

ORGANIST/CHOIRMASTER JOB DESCRIPTION

Organization:

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church is a 100-year-old plus inner city parish located on the south boundary of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Its identity within the Diocese of Alabama and the Birmingham community is that of an Anglo-Catholic parish, with emphasis on high liturgical customs, diversity of membership, and service to the surrounding community.

We are a medium (Program) size church, with approximately 100 persons attending the principal service on Sunday, sometimes more at special services. In addition a full-time rector and part-time Deacon, the parish has three part-time employees, the administrative secretary, the bookkeeper, and the organist/choirmaster.

Position and starting date

The organist/choirmaster plays a significant role in this Anglo-Catholic parish by helping shape the musical portions of the liturgy, working with the rector and choir to enrich the worship service. For most of the liturgical year (from the Sunday after Labor Day through Trinity Sunday), the organist/choirmaster is responsible for two choir rehearsals and one service every week. The two rehearsals are for one and one half hours on Wednesday evenings and for one hour on Sunday morning before the principal worship service at 10:30 a.m. There are also approximately twelve non-Sunday services celebrated with High Masses, usually in the evening. There are approximately seven Sundays with particularly high or special liturgies. The organist/choirmaster receives one month's vacation during the summertime. Otherwise, during the summertime the organist/choirmaster remains responsible for playing organ music at the principal Sunday service and for choirmaster duties. In the summer, choir does not meet on Wednesdays for rehearsal. Some choir members take a break for summer, while others prefer to sing all summer. At the choirmasters discretion, an anthem can be prepared, or summer choir members can lead hymns. At least once a year, usually as a part of the liturgical season, the organist/choirmaster is expected to present a special musical event, either with the choir or outside musicians. The organist is responsible for hiring her/his own substitute in the event she/he cannot be available for a rehearsal or service. Performances for wedding and funerals are by request of the families and are considered separate from church duties.

The position is available September 15, 2022, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Required qualifications

A minimum of a bachelor's level degree in organ performance is required, and coursework in choral directing or equivalent. The candidate must demonstrate ability to have a good working relationship with the rector and choir to select appropriate music. A varied repertoire and improvisational skills are also necessary.

Preferred Qualifications

Experience in performing and conducting in a high liturgical setting is preferred, although a demonstrated interest is acceptable.

Terms

The position is considered part-time; however, around Christmas and Easter the special liturgy and frequency of services effectively transform the position into a full-time job. St. Andrew's is willing to assist a promising candidate in obtaining other work in the Birmingham area. Pay is negotiable and based upon experience. Base salary will roughly follow guidelines of the American Guild of Organists; however, in exchange for a lower salary base, St. Andrew's may be able to offer health insurance coverage or a 403(b) retirement plan.