



Facts and Figures for our Casavant Organ Opus 3062

The History

The organ was installed in 1970 under the direction of Lawrence Phelps, the mid-century tonal designer who established the American Organ Reform movement. He personally designed our organ for the space to blend perfectly with the marvelous acoustics of our historic building.

The Organ's Current Condition

Around 20% of the pipes and valves are no longer functioning. This is due to a number of reasons including: Long periods of heat and Humidity, Lack of major maintenance through the years, and wear and tear. If we continue to do nothing, it will eventually be non-functioning.

The Restoration Plan

The work on the organ will happen over two consecutive summers, 2018 and 2019, in the following stages:

Stage One: Swell and Pedal divisions, façade and console (organ will not be playable for a few months)

Stage Two: Great and Positiv divisions, Pedal Psalme 16', & tonal work on site (organ will be playable except for one Sunday)

The Cost

This is a project where we pay as we go. However the total cost for the restoration will be about \$450,000 for the two stages. An optional stage Three has been proposed which completes Phelps original design with the addition of an Antiphonal Division in the balcony (essentially another smaller organ playable from the console) at additional cost of \$150,000.

Timeline

We plan on beginning disassembling the organ and removing the console right after Easter and the Christ Church Choir concert in May, 2018. This is the most common time to begin a major renovation according to JL Weiler and Casavant Freis, who will be doing the work at Emmanuel and at their workshops in Chicago and St Helens,

Canada. There will be scaffolds set up and plastic dust barriers around the organ space. They will be carefully crating and loading the disassembled organ pieces onto trucks for shipment. We must reserve this time slot now with a signed contract and modest down payment.

The work will commence on and off site during the summer with weekly monitoring and regular updates by the organ committee. The plan is to install the refurbished console and components by Advent 2018. There will be a noticeable improvement in the sound and features of the organ with the completion of Phase One.

Phase Two will begin again after Easter 2019. Removal of the remaining pipes to be reworked off site will not affect the operation of the organs. It will be playable during the summer of 2019 with the exception of one or two Sundays when work is being done. It will not have its full range of sound obviously.

The organ will be re-assembled again by Advent 2019 and restored to its original glory.

The optional Phase Three can happen during Phase Two if fundraising goes well, or be delayed to the following year. It would be slightly more economical if combined with one of the other phases. The work crew would not have to make a special trip back to Emmanuel and shipping costs would be combined.

Fun Facts

- Our organ is rated in the top 10 in the Midwest and is a fine example of a near original instrument.
- Our organ is valued at over 1.1 Million dollars.
- When it was purchased it was considered "the best" and cost about \$90000.
- The organ has 44 stops, 46 registers, 63 ranks and 3156 pipes.
- Buying a used instrument and retrofitting it to our space would actually cost more than repairing ours. (St. Lukes in Park Ridge recently did this and the bill was \$750000)
- It takes 1.7 seconds for the sound to travel from the pipes in the front to rear balcony of our church!
- after our refurbishment, we will own one of the best sounding organs in the country. This will attract many professional groups to our church.
- There are over 20000 moving parts in a pipe organ of our size.
- The maximum sound output is 130 Decibels-in the range of a jet engine!!!
- We may adopt an organ monkey from a bankrupt circus and he will live up in the pipes and we will throw food at him during Sunday services. (just wanted to see if you read it all! Dan)