

YDS STUDENTS AND THEIR PASSIONS

Yale Divinity School attracts students with a wide variety of backgrounds and interests. Many are recent college graduates, but a sizeable number are second-career students. About a quarter aim to enter the ordained or lay ministries, while others are interested in the life of the academy, the world of nonprofits, or the arts and communications. A majority are associated with mainline Protestantism, many are Roman Catholic or evangelical, some are of non-Christian faith traditions, and others have no formal affiliation. The student body is increasingly characterized by diverse ethnicities and racial identities, and the LGBTQ community is an integral part of campus life. Mirroring this is a diverse array of activities through which YDS students pursue their passions, creating palpable energy that permeates the campus on multiple levels. Activities include those that are linked to the Community Life Committee or Yale Divinity Student Government (see Student Groups and Activities, below) and those pursued in less formal ways. A few recent examples of student endeavors, past and present: extraordinary student art on display in the Divinity School's Sarah Smith Gallery such as exhibits on the LGBTQ community at YDS, the history and contributions of Black churches, and the role of Christianity in Black women's struggle to forge their identities in the late nineteenth century; a student-run community garden on campus, focused on organic and sustainable growing methods that encourage a theological appreciation for creation; travel abroad to participate in globally significant religious dialogues, such as an International Women's Day panel at the Vatican on the topic of women's leadership in Catholicism; small church gatherings in apartments or other informal settings as venues for creative, egalitarian, and progressive worship with communion at the center; campus drag shows run by DivOut, a fellowship of LGBTQ students; and the annual student-run Graduate Conference in Religion and Ecology, a unique academic venue showcasing graduate and professional research on the intersections of environmental ethics and moral worldviews.