



CHORAL SCHOLARSHIPS 2026-27

St. Mary's Parish Church, Battersea, seeks to appoint four **Choral Scholars** (soprano, alto, tenor and bass) for the academic year 2026-27 (September-July). Scholars are paid an annual honorarium of **£1,900** plus extra fees for any weddings/funerals as available through the year.

Music at St. Mary's

Music plays an integral role in worship at St. Mary's. The church has a very able and enthusiastic robed SATB choir, supported by the four Choral Scholars (SATB), which performs music covering a variety of musical styles from the Renaissance to the present day. The choir sing at most Sunday morning services, choral evensong twice a month, on liturgical feastdays, and at regular concerts and special events. 2027 marks the 250th anniversary of the current church building, and this is likely to be celebrated with several musical events.

At a typical Sunday Eucharist the choir normally sing an anthem, a communion motet, a psalm (Anglican chant or responsorial), and a mass setting which is usually congregational. Occasionally the choir perform a choral mass, such as Mozart's *Missa Brevis in G* or Haydn's *Little Organ Mass*, with instrumental accompaniment. Evensong is sung on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. These are full choral evensongs featuring settings of the preces & responses, a psalm sung to Anglican chant, a Magnificat & Nunc dimittis and a choral anthem. The choir and choral scholars are not required on the 1st Sunday of the month except in occasional circumstances.



In addition to leading worship at the regular services, the choir perform large-scale works with orchestra or chamber ensembles such as Handel's *Messiah*, Fauré's *Requiem*, and Mozart's *Spatzenmesse*. Other recent performances include singing the Sunday services at Southwark Cathedral and performing the premiere of an anthem commissioned from composer Ben Ponniah. The choral scholars have significant roles in all music making including performing the solos in larger works.

The church is a particularly beautiful Grade I listed Georgian building on the banks of the river Thames and is an inspiring place to work. The organ is a 1991 Saxon Aldred two manual tracker action instrument with 27 speaking stops, and there is also a 5'5" Kawai baby grand piano which is regularly used for services and concerts.

Scholars are sometimes able to use the church for practice, concert performances, teaching etc. subject to agreement from the Director of Music and booking with the Parish Office.

The Scholarships

The Choral Scholars play a very valuable part in enhancing and supporting the choir of St. Mary's. As well as having the opportunity to expand their knowledge of repertoire and technique, the scholars will be able to develop their abilities through leadership of the choir. The scholarship will serve as a solid foundation for those applying for cathedral/university/collegiate choral scholarships, as well as helping to consolidate and expand skills of those who may be studying at or who have graduated from university or conservatoire.



Each Choral Scholar is expected to be present at all rehearsals and services during term time, as well as major feast days. Several festivals over the course of the year do not fall on Sundays including Advent and Christmas services, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week services, etc. The Choral Scholars are expected to be available for these services with the exception of Midnight Mass/Christmas Day. 4 weeks' holiday (e.g. 4 Wednesdays and 4 Sundays) is permitted during the term of the scholarship by agreement with the Director of Music.

The Choral Scholars may have many opportunities for solo performances through the year by mutual agreement with the Director of Music. There are two recital series which run at St Mary's each year, as well as choral concerts. Scholars are encouraged to perform as a quartet or as soloists. There are also opportunities to develop rehearsal leadership skills and/or choral conducting if this is an area of interest. It is hoped the Choral Scholars will have a thorough involvement in the music making and life of the church.

Typical Weekly Timetable

Wednesday

19:30 - 20:45 Choir Rehearsal

Sunday

(Every Week except 1st Sunday of each month)

09:45 - 10:30 Choir Rehearsal

11:00 - 12:15 Eucharist

(2nd and 4th Sunday of each month
except in Lent & Advent)

16:45 - 17:45 Choir Rehearsal

18:00 - 19:00 Choral Evensong

This list is not intended to be exhaustive and the Choral Scholars may be asked to sing at other services on occasion. Some help maintaining and managing the choir library is required.

Person Specification

This position is open to all ages and stages of career (gap year, undergraduate, postgraduate, etc.) and provides an excellent training to those who are looking to support their music studies and improve their abilities as a choral singer and/or soloist.

Applicants should have experience of choral and/or solo singing and have secure sight-reading skills. Previous experience of church music is highly desirable but not essential. Good self-management and time keeping is also necessary. Above all, a passion for high standards of music making and choral singing is crucial. It is also expected that scholars will take part in some wider aspects of the church's life, being good team-players willing to work well with others.

Honorarium and Fees

The honorarium for each Choral Scholar position is worth **£1,900** per annum. In addition to this, weddings and funerals often occur through the year and the scholars have first refusal on these paid opportunities (c. **£80** each as of September 2025).



Application and Audition

To apply, candidates are requested to submit a CV detailing relevant experience along with a short letter of application by email to the Director of Music, Katy Silverman:

music@stmarysbattersea.org.uk. Informal enquiries and visits to the church are most welcome.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to audition and will be asked to:

- Sing one piece of their choice which demonstrates their vocal ability and technique;
- Sight read a piece of choral music;
- Sing some verses of a psalm (Anglican chant);
- Perform one or two aural tests.

After the audition, a short interview will take place with the Director of Music.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on **Sunday 24th May**.

Email: music@stmarysbattersea.org.uk

Website: www.stmarysbattersea.org.uk/music

Address: Director of Music
St. Mary's Church
The Parish Office
Battersea Church Road
London, SW11 3NA