



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

**SEARCH FOR THE DEAN**

The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine  
New York, New York

The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine (the Cathedral), the seat of the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York and the world's largest Gothic Cathedral, seeks a visionary, inspiring, and seasoned clergy executive to serve as its next Dean. Located at the nexus of two New York City communities, Harlem and Morningside Heights, the Cathedral brings together the cultural and intellectual richness of both vibrant neighborhoods. Combining soaring architecture with intimate spaces that inspire awe and reflection and an eleven-acre close in the heart of Manhattan, the Cathedral is an active house of worship and a vibrant community, arts and cultural, and civic center, as well as a feat of human engineering.

Every week, hundreds of visitors, tourists, seekers, and friends from around the world are drawn to the Cathedral. They attend moving cultural and artistic events and public conversations about dynamic contemporary issues, participate in vital community support services, and join weddings, funerals, services of baptism, confirmation and ordination, prayer services, and worship. Many come for contemplation, respite, and community. The Cathedral is a place for all.

Appointed by the Bishop and the Board of Trustees, the Dean serves as the chief executive officer and chief cleric of the Cathedral. Overseeing an operating budget of \$17M, a capital budget of approximately \$4M, and an endowment of approximately \$100M, the Dean is charged with responsibility for the day-to-day operational management of the organization, its fiscal health and stability, and providing audacious vision and strategic leadership that will guide the current and future direction of the Cathedral. An ordained priest in the Episcopal Church (or the broader Anglican Communion), the Dean will serve as a visible and vocal leader in the life of New York City, the state, the country, and the world.

The Cathedral has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of its next Dean. Please direct all applications, nominations, and inquiries to Isaacson, Miller, as indicated at the end of this document.

## THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE

Over one hundred years ago, the trustees of the [Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine](#) conceived its mission to be a house of prayer for all people, an instrument of church unity, and a center of intellectual light and leading in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Today, as the mother church of the Episcopal Diocese of New York and the seat of its bishop, the Cathedral serves the many diverse people of the diocese, city, nation, and world through the worship of God; pastoral, educational, and community outreach activities; arts, cultural, and civic events; international ecumenical initiatives; and the preservation of the great architectural and historic site that is its legacy.

### Liturgy and Spiritual Life

[The Episcopal Diocese of New York](#) encompasses three New York City boroughs and seven New York state counties. Established in 1785, it is one of the Episcopal Church's original dioceses. As the seat of the bishop, the Cathedral hosts diocesan-wide liturgies and celebrations of the life of the diocese and denomination throughout the year, including signature events like St. Francis Day. The Bishop and the Dean each serve distinct, essential, and complementary roles at the Cathedral.

Importantly, the Cathedral is also home to the [Congregation of St. Saviour](#). Formed in 1992, the Congregation is its own non-profit corporation with elected lay wardens, vestry, and a vicar appointed by the Dean. The highly diverse congregation includes people who live in the neighborhood or city, commute from nearby towns and states, or who live far away and simply want to have their spiritual roots in this welcoming place.

Rich programming abounds in the spiritual life of the Cathedral. [Community at the Crossing](#) is a 21st-century incarnation of the Cathedral's 19th-century mission to foster unity across differences through shared prayer, study, and service. Young professionals aged 21–35 from different parts of the United States, representing different Christian traditions, come together for a year to live a contemplative life under spiritual mentorship at the Cathedral. Modeled after a successful program created by the Archbishop of Canterbury, called the Community of Saint Anselm, the Cathedral hosted the first cohort in fall 2023.

[Nightwatch](#), a beloved, longstanding tradition, is an evening spent in the Cathedral immersed in a faith-based program designed to deepen one's spiritual connection with God. During the evening, participants experience community building, workshops, and exploration of the Cathedral through interactive activities, candlelight meditation, music, writing, and a labyrinth walk. The powerful program closes with a shared Eucharist, after which participants stay overnight sleeping in the undercroft of the Cathedral.

Drawing upon the teachings of Christ and the legacy of the Episcopal Church's connection to the vital social issues of the times, the Cathedral has a history of hosting uniting vigils, both on the Cathedral's front steps and inside the Cathedral itself. Following the verdict of the Derek Chauvin trial in 2021, the Cathedral offered a special service drawing upon the Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to working towards justice, reconciliation, and racial healing. In March 2022, the Cathedral held a vigil for Ukraine, during which more than 200 attendees lamented the world's hunger for power and prayed for healing and peace.

### Community Engagement and Education

Throughout its history, the Cathedral has been at the forefront of responding to the needs of the [community](#) and the City of New York. Whether it's educating youth, feeding the hungry, clothing the needy, or stewarding the building and grounds, the Cathedral is dedicated to building a better future for all.

