Chapel and Music Office

Appointment of Chaplain

Further Particulars

Trinity College expects to appoint a Chaplain to start from 1 April 2027 or on a mutually agreed date not later than the start of the academic year in October 2027. Chaplains are typically appointed for a period of four years, although changes to this term of office are currently being considered by the College and will be discussed as part of the appointment process.

Trinity's two Chaplains are central to the life of the College, particularly in the pastoral care of students, Fellows and staff, and play an important part in the conduct of worship in the College Chapel. Though they work closely with the Dean of Chapel and the Director of Music, the role requires and allows flexibility for independent initiative and individual responsibility.

The work of the Chaplains is especially demanding in term time when there are many evening and weekend commitments. The Chaplains take the initiative in developing a programme of activities to engage students, Fellows and staff. Vacation activities are also important, including accompanying the College Choir tours, together with weddings and occasional other services. Within the role there is the freedom for Chaplains to develop areas of activity that are of particular interest to them.

Candidates for the Chaplaincy should normally have at least two years' experience in parish or other ministry. The post is typically held by those who are quite recently ordained. The successful candidate will be encouraged to seek further training and development of ministry during the period of appointment, in consultation with the Dean of Chapel.

In particular, the College would welcome applications from those with experience of pastoral counselling or who are willing to develop their skills and competencies in this area. In addition, the College will be happy to explore an association with a parish church in Cambridge, to enable the Chaplain to maintain a link with church life outside the College.

The College

Trinity College, founded in 1546 by Henry VIII, is one of the largest Colleges in the University of Cambridge, with some 720 undergraduates, 350 graduate students, 190 Fellows and around 360 non-academic staff.

Trinity is an intellectually inspiring place for undergraduates and graduates to pursue their education and research, and to enjoy the many and varied opportunities (cultural, sporting and social) that a well-resourced College can provide.

College life is lively and diverse, with students coming here from all over the world as well as from all kinds of different schools in the United Kingdom. Members of the College go on to a wide range of professions and careers after taking degrees in all the subjects the University offers.

Further information about the College is available on the website www.trin.cam.ac.uk

The Chapel

Trinity College Chapel was built during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth I. Its fine architecture and prominent location in the College and town make it a focal point for members of College and visitors to the city. The community drawn together through Chapel worship and other events is vibrant and diverse. The building is also used for formal ceremonies and events within College and serves as a venue for musical performance. The Chapel is an Anglican foundation, but the Chapel is supported by and welcomes members of all denominations, as well as interested enquirers from other faiths or none.

The Revd Prof Michael Banner has been Dean of Chapel since September 2006. He is a Fellow of the College, Director of Studies in Religious Studies and, as Dean, is responsible to the College Council for the work of the Chapel and Chaplains.

During full term, services are held daily in the Chapel and the weekly pattern is listed below. Day-to-day services are primarily the responsibility of the Chaplains and it is expected that Chaplains will normally be present at all services, except on a day off. Each of the Chaplains has a designated day off such that there is always one of the Chaplains available.

Sunday	11.15 am	Sung Eucharist
	6.15 pm	Choral Evensong
Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
	6.15 pm	Choral Evensong
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
	9.00 pm	Sung Compline
Thursday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	6.15 pm	Choral Evensong
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer

The College has a strong musical tradition and its mixed-voice choir is regarded as one of the leading choirs in the world. The Director of Music (Steven Grahl) is responsible for their work, assisted by two undergraduate Organ Scholars. The Choir broadcasts, records and tours regularly, and all choral services from the Chapel are webcast live on the internet and available to listen again, with a substantial international audience. An ability to sing is not essential. It is expected that the Chaplains will support the choral traditions of the Chapel and a Chaplain generally accompanies the Choir on international tours.

Other activities

The Chaplains take the initiative in organizing a wide range of activities designed to appeal to students, Fellows and staff. Some of these have a Christian perspective e.g. bible study groups, retreats, book groups discussing writings on faith and services aimed at those with families. Others are more recreational e.g. the weekly Chaplains' tea, and games / craft activities aimed at bringing together different groups of students. Opportunities for volunteering in the wider community are also developed and promoted by the Chaplains.

The Chaplains conduct occasional offices, including weddings and baptisms. The Chapel has in recent years supported applications for marriage by Special Licence from resident and non-resident members in appropriate circumstances, and the Chaplains often conduct weddings during the vacations. In addition, Chaplains prepare members of College for confirmation, encourage those who may have a vocation to the ministry, and offer guidance and advice to all who seek it.

The work of the Chapel and clergy is supported by the staff in the Chapel and Music Office (see https://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chapel/home/whos-who/ for more information). Students are also actively involved in the work of the Chapel in a variety of ways, especially through reading lessons, serving and acting as stewards at services, and fostering this involvement is an important task.

