DIRECTOR OF MUSIC : Role Description

St Ninian's Cathedral, North Methven Street, Perth

The Cathedral is seeking to appoint a Director of Music following the retirement of Geoff Bolton. As the spiritual heart of our city and diocese, St Ninian's Cathedral has a strong musical tradition and is committed to offering Christian worship of beauty, depth and integrity. We are looking for an experienced and inspiring musician to develop this inheritance and inspire both choir and congregation.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Liturgical Music Planning and Leadership

- Plan and prepare music for all choral and sung services in line with the liturgical year and in collaboration with the Provost. Produce monthly music lists.
- Lead the musical elements of worship, normally from the organ or by conducting the choir, and arrange appropriate deputies or assistants when required.
- Play, or find a deputy, for diocesan services such as ordinations and for occasional offices (for which a fee is paid) such as weddings and funerals.

2. Musical Direction and Development

- Play the organ and direct the choir at the weekly Sung Eucharist (Sundays at 11:00), monthly Choral Evensong (Sundays at 16.00), and at major feasts - including Ash Wednesday, the Paschal Triduum, Ascension, Corpus Christi, All Souls and the Advent and Christmas carol services - typically around 10-12 additional services per year.
- Lead choir rehearsals, which are currently on Thursday evenings and briefly before each service. This may be rearranged in consultation with the choir.
- Select a repertoire that reflects and builds upon the Cathedral's well-established liturgical and musical tradition and also fits and challenges the abilities of the choir.
- Build and sustain a committed choral community and have a duty of care for members of the Cathedral Choir, including young people and vulnerable adults.

3. Musical Education and Formation

- Work to recruit and audition new choir members, helping to sustain and develop the choir's membership over time.
- Support the ongoing musical development of choir members, including new and younger singers, by active musical training.
- Actively develop our existing links with local schools and work with the Provost to explore the possibility of choral scholarships and a children's choir.
- Encourage confident congregational singing and musical engagement.

4. Safeguarding

- PVG Scheme membership must be obtained before taking up the post. The Cathedral PVG co-ordinator will oversee the application process.
- Ensure compliance with church and statutory safeguarding policies.
- Take part in all required safeguarding training.
- Create a safe and friendly environment for children.
- Develop and encourage good safeguarding culture and practice.

5. Accountability and Administration

- When carrying out these responsibilities you will be accountable to the Provost, and in the absence of the Provost, to the Vestry.
- Manage music expenditure in collaboration with the Vestry Treasurer.
- Develop a plan for the maintenance and tuning of our organs and piano.
- Oversee a rota to ensure an organist and sufficient singers are available for each service.
- Arrange suitable deputies for up to eight services per year (not including the major feasts), with cover costs met by the Vestry. All absences are to be agreed in advance with the Provost.
- Report on musical matters to the cathedral congregation at their Annual General Meeting, which is usually held in January.
- Ensure compliance with copyright and licensing policies.

6. Collaboration and Wider Engagement

- Support occasional collaborations with visiting musicians, schools, and other churches.
- Develop, in collaboration with the Provost, an annual programme of musical events consistent with the life of the Cathedral.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

1. Essential

- Ability to lead, inspire, train, and develop a choir of skilled volunteer singers of all ages.
- Excellence as an organ accompanist and soloist, with experience of playing in a public context.
- Ability to give strong leadership and to communicate, organise and delegate effectively.
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to build a healthy working environment.
- Experience of music leadership within the Church.
- Knowledge of the Anglican choral tradition and commitment to, or sympathy with, Christian faith and worship.
- A vision for the future of music at the Cathedral.
- Suitability to work with young people, compliant with safeguarding regulations.

2. Desirable

- Associate or Fellow of the Royal College of Organists
- Experience managing music in a liturgical or cathedral-style context.
- Experience working on choir recruitment and with children's choirs

CONTEXT

St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth is at the heart of the diocese of St. Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane in the Scottish Episcopal Church and was consecrated in 1850. Inspired by traditional Scottish Episcopalianism and the Anglo-Catholic revival of the Oxford Movement, liturgical music has been central to the Cathedral's identity from the beginning. The Cathedral has grown in recent years, for example attendance at our four main Christmas services has doubled to 730 since 2024, and we are developing our links with the Cathedral Primary School. The cathedral is managed by the Provost, the Very Revd Dr Stephen Holmes, assisted by the Vestry (cathedral trustees).

St Ninian's Cathedral has a good acoustic, a fine organ and an extensive music library. We have a strong musical tradition, rooted in the Anglican choral tradition. The choir has reduced in numbers in recent years, although it still consists of ten competent singers, and the Provost and Vestry are committed to reviving our musical tradition and building on our links with local schools such as Strathallan, Glenalmond, Perth High School, Ardvreck, and Craigclowan. We also intend to seek funding to develop a children's choir. The new Director of Music will have a key role in this revival.

The cathedral organ, which incorporates earlier work by J. Robson, P. Connacher, E. Ingram and J.R. Millar, was last completely rebuilt by Sandy Edmonstone in 1996 and restored in 2018. It is maintained by organ builders Messrs Harrison & Harrison of Durham. The organ pipes, which are located in the South Choir Aisle, are linked to a detached console in the North Choir Aisle comprising four manuals and sixty-seven draw stops. For further information see: https://npor.org.uk/survey/D03958 The Director of Music may use the organ for teaching at pre-booked times agreed with the Cathedral office.

The Cathedral also has a Viscount electronic organ with 3 manuals and a new Yamaha C2 grand piano.

Cathedral website: https://perthcathedral.co.uk/

HOURS AND REMUNERATION

The workload varies according to season but it is approximately 22 hours a month.
c. £7,000 per annum depending on qualifications and experience

APPLICATION AND CLOSING DATE

Interviews will take place during week commencing 29th November 2026

To apply for this post please send a CV, the names of two referees and a covering letter explaining why you wish to be Director of Music at Perth Cathedral, together with a video/recording of some of your work that would reflect your skills and suitability for this post to: provost.perth@gmail.com