



Winter 2014 –15 at the Cathedral

In Sickness and Health: Cathedral Community Cares

New Yorkers have recently been faced with the prospect of the Ebola virus loose in the city—a situation that the Dean addresses in his Meditation this issue—and the headlines remind many of us, and the Cathedral as an institution, of what it was like during the last frightening (and continuing) epidemic: HIV/AIDS. There are many differences between the two viruses. What is the same is the human suffering that affects individuals, families and communities. In the 80s, concern was slow to spread among those not immediately affected; the *New York Times* recently noted that its own first front-page story about HIV didn't come until May 1983, when over 550 people had died in this country, half in NYC alone.

The Cathedral was among a number of organizations that made a difference in those days. Many of these organizations—Gay Men's Health Crisis; Housing Works; God's Love, We Deliver; and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS—sprang up in response to HIV and are still going strong. The Cathedral began offering direct aid and counseling to HIV-positive people in the early 1980s. The AIDS memorial in the Medicine Bay (consisting of an altar with a book inscribed with the names of those who have died) was set up in 1987. "It will be witness to the city and community that we hold close in our love and care those persons who have AIDS or have died from AIDS," said The Right Reverent Paul Moore, Bishop of New York (quoted in the *New York Times*). "It will dignify this tragedy as much as possible." Cathedral Community Cares, the social service arm of the Cathedral, grew out of those early efforts and was formally established by the Congregation of St Savior in the early 90s. HIV-positive men and women—struggling with the diagnosis and day-to-day management of a then-terminal disease—were welcomed, counseled and fed, as were others fighting poverty, homelessness, hunger and illness.

In the decades since, the CCC program has become more comprehensive. In 2012, staffers launched the first public health initiative to address systemic gaps in healthcare and health education for low-income clients. CCC has developed partnerships with hospitals, clinics, and community organizations; offers free on-site screenings (for HIV, diabetes and other conditions) and workshops; and presents an annual

Summer Health Fair in partnership with Mount Sinai-St. Luke's Hospital and the NYC Sigma Gamma Rho sorority alumni group. The Sunday Soup Kitchen serves roughly 25,000 meals a year, offering a diverse and healthy menu. This summer, CCC hosted a cooking class for low-income people, sponsored by Cornell University Cooperative Extension. Clients learned how to shop for and prepare inexpensive nutritional meals, and were taught safe food-handling practices. As the Cathedral gears up for its next initiative, *The Value of Food*, which will address everything from sustainable agriculture to the use of food in cultural and sacred ritual, CCC staff and clients remind us that this complex subject is, to the hungry, very simple indeed.

CCC also operates the Clothing Closet, where clients can choose gently-used, job interview-appropriate clothing at no charge. CCC staff and volunteers offer a personalized shopping experience to each client. CCC also offers referrals for career counseling and job finding programs to those clients who are not already enrolled. (Most clients are referred from training programs and the New York City Human Resources Administration.) Many city businesses and organizations have donated clothing or organized clothing drives to support the Clothing Closet (see *Spirit of the Season*).

Beyond the immediate help it offers, CCC serves as a voice for those who struggle with poverty, homelessness, and hunger in West Harlem and Morningside Heights, and citywide. Its role is not only to spotlight need, but to reinforce the social links between the more and less advantaged, and keep our nation's foundational commitment to all citizens up to date and inclusive. CCC is a member of the New York City Coalition Against Hunger, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, and Food Bank for New York City, and has participated in events and campaigns to advocate for policies that protect and support clients. The recent cut to the SNAP (food stamps) program is a reminder of how important such advocacy is. The number of those seeking food at the Cathedral Soup Kitchen and other food banks around the country has been going up since 2008. It is instructive to remember at this time how the AIDS crisis galvanized an entire generation of gay men, playing a significant role in the gay rights movement that is today enjoying great success, as more states legalize gay marriage. Trauma reveals its merciful side when it leads to action.

"We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men."

*Herman Melville (1819–1891),
inducted into the American Poets Corner in 1985*

This fall, CCC Program Manager Lauren Phillips attended a weeklong professional workshop in Bolinas, California, sponsored by Commonweal Advanced Cancer Support Training. CCC intends to use what she learned to support people with other long-term illnesses, including HIV/AIDS. Lauren explained that she and another woman were the only participants who work with people in poverty, and so as well as learning techniques and methods, she was able to offer a new perspective to other health professionals. Important work is being done in a number of fields on the effect of combined simultaneous stressors—in elder care, in chronic illness and in the life trajectories of the disadvantaged. The Cathedral has considerable experience with this—and with the kind of care and counsel that can make a difference—and will continue to participate in the national conversation.

Whatever the future may bring in regard to deadly epidemics and New Yorkers in need, the Cathedral can rely on its history of service and on the message of the gospels to provide a template for response.

