

Job Title: Director of Music at St Michael's Church
Location: St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 2ND
Accountable to: Vicar
Appointed by: Vicar with the agreement of the PCC
Key relationships: Vicar, PCC, Organist, Assistant Organist, Worship & Music Committee, Choir Committee, choir members, music group members

Background

St Michael's is the church at the centre of the town of Bishop's Stortford in Hertfordshire, UK. Music is an important part of our life together as a church and we embrace a wide range of musical styles. We have a robed SATB choir of adults and children.

The post of Director of Music at St Michael's will become vacant at the end of December 2019, following the resignation of our current Director of Music after 14 years to pursue other projects.

Pattern of Worship at St Michael's

Our main service is at 10am on Sundays. On the first Sunday of each month we have a Parish Praise service, where the music is led by the piano and instrumentalists, followed by a Choral Eucharist (BCP) at 11.15am with robed choir and organ. From time to time, Parish Praise is replaced with All-Age Communion, followed by Choral Matins with the choir.

On the second and fourth Sundays of each month we have a Parish Communion service (Common Worship Order One), where our music is led by our robed choir.

On the third Sunday of each month we have a full Choral Evensong at 6pm, with our robed choir, plus an increasing number of visiting singers from around the local area.

At major festivals additional services are held at which the Director of Music leads the choir. The current pattern includes an Advent Procession, Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, and a choral meditation service on Palm Sunday.

From time to time additional services are held to broaden our worshipping experience. These recently included a Taize service, Songs of Praise, All Souls Commemoration, evening Holy Communion to a Jazz Mass setting.

Choir practices are generally held during school terms. The choir does not sing at Sunday services during five Sundays in the summer, and the Sundays following Christmas Day and Easter Day and on three Sundays falling during half-term holidays.

The musical style at St Michael's combines traditional Anglican music with more contemporary choral and congregational music. For example, traditional and modern hymns and songs are part of our services each week, we use a sung setting of the Eucharist (most often the St Thomas Mass but also settings by Ives and Rawsthorne), and the choir sings an anthem during the distribution of communion. We have full choir and congregation copies of the most recent edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern.

Role and ethos

The role of the Director of Music is to provide musical leadership that enhances our mission as a church and enriches our worship. The Director of Music makes a significant contribution to the worshipping life of St Michael's Church through the leadership s/he exercises in our music ministry.

Main duties and responsibilities

1. To direct all musical content at services as outlined in the list below.
2. To lead the recruitment, training, (including RSCM preparation) and direction of the choir
3. To lead a weekly choir rehearsal. This is currently held on Fridays: from 6.20 – 7.30pm Juniors/7.30 -8.30pm Adults.
4. In consultation with the Vicar, to plan and prepare appropriate hymns and anthems for Sunday and other services.
5. To work with the Vicar and other staff members in the planning of worship.
6. To attend quarterly meetings of the Worship & Music Committee for the purposes of planning worship for major festivals. The Director of Music may from time to time be invited to attend full PCC meetings but will not be a voting member unless elected at the APCM.
7. To advise the PCC on the state of the organ, piano and choir robes. To arrange the regular tuning of the organ and piano and to advise the PCC when works to the organ or piano are necessary.
8. To work with the clergy, PCC and congregation to continue to develop a rich diversity of styles of music, helping everyone to find ways of connecting with God through worship.
9. To be responsible for the music library and to take responsibility for the purchase of new music to develop the repertoire, within the financial constraints set by the PCC.
10. To liaise with the Parish Administrator to ensure the accurate and timely recording of information needed for copyright returns.
11. To take an appropriate part in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, in accordance with Diocesan guidelines, to comply with all safeguarding procedures and to undertake safeguarding training as per Diocesan recommendations.
12. To oversee and contribute to organising the church's programme of concerts, liaising with external musicians/music groups where appropriate.

Accountability

The Director of Music will be appointed by the Vicar with the agreement of the PCC of St Michael's Church, and will be employed by the PCC. The Director of Music will be accountable to St Michael's PCC through the Vicar. The employment contract will be in accordance with current UK legislation and canons of the Church of England.

The appointment is subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure. The Director of Music will adhere to and support the Parish Safeguarding Policy.

Service duties

Directing the choir at the principal choral services each Sunday:

1st Sunday (10am Parish Praise; 11.15 Choral Eucharist)

2nd Sunday (10am Eucharist)

3rd Sunday (6pm Choral Evensong)

4th Sunday (10am Eucharist)

5th Sunday (10am Eucharist)

In addition to direct the choir at services on Ascension Day, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day; and other feast days and special services given reasonable notice.

To play the organ or arrange for a replacement organist when the choir is absent.

Skills Essential

Experience of leading a choir or choirs of adults and children

Commitment to and experience of recruitment of adults and children to join a choir/choirs

Willing and able to lead music of a range of styles

Supportive of the purpose and vision of the Church of England

Open to new approaches

Good communication and administrative skills

Ability to work collaboratively with others

Understanding of the role of music in liturgy and an interest in contributing to the planning of liturgy and worship

Ability to play the organ/piano for services as required

Desirable

Committed Christian

Experience in vocal coaching

The Organ

St Michael's has a well-maintained three manual Walker organ dating back to 1888.

A complete rebuild was carried out by Mander Organs in 2016. In addition, there is a movable 3-stop chamber organ built by Peter Collins. The specifications are available on the vacancy page of the church website.

Hours and Salary

A salary of £6741 gross p.a (2019), to be reviewed for 2020, is offered on the basis of 10 hours' work per week, in addition to payments as mentioned below.

Annual Leave: Eight Sundays away from St Michael's p.a.: to be taken when the choir is absent from duty (unless by arrangement).

This appointment will be subject to a probationary period of six months after which it is anticipated that a permanent appointment will be made.

Weddings and funerals

The Director of Music has first refusal on bookings for weddings, funerals, and other similar services. The 2019 fee for playing at a wedding (including meeting the couple beforehand to discuss music) is £141.00 and for a funeral is £85.00. The Vicar may, in consultation with the Director of Music, allow some other competent person to play at such services, but in such circumstances the charge will still be payable to the Director of Music. No charge is payable to the Director of Music when s/he is unavailable to play for these services.

St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford.
October 2019.