**Job Description for Organist Position**

Hancock, United Church of Christ

1912 Massachusetts Ave, Lexington MA 01421

781-862-4220   [www.hancockchurch.org](http://www.hancockchurch.org/)

**Title of Position: Organist/Accompanist**

Purpose of Position: Hancock Church is seeking an organist/accompanist to collaborate with our Director of Music in leading worship services, and to accompany our choir and other musical groups and soloists as needed. The position is open to anyone, regardless of denomination or faith tradition, provided they are comfortable working within a progressive Christian context.

**Responsibilities:**

*The primary responsibilities of the organist are:*

●       Provide solo organ or piano music for worship on Sunday mornings and other services (as detailed below)

●       Provide creative and dynamic musical leadership of hymn and other congregational singing. This could include creative hymn/song introductions, interludes, re-harmonizations, organ descants, etc.

●       Provide accompaniment for the Chancel Choir for weekly rehearsals (currently Thursday evenings) and on Sunday mornings.

*In addition, the Organist shall:*

●       Choose solo literature appropriate for each service

●       Accompany other musical groups and individuals as needed for services

●       Be responsible for communicating with the Director of Music any issues with any of the keyboard instruments

●       Maintain the pianos by keeping the water reservoirs etc. full

●       Collaborate with the Director of Music in planning music for worship

●       Communicate music choices with the Director of Music and the office staff within the timeframes assigned by each

●       Play for the following (but limited to) additional services/occasions: Christmas Eve (2-3 services), Easter (2 services), Blue Christmas (early-mid December evening service), Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Lexington Interfaith Choral Festival (concert in spring), Lexington Interfaith Thanksgiving service (every few years), recording of services for later online broadcast (3 or so per year)

●       Play for special Saturday morning choir “dress” rehearsals—usually 2-4 per year.

●       Play for weddings and funerals as available (for additional fee)

●       Running sectional rehearsals for the choir in conjunction with the Director of Music

●       Leading music in the absence of the Director of Music if appropriate

●       Attending worship planning meetings for special occasions (not weekly), as needed.

**The Organist shall NOT be responsible for:**

●       Choosing hymns or other worship songs (although input to the Director of Music always welcome)

●       Attending weekly staff meetings or other church meetings

●       Filing music (other than their own)

●       Leading/rehearsing other groups (unless they desire to do so)

●       Maintaining the instruments beyond what is detailed above

●       Recruiting new individuals to sing, play etc.

●       Preparing budgets, beyond their own sheet music needs

**Working Relationships and Accountability**

The Organist shall be accountable to, and directed by, the Director of Music, who is the head of the music program. If an issue arises that the organist feels like has not been addressed by the Director of Music, or involves the Director of Music, the Organist shall communicate the situation with the Senior Minister, who will engage the Personnel Committee as needed.

At all times the staff of Hancock church are expected to work with each other collegially, with grace, and respect.

Financially, the Organist will be allotted budget monies for the purchase of music and supplies.

**Qualifications**

*Required:* High degree of proficiency in playing the organ and choral accompanying experience.

*Desired:* Master’s Degree in Music or equivalent, with training in sacred music and creative hymn playing. 5+ years experience in choral accompanying. 5+ years working in a church music program

**Evaluation and Review:**

The Director of Music, in coordination with the Personnel Committee, shall conduct salary and performance reviews in conjunction with those for the rest of the staff.

**Workspace**

The organist does not have an office at the Hancock Church building and is not expected to perform administrative tasks onsite. However, areas in the choir room and library (with wifi) are available for use. A laptop computer can be provided to the organist for their use during their tenure. Room for music and other materials storage shall be provided.

**Instruments**

Hancock Church has a range of instruments the organist can access:

*Organ*: Three manual Aeolian Skinner organ, initially built in 1940 incorporating a portion of an earlier Hutchings instrument. Re-built and expanded in the early 1970’s.

*Pianos:* Schimmel baby grand in the sanctuary, a re-built 1923 Steinway A in the chapel, a Young Chang baby grand in the choir room, a studio piano and a variety of digital keyboards.

*Other:* The church also has two harpsichords, and an array of early music instruments including recorders, crumhorns, a shawm, psaltery, etc. We also have two timpani, and two full sets of handbells.

The organ is tuned 2-3 times per year. The pianos and harpsichords are tuned as needed.

**Work Schedule**

The Organist shall work an average of 15 hours per week, inclusive of 4 hours per week of individual practice, recognizing that the number of hours per week can vary widely according to the season. The organist generally only needs be present in the building for rehearsals and services, and to practice on the instruments as needed.

**Salary and Benefits**

Salary and benefits are competitive, and on a sliding scale based on education and experience.

The Organist has the option of using the building to perform, and the instruments to teach, provided such use does not interfere with other church activities. All building use is subject to the Safe Church Policy in place at Hancock Church.

**About the Church**

*“We welcome all who seek to know God. We believe that, although we are many members, we are one body in Christ. We have been called as well as challenged by God to respect and reconcile our differences. We recognize and love each individual as a child of God. We welcome, respect, support, and lovingly encourage people of every race, ethnicity, creed, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical and mental ability to join us on our journey of faith. This faith journey indeed calls Hancock Members not to be silent in the face of prejudice, injustice, and exclusion, but to express our faith, in word and deed, for justice and inclusiveness for all humanity. As Paul wrote to the Galatians, “In Christ there is no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for all are one…””*

Hancock Church was founded in 1868 on the Battle Green in Lexington, MA. It is a member of the United Church of Christ. It has 650  members, and is currently served by a senior minister, an associate minister, and two student ministers.

**About the Music Program**

The primary goal of the music program is to support and lift up worship at Hancock Church. We integrate music and word each week so that each informs and lifts up the other.

Hancock Church has a long history of appreciation and support for music. Our Chancel Choir has 22-28 members, including 4 paid section leaders and a high school Choral Scholar. It sings a wide range of quality choral literature from the Renaissance to the current moment, and performs two major works per season with orchestra or instrumental ensemble. Past “Cantata Sundays” have included the Lauridsen *Lux Aeterna*, the Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, *Messiah* excerpts, Brahms *German* *Requiem* excerpts, *The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass* by Carol Barnett, and many more.

We have a vibrant handbell program which plays two full 5 octave sets of bells and handchimes. The bells play monthly in worship during the program year, as well as two public concerts each year.

Our River Rock Band consists of professional and amateur musicians who play a wide variety of rhythm- based music. The band has recorded 2 albums (ask your smart speaker to play them!), and plays mostly for our evening worship.

A Joyful Noyse is a resident early music ensemble that consists of professional and amateur musicians from around eastern MA. They perform 4-5 times per year in worship, and 2-3 public concerts per season.

The Hancock Choristers is a children’s choir for kids in grade 1-5. In hiatus since the start of the pandemic, we hope to re-start it in fall 2022.

Other ad hoc music groups include a brass ensemble and a chamber vocal ensemble.

The music staff consists of the Director of Music, the Director of Handbells, and the Organist, as well as our section leaders, a percussionist, and other professional instrumentalists as needed.

**How to Apply**

Send resume and letter/e-mail of interest to:

Mark Morgan, Director of Music

E-mail:  mark.morgan@hancockchurch.org

Post: Hancock, United Church of Christ

1912 Massachusetts Ave

Lexington, MA 0241

Links to recordings welcome, but not required.

Auditions/interviews are tentatively scheduled for early May, 2022.

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"Serving others is the rent you pay for living on this planet"--Muhammad Ali

Mark Morgan
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