



ST BENET FINK
TOTTENHAM



DIRECTOR OF MUSIC VACANCY

Application Pack and Information for Candidates



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in exploring this post. An exciting opportunity has arisen for a gifted musician to join us as Director of Music at St Benet Fink, Tottenham to lead and develop music for the next phase of the church's life with effect from April 2026 (after Easter, or as soon as possible after that date).

We seek someone who:

- Is an excellent organist, and is skilled in directing and accompanying a choir of professional singers, as well as enabling engaging congregational music.
- Is excited by the current musical offer at St Benet's, and is committed to work with us to further develop the musical tradition.
- Can work collaboratively to plan music that engages the whole congregation in worship.
- Has a good understanding of the role of music in liturgy, and an ability to work within the Anglo-Catholic liturgical tradition.

Music, and not least choral music, plays an important part in the life, ministry and mission of St Benet's. The musical offer has been developed significantly over the past 15 years, is warmly appreciated by the congregation, and has proved important in attracting new worshippers to the life of the church.

I am pleased that you are considering applying for the role of Director of Music at St Benet's: music is integral to the life of our church, and there are opportunities for further development, as we build upon our current provision, in which you will play a key role. We hope that this application pack will answer many of your questions, though if you would like any further information about the role, or would value an informal discussion before applying, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Fr James Hill, Vicar

Parish Life

St Benet's is a vibrant church in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, with an average Sunday congregation of 60 people, and a worshipping community of c130. The church serves a diverse parish of over 10,000 people. The parish is located between Tottenham and Wood Green, and there are excellent transport links (the nearest tube station is Turnpike Lane). We place great emphasis on excellence in music, liturgy, hospitality and welcome. The congregation, reflecting the wider Parish, is highly diverse in terms of background, ethnicity, age and gender. We are deeply committed to prayer and worship, and loving service of our local community.

The current Sunday pattern of worship is:

- 8am Said Low Mass (English Missal)
- **11am Sung Parish Mass** (Modern Roman Rite) [with a professional choir once a month]
- **5pm [monthly – c9 times a year, all choral and sung by professional singers]:**
 - o Choral Evensong & Benediction (currently 6 times a year)
 - o Solemn Mass for the Patronal Festival (July)
 - o English Missal Requiem Mass for All Souls-tide (November)
 - o Christmas Carol Service (December)

Other mid-week festivals are kept, and a full programme of choral services is offered during Holy Week and at Easter, as well a choral Mass on Christmas Eve at 7.30pm, Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day (from 2027). As mentioned above, hospitality is an important part of the life, ministry and mission at St Benet's: hospitality and music are regularly combined. Some key examples of this are detailed below:



Choral Mass and Canapes

Following the monthly Sunday morning Choral Mass (currently usually on the third Sunday of the month), canapes and prosecco or wine is served at the back of church. A larger proportion of the congregation attends on these Sundays, along with a wider fringe of people attracted by the music. Canapes and drinks provide an important opportunity for fellowship, and singers often choose to stay to enjoy refreshments and fellowship with the wider congregation.

Evensong and Curry

The six, monthly Evensongs (usually held on the first Sunday of the month), and the All Souls Requiem, are followed by curry and drinks in the Church hall.

Assumption Choral Mass and Barbeque

This takes place on a Sunday morning during August.



The Church Building

S. Benet Fink is a fine building by J. S. Alder, of 1912. Its wooden barrel roof provides a stunning acoustic for choral worship, instrumental recitals and concerts.

The Current Musical Vision and Offer

The Parish greatly values music as a means to enhance worship, and as a core focus of our mission and outreach. Whilst congregational music remains a core part of the musical offer, the congregation greatly appreciate choral music.

Choral music was gradually re-introduced at St Benet's from c2012, starting with Evensong and Curry and expanding to include monthly Choral Parish Masses. The church's commitment to choral music is demonstrated not only by the provision of a budget for signers from our relatively modest general fund, but also by regular specific giving by members of the congregation towards the cost of singers.

Our current organist, Chris Totney, who is relocating to a different part of the country, has been in post since 2022. Chris has brought energy and consummate musicianship to the role, and over the past 3.5-years has been integral to the development of the musical tradition at St Benet's.

St Benet's seeks to maintain this musical tradition, but we are also looking for ways to develop it further (within the constraints of the resources available). There is an opportunity for the new Director of Music to help shape the future vision for music in the parish, working closely with the Vicar and the PCC.

Overview of the current use of music in worship

Hymns

- St Benet's uses the New English Hymnal (with occasional additions on the service sheet).
- Four hymns are usually sung at the Parish Mass.
- The Vicar selects the hymns and hymn tunes, and publishes a list twice a year, and well in advance.
- A wide selection of hymns is chosen from the NEH, appropriate for each season.