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Schedule of Daily Liturgical Services

Sunday
8 am
Morning Prayer
& Holy Eucharist
9 am
Holy Eucharist
11 am
Choral Eucharist
4 pm
Choral Evensong

Monday through Saturday
8 am
Morning Prayer
8:30 am
Holy Eucharist
(Tuesday & Thursday)
12:15 pm
Holy Eucharist
5 pm
Evening Prayer

Cathedral Information
The Cathedral is open daily
from 7:30 am–6 pm
For information:
(212) 316-7540
stjohndivine.org

Reaching the Cathedral
The Cathedral is located at
1047 Amsterdam Avenue,
at 112th Street.

By Subway:
#1 Train to 110th Street

By Bus:
#M4 to Amsterdam
& 110th Street
#M11 to Amsterdam
& 112th Street
#M104 to Broadway
& 112th Street

Keeping Time

THE CATHEDRAL CELEBRATES FORTY YEARS OF EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK



Photo: Courtesy EM/NY

Frederick Renz, founder and maestro of Early Music New York, which has earned accolades worldwide, describes a lifetime of playing early music (11th to 18th century) as akin to being an anthropologist, a detective, or Columbus sailing for the new world. “I love the Eureka moment,” he says, when, by dint of scholarship and experience, he realizes how something must have sounded hundreds of years ago.

The idea behind the revival of early music is to step back from the conventions of the 19th-century concert hall and play the music as it was originally performed, with the same kinds of instruments and number of players. This requires considerable research. Without recordings, early musicians are dependent on musical treatises and books to understand how the instruments were made, how they sounded, and what happened between the notes on the page and the notes in the air.

Renz, as leader of the ensemble, has been an Artist in Residence in the Cathedral since shortly after the group formed. The anniversary celebration falls on November 22, St. Cecilia Day—Cecilia is the patron saint of music—a windfall of scheduling that pleases Mr. Renz enormously. The concert, “Cathedral Flourishes,” will feature works written in honor of St. Cecilia by Johann Sebastian Bach and his contemporaries: George Frederick Handel and William Boyce and Henry Purcell.

The Early Music New York holiday concert this year is “A Dutch Christmas, the Age of Rembrandt.” (A CD of this program was produced in association with The Metropolitan Museum of Art). It features late Renaissance carols and dances by Jan Pieterzoon

Sweelinck, Jacob van Eyck, Pierre Phalèse & Tielman Susato. Early Music New York’s men’s choir will be joined by a consort of recorders. Christmas concerts, held this year on December 6, 7, 13 and 25, typically sell out early, so order your tickets now.

Renz and the other original EM/NY members were alumni of Pro Musica, the famous early music ensemble that disbanded in 1974. Early Music New York was originally based in Renz’s W. 71st St. studio. They put out a press release about the new group, the *New York Times* wrote an article and The Very Reverend James Parks Morton, then Dean of the Cathedral, called them up to offer any assistance they might need. Renz allowed as how they were a bit strapped for space, and the next week the group was rehearsing at the Cathedral. Over the years they occupied different rooms, but ended up in the crypt, in a 1000-square foot space. “It was great,” he said. “In those days, things were a bit looser, and I was often the one who voluntarily turned out the Cathedral lights at night. I explored every inch of the Cathedral, the triforium, out on the buttresses.... It was like a fantasyland.”

In those early days, the group only rehearsed at the Cathedral; they played at Tully Hall. “But then I became disillusioned with the acoustics there and rental costs were rising.” One of the earliest performances at the Cathedral was the medieval drama, “Daniel at the Lion’s Den.” Dean Morton’s daughter was a chorister for that performance.

Like so many cultural movements, contemporary interest in early music came out of the sixties. That’s when musicians started trying to figure out what medieval, renaissance and baroque music sounded like originally, and when craftsmen started making authentic replicas of old instruments. “The real old instruments are museum pieces,” said Renz. “You don’t want to risk them on everyday practice and performing.”

He explains that early music is similar to jazz in that improvisation was expected. There are period treatises for musicians that explain and give examples of how to “ornament,” as they called it, the melody. Renz talked about how many contemporary musicians, such as Philip Glass, were influenced by the resurgence of early music. “Music is generally something you change and vary...taking it forward. Early music is just the opposite. It’s like taking the varnish off an old painting. All the colors become vibrant again.”

Renz fell in love with early music as a freshman in college, when a faculty concert at the State University of NY, Fredonia, featured a number of teachers who had come back from European sabbaticals with the baroque versions of the instruments they played. Fascinated, Renz spent a semester abroad in his junior year, studying in Antwerp, Belgium, and the Netherlands, where he bought a harpsichord. In college, Renz studied harpsichord and choral conducting, receiving master’s degrees in both. He then studied

weekend in December, features handmade jewelry, textiles, wood and glasswork, as well as other surprises that make unique gifts and honor the tradition of handicrafts, which is an integral part of the Cathedral. For those who prefer to give a special experience, a Vertical Tour of the Cathedral is an unforgettable gift, as is a Knightwatch Medieval sleepover at the Cathedral—for children ages 6–12 and their adult companions.

