild can live to 15 years or more, but peacocks in captivity may reach 25 or older with the proper care. In the knowledge that the current three birds are nearing their golden ages, the Cathedral has sought to find a place where they can continue to roam freely and will receive the best possible medical attention and treatment as they grow older. While Jim, Harry, and Phil will be missed, the Cathedral is glad to provide them with a safe, comfortable retirement at Animal Nation.

Animal Nation is a non-profit, 100% volunteer-run wildlife, farm animal, and domestic animal rescue facility, sanctuary, and adoption center with a mission to eliminate cruelty to animals while spreading compassion into the hearts of all beings. For the past twenty years, Animal Nation has provided a home to hundreds of animals both great and small, becoming the go-to resource in Westchester, Rockland, Fairfield, and surrounding counties when it comes to wildlife, farm animals, and other creatures. After much careful consideration of the Cathedral peacocks’ medical needs and age, the Cathedral and Animal Nature partnered on a plan for their move upstate.

Close attention to the peacocks’ well-being is nothing new for the Cathedral. The three birds received a new hutch in 2017, designed to match the Cathedral’s Gothic appearance by Ryan Lewandowski and Paul Scrugha, the winners of a design competition by Ennead Architects. The new hutch was blessed in an outdoor ceremony by The Right Reverend Andrew Dietsche, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

As symbols of the Cathedral and The Cathedral School, the peacocks will always be part of the history and legacy of this Manhattan landmark. In the words of Flannery O’Connor, inducted into the Cathedral’s American Poets Corner in 2014, “I intend to stand firm and let the peacocks multiply, for I am sure that, in the end, the last word will be theirs.”