

Residentiary Canon & Precentor Worcester Cathedral



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A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP AND THE DEAN

Thank you for your interest in the post of Residentiary Canon and Precentor of Worcester Cathedral.

Worcester Cathedral is one of the great churches of England, with a rich and enduring heritage of worship, music, and learning. For centuries it has been the Mother Church of this diocese and the seat of the Bishop, rooted in the Benedictine tradition and sustained by a daily rhythm of prayer and praise.



Today, it remains a place where worship is offered with depth, beauty, and care, and where all are welcomed to encounter God. We seek to serve the people of the diocese and all who come through our doors with generosity of spirit, shaped by the pattern of prayer that has defined this place for generations.

In our worship, we hold together what is ancient and what is new, drawing on the riches of the tradition while speaking clearly to the present. Our prayer is that those who come here may find hope, meaning, and a sense of God's presence.

We are now at an important moment in the life of the Cathedral, as we grow into a renewed vision for our future. The Precentor will play a central role in ensuring that worship remains the heart of all we are and all we do.

We hope that you will consider prayerfully whether God may be calling you to this ministry.



The Rt Revd Hugh Nelson
Bishop of Worcester

The Very Revd Dr Stephen Edwards
Dean of Worcester

THE APPOINTMENT



The Bishop of Worcester is seeking a priest to be Residentiary Canon and Precentor of Worcester Cathedral. The person appointed will be responsible for the organisation and development of the liturgical and musical life of the Cathedral. They will be expected to play a full part in the Chapter and Cathedral community and to contribute to the work of the wider diocese.

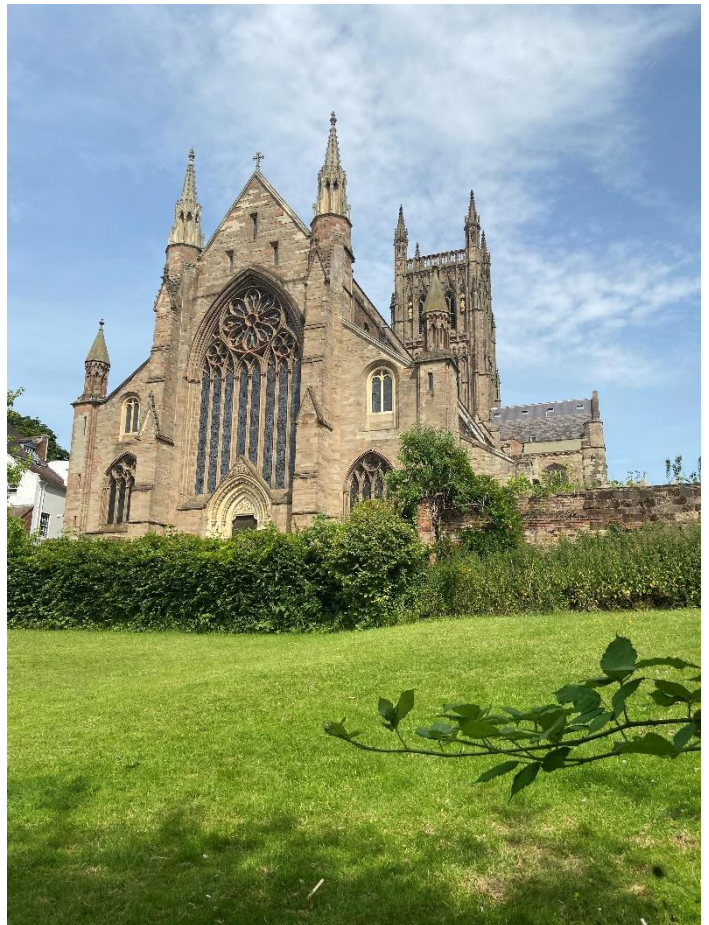
The Church of England is for everyone, and it is a priority for us to reflect the diversity of the community the Church serves across the whole diocese. We welcome all applications from interested and suitably qualified people, and particularly welcome applications from those of global majority heritage, people with disabilities, and women.

WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

For more than 1,300 years, Worcester Cathedral has stood at the heart of faith, community and civic life. Rising above the River Severn, it is one of England's great cathedrals: a place shaped by prayer, pilgrimage, music, learning and service through every age.

