

# CARLISLE CATHEDRAL

## Information Pack for Visiting Choirs

We are delighted that your choir hopes to visit Carlisle Cathedral, and look forward to welcoming you to this magnificent building in which the praises of God have been sung for more than 700 years. This booklet will guide you through the practicalities of your visit. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries.

### Booking your visit

The first decision to be made is when you would like to visit, and how many services you would like to sing. You can see exactly which slots are currently available for visiting choirs on the online calendar on the Cathedral's website at [https://www.carlislecathedral.org.uk/visiting\\_choirs](https://www.carlislecathedral.org.uk/visiting_choirs). During the longer school holidays (when our own choirs are on holiday), visiting choirs usually sing on Saturdays and Sundays, and there is often the option to sing in addition for all or part of the preceding week. During term time, we are happy to welcome visiting choirs on Saturdays. Check on the Visiting Choirs calendar to see which days are available.

When you have identified a date or dates when you would like to sing, please contact our Music Department Administrator ([musicadmin@carlislecathedral.org.uk](mailto:musicadmin@carlislecathedral.org.uk)) who will make you a provisional booking. You should then complete the application form (downloadable from the same page as the calendar on the website) and return it to the Music Administrator by email or by post. Once this has been formally accepted by the Dean, we will confirm by email that your visit is booked.

### Organists

Visiting choirs need to arrange for their own organist to accompany them. Your organist will play for the entire service, including voluntaries before and after and any congregational music such as hymns. In the hands of a skilled player, the Cathedral organ is a superb instrument for accompaniment. If you are not able to bring your own organist and have difficulty in finding someone to play, we can suggest local organists who might be able to undertake this work, although please note any booking of an organist's services and negotiation and settlement of fees would be your responsibility.

### Choosing the music

Please don't feel that singing in a cathedral demands a challenging and impressive repertoire. It is always much more effective and rewarding to sing relatively modest music that is well known to the singers. This way they will really enjoy the experience of singing in the Cathedral and leave knowing that they have sung well and have risen to any challenges. Their singing will also have inspired and moved the worshippers who have attended their services.

On a practical note, if you will be singing more than one Evensong, do consider programming the same set of Responses at each. To do so will free up time for rehearsal of other music. Also, although the psalms set for the day is a very important part of the service, if you feel that the psalms are too long for you to be able to do them justice, we would much rather you sang a shorter portion well (say,

of around twenty verses) than struggle through the whole thing. If you feel you need to reduce the number of verses or to sing just one of the psalms set, then please discuss this with us.

There are detailed descriptions of exactly what music you will need to prepare for each of the services starting on page 5 of this booklet. When you have decided on your music choices, please complete and send in a music list, downloadable from the website. You will need one for any Sundays you are singing, and another for any weekdays (including Saturdays). The Music Department Administrator will advise when this should be done at the time of confirming the booking. We usually ask for at least eight weeks' notice in order to deal with any queries that might arise and to ensure inclusion in our own music lists and publicity.

You will want to choose anthems appropriate to the season, taking into account any Saints' Days or other celebrations in the Lectionary. We use the Common Worship Lectionary for psalms and readings (Second Service for Evensong, and Principal Service for the Sunday Eucharists). We will let you know well in advance which psalms are set for your service(s), and pass on any other relevant liturgical information such as Saints' Days. In Carlisle, we do not use readings and psalms for the Eve of a Saint's Day, but that need not prevent you from reflecting any such feast in your choice of anthem.

### Arrival

Please contact the vergers by telephone or email in advance of your visit to discuss at what time you would like to arrive, so that they can be ready to meet you and let you into the Song Room. The vergers will let you know if your proposed time is convenient, suggesting an amended time if needed to avoid a clash with services or other events taking place in the Cathedral. The e-mail address to use is [headverger@carlislecathedral.org.uk](mailto:headverger@carlislecathedral.org.uk), and the 'phone number is 01228 535169 (please note this is different from the main Cathedral telephone number).

