

Washington National Cathedral

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Whatever your church, your faith, or your reason for visiting, we welcome you to Washington National Cathedral.

This Cathedral, officially the Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, had its beginning in 1893 when Congress granted a charter creating the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation. The foundation stone was laid in 1907 in the presence of President Theodore Roosevelt, and the Cathedral was completed 83 years later, in 1990 when the “final finial” was placed in the presence of President George H.W. Bush.

The Cathedral welcomes people of all beliefs, and it stands as a timeless reminder of humanity’s drive to understand the mysteries of faith. It is an active church with many services each day. In addition to its regular services conducted in the Episcopal liturgy, each year there are interfaith and ecumenical services. It is the seat of the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington.

The Cathedral opens its doors to thousands of visitors who come to find peace and inspiration, view the Cathedral’s extraordinary art and architecture, and learn about its history. It also sponsors musical offerings, and regular programs on contemporary issues and on spirituality and faith.

The idea of a “church for national purposes” is attributed to Pierre L’Enfant’s 1791 plan for the new Federal City. Today, Washington National Cathedral is a place where the nation celebrates our history and values, mourns our losses and commemorates important events, fulfilling its mission as a National House of Prayer for All People.

Cathedral Art and Architecture

The Cathedral’s architecture is Gothic: it is built in the shape of a cross and exhibits great height, ribbed vaults and pointed arches that lead the eye upward, and flying buttresses that balance the outward thrust of its Indiana limestone walls. Philip Hubert Frohman was its principal architect. The central tower is the highest point in Washington, D.C., at 676 feet above sea level. The Cathedral is the sixth largest in the world.

The iconography of a cathedral is the system of images and symbols used in its decoration. Every element of construction and art—thousands of works in wrought iron, stone, stained glass, wood carving, and fabric art—is designed to reveal the presence of God, to teach Christian belief, and to pay tribute to our country’s history.

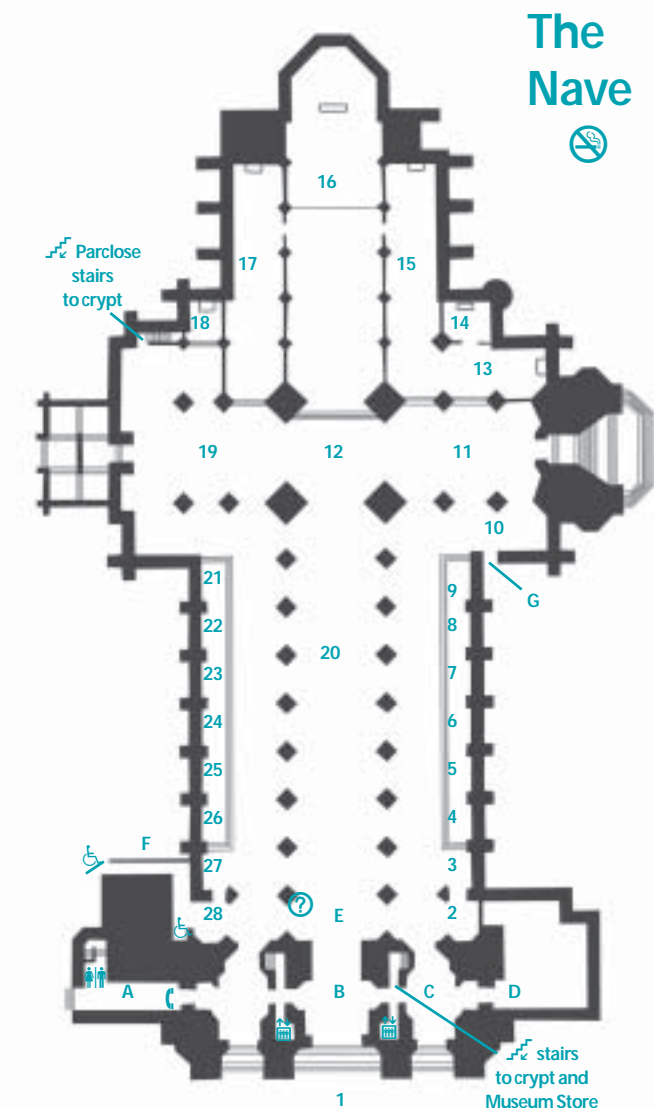
We invite visitors to pause and experience the evocative power of this majestic place: the silence, the space, the light, the architectural grandeur.

