

Hampstead Parish Church

Director of Music and Organist



Hampstead Parish Church

St John-at-Hampstead is a beautiful Sanderson church dating from 1745, set in the heart of Hampstead. The parish population is over 9000. Sunday worship is robed and choral. An inclusive church, with membership drawn from a wide range of nationalities and cultures, the Electoral roll numbers 338, and over 100 children are registered in Junior Church. A varied parish life includes not only a commitment to music, but also literature and drama, supported by different parish organisations. There are close links with Hampstead Parochial School (primary), and other local schools. On average 100 adults and 50 children attend the 10.30 Eucharist. Choral Evensong has a congregation of 20 – 30.

Music

Music has played a crucial role at Hampstead Parish Church (HPC) throughout its history. Previous organists include 'Father' Willis and James Shaw (father of Martin and Geoffrey). The renowned choirmaster Martindale Sidwell nurtured many nationally known musicians during his near 50-year tenure. Lee Ward and most recently James Sherlock continued and developed this rich heritage. James left in August 2017 to pursue a career in orchestral conducting.

HPC is distinctive in its commitment to the highest standard of professional music-making (comparable to the finest City churches), to the musical life of the wider parish, exemplified in the very active Junior Choir and Community Choir, and to music beyond the church, including links with the Hampstead Arts Festival.



The ministry of music is resourced not only by the Parochial Church Council (PCC), but also by the Friends of the Music (with a large group of supporters), and the Hampstead Church Music Trust. Founded in the 1970s the Trust gives financial support to the music of HPC and to church music in wider Hampstead. A recent seven figure legacy to the Trust means that music is not only financially secure, but also new areas of work can be developed. Our vision is therefore not just to continue what we already do, but develop it.



The church employs a professional choir of eight singers and a mixed Junior Choir of 20 or more singers. Five of the professional choir sing at the 10.30 Eucharist, and eight sing Choral Evensong. The calibre of singing is extremely high and the choir includes conservatoire graduates, cathedral singers and opera professionals. The Junior Choir sings separately at the 10.30 Eucharist, and is beginning to sing weekly on Thursdays for Evensongs. A recently introduced Community Choir has proved very popular and has expanded the musical range of the church. The Junior Choir and Community Choir are under the direction of the Assistant Director of Music, David Moore FRCO.

Weddings, funerals and memorial services number up to twenty per year, and choirs and musical ensembles are often required. In addition to the liturgical music of the church, there are concerts given by young professional musicians and more established ensembles. Members of the choir regularly give solo recitals, including the annual Sidwell Recital. These concerts are supported both financially and commercially by the 'Friends of the Music', and the Director supports and oversees this work. The recently introduced recently-introduced Bach Passion and Christmas-time concert, with quality orchestral accompaniment, have proved popular.

Facilities in the church include a large choir vestry which functions as a song room for rehearsals and music storage. There is a concert quality grand piano in church, and practice pianos and keyboards are available. The fine Willis organ was restored in 1997 to its original Willis 'sound' by Bower and Company and includes a brand new nave section and English-style choir organ.

The Future

This is an exciting time for HPC, and its music and worship. The Revd Jeremy Fletcher was appointed as Vicar in March this year. A former member of the Liturgical Commission, Jeremy was Precentor of York from 2002 – 2009, and Vicar of Beverley Minster from 2009 – 2017. The PCC shares a vision with him to ensure that music offered to the glory of God is at the heart of worship, mission and discipleship, developing both the professional and voluntary. Possibilities include:

- the wider participation of the Junior Choir in liturgical worship,
- more scope for competent members of the congregation to join with the professional singers for the performance of appropriate larger scale repertoire at major festivals,
- the expansion and development of the Community Choir.
- further development of young church musicians, not least through the training of young organists and future choral scholars.

We would like to explore a greater partnership with local arts organisations, building on existing links to develop a higher profile series of concerts and recitals which exemplify the creativity at the heart of God and relate to and celebrate the cultural life of the area.

We would like to find further ways of music being an educational and community resource, especially in outreach to and partnership with local schools.

We would like the choirs to be a visible sign of HPC beyond our walls and parish boundaries, giving concerts, making recordings, and touring further afield. We would like to foster relationships with choirs who might lead worship in addition to the parish's choirs, especially during holidays.

The Director of Music can expect from HPC

- Pro Rata remuneration (including pension) commensurate with the role, and comparable to similar London Churches
- Extra fee paying occasional offices and concerts
- Support and vision offered by the PCC, the Friends of the Music, and financially by the HCMT
- An immediate paid colleague as Assistant Director of Music
- An established skilled professional and Junior Choir
- Excellent dedicated music facilities.



The Role of Director of Music

Responsible to the Vicar, the Director of Music oversees the provision of all music in worship in Hampstead Parish Church. The Director oversees the development of all the choirs, with direction of the Junior and Community Choirs currently delegated to the Assistant Director. The Director is specifically responsible for the leadership and technical excellence of the professional Choir, and supports the musical and professional development of the Assistant Director.

