

Director of Music and Organist St James' Church, Wulfstan Way, Cambridge

Thank you for your interest in growing with us! We are looking for a Director of Music who can work with us to develop the musical life of our church and choir. Recently, we have worked with a succession of talented students who have joined us for half a year or longer before moving on to other challenges as their courses finish. This regular injection of new energy has kept us working on new ways to improve our music, and this has worked well for somebody looking for experience using their musical gifts with a good parish church choir. We would also welcome a Director aiming to work with us for a much longer period.

The church

All our music takes place within a church setting. The church is the local Church of England (Anglican) parish church. It serves the local community and most people attending live locally. The congregation aims to be open and welcoming! There is a half-time priest-in-charge, Steve Rothwell, who formally makes appointments to the post of Director of Music with the agreement of the Church Council.

The church itself is about three miles from the very centre of Cambridge – easy to cycle if you're living in town, and far enough out to be accessible by car, with its own car park. The main church building dates from 1955 – it has a community feel, and is well insulated with a modern boiler, so planning for organ practice doesn't involve a hot water bottle.

The main weekly musical event is the 10 o'clock service on Sunday morning – this is the only weekly service with music. The service usually has four hymns and a psalm sung to Anglican chant, and all of the (typically 70) people present also sing the main sections of a congregational mass setting. The choir sings an anthem during communion, usually in four parts. The organist (you!) usually plays a prelude, an interlude during communion, and a voluntary, in addition to accompanying the sung parts of the service.

Once a month, an all-age service is led by an orchestral musical group, whose membership has a substantial overlap with the choir: you could become involved in the direction of this should you wish, but it is not required.

The primary role of the organ and choir is to lead a service of divine worship, and the style and focus of the music reflects this. You'd need to be able to take an active part in this leadership and in helping bring our church to our local community, regardless of the extent to which you share our beliefs. We'd hope that, with support, you would take a leading role in advising on appropriate music. You'd also need to be around to help plan and lead festival services, such as in the run up to Christmas and Easter.

The choir

The choir is non-audition, and takes all comers: from children with very little experience to adults who have sung in many similar choirs over their lifetime or who have professional experience. We are looking to build capacity – partly by appointing a new Director of Music! – so that we can work better with those with talent but less musical experience, to help them develop so that they are able to join our regular four-part singing.

At present, the whole choir rehearses for an hour on a weekday evening (if required, we can be flexible as to when), plus half an hour before the main Sunday service. In the past, children

have rehearsed separately, but the junior choir is not sufficiently large at present to justify this.

The regular attenders in the choir number about fifteen; we are often augmented by additional members who join us for special occasions or during holidays. We are looking to build this number as well as to develop existing members.

The choir is robed and has an extensive music library.

The organ

The organ is small by cathedral standards, but has a wide tonal range, capable of accompanying delicate vocal solos and of filling the church with a festival voluntary. It was built in 1975 by William Johnson. It is an extension organ with a total of six full ranks of pipes, with two manuals plus pedalboard and all ranks enclosed within the same box. The action is electric.

The table below summarizes the stops available; the letters indicate which stops belong to identical ranks of pipes.

Great	Swell	Pedal
A Mixture II	B Mixture II	A Gemshorn 4'
C Nazard 2 2/3'	F Tierce 1 3/5'	C Rohr Flute 8'
C Rohr Flute 4'	A Gemshorn 2'	D Subbass 16'
B Principal 4'	D Stopped Flute 4'	E Fagotto 16'
A Gemshorn 8'	C Rohr Flute 8'	
D Gedact 8'	E Fagot 16'	
	E Trumpet 8'	

Expectations and remuneration

You will need to be proficient on the piano to accompany a choir practice, and on the organ to accompany a service. Whilst we do not specify any required qualification, we suggest that in practice grade 8 standard would be the minimum to permit doing this comfortably, and some of our recent Directors have been well beyond this standard.

You must be happy to train and conduct a mixed-age, mixed ability group. Many of our recent Directors have chosen to partner with us specifically to develop their skills in this aspect of direction, and we are happy to work with you on this. Because of the contact with children you will need to undergo a background check with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

You will be responsible for some of the administration of running a choir and maintaining an organ. We aim to support you in doing this so that you can focus on the more musical aspects.

We recognise that although you may still be learning yourself, you will be giving of your time and skill-set and we pay a salary in recognition of the time and service you give. This salary is in line with the Royal School of Church Music's Church Musician Fees Guidance and depends upon a number of factors, including the extent to which you come to us already pursuing a profession, and the number of weeks a year you are able to direct. You will have an employment contract with leave entitlement (and, for avoidance of doubt, these particulars are not intended to form part of any contract!). The details of leave entitlements may be negotiated to reflect the period(s) for which you expect to be in Cambridge.

A typical annual salary would be in the region £3500-£4000 before any tax and National Insurance contributions. Your contract will specify separately arrangements for payment for playing at weddings and funerals, although weddings are rare.

We are flexible with regard to the total duration that a Director of Music is able to work with us. We think that an initial commitment of six months is the minimum to enable us to get to know each other and benefit from the partnership.

Further information and how to apply

If there's anything we haven't answered, if you would like an informal discussion of whether we might be a fit for each other, or if you would like to apply for the role, please contact Grae Worster at mgw1@cam.ac.uk. At the formal stage would be a brief interview, audition and opportunity to work with the choir to see whether we would work together. There isn't a formal closing date for applications, but we shall close the advertisement as soon as we make an appointment.

We hope to hear from you!