Visitor Services

- A RESTROOMS** are down the stairs in the Northwest Cloister, off North Road.
- B** Elevators rise to the **PILGRIM OBSERVATION GALLERY** for views over the city. Stairs lead down to the **MUSEUM STORE** and crypt level. Limited **FOOD SERVICE** is available in the Museum Store.
- C AUDIO TOURS** as well as a limited selection of souvenir items are available in the Churchill Porch.
- D** Occasional exhibits are displayed in the **RARE BOOK LIBRARY EXHIBIT ROOM**.
- E** At the west end of the nave visitors may obtain **INFORMATION** about the Cathedral and membership or join a guided tour.
- F** A **WHEELCHAIR RAMP** is located on the cloister’s east side, adjoining a wheelchair-accessible restroom. Visitor “lost and found” is located in the office of the Foundation Special Police, beneath the ramp entrance.
- G WHEELCHAIR ACCESS** to the crypt level and South Road is located in the south transept.

Main Floor

- 1** The **WEST FAÇADE** features three massive portals. The great bronze gates show scenes of St. Peter in the north portal, Abraham and Moses in the center, and St. Paul in the south. The carved typana above the gates show the creation of day, the creation of humankind, and the creation of night. The three statues are St. Peter, Adam, and St. Paul. Here begins the Cathedral’s iconographic “story” from west to east: creation to the redemption of humankind.
- 2** A heroic marble statue of the first president dominates the **GEORGE WASHINGTON BAY**. The abstract design of the window reflects the search for freedom which led to the founding of our nation.
- 3** The **MARYLAND BAY** is rich with symbols of the state and its diverse religious heritage, both in its stone carving and in its stained glass. The land for what is now the District of Columbia came out of Maryland.
- 4** Colorful windows depicting richness of the lands explored in the 1803 Lewis and Clark expedition to the American northwest are in the **FOLGER BAY**.
- 5** In 1891, a group of men met in the Washington home of Charles C. Glover to lay plans for building the Cathedral. This event and others are commemorated in the **GLOVER BAY** windows.



- 6** In memory of Charles Warren, lawyer and historian of the Supreme Court, the **WARREN BAY** contains many symbols of law. Directly above is the **SPACE WINDOW** commemorating the mission of Apollo XI and holding a piece of moon rock brought back by its crew.
- 7** The **WOODROW WILSON BAY** is enriched by myriad images in stone and glass, symbolizing events in the life of our twenty-eighth president, who is buried here. *War and Peace* is the title of this striking and colorful window.
- 8** Windows in the **LEE-JACKSON BAY** contain scenes from the lives of these two Civil War generals.
- 9** Behind its wrought iron gate, the **MELLON BAY** may be used for private prayer. Carvings relating to Andrew W. Mellon are on the column capitals.

