

First Presbyterian Church
Charleston, West Virginia

Choir Director and Organist

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Summary

First Presbyterian Church in Charleston, WV is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and has a cathedral like sanctuary with two pipe organs. The sanctuary houses a *Casavant* organ with three manuals, 1,700 pipes, and 23 stops. The *Casavant* organ was installed in 2010. The sanctuary also houses the only C.B. Fisk organ in the state of West Virginia: three manuals, 2,732 pipes, and 24 stops with a case carved from Appalachian oak that formerly was in Appleton Chapel at Harvard University. The *Fisk Opus 79*, was installed at First Presbyterian Church in 1980.

Music is an integral part of the worship experience, evoking majesty, wonder and awe. The congregation has a long tradition of excellence in music coupled with an intellectual, liturgy based worship style while incorporating a wide, eclectic mix of music.

The Choir Director/Organist serves as the principal musician of the church, providing leadership, management, collaboration, and coordination of the music ministry program for First Presbyterian Church.

Accountability

The Choir Director/Organist is employed by the Session and works under the supervision of the Pastor/Head of Staff. This position requires some flexibility in hours available for work, including evenings and weekend. The position is a full time, year round, salaried position. The hours required during any given week are those needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the position and may vary at different times of the year but are approximately 30-40 hours per week.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Play Sunday service (10:30 a.m.) and all additional worship services during the liturgical year. This includes, but is not limited to, Sunday traditional services and Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday.
- Rehearse and direct the adult choir (Thursday evening rehearsals, Sunday mornings, and at other times as needed.)
- Rehearse and direct a children's/youth choir, in addition to planning and leading a summer week-long music camp for children and youth of the congregation and community, fostering church music education among children and youth
- Provide leadership for the Handbell Choir, Praise Team, and for other musical ensembles
- Plan choral and instrumental music which is part of regular worship services, and plan for performance of that music by the choir, ensembles, soloists or instrumentals

- Select anthems for the Choir for regular and special services
- Practice to prepare hymns and service music as appropriate
- Arrange for substitutes to direct the choir and serve as organist (when necessary)
- Purchase necessary music (within budget allotment)
- Work with volunteers to catalog and file music, and prepare music for choir distribution
- Submit necessary information for bulletins in timely fashion as required by the church office
- Oversee tuning and maintenance of the organs and pianos within the structure of the approved budget
- Provide proper notice to the church office and Pastor/Head of Staff if unable to be at scheduled practices, services or events
- Serve as accompanist for all choir rehearsals, Sunday services, weddings and funerals, or arrange for an occasional accompanist (within the budget allotment)
- Communicate with choirs and music ensembles, including schedules to members of choir
- Communicate dates of special performances to congregation and general public utilizing: letter mail, email, website, Facebook, brochures and newspaper, as appropriate
- Work with other member of the church staff to support program needs related to music

Other Responsibilities and Expectations

- Attend weekly staff meetings and make arrangements to meet on a regular basis with Pastor/Head of Staff, Associate Pastor and Director of Christian Education
- Attend Worship Committee meetings
- Communicate, as needed, with congregation
- Become a member of the local chapter of AGO (dues to be paid by church)
- Strong commitment to personal demonstration of Christian character in word and deed
- Other duties may be assigned as needed

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in music required (Master's degree is strongly preferred)
- Demonstrate outstanding proficiency in organ and piano playing; playing of service music and choral direction
- Successful candidate will demonstrate a broad knowledge of church music repertoire with a high proficiency in a wide range of music styles
- Excellent organization and record-keeping skills required

Preferred minimum of three years of experience in a church choir director and/or organist position. Strong interpersonal skills are required to interact with co-workers and volunteers in a humble, respectful, and pastoral manner.

Salary and Terms

Organist salary will be based on AGO guidelines and additional Choir Director compensation to be negotiable based on education and experience. TAFB (time away from the bench) is

negotiable but should be cleared in advance with the Pastor. Responsible for engaging a suitable substitute organist/choir director when absent.

Enrollment of benefits is with the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and vacation and continuing education benefits are per the Personnel Policies of the Session.

The Session requests the Choir Director/Organist give thirty days advance notice to terminate employment.

How To Apply

Send the following materials by email to: The Reverend Dr. Nancy Kahaian and Sallie Daugherty, Personnel Chair, to searchfirstpresby@gmail.com or deliver to the church office at 16 Leon Sullivan Way, Charleston, WV 25301.

- Letter of interest
- Resume
- Contact information, including a phone number and email address
- Three personal references (not related) and two individuals with first hand observation of the applicant in the context of working in a church music environment

Please apply by March 31, 2020

We will acknowledge receipt of completed applications immediately by email, and accept them until the Choir Director/Organist position is filled. Every effort to respect the confidentiality of all candidates will be made, and we will call references later in the process and with a candidate's permission.