In this issue, the newsletter profiles Frederick Renz of Early Music New York, celebrating forty years of music at the Cathedral. Paul Winter’s Solstice Concerts are celebrating their 35th year. The Christmas Choral Concert, in Kent Tritle’s fourth season as Director of Music, promises to be better than ever. As the season winds down, the New Year’s Eve Concert for Peace reminds us of the deeper meaning of the holiday. All of these concerts make great gifts. Or browse the Pop-Up shop for a tee shirt, handsome black tote bag, or delightful plush ornament.

“When I hear music I fear no danger, I am invulnerable, I see no foe. I am related to the earliest times and to the latest times.”

Henry David Thoreau (1818–1862), inducted into the American Poets Corner in 1988

harpsichord with Gustav Leonhardt in Holland as a Fulbright Scholar and spent six seasons with Pro Musica as a keyboard soloist.

Renz has given numerous solo recitals, appeared with orchestras and chamber groups in New York, and has recorded for Lyricord, Foné, Decca, Vanguard, Musical Heritage Society, Musicmasters and Nonesuch, as well as Early Music’s own label, Ex Cathedra. Renz has received numerous accolades including commissions from The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Spoleto Festival USA. He has also received two Producers Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts’ Opera/Musical Theater Program and a grant from the Ingram Merrill Foundation.

The Cathedral means many things to many people, but to Frederick Renz it is not only a performance space he is grateful for and an organization whose values and programs he cherishes, but a reminder of the period he loves most, when music was intertwined with the church, and cathedrals were centers of communal activity, administrative, artistic, and commercial as well as spiritual. Early Music New York lost their space at the Cathedral in 2008, when plans were afoot to substantially renovate the crypt. (Those plans are in abeyance for the moment.) He now rehearses and has his office in The First Church of Christ, Scientist. The new digs are right around the corner from his apartment, which is convenient. Asked what he misses most about being housed at the Cathedral, he says, “I’m not as aware of what’s going on there now, which is too bad. I also miss being able to call a rehearsal at all hours.”



Photo: Susan Cannon

Dean’s Meditation: Fear

“We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.”

Plato

“It is a fire straight from the pit of hell... We cannot fool ourselves into thinking that the vast moat of the Atlantic Ocean will protect us from the flames of this fire.”

Dr. Kent Brantly, US medical missionary, director of Monrovia’s only Ebola treatment center and disease survivor, speaking to Congress

“Information travels faster than viruses do now. This is why we are afraid. But this is also why we are safe.”

Steven Johnson, “Ebola’s Information Paradox” NY Times op-ed, October 24, 2014

“It is a scary time to be a doctor or nurse. Medicine has always depended on providers putting themselves at some risk. We aim to minimize these dangers, but they often persist.”

Robert Klitzman, professor of psychiatry and Director of the Masters of Bioethics Program at Columbia University.

“Fears are educated into us, and can, if we wish, be educated out.”

Karl Augustus Menninger, American psychiatrist and a member of the Menninger family of psychiatrists who founded the Menninger Foundation and the Menninger Clinic

We have known for decades that the resource-poor countries of Africa need front-line doctors and nurses and basic resources. Clean water and sanitation are essential to life. They also are necessary to stop the spread of disease. We have also known about the dangers of pandemic, especially in resource-poor countries. By definition, pandemics occur over wide geographic areas and affect an exceptionally high proportion of a population, spreading quickly even throughout the world. The Greek derivative, *pandemos*, means all the people.

Developing countries encounter unique and difficult issues and challenges in preparing for a pandemic. Deaths attributable to an influenza pandemic, for example, would likely be substantially higher in developing countries than in industrialized countries. Pharmaceutical interventions such as vaccines and antiviral agents are less available in developing countries. The public health and clinical infrastructures of developing countries are often inadequate to deal with such widespread health crises. Such events inevitably have a global effect. That is why improving pandemic preparedness in every country, particularly developing ones, is an urgent need about which all citizens of this planet should care, as articulated by Oshitani, Kamigaki, and Suzuki, in “Major issues and challenges of influenza pandemic preparedness in developing countries” (www.cdc.gov/EID/content/14/6/875.htm).