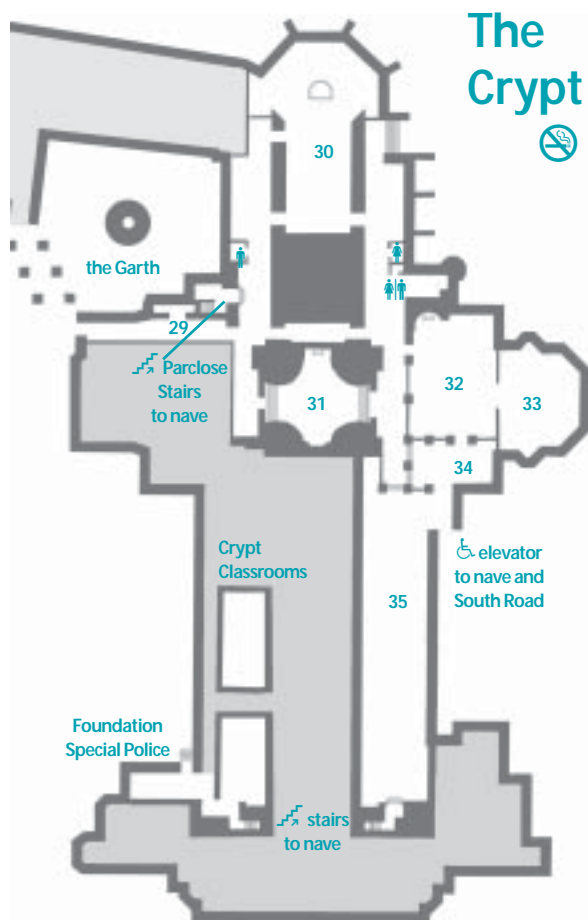
The Nave

- 10** The artwork in the **BAPTISTRY** depicts symbols representing baptism. A nearby elevator provides wheelchair access to the crypt level and South Road.
- 11** The rose window in the **SOUTH TRANSEPT** has as its theme *The Church Triumphant*, with its imagery taken from the biblical book of Revelation. All of the glass in this window was manufactured by the Blenko Glass company of West Virginia. Outside, the portal is adorned with sculpture, including a depiction of the *Last Supper* with Jesus welcoming all with outstretched arms.
- 12** **THE CROSSING** is the center of the two transept “arms” and the “body” of the long nave, which form the shape of a cross. Piers soar nearly one hundred feet to the vaulting. Inset in the marble floor is the Jerusalem Cross, the Cathedral’s special symbol. Stones for the Canterbury Pulpit came from Canterbury Cathedral, England.
- 13** A tribute to those who have served in our armed forces, the art of **WAR MEMORIAL CHAPEL** tells stories of sacrifice and the struggle for freedom.
- 14** A statue of the *Christ Child* welcomes visitors to **CHILDREN’S CHAPEL**, built to the scale of a six-year-old child. The kneelers feature baby animals; the wrought iron depicts imaginary ones.
- 15** The red needlepoint kneelers of **ST. JOHN’S CHAPEL** recognize noted Americans by displaying symbols for the accomplishments of each. Carvings portray the Last Supper and the crucifixion; the windows tell of the miracles of Jesus.
- 16** At the east end of the Cathedral nave is the **HIGH ALTAR**. One hundred ten figures of men and women exemplifying the highest ideals of Christianity surround the central figure of *Christ in Majesty*, completing the iconographic story with the redemption of humankind through Jesus Christ. The bishop’s chair, the *Glastonbury Cathedra*, is on the left.
- 17** The ornate reredos in **ST. MARY’S CHAPEL** shows scenes from the life of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The windows depict the parables of Jesus; the sixteenth-century tapestries tell the story of David and Goliath.
- 18** The painted altar panels of **HOLY SPIRIT CHAPEL** are by noted American illustrator N. C. Wyeth. The dove is masterfully used in the ironwork and altar painting to symbolize the Holy Spirit. Reserved for private prayer.
- 19** Above the balcony of the **NORTH TRANSEPT** is the Cathedral’s largest and oldest rose window, *The Last Judgment*. A life-sized figure of Christ as judge can be seen in the center. Stained glass artist Lawrence Saint attempted to follow medieval stained glass techniques in crafting this window.

20 Looking west from the mid-nave crossing is a view of the magnificent **WEST ROSE WINDOW**; it brings inside the creation theme, inspired by God’s words in the book of Genesis, “Let there be light.” This window and all of the **NAVE CLERESTORY**, or the top level of windows, were created by Rowan LeCompte. These windows tell stories from the Hebrew Bible. They are admired for their clarity, sparkle, and brilliance of color.