Key programs include the award-winning childcare program [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. ACT began as a small day camp for 90 campers and has expanded to providing year-round, affordable, reliable, non-sectarian, and socially enriching quality educational programs and services that sustain, support, and enhance participants' ability to thrive in diverse communities. In the fall of 2022, the Cathedral began offering Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) in partnership with the New York City Board of Education.

[Cathedral Community Cares \(CCC\)](#) was founded to combat and alleviate poverty through preventive services, education, and advocacy--specifically targeting the issues of health and hunger. CCC tackles these problems on multiple fronts by addressing the immediate and beyond-emergency needs of the underserved while seeking long-term policy solutions that will benefit both clients and the greater community. CCC hosts four main programs: a weekly hot meal, a clothing closet, a food pantry/community fridge, and a weekly food pantry run through the plentiful app. In the first six months of 2024, CCC has had over 20,000 visits.

[The Cathedral School of St. John the Divine](#) was founded in 1901 in Guild Hall (now known as Synod Hall) on the Cathedral Close as a boarding school for boys in the Cathedral's choir. The Cathedral School grew into an independent, coeducational, Episcopal K-8 day school for children of all faiths during the 20th century, though it continues to provide the Cathedral's children's choir. The School is committed to a rigorous academic program that integrates the arts, athletics, and leadership development. Still located on the Cathedral Close, the School offers a unique setting for the celebration of the many traditions shared by its families. The School prides itself on being a diverse community where students come to understand the inherent value of all people and the importance of working towards equity in all that they do. Continuing a century-old relationship, the School and Cathedral today remain robust partners in coordinating decision-making, cost-sharing, and governance. The Dean of the Cathedral serves as ex-officio Chair of the School's board, while the School board president serves on the Cathedral's board. In 2021, the Cathedral School welcomed [Erica Corbin](#) as its 19th Head of School, opening a new chapter for the storied institution's continued impact.

### Art and Ideas

The Cathedral was founded as "a center for intellectual light and leadership" and is home to an expansive collection of [art](#), hosts impressive exhibitions and installations, and houses numerous spaces dedicated to the preservation of textiles, poetry, and literature.

Throughout history, the arts and spirituality have served together to inspire, awe, and renew the human spirit. This connection is alive and essential at the Cathedral. Art exhibitions at the Cathedral span

centuries, celebrating the creativity of 17th-century weavers to modern painters and everything in between. Ongoing exhibitions include Janet Cardiff's contemporary sound installation, "The Forty Part Motet," – and The James Parks Morton Interfaith Art Collection. Throughout his career, the Very Reverend James Parks Morton, Dean of the Cathedral from 1972 to 1997 and a passionate proponent of interfaith dialogue, amassed a collection of over 300 pieces of religious art. Dean Morton and Pamela Taylor Morton generously offered the collection to the Cathedral, selections from which are on rotating view.

In the 1970s, Dean Morton created a [Residency Program](#) to weave living art and artists into the fabric of the Cathedral, providing time and space for artists to respond to the Cathedral as a powerful creative statement in stone and opportunities for the public to access their work. Many of the artists, scholars, musicians, and environmentalists have remained involved with the Cathedral since their appointment in the 70s and 80s. Some present regular performances—which have become synonymous with the Cathedral itself—throughout the year; others lend their art to the Cathedral on a project basis.

The [Textile Conservation Laboratory](#) was established in 1981 with a mission to conserve two sets of 17th-century tapestries that were early gifts to the Cathedral. The Lab was founded with start-up grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Kress Foundation, the Getty Grant program, and the Municipal Council for the Arts. Under the direction of Marlene Eidelheit since 1992, and through support from grants and private gifts, the professional staff of conservators have undertaken exhaustive work on the Barberini Life of Christ set and have begun work on the other, The Acts of the Apostles. In addition, leading museums, institutional and corporate collectors, galleries, and individuals with personal collections bring textiles of all kinds to be conserved in the on-site lab.

Inspired by Westminster Abbey's Poets' Corner, the Cathedral began honoring American poets in 1982 in the [American Poets Corner](#). Initial inductees were iconic writers like Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Washington Irving. In 2021, Muriel Rukeyser, whose poetry of womanhood and Jewishness celebrates difference and decries injustice was inducted. As a lifelong New Yorker, she formed a relationship with the Cathedral towards the end of her life, becoming the namesake of the Muriel Rukeyser Poetry Wall.