Scott Simon is one of America’s most admired writers and broadcasters and has reported from all fifty states, and from five continents. He has covered ten wars, from El Salvador to Sarajevo to Afghanistan and Iraq. When Simon, who has won every major award in broadcasting, addressed the “out-of-control, almost biblically tragic outbreak that’s going on in West Africa right now” on NPR, people listened. On the program, Simon pondered the issues with physician and infectious disease specialist and deputy physician-in-chief at Memorial



Providing health and wellness services is just one way Cathedral Community Cares assists our community. Photo: Courtesy CCC

Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Kent Sepkowitz: How was the CDC handling Ebola and how in danger are Americans? Sepkowitz explained:

We have health care here. We have the CDC. We have health care infrastructure. We have all those things that tax dollars have been supporting all this time, but more than anything else, we have a tradition of getting supplies to and from places. We have enough rooms. We have enough beds. We have enough gloves. We can afford the type of over-the-top waste creation that taking care of an infectious patient can make...What we’re seeing in West Africa now is over an eight-month period somewhere in the order of seven to 15,000 cases. That’s a very slow-motion outbreak. It’s certainly an epidemic, but it demonstrates how much more difficult it is to transmit this infection.

The fact that Americans are in little danger was hard to keep in focus. The death of Thomas Duncan in Dallas raised questions about the readiness of hospitals and the truthfulness of self-reporting. Some people, including political leaders, called for travel from affected countries to be banned—or at least quarantined. Even though we know that most flights from Africa go through other airports outside of the U.S and that tracking every person leaving Africa through those airports is an impossible task, another politically polarizing debate ensued. They were not persuaded by humanitarian arguments, and proponents of clampdowns refused to accept the fact that such an approach would not increase our safety. Experts made clear that its effect would be to prevent us from combating the disease at the source—the only effective way to combat the disease—and we would be more at risk.

What happened in Dallas illustrates that it is usual with any outbreak or with any infectious disease that the first case is missed. Sepkowitz confessed to Scott Simon that “...even when there’s an outbreak you know, across the Atlantic. It’s almost axiomatic that somehow the light bulb is just not going to go on.” Steven Johnson, author of the book and host of the PBS series *How We Got to Now*, wrote an op-ed in the NY Times, “Ebola’s Information Paradox,” on October 24, 2014. In it he reminded us that how disease and information spread affects us in different ways:

... the 19th century ... cholera bacterium ...spread through a [London] neighborhood with terrifying speed, while the information about that terror moved more slowly. This was good news for the mental well-being of England’s wider population, which was spared the anxiety of following the death count as if it were a stock ticker. But it was terrible from a public health standpoint; the epidemic had largely faded before the official institutions of public health even realized the magnitude of the outbreak.

Johnson explained that our global connectedness, technology and institutions such as the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention enhance the speed of information, which is both our greatest defense against a true epidemic in a city like New York and the catalyst for ungrounded fears that we live in “perilous times.” As he wrote,

“A New Yorker or Londoner is far less likely to perish from an epidemic disease than he or she would have been 150 years ago...vastly less at risk and ... more worried—for the same reason. Information travels faster than viruses do now. This is why we are afraid. But this is also why we are safe.”

Robert Klitzman, professor of psychiatry and the Director of the Masters of Bioethics Program at Columbia University, has written:

The Ebola crisis has revealed serious gaps in our health care system, and we need to think broadly how to deal more effectively with future epidemics [but] doctors and nurses have rallied to care for our sickest patients, sometimes placing themselves at significant risk. In the upcoming months, these professionals will be among our greatest weapons against [any] modern plague.”

In fact, to achieve and to sustain meaningful health security, we must defeat such diseases where they erupt. To do so is humane, but it is also our only defense. In our global society, we will discover again and again that we are only as safe as our least healthy global citizens. Healthcare professionals willing to show up and to risk their own safety on the front lines of such battles have always been our health security warriors. Are they heroes? Oddly, it may be easier to be a hero when you remain at a distance. To return home with the possibility of bringing a disease back with you may quickly get you labeled a threat. Even with the means to prevent the spread of such diseases, our fears get the best of us and we turn on the ones who put themselves in harm’s way to protect us. Those who inspired us and endeavored to make our lives better are rejected and vilified as they try to reenter their home communities.

I wonder whether angels in the Bible had the same problem. The word angel comes from the Greek meaning messengers. They worked overtime, especially that First Christmas. As they were wont to do, they would utter words of encouragement, “Do not be afraid.” Such words, however, can be heard as threats, as the challenge of engagement of the hearers sinks in: an older man, ready to divorce the pregnant teen to whom he was betrothed, knowing he was not the father. The Christmas Story would have changed if Mary, also told not to be afraid, or Joseph had refused to take that risk. Do we put one foot in front of the other because we are freed from fear? More likely, the heroic comes in the midst of the ordinary fears that could undermine us and God’s plan. To dispel the darkness someone must dare to carry the light into the dark places. Every time fear is cast out in that way, we become our truer selves. Then Christmas breaks into our daily lives again.

