



**The Cathedral Church of St. Michael,
Coventry**

Organ Scholarship 2024-2025



The Cathedral

Coventry Cathedral is recognised internationally for its ministry of peace and reconciliation. The striking architecture of the new building sitting alongside the ruins of the bombed Cathedral provides a powerful symbol that is ever more relevant in our increasingly divided world. It is the spiritual home of a committed congregation of worshippers who, together with large numbers of visitors, pilgrims and tourists, enjoy the diversity of liturgy and music which comprises the worshipping life of the Cathedral.

The Way We Worship

Since 1962, Coventry has enjoyed a reputation for liturgical innovation. The Dean and Canons are committed to offering a home for the wide range of traditions found within Anglicanism. This commitment to respect for diversity is also a part of our worship. We seek to reflect the breadth of the Church of England, representing its varying traditions with integrity and style.

As a consequence, Sunday worship at the Cathedral sees several hundred people across our four acts of worship. The Cathedral Eucharist and Choral Evensong (and the said service at 8 am) are formal in style (there is a more detailed description below).

The Primary Purpose

Our vision for the Cathedral includes making it a centre of musical excellence.

Coventry Cathedral Organ Scholarship 2024-2025



Remuneration:	£4,200
Reporting to:	Director of Music
Work base:	Coventry Cathedral
Duration of Scholarship:	1 st September – 31 st July
Application Deadline:	5pm on Monday 23 October
Audition/Interview:	the week beginning 6 November or on a mutually agreeable date
Date of Issue:	5 October 2023

The Organ

Coventry Cathedral's organ is well-known as an excellent instrument both for recitals and for accompanying services. With four manuals, nearly five thousand pipes and an eclectic stop-list, it is a very versatile instrument, accommodating most schools of music with integrity. Its vibrant sound (and the Cathedral's cavernous acoustic) makes it particularly appropriate for 19th and 20th century works. Built by Harrison and Harrison of Durham, it was fully cleaned in 2001 and there is an on-going programme of restoration.

The Choirs

There are three choirs associated with the Cathedral:

The Cathedral Choir (three sections: Boy Choristers, Girl Choristers, Clerks & Scholars)

The Chamber Choir (adult mixed voices)

Coventry Cathedral Chorus (formerly Saint Michaels' Singers)

In term time, the Cathedral Choir sings on Sundays at the 10.30 a.m. Cathedral Eucharist and 4.00 p.m. Choral Evensong. Wednesday 5.15pm Evensong is sung by the Boy Choristers, and Thursdays by the Girl Choristers. Two midweek evensongs per month are sung with Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars, and the Lay Clerks sing once service of Compline per month. Out of term time visiting choirs frequently sing on the weekends and occasionally Choral Evensong on Saturdays is sung by a visiting choir. As well as before each sung service the boys rehearse twice a week, the girls, Clerks and Scholars once. The Chamber Choir rehearses and sings services twice or three times per term. The choirs sing at many special occasions and services, and tour periodically.

The Liturgical Department

The Liturgical Department of the Cathedral is headed up by the Canon for Worship and Welcome (candidate appointment in the new year) and includes the Head Verger (Dan Anderson) and his team, the Director of Music (Rachel Mahon) and the Assistant Director of Music (Luke Fitzgerald).

Main Duties and Responsibilities of the Organ Scholar:

1. Playing the organ to a high standard at statutory and other (including diocesan) services or events as directed by the Director of Music for four to ten occasions per month on average.
2. Attending and playing for the choir rehearsals before services as required.
3. Attending one or two meetings before each service/event at the organ, if requested by the Director of Music or Assistant Director of Music, to establish registrations, tempo and protocol directions pertaining to the upcoming services (to be arranged at a mutually convenient time during the week(s) leading up to the service or event in question). These meetings are to help nurture the Organ Scholar's development and it is expected that they become less frequent as the year progresses.
4. Practising to prepare the accompaniments and solo pieces adequately and for that purpose time may be booked on the main organ. Also, the scholar may practise on the electronic organ and on the pianos in the Undercroft when they are available.
5. Depending on the strengths of the candidate, occasionally conducting one of the cathedral choirs in rehearsal or performance, as required by and agreed with the Director of Music.
6. Assisting in the training and preparation of probationers and choristers, with mandatory attendance at Tuesday rehearsals and optional attendance at Saturday morning rehearsals.
7. Carrying out such other tasks as may reasonably be required by the Director of Music within the capacity and experience of the post holder and as may be relevant to the purpose and needs of the Cathedral.
8. Attending all regular services to observe and/or play. These are evensongs on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 5:15pm (4:30pm rehearsal), 10:30am Eucharist on Sunday mornings (9:30am rehearsal) and 4pm Evensong on Sunday (3pm rehearsal).
9. It is expected that these duties will require about 380 hours over the course of the eleven months, based on an average of about 10 hours per week, with the bulk of the hours taking place during the choir terms. There are ample choir holidays, usually with a week (including two weekends) off in a half term and two weeks off after Christmas and Easter. The choir year finishes in mid-July.

Accountability & Supervision received:

The Organ Scholar is accountable to the Canon for Worship and Welcome through the Director of Music. The Director of Music, or the Assistant Director of Music will provide supervision, with regular meetings and ongoing appraisal.

Qualities and Experience Required:

1. A musician and organist highly skilled as both soloist and accompanist, and with the confidence and skills necessary to conduct choirs and to train young singers. RCO diploma qualifications will be advantageous to applications, with playing to at least ARCO standard required.
2. Experience of liturgical accompaniment, knowledge or experience in the training of children's voices, and familiarity with Safeguarding guidelines and procedures will be essential.
3. A warm personality, a good sense of humour and the ability to work well in a team.
4. Someone appreciative of the wide range in the musical styles that are a part of Cathedral worship.
5. The position is open to men and women and is subject to DBS clearance. It is likely that this position will suit someone who is a young adult and attending or preparing for university, college or conservatory education.

Qualities and Skills Desired:

1. A full member of an active Christian Church.
2. Experience in choral conducting.

Application Documents Required:

1. A CV listing previous musical experience both liturgical and more general, academic and musical qualifications achieved, and organ teachers.
2. An example of a recent recital performance programme.
3. A covering letter giving your reasons for applying and your relevant skills and experience
5. Two referees whom the Cathedral may approach – one must be a Director of Music and a second from a priest, teacher or similar vouching for your character and musical skills.
6. Send applications to:
The Director of Music, Coventry Cathedral, 1 Hill Top, Coventry, West Midlands
CV1 5AB
Applications may be emailed by 5pm on 23rd October to:
rachel.mahon@coventrycathedral.org.uk

Audition and Interview: to be held at Coventry Cathedral during the week of 6 November or at a mutually convenient date.

1. Candidates called to audition will be required to perform two contrasting works on the organ, one of which should be by J. S. Bach and together they should be no longer than 10 minutes in length.
2. There will be sight-reading, score-reading, and transposition tests.
3. Candidates will be required to prepare an excerpt of an organ accompaniment to an anthem or canticle.
4. Candidates will be required to play a hymn with some improvisation.
5. There will be a formal interview to establish the candidate's suitability for the post.
6. 45 minutes' practice time on the organ will be allocated to each short-listed candidate at a time mutually convenient.