

Choral 2024-25 Scholarships

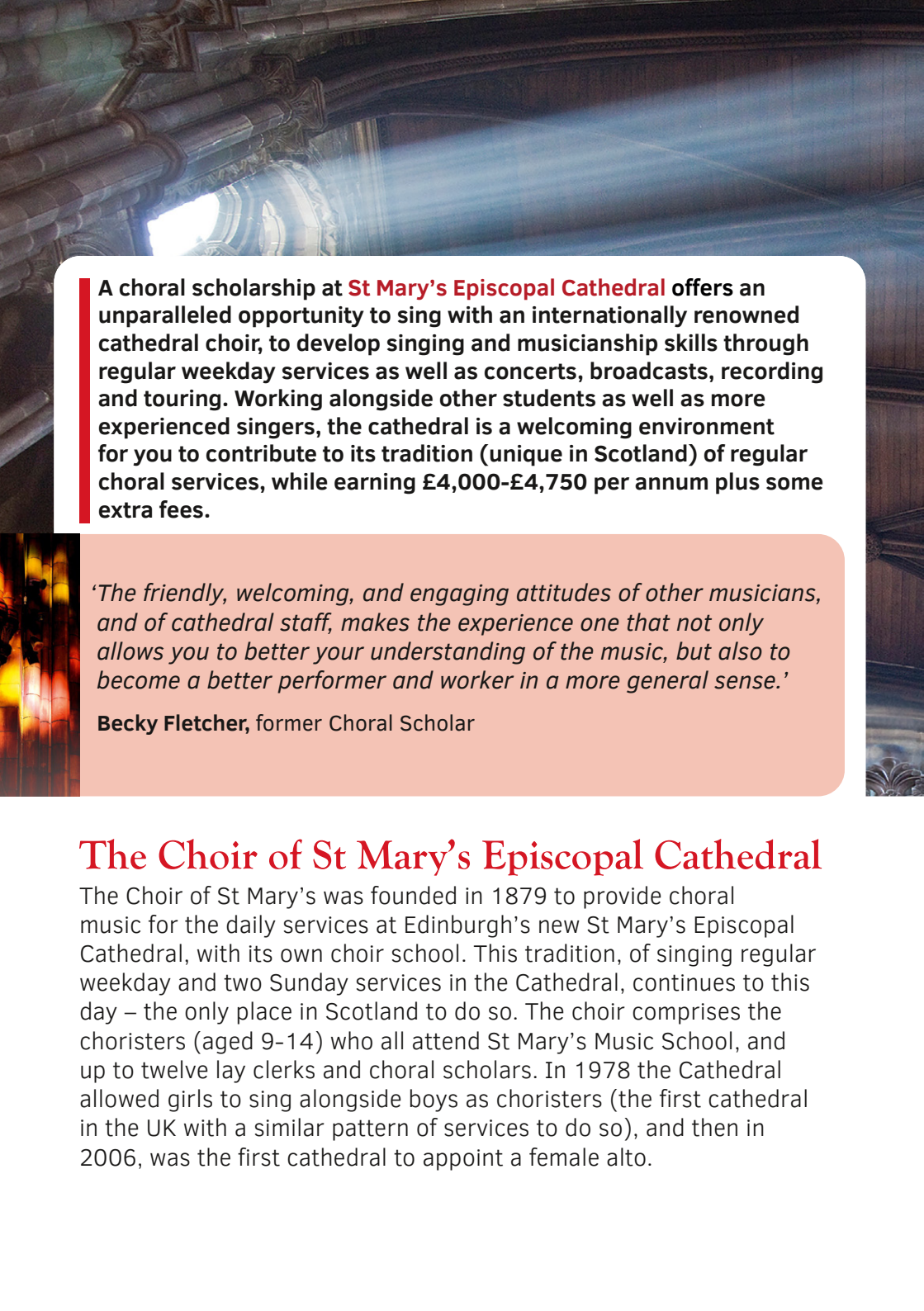
Altos • Tenors • Basses



Choir of St Mary's Episcopal
Cathedral • Edinburgh



ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



A choral scholarship at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral offers an unparalleled opportunity to sing with an internationally renowned cathedral choir, to develop singing and musicianship skills through regular weekday services as well as concerts, broadcasts, recording and touring. Working alongside other students as well as more experienced singers, the cathedral is a welcoming environment for you to contribute to its tradition (unique in Scotland) of regular choral services, while earning £4,000-£4,750 per annum plus some extra fees.

'The friendly, welcoming, and engaging attitudes of other musicians, and of cathedral staff, makes the experience one that not only allows you to better your understanding of the music, but also to become a better performer and worker in a more general sense.'

Becky Fletcher, former Choral Scholar

The Choir of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral

The Choir of St Mary's was founded in 1879 to provide choral music for the daily services at Edinburgh's new St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, with its own choir school. This tradition, of singing regular weekday and two Sunday services in the Cathedral, continues to this day – the only place in Scotland to do so. The choir comprises the choristers (aged 9-14) who all attend St Mary's Music School, and up to twelve lay clerks and choral scholars. In 1978 the Cathedral allowed girls to sing alongside boys as choristers (the first cathedral in the UK with a similar pattern of services to do so), and then in 2006, was the first cathedral to appoint a female alto.



Photo credit: Peter Backhouse

In addition to singing services at St Mary's, the choir is well known for its recording work, concerts, and broadcasts. The choir regularly record with Delphian Records and their most recent disc of Stainer's *The Crucifixion* was released in April 2024. Other recent recordings have included single-composer discs from Tudor England, Bruckner, Gabriel Jackson, Stravinsky, and Kenneth Leighton, which all gained outstanding reviews from the press. Music by contemporary composers is an important part of the choir's repertoire and many leading composers have written for the choir including James MacMillan, Arvo Pärt, Cecilia McDowall, and most recently, Joanna Marsh.

The choir regularly broadcasts on BBC Radio including a live broadcast of Choral Evensong during the Edinburgh Festival. Other recent events have included music for the Steve Coogan film *The Lost King* and filming for BBC Scotland's *Christmas Watchnight* service 2022. The choir has toured many countries and venues in Europe and further afield, most recently to Germany in 2024, and has worked with many orchestras and other ensembles such as the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Choral Scholarships

Choral scholars sing with the choir for its full schedule of services, concerts etc. A competent level of singing and musicianship is expected from the outset, with some experience of singing Anglican choral music (or similar). It is recognized that choral scholarships are a learning process however, and through singing music most days during term time, confidence in sight-reading, ensemble and solo singing increases quickly.

While being a choral scholar is a significant commitment, care is taken to see that the scholarship works alongside university degrees. Singing as a gap-year choral scholar is also an option.

Applications

To apply for a choral scholarship please send a copy of your CV (detailing your singing experience in particular) and names and email addresses of two referees. If invited to audition, you will be asked to sing a couple of prepared pieces of your choice and to do some sight-reading.

To find out more, arrange a visit to St Mary's or audition, please contact Duncan Ferguson, the Cathedral's Director of Music, music@cathedral.net



cathedral.net

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