

Job Description: Organist & Director of Music

Parish: Pilgrim Parish (Lutheran)

Location: Chicago, Illinois

Position: Part-Time

Compensation: \$19,000–\$21,000 annually

Position Purpose

The **Organist & Director of Music** provides primary musical leadership for Pilgrim Parish and its school community. This individual is responsible for fostering a vibrant, faithful, and welcoming liturgical music program that engages parishioners of all ages—from school children to adult choir members—while enriching worship and supporting the spiritual mission of the congregation.

The Organist & Director of Music serves as the primary accompanist on organ and piano during worship services, directs the Adult Parish Choir, provides musical leadership for the parish school chapel, and works collaboratively with the Pastor, worship committee, staff, and volunteers in planning and executing the parish's worship music program.

Pilgrim Parish is home to a historic **1906 Hinners organ** that is well loved by the congregation. The position requires an organist who appreciates historic instruments and is comfortable working with an older instrument that can occasionally be temperamental.

Core Responsibilities

1. Liturgical Leadership & Service Playing

- Serve as organist and pianist for all regularly scheduled Sunday morning worship services. Services are held at 10:30 a.m. between Labor Day and Memorial Day, and at 9:30 a.m. during the summer.
- Play the organ and/or piano for special services, including but not limited to:
 - Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
 - Holy Week
 - Other special worship services as scheduled, including funerals and weddings
- Select hymns, service music, and other appropriate musical offerings in collaboration with the Pastor, with consideration for the lectionary and Lutheran liturgical tradition.
- Lead and accompany congregational singing with a high degree of musical proficiency.
- Serve as the regular worship accompanist on organ and piano for the parish.
- Accompany choirs, soloists, instrumentalists, and other musicians as needed.
- Provide appropriate prelude, offertory, postlude, and other service music.
- Work with the Pastor to ensure that worship music supports the themes and liturgical character of each service.

2. Adult Choir Direction

- Direct the Adult Parish Choir and provide ongoing musical leadership and development.
- Lead weekly choir rehearsals & prepare the choir for Sunday worship & special services.
- Select appropriate choral repertoire in consultation with the Pastor and in keeping with the parish's Lutheran worship tradition.
- Provide coaching appropriate to singers with varying levels of experience.
- Recruit, welcome, encourage, and retain volunteer choir members.
- Coordinate choir participation in special services and seasonal worship.

3. School Chapel & Music Leadership

- Conduct music sessions with students each Wednesday at 9 a.m., as part of the school chapel program (during the school year only).
- Select and prepare age-appropriate music for student participation in worship.
- Encourage children to develop confidence and enthusiasm for singing and worship.
- Demonstrate a patient, encouraging, and collaborative teaching style appropriate for children.
- Work collaboratively with school staff and teachers to support the school's worship and music program.

4. Worship Planning & Musical Coordination

- Collaborate regularly with the Pastor in planning worship music and special services.
- Attend worship committee meetings as requested.
- Schedule and coordinate choirs, soloists, instrumentalists, and other musical participants.
- Coordinate musical needs for special services and seasonal worship.
- Recruit and coordinate replacement organists/piano players or other appropriate substitute musicians when absent.
- Maintain clear communication with clergy, staff, musicians, choir members, and volunteers regarding worship schedules and musical responsibilities.
- Assist in developing the parish's overall music program and identifying opportunities for musical growth and participation.

5. Preparation & Administrative Responsibilities

Weekly preparation includes approximately five hours dedicated to:

- Selecting and preparing music for worship.
- Preparing organ and piano repertoire.
- Preparing choral music and rehearsals.
- Coordinating with the Pastor regarding upcoming services.
- Scheduling musicians, soloists, and instrumentalists.
- Communicating with choir members and other musicians.
- Arranging substitute musicians when necessary.
- Maintaining music resources and the choral library.

- Preparing music for school chapel.
- Addressing other reasonable music-program administrative needs.