21 The **KELLOGG BAY** is a memorial to diplomat and statesman Frank B. Kellogg and reflects his ardent desire for universal peace. On the east wall is a carving of Martin Luther King, Jr., preaching his last Sunday sermon from the Cathedral’s pulpit (March 31, 1968).

22 The **HUMANITARIAN BAY**, also known as the Boardman Bay, honors such servants of humankind as George Washington Carver, Albert Schweitzer, Elizabeth Fry, and St. Francis of Assisi.



23 Peace and universal unity are the themes of the Henry **WHITE BAY**. The windows contain symbols of the League of Nations, the United Nations, peoples of the world in prayer, and peaceful uses of atomic energy.

24 *America the Beautiful* is symbolized by the brilliant color and abstract design of the windows of the **BETTELHEIM BAY**.

25 The **NATIONAL CATHEDRAL ASSOCIATION BAY’S** windows portray some of the roles of Christian women as “life-givers, healers, purifiers and teachers.” Members of the NCA from all over the nation built this and other sections of the Cathedral, and continue to support its programs.

26 The windows of the **DULIN BAY** depict the words of the twenty-third psalm in vivid colors.

27 Philip Hubert Frohman, beloved Cathedral architect for over fifty years, is memorialized in the **FROHMAN BAY**. The dramatic, abstract window utilizes an imaginative design of leading and small pieces of glass.

28 In **ABRAHAM LINCOLN BAY** a heroic bronze statue stands before words from Lincoln’s farewell address at Springfield, Illinois. The floor is inset with Lincoln-head pennies; the window depicts in abstract form *The Agony of Civil War*.

