

Cathedral Choir

Choral Scholarships



BRISTOL
CATHEDRAL

Choral Scholarships in Bristol Cathedral Choir

There are places for up to four Choral Scholars in the Bristol Cathedral Choir at any one time. These will generally be two basses, a tenor, and an alto. The alto Choral Scholarship is open to anyone, regardless of gender. Scholars are expected to sing one weekday service (currently Monday) the two Sunday choral services, and additional statutory services and concerts as laid out in the Choir Diary.

You will be of a very high standard, both vocally and in terms of reading, but will not be expected to sing without the support of the professional Lay Clerks. There may be opportunities to deputise for absent Lay Clerks for extra remuneration with the agreement of the Master of the Choristers after assessing your proficiency for such an undertaking. Scholars are eligible for six singing lessons per year with an approved professional singing teacher, paid for by the Cathedral as part of the scholarship.

The Choral Scholarships are generally held in conjunction with a degree course at either The University of Bristol or UWE, though this is not an essential requirement. An undergraduate Choral Scholar would be in post for the duration of your degree (usually three years). The current value of a Choral scholarship is incremental on years of service: £2,685 p.a. (Year 1), £3,226 p.a. (Year 2), and £3,767 p.a. (Year 3).

Choir terms are:

- **Michaelmas:** The first weekend after the beginning of the Bristol Cathedral Choir School term in September until Christmas Day
- **Lent:** The weekend of Epiphany until Easter Day
- **Trinity:** The beginning of the choir term until the Sunday after the end of the Bristol Cathedral Choir School term.

Music

Music is an integral part of Bristol Cathedral's life and mission. Evensong is sung on most days at 5.15pm (and on Sunday at 3.30pm).

The Cathedral Eucharist is sung each Sunday Morning. In addition there are several special services throughout the year as well as the important Church festivals and feasts.



The Choir of Bristol Cathedral

There has almost certainly been a choir singing in Bristol Cathedral since its days as an Augustinian abbey church, founded in 1140. When, in 1542, it became the cathedral church of the new diocese of Bristol, its new statutes still provided for cathedral life in terms of worship, community and education; of the praises of God sung with perpetual jubilation, of the common table, of the masters of the choristers and of the Cathedral Grammar School. The passing of the centuries has modified but not destroyed the pattern.

The choir consists of 28 choristers (14 boys and 14 girls), all of whom are educated at Bristol Cathedral Choir School - occupying the former Augustinian refectory, and magnificent new buildings. These are supported by incentives endowed by the Bristol Cathedral Choral Foundation. There are also probationary choristers who fulfil a part timetable and attend other schools in the city, six Lay Clerks, and four Choral Scholars. Together, with the voluntary Consort, Choral Evensong is sung six times a week in the Cathedral during term time.

The Choir enjoys a busy and challenging timetable, and highlights have included singing aboard the HMS Prince of Wales in the presence of TM The King and Queen, tours to Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Bordeaux, and more. The Choir broadcasts regularly on BBC Radio 3.



About the Cathedral

A church has probably stood on this site for over 1,000 years but it came to prominence in 1140 when Robert Fitzhardinge founded the Abbey of St. Augustine. The Chapter House and Abbey Gatehouse remain clearly to be seen: other remains are within Bristol Cathedral School.

The eastern end of the Cathedral, especially in the Choir, gives Bristol Cathedral a unique place in the development of British and European Architecture. The Nave, Choir and Aisles are all the same height, making a large hall. Bristol Cathedral is the major example of a 'Hall Church' in Great Britain and one of the finest anywhere in the world.

In 1539 the Abbey was closed and the partially rebuilt nave was demolished. The building became the Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity in 1542. In 1868 plans were drawn up to rebuild the Nave to its medieval design. The Architect, G. E. Street, found the original pillar bases, so the dimensions are much the same as those of the abbey church. J. L. Pearson added the two towers at the West End and further reordered the interior.

If you would like an informal conversation with the Master of the Choristers & Organist, Mark Lee, please arrange this by emailing mark.lee@bristol-cathedral.co.uk.