[Music](#) has been performed in cathedrals for centuries, and the Cathedral's splendid Gothic interior is a marvelous place to hear all kinds of music: from chant and a cappella treasures to world premieres – performed by the Cathedral's exceptional Cathedral choirs, orchestra, and organists as well as guest choirs and musicians from around the world. The 2024-2025 season features the much-anticipated return of the Great Organ after five years of restoration and repair. With the incorporation of streaming services, the Cathedral has expanded its reach to music lovers around the country and worldwide.

### **Leadership and Governance**

The Bishop of the Diocese serves as the chair of the Cathedral's Board of Trustees which is composed of 27 elected clerical and lay members who serve terms of three years with the option to return after one year. Eight permanent committees oversee the work of the Cathedral: executive, nominating, finance, development, fabric (buildings and grounds), program and strategic planning, the Cathedral School, and audit.

In February 2024, the [Right Reverend Bishop Matthew Foster Heyd](#) became the seventeenth bishop of New York. Since his consecration as bishop coadjutor in May 2023, Bishop Heyd has worked towards expanding the Episcopal Diocese's commitment to reparations for slavery, launching its diocesan credit union, and greening its buildings. He has also been a leading voice among a group of religious leaders and housing advocates proposing housing more asylum seekers in their churches.

Current Board President and chair of the executive committee, [Frank Brown](#), is an Advisory Director at General Atlantic. He previously served as a Managing Director and Chief Risk Officer, leading the firm's global risk management program. Before joining General Atlantic in 2011, Frank served as Dean of INSEAD, a leading international business school, from 2006 to 2011.

The Cathedral Regents are significant and consistent donors to the Cathedral who play an essential role as ambassadors to the community to raise the visibility and communicate the excellence of the Cathedral's mission and assume a leadership role in attracting public and private support.

## **ROLE OF THE DEAN**

Appointed by the Bishop and the Board of Trustees, the Dean serves as the chief executive and clerical officer of the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine. Overseeing an operating budget of \$17M, a capital budget of approximately \$4M, and an endowment of approximately \$100M, the Dean is charged with responsibility for the day-to-day operational management of the organization, its fiscal health and stability, and providing sound strategic leadership that will guide the current and future direction of the Cathedral. The Dean leads a team of 10 direct reports, including the Vicar, Canon for Community Engagement, Chief Financial Officer, Executive Director of Development, Executive Director of Cathedral Programming, Executive Director of Operations, Chief Financial Officer, Director of Music and Organist, and executive assistant, and provides overall leadership for more than 150 full- and part-time clerical and lay staff members.

## **LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT DEAN**

As the Cathedral looks to the future, the Dean will lead a dynamic and dedicated staff in achieving the following interrelated outcomes, all the while sustaining the historical mission of the Cathedral.

### ***Develop and Champion a Compelling Vision for the Cathedral's Next Chapter***

Throughout its long history, the Cathedral has served as a leading institution in an ever-changing world. Drawing on the strength of the Cathedral's magnificent architecture, powerful liturgies, inspiring music and performing arts, beautiful artwork, impactful community engagement, educational programs, and wide-ranging conversations about important issues, the Dean will collaboratively develop a contemporary, capacious, and bold vision for the Cathedral's vibrant next century.

### ***Serve As a Dynamic Public Presence in the Life of New York City, the Church, and the World***

The Dean will be an active and engaged leader in the public sphere, effectively increasing the impact and visibility of the Cathedral. The Dean will be comfortable engaging with audiences of all sizes and

compositions to adeptly broadcast the Cathedral's unique identity as a beacon of progressive Christianity and community care in a broken and divided world. Through the Dean's leadership, the Cathedral will further develop a clear public identity that is immediately and broadly recognizable, and they will embrace the opportunity to amplify issues aligned with the mission of the Cathedral across New York City, the state, the region, and the world.

***Cultivate a Collaborative, Strategic Partnership with the Bishop and the Board***

As the seat of the bishop and home to the Episcopal Diocese of New York, the Dean will develop a strategic and complementary partnership with Bishop Heyd to nurture a robust sense of shared mission and cooperation between the Cathedral and the Diocese. The Dean will actively engage with and further develop the Board of Trustees, drawing upon deep individual and collective expertise in service to the Cathedral.

***Champion the Cathedral as a Radically Welcoming Spiritual Institution***

As the vibrant spiritual home for the Congregation of St. Saviour, a magnificent public space for reflection and prayer, and the diocesan home for Episcopalians and Anglicans across New York – and the world – the Dean has a unique opportunity to provide a model of community for the Church and society that centers on robust and intentional diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and justice.

