

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King Liverpool



INFORMATION FOR VISITING CHOIRS SINGING AT CHORAL SERVICES

THE CATHEDRAL



Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral is the largest Catholic Church in Britain, mother church of the northern province of England and seat of the Archbishop of Liverpool. It includes an extensive crypt, a fragment of the mighty uncompleted project of the 1930s by Sir Edwin Lutyens, and the 1960s Modernist cathedral by Sir Frederick Gibberd. In addition to the main cathedral, which seats 2,300, there are, in the crypt, a chapel and a concert room, each seating 300, and a number of large reception spaces. The entire complex is Grade II* listed.

The cathedral is surrounded on all sides by Liverpool's universities, including student residences, and is close to the commercial centre of the city. The cathedral is also a parish church, albeit with only a small resident population. However, a wide variety of regular liturgies is provided for different congregations ranging from family Masses to solemn choral Masses. Since opening in 1967 the cathedral has hosted many notable occasions such as the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (1977), the Feast of Pentecost in 1982 when St Pope John Paul II celebrated Mass and in 1989 when a special Mass was organised 24 hours after the Hillsborough tragedy.

WELCOME

We are delighted to welcome visiting choirs to lead our services on appropriate occasions and when the Cathedral Choir is in recess. We very much value the generosity and musicality that visiting choirs bring to the cathedral community.

The cathedral is a busy centre of many activities and the following notes are intended to help the smooth arrangements of your visit and make the most effective use of your talents in worship here.

You will appreciate that it is a matter of great importance to us that as the mother church of the diocese we should be an exemplar of best practice and inspire musicians from parish churches to strive to reach high standards. This we endeavour to do in all our liturgies. The cathedral is an extraordinary building on a grand scale, with its own characteristic acoustic: as a result, not everything that works in a smaller church will necessarily succeed in our vast space.

CONTACT FOR VISITING CHOIRS

The Music Administrator is the first point of contact for visiting choirs:

Jacqueline Larrosa

0151 708 7283

j.larrosa@metcathedral.org.uk



SUNG SERVICES

We welcome visiting choirs to sing at our two principal Sunday liturgies in the cathedral when the Cathedral Choir is in recess:

- 11am Solemn Mass
- 3pm Choral Evening Prayer (optional, not sung during August)

We regret that we are unable to welcome visiting choirs to sing choral services on other days of the week.

BOOKING A DATE

Please consult the list of available dates available for visiting choirs on the [cathedral website](#), and then complete the [Visiting Choir Enquiry form](#).

MUSIC

Once you have a booking confirmed in the cathedral diary, you will be sent a link to complete your music choices (refer to pages 8-9 of this document for guidance).

Your musical choices should be submitted no later than three months prior to your visit to allow time for approval of repertoire, and so that our Order of Services and Music and service sheets containing details of your music can be published.

The cathedral reserves the right for the Director of Music to suggest adjustments to the proposed music where, in their judgement, this would be prudent. We scrupulously observe the legal requirements of all music protected under copyright. It is not permitted to bring photocopied music to the cathedral without written permission of the copyright owner.

Choir directors are asked to bear in mind the difficulties of adjusting to an unfamiliar building when choosing the music. Because the service is being held in a cathedral, some feel an inclination to produce something on a grand scale – this is not necessary! The choice of music should be suited to the capabilities of the singers. The duration of settings and motets should balance so that the service is not overlong. Something simple, performed well, is likely to be more conducive to worship.

Final approval of the musical programme rests with the cathedral authorities and once agreed, should not be changed without further consultation.

DRESS

Overall presentation is important and so we expect an appropriate standard of dress and reverence both inside and outside the cathedral. When rehearsing in the choir stalls, we ask robed choirs to wear their cassocks. If your choir does not use robes, then please wear smart attire such as suits, or all black clothing.

Robed choirs are welcome to join the ministers' procession and recession; unrobed choirs should make their way into the choir stalls informally before services. Choirs should be in place – on the sacristy corridor if they are processing, or in the choir stalls if they are not – **no later than 5 minutes** prior to the start of the service.



REHEARSAL TIME

The usual rehearsal times for Sunday services are as follows:

Solemn Mass: 9.50-10.30

Choral Evening Prayer: 13.50-14.30

A member of the music department will be on hand to greet and assist you during your visit. Rehearsal times can be varied, within limits, to suit choirs travelling longer distances.