Sung Parish Masses

- The congregational Mass setting used is by David Thorne (with the 2013 Lourdes Gloria).
- In Lent, an accompanied Plainsong setting is used.
- A responsorial psalm and Gospel acclamation is sung, currently sung by the clergy.
- Organ music is played before Mass, during the administration of Holy Communion (in most seasons), and a voluntary is played at the end of Mass, following the singing of the Angelus or Regina Caeli.

Choral Parish Masses

- A Mass setting is sung by the robed choir (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei) in place of the congregational setting.
- The choir also sings an anthem, and where appropriate an additional seasonal piece.
- A rehearsal takes place before the service, usually from 9:30 – c10.30.



Choral Evensong and Benediction

- The robed choir sings choral settings for the Evensong and Benediction canticles, and choral responses.
- An anthem is sung.
- The Psalm, is sung by the choir, to Anglican chant.
- A hymn is sung before Benediction, in addition to the Office Hymn for the season.

Christmas Carol Service

- This includes a variety of choir pieces, as well as congregational carols
- In addition, in the past we have also had an Advent Carol Service

All Souls Requiem

- An opportunity for the choir to sing a full and ambitious Requiem setting
- Past music has included the full Requiem settings by Richafort, Lobo, Clemens non Papa and Michael Haydn

Current Music Library

St Benet's uses a wide variety of choral settings for Choral Masses and Evensongs ranging from Victoria to Peeters, via Mozart and Haydn; and the standard range of Evensong repertoire.

An extensive music library has been built up: there is a budget to continue to expand the library by agreement with the Vicar. A catalogue of the music library is available on request.

Professional Singers and the Music Budget

St Benet's commits an annual budget to music, a significant part of which covers the cost of paying professional singers for choral services. There is a finite budget, and it is necessary to manage the number of choral services offered, and the number of singers booked for each service with regard to this budget. Typically four singers are engaged for a Choral Mass, and five or six singers for a Choral Evensong. For major choral services such as the Patronal Festival and All Souls Requiem up to eight singers have been booked to enable a wider repertoire to be sung. It will be necessary to manage the music budget in collaboration with the Vicar, with there being scope to occasionally engage additional singers to enable particular pieces to be performed at some services in exchange for 'cutting the cloth' for others.

Over the years, our Directors of Music have drawn from a wide pool of reliable professional singers, who have served us well. Whilst we are keen to continue to use our regular singers, it is sometimes the case that they are unavailable; and thus, part of your role will be to build relationships with and engage new singers in order to ensure that all of the choral services are fully resourced.

Working with Other Musicians

For some choral services there is opportunity to work with another musician who would either conduct or play the organ.

Currently a regular conductor is available for Evensong, the All Souls Requiem and the Patronal Festival. Whilst we value the relationships that have been built with other musicians over the years, and hope that these will be maintained, such additional provision cannot be guaranteed. It will be important for the Director of Music to develop a good working relationship with other musicians, who may assist on a regular or occasional basis.



The Organ

The church houses an unaltered organ by Willis, originally from St Peter-le-Poer in the City of London. Further details about the organ are provided in annex 1.

The organ is currently tuned and maintained by B.C. Shepherd and Sons, and is currently tuned three times a year, before Christmas, Easter, and the Patronal Festival. The organ is in a good and fully playable condition.

The church also owns an upright piano.

The Role

Person Specification

Essential:

- An excellent and accomplished organist.
- Able to inspire congregational worship and singing.
- Skilled in directing and accompanying a choir of professional singers.
- A good understanding of liturgy, and the role of music within it.
- An ability to work within the Anglo-Catholic liturgical tradition.
- Able to plan organ and choral music appropriate for the liturgical season.
- Able to work effectively with existing professional singers, and collaborate with conductors/organists where occasionally required.
- Able to book appropriate singers in an effective and timely manner, and to source new and additional singers where appropriate or required.
- A sensitive, committed, flexible and inspirational leader, and a good communicator.
- Works collaboratively, and is able to co-operate with the Vicar and other officers and members of the church.
- An understanding of the role of music within the mission of the church.
- Can bring fresh ideas for enhancing the development of the musical life of the parish, including for those Sundays when the music provision is congregational.
- To be able to play an extensive repertoire of organ voluntaries to a high standard.
- Understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of Safeguarding (and willing to undergo Safeguarding training and to work within the Safeguarding guidance provided by the House of Bishops).

The post will be subject to the completion of a satisfactory DBS check.

Desirable:

- Has an interest in promoting St Benet's as a venue for concerts, recitals, other musical events and recordings.
- An interest in/aptitude for involvement in a project for restoring the organ, which is currently at an early stage of fundraising.

It is not essential that the Director of Music is a communicant Anglican or practising Christian, but the successful candidate must be sympathetic to working in support of the mission and ministry of the Church, and respectful of the Anglican Catholic tradition.