From the shrines of St Wulfstan and St Oswald to the tombs of King John and Prince Arthur, generations have come here seeking hope, inspiration and encounter with God. The Cathedral has weathered periods of profound change and challenge, remaining a constant witness to the Gospel in the city and region.

Today, Worcester Cathedral welcomes thousands of worshippers, visitors, pilgrims and learners each year. We are home to a flourishing musical tradition, host major diocesan and civic occasions, work closely with King's School Worcester, the University of Worcester and many community partners, and are supported by dedicated staff, volunteers, congregations and Friends.





At the heart of our life is a growing sense of vocation and opportunity. As we develop a new Vision and Strategic Plan, we are seeking to renew Worcester Cathedral as a beacon of Christian hope for the city, county and region—helping people of every generation encounter God, discover belonging, find meaning and serve the common good.

We want everyone who encounters the Cathedral—in worship, music, heritage, learning or community life—to experience something of God's hope, wonder and peace.

Our ambition is to be:

- Spiritually vibrant
- Financially resilient
- Environmentally responsible

so that Worcester Cathedral continues to shine as a beacon of hope from generation to generation.

Looking Ahead

This is a significant and exciting moment in the Cathedral's life: a new Vision and Strategic Plan, strengthened governance structures and a number of recent senior appointments are helping to shape the next chapter of Worcester Cathedral's story. We are seeking not simply to sustain a remarkable heritage, but to grow a thriving Christian community that serves the needs of today's world while remaining faithful to the Gospel entrusted to us.

The new Residentiary Canon and Precentor will join us at a moment of opportunity and renewal. They will play a central role in shaping the Cathedral's worship, spiritual life and mission, helping us deepen our vocation as a Cathedral that offers hope, inspires wonder, nurtures belonging and welcomes all to encounter the love of God.



We are seeking not simply to sustain a remarkable heritage, but to grow a thriving Christian community that serves the needs of today's world while remaining faithful to the Gospel entrusted to us.

Governance

Worcester Cathedral is a registered charity governed by Chapter, whose members serve as trustees.



The Dean, Residentiary Canons, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Finance Officer form the Senior Executive Team, providing day-to-day leadership under Chapter's oversight.

As the Cathedral continues to develop its governance and leadership arrangements under the Cathedrals Measure 2021, the successful candidate will contribute significantly to shaping the Cathedral's future and delivering its vision.

LITURGY, MUSIC AND CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

At the heart of Worcester Cathedral's life is the daily offering of worship. Rooted in the Benedictine tradition and shaped by the Anglican inheritance, the Cathedral's liturgy encompasses the daily celebration of the Eucharist, Morning and Evening Prayer, the Church's festivals and seasons, and the civic and diocesan occasions that mark the life of Church, city and county.

Music plays a central role in the Cathedral's worship and witness. Alongside the Cathedral Choir, Worcester is blessed with a long-established Voluntary Choir, Youth Choir and Chamber Choir, reflecting a commitment to musical excellence, participation and nurture across generations. Strong partnerships with King's School Worcester and the wider community ensure that music remains at the heart of Cathedral life.

Worcester values both the richness of its liturgical tradition and the opportunity for thoughtful development. We are seeking a Precentor who will cherish the Cathedral's inheritance while bringing imagination, creativity and theological depth to the future shape of worship, enabling it to speak with confidence and hope to new generations.

The Team

The Precentor will work closely with an experienced and committed team including the Director of Music, Assistant Director of Music, Head Verger, vergers, Liturgy Administrator, chorister support staff and a large body of musicians and volunteers. Together they sustain a substantial and varied pattern of worship, music and events throughout the year.

Congregational Life

The Congregational Committee supports the flourishing of the Cathedral community, with a particular focus on welcome, belonging, pastoral care, spiritual growth and charitable engagement. As Chair of the Committee, the Precentor will have an important role in shaping how worship and congregational life contribute to the Cathedral's wider vision.

This is an exciting opportunity for someone who is passionate about excellent liturgy and music, but who also sees them as instruments of mission: helping Worcester Cathedral become ever more a beacon of Christian hope, wonder and belonging for people of all ages and backgrounds, now and for generations to come.

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depth to the future shape of worship, enabling it to speak with confidence and hope to new generations.

