

EGLWYS GADEIRIOL TYDDEWI



ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL

## Organ Scholarship



The Dean and Chapter of St Davids Cathedral wish to appoint an Organ Scholar for the academic year beginning in September 2022. The scholarship is an exciting opportunity for a postgraduate or undergraduate organist who wishes to pursue a career as a church musician. The Organ Scholar will be expected to play a full part in the musical life of the Cathedral.

The Organ Scholarship was set up in 2016. Previous holders of the scholarship have been appointed to organist's positions at Ely Cathedral, Southwell Minster, Magdalen College, Oxford and St George's Chapel, Windsor . The scholarship is generously supported by the Friends of Cathedral Music (FCM). It is also supported by an anonymous donor who wishes to support and encourage the performance of Tudor church music at the Cathedral. It is therefore important that the successful candidate has interest in this genre and is willing to spend an appropriate portion of time during his/her tenure studying, performing and promoting it.

The period of the appointment is usually for one year.

## **St Davids**

St Davids is situated in the beautiful Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, West Wales. It was given a Royal Charter by the H.M. Queen in 1995 which formally recognised its status as a city. It is surrounded by some of the finest coastline in Europe and offers an unrivalled range of outdoor activities including walking, rock climbing, surfing, swimming and hiking. St Davids is an extremely popular tourist destination attracting around half a million visitors every year.

## **The Cathedral**

The present building was begun in 1181-82 and is thought to be on the site of a monastery founded in the mid-6th century by David, patron saint of Wales. Her Majesty The Queen is a Canon of the Cathedral Chapter and President of St. Davids Cathedral Festival. The Cathedral provides a stunning setting for worship which has been offered on this site for 1400 years, within which the musical tradition is an essential ingredient. The famous Tudor composer Thomas Tomkins was born in St Davids in 1572. Whilst his father was Organist and Master of the Choristers, Tomkins served as a chorister and lived in the cathedral close until his mid-teens. The Tomkins family then moved to England, when Thomas began studying with William Byrd.



## **The Cathedral Organs**

The cathedral's main organ was built by Father Willis in 1883. In the year 2000 a major rebuild was completed by Harrison & Harrison and the instrument now has four manuals and 54 stops. It is widely acknowledged as an outstanding instrument of great character and versatility. There is also a three-stop chamber organ by Kenneth Tickell owned by St Davids Cathedral Festival. The cathedral has care of a Steinway model D piano and a recently restored Bechstein grand piano built in 1925.

## The Cathedral Choirs

The cathedral enjoys a reputation throughout Wales and the United Kingdom for the high standard of its music and liturgy. Through the commitment and dedication of its musicians, the amount and level of musical activity at the cathedral is out of all proportion to the modest size of the community. There are therefore many stimulating and challenging opportunities for a talented and passionate musician. St Davids Cathedral is unique in the UK in that the top line of the cathedral choir is sung by girls aged 8–18. They are recruited from local primary and secondary schools. The ‘back row’ of the choir is made up of Vicars Choral (Lay Clerks) who work locally in a variety of occupations and up to three annually appointed Choral Scholars. In addition, there are several regular Deputy Singers and a Junior Choral Scholar.

The Cathedral Junior Choir sings Evening Prayer twice a term. The Cathedral Singers for which the Organ Scholar is the principal accompanist, is an adult voluntary choir, directed by the Assistant Director of Music, and sings Evensong once a fortnight.

The pattern of choral services is as follows:

Monday	Evensong* 6pm	<i>Cathedral Singers &amp; Choral Scholars</i>
Tuesday	Evensong 6pm	<i>Boys &amp; Choral Scholars</i>
Wednesday	Evensong 6pm	<i>Cathedral Choir +</i>
Thursday	Evensong 6pm	<i>Cathedral Choir</i>
Friday	Evensong 6pm	<i>Vicars Choral &amp; Choral Scholars</i>
Sunday	Choral Eucharist or Mattins 11.15am	<i>Cathedral Choir</i>
	Evensong 6pm	<i>Cathedral Choir</i>

+Girls only every second week  
\* Fortnightly

Rehearsals take place before all services and after evensong on Thursdays. The cathedral choir sings occasionally on a Saturday. This occurs during the annual Friends’ Festival and for Ordinations of which there are usually two per year. Several weddings per year also take place on a Saturday. The choirs sing for the duration of the academic term, with choir holidays taking place during school half terms, after Easter and after Christmas. The choir year usually ends in mid-July. The choirs are in residence during Holy Week to Easter Day, and until after the morning service on Christmas Day. The annual St Davids Cathedral Music Festival usually takes place in May half-term week, after which the choir takes a week off.

In addition to the services mentioned above, Welsh Communion and Parish Communion services both take place in the Lady Chapel and Nave on Sundays on 9.30am.

## Recordings, broadcasts and Tours

The choir is regularly invited to broadcast on BBC Radio 3, Radio 4 and BBC television. The choir has toured Spain, Holland, Australia, Italy and the USA. The Cathedral Choir made a tour of Northern France in 2016 and in July 2018 toured the Netherlands, performing in Amsterdam, Delft and Rotterdam. On this occasion the Organ Scholar was the organist for the tour. The Cathedral Choir has made recordings with Priory Records, Regent Records and York Ambisonic.

