



## **CHORAL SCHOLARSHIPS 2020-21**

### **Adults 18+**

The Church of St Margaret's, Lee seeks to appoint four Choral Scholars (SATB) for the coming academic year. The annual honorarium for each scholar is up to £1000.

#### **MUSIC AT ST MARGARET'S**

The choir has long been at the heart of worship at St. Margaret's, performing a wide repertoire of music from the British sacred music tradition. The choir consists of two parts: the Junior Choir is auditioned and made up of children aged 7-14 drawn from a number of local schools, while the Senior Choir is a friendly body of volunteers drawn from the congregation and others interested in church music. Beyond its regular commitments at St. Margaret's itself, the choir makes an annual visit to a cathedral in the South East of England – recent visits have included Rochester, Winchester and Southwark, as well as St George's Chapel, Windsor.

In addition to its function as a place of worship, until the Covid 19 pandemic the church acted as a busy concert venue for Trinity Laban and Goldsmiths, University of London, and a variety of local ensembles. The choir has also produced two CDs and aims to record another in the coming year.

#### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

The 2020-21 Scholarship is premised on there being two stages: a period during which Public Health England ('PHE') guidance limits singing in public and imposes social distancing, and a period when this is no longer the case. To make sense of the first period, it may help to understand the "normal" regime in the latter period.

During the latter period (without present PHE restrictions), and as has been the case in the past, Scholars have been and will be required for morning services and at least one evensong per month during term-time, as well as for all major festivals (excluding Midnight Mass and Christmas Day). Evensongs are usually on the last Sunday of each month at 6pm (full choir), though it is hoped that there will also be a number of scholars-only evensongs throughout the year. Scholars have taken part in termly concerts and have used the church for their own concerts and rehearsals, subject to prior arrangement. In addition, many previous scholars have composed for the choir.

During the former period where PHE restrictions apply, Scholars will be expected to participate in virtual choir rehearsals which take place each Thursday by Zoom. Music is provided in advance, with backing track accompaniment, to assist with the learning process. The choir has been making regular recordings throughout the pandemic for use at virtual church services. This involves individual members of the choir contributing recordings of their part of choir performances and submitting their own solo recordings. Scholars are encouraged to be at the centre of this process. In addition, it is intended to start using solo singers and then small groups of singers during actual services, and scholars would be encouraged to play a full and active role in this – providing them the opportunity to perform live in public to an extent that is difficult otherwise to achieve in the present times.

#### **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

Candidates will be expected to have prior experience of choral/solo singing, as well as a good level of sight-reading and the ability to hold a vocal line alone. Effective time management skills are also essential. Previous scholars have gone on to sing at Southwark Cathedral, St Martin-in-the-Fields and St George's Church, Beckenham, as well as setting up vocal ensembles of their own.

## **TIMES/DATES REQUIRED**

The choir's calendar is loosely based around university terms, though some services may take place during university holidays. A typical schedule is outlined below:

- Thursdays: 8.20-9 during the period of PHE restrictions and 7.30pm-9pm thereafter
- Sunday mornings: 10am-10.30am (rehearsal); 10.30am-11.30am (service)
- Last Sunday of each month: 4.15pm-5.30pm (rehearsal); 6.00pm-7.30pm (service)
- Service times during the period of PHE restriction have changed at various points but will be confirmed before any applicant takes up a scholarship – it would involve attendance at a service on a Sunday, either in the morning or afternoon.

Again, to give an idea of the “normal” approach, on most Sundays, there is a parish communion service – here, the choir leads the hymns and a congregational mass setting, as well as singing an anthem. During the period of PHE restrictions an anthem is recorded for each week's service that is broadcast via Facebook at communion.

In terms of the range of services during “normal” times: Once a month, the choir will perform a full setting of the Mass, for example settings by Haydn, Mozart, Darke and Stanford. On the second Sunday of the month, there is a service of Morning Prayer, in which the choir additionally sings a psalm and canticles. The choir also sings Evensong once per month – at this service, the choir sings an introit and anthem, as well as settings of the psalms and canticles. During the period of PHE restrictions it is hoped that as many of these services will become available with live solo/small ensemble performance of mass settings, canticles and anthems.

## **HONORARIUM/FEES**

The annual honorarium for each scholar is up to £1000 (paid in termly instalments), with extra fees available for weddings and funerals throughout the year.

## **APPLICATION/AUDITION**

Candidates will be invited for audition, during which they will be expected to sing a piece of their choice, as well as sight-reading a short piece. They will then be invited to participate in a few Zoom virtual choir sessions to allow them to see how the process works before committing themselves to the requirements of the scholarship.

To apply, please send a completed application form and CV to Duncan Atkinson via the Church Office ([office@stmargaretslee.org.uk](mailto:office@stmargaretslee.org.uk)).

For any further information or if you wish to have an informal chat about the position, Duncan Atkinson can be contacted on 07802 725519.