The American Poets Corner: Robinson Jeffers



Photo: Courtesy Tor House Foundation

To feel and speak the astonishing beauty of things—earth, stone and water,

Beast, man and woman, sun, moon and stars—

The blood-shot beauty of human nature, its thoughts, frenzies and passions,

And unhuman nature its towering reality—

For man's half dream; man, you might say, is nature dreaming, but rock

And water and sky are constant—to feel

Greatly, and understand greatly, and express greatly, the natural

Beauty, is the sole business of poetry.

The rest's diversion: those holy or noble sentiments, the intricate ideas,

The love, lust, longing: reasons, but not the reason.

Robinson Jeffers (1887–1962), inducted into the American Poets Corner in 2007

John Robinson Jeffers was born near Pittsburgh, but moved with his family to Los Angeles when he was sixteen. After college, he lived in a small cabin in the Big Sur region of California, very wild and untamed then, with the love of his life, Una. “For the first time in my life,” he later wrote of this first encounter, “I could see people living—amid magnificent unspoiled scenery—essentially as they did in the Idyls or the Sagas, or in Homer’s Ithaca. Here was life purged of its ephemeral accretions. Men were riding after cattle, or plowing the headland, hovered by white sea-gulls, as they have done for thousands of years, and will for thousands of years to come. Here was contemporary life that was also permanent life...”

Jeffers spent his time writing, building a house by hand out of local granite (Tor House) and raising a family. In 1924 Jeffers published his third book, *Tamar and Other Poems*, which went into multiple printings. Jeffers was compared to Sophocles and Shakespeare and was on the cover of Time magazine in 1932. His reputation faltered in later years, and Jeffers died in his sleep a few days after his seventy-fifth birthday, in his beloved Tor House.

Jeffers was, and has remained, an influential figure in the environmental movement. In 1969, The Sierra Club published *Not Man Apart: Photographs of the Big Sur Coast*, which combined lines from Jeffers’s poetry with photographs by Ansel Adams, Edward Weston and others in a work that substantially aided efforts to preserve that iconic coastline.

The Cathedral appreciates the generosity of the Drue Heinz Trust and Mrs. Edward T. Chase, whose support ensures that poetry continues to be an important part of arts at the Cathedral.

Looking Back

AUTUMN LEAVES



Photo: Helena Kubicka de Bragança

It was a glorious autumn in New York, colorful, and full of important, moving and entertaining events. **Ralph Lee** and **the Mettawee Theatre Company** opened the season, offering audiences a marvelous weekend of performances September 5–7 with **The Dancing Fox: Wisdom Tales of the Middle East**.

In September, the Cathedral hosted the **Episcopal Relief & Development 75th Anniversary Celebration Art Exhibition**, with photographs of their programs from around the world. On September 21, the Cathedral hosted **Religions for the Earth: a Multifaith Service**, the culmination of the hugely successful People’s Climate March, when an estimated 300,000 people marched through the streets of Manhattan. At the service, activists and spiritual leaders of many traditions sang, prayed, chanted and spoke, creating a passionate, collective voice for change, including **Chief Arvol Looking Horse**, Lakota spiritual leader; Indian activist **Dr. Vandana Shiva**; **AI** and **Karenna Gore**; **Rajendra K. Pachauri**, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change; and the **Reverend Serene Jones of Union Theological Seminary**, who summed up the problem by saying, “We have a soul-sized work before us.” The Cathedral will continue to be involved in this work, and we hope you, too, will become involved in what is now affecting—and will continue to affect—people in every country. The young, especially, deserve our attention to this danger.

The Feast of St. Francis and Blessing of the Animals reminded us of those who are entirely innocent and who rarely benefit from what we do to the earth. But St. Francis Day is a time of celebration, and as such was as joyous as ever, beasts great and small processing down the aisle of the Cathedral to be blessed by clergy with smiles on their faces. **The Paul Winter Consort** and **The Forces of Nature Dance Theater** performed.

On September 28, the Cathedral honored the mission of the United Nations. **His Excellency Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa**, President-Elect of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, gave the sermon at the 11 am service. Mr. Kutesa is a Member of Parliament in Uganda and a former Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On October 8, **Enter the Conversation** welcomed **Maude Barlow** and **Wenonah Hauter** for a wide-ranging conversation with Dean Kowalski. Barlow, bestselling author and activist, is the **National Chairwoman of the Council of Canadians**, a citizens advocacy group; co-founder of **The Blue Planet Project**; one of the “1000 Women for Peace” nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize; and 2009 winner of the prestigious **Lannan Cultural Freedom Fellowship**, known as the “Alternative Nobel.” Hauter, **Founder and Executive Director of Food & Water Watch**, has worked extensively on energy, food, water and environmental issues at the national, state and local level. Author of the critically acclaimed book, **Foodopoly: The Future of Food and Farming in America**, Hauter is currently writing **Frackopoly**, due for publication in 2015. The conversation focused on the need to organize, to work on a local level and speak to people about issues immediately affecting their lives.