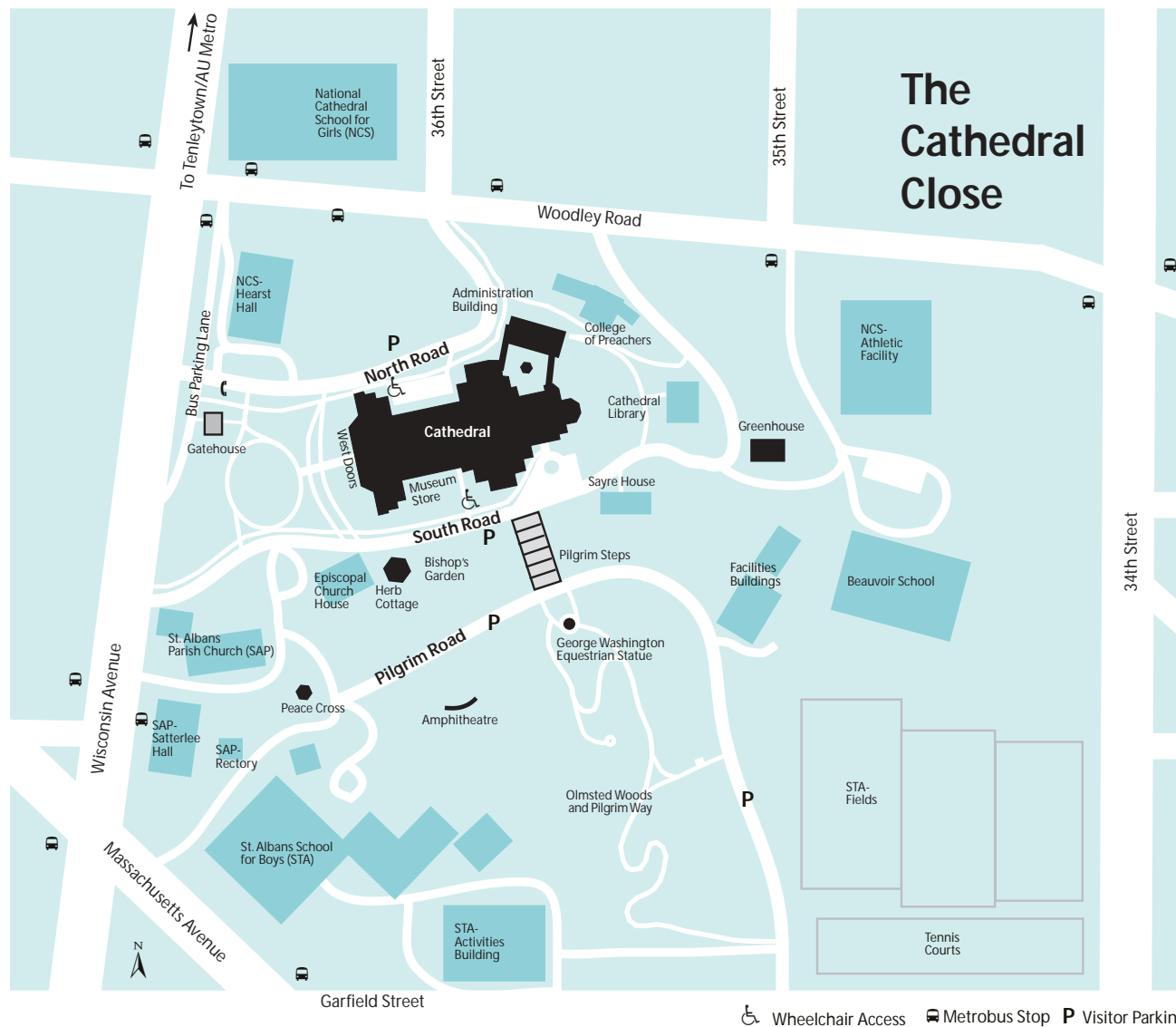
Crypt Floor

The crypt level can be reached by descending the Parclose Stairs, with a handsomely detailed stone screen, carved in place. The crypt corridors convey the solidity of Gothic construction. The iconography of the crypt chapels deals with New Testament imagery and the promise of eternal life: Jesus’ birth, his death and entombment, and his resurrection.

29 Tiny **GOOD SHEPHERD CHAPEL**, just off the **GARTH** with its modern fountain, is open daily 6 am to 10 pm for private prayer. The chapel’s sculpture of a shepherd with his lamb interprets the role of God as protector, especially to those who are injured or suffering.

30 The Cathedral’s foundation stone was placed on this site under what later became the altar of **BETHLEHEM CHAPEL**. This chapel contains symbols and depictions of the genealogy and birth of Jesus. In 1912 this became the first part of the Cathedral to be completed, and a service has been held here every day since.

31 Directly beneath the crossing is the **CHAPEL OF ST. JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA**. The somber mural tells the story of Jesus’s entombment following the crucifixion. This chapel and Resurrection Chapel are primarily built in the Romanesque (or Norman) style of architecture featuring rounded arches and a heavier “feel” than Gothic architecture. The use of this style



here imitates the medieval custom of building a Gothic cathedral over the crypt of an earlier, Romanesque church.

32 Peaceful **RESURRECTION CHAPEL** is decorated with colorful mosaics, portraying the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection. Quiet is observed in this chapel.

33 The **CATHEDRAL CENTER FOR PRAYER AND PILGRIMAGE**, offers meditation aids to visitors. Open Monday–Saturday 10 am to 4 pm; Sunday 1 to 4 pm.

34 The **VISITORS’ LOUNGE** offers a place to rest. Visitors may sign the state books here. An elevator provides wheelchair access to the nave and South Road.

35 Sales in the **CATHEDRAL MUSEUM STORE** help support the Cathedral. Books, cards, religious art, gifts, music, and limited food service are available.

On the Cathedral Close

The grounds upon which a cathedral stands are called a “close.” Comprising fifty-nine acres, the Close is home to three schools, a college, the offices of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington and St. Alban’s Church.

