

Job Posting: Music Director, Des Moines United Methodist Church

December 1, 2025

Position Summary

The Music Director is responsible for leading and developing the vocal choir(s) and handbell choir(s) of the church as vibrant ministries of worship, discipleship, and outreach. This person provides artistic vision, musical excellence, while collaborating with the pastoral staff and worship team to plan and lead music that glorifies God and edifies the congregation.

Primary Responsibilities

Choir Leadership and Development

- Select, rehearse, and direct music for all regular and special worship services (Sunday mornings, seasonal services such as Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter, weddings, funerals, etc.).
- Direct adult choir, handbell choir(s), and any additional music worship related or occasional festival or combined choir performances.
- Coordinate with the pastor and worship planning team to choose music that supports the sermon theme, liturgical season, and theological vision of the church.
- Conduct choirs and handbells during worship services, coordinating and supporting the church pianist and organist.

Rehearsal & Program Development

- Plan and lead weekly rehearsals for adult choir and handbell ensembles (typically Wednesday or Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings).
- Recruit, audition (when appropriate), and retain choir and handbell members.
- Develop musicianship skills of volunteer singers and ringers through warm-ups, sectional rehearsals, and occasional workshops or community performances.
- Maintain and catalog an extensive library of choral and handbell music; purchase new music within budget guidelines.
- Oversee the care, inventory, and maintenance of handbells, chimes, robes, folders, and other equipment.

Administrative Duties

- provide spiritual encouragement to choir and handbell members; foster community and discipleship within the church and music ministry.
- Communicate clearly and regularly with choir members (e-mail, planning center, weekly bulletins, updates, etc.).
- Prepare and manage the music ministry budget in collaboration with church leadership.
- Schedule soloists, instrumentalists, and guest musicians as needed.

- Oversee or delegate the scheduling of choir members for anthems, offertories, and special music.
- Ensure copyright compliance (CCLI, OneLicense, etc.).

Desired Qualifications

- Strong personal faith and a lifestyle congruent with the church's statement of faith and values.
- Bachelor's degree in music (choral conducting, sacred music, music education, or related field) strongly preferred; significant equivalent experience considered.
- Demonstrated proficiency in choral conducting and handbell directing techniques.
- Ability to read music fluently and teach vocal technique and music-reading skills to volunteers of varying abilities.
- Experience directing English handbells (3–5 octaves or more) and handchimes.
- Keyboard skills (piano or organ) sufficient to accompany rehearsals and services when needed.
- Excellent interpersonal, organizational, and communication skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively with staff, volunteers, and congregation members of all ages.

Preferred Additional Skills

- Familiarity with contemporary worship styles and ability to incorporate praise team or modern anthems when appropriate.
- Experience leading children's or youth choirs.
- Knowledge of church music history, hymnody, and current sacred choral/handbell literature.

Compensation & Hours

This is a salaried position 9 months a year (September – June dependent of calendar year) with a time commitment of approximately 6.5 hours per week.

Salary available upon request. Submit resume and questions regarding this position to office@desmoinesumc.org or call the church office at 206-878-8301.

This position is open until filled.

This position is supervised and evaluated by the church Pastor and SPRC following a 90 day probationary period.

This position offers the joy of building a thriving music ministry that helps the congregation lift their voices and hearts in worship week after week.