### Rehearsal

The Song Room is generally available for choir rehearsals at any time during the day for the duration of your visit, except when a service is taking place in the Cathedral. The times shown below are automatically booked in the diary for possible rehearsal in the Cathedral itself:

<b>Monday to</b>	8.40am to 10.00am	Organ practice
<b>Friday</b>	3.30pm to 4.30pm	Organ practice
<b>(except Bank</b>	4.30pm to 5.30pm	Choir practice
<b>Holidays)</b>	<b>Evensong is at 5.45pm</b>	

<b>Saturday</b>	11.00am to 12noon	Organ practice
<b>(and Bank</b>	1.15pm to 1.45pm	Organ practice
<b>Holidays)</b>	1.45pm to 2.45pm	Choir practice
	<b>Evensong is at 3.00pm</b>	
	Rehearsal time is also available after Evensong until 4.45pm.	

<b>Sunday</b>	8.40am to 9.15am	Organ practice
	9.15am to 10.15am	Choir practice
	<b>The Eucharist is at 10.30am</b>	
	1.15pm to 2.00pm	Organ practice
	2.00pm to 2.45pm	Choir practice
	<b>Evensong is at 3.00pm</b>	

Depending on the relative needs of your choir and organist, you may wish to vary the division between choir and organ practice within these times. These bookings are nearly always guaranteed, but if there are any special events taking place in the Cathedral that would affect these times, we will let you know well in advance and discuss alternative rehearsal time at another point in the day as appropriate.

### **Refreshments**

Tea, coffee, squash and biscuits are served after the Sunday morning Eucharist, to which visiting choirs are warmly invited. The Cathedral Café is usually open when visiting choirs are singing during the day.

### **Tours of the Cathedral**

On Saturdays, it may be possible to organize a guided tour of the Cathedral for your choir. If you would like to explore this possibility, please contact the Cathedral Office: e-mail [info@carlislecathedral.org.uk](mailto:info@carlislecathedral.org.uk), telephone 01228 548151.

### **Robes**

If your choir normally wears cassocks and surplices for services, then please wear cassocks only when rehearsing in the Cathedral itself (i.e., not the Song Room). Otherwise wear what you normally wear for services (e.g. gowns, suits) for Cathedral rehearsals as well.

### **Lavatories**

Lavatories are available in the Song Room – there are no facilities in the Cathedral itself.

### **Cantors**

The Dean or another member of Chapter will normally sing the Office unless other arrangements have been made in advance (e.g. if you are bringing your own priest). Our clergy are familiar with, and have copies of, the following Responses:

Trebles only: Archer, Darke, and Plainsong (unis.)

A.T.B.: Ashfield, Harris, Lloyd, Rose, Tallis, Walsh, and Plainsong (unis.)

S.A.T.B.: Aston, Ayleward, Clucas (with or without the separately published *Our Father*), Ebdon, Gibbons/Barnard, Leighton, Lloyd (Set 1), Lloyd (Set 2), Moore, Oxley, Radcliffe, Reading, Rose, Shephard, Sumsion, Tallis, Walsh, the “Tudor Composers” (Byrd, Morley, Smith & Tomkins, edited by Watkins Shaw), and Plainsong (unis.)

If you would like to sing a set of Responses that is not on the above list, please would you send us a copy when advising us of your music choices.

### **Processions**

The procession is an important part of the service. If you are not used to processing the vergers will be very happy to show you what we normally do in Carlisle, and arrange a rehearsal for your choir. If you are a liturgical choir and have a well-established routine for processions that works in our building, then please just do what you normally do. The details of exactly when to bow and whether to leave from the west or east of the stalls are much less important than the general principle of entering and leaving in a tidy, organised and professional manner.

