



Job Title: Interim Organist and Assistant Director of Music

Department: Music

Location: Great St. Mary's and Michaelhouse

Reporting to: The Director of Music

Term: Fixed term until 31 July 2026

Salary: £12,250 p.a. for an average 14.5 hours per week paid monthly in arrears, comprising time spent in services, rehearsals, and in personal preparation and administration; over (normally) 3 or 4 days, including Sundays.

Holidays: in line with statutory employment law, to be taken mostly during periods where the choir is on holiday, within a framework of a normal working week of Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this rôle is to contribute to and enhance the mission and ministry of Great St Mary's Church by maintaining and developing standards of musical excellence in the church's worship. The Organist and Assistant Director of Music's main rôle is to play the organ for services and accompany the choir. In addition, they will support the Director of Music in a wide variety of activities in the running of the department including working with the choirs, directing rehearsals, and some services, as agreed with the Director of Music. They will also run the Great St Mary's Occasional Choir.

This is a one-year fixed-term post, which could be suited to a recent graduate looking to gain experience in a major church. It could also be suited to a more experienced candidate with an established portfolio career. Great St Mary's is discerning the long-term future of this rôle in the context of the ongoing development of its music programme. It may be possible for the successful candidate to extend their contract with us.

ABOUT GREAT ST MARY'S

Great St Mary's is a parish church in the heart of Cambridge, one of the fastest-growing cities in the United Kingdom. It is open every day to people of all faiths and none, and seeks to serve the city and university of Cambridge.

Our varied and lively church life is supported by a committed and capable staff team and many volunteers. Music is a central part of the church's outward-facing ministry and mission. The successful applicant will need to be an outstanding organist, and a capable director, singer

and pianist. They will have an exacting, professional and inspiring manner with singers of all ages, particularly children.

ABOUT MUSIC AT GREAT ST MARY'S

Great St Mary's has a strong musical tradition. There are two three-manual organs, the Father Smith/Hill University Organ (restored by Mander in 1995), and the Parish Organ of 1991, built by Kenneth Jones and Associates. There is also a Yamaha U1 upright piano and, additionally, a Kawai G3 grand piano in St Michael's Church (which houses Michaelhouse Café). A community orchestra, The Academy of Great St Mary's Orchestra is based at the church and has a regular concert series. There is a programme of lunchtime recitals in both church buildings.

Choirs

There is a diverse choral foundation of around ninety singers, which comprises:

- An un auditioned Junior Choir, for children aged 5-8, which meets twice a month on Sunday mornings and is directed by soprano Helen Groves, who is also vocal coach for the regular choristers.
- Auditioned choirs for children aged 8-18:
 - The Great St Mary's Choristers, a mixed treble line of children aged 8 to 14, which rehearses twice a week and sings for evensong on Thursday and either the Eucharist or evensong on Sunday.
 - A Youth Choir of older teenaged voices, which rehearses once a week. This comprises the most experienced and able sopranos and former trebles with changed voices. The Youth Choir sings Compline on its own once a month, and normally joins forces with the adult 'back row' for Sunday choral services.
- An auditioned adult volunteer 'back row' of altos, tenors and basses.
- An un auditioned adult SATB 'Occasional Choir' which meets to sing for Sunday services when the main choirs are unavailable.
- The Michaelhouse Singers, an un auditioned community choir that supports the well-being of adults of all ages with mild to moderate anxiety and other mental health conditions, including dementia, and their friends and carers. The Michaelhouse Singers are currently conducted by Alison Daniels, a Lay Clerk at Ely Cathedral.

The choirs are active throughout the school year, with holidays corresponding to school holidays, except in the immediate run-up to Christmas and Easter, when all the choirs are expected to be present.

Rehearsals and Services

The choir's weekly rehearsal schedule is currently as follows:

MONDAY	NO REGULAR COMMITMENTS	
TUESDAY	1645-1800	Probationer Rehearsal
WEDNESDAY	1630-1800	Chorister Rehearsal (<i>and voice training</i>)
	1815-1945	Youth Choir Sopranos' Rehearsal (<i>and voice training</i>)
	<i>When the Youth Choir sings the forthcoming Sunday alone:</i>	
	1815-1915	Youth Choir Rehearsal (<i>and voice training</i>)
	1930-2000	Choral Compline
THURSDAY	1645-1800	Probationer Rehearsal (<i>and voice training</i>)
	1730-1900	Chorister Rehearsal
	1830-1900	Choral Evensong
FRIDAY	1815-1945	Youth Choir Altos', Tenors' and Basses' Rehearsal
	1900-2030	Choir Adults' Rehearsal
	<i>When the Youth Choir sings the forthcoming Sunday alone:</i>	
	1815-1945	Choir Adults' Rehearsal
SATURDAY	NO REGULAR COMMITMENTS	
SUNDAY	0845-0945	Choristers'/Youth Choir Rehearsal
	0900-0945	Adults' Rehearsal
	1000-1100	Choral Eucharist
	(1130-1230	Choral Mattins – monthly)
	<i>GMT</i>	<i>BST</i>
	1445-1545	1545-1645 Choristers'/Youth Choir Rehearsal
	1400-1545	1500-1545 Adults' Rehearsal
	1600-1700	1700-1800 Choral Evensong

There are normally two choral services each Sunday, except once a month, when a third is added. At these, any of the regular choirs (or the Occasional Choir) might be called upon to sing during choir term-time, according to an annual schedule.

On occasion, services are replaced and/or supplemented by other services, including:

University Sermons	One or two per term, at 11.30am <i>Music for these services is usually provided by a College Choir nominated by the University Organist, Sarah MacDonald, but occasionally by Great St Mary's own musicians.</i>
Sunday nearest All Souls	Requiem Eucharist replaces Evensong
Remembrance Sunday	10.50am Civic Service of Remembrance
Advent Sunday	Advent Procession replaces Evensong
Last Sunday before Christmas Eve	Carols by Candlelight replaces Sunday evensong
Christmas Eve	Crib Service at 4pm; Midnight Mass at 11.30pm.
Christmas Day	10am Eucharist, 11.45am Choral Mattins.
Ash Wednesday	Choral Eucharist at 7pm.
Maundy Thursday	Choral Eucharist at 7pm.
Good Friday	The three-hour Service of the Cross at 12pm (organ only between 12 and 1.30pm)
Easter Ceremonies	5.15am on Easter Morning, in addition to two choral services (Eucharist and Mattins) later in the day.
Ascension Day	Singing from the Tower at 7.45am

Special services, such as weddings, funerals and memorial services occur throughout the year on an occasional basis. When an organist and/or choir from Great St Mary's is required, these normally attract additional fees (currently £250 for weddings and £208 for funerals).

Tours and concerts

In addition to services throughout the year, the choirs undertake at least one tour per year. In the past, these tours have alternated between domestic and international locations, with previous destinations including: Germany (2024), Chester (2023), Canterbury (2020); Dublin (2019); Salisbury and Wells (2018); Prague (2017); The choirs also give concerts, some in conjunction with The Academy of Great St Mary's Orchestra.

THE MUSIC STAFF

The department is currently led by the Director of Music, Alexander Berry, who has been in post since September 2023. The Organist and Assistant Director of Music post has been vacant since January 2025.

A Music and Liturgy Administrator, Sarra Facey, started in December 2024 to support the clerical work of the music department. Helen Groves has been Voice Coach for the regular choirs, in addition to directing the Junior Choir, since 2011. The Academy of Great St Mary's Orchestra is conducted by composer and conductor Adam Pounds, a long-standing member of the congregation.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Organ Playing, Choir Training and Singing

- Playing the organ for the majority of services at Great St Mary's, including regular Sunday worship and mid-week evensongs, and up to three choir/orchestra concerts per year.
- Choosing, preparing and performing thematically relevant and seasonally appropriate organ repertoire for pre- and post-service voluntaries which coördinate with the choral music scheme and enhance the worship. Contributing to the choral music scheme and repertoire of Great St Mary's where required.
- Directing the choirs in services/concerts, as agreed with the Director of Music.
- Being present at choir rehearsals in order to:
 - Direct and run rehearsals as required
 - Train the probationer choristers
 - Accompany the choirs
 - Lead sectional rehearsals
 - Deliver chorister musicianship training
 - Sing, when necessary and not otherwise engaged, with the adult back row (likewise occasionally in services)

All the above being as agreed with the Director of Music.

- Directing the Occasional Choir, in collaboration with the Director of Music.
- Playing or directing at special services (weddings, funerals and memorials), as agreed with the Director of Music.
- Carrying out the personal preparation required to maintain the highest standards.
- Working with all those at Great St Mary's to make sure that the church's Safeguarding policy is observed at all times, and reporting immediately any concerns or issues you may have that threaten the safety or welfare of anyone within the care of the church, in accordance with Great St Mary's Safeguarding policy.

