



North Circus Street, Nottingham, NG1 5AE

Nottingham (St Barnabas) Cathedral is looking to appoint a

Soprano Lay Clerk

(Freelance)

to join the Cathedral Choir

Lay Clerks are the professional core of the Cathedral Choir, providing musical leadership and continuity within a warm, collaborative choral community. The choir sings a broad repertoire grounded in the Cathedral's liturgical life.

This is a freelance role with regular weekly commitments and opportunities for additional services, concerts, and recordings. Nottingham Cathedral is actively developing its Cathedral Music programme and professional provision.



Role Description

Nottingham Cathedral Choir combines four paid Lay Clerks (one each of SATB) and four university Choral Scholars along with committed volunteer singers. We aim for high musical and liturgical standards within a welcoming and collaborative environment. Lay Clerks are the professional core of the ensemble, offering musical leadership and continuity.

With the appointment of its new Director of Music in November 2025, Nottingham Cathedral is looking ahead to a period of growth and artistic ambition in its musical life. The Cathedral Choir is central to this vision, with plans to strengthen its professional provision and to develop an increasingly confident, outward-facing choral presence, building on the Cathedral's strong liturgical tradition.

The Cathedral now seeks a Soprano Lay Clerk to join the choir from January 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter. This role is offered on a freelance contract-for-services basis and is not a contract of employment.

The Musical Life of the Cathedral

The Cathedral Choir sings principally at the Sunday 11.15am Solemn Mass, supported by a weekly (Wednesday evening) rehearsal. The repertoire is grounded in plainsong and polyphony but embraces a wide range of sacred music from across the centuries and around the world.

In addition to regular Sunday worship, the choir sings for major feasts, diocesan celebrations, and occasional special services. In the future there will also be opportunities to take part in concerts, broadcasts, and recordings as part of the Cathedral's developing musical life. In addition to the Cathedral Choir, Nottingham Cathedral maintains a thriving Children's Choir which meets weekly and contributes regularly to worship, reflecting the Cathedral's commitment to nurturing young musicians alongside its adult choral tradition.



Duties and Commitments

The Soprano Lay Clerk will be expected to attend:

- ♪ the Wednesday evening rehearsal
- ♪ the Sunday 11.15am Solemn Mass
- ♪ approximately ten additional services per year

The successful candidate will:

- ♪ Prepare music independently to a professional standard in advance of rehearsals and services
- ♪ Provide confident vocal leadership within the soprano section and the wider choir
- ♪ Contribute positively and collaboratively to rehearsals and services
- ♪ Engage respectfully with the Cathedral's liturgy and worship

From time to time, Lay Clerks may also be invited to sing for concerts, broadcasts or recordings, and other special musical or liturgical occasions such as weddings and funerals. Such occasions are scheduled and discussed well in advance wherever possible.



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Remuneration and Contractual Arrangements

The role carries an annual stipend, paid monthly in arrears.

Appointments are normally made for an initial period of up to three years, subject to renewal by mutual agreement. A probationary period applies during the first three months.

The role is freelance; Lay Clerks are responsible for their own tax and National Insurance contributions.

Safeguarding

Nottingham Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and to the wellbeing of all who contribute to its musical life. The successful applicant will be required to comply with safeguarding policies and procedures and to complete any necessary checks.

Person Specification

Essential

- ♪ A confident yet balanced, well-trained soprano voice
- ♪ A positive, warm and collaborative attitude and enjoyment of ensemble music-making
- ♪ Ability to blend sensitively within an ensemble while also providing vocal leadership
- ♪ Excellent musicianship, including strong sight-reading and the ability to learn repertoire quickly
- ♪ Experience of singing in a high-level choral environment
- ♪ A professional, reliable, and punctual approach to commitments
- ♪ Willingness to engage respectfully with Catholic liturgy and worship
(applications from non-Catholics are very welcome)

Desirable

- ♪ Previous experience as a lay clerk or choral scholar
- ♪ Familiarity with sacred choral repertoire, plainsong, and liturgical music making
- ♪ Experience of singing for broadcasts or recordings

Personal Qualities

- ♪ Musically assured and calm under pressure
- ♪ Collegial, supportive, and encouraging towards other singers
- ♪ Well organised and conscientious in preparation
- ♪ Comfortable acting as a public representative of the Cathedral's musical life

How to Apply

Applicants are invited to submit the following by email to cathedralmusic@dioceseofnottingham.uk:

- ♪ A CV outlining relevant singing experience
- ♪ A short covering letter explaining their interest in the role and suitability
- ♪ Contact details for two referees, at least one of which is musical

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to audition and interview. The post will remain advertised until filled, and so early applications are encouraged.

Preliminary informal conversations about the role are welcome; please contact the Director of Music on peter.siepmann@dioceseofnottingham.uk.