## **Conducting**

You should conduct from the west end of the stalls for Evensongs, as the congregation sits to the west of the choir in the Well; and from the east end of the stalls for the Sunday Eucharist, when the bulk of the congregation is to the east. In this way, the choir will be singing in the direction of the congregation when they turn to face you. Because you will be at the opposite end for the Sunday Eucharist, you may want to move your singers as well so that they be in the same positions relative to you; this will, in turn, affect the order of the procession. You can conduct from either side or from the centre, depending on what your choir is used to. If you conduct from the centre, just be aware that during Sunday Evensongs the lesson readers process to and from the lectern during the psalm and the Magnificat, so you will need to leave space for them. We usually conduct the hymns in Carlisle, partly because we feel that this makes the point that they are just as important for the choir as any of the other music in the service, but if your choir is used to singing hymns without a conductor, just do what you normally do.

There is a wooden conducting stand in the Cathedral, which you are welcome to use. Between services it generally lives on the back row of the choir stalls.

## **Security**

Please remind members of your choir not to leave any money or valuables unattended. The Cathedral cannot accept liability for any loss or damage to personal property.

## **Recordings**

If you wish to make an audio recording of any of the services whilst here, this may be permitted, but you should let us know in advance. Any microphones must be discreetly placed in the organ loft. It must be clearly understood that any such recording can be for private use only, and that in no circumstances can it be used for commercial or public broadcasting purposes.

## **Photographs**

If you wish to take a group photograph of your choir you are welcome to do so – in front of the High Altar is a popular place for this. Please discuss with the vergers beforehand to find a suitable time.

## **Parking**

Please note that parking in the Cathedral grounds not available to visiting choirs, other than in exceptional circumstances. You are welcome to bring a vehicle into the Close for the purposes of dropping off or collecting robes and music.

## **After Weekday Evensong**

Please would you vacate the building by 6.45pm after weekday Evensong so that the vergers can lock up in good time before they go off duty.

# The services in detail

## CHORAL EVENSONG, AT 5.45PM ON WEEKDAYS AND 3.00PM ON SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS

Rehearsal in the stalls ends fifteen minutes before the start of the service. Three minutes before the start of the service, the choir lines up in front of the screen to the North Transept. There is usually silence before weekday services, but on Sundays the organist plays a voluntary, which should end around one minute before the service is due to start.

The ship's bell is rung three times to signal the start of the service.

The organist then extemporises to play the choir into the stalls. All remain facing east until the entire choir is in the stalls, bow together and turn inwards.

The service proceeds as follows:

<i>During Lent only</i> General Confession & Absolution	Text from the Book of Common Prayer (also printed separately on a green card, available from the vergers)
<b>Preces</b>	Sung standing throughout. See note on page 3 (above) regarding Cantors
<b><i>On Saints' Days and Sundays only</i></b> <b>Office Hymn</b>	Announced
<b>Psalm(s)</b>	Announced
<i>First lesson</i>	
<b>Magnificat</b>	Not announced
<i>Second Lesson</i>	
<b>Nunc Dimittis</b>	Not announced
<i>The Creed</i>	Turn to face east for the Creed. Text from the Book of Common Prayer.
<b>Responses</b>	There are always just three collects, even in Advent and Lent. In the Lord's Prayer we normally sing 'which art' and 'them that', but if your choir is used to 'who art' and 'those who', that is also acceptable.
<b>Anthem</b>	Announced
<i>Intercessions, ending with the Grace</i>	Decide in advance whether your choir will sit or kneel for the prayers.
<b><i>On Sundays only</i></b> <b>Final Hymn</b>	Announced
<i>On Sundays only</i> Blessing	

The organ voluntary follows immediately.

The choir processes out (turning east to bow together first), and assembles outside the Song Room door in the aisle for the vestry prayer.

## SUNG EUCHARIST AT 10.30AM ON SUNDAYS

The service follows Common Worship Order One. A congregational booklet with the order of service for the various liturgical seasons is supplemented each week by a sheet that includes the words of all the hymns. Copies of both for all your singers will be given to you by the vergers in advance. Hymns are from the New English Hymnal, copies of which are available in the choir stalls.