Administration

- Maintaining such personal organisation as is necessary to facilitate the other aspects of this rôle.
- Assisting with the smooth-running of the music library, principally before and after services.
- The majority of the administration of the choirs and Music Department is undertaken by the Director of Music and the Music and Liturgy Administrator. Occasional input into aspects of these tasks may be appreciated, but is not a formal part of this rôle.

Communication and Outreach

- Working as part of the staff team, developing a good working relationship with all staff, choir members and families, attending meetings and deputising for the Director of Music as required.
- Being proactive in the promotion of Great St Mary's as a centre of musical excellence within the local area, the diocese and further afield through a range of activities.

Compliance

- Ensuring all work and activities are undertaken in compliance with applicable statutes, regulations and directives regarding Health & Safety, Fire and Security, including the church's internal policies and procedures, particularly those related to Safeguarding.
- Taking reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Any appointment will be subject to a Church of England Confidential Declaration (including two references) and an Enhanced DBS Check.
- Safeguarding training will be required.

ANNUAL LEAVE

Annual leave is to be agreed with the Director of Music in the first instance, and will be in line with statutory employment law, to be taken mostly during periods where the choir is on holiday. A similar arrangement exists for the Director of Music. An internal appraisal system exists, and the successful applicant will be warmly encouraged to seek out opportunities for personal development.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

It is expected that the Assistant Director of Music will work the following core hours, with the other hours spent on organ practice and administration. The hours below are subject to change.

Sunday	0845-1115	Rehearsal followed by Eucharist	2.5 hrs
	(1115-1230)	(Mattins follows once a month)	(1.25 hrs)
	1430-1700 (GMT) 1530-1800 (BST)	Rehearsal followed by Evensong	2.5 hrs
Tuesday	1500-1600	Music and Liturgy meeting	1 hr
	1630-1800	Lead Probationers' Rehearsal	1.5 hrs
Thursday	1630-1915	Probationer Training, Chorister Rehearsal and Evensong	2.75 hrs

Occasionally, the Assistant Director of Music will be asked to take other weekday rehearsals in the absence of the Director of Music. On weeks when occasional or special events take place, the Assistant Director of Music will be released from other duties in lieu of the extra time.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

In sympathy with the needs and aims of a Christian place of worship	Essential
An understanding of Church of England liturgy and the rôle of music within it	Essential
A commitment to upholding the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults	Essential
Experience of working with children	Desirable
Experience of accompanying on the organ a choir in a major church, cathedral, college chapel or similar liturgical setting	Essential
Ability in and understanding of liturgical organ improvisation	Essential
Organ playing of ARCO or equivalent standard	Essential
FRCO or equivalent higher organ-playing diploma	Desirable
Piano playing of DipABRSM or higher standard	Desirable
Ability to sing at sight	Essential
Experience of choir training and conducting	Essential
Ability to gain the respect and confidence of the church choirs, both adults and children	Essential
Excellent communication skills	Essential
Good organisational and time management skills	Essential
Proficient in the standard IT packages and music-processing software	Essential
A good team-player	Essential

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Applications for the post are invited by email only. This should comprise a covering letter and completed application form. Candidates are also welcome to submit a CV in addition, if they wish. The application should be accompanied by details of three referees, at least one of which should be able to comment on the candidate's experience with, and suitability for, working with children's choirs. Applications should be sent to alex@cam.ac.uk, and received by Midday on **Monday 17 February 2025**.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for interview and audition on Thursday 27 February.

The selection process will consist of discussions with clergy and lay members of the staff team, including members of the Music Department, a short chorister rehearsal (15 minutes – music to be provided in advance), and an audition on the Parish Organ, which will likely include the following tests:

- Playing two short, contrasting pieces of organ solo repertoire: a contrapuntal work by Johann Sebastian Bach, Diederich Buxtehude or similar, and one contrasting piece (15 minutes combined maximum).
- Preparing the accompaniment of the Magnificat from the Evening Service in A by Charles Villiers Stanford (stop before the Gloria).
- Sight-reading.
- Transposition and extension of a hymn (30-60 second improvisation).
- Preparing a Gospel improvisation on John 1.1-14 (60 seconds):

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Any appointment will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check, a Confidential Declaration and satisfactory references, which, in addition to confirming the candidate's suitability for the other parts of this rôle, must also confirm their suitability to work with children.