Pastoral work

In providing pastoral care of students, the Chaplains work especially closely with Tutors and Directors of Studies, and also with the College Nurse, the College Counsellor and others who are concerned with student welfare. They should be readily available to every member of the College community, regardless of their faith, on any matter of personal concern, and be fully involved in the life of the College, knowing and being known by as many as possible.

In particular, the Chaplains are expected to meet all new students at the beginning of the year and entertain them in small groups (a generous entertainment allowance is provided for this purpose). The Chaplains continue to support and encourage students throughout their time in the College, and are available to meet with students by appointment and through more informal contact.

The Chaplains must also be able, where appropriate, to work independently, particularly in respecting the confidence of those who approach them, and should be able to counsel, and live easily among, all members of the College community. They should be prepared to visit those in hospital, as well as giving time to any members of the College who need their advice or help. Chaplains will be expected to develop their skills in counselling in their first year, as appropriate, to enable them more effectively to meet the needs of students.

Each undergraduate has a Tutor and a Director of Studies chosen from the teaching Fellows. The ten Tutors are concerned with the overall progress and welfare of their group of students and are available to advise on personal as well as on academic matters. Directors of Studies in thirty subjects arrange for each undergraduate to be given supervisions individually or in small groups. The Chaplains are members of the College's Pastoral Care Committee (convened by the Senior Tutor), which meets once a term. They may also be invited to serve on other College committees, including the Liaison Committee (between senior and junior members of the College). While undergraduate life is shaped by the University terms, Fellows, staff and graduates are here all year round and pastoral work continues throughout the vacations.

Other commitments

In making themselves known and available to the entire community, informal contacts and activities matter as much as more formal meetings and entertainment. Chaplains are expected to lunch and dine regularly at High Table, with students in Hall and in the staff canteen, and to find other ways of engaging with all members of the College community. The BA dinners held each Friday evening during term time are an excellent way of meeting graduate students, for example. Chaplains will need to bring commitment and imagination to the task of forming and maintaining relationships across the College.

The Chaplains are actively involved with the Trinity College Centre in Camberwell, South London (where the College first set up a Mission in 1885). One of the Chaplains acts as Secretary to the Trinity in Camberwell charity, organising its meetings and liaising with the Warden at the Centre. We are keen to expand on the opportunities for Trinity students to help run activities in Camberwell in the coming years. Between them the Chaplains share responsibility for recruiting students, and participate fully in the various activities on offer. The new Chaplain should expect to act as Secretary to Trinity in Camberwell at some time during their tenure.

The College is patron of thirty-one livings and seeks to maintain close contact with these parishes. There are occasional invitations to preach and take services, especially during vacancies in local livings.

Conditions of employment

The Chaplains are employed by the College, and paid at the rate for an incumbent in the Diocese of Ely (currently £34,950). The College will pay pension contributions to the Church of England Pension Scheme. It is a condition of employment that each Chaplain should reside in accommodation close to the College. Suitable College accommodation will normally be provided rent-free, with Council tax, water, and removal expenses paid by the College. Where a Chaplain has their own existing accommodation close to the College, or wishes to buy a house, a generous housing allowance is available.

The Chaplains are Senior Members of the College, and enjoy many of the privileges of the Fellowship. They may eat meals in Hall without charge, and receive annual allowances for books (currently up to £600) and entertainment (currently up to £3,582). Other necessary expenses of office will be met in full. Although not teaching officers, appropriately qualified Chaplains may be invited to undertake a limited amount of teaching, for which separate payment would be made.

A consortium of four Colleges supports a nursery in Clarkson Road at which the children of Fellows and staff at the four Colleges have priority for places. Membership of the College gym is available for a modest fee and the College punts may be used at a subsidised rate.

Chaplains are entitled to 36 days holiday per annum including bank holidays, which may be taken only in the university vacations. Such holiday should be taken at a time to be agreed with the Head of the Chapel and Music Office and in the light of the holiday plans of the other Chaplain, to ensure that at least one Chaplain is in residence at any time.

The College attaches importance to ensuring that Chaplains have the opportunity and encouragement to develop their ministry during their time at the College. Time and funding is made available for further training. Chaplains should expect to attend a weekly staff meeting during term, and also to review their work on a termly basis in discussion with the Dean of Chapel.

Application

A letter of application, together with a curriculum vitae, should be sent to Paul Nicholson, Head of the Chapel and Music Office, Trinity College, Cambridge CB2 1TQ by 10.00am on Monday 14 December 2026.

Applicants should also provide contact details for three referees including, in the case of a curate, their training incumbent. We will also request a reference from your Diocesan Bishop.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to Trinity for dinner on Sunday 31 January 2027 and for a formal interview and informal discussions on the following day Monday 1 February.

It is a condition of the appointment that the recommended candidate passes an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Further information about the Chapel can be found at https://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chapel/.

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact:

Paul Nicholson
Head of the Chapel and Music Office

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