

History of the Möller Organ, Op. 10252

Our pipe organ was contracted with the M. P. Möller Co. of Hagerstown, MD, in January, 1966. It was installed during the summer of 1967, and dedicated in October, 1967. Because of the deteriorating condition of the 1920 Estey pipe organ, an Organ and Choir Space Committee was formed in 1964 to explore options for a new organ as well as the re-design of the choir space. Dr. Robert S. Baker, Dean of the School of Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary, was engaged as Consultant, and with the vision and determination of John R. Rodland, Minister of Music, the present design of the organ and choir space was implemented. The Möller Company was represented by John Hose.

The cost of the organ in 1967 was \$78,000, and the cost including the re-design of the chancel and choir loft brought the total project to \$128,000. The congregation responded generously and enthusiastically. In 1998, a major project was undertaken by Petty-Madden Organbuilders to convert the combination action and relay system to more efficient and modernized solid state technology and to replace the console. The need for cleaning and repairs was recognized at that time and eventually the church was able to decide in favor of a major restoration.

To that end, in 2011, the Organ Restoration Committee was formed, with Tom Gray, Chair, and members Maria Artime, Linda McFadden, Dave Miller, Ernest Velez, and ex-officio members Peggy Hsiao and Peter Wilkinson. Bynum Petty was engaged as Consultant, and with his help the scope of the project was determined and bids were received. A contract was signed with Emery Brothers, Inc. in September, 2012. Work began with the removal of the Antiphonal division in January, 2013, followed by the remainder of the organ in April. The basic restoration work was completed in time for the church's 150th anniversary celebration on October 6, 2013. Final finishing and additions were completed by the spring of 2014.

Restoration included thorough cleaning, repair, and re-voicing of all pipes, repair of the pneumatic swell shades and tremulants, replacement of all leather, replacement of outdated wiring, reconditioning of the two blowers, addition of a static reservoir in the blower room, restoring wind pressures to the original specification, replacement of the grille cloth, refurbishing of the blower rooms, cleaning and additional lighting in the organ chambers. Two stop additions were made by relaying the Pedal Spitzflöte 8' to the Great and by activating the Swell Fagotto to play at 8' pitch. New pipes were installed for a Principal 2' and Mixture IV on the Great. A Zimbelstern was added, and Walker Technical Co. installed eight digital stops, including Chimes. Total cost of the whole project was \$374,741.77.

We are grateful for the gifts of time, money and craftsmanship that made this project possible. A Capital Campaign gave church members an opportunity to contribute financially. This was supplemented by monies from the Karen Kaiser fund. In addition to Stephen and Michael Emery, these workers from Emery Brothers, Inc. were engaged on the project: Adam Dieffenbach, Kevin Freaney, Doug Keilitz, Parfyon Kirshnit, Jon Kracht, Rory Lipkis, Earl Ludwig, Clem Miro, Ardie Peeters, Rich Spotts, Ryan Stout. New pipework was designed by Bynum Petty; pipes were made by A. R. Schopp's Inc. Digital additions were by Bob Walker of Walker Technical Co. Control system upgrades were made by Solid State Organ Systems.

The organ has 3 manuals and pedal keyboard controlling the Great, Swell, Choir, Antiphonal and Pedal divisions, with approximately 2,900 pipes. Exposed pipes of the Great and Pedal divisions are visible in the cantilevered balcony above the choir loft in the rear of the sanctuary, enclosed Swell and Choir divisions are in chambers behind the grille cloth in the rear, and two divisions of the Antiphonal, both enclosed and unenclosed pipes, are behind the grille cloth in the chancel.

For 47 years, this organ has supported the congregation in hymn singing, accompanied the choir, soloists, and instrumentalists, and provided music from centuries of organ literature for worship services, weddings, funerals, recitals, choral concerts, teaching purposes, and other musical events. It is a joy to think that the organ will be used and appreciated for generations to come. May we continue to offer the music of this fine instrument for the glory and praise of God.