An organ voluntary is played, ending one minute before the service is due to start.

The choir assembles **in the Crossing facing east** at 10:27 (note the difference from weekday Evensongs – this is so that the choir’s singing projects into the Quire at the start of the hymn).

At 10:30 a ship’s bell is sounded three times and the service proceeds as follows:

### **Processional Hymn**

Not announced. The choir leads the procession. There is no need to bow during a processional hymn, so each choir member should simply turn inwards on reaching his or her place.

*Welcome and opening prayers*

Remain standing

### **Gloria in excelsis (the Kyrie is sung instead during Advent and Lent)**

Any intonation should be sung by a member of the choir

*Collect for the day*

Remain standing

*First reading*

Sit for the reading

### **Gradual Hymn**

Not announced

*The Gospel*

Face east for the Gospel. The Gospel is preceded by the sung Gospel responses (the simple unison setting printed in the order of service) and followed by an organ extemporization

*The Sermon*

Sit

*The Nicene Creed*

Stand and face east

*The Intercessions*

Decide in advance if your choir will sit or kneel

*The Peace*

### **Offertory Hymn**

Not announced. Allow around half a minute for the Peace to be exchanged before the playover to the hymn

*Offertory prayers*

### **Sursum Corda**

Sung unaccompanied by choir and congregation to the usual setting in the service booklet. The intonation is given by the organist after the Offertory prayers.

*Eucharistic Prayer*

### **Sanctus**

The Benedictus is normally sung during the administration unless there are compelling musical reasons for it to follow immediately after the Sanctus.

*Eucharistic Prayer, continued, including the  
**Acclamations and Doxology***

Remain standing. The music for the acclamations and doxology are printed in the order of service.

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Sit for the Lord’s Prayer. Note that the modern words are used at the Eucharist.

*The Communion*

The choir receives Communion first. Process out from the east of the choir stalls to the High Altar, and kneel at the communion rail. There is no need to process back to the stalls together – individuals simply return to their places after their own communion.

**Benedictus, Agnus Dei and Motet**

These three items should last no longer than 10 minutes. The Benedictus may be omitted entirely from the service, particularly if it is a long and complex setting – if you choose to do so, let us know in advance.

*Post-communion prayers,  
ending with the Blessing*

**Final Hymn**

Not announced

*Dismissal*

The organ voluntary follows immediately after the Dismissal. This should be the voluntary itself, not improvisation.

The choir processes out, turning east to bow together first, and assembles outside the Song Room door in the aisle for the vestry prayer.

# Information for visiting organists

Carlisle Cathedral Organ dates from 1856 and was originally built by 'Father' Willis. It has subsequently had rebuilds in 1907 (Harrison and Harrison), 1962 (J W Walker and Son) and 1997 (David Wells). With its four manuals and pedals and almost 4000 pipes it is one of the treasures of the cathedral. More information can be found on the cathedral website including the specification of the instrument. The details below are to help you get the best playing experience possible and to answer any questions you may have prior to and during your visit.

## Entering and exiting the loft

The Organ loft door is located on the left hand side of the archway underneath the organ case. This will be locked so you will need to find the duty verger to unlock it for you (office in north east aisle). On opening the door you will find the light switch on the left hand wall. Please take care not to bump your head on the way up. On exiting, please make sure the door locks on your way out.

N.B. The steps are very creaky and noisy. Please therefore do not climb up or down during a service unless in an emergency.

## Switching on and off

The blower switch is on the right hand side of the console on the Positive Organ stop jamb. It consists of on and off buttons.

The light switch is to the left of the console at about shoulder height on the case itself.

If required, the fan heater to your left can be switched on with the dial on the right hand side of the unit (the sound is covered by blower noise so can be used in services.)

