



**Christ  
Church  
Cathedral**  
Dublin

**Director of Music: Tom Little**

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## JOB DESCRIPTION FOR LAY VICARS CHORAL

THE CATHEDRAL CHOIR

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Christ Church Cathedral Choir traces its origins to the choir school founded in 1493. The choir was always highly regarded in Dublin's musical life and took part in the first performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Dublin in 1742. Uniquely in these islands, the cathedral's principal choir of today is constituted as a mixed ensemble of 22 adult singers.

The choir's repertoire is extensive, covering more than five centuries, and includes many specifically commissioned works. In addition to the full part it plays in the worship in the cathedral, the choir enjoys an enviable international reputation, enhanced by concerts, tours and regular broadcasts on both the RTE and BBC networks.

The choir has toured extensively all over the world, most recently to the U.S.A in 2019, where they sang in Washington D.C., Boston and New York City.

### SCHEDULE

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Lay Vicars Choral sing for 3-4 choral services per week during choir terms: evensong on Thursday evenings, Eucharist on Sunday mornings and evensong on Sunday evenings. There is also an optional evensong every Saturday evening, and a rehearsal following evensong on Thursdays. The weekly schedule is as follows:

**Thursdays:** Rehearsal 17.20 for Evensong 18.00; Rehearsal 18.50-20.30

**Sundays:** Rehearsal 10.00 for 11.00 Cathedral Eucharist  
Rehearsal 14.30 for 15.30 Evensong

Lay Vicars Choral are also expected to sing at a service on the following days: All Saints' Day; St Laurence O'Toole; Monday before Christmas (Nine Lessons and Carols); Christmas Eve; Christmas Day; Epiphany; Candlemas; Ash Wednesday; Maundy Thursday, Good Friday (2 services); Holy Saturday; Ascension Day.

In addition, the cathedral choir has an annual programme of concerts, broadcasts, tours and recordings.

The cathedral also has a girls' choir, consisting of 20 girls between the ages of 10 and 18. The girls' choir sings Evensong on Wednesdays, and they combine with the cathedral choir for major feast days and special services.

Lay Vicars Choral are expected to attend each scheduled rehearsal or service, except in the case of incapacitating illness. Applications for leave must be approved by the Director of Music, and it is the responsibility of the Lay Vicar Choral to provide a deputy from the choir's deputy list.

Lay Vicars Choral who sing for 3 services per week (at a rate of €35 per service) are paid an annual stipend of €5,250, paid monthly in arrears. They are paid separately for the frequent corporate events, concerts, weddings, broadcasts, tours and recordings. A fee of at least €100 is payable to each Lay Vicar Choral for services and concerts extra to those mentioned above.

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#### CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

The earliest manuscript dates Christ Church cathedral to its present location around 1030. Dúnán, the first bishop of Dublin and Sitriuc, Norse king of Dublin, founded the original Viking church, which was probably subject to the archbishop of Canterbury. By 1152 it was incorporated into the Irish church and within a decade the famous Archbishop Laurence O'Toole had been appointed. Laurence O'Toole acted directly in diplomatic efforts between the Dubliners and the Anglo-Normans including Strongbow (Richard de Clare) following the capture of the city in 1170. It was due largely to John Cumin, the first Anglo-Norman archbishop, that the Hiberno-Norse cathedral was replaced with the Romanesque and later Gothic cathedral, parts of which survive today.

The cathedral as it exists today is heavily Victorianised due to the extensive restorations and renovations carried out by the architect George Edmund Street (between 1871-8) at the expense of a Dublin whiskey distiller, Henry Roe, who gave £230,000 (£23m today!) to save the cathedral. A two-year restoration of the cathedral roof and stonework was undertaken in 1982. Kenneth Jones of Bray installed a new organ in 1984 which was restored by Flentrops and Wells Kennedy in 2004. Further work since 1997 has included the renewal of the heating and lighting systems and the restoration of the massive 12th century crypt.

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#### APPLICATION

To apply for a Lay Vicarship, please send a Curriculum Vitae, a covering letter and details of two referees to the Director of Music, Tom Little (email: [tom.little@christchurch.ie](mailto:tom.little@christchurch.ie)).

Candidates will be required to perform a song or aria of their choice, and undertake a series of basic sight-reading tests. Successful candidates are required to undergo Garda vetting. Start dates are immediate or for the beginning of September.



*The Cathedral Choir in Washington National Cathedral, July 2019*