



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

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RELEASE

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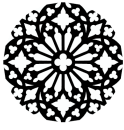
**FAITH LEADERS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS TO GATHER ON THE FRONT STAIRS
OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
IN SUPPORT OF DESIGNATING HOUSES OF WORSHIP ESSENTIAL**

On this year's National Day of Prayer, faith leaders and elected officials from across New York City will rally on the front stairs of **the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Thursday, May 6 at 1pm** to urge Governor Cuomo and New York legislators to designate houses of worship as essential. Spearheaded by Pastor Gilford T. Monroe and activist Bertha Lewis, speakers at this #HOWtoVaxNYC rally will highlight the unique ability of houses of worship to host long-term health programs, including COVID-19 vaccinations, and bring awareness to the essential role religious institutions serve in NYC communities.

Over a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, houses of worship in New York City continue to prove their commitment and capacity to provide life-saving services to their communities. New York's diverse churches, synagogues, mosques, and other faith centers have risen to meet the needs of communities hit hardest by the pandemic by offering critical medical, social, and shelter services since the onset of the coronavirus. The Cathedral of St. John the Divine has been at the front lines of efforts to protect and serve its community, pledging its spacious interior for use as a field hospital or vaccine site and hosting numerous vigils, rallies, and prayer services on its front stairs, and is proud to partner with fellow houses of worship and faith leaders for the #HOWtoVaxNYC initiative.

New York is moving quickly towards a full summer reopening, yet many residents in low-income communities of color remain unvaccinated against COVID-19. As trusted voices with the proven ability to provide health services, houses of worship are well-prepared to assist in the vaccination of communities who have been impacted hardest by the pandemic. Essential classification would allow faith centers to amplify their already-great efforts to support the health of their neighborhoods. New York cannot reopen safely until access to vaccinations is truly equitable.

All are invited to attend and show their support for this movement and learn more about how houses of worship have played an essential role in their communities during COVID-19. To show support for the movement, people are encouraged to use the hashtag #WeAreEssential on social media. The rally will open with a welcome by the Reverend Canon Dr. Patrick Malloy, Sub Dean of the Cathedral. Speakers



The Cathedral
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Page 2 cont.

will include elected officials from New York City, faith leaders and clergy members, and nonprofit organizers.

EVENT: #HOWtoVaxNYC Rally

DATE: Thursday, May 6

TIME: 1 PM

WHERE: The Cathedral of St. John the Divine
1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112th Street)

About The Black Institute

The Black Institute, founded in 2010, by Bertha Lewis, a community organizer, has shaped intellectual discourse and impacted public policy from the perspective of Black people in America and people of color throughout the diaspora by using forward-thinking strategies to achieve racial equity. TBI is a Black-led policy and organizing institution dedicated to solving local problems and addressing the concerns of Black families and immigrants.

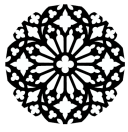
The 67th Precinct Clergy Council

The 67th Precinct Clergy Council, Inc., informally known as the God Squad, is a faith-based organization comprised of clergy focused on lessening neighborhood tensions and acting as a liaison between their communities and law enforcement. Recently, the God Squad established Clergy For Safe Cities (CSC), a national coalition to support clergy-based gun violence prevention initiatives and implement a collective, comprehensive, community initiative to decrease the involvement of young people in crime and gun violence in their city. To date CSC has trained 500 faith leaders on successful clergy-based models and best practices. For more information, visit 67clergycouncil.org.

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.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cathedral has responded to changing needs in the local community and across the city and state. People from many faiths and communities worship together in daily services held online; the soup kitchen serves roughly 50,000 meals annually; social service outreach has an increasingly varied roster of programs to safely provide resources, aid, and COVID testing to the hardest-hit New Yorkers; the distinguished Cathedral School prepares young students to be future leaders; Advancing the Community of Tomorrow, 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



The Cathedral
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Page 3 cont.

allow conversation, celebration, reflection and remembrance—such is the joyfully busy life of this beloved and venerated Cathedral.