

## ***Prospectus for Director of Music Appointment***

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, Wardens, Choir and other church musicians. Other church employees and office holders e.g. Administrator and (proposed) Families Minister.

### **St Michael's Church and its Music: Some 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 have historically embraced a wide range of musical styles. We have had a robed SATB choir of adults and children. The post of Director of Music at St Michael's became vacant at the end of December 2019, following the resignation of the then Director of Music after 14 years to pursue other projects.

### **Context: Pre-Lockdown Worship at St Michael's**

This section sets an historical scene, describing the pattern and nature of worship we were accustomed to before the Lockdown of March 2020 proscribed our activities. Our main service was at 10am on Sundays. On the first Sunday of each month we had a Parish Praise service, with music led by piano and instrumentalists, followed by a Choral Eucharist (BCP) at 11.15am with robed choir and organ. From time to time, Parish Praise was replaced with All-Age Communion, followed by Choral Matins. On the second and fourth Sundays of each month we had a Parish Communion service (Common Worship Order One), with music led by the robed choir and congregational singing of hymns and Communion setting. On the third Sunday of each month we had a full Choral Evensong at 6pm, involving an increasing number of visiting singers from around the local area. Our Hymn Book is A+M (2013).

At major festivals additional choral services were held e.g. Advent Procession, Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, and a choral service on Palm Sunday. From time to time additional services were held to broaden our worshipping experience. These have included Taize services, Songs of Praise, All Souls Commemoration and Holy Communion to a Jazz Mass setting.

Choir practices (Fridays) were generally held during school terms. The choir did 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.

### **Context: The effect of Lockdown and our journey through it**

Lockdown has decimated our musical worship. No congregational singing took place in St Michael's between March 2020 and July 2021. Choral singing has been sporadic and intermittent. When it has taken place, it has been socially distanced and using limited numbers (6 remaining the maximum number allowed at the time of writing). We have seen very few of our erstwhile trebles participating over the past 16 months.

## **Context: Our emerging Music in Worship, and our developing Vision for the Future**

***We prioritized worship and singing as much as possible at all stages of the Lockdown, opening up for in-person worship, including singing, on every permitted Sunday, without fail. We have offered a wide variety of opportunities for individuals and groups to play and sing, to which a rich diversity of musicians have made themselves keenly and graciously available.***

During full Lockdown we maintained some music in our on-line worship through Zoom: solos, duets and small home-based ensembles were able to share music virtually. On three occasions virtual anthems were edited up from contributions sung at home and sent in by choir members, then combined and broadcast by screen-share during the Zoom worship.

Since returning to in-person worship in July 2020 singing has been restricted to lone Cantors, small household duets and family ensembles, and, for periods in the autumn, and again since April 2021, socially-distanced choirs and ensembles of limited numbers.

We are now at last singing again as a Congregation in church. At Christmas 2020, and since Holy Week 2021, communal singing in the churchyard has been enjoyed with great fervour and gratitude. And we plan also that choral singing can soon take place unrestricted by social distancing and caps on numbers. We intend to include as much singing as we are able, going forward, involving the diversity of singers, organists and musical direction currently available on an *ad hoc* basis.

A vision for our future worship and music within it is beginning to emerge. There is a desire to rebuild and re-establish our choral tradition. There is also an acknowledgement that we should not be attempting the impossible task of recreating the past. There is no assumption that the obvious plan should be to revert to our pre-Lockdown patterns of worship and music. On the contrary, the prospect ahead of us is to draw from our past and re-imagine its traditions appropriately, with discernment and realism. At the same time, some aspects of our improvised worship in lockdown have been appreciated, and there is desire that they should have an appropriate ongoing place in our church life. For example, solo and small group singing, and organ music for reflection and meditation, have been greatly valued, and their appropriate retention would be appreciated by many.

## **Context: 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 church website. There is also a fine Kawai grand piano in the church, available to play for choir rehearsals, services and concerts.