The Director of Music is responsible for musical programming and some administrative and logistic support for concerts which complement the church's fundraising and outreach ambitions. The Director conducts concert performances which include orchestras and other ensembles as well as organ or piano accompaniment.



Person Profile

The Director of Music must be a musician of standing and influence in the music profession, with a proven record in musical direction and performance.

It is desirable that the Director of Music is an accomplished organist, and Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists is a guide to the minimum performance qualification.

A sensitivity to and understanding of the Christian faith and sympathy with the styles of worship at the church are essential, and it is desirable that the Director of Music be a communicant worshipper.

Good experience of working with children and young people, both in conducting and training them as singers and musicians, is essential.

The Director should be an excellent communicator with first-rate organisational skills and be a proficient user of digital technology, including Microsoft Office software.

Sample Terms and Conditions

The Director of Music is a part-time position. The role is currently ten hours per week, though this could and should expand as the role develops. Sunday duty is essential. Holiday entitlement includes six Sundays.

It is expected that the Director will hold other musical employment which will enhance their professional profile and create opportunities for creative links between institutions. As a guide, the current remuneration package, including pension contributions, is c£12,000.

Use of the church, organ and piano for private teaching will be agreed and included in the conditions of employment.

Application

We are looking for a Director of Music who

- will have a vision of music at the heart of worship and the life of a church
- will be excited by the possibilities of developing and expanding what is already here
- will give the time and thought to develop and implement these areas
- will be able to inspire and motivate the very best singers and players
- will be able to motivate and inspire colleagues both paid and voluntary
- can offer a minimum of 10 hours per week, worked flexibly

Please write a letter of application including a full CV and details of two referees to:

Revd Jeremy Fletcher
Director of Music Application
14 Church Row
London
NW3 6UU

Email: vicar@hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk

Applications must be received by Monday 16 October.

Interviews with organ playing and choir directing will be on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 November.

Hampstead Parish Church Director of Music: Job Description

Summary

To have care, control and general oversight of the music in Hampstead Parish Church, subject to the overall direction of the Vicar and Parochial Church Council.

To maintain the highest musical standards and foster the musical gifts of all in the service of the ministry of the parish.

Supervisory Responsibility

The Assistant Director of Music, professional singers, singing teachers, additional organists.

Duties and Responsibilities

- To ensure the provision of music in worship and manage the music budget.
- To plan the music programme for worship on a termly basis.
- To establish a profile within the parish as someone with whom people feel at ease discussing music and worship.
- To recruit, administer and direct the professional Choir, ensuring it sustains a high standard and reputation, and through external engagements and recordings to promote a positive image of HPC.
- To ensure the efficient administration of the professional Choir, including fee payments, attendance records, robe cleaning, dress codes and sheet music provision.
- To develop and maintain a bank of high quality deputy singers, ensuring they are booked as and when necessary.
- To direct and mentor the Assistant Director, including regular planning and feedback.
- When required, in consultation with the Vicar, to direct and oversee the process for recruiting music staff.
- With the Assistant Director to foster the development of the Junior Choir and the Community Choir.
- With the Assistant Director, to maintain and develop the music library.
- To arrange for weekday funerals and weddings, in timely and close consultation with the Vicar.
- To advise the PCC on the care of the organ and pianos, and to ensure they are maintained and tuned.
- To plan, organise and direct the professional Choir at concerts outside Sunday worship, including major promotional events through the Friends of the Music.
- To attend the termly meetings of the Friends of the Music, advising and supporting the Friends of the Music committee in the preparation and delivery of an annual series of concerts to the highest possible standards.
- To be in attendance as required at the PCC, and when necessary to play a part in the discussion of the place of music in the life of the church.
- To engage a locum Director of Music during leave periods.
- To communicate carefully with the Administrator and members of the PCC over the church diary and administrative matters.
- To develop young singers and organists, equipping them for the next stage of a musical career.

Additional Responsibilities

- To carry out regular practice and professional development in order to sustain personal performance standards and prepare for specific requirements.
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation and statutory codes of practice.
- To adhere to the Parish Safeguarding Policy, and maintain the highest standards of welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- To adhere to the diversity and equal opportunities policies of the parish.
- To undertake Safeguarding and Health and Safety training as required

Existing Sunday schedule

9.35am in Junior Choir rehearsal (which starts at 9.00)

DOM may need to accompany for 5 minutes with the Junior Choir in the church

9.45 - 10.25am Adult Choir rehearsal

10.30 - 11.50am Choral Eucharist

5.10 - 5.55pm Adult choir rehearsal

(3.40 – 4.25pm in winter)

6.00 - 7.00pm Full Choral Evensong

(4.30 -5.30pm in winter)

In addition to the above the post holder would be expected to attend at all choral Feast Day services, usually 6.30pm for 7.30pm on a weekday.

The Junior Choir meets from 5.30 – 7.00 pm on Thursdays, and 4.45 – 5.30 pm on Fridays.
The Community Choir meets at 7.45 pm on Thursdays.



HAMPSTEAD PARISH CHURCH