On display from October 12 through November, **Amen: a Prayer for the World**, an exhibition of fiberglass figures in poses of prayer or meditation, was sponsored by **CARAVAN**, a nonprofit focused on interfaith and arts; and co-curated by **CARAVAN** founder and president **Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler**, and renowned Egyptian artist **Reda Abdel Rahman**, who also designed and sculpted the statues. The artworks were very popular among Cathedral visitors. On October 22, a concert in the Chapel of St. James, celebrating the exhibition, featured **Amir Vahab & Ensemble**. An accomplished composer and

vocalist of Sufi and folk music, Vahab’s musical selections for the evening were inspired by the poetry of Rumi, Hafiz, and Yunus.

On October 14, “**Come Share My Meal: Poets From the Arabic Diaspora**” brought poets **Deema Shehabi**, **Lawrence Joseph** and **Sinan Antoon**; poet and translator **Marilyn Hacker**; and the Cathedral’s Poet in Residence **Marilyn Nelson** to the Cathedral for an evening of contemporary poetry from the Middle Eastern diaspora. Nelson also read poems by Palestinian poet **Nathalie Handel**, and Pittsburgh poet and poetry educator **Samuel Hazo**. The intimate reading/book signing was enjoyed by all. “When I wrote this poem,” Antoon said of one of the final poems he read, “I thought: this should only be read in a cathedral. And then two days later, I got the invitation.”

The 2014/15 season of **Great Music in a Great Space** opened on October 15, with **Arvo Pärt’s** rarely performed **Te Deum**, combining the influences of medieval music and chant to transcendent effect; **Mendelssohn’s** jubilant **Heilig**, **Tavener’s Svyati** for choir and cello; and other works. **Kent Tritle, Director of Cathedral Music**, conducted; **Patrick Jee**, cello, and **Peter Stewart**, baritone, soloed.

The weekend of October 30, Synod House hosted **Curlwe River**, a highly acclaimed production of **Benjamin Britten’s** Noh-inspired church parable. Tenor **Ian Bostridge** delivered a stunning portrayal of a madwoman tortured by the loss of her child. The performances were part of **Lincoln Center’s White Lights Festival**, inaugurated in 2010 by the Center Artistic Director **Jane Moss**, to offer a “spectrum of artistic expression that moves us inward and expands our spirit.”

Halloween—prelude to the dark days of winter—is always an excuse for fun and hijinks at the Cathedral. The **Crypt Crawl** offered a venture into the Cathedral’s crypt for spooky stories and a history of this treasured holiday. **The Annual Cathedral Halloween Extravaganza**, with **Ralph Lee’s Procession of the Ghouls**, always one of the Cathedral’s most magical evenings, was a high-spirited (and multi-spirited) spectacle for kids of all ages. The film this year was the silent classic **The Phantom of the Opera**.

November opened with the induction of **Flannery O’Connor** into the American Poets Corner, at the November 2 Evensong, and an event honoring the writer the following evening. Writers, scholars and family members celebrated the genius of this American original, who said, “Writing a novel is a terrible experience, during which the hair often falls out and the teeth decay. I’m always irritated by people who imply that writing fiction is an escape from reality. It is a plunge into reality and it’s very shocking to the system.”

The Cathedral was honored to welcome three great artists on November 17, when **Vanessa Redgrave** and trumpet-flugelhorn master **Jimmy Owens** performed **Joan Didion’s Blue Nights**, a meditation on grief and memory. It was a spellbinding performance of haunting—and haunted—text.

On November 18, **The Great Organ: A Recital Series** featured a concert by the Cathedral’s own **Kent Tritle**, performing two late preludes and fugues of **Bach**; **Duruflé’s Suite, Op. 5** and **Magnificat octavi toni** by **Heinrich Scheidemann**.

On November 22, Cathedral Artist in Residence **Frederick Renz** and **Early Music New York** (see article) opened their 40th anniversary season on St. Cecelia Day (patron saint of musicians). The celebratory evening featured works for natural trumpets and timpani by **Johann Sebastian Bach** and contemporaries **Georg Philip Telemann**, **George Frederick Handel** and **William Boyce**.



Dr. Vandana Shiva and Rabbi Ellen Bernstein.

A Life of Achievement



Photo: Courtesy Vivian Hewitt

The Cathedral, anchoring the neighborhood for over a century, has inspired deep loyalty in friends, neighbors and congregants. If you have followed our newsletter over the years, you will have heard stories of clergy, staff, volunteers, artists and activists who have gone above and beyond for this institution. You will also know how many rare souls have worked and performed here, adding their voices to the one voice that is our Cathedral, our city, our time.

