

ORGANISTS

1872 – 1876	Mr Carver
1876 -	Mr Raymond
- 1883	Mr C. England
1884	Magnus Peterson
1895 – 1912	Maughan Barnett
1912 – 1930	C W Kerry
1931 – 1952	R Withers
1953 – 1956	R Withers
1957 – 1959	Stuart Cannon
1960 – 1964	Malcolm Rickard
1965 – 1967	Ken MacKenzie
1968 – 1969	Roy Tankersley
1970 – 2002	Ray Wilderspin
2002 -	Eleanor Carter

The earliest records of the Choir were, like so much of the other early records of St John's lost in the 1884 fire.

The first organist and choirmaster there is record of was Mr Carver, who was occupying the position in 1872 at a remuneration of \$52.00 a year.

He was succeeded by Mr Raymond in 1876.

The first organist and choirmaster to play on the new organ in 1886 was Mr C England, who held the position until 1893.

Mr Paterson, his successor, died as a result of an accident within a few months of his appointment.

In 1895 Mr Maugham Barnett was appointed to the position and held it with great distinction for nearly 18 years.

Throughout most of these years the Choir membership stood at about forty – sometimes more, sometimes less. In 1906, when it had 48 members, the number included seven tenors and eleven basses.

Mr Barnett was succeeded by Mr C W Kerry and other distinguished musician, who held the position for 19 years.

He was followed by Mr W L Haggit who, with a short break of service in the Armed Forces in 1943, was organist and choirmaster until the end of 1949.

Mr Brian Withers succeeded Mr Haggit in 1950 and was followed in 1953 by Mr Stuart Canon.

The four organists between 1953 and 1970, Malcolm Rickard, Les Adam, Ken MacKenzie and Roy Tankersley, were here for short periods of between two to four years.

Ray Wilderspin took up the position in 1970 and resigned 32 years later, in 2002.

The present organist is Eleanor Carter, a cellist with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. The choir is much smaller than a century ago and ranges between eight to twelve members with additional temporary members for special occasions. The members enjoy their participation and the opportunity to witness in music.

ORGAN

The present organ was installed in 1886 and made by T C Lewis and Son in London. It was rebuilt and restored in 1976 by George Croft and Son under the direction of Ken Alpin.

HYMN BOOKS

Church Praise	1884
Revised Church Praise	1910
Scottish Psalter and Church hymnary (Revised edition)	1937
With One Voice (Ecumenical Hymn Book)	1984

CHOIR GOWNS

Black gowns, white collars and cuffs, black caps (First Presbyterian Church in NZ to be gowned.)	1944
Blue gowns, white collars and cuffs and blue caps	1963
Caps dispensed with	1976
Blue gowns, high neckline and no collars or cuffs	1998