The **BISHOP’S GARDEN** is modeled on a medieval walled garden. The garden is open daily until dusk. An equestrian statue of George Washington stands at the base of the broad, stone Pilgrim Steps. The **PILGRIM PATH** winds through the five-acre Olmsted Woods, named for the landscape architect of the Close. The **HERB COTTAGE** shop, run by All Hallows Guild, supports the care of the Cathedral grounds.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Monday–Saturday: 7:30 am, noon, 2:30 pm, 5:30 pm (4 pm Saturday), 7:45 pm (weeknights Memorial Day–Labor Day); Sunday: 8 am, 9 am, 10 am (September–June), 11 am, 4 pm, 6:30 pm. Updates posted on the Cathedral website.

CATHEDRAL OPERATING HOURS

Monday–Friday: 10 am to 5:30 pm; extended to 8 pm weeknights Memorial Day–Labor Day. Saturday 10 am to 4:30 pm. Sunday: 8 am to 6:30 pm. No touring during services or special events. Other tour interruptions posted on the website.

GUIDED TOURS/AUDIO TOURS

Tour guides lead visitors through the art, architecture and history of the Cathedral. Monday–Saturday: 10 to 11:30 am and 12:45 to 3:15 pm; Sunday: 12:45 to 2:30 pm. No tours during services and special events, or on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter (other tour interruptions posted on the website). Specialty tours are also available. Group tour reservations and information: (202) 537-6207; email: tours@cathedral.org.

Self-paced audio tours are available for rental during regular touring hours and cover the nave and crypt chapels. \$5 per person; NCA discounts available.

MUSIC

Cathedral choristers sing Evensong at 5:30 pm Tuesday–Thursday during the school year. Free organ demonstrations Wednesday at 12:45 pm. The carillon is played Saturday at 12:30 pm. On Sunday, the ten-bell peal is rung following the 11 am service and organ recitals usually follow 4 pm Evensong. Numerous special musical events can be found on the website.

CATHEDRAL SHOPS

The **Museum Store** is open 9:30 am to 5 pm daily, and sells Cathedral-themed gifts. The **Greenhouse**, selling plants and herbs, is open 9:30 am to 5 pm Monday–Saturday; 10 am to 5 pm Sunday. The **Herb Cottage** is open 10 am to 5 pm daily, and sells gifts for the home.

The shops are closed Easter, Christmas, and New Year’s Day, in addition to other special closures, and may have seasonal extended hours. Sales at the shops support the Cathedral’s ministry, programs, and gardens. Visit the website and shop online: www.shop.cathedral.org.

An Invitation to Help

The mission and ministry of Washington National Cathedral and its preservation depend entirely on the gifts of friends throughout the world. Each building stone, each note of music, each word spoken in prayer, or preaching is supported by the gifts that individuals contribute to the Cathedral.

Many visitors choose to extend their visit to the Cathedral by joining the **National Cathedral Association (NCA)**, beginning a lifetime relationship with the Cathedral. As an NCA member, you can join in Cathedral events such as Major State Days, pilgrimages, and regional events, receive *Cathedral Age* magazine, and enjoy discounts at all the Cathedral shops.

I wish to join the National Cathedral Association

- Family/Group \$35
- Individual \$30
- Student/Retired/Limited Income \$15

The **Cathedral Fund** sustains every aspect of the Cathedral’s life, including worship and music, spiritual, and educational programs, and the ongoing maintenance of the building and grounds. Donors of \$100 or more to the Cathedral Fund receive recognition through the Cornerstone Society.

I wish to make a gift

- \$35
- \$75
- \$150
- \$_____

This gift is in memory of in honor of

in thanksgiving for: _____

Please enter my gift in Washington National Cathedral’s *Book of Remembrance*:

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Department of Membership & Development

Washington National Cathedral

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