

# A History of the Sports Bay in the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine

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The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City has the distinction of being the largest religious structure in the United States as well as the third largest in the world. In an effort to make the church more conversant with the larger society and as a graphic illustration of the Episcopal Church's belief that religion should be integrated into all other aspects of life, a number of secular themes were featured in the construction details of the cathedral. Sport was one of the seventeen themes selected for the bays of the nave, though not without controversy and numerous problems. The inclusion of a sports bay was interpreted as being indicative of the extent to which sport had become accepted into the mainstream of the American culture of the mid 1920's. The sports bay was also viewed as illustrative of the basic compatibility of religion and sport as evidenced by the symbolism in the design of the stained glass windows of the bay.