

Director of Music/Organist

First Presbyterian Church, Wausau, Wisconsin

Position Summary

First Presbyterian Church seeks a gifted and collaborative **Director of Music/Organist** to lead and enrich the congregation's music ministry. This part to ¾ time staff member works closely with the Pastor in planning music for worship, provides organ and piano leadership for services, directs the adult choir and handbell choir, accompanies soloists, and helps support the broader worship life of the church through creativity, professionalism, and collegiality.

The church's primary goal is to call a strong musician with excellent organ skills and the ability to lead volunteer ensembles well. Experience in worship technology, livestreaming, or video support is helpful but not required and would be compensated accordingly.

About the Music Program and Instruments

First Presbyterian Church has a 10-member adult choir, which includes 1 paid singer, and has been currently singing SAB music and has potential for growth. The handbell choir currently has 6-7 regular ringers. The church has five octaves of handbells and 3 octaves of hand chimes. The church's sanctuary features a 7-foot Yamaha grand piano and a 3-manual, 49-rank 1994 Schlicker organ, which also incorporates pipes from the building's original 1927 Austin organ. Both instruments are regularly maintained. The organ is highly regarded by area musicians, and the church is glad to share audio and video samples with interested candidates so they can experience its range and capabilities.

Responsibilities

Worship Planning and Leadership

- Collaborate regularly with the Pastor in planning music for worship and special services
- Prepare and provide organ and/or piano leadership for Sunday worship and other services of the church
- Work with the Pastor, who selects hymns and sung responses, while selecting appropriate preludes, postludes, offertories, and other service music
- Accompany congregational singing, choir, handbells, soloists, and guest musicians as needed
- Submit music titles and other needed information to the church office by established deadlines for bulletins

Choir and Handbells

- Direct the adult choir, including preparation of approximately **2 to 3 anthems per month** during the program year (September – May)
- Direct the handbell choir, including preparation of approximately **1 piece every 1 to 2 months** during the program year
- Lead regular rehearsals (1 hour for each ensemble on Wednesday nights, and 45 minutes on Sunday if ensemble is involved in worship) and foster a welcoming, supportive environment for volunteer musicians
- Recruit, encourage, and work with choir members, handbell ringers, soloists, and other musicians as needed

Soloists and Special Music

- Work with and accompany soloists on Sundays when choir or handbells are not singing or ringing
- Secure and coordinate guest musicians as needed for special services such as Christmas Music Sunday, Christmas Eve, Holy Week, and Easter
- Lead additional rehearsals as needed for major services and seasonal music

Administration and Communication

- Attend monthly staff meetings
- Maintain and organize the church music library
- Order or recommend music and worship resources within budget
- Occasionally contribute brief articles or announcements for the church newsletter, website, or social media regarding the music ministry

Instruments, Equipment, and Licensing

- Monitor the condition of the organ, piano, handbells, and related music equipment
- Coordinate tuning, maintenance, and repair of instruments with approved technicians
- Help ensure compliance with music licensing and copyright requirements for in-person and streamed worship

Substitute Coverage

- When absent, secure qualified substitute musicians
- Provide substitutes with all necessary worship information, including hymns, sung responses, and service music details
- Ensure that the substitute forwards prelude, postlude, and other music titles to the pastor or office staff in a timely manner

Weddings and Funerals

Weddings and funerals are compensated separately according to the church's fee schedule. Weddings are rare, and there generally are 3-4 funerals per year.

Summer Schedule

During the summer months, when the adult choir and handbell choir are generally not active, responsibilities are considerably lighter and focus primarily on worship accompaniment and service music preparation. Recruiting and rehearsing with soloists or guest musicians for summer Sunday music will replace choir rehearsals. Advance planning for fall schedules for choirs, in consultation with the worship plans of the pastor, is encouraged during the summer months.

Qualifications

Required

- Strong organ and piano skills
- Ability to direct volunteer adult choir
- Familiarity with handbells
- Ability to accompany soloists and ensembles
- Familiarity with Christian worship in a liturgical and/or mainline Protestant setting
- Basic knowledge of microphones, sound systems, and speakers used in worship
- Strong organizational, interpersonal, and collaborative skills
- Ability to communicate clearly and work well with staff and volunteers

Preferred

- Experience directing handbell choir

- Experience in Presbyterian or similar mainline worship traditions
- Degree or formal training in organ, sacred music, choral conducting, piano, or a related field
- Membership in or familiarity with the American Guild of Organists
- Familiarity with church sound systems, microphones, and audio support for worship
- Experience with worship livestreaming, video support, or posting worship services online is welcomed but not required

Hours

This is a part to $\frac{3}{4}$ time position averaging approximately **25-30 hours per week** over the course of the year, with heavier seasonal demands during Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, and Easter and significantly lighter responsibilities during the summer months.

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation is negotiable and it will be based on experience, qualifications, and the final scope of responsibilities.

Salary range: 25-30 hours per week \$40,000 to \$45,000

Benefits include:

- Enrollment in health insurance, pension, and death and disability coverage plans
- 3-4 weeks paid vacation, plus 2 extra Sundays, and paid holidays
- 1 week of continuing education leave, including one Sunday
- Funds for professional expenses, continuing education, and travel
- Annual AGO membership dues paid by the church

Additional Opportunities

The church is open to the Director of Music/Organist teaching private lessons in the church building, subject to space availability, policies regarding building use and child safety, and coordination with the church calendar. Any lesson studio arrangement would be separate from the duties and compensation of the position.

To Apply

Please submit to pastor@firstpreswausau.org

- a cover letter
- résumé
- contact information for references
- and, if available, links to recordings or other examples of musical leadership

The church welcomes inquiries from candidates who are excited by the opportunity to serve a congregation with a strong musical tradition, a remarkable pipe organ, and a desire for vibrant worship leadership.