



POST OF ASSISTANT ORGANIST

Available from January 2022, or sooner by negotiation

St Francis's music supports its vision to be a spiritual hub for the community, making God's love known to all. This post is designed to support that vision and to help proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation.

INTRODUCTION

St Francis is seeking an Assistant Organist. The parish is inviting applications from candidates to work with the Director of Music in maintaining and developing liturgical music for regular and special services. The successful candidate will work as part of a small but enthusiastic musical and administrative team whose desire for high standards extends to excellence of pastoral care, and the offering of the best of music and worship to God.

ST FRANCIS CHURCH

St Francis is an Anglican parish church in Welwyn Garden City. The liturgical style is formal and dignified, yet inclusive and welcoming, and along with thoughtful preaching, a sensitive liturgical programme of music has always been an important part of its witness. The church is committed to maintaining the very highest standards in its offering of worship to God. The repertoire for regular services and special events is eclectic and the congregation is used to music in a wide variety of styles from all centuries down to the present day. The church is particularly well-known for its creative use of music in special services and sensitively embracing music of all styles (alongside more traditional church repertoire) in celebrating the rich seasons of the Church Year.

PATTERN OF CHORAL WORSHIP

The main Sunday service is the 9.15am Parish Eucharist at which the choir sings a setting of the mass, and usually two anthems and hymns. The rehearsal for this service is from 8.40am. The choir also sings at occasional mid-week feast days and for the usual services in Advent and at Christmas, for Holy Week, and at Eastertide. In the month of August, and on the Sundays after Christmas and Easter, a simpler liturgy at the 9.15am service is accompanied by the organist without choir. There is a monthly full choral evensong at 6.00pm with a rehearsal at 5pm. Additionally the choir rehearses on a Friday evening from 7.00pm until 9.00pm. The choir holds an annual residential week

at a British cathedral and sings evensong at various local cathedrals occasionally during the course of the year.

OCCASIONAL SERVICES

The church holds occasional special services (weddings & blessings, funerals and memorials). The number of such services varies from year to year, but we usually have c. 10-12 in a typical year. It is hoped that, for the sake of consistency, the regular musicians, including the Director of Music and Assistant Organist will be available for the majority of these.

THE MUSIC TEAM

St Francis maintains a mixed choir of 26 trebles (boys and girls) and 18 adults on Sundays and Feast Days. It is hoped to start a new choir early in 2022 which will consist of retired female trebles from the main choir and other girls by audition embracing the age range of Year 11 to Year 13. We hope the new Assistant Organist might take a leading role in developing this choir. We hope also in the future to restart our junior choir which was made up of children from Years 1 to 4 (non-auditioned) who sang three or four times a year. Again, if interest is there with the new Assistant Organist, involvement could also be included.

OUR INSTRUMENTS

There is a fine and very comprehensive two-manual Johnson of Cambridge organ, which is in good condition and is maintained and tuned by Shepherds of London. The church also owns a grand piano, which is in good condition, and two excellent upright pianos. These instruments are available for practice when the church diary permits.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSISTANT ORGANIST

The Assistant Organist's overall responsibility is to play the organ at choral services and to support the Director of Music in maintaining excellence in liturgical music at St Francis. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Playing the organ at regular choral services.
2. Playing the organ at special services such as weddings, funerals, and memorial services, for which additional fees are paid.
3. Booking organist deputies of an appropriate standard when necessary and with the approval of the Director of Music.
4. Assisting the Director of Music with directing the choir of St Francis.
5. Work with the Director of Music in the maintenance, development, and organisation of the music library.
6. Making arrangements for the tuning and maintenance of the organ and pianos, subject to prior approval of any expenditure.

7. Assisting the Director of Music as required, e.g. programming music for special services.
8. Assisting the Director of Music in arranging and promoting an annual series of lunchtime recitals in the church.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The role of Assistant Organist at St Francis is a challenging one. The successful candidate will be an exceptional musician who can demonstrate:

1. An ability to play the organ to a high standard.
2. A broad knowledge of sacred church music.
3. Significant experience of liturgical organ playing with a good solo repertoire and ability to improvise and sight read.
4. A team-player able to work with musical, clerical, and administrative colleagues.
5. Excellent communication skills with an understanding of the need for discretion on occasions.
6. An ability to work accurately and reliably to tight deadlines, and to maintain good grace and humour when under pressure.

Furthermore, the Assistant Organist should be experienced, and able to conduct a choir and train singers (should they wish to be involved in developing the choirs).

The Assistant Organist will report to the Director of Music and ultimately to the Vicar.

PAY

The remuneration for this post is £4,000 (gross) per annum paid monthly in arrears. It is the responsibility of the post holder to pay tax on this amount if applicable. Holiday entitlement is 5 Sundays per annum by prior arrangement with the Director of Music

DBS

A DBS check will be required as the Assistant Organist will be working with children.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

An informal conversation (in person or by phone) may be arranged with Rev'd Jenny Fennell (Vicar), by emailing: vicar@stfranciswgc.org.uk, or calling: 01707 320960

A visit to the church can be arranged too. A Letter of Application accompanied by a full Curriculum Vitae and the names of two referees (who will not be contacted without prior permission) should be sent by email to Rev'd. Jenny Fennell at vicar@stfranciswgc.org.uk.

Appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references, safeguarding checks and clearance and the provision of proof that the appointee has the right to work in the United Kingdom. Candidates may be asked to provide proof of qualifications.