The television can be turned on by the button at the bottom right of the set. All other controls are to the left of the console underneath the fan heater. There are three cameras; Camera 1 is pointing at the west crossing (to see when the choir is lined up), Camera 2 is pointing at the choir stalls and can be moved by hand (behind you) as necessary to see the conductor, Camera 3 is pointing at the high altar and can be useful during the offertory. There is also a mirror above you that is good for a general view of the east of the cathedral.

The speaker to your right is connected to the main cathedral speaker system and allows you to hear the spoken word more clearly. The volume control ranges from 0 – 11 as required.

When you have finished using the organ, please make sure that everything is switched off and as you found it and the swell pedals are fully open.

## Piston memory channels

Divisional channel 15 and general memory levels 87 – 96 are reserved for visiting organists.

Divisional 16 is set as a quiet practice channel for piston practice (the same stops are available on every piston). You are most welcome to refer to the resident organists' divisional channels if you wish, but they must on no account be changed. The display on the right above the solo manual shows green numbers for the divisionals and red for the generals. The locking button will reveal a 'full stop' in the corner of the read-out to show that a channel has been locked.

N.B. Please do not, under any circumstances, touch the 'read' and 'write' buttons at the top left above the solo manual. These are part of an old card reading system that, if touched, will wipe the entire organ memory.

## Advice on using the organ

### General info

Although still essentially a Willis, the organ is now much more neo classical in style with some German influences. For example, the Great flue work is not based on your usual Open I, II and III but on three principals of differing character. The positive is baroque in style, the swell is brightly voiced in the principal ranks and the solo is a mixture of solo stops and choir stops. This mix makes the organ extremely versatile from Baroque German music, French Baroque music,



French music (French swell by coupling solo and swell) and of course the English romantic repertoire. Please have a look at the different divisional channels to get some ideas.

As in many cathedrals, the organ does not sound downstairs quite as it seems from the console. A few pointers to help you along the way:

*Pedal:* This sounds very big at the console but the upper work especially does not speak into the building. Use more 16' than you think (e.g. open wood) although be careful as the Violone has some louder notes than expected. The Trombone and the Ophicleide sound the opposite volume downstairs to what they do at the console. The 32' is better used underpinning a large foundation sound or full swell.

*Swell and Solo:* These both speak much more clearly than heard at the console. Take particular care with the solo box as the first 1/5 of opening is quite dramatic.

*Great:* This is pretty much as you hear but the reeds are not as loud downstairs. Avoid the Open Diapason unless soloing at tenor pitch. Avoid the Mixture until at full organ as very overpowering and bright.

*Positive:* This is in a separate case to your left and speaks much more directly. It is not as loud downstairs as it is to you. Play slightly more ahead of the choir if using only this manual. N.B. Especially in the summer months, tuning on this manual can become different to the rest of the organ due to its proximity to the South Door.

Suggested Bach Plenum: Gt to mix (no Open I) coupled to swell to mix/seq and solo to mut, Pedal (32') 16', 8', 4' Tromb coupled to Positive to mix and Double Trumpet 16'.

### **Accompanying congregational hymns (Sunday morning Eucharist)**

General maximum registration – Full swell, Positive to mix, Great to 4' (no open 8'). For especially big hymns the 2' and Double Trumpet 16' would be ok for final verse. General Minimum – Swell to 2', Positive to 4', Great to 4'.

### **Accompanying congregational hymns (Sunday afternoon and weekday feasts)**

General maximum registration – Full Swell (box 1/3), Positive to 2' (occasionally the mix) Gt to 4' (no principal 4' or Open 8')

### **Accompanying choirs (Sunday morning Eucharist)**

The congregation mainly sit in the east end of the building where the organ speaks best to, in the main. (i.e. over the heads of the choir). Please be aware it is therefore easy to drown the choir out if the box is too wide or too much upperwork. It is recommended that the choir director listen from the high altar rail from time to time to gauge the best balance.