Vivian Hewitt, congregant since the origin of the Congregation of Saint Saviour and a volunteer for the past 25 years, is one of these. The 94-year old retired librarian and renowned art collector (The Hewitt collection of African American art is now the heart of the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts+Culture in Charlotte, N.C.) can be found in a pew every Sunday with a group of friends. “We look out for each other,” she says. “If one of us doesn’t show up, we check to see what’s wrong.” Mrs. Hewitt lives in the brownstone on West End Avenue that she and her husband John purchased fifty years ago, making her a longtime observer of the neighborhood, and of the city and nation for much longer. Asked about how the nation has changed over her lifetime, Mrs. Hewitt replied, “There are so many more opportunities now for young black people. I never thought I’d see an African American president. Barack and Michelle are a wonderful couple, the most intelligent presidential couple since Franklin and Eleanor.”

Mrs. Hewitt is fiercely devoted to the Cathedral. “The Cathedral is so spiritually satisfying...so intellectually and culturally imbued in the life of the city...I tell people, if you can only visit two places in NYC, visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Cathedral.” On the day in October this writer spoke with her, the petite dynamo with the soft nimbus of gray hair was getting ready to be honored at a Friday evening ceremony for Jack and Jill of America. Mrs. Hewitt was President of the New York Chapter in the late ‘60s.

I asked her how she came to volunteer at the Cathedral. “I was at a library meeting and I said to my friend [Columbia librarian] Richard Logsdon, ‘Tell me, now that you’re retired, how are you squandering your time?’ His face lit up. ‘I’m a tour guide at the Cathedral.’ I said, ‘You know, I think I might like to do that.’ And I did, for 25 years. I loved it. She confesses to being nervous when she began giving tours, but loved doing it. The stained glass windows were particular favorites, especially the Sports and Communications windows. She remembers giving joyful Christmas parties for the other volunteers and members of the Laymen’s Club, “singing around the piano.”

The Cathedral Invites You to Take a Pause to Consider Climate Change

“I believe [faith] is a call to commitment, and I believe we saw an inkling of what that looks like and the power that can ensue when the community of faith joins the river.”

Terry Tempest Williams

The acclaimed writer and activist visited the Cathedral most recently for Religions for the Earth: a Multifaith Service on September 21, 2014

Looking Ahead

'TIS THE SEASON

December opens with the annual **Cathedral Crafts Fair**, always laden with beautiful handmade gifts for all the people on your list. If you dread the crowds and traffic of holiday shopping, come to the Cathedral where strolling is still a pleasure, where peacocks may greet you as you arrive, and where you can linger after shopping to look at **Xu Bing’s** mighty phoenixes (not here for much longer, so please visit!).

The holidays are stressful for many people. **Nightwatch Dusk & Dawn** urban retreat (December 12 & 13) is designed for adults seeking rest from their busy lives for soul renewal and spiritual direction. The Friday evening and Saturday afternoon of chanting, meditation and reflection draws upon the rich tapestry of the world’s faith traditions, preparing you for the swirl of social and family events and helping you tap into the joy of the season.

This year is **The Paul Winter Consort’s** 35th year at the Cathedral. Come celebrate with Paul and his friends, including special guest **Danny Rivera**, at the **Winter Solstice Concert**, held on December 18–20th. This year’s Solstice promises to be a landmark in the show’s tradition of interweaving diverse performers of the world.

The annual **Christmas Concert**, December 13, will take place in the Great Crossing and will feature the combined Cathedral Choirs and Orchestra with soloists **Amy Justman** and **Marc Day**, conducted by **Kent Tritle**. This year, the concert includes **Gloria in excelsis Deo**, **J.S. Bach’s** Christmas Cantata from 1745. This music, later incorporated into his *Mass in B minor*, sets a joyful, triumphant text not only in tribute to the birth of Jesus, but also in commemoration of the Peace of Dresden, signed on Christmas Day in 1745. Alongside splendid a cappella motets and beloved Christmas carols, this program will also feature the New York premiere of “**Monday’s Child**” by **James Adler**, performed by the Cathedral Choristers under the direction of **Malcolm Merriweather**. Don’t miss this joyous occasion when friends, family and neighbors come together to celebrate the Christmas story. While you’re here, take a look at the **Peace Tree**, in the front of the Cathedral, decorated with hand-folded paper cranes.

Early Music New York with **Fred Renz** (see article) presents “**A Dutch Christmas, the Age of Rembrandt**” (produced in association with The Metropolitan Museum of Art), featuring late Renaissance carols and dances by **Jan Pieterzoon Sweelinck**, **Jacob van Eyck**, **Pierre Phalèse** and **Tielman Susato**, on December 6, 7, 13, and 25.

For those of you who want a festive yet reflective end to the year—and to be part of a larger community—the **New Year’s Eve Concert for Peace**, featuring soloists **Jamet Pittman** and **Gregory Purnhagen** is an inspiring choice. Concertgoers, leaving the cathedral with candles in hand, the exquisite music still echoing in their thoughts, feel a little more hopeful about our beautiful and troubled world. This year’s concert, hosted by **Harry Smith**, features guests **Judy Collins** and **Jason Robert Brown**.