THE ROLE

As a Residentiary Canon and member of Chapter, the Precentor will play a full part in the worship, mission, leadership and governance of Worcester Cathedral. Working alongside colleagues, staff, volunteers and the wider Cathedral community, they will help shape the next chapter of our life together as we seek to become a beacon of Christian hope from generation to generation.

We are looking for someone who is inspired by worship and its power to draw people into the presence of God. They will value beauty, prayerfulness and excellence, while bringing imagination, creativity and theological depth to the development of the Cathedral's liturgical and musical life. They will cherish the richness of the Anglican tradition, engage confidently with the Cathedral's outstanding musicians, and help ensure that worship speaks both faithfully and compellingly to today's world.

We seek someone who is ambitious not for themselves, but for the mission of the Cathedral: someone who sees worship, music and congregational life as powerful instruments through which people encounter God, discover belonging and grow in faith.

This role offers significant opportunity to shape the future. The successful candidate may be an experienced precentor, but equally may come from a different ministry background and bring fresh insights, gifts and perspectives. We are not looking for a particular "type" of person; we are seeking the person whom God is calling to join us at this exciting moment in our journey.

We believe that greater diversity enriches the life and witness of the Church. We warmly encourage applications from candidates of all backgrounds and experiences, particularly those who can help us broaden the voices, perspectives and gifts that shape our common life.

A. Liturgy & Music

The Precentor will:

- Lead the **organisation, development, and delivery of all Cathedral worship**, in collaboration with the Dean and under Chapter
- Ensure that worship is **faithful, well-prepared, and compelling**, demonstrating theological depth, musical excellence, and pastoral sensitivity
- Oversee and develop the Cathedral's **liturgical life and practice**, including regular review of the liturgical plan
- Work closely with the Director of Music and the Liturgy Administrator, providing **clear leadership** to all involved in worship
- Work closely with the Minor Canon for Eco Spirituality in support of the new worshipping communities and opportunities provided by the Cathedral's Eco Ministry
- Sustain and develop the Cathedral's **musical life as a central expression of its worship and mission**, working closely with the Director of Music
- Be normally present for choral services and able to **cantor confidently when required**, with a strong working knowledge of the choral tradition
- Ensure that services are **carefully planned, rehearsed, and delivered**, with clear communication and shared understanding across clergy, musicians, and vergers
- Work closely with the Head Verger to ensure that **liturgical vision is translated into practical, effective delivery**, particularly for major and complex services
- Provide **pastoral care and oversight of choristers, lay clerks, and scholars**, maintaining strong relationships with families and the King's School

- Encourage a culture of **confidence, participation, and excellence** among all who contribute to worship
- Oversee the **liturgy and music budgets** working with the Chief Operating Officer, and contribute to fundraising for the Cathedral's musical life
- Ensure **best practice in safeguarding**, particularly in relation to children and young people
- Be the Chapter **representative** for the Choirs Association, and work collaboratively with other bodies with an interest in the music of the Cathedral, the Three Choirs Festival, the Worcester Festival Choral Society, the Friends of Cathedral Music, and the Royal School of Church Music.

B. Congregational Life

The Precentor will:

- Chair the Congregational Committee, fostering a **welcoming, confident, and well-integrated worshipping community**
- Coordinate the Cathedral's **pastoral liturgies**, including baptisms, weddings, funerals, and memorial services
- Enable all who contribute to worship to **take their role confidently and effectively**, through clear leadership, training, and support
- Support initiatives that connect worship with the Cathedral's **wider mission**, including environmental and spiritual engagement
- Work with other colleagues to develop the Cathedral's engagement with **children and young families**.

C. Generic Role for Residentiary Canons

All Residentiary Canons will

- attend Sunday and weekday services as required by the Statutes and engage in liturgical and preaching duties as directed by the Chapter.
- share with the Dean and fellow residentiary canons in the pastoral work of the Cathedral.
- share in collective responsibility for maintaining a strong culture around safeguarding.
- act as canon-in-residence for an allocated number of weeks in the year with the duties set out in the Chapter's residence policy.
- exercise their duties as Trustees in attending and taking a full part in the discussions and decision-making of the Chapter as it fulfils its statutory responsibilities.
- are members of the Senior Executive Team which is responsible for the day to day good management of the Cathedral, operating under the oversight of the Chapter to further the objects of the Chapter and to implement its strategic and operational aims, vision and priorities.
- attend other meetings, events, and services at which Chapter members are expected.
- serve as trustees of St Oswald's Hospital.
- contribute to the life and work of the diocese and the wider church.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Precentor will:

- Be a priest of the Church of England (or a church in communion) in holy orders for at least six years
- Be deeply committed to the **life of prayer, worship, and mission** at the heart of a cathedral context
- Demonstrate the ability to **shape and lead liturgy with imagination, theological depth, and pastoral sensitivity**
- Have a **strong working knowledge of church music and the choral tradition**, and be able to sing the liturgy confidently

- Be an **engaging communicator and thoughtful preacher**, able to articulate faith clearly and hospitably
- Show proven ability in **leadership, organisation, and team development**, including the management of staff and volunteers
- Be able to operate effectively as part of a **senior leadership team in a complex organisation**
- Demonstrate sound judgement in **planning, prioritisation, and delivery under pressure** with the ability to work to strict deadlines exercising good personal time and task management skills
- Show a strong and active commitment to **safeguarding**, pastoral care, and the wellbeing of the Cathedral community

Desirable

- Experience of shaping worship in a **missional and outward-facing setting**
- Experience of working with **choirs and young people**

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is our absolute priority. All clergy and employees are required to follow the Cathedral's safeguarding policy and procedures, which are in accord with Church of England policies. As one of the senior leaders in the community, the Precentor plays a significant role in setting and supporting safeguarding culture, especially as it relates to the choirs and worshipping community. Safeguarding matters are a standing item at Chapter meetings, and the Precentor ensures that liaison with King's School takes account of safeguarding protocols.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The vacant canonry is a Crown appointment, formally made by His Majesty the King. The nomination to the Crown will be made by the Ecclesiastical Secretary to the Crown and the Lord Chancellor, Prebendary Helen Dimmock MBE, following a selection procedure conducted by the Bishop of Worcester, and in consultation with the Dean and an advisory group.

The person appointed to the canonry will be a post holder under common tenure within the Diocese of Worcester. They must be a priest of the Church of England or of a church in communion with the Church of England who has been six years complete in holy orders. The appointment is subject to Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS Disclosure.

It is hoped that the person appointed will be installed in January 2027, or as soon as possible thereafter.

For the better performance of duties accommodation will be provided within the Cathedral precinct. There is no garage, but available parking on College Green.

The stipend (paid by the Church Commissioners) is that for a residentiary canon, currently £35,730 pa (to be confirmed). Agreed removal and resettlement costs will be refunded. Council tax, water rates and buildings insurance are paid by the Chapter.

Agreed working expenses are reimbursed by the Chapter on production of receipts.

The Dean and Residentiary Canons take a weekly day off (that is, a clear period of 24 hours and normally the same each week) which is free of all cathedral duties. The choice of day needs to be related to days off taken by the Dean and other residentiary canons, and the needs of the music team. In recent years the precentor's day off has been Tuesday, however alternative arrangements may be possible.

The Dean and Residentiary Canons take in turns to be 'in residence' throughout the year. This is arranged in weekly units according to a rota. This provides a constant liturgical presence as well as a point of daily reference for vergers and office staff. During weeks of residence the weekly day off is covered by a colleague.

The Dean and residentiary canons take 36 days holiday each year. Within this allocation are included no more than six Sundays and the 'inside of weeks' following Christmas and Easter. The annual leave year begins on 1 January each year. Holiday times are negotiated between the Dean and residentiary canons to ensure that the requirements of residence are met.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be made using the [Application Form](#).

Completed application forms and any queries about the application process can be directed to the People Administrator at JodieBrookes-Kavanagh@worcestercathedral.org.uk

The closing date is 12 noon on Monday 3rd August 2026.

Candidates should provide examples in their personal statement of how they meet the person specification and can demonstrate how they would fulfil the areas outlined in Sections B and C of the role description. This evidence will be used to shortlist candidates for interview.

The interview process for shortlisted candidates will be held on the afternoon of Tuesday 1st and throughout the morning and afternoon of Wednesday 2nd September 2026. Overnight accommodation will be provided.

Those invited for interview will be asked to prepare for an exercise in relation to liturgy, to preach a brief sermon to the panel, and to take part in a singing test.

Those interested in the post are welcome, if they wish, to contact the Dean, Stephen Edwards, on 01905 732927 for an informal discussion.