STREAMING

The 11.00am Sunday Mass is recorded and live-streamed. The recording will be shown live on the cathedral's [YouTube channel](#), and a copy of the recording will be available on this platform.

FACILITIES

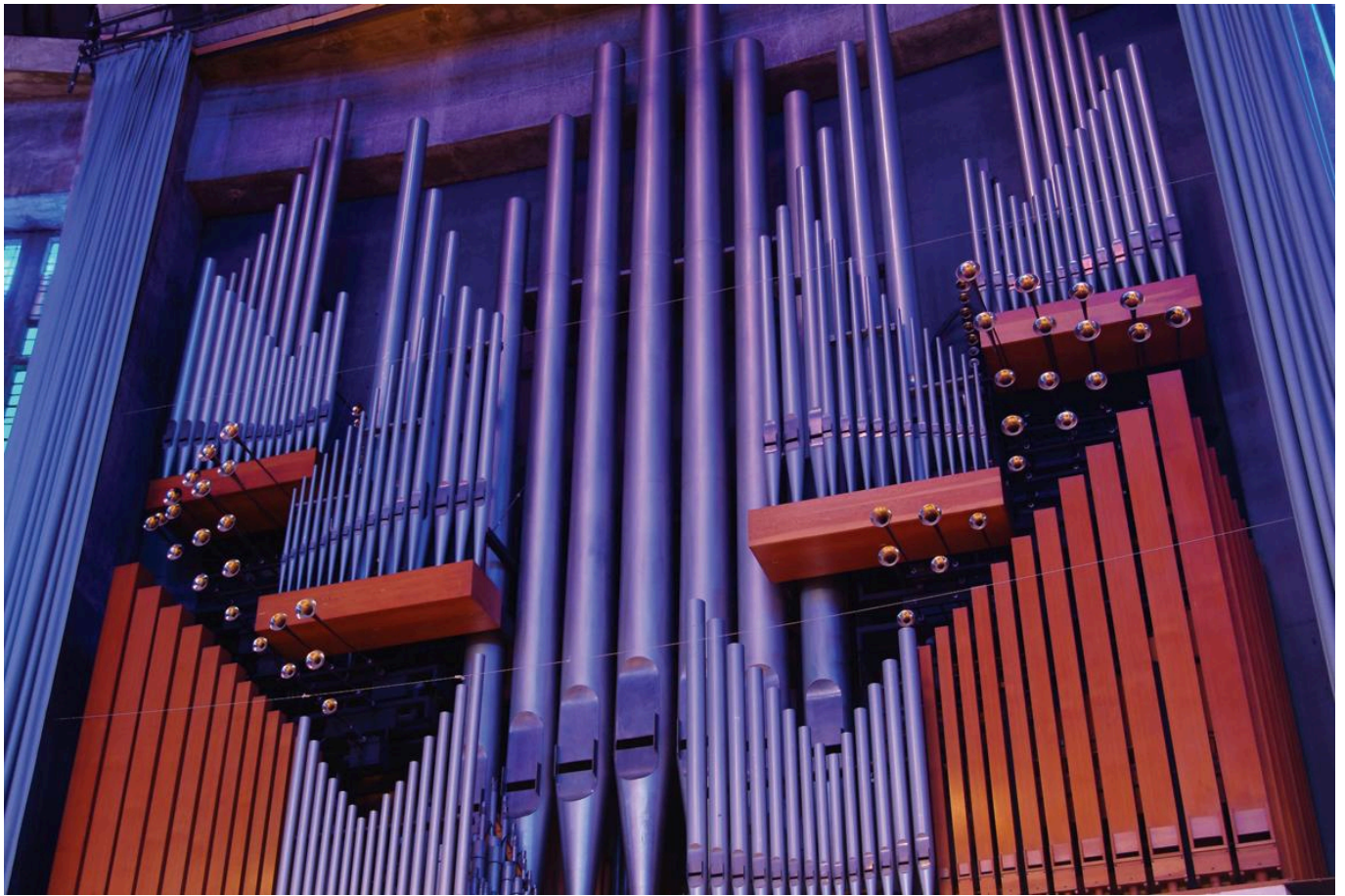
The song room or the meeting room, which are both located on the sacristy corridor (accessible via the car park), may be used for rehearsals, and for storage of music, robes and other belongings. The song room contains a set of choir stalls and a piano; the meeting room is slightly larger but has no choir stalls. When these rooms are not in use, they can be locked. Please note that the cathedral authorities cannot accept responsibility for any valuables left unattended in the song room or meeting room.