Summary of Key Duties

The Director of Music is expected to:

- Play the organ to a high standard to accompany congregational worship (3-4 Sundays a month) and choral services (1-2 Sundays a month), and for specified Festivals.
- Attend a termly planning meeting, and select appropriate music for choral services in advance of each term, in collaboration with the Vicar.
- Rehearse the choir prior to choral services, and accompany/conduct them during worship.
- Be responsible for the effective and timely booking of singers, working within the constraints of the budget, and making use of those singers who already regularly sing here.
- Seek to maintain and foster good relationships with existing singers and other musicians, and to develop them with new singers.
- Develop further contacts to widen the pool of singers that can be drawn upon.
- Liaise regularly with the Vicar regarding seasonal liturgical requirements.
- Work with the Vicar to develop the vision and role of music in the life and mission of the church.
- Help the congregation in worship through the choice and delivery of music.
- Advise the Parochial Church Council regarding the appropriate care and maintenance of the church's organ.

Detailed Role Requirements

The following responsibilities form the major focus areas for the Director of Music:

Organist

The Director of Music is also the Organist of the church. The Director of Music plays the organ for services, accompanying the singing, playing voluntaries and improvising as appropriate.

Current volume of services

Currently there is:

- A Parish Mass every Sunday (for around 40 Sundays a year these will include only congregational music).
- For around 13 Sunday mornings a year there is a Choral Mass with professional singers.
- A choir is also engaged for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, the First Mass of Christmas, Ash Wednesday and a professional cantor for Holy Saturday. From 2027 a choir will be engaged for Ascension Day
- The Director of Music is required to book and rehearse singers, and play the organ for the above choral services.
- There are usually c9 choral services a year at 5pm on a Sunday evening, including Evensong, the Patronal Festival, All Souls Requiem and the Christmas Carol Service.
- In addition, the Director of Music is required to play for the following services as part of the role:
 - o Ash Wednesday (with choir)
 - o Ascension Day with choir (from 2027)
 - o First Mass of Christmas (with choir) and Christmas Morning Mass (including where these do not fall on a Sunday)
 - o The Crib Service on the afternoon of Advent 4
 - o And up to 3 additional services a year (not including weddings and funerals,



for which an additional fee is always offered), and we would be open to these being choral services by negotiation.

The remuneration for this role covers all of the above. If the Director of Music is asked to play for more than 3 additional services, in addition to those which are listed above, then a per service fee is payable.

Choir Rehearsals

These take place before choral services, and usually last for c.45 minutes to an hour.

Occasional Offices

As Director of Music, you will have first refusal to play for Occasional Offices (weddings and funerals) when an organist has been requested, and to receive the fee if you play for such a service. If you refuse a particular opportunity to play, then the PCC reserves the right to hire a deputy, and the deputy organist would receive the fee due for that service. Fees for playing the organ at Occasional Offices are set by the PCC.

Availability of the Organ for Practice

The organ is available for practice when the church is not otherwise being used. You may also use the instrument to give lessons, with the permission of the Vicar and PCC, at agreed times, and subject to satisfying all safeguarding requirements specified by the PCC.

Concerts and Recitals

The Director of Music has the opportunity to organise some recitals and concerts in the church during the year should they wish to do so, and in consultation with the Vicar. In the past, organ recitals and occasional concerts by community music groups have taken place.

Summary of Key Terms and Conditions

Contract: A contract will be drawn up between you and the PCC of the Parish of St Benet Fink, Tottenham.

Remuneration: This role attracts an annual payment of £8,500. You will be paid monthly in arrears. There may be some opportunities to earn further income from fees by playing for occasional offices. The salary/ will be reviewed annually, and is usually increased in line with CPI inflation.

Sundays off: You will be entitled to five paid Sundays off a year (for which you will be required to arrange a competent deputy). You should not take a Sunday off when there is a choral service, unless in exceptional circumstances. If you take more than five Sundays off a year, then you will be required to arrange and pay for a competent deputy.

In the past the Vicar has occasionally played the organ when the organist has been absent, subject to the Assistant Priest being available to celebrate the Mass.

Full terms and conditions of service are set out in the contract.

Annex 1 - The Organ

History

The organ in St Benet Fink church was originally made for St Peter le Poer in the City of London. When that church was demolished the organ was moved to its present location in the then new Tottenham church in 1911. The case of the organ was made by Samuel Green (organ builder to King George III) in 1792. The organ itself is the work of the famous Henry 'Father' Willis, built in 1884.

Stop List

Great Organ		Swell Organ		Pedal Organ	
Open Diapason	8	Open Diapason	8	Open Diapason	16
Claribel Flute	8	Lieblich Gedact	8	Bourdon	16
Dulciana	8	Salcional (sic)	8		
Principal	4	Vox Angelica	8		
Flute Harmonique	4	Gemshorn	4		
Fifteenth	2	Fifteenth	2		
Corno di Bassetto	8	Cornopean	8		

The organ retains its original mechanism (except for the introduction of an electric fan blower), stop list and voicing.

Historical Significance

This organ combines a very fine case by Samuel Green with the musical excellence and mechanical sturdiness of an organ by Henry Willis: that is what makes it unique. The organ is described by Nicholas Plumley in *The Organs of the City of London* (Positif Press); it is grade II*.