## **Director of Music for St Michael's Church 2021-**

### **Summary of 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.

***At this post-Lockdown moment in our pilgrimage as a church, there is much exciting potential for a new Director of Music, to build on the commitment we have shown to music and worship in 2020-21, and rebuild, re-energise and innovate, as we embrace God's future for us.***

### **Main duties and responsibilities**

#### **Re-imagining...**

***The Director of Music will have a key collaborative role in shaping the emerging pattern of worship and music at St Michael's as we move on from Lockdown:***

1. To collaborate with the Vicar and other staff members in the planning of worship. In consultation with the Vicar, to plan and prepare appropriate hymns, anthems and music, for Sunday and other services.
2. To work with the clergy, PCC, congregation and other musicians in the local Christian community, to develop a rich diversity of styles of music, helping everyone to find ways of connecting with God through worship. If we appoint a Families Minister in autumn 2021, collaboration with the Director of Music will be an important dynamic in both employees' ministry. The Director of Music will from time to time report to and/or attend PCC, to animate and contribute to discussions about our corporate development of worship.
3. An element within this will be to be part of the discernment process of re-imagining both our Sunday cycle of worship, and the place of special and Festal services in our annual worshipping cycle.

#### **Rebuilding...**

***A key aspect of the role will be the rebuilding of our musical life, both in terms of communal singing as a congregation, and the role of the choir in our worshipping community:***

4. To spearhead the recruitment, induction and training, (including RSCM preparation) and direction of the choir, for both adults and children. To promote and publicise the choir in appropriate community settings, and specifically the schools of our town.
5. To establish and embed an appropriate pattern for choir rehearsal.

6. To contribute to the renewal of confidence in our singing as a congregation.

### **Restoring...**

#### ***Other aspects of our church life need restoring, for example:***

7. To re-establish St Michael's as a venue for musical concerts, as circumstances allow, liaising with external musicians/music groups where appropriate.

### **Running...**

#### ***Some aspects of the role involve ongoing tasks of presence, organisation and administration:***

8. To direct (or arrange direction) for all musical content at services.
9. To advise the PCC on the state of the organ, piano and choir robes (day to day care of robes is provided). To arrange the regular tuning of the organ and piano and to advise the PCC when works to the organ or piano may be necessary.
10. To have oversight for the music library (admin help is provided), and for obtaining new music to develop the repertoire, within the financial constraints set by the PCC.
11. To liaise with the Parish Administrator to ensure the accurate and timely recording of information needed for copyright returns.
12. 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 requirements.

## **Person Profile for this appointment**

### **Essential skills and attributes**

Enthusiasm for music and its contribution to Christian worship  
Ability to play the organ and piano for services to enable congregational worship and singing as required  
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  
Familiarity with and commitment to the Anglican choral tradition of worship  
Knowledge of and commitment to other worshipping and musical styles  
Supportive of the purpose and vision of the Church of England as manifest in St Michael's church  
Open to new approaches and keen to be part of a process of re-imagining and renewal  
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  
Understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding in a church (or other equivalent) context.

### **Desirable but not essential:**

Committed Confirmed Communicant Christian  
Experience in vocal coaching

## **Hours and Salary**

### **(preliminary details, subject to arrangement of a contract of employment)**

A salary of £7000 gross p.a. is offered on the basis of an average of 10 hours' work per week. Additionally the Director of Music earns *ad hoc* payments for weddings and funerals.

As the role develops and, we pray, its scope and scale evolve, the PCC would be open to reconsidering its basis, in terms of salary and hours of work.

The Director of Music has first refusal on bookings for weddings, funerals, and other similar services. The current fee for playing at a wedding (including meeting the couple beforehand to choose music) is £144, and for a funeral is £87. 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 if s/he is unavailable to play for these services. The Director of Music is encouraged to maintain and pursue other opportunities to enhance their career. If they have private teaching responsibilities the organ and piano are freely available to them, subject to the constraints of other uses of the church building.

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.

### **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. Once an appointment has been agreed in principle, a detailed employment contract will be finalised, in accordance with current UK legislation, and the Canons of the Church of England.

### **Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding**

The appointment is subject to a successful enhanced DBS disclosure and barring list check, plus successful completion of Church of England Safeguarding Training. The Director of Music will adhere to and support the Parish Safeguarding Policy.

***St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford, August 2021.***