Alongside the Vicar, the Dean will serve as a trusted pastoral leader and embody joyful expression of the Episcopal faith; sustaining and deepening the connection of those who already hold the Cathedral in a place of centrality in their lives, while radically welcoming and embracing new communities.

***Strengthen and Diversify the Financial Position of the Cathedral to Ensure Sustainability***

The 130-year-old landmark Cathedral has survived fires, floods, and earthquakes, yet it still stands because of careful planning and generous donors. The work is never done. The successful candidate must understand the critical roles strategic fundraising, effective communications, and savvy relationship management will play in supporting both stability and growth at the Cathedral, particularly in the unique New York City context. The new Dean will bring strong financial acumen and experience with complex organizational budgets to sustain the Cathedral for the next hundred years. Key priorities will include building the endowment, increasing philanthropic support, expanding earned revenue, and carefully attending to and planning for the ongoing, immense capital needs of the Cathedral.

***Sustain and Bolster Community Care and Connection***

The Cathedral has long been a proud and invested member of New York City's Morningside Heights community on Manhattan's Upper West Side—a safe haven and shelter during times of crisis, a voice of positive moral leadership for those without a platform, and a place where food, shelter, and services are always available to those in need. The Dean will maintain and expand the Cathedral's commitment to serving and partnering with the community to build a better future for all.

The Cathedral and the Cathedral School share values, history, and physical proximity on the Close. The Dean and School Head form an essential partnership that the next Dean will invest in actively and enthusiastically to further shared and individual aspirations.

### ***Support and Develop a Dedicated Staff***

As the chief executive of the Cathedral, the Dean will serve as a stable, approachable, transparent leader for clerical and lay staff across the organization. The Dean will bring strong organizational acumen to help assess and implement procedures and mechanisms that will ensure that the internal operations of the institution are collaborative, efficient, and effective. The Dean must be an experienced manager of people, attending to morale, professional development, communication, and a sense of shared vision and responsibility. The Dean will actively champion the values and practices of enabling a flourishing diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible organization – culturally and structurally.

### ***Celebrate and Reinforce the Arts at the Cathedral***

Art has always had a place in churches, stimulating the eye and imagination; for many, presenting and interpreting beauty is an act of spiritual devotion. The Cathedral hosts impressively broad and wide-ranging artistic installations and musical programs. These artistic activities are central to the Cathedral's identity and engagement with the world. The next Dean will serve as a champion for the arts at the Cathedral, continuing and expanding upon the beautiful traditions that continue to draw so many back time and again to the Cathedral.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The successful candidate will embody most, if not all, of the following professional qualifications and personal qualities:

- An ordained Episcopal/Anglican priest with significant liturgical, pastoral, and organizational leadership experience.
- Demonstrated ability to guide the development and execution of a compelling strategic vision for the Cathedral.
- Strong written, oral, and interpersonal skills; the ability to communicate the Cathedral's needs, plans, and programs effectively with internal and broad external constituencies, including the media.
- A skilled and savvy public communicator, thought leader, convener, and public pastoral presence with a particular focus on matters of faith, social ethics, and crisis leadership.
- An unwavering commitment to and demonstrated expertise with issues related to diversity, equity, access, inclusion, and justice institutionally and in the broader society.
- Enthusiasm for and success with fundraising, a willingness to be actively involved in donor cultivation, and the aptitude for maintaining and building durable relationships with donors and other stakeholders; familiarity with New York and New York City preferred.
- Expertise with complex institutional budgeting, fiscal planning, and financial management.
- Experience recruiting, motivating, and retaining talented staff.



- Successful development of partnerships and creative approaches to revenue generation, fundraising, community engagement, programming, education, and interfaith collaboration.
- Commitment to and alignment with the Cathedral's mission and core values.
- Approachable, collaborative, humble, kind leadership style combined with the ability to make and communicate difficult decisions.
- Patience, determination, energy; sense of humor and optimism.

#### **LOCATION AND COMPENSATION**

This is a full-time, on-site position located in New York City. The anticipated compensation range for the role is \$175,000-\$220,000 (commensurate with experience), as well as housing on the Cathedral Close and Episcopal clergy benefits.

#### **APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS**

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/cathedral-church-saint-john-divine/dean>. Electronic submission of materials is required.

Ernest A. Brooks III, Claire Hennessey, and Drew Chang  
Isaacson, Miller

#### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

*Equal employment opportunity and having a diverse staff are foundational principles at The Cathedral of Saint John the Divine. We are committed to ensuring equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, marital or civil partnership/union status, familial or caregiver status, alienage or citizenship status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, military or veteran status, genetic information, predisposition, or carrier status, unemployment status, domestic violence, sexual violence, or stalking victim status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.*