## **St Davids Cathedral Festival**

The Festival takes place annually at the end of May attracting audiences and artists from all over the world. The Cathedral Choir takes a leading role in the Festival and in recent years has given concerts with the King's Singers, Tenebrae, British Sinfonietta, The City Musick, The BBC Singers, and Onyx Brass. The Festival has commissioned music by Giles Swayne, David Briggs, Neil Cox, Francis Grier, Matthew Martin, Meirion Wynn Jones, Paul Mealar, Robert Walker and Geraint Lewis. BBC Choral Evensong is often broadcast live from the Cathedral during the Festival. The Festival Chorus usually sings a large-scale oratorio with a professional orchestra each year: Mozart's Mass in C minor (2016) Verdi's Requiem (2017) Haydn's The Creation (2018). The BBC National Orchestra of Wales performs annually at the Festival.

## **The Music Department**

Simon Pearce	<i>Acting Director of Music</i>
Thomas Hawkes	<i>Acting Assistant Organist</i>
Becky Shaw	<i>Festival Administrator</i>
Christopher Limbert	<i>Music and Liturgy Administrator</i>
Sarah Bembow	<i>Singing Teacher</i>
Ann Thair	<i>Choir Chaperone (volunteer)</i>

The Dean of St Davids assisted by the Sub-Dean, leads the work and ministry of the cathedral as a centre of worship and pilgrimage, and is responsible for the work of all the Cathedral Departments. The Organ Scholar is responsible to the Organist and Master of the Choristers although some of his/her work will be directed and overseen by the Assistant Director of Music.

## **Remuneration**

The Organ Scholar receives £4,500 per annum, payable monthly through the payroll, and tenable on an academic yearly basis. This is offered on the basis of a fixed term contract of one year. Up to a further £1,000 is available to pay for organ lessons and the associated travel expenses incurred. Some organ lessons should include the study of Tudor organ music with a teacher who has expertise in that area. Additional fees are payable for non-statutory duties, including weddings, funerals and some concerts. The Organ Scholar is entitled to at least one day per week when he/she is free of any cathedral duties.

## **Accommodation**

Shared accommodation is provided rent-free in a comfortable house in the Cathedral Close. This is within walking distance of the Cathedral and the city. Electricity, heating, water, phone and WIFI services are paid for by the cathedral.



## **Responsibilities**

The Organ Scholar is responsible for:

- Taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by this placement;
- His/her own musical development, organisation and time planning;
- Behaving in a manner appropriate to the professional and pastoral nature of the role;
- Familiarity and compliance with all Cathedral policies, in particular the Safeguarding and Health & Safety Policies.

## **Experience, Training and Opportunities**

- The Organ Scholarship is an opportunity to work alongside dedicated professionals in a supportive, stimulating and beautiful working environment.
- Through practical experience, observation and discussion, he/she will receive training in liturgical organ accompaniment, solo organ playing, improvisation, choir training and conducting.
- He/she will have the opportunity where appropriate to conduct services and rehearsals which may include working with the full choir, the Cathedral Singers, the choristers and the probationers.
- He/she will become familiar with the musical and liturgical life of a busy cathedral and have opportunities to contribute to the planning of services and music.
- He/she will have performing opportunities at the cathedral, as part of the renowned St Davids Cathedral Festival and elsewhere.
- He/she will develop team working and pastoral skills through interaction with colleagues within the Music Department and the Cathedral, and with adult and child choristers.
- The Organ Scholar will be expected to play for non-statutory services from time to time for which extra fees will be paid.

## **Duties**

- Being present and assisting at all rehearsals, services, meetings as directed by the Organist & Master of the Choristers.
- Playing the organ regularly for choral services as required.
- The Organ Scholar is expected to continue the development of his/her musical expertise and will have access to the cathedral's organs subject to the cathedral diary.
- The organ scholar will act as Choir Librarian. He/she is assisted in this by the choral scholar.
- Playing the organ for the (non-choral) Parish Eucharist on Sundays.
- Regularly assisting and observing the other cathedral organists at the organ console.
- Giving an organ recital as part of St Davids Cathedral Festival and as part of the Summer Concerts Series. (*One of these would feature Tudor organ music as a significant part of the programme.*)
- Choosing and playing appropriate organ music (voluntaries) before and after some services.
- Assisting with the training of probationary choristers and with choristers' music theory tuition.
- The Organ Scholar will be expected to sing in the cathedral choir from time to time as required.
- Taking a share in the administrative workload of the Music Department, including the copying and typesetting of music, publicity, drafting and planning.
- Playing on some Sundays when the Cathedral Choir is on holiday (in rotation with the other organists).

- Assisting with the preparation and running of the Cathedral Festival
- Greeting visiting organists and assisting them as required.
- Assisting with RSCM exam preparation.
- The Organ Scholar will be required to assist the cathedral's Education & Pilgrimage department with various projects from time to time.

### **Other work**

There may be opportunities for the Organ Scholar to earn extra income by undertaking freelance work outside the cathedral during his/her free-time, and also by assisting in the cathedral office or cathedral shops from time to time.

### **Outreach and Schools**

Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi is a new Church in Wales 3-16 School which opened in St Davids in 2018 when the existing primary and secondary schools combined. Many of the cathedral choristers are recruited from this school. There are opportunities for the Organ Scholar to be involved in the school's musical life. During the Lent and Summer terms the organists and choral scholars take the Festival's Outreach Project to local schools from which the Children's Festival Chorus is formed.

### **Applications**

Letters of application, together with curriculum vitae and the names and contact details of two referees should be emailed to Christopher Limbert: [chris@stdavidscathedral.org.uk](mailto:chris@stdavidscathedral.org.uk)

The deadline for applications is 12.00pm 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.  
Auditions will take place on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

If you have further questions, please telephone Simon Pearce on 07932 420581 or email [music@stdavidscathedral.org.uk](mailto:music@stdavidscathedral.org.uk)