### **Accompanying choirs (Sunday afternoon and weekdays)**

The congregation sits in the quire for these services and therefore much closer to the choir allowing for more organ. For psalms, it is only necessary to accompany on the swell (with some solo), being careful of the box. For large works, especially with a big adult choir, it is possible to use the majority of the organ at times, but, again, best to get the choir director to listen from various different areas in the quire area.

## **Voluntaries and improvisations**

### **Weekdays**

During the week, it is not essential to play before the service but you may do if you wish. The bell will be rung to signal the beginning of the service. You do not need to stop playing though. Continue to play until the choir are in position and also allowing enough time for the priests to enter their stalls too (out of sight from the console). The note of the first response for the priest should be trailed from the last chord. After the 'grace' it is straight into the voluntary. It is suggested that this be no more than 5 minutes.

## **Sundays**

On Sunday mornings, you are welcome to play for around 12 minutes prior to the service, finishing a few minutes before the bell. Although some louder sections are ok in moderation, it is suggested that the majority of the piece be of a volume that people can still prepare for the service. N.B. There is no fanfare prior to the first hymn.

An improvisation is required after the gospel, lasting no more than 1 minute. Material in this improvisation needs to have some relevance to the gospel reading (i.e., it is not necessarily a fanfare and can be soft if this is more appropriate to the reading). If you do not feel comfortable improvising, this is fine but must be mentioned to the vergers in advance so the sermon can begin straight away.

Occasionally the offertory hymn is not long enough and an extension is required after the last verse. The cue to stop is the vergers placing the communion railings in position.

Improvisation or a short piece is welcome, but not necessary, whilst the choir take communion. This must be on the quietest stops only.

The final voluntary can be your moment. Some in the congregation will sit and listen and treat it, as it should be, as part of the service.

On Sunday afternoons there is a pre-service voluntary, finishing a few mins before the service.

You may then improvise the choir in, as during the week. After the prayers there is a hymn followed by the blessing, which the final voluntary follows. This can be a big voluntary if desired.

## **Other things to note**

For services in the Quire, priest's notes (and choir notes) to be given on sw Lieblich and gamba. On Sunday mornings the Sursum Corda to be given on the Sw Open Diapason.

Gospel Acclamations and Eucharistic acclamation harmonies can be found on the organ when you arrive with suggested registrations.

## **Other useful information**

Please do not rub anything out on the console music desk as eraser shavings can cause ciphers to occur.

Practice time is available between 8.40am and 10am and (on weekdays) between 3.30pm and the commencement of your choir rehearsal. Although this is designated time for 'music in the cathedral', please be mindful of others. The building is often busy, especially during the afternoon slot with tourists and staff – not least the Vergers. The positive speaks directly into the shop which is open between 10.30am and 3.30pm so please avoid using this division during the first few minutes of your afternoon practice. In general, please do not undertake sustained loud practice for long periods, or when quieter practice would suffice.

In the event of any problems, please do not attempt to rectify these yourself, but seek out the duty verger, who will be able to pass on your query to the best-placed person. If any minor things occur which don't require immediate attention, please note these neatly in the small blue book on the console.

We hope that you have an enjoyable and rewarding time playing the cathedral organ here at Carlisle.

Edward Taylor  
*Assistant Organist*  
October 2021

# Preparation timeline

## *What you need to do*

Check online calendar to identify possible dates for your visit

Contact the Music Department Administrator to check that these dates are available

Complete and send us the booking form available on the website

*By the date advised to you when we confirmed your booking*

E-mail the Music Department Administrator with your music list, using the Music List forms from the website

*No later than one week before your visit*

Contact the vergers to discuss any practical details about your visit. This will include the time at which you would like to arrive – the vergers will let you know if this is convenient, and they may suggest an amended time to avoid clashing with services or other events in the Cathedral.

## *What we need to do*

Book those dates provisionally for your choir

Confirm the booking.

Give notice of which psalms and hymns are set at the services when you will be singing, also details any important liturgical considerations, e.g. Saints' Days.