Work Schedule

The position is expected to average approximately **9 hours per week**, with projected hours associated with Holy Week and the Christmas season.

Day/Period	Assignment	Scheduled Time	Projected Hours/Week
Sundays	Adult Choir Rehearsal	TBD	0.5
Sundays	Sunday Worship Services	TBD	2.5
Wednesdays	School Chapel	TBD	1
Weekly	Music & Worship Preparation	Flexible	5
Holy Week	Preparation & Services	TBD	25 projected hours
Christmas Season	Preparation & Services	TBD	25 projected hours

The specific schedule may vary according to the worship calendar, special services, school calendar, and seasonal needs of the parish.

Qualifications & Skills

Technical & Musical Proficiency

- Superior proficiency in organ performance, including hymn playing, registration, accompaniment, and traditional Lutheran organ repertoire.
- Strong piano skills sufficient to accompany choirs, soloists, instrumentalists, and congregational singing.
- Comfort and demonstrated ability working with a historic pipe organ; Pilgrim Parish's primary instrument is a **1906 Hinners organ**.
- Ability to adapt to the unique characteristics and occasional mechanical challenges of a historic instrument.

Choral Conducting

- Strong choral conducting skills with the ability to lead effective rehearsals.
- Ability to provide appropriate vocal and musical coaching.
- Experience working with volunteer adult singers is strongly preferred.
- Ability to select repertoire appropriate to the musical abilities of the choir and the liturgical setting.

Liturgical Knowledge

- Firm understanding of Lutheran liturgy, hymnody, and the church year.
- Appreciation for the role of music in Lutheran worship.
- Ability to select music that supports the theological and liturgical themes of worship.

Teaching & Relational Skills

- Demonstrated ability to work effectively and patiently with children.
- Warm, welcoming, and encouraging approach to volunteer musicians and choir members.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively with the Pastor, school staff, worship committee, parish staff, and volunteers.
- Ability to recruit and encourage participation in the parish music program.

Education & Experience

- Bachelor's or Master's degree in Music, Organ Performance, Sacred Music, or a related field preferred; equivalent professional experience will be considered.
 - Previous experience serving as a church organist, music director, choir director, or in a comparable role preferred.
 - Experience in Lutheran worship and sacred music is strongly preferred.
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Compensation & Paid Time Off

The annual compensation for this part-time position is **\$19,000–\$21,000**, commensurate with qualifications and experience.

The salary includes:

- Regular weekly responsibilities averaging approximately **9 hours per week**.
- **25 projected hours** for Holy Week preparation and services.
- **25 projected hours** for Christmas season preparation and services.
- **Four (4)** workdays of paid time off (PTO) annually.
- This part-time position does not qualify for health benefits

PTO must be scheduled in coordination with the Pastor and parish leadership to ensure appropriate musical coverage for worship services. When PTO is taken on a Sunday or for

another scheduled worship responsibility, the Organist & Director of Music is responsible for coordinating with the parish to ensure appropriate substitute coverage.

Additional services or musical events outside the regular responsibilities of the position will be discussed and approved in advance by the Pastor and parish leadership.

Working Relationships

The Organist & Director of Music reports to the **Pastor** and works closely with:

- Pastor and clergy
- Worship Committee
- School staff and teachers
- Adult Parish Choir
- Student musicians and singers
- Soloists and instrumentalists
- Parish volunteers
- Sound and technical volunteers

The successful candidate will bring musical excellence, dependability, creativity, and a spirit of collaboration to the ministry of Pilgrim Parish.

About Pilgrim Parish

Pilgrim Parish seeks to cultivate worship that is rooted in Lutheran tradition while being welcoming and engaging for people of all ages. Music is an important part of the parish's worship and community life. The Organist & Director of Music will have an important role in sustaining and developing this ministry for the congregation, school, and broader parish community.

How To Apply

Please send resume and other application materials to Mr. Andrew Yearick, Pilgrim Lutheran Church and School, ayearick@pilgrimchicago.org.