

# The Choir of

**St Matthew's Church  
Northampton**

## **Could my child be a Chorister?**

The Director of Music, Stephen Moore, is  
looking to recruit

***BOYS from school years 4 to 6,  
and  
GIRLS from school years 6 to 8***

who are keen to sing and eager to learn.

Read on for more information....



For over one hundred years St Matthew's Church, Northampton, has been a focus of Christian worship and prayer and for many years music has played a large part in that worship. St Matthew's is perhaps one of the most famous churches in the country, a reputation founded on its distinguished record of commissioning new works of art, music and literature, as well as the excellence of its longstanding choral tradition.

Numerous eminent British composers, including Leighton, Howells and perhaps most notably Britten, have written major works for the church which are now well established in the repertoire of choirs all over the world, perhaps the most famous of which is *Rejoice in the Lamb* by Britten.

### WHY SHOULD I JOIN?

There are plenty of reasons for joining the choir.  
Here are just some of them:

1. **Money!** All Choristers are paid for their attendance. The length of time you stay with the Choir is recognised with an increase in the amount you receive.
2. **Fame:** As well as the regular round of services, the Choir also sings at bigger occasions and events to large numbers of people. The choir has also performed on national TV and radio and made CD recordings.
3. **Achievement:** The Choristers are also encouraged to develop other skills such as self-discipline, commitment and team work. Choristers can, through hard work and commitment, achieve promotion to become Senior Choristers and earn more money!
4. **Tradition:** As part of the choir at St Matthew's you will be taking part in a 500 year old tradition respected across the world and sing an exciting repertoire of music, including some written for St Matthew's choir.
5. **Musical Training:** The Choir is directed and trained by professional musicians and uses the RSCM's *Voice for Life* scheme to train choristers in all aspects of music.
6. **Friendship and Team work:** St Matthew's Choir is a great place to make new friends and have fun together. Choristers regularly enjoy other activities besides singing, such as trips to the cinema, bowling and theme parks.
7. **Travel:** There are regular tours as well as trips to cathedral cities in the UK to see the sights and perform.
8. **Great Opportunities:** Previous members of the Choir at St Matthew's have won prestigious national awards including the *Choirboy of the Year*. Each year talented musicians from the Choir are supported financially to further improve their musical training and experiences.

## WHEN DOES THE CHOIR SING?

The choir rehearses on Tuesdays and Fridays and normally sings two services on a Sunday. It is essential that all members of the Choir demonstrate the very highest levels of commitment. Being a member of any choir can be demanding but is often also very rewarding.

The choir's normal schedule during school term time is as follows:

Tuesdays	Junior Chorister Rehearsal	4.30-5.45pm
	Chorister Rehearsal	5-6.30pm
Fridays	Chorister Rehearsal	6.30-7.15pm
	Full Rehearsal	7.15-8.15pm
	Adult Rehearsal	8.15-9pm
Sundays	Full Rehearsal	9.20am
	Parish Mass	10.15am
	Chorister <i>Voice for Life</i> training (by appointment)	4.30pm
	Full Rehearsal	5pm
	Choral Evensong (currently three times a month)	6.30pm

The Choir are occasionally required to sing at times outside the normal weekly routine, especially during busy times at Christmas and during the build up to Easter.

The Choir is run in accordance with the Diocese of Peterborough Child Protection Policy, and all adults have an enhanced CRB check.

# VOICE *for* LIFE

One of the Royal School of Church Music's core educational programmes, Voice for Life exists to support and promote singing in churches, schools and other communities.

At each level of Voice for Life there are graded targets which are assessed informally by the choir trainer or teacher. Once a singer has completed the necessary training for that level, reached the targets

and finished their workbook they can be awarded their RSCM Voice for Life medal and the appropriately coloured ribbon, ranging from White to Gold. As part of Voice for life, singers receive teaching about the religious aspect of singing in a choir, this forms an important part of the training.

## DOES IT MATTER WHICH SCHOOL MY CHILD ATTENDS?

No—Choristers are drawn from many different schools in the local area. The church maintains excellent relations with these schools, and head teachers are made aware of the choir's activities.

## HOW DO WE APPLY?

We are looking for new choristers between the ages of 7 and 11. Interested children are encouraged to come to 2 or 3 Sunday morning rehearsals and services. Following this, joining the choir is by a short audition which consists of simple ear tests as follows:

- Clapping basic rhythms
- Listening to a short melody and singing it back
- Singing the upper or lower of two given notes
- Singing a hymn or other song of your choice

Candidates will also be given a short passage of English to read aloud, to test their general level of literacy and confidence with words.

All new choristers join as 'Probationers' where they will receive training in small groups, incorporating the *Voice for Life* White level tests. After two terms each Probationer will be admitted as a 'Full Chorister' and receive a medal to show their achievement.

Although the natural focus each week is our performance at church services on Sundays, many choir members come almost entirely for the music. At rehearsals we focus very much on vocal technique, music theory, and musicianship skills.

## THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

*Stephen Moore, the Director of Music, has had a long association with church music, beginning as a chorister at St James the Greater Church in Leicester. He studied Organ at Trinity College of Music, graduating with a first class degree in 2008. Whilst in London, Stephen worked successively in The Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich and the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, and upon finishing his degree, spent a year as Organ Scholar at Salisbury Cathedral before being appointed Organist and Director of Choral Music at Felsted School, Essex.*



## CONTACT

**To arrange an audition or for an informal chat please contact the Director of Music.**

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*'Sing unto him a new song : Play skilfully with a loud noise' Psalm 33 v.3*