

THE CATHEDRAL STORY



Cathedrals tell God's story through their art and architecture, and this Cathedral is no exception. It has been built to declare the Glory of God and the good news of Jesus Christ. It is a message in stone and glass, needlework, wrought-iron, and sculpture, of God's love for all creation throughout the ages and in every place. At the same time, as Washington National Cathedral, it is a living symbol of the nation's heritage of religious freedom and faith. The Cathedral's art and architecture combine to convey events and insights of both the biblical and national stories.

Chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1893, the Cathedral has been constructed in the 14th century Gothic style. It traces its roots to the great cathedrals of Europe and to Pierre L'Enfant's inclusion of "a great church for national purposes" in the original plans for the nation's capital. The Cathedral is Episcopal in its heritage, seeking to serve God and the people from a standpoint of committed faith. It is national by the vision of its founders, by its location in the nation's capital, and by the spirit and commitment which undergird its mission as a House of Prayer for all people.

Washington National Cathedral is a private institution and receives no public

funds. It has been built and is supported entirely by the gifts of the thousands of people who come here, and through the efforts of its friends nationwide.

WORSHIP, EDUCATION, OUTREACH

Historically, cathedrals have been centers of worship, of education and the arts, and of community outreach and vision. This Cathedral strives to be faithful to that high calling, a living instrument of faith. In addition to sermons and conferences on matters of public and spiritual importance, the Cathedral Foundation reaches out through an educational program for public schools and five educational institutions: the National Cathedral School for Girls, St. Albans School for Boys, Beauvoir School, a College of The Laity, and the College of Preachers.

Over 1,500 worship services take place in the Cathedral each year, and great moments of national celebration and mourning, from Presidential Inaugural prayer services to state funerals, are observed here. Every American President since Theodore Roosevelt has come to the Cathedral, and Helen Keller and Woodrow Wilson are among those buried here. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his last Sunday sermon from the Canterbury pulpit. All 58,000 names of the Vietnam War Dead were read aloud during a vigil in the War Memorial Chapel.

A PRAYER FOR WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

Almighty and everlasting God, we give you thanks for setting the minds and hearts of your people to proclaim your Word and to work your will, especially through the offerings and opportunities of this cathedral church.

Inspire its ministry so that the knowledge of your truth in the world might be increased.

Broaden its mission so that lives might be enobled and lifted up as examples of your boundless and loving care.

Remember those who have built before us, Good Lord, that we too may be builders, of compassion and concord and care.

And finally we raise up to you, O Lord, the hopes and aspirations of all in this good land, that our heritage of faith may not falter, and that in your light we may follow the paths of justice and hope.

Through the grace and love of Christ, the true foundation stone, we pray.
Alleluia, Alleluia. Amen.