REFRESHMENTS/FACILITIES

Tea and coffee/soft drinks can be provided between the rehearsal and the service. Please note that owing to renovations, there is currently no on-site restaurant/café. Toilets are available on the sacristy corridor.



THE ORGAN



The organ is a fine 4-manual Walker instrument, which was fully restored between 2021-2022. Details of the organ, including a full specification can be found on the [cathedral website](#).

For a Sunday Solemn Mass and Choral Evening Prayer, a staff organist will be provided by the cathedral. If you wish to bring your own organist, that can be arranged provided they are of an adequate standard.

ACCOMMODATION

Unfortunately, the cathedral cannot offer accommodation. The website www.visitliverpool.com offers a selection of accommodation possibilities, along with other resources, to help make your visit to Liverpool a success.

SAFEGUARDING

The cathedral takes safeguarding seriously. You will be asked to complete a safeguarding declaration as part of the pre-visit administration.

SOLEMN MASS

NB. items with blue background require you to complete details on the 'Music Choices' form. A link to this form will be sent to you once you have a confirmed booking to sing at the cathedral.

ITEM	WHO SINGS?	MUSICAL SETTING	NOTES
Entrance hymn	Choir* & congregation	Cathedral will advise	Good lead required from the choir
Penitential rite (Kyrie)	Choir	At choice	Generally spoken, except in Lent and Advent (when there is no Gloria)
Gloria in excelsis Deo	Choir	At choice	Sung (in Latin or English) on all Sundays except those that fall during Lent and Advent
Responsorial psalm	Cantor, choir & congregation	Cathedral will advise	Led by a cantor provided by the cathedral; choir leads singing of the refrain
Gospel acclamation	Cantor, choir & congregation	Solemn Mass music sheet	Led by a cantor provided by the cathedral; choir leads singing of the refrain
Preparation of the gifts motet	Choir	At choice	A text relevant to the liturgical day/season, lasting no more than 4 minutes
Preface dialogue	Priest, choir & congregation	Solemn Mass music sheet	Good lead required from the choir
Sanctus	Choir	At choice	Sung (in Latin or English). Please omit the Benedictus of your Mass setting if it is a separate movement
Memorial acclamation	Choir & congregation	Solemn Mass music sheet	Good lead required from the choir
Great Amen	Choir & congregation	Solemn Mass music sheet	Good lead required from the choir
Agnus Dei	Choir	At choice	Sung (in Latin or English)
Communion motet	Choir	At choice	A eucharistic text relevant to the liturgical day/season, lasting no more than 4 minutes
Post-Communion hymn	Choir & congregation	Cathedral will advise	Good lead required from the choir
Organ voluntary	Organ	At organist's choice	

CHORAL EVENING PRAYER

Evening Prayer is the title normally given to the English version of the Office of Vespers. It has been revised since the Second Vatican Council. Together with Morning Prayer, it is the most important of the Offices.

Evensong in the Anglican rite is a combination of Vespers and Compline and this should aid the understanding of the form of Evening Prayer, which is rather shorter. Evening Prayer as celebrated in the cathedral takes the form as below.

NB. items with blue background require you to complete details on the 'Music Choices' form. A link to this form will be sent to you once you have a confirmed booking to sing at the cathedral.

ITEM	WHO SINGS?	MUSICAL SETTING	NOTES
Introit	Choir	At choice	A text relevant to the liturgical day/season, lasting no more than 3 minutes
Opening responses	Priest, choir & congregation	CEP Music sheet	
Office hymn	Choir & congregation	Cathedral will advise	
Psalmody & New Testament canticle	Choir & congregation	Cathedral will advise	
Motet	Choir	At choice	A text relevant to the liturgical day/season
Magnificat	Choir	At choice	In Latin or English
Lord's Prayer, collect and blessing	Priest, choir & congregation	CEP Music sheet	
Motet to the Blessed Virgin Mary	Choir	At choice	In Latin or English
Organ voluntary	Organ	At organist's choice	

THE ROLE OF THE CHOIR

The purpose of the choir in the Roman Catholic liturgy is to lead the congregation in singing, enhance the beauty of worship, and support prayer through music, helping the faithful participate more fully and spiritually connect with God.

The choir fulfils these functions by leading the congregation in the singing of hymns, responses and acclamations and by singing Mass parts and motets on their behalf. To this end, we ask that you rehearse all appointed materials, both congregational and choral.