Photo: Isadora Wilkenfeld



The Cathedral
Church of Saint John
the Divine

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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.

2014 Winter Cathedral

Cathedral

The Spirit of the Season

The year that is now ending has had its share of terrible news. Yet in spite of all that is wrong with the world, we greet the holiday season with joy. This is our time to celebrate what we have—a category that expands the more it is paid attention to.

Sharing love, good food, music and worship with friends and family brings light to the darkening days. Sharing with those we don't know so well (or at all)—neighbors or congregants, our troops posted abroad, hungry children and stressed parents—brings a different kind of pleasure, one many have claimed is the greatest of all. To give is to create a bridge between yourself and the other person; all of a sudden, you know in your deepest being that you are not alone; that humanity is a shared condition. Giving reminds us of all that we have been given—life, breath, sunlight, memory, hope.

The Cathedral, of course, is in the business of giving. From blessings to Sunday meals, concerts to counseling, Cathedral clergy, staff and volunteers devote themselves to the well being and happiness of others, and as such are among the luckiest workers in the city. This doesn't mean the work is easy. There are shortages of funds, time and space; there are differing opinions on methods and priorities. A wealth of experience—over a century's worth—and the input of countless numbers of exceptionally talented people helps us find our way, keeping in touch with community needs and Cathedral tradition.

If you are thinking of making charitable contributions this December, please take a moment to think about Cathedral Community Cares (CCC), which offers social and medical services, including the Sunday Soup Kitchen & Clothes Closet; Adults and Children in Trust (ACT) with its myriad of summer, pre-school and after-school programs; Friends of Music, which supports the Cathedral choral and organ concerts; the American Poets Corner, celebrating the best of our nation's literature; the Textile Conservation Lab, conserving precious textiles, including Cathedral tapestries damaged in the 2001 fire; Public Education and Visitor Services (PEVS), offering daily tours, frequent workshops and thought-provoking programs; and our beautiful gardens, managed by the Cathedral Gardens Conservancy. Join us in supporting the Cathedral's Annual Fund and make a gift by December 31! An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. For further information, please

contact contact Priscilla Bayley in the Development Department at (212) 316-7570 or pbayley@stjohndivine.org

Of course, there are many ways to give beyond money. The Cathedral always needs volunteers, for assistance with the liturgy, pitching in at ACT, CCC, and The Cathedral School, leading guided visits (see this issue's article about the indomitable Vivian Hewitt) and working in the garden. The Clothing Closet appreciates donations, such as the twenty bags of men's clothing, all new, suitable for interviews and office work, donated by Career Gear in August; the clothing drive organized by Digitas L&I, a Midtown advertising agency, in September and October; and the clothing drive run by The Parents Association at Bank Street School for Children in November. The Cathedral is very grateful for their support. CCC would also like to thank the volunteers from Barnard Reach Out for helping with the soup kitchen reorganization and the staff at *The Colbert Report* for their shift in the soup kitchen this September.

CCC welcomes toys for its annual toy drive. The Cathedral School, Trinity School, The Laymen's Club, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, and the NBC Today Show Toy Drive all donate toys for children, which are then given out by CCC staff the week before Christmas. CCC expects to offer gifts to about 150 children this year. You, too, can donate toys: new, unwrapped, delivered to CCC by December 17. Food for the annual Christmas dinner is also welcomed: cooked turkeys, chickens and hams, pies and other desserts must be delivered to the ACT gym between 8:30 and 9:00 the morning of December 22.

Whatever your interests and skills, there is room and a warm welcome for you here. Also consider joining the Society of Regents, an association of men and women who provide annual unrestricted leadership gifts of \$1,000 or more to support the preservation and maintenance of the Cathedral architecture, as well as its educational, outreach and artistic programs. Members of the Society of Regents are invited to special events throughout the year.

Whether or not you choose to give to the Cathedral, your presence here is a gift. The liturgy, music, dances, forums, workshops and other special events are half the conversation—all of you are the other half. The Cathedral needs your voices and ideas, your enthusiasm and compassion. Join us.



Photo: Helena Kubicka de Braganca

Close Friends and New Arrivals

- Sally Benner, Vice President, Development & Strategy
- Jason Boyce, Officer, Security
- Valeria Jara, Webmaster and Manager, Communications
- Anna Lenti, Administrative Assistant, Music
- Stacey Pedone, Director, Facilities Management
- John Tiebout, Manager, Visitor Services
- Alexis James Waggoner, Nightwatch Coordinator
- Michael Yearwood, Assistant Director, Security
- Barry Cloud, Officer, Security, went from full time to event coverage, and we bid adieu to Avery Griffin, Administrative Assistant for Music.

Stay in Touch

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

In Memoriam

Dorothy Jackson (1930–2014)