

First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, CA

Organist

Exempt, 15 hours/week

Priority Deadline to apply March 1, 2020

Rolling review upon receipt. Early applications are encouraged. Position will remain open until filled.

Position Title: Organist

Date: January 2020

Job Summary

As Organist, provide traditional and innovative organ and piano music and serve as primary accompanist for the Chancel Choir as an integrated, integral part of Sunday worship leadership in partnership with the Director for Choirs, worship team members, and other staff.

Our Church

First Pres is a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with more than 600 regular attenders in two morning worship services, one traditional and one contemporary. Both services incorporate liturgy, narrative, the Word preached, and a wide range of musical offerings, including congregational singing, choirs, soloists, instrumentalists, and worship bands. There are special worship services and musical events throughout the year. In past years we have had a Lenten Organ Recital Series coordinated in conjunction with the Organist and the volunteer Organ Committee. Founded in 1878, First Pres has a rich history of university ministry, mission outreach, and music.

Sanctuary Instruments

Our organ is a Fratelli Ruffatti III/37 installed in 1975 during a season of West Coast Ruffatti installations that include Davies Symphony Hall (San Francisco) and the Crystal Cathedral (now Christ Cathedral, in Garden Grove, CA). It has an updated electro-pneumatic console, one additional rank of post-installation pipes, and a Zimbelstern. It had a complete revoicing in 1993 to enhance its presence in the Sanctuary.

A Sanctuary renewal project completed in summer 2019 provided much improved resonance for both singing and for the organ by replacing carpet with polished concrete throughout the Sanctuary (runners only on aisles), reupholstery of pews and complete painting of walls and canopy using surface-hardening products.

Our piano is a Grotrian 7'4" Model 225 Concert in excellent condition, purchased new in 2005.

Major Responsibilities/Activities

Sunday Worship Services (50%)

- Provide music leadership on organ and piano for Sunday 9 am worship and special services.
 - Lead congregational hymn and song singing with sensitivity, energy, and imagination.
 - Provide musical leadership sustaining flow of worship through musical transitions.
 - Research, select, and perform solo material for preludes, postludes, and offertories that enhances worship including sermon series, themes, and seasons for Sunday worship, special worship services, and special music concerts.
 - Communicate in a timely fashion toward the coordination of music in worship.

Chancel Choir Accompanist (50%)

- Serve as primary accompanist for the Chancel Choir, including:
 - Chancel Choir rehearsals on Thursday evenings during the academic year.
 - Sunday 9 am worship services (weekly, year-round) and special services.
 - Two choir retreats per year.
 - Assistance with sectionals and soloist rehearsals as needed.
 - Occasional music support for children's and youth choirs, young adult choir, soloists, or special music guests to rehearse or present music for worship.
 - Choir concerts, 3–4 per year (Christmas Choir Concerts, Hanging of the Greens Children's and Youth Choirs Concert, Palm Sunday Concert).

Instrument Maintenance and Administration (included in Sunday Worship Services & Chancel Choir Accompanist)

- Oversee regular organ maintenance and tuning.
- Oversee regular piano maintenance and tuning on the pianos at the church.
- Develop and manage instrument maintenance budget.

- Find an appropriate replacement for absences.
- Potential to oversee and coordinate a Lenten Organ Recital Series in conjunction with the Organ Committee.

Desired Qualities and Experience

Education: Graduate degree in music from accredited educational institution or equivalent.

- A growing and deepening faith in Jesus Christ.
- Musically-gifted, relational, servant leader with a love of worship through music.
- Demonstrated experience in leading congregational singing and hymnody.
- Background in planning worship services in a traditional and blended style.
- A high level of technical proficiency in performing solo organ and piano music, accompanying, sight-reading, open score playing, and improvisation.
- Sensitive and collaborative choral accompanying skills; general knowledge of vocal and choral coaching desirable.
- Technical knowledge of pipe organs and recommended organ maintenance desirable; ability to execute minor repairs and tunings a plus.
- In addition to working on Sundays in worship services, willingness to work evenings as required for choir rehearsals, special worship services, special music concerts and programs.
- Excellent people skills with an ability to work graciously and collaboratively with choir musicians, children, choir leadership, staff, volunteers, and other ministries.
- Excellent time management and written communication skills.
- Attention to detail; able to follow projects, ideas, and needs through to completion.
- General computer knowledge and proficiency in software programs and web-based applications used for worship planning, which may include: Microsoft Office 365, Outlook, Word, Excel, and Google Apps.
- Manifest a healthy attention to work/life balance, personal spiritual practices, and times of rest and recreation.

Schedule

- Sunday Worship Service at 9 am (including Chancel Choir pre-service rehearsal at 8 am).
- Chancel Choir Rehearsals during the academic year on Thursdays, 7–9:30 pm.
- Potential to participate in weekly worship planning meetings on Tuesdays, 1–2 pm.
- Time off: Up to 4 Sundays and/or scheduled rehearsals/year, to be authorized in conjunction with the Senior Pastor and Director for Choirs (likely not during the Sundays of Advent or Lent).
- Special Services, including:
 - Christmas Eve (1–2 services), Good Friday, and Easter services (1–3 services).
 - Christmas Choir Concerts (3) and Palm Sunday Concert.
 - Potential for Ash Wednesday service, Maundy Thursday service, and Grief services (1–2 annually).
- Potential Lenten Organ Recital Series (traditionally on Friday evenings, 7–9 pm).
- Other hours as required by performances, rehearsal, and personal preparation time.
- Right of first refusal to play for weddings and funerals at the church (with additional compensation).
- Permission for private teaching and practice at the church (to be scheduled with Church Office).

Reports to: Director for Choirs

Note: Nothing in this job description restricts the right of First Presbyterian Church leadership to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time.

How To Apply:

- Find the First Pres Berkeley application form at <https://fpcberkeley.org/careers>.
- Materials Requested: 1) Application Form, 2) Resume, 3) Cover Letter, and 4) at least 2 digital files or YouTube links (video or audio) that present abilities to solo and accompany, on piano and organ.
- All application materials should be sent to: Bonnie Rauscher, Human Resources, at bonnier@fpcberkeley.org, or Bonnie Rauscher, First Presbyterian Church, 2407 Dana St., Berkeley, CA 94704.

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Job offer will be contingent on passing a criminal record background check.