



ST BARNABAS WITH CHRIST'S CHAPEL

Choral Scholarships (all voice types)

from September 2024



The Choir of St Barnabas Dulwich is seeking to appoint four Choral Scholars to commence in September, 2024.

Applicants of any voice type, and of all ages and stages of career, are encouraged to apply.

Overview

Music plays an integral part in the life of St Barnabas and the PCC are committed to the support of Choral Scholarships. These positions offer a hugely exciting opportunity for committed, talented, and energetic musicians to become part of a thriving choir and church community in the parish of St Barnabas with Christ's Chapel.

The music team at St Barnabas are committed to the Choral Scholarship being a valuable experience in the musical and professional development of young and early-career musicians. There exist many exciting opportunities within the parish for professional development and broadening the scope of the Choral Scholarship. These include, but are not limited to: working with the Children's Choir and Youth Choir; singing at weddings; performing lunchtime recitals; library and archival work. These by no means limit the full extent of available opportunities, and the musical team are open to any ideas applicants might have about what they would like to get out of the scholarship program and how this might be achieved.

We are seeking to appoint musicians who wish to contribute to the musical life of a busy, successful, and energy-giving church, while continuing to develop their own skills as musicians and leaders. The Parish aspires to increase the engagement of under-represented groups.

About St Barnabas

St Barnabas is a large, modern, welcoming, and inclusive church that sits in the central Anglican tradition. Our large congregation includes people of all ages and from different backgrounds.

There has been a church choir in this corner of SE21 for one hundred and thirty years and records from 1891 show that from the very beginning—and even in a temporary building—the Choir of St Barnabas was a success such that it was oversubscribed. Such was the strength of commitment from members of the choir the when a fire ripped through the old Victorian building, the choir still met, sang, and led worship the following Sunday in the Parish Hall.

Almost thirty years later, this commitment remains strong. The Parish Choir, numbering 40 and supplemented by four Choral Scholars, rehearses weekly and sings every Sunday. At Christ's Chapel in Dulwich Village, there is also a choir that leads the regular singing of Evensong. The Dulwich Children's Choir and Dulwich Youth Choir meet each week and sing a monthly family service. The choirs sing at all the major festivals throughout the year and join forces to give large concerts both at Christmas and in June (to mark St Barnabas Day). The choir has toured internationally and undertakes local tours and residencies—in 2024 the choir will be singing Evensong at Westminster Abbey.

Congregational attendance is strong, with some 250 adults and children joining for the Family Communion, and Sunday Evensong at St Barnabas attracting very healthy numbers. All services sung by the choir are usually streamed live: the church invested heavily in its IT/AV equipment in November 2020 to ensure this online experience is as inclusive and realistic as possible. St Barnabas is home to a fine 3-manual Tickell organ and was recently blessed with the gift of a brand-new Yamaha grand piano. Music is very well-resourced and the PCC see music as central to mission in the Parish and wider community.

Job Description

The role of Choral Scholar aims to ensure both the maintenance of excellent musicianship within the parish and the development of early-career musicians' skills and talents. It is expected that the successful candidate would hold the scholarship for one academic year in the first instance, through to July 2025, with the possibility of extending this choral scholarship into the new academic year. The scholarship holder will be paid a generous annual honorarium of **£2,500**, with additional fees available for singing at weddings and funerals.

Key Responsibilities and Expectations

- Choral Scholars will be expected to sing at rehearsals and services, approximately 30 a year and no fewer than three Sundays a month, as directed by the Director of Music. (See below)
- Rehearsals will take place weekly on a Friday evening during term-time (7–8.15pm) and immediately before services. While there is an expectation that Scholars attend Friday night rehearsal less than infrequently, the music department appreciates that a certain number of absences (particularly for the purposes of external performance opportunities or professional development) may be necessary.
- Choral Scholars will demonstrate leadership within the choir, encouraging and leading their respective section and being comfortable performing chorally both with amateurs and, on occasion, other professionals.
- Choral Scholars may have the opportunity to sing step-out solos, in ensembles with other choral scholars, and to have the option to a perform recital. It is anticipated that Choral Scholars will take featured roles in two or three concerts in the church during the year.
- Choral Scholars may have the opportunity to work with the choristers of Dulwich Children's Choir or the Dulwich Youth Choir. This may take the form of mentorship, leading sectionals or smaller rehearsal, or singing with the ensembles in concerts. There is the opportunity for additional work assisting with the administration of the Children's and Youth choirs, which attracts additional remuneration (subject to discussion).
- Choral Scholars will be encouraged to develop their skills as singers; it is expected that scholars take regular singing lessons with a teacher.

Regular Pattern of Services and Rehearsals

Friday

5.30–6.30pm *Dulwich Children's Choir Rehearsal*

6.00–7.00pm *Dulwich Youth Choir Rehearsal*

7.00–8.15pm Parish Choir Rehearsal

1st Sunday of the Month

5.00pm Rehearsal

6.30pm Service of Choral Evensong

Other Sundays (term time only)

9.00am Rehearsal

10.00am Service of Parish Communion

Choral Scholars will be expected at other major services throughout the year, including: Nine Lessons and Carols; Christmas Midnight Mass; Christmas Day Morning; Ash Wednesday; Maundy Thursday; Easter Day services (including Evensong); Ascension Day; and St Barnabas Day.

This is not an exhaustive list. Scholars may from time to time be expected to sing at concerts and additional services as included on the termly services list.

Person Specification

- Experience of choral singing is essential. Applications are welcomed from those looking to develop their skills in advance of applying for cathedral or university choral scholarship, as well as those who may be studying at or who have graduated from university or conservatoire and are looking to consolidate and develop their skills.
- Singers should show ease and competence in singing in various musical styles
- Familiarity with traditional liturgical choral music, and confidence leading the singing of hymns and psalms, is desired.
- Successful candidates will:
 - have a strong, developed singing voice of a quality to inspire and lead the church congregation;
 - have either strong sight-singing skills or be very quick and able at learning “by ear”;
 - prepare sufficiently in advance of rehearsals so that a good and confident lead can be given to the choir;
 - be able to hold their own vocal line and to take a leadership role within their section;
 - be able to sing in time and in tune;
 - have a strong and clear speaking voice and be able to communicate effectively;
 - be able to demonstrate their enthusiasm for music in church;
 - demonstrate skills as a musical leader, or an enthusiasm to develop such skills;
 - be in sympathy with and support the aims and mission of St Barnabas, Dulwich.

Application Process

For an informal conversation with the Director of Music, or for more information, please contact the Parish Office at parishoffice@stbarnabasdulwich.org or 020 8693 1524.

To apply via email or express interest, please send a CV (max 2 pages) and covering letter (max 1 page) detailing your interest in and suitability for the role to the Assistant Director of Music, Owen Elsley, at adom@stbarnabasdulwich.org. Please provide the contact details of two referees. We will acknowledge receipt of all applications.

The closing date for applications is 5pm Friday 7 June 2024.

Applications before the closing date are strongly encouraged. Auditions will be considered upon receipt of application. Auditions will be held at St Barnabas Church (40 Calton Avenue, SE21 7DG). Candidates should bring a prepared solo song, with or without piano accompaniment, and they will be given tests including singing, aural, and sightreading.