

## Christ Presbyterian Church, Madison

From the earliest beginnings of Christ Church, truly great music, especially for the pipe organ, together with some of the finest instruments which could be found, became a congregational preference and the primary means through which members and visitors would offer themselves in joyful worship throughout the year. Today, Classics for the king of instruments, are presented in a prelude during the half hour before each classical service. This opportunity for quiet and listening has given many a reason to come to church early every Sunday morning.

### The Buildings, The Organs, and the People who Played Them

#### 1851-1891

The First Presbyterian Church of Madison, Wisconsin, was organized by the Presbytery of Dane on October 4, 1851. John Knox Presbytery, now a familiar unit of the Presbyterian Church (USA), came into being January 1, 1977, 126 years later. Within a year the new church selected a site for the first building, a New England style Modified Gothic church. This new 40 foot by 60 foot building with a 110 foot spire was located on Wisconsin Avenue, the site of the present Masonic Temple. A bell, which was added later, weighed a thousand pounds. In 1873 an organ was purchased in Milwaukee and installed in the church. It had two keyboards (manuals), with 58 notes; and pedal, with 30 notes. The organ had a black walnut base, and pipes in two shades of blue with markings of red and gilt. Of course it was hand pumped from the rear, and the traditional tales of the pump boys' delinquencies were repeated for years. The new building, dedicated on Christmas Day 1853, served the early congregation for 39 years. About 32 years after the dedication, the white frame building's proud spire was blown to the street by a storm, hastening the rapidly growing congregation to consider building again.

#### 1891-1963

The second structure was an American Romanesque building located at the corner of West Dayton and Wisconsin Avenue, a site now occupied by the Concourse Hotel. Warren H. Hayes from Minneapolis, Minnesota, was the architect. It was considered less austere, more home-like with seating arranged in the form of a partial amphitheater, the organ located in one corner. The beautiful Chapman memorial window, a work of great merit, was put in the southwest wall. The building was dedicated July 4, 1891. It remained a suitable home for the next 71 years. By changing its name, First Presbyterian Church became Christ Presbyterian Church on July 2, 1891. A new Lancashire-Marshall pipe organ from Moline, Ill. was built and installed in 1892. It was said to have been one of the best in the state. The bellows were furnished with air by two vertical feeders operated by a water motor. The case was of oak, and the effect of the paneling, together with the decorated pipes which appeared in front, were best described as simple and elegant. The dedication of the "new grand organ" took place May 13, 1892, performed by Clarence Eddy, of Chicago, "one of the first if not the very foremost organist of America."

UW Professor and founder of the School of Music, Fletsher A. Parker was organist in 1901 followed by Mrs. Leroy Case, 1908; and John Weaver, 1913. 23 years after the building dedication, the church suffered extensive fire damage from a lighting strike in 1914. Necessary rebuilding and expansion of the original structure would follow as well as planning for a new organ to replace the damaged one. The congregation ordered a 30 rank, (single row of pipes of one voice color brought into play by a stop), three manual organ, built by the Austin Organ Co., Hartford, Connecticut. The new organ was installed and dedicated April 9, 1915 and Clarence Eddey returned as recitalist. Irene B. Eastman became organist in 1917 followed by Dr. Charles H. Mills, 1920; C. Morse Huffer, 1924; Mrs. Chester Easum, 1927; and Luella Buriff Natwick, 1928. University of Wisconsin Professor Paul G. Jones became church organist in 1930 and continued for the next 30 years until his resignation in January 1960. For the next four years Dennis Drescher assumed the organist position.

1963-

The third building, now occupied by Christ Presbyterian Church, was planned during days of great growth for the congregation. A very large Building Council, with augmented committees, worked skillfully for a move to scenic lake property on Gorham Street. Harold H. Fisher and Associates, Detroit, Michigan, was architect; the new building was dedicated June 9, 1963. The organ committee selected a 53 rank, four manual organ to be built by the M. P. Möller company in Hagerstown, Maryland. An Organ Dedication Recital was performed by Professor Robert Glasgow, University of Michigan. Sandy Stevens served as organist for the church until on June 17, 1965, the Rev. J. Alfred Fryer, Director of Music and Associate Minister, appointed John A. Rafoth as organist. June 2010 marks 45 years, the longest service tenure of any staff in the history of Christ Presbyterian Church. At his urging in 2007, numerous donors in the congregation financed an organ restoration effort, addressing mounting problems primarily related to the general aging of the organ's originally-installed systems and materials. Located in Fox Lake, Illinois, Fabry Pipe Organs Inc. accepted the maintenance and refurbishing contract which once again brought the instrument into compliance with the performance standards of the day.

Specifications

M.P. Moller Pipe Organ, Opus 9754 completed June 1963. Improvements and maintenance by Fabry Organs Inc.

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**Great**

Unenclosed and displayed

16'	Quintade	73 pipes
8'	Principal	61
8'	Bourdon	61
8'	Quintaton	
4'	Octave	61
4'	Spitzflute	61
2 2/3	Quint	61
2'	Octavin	61
III-IV ranks	Furniture	269
4'	Clarion	
8'	Trumpet	73
16'	Trumpet	
	Chimes (Antiphonal)	
	Tremolo	

**Swell**

Enclosed

8'	Rohrflote	61 pipes
8'	Viole de Gambe	61
8'	Viole Celeste	54
4'	Spitz prinzipal	61
4'	Chimney Flute	61
2'	Harmonic Piccolo	61
IV ranks	Plein Jeu	244
16'	Fagot	61
8'	Trompette	61
4'	Hautbois	61
8'	Vox Humana	61
	Tremolo	

**Choir**

Enclosed

16'	Erzahler	73 pipes
4'	Principal	61
8'	Gedeckt	61
8'	Gemshorn	61
8'	Gemshorn Celeste	54
4'	Koppelfloete	61
2'	Doublette	61
1'	Larigot	61
II	Sesquialtera	98
2 2/3	Nazard	
1 3/5	Tierce	
II ranks	Zimbel	122
4'	Trichter Regal	61
8'	Clarinet	61
8'	Rafoth Trompette	73
16'	Rafoth Trompette	
	Zimbelstern	5 hand bells
	Tremolo	

**Antiphonal** (South Gallery-above the chancel and enclosed)

8'	Gedeckt	61 pipes
4'	Prinzipal	61
4'	Kopple Flute	61
2'	Principal	61
III ranks	Mixture	183
8'	Trompette	61
16'	Gedeckt	32
	Chimes (Deagan "D")	
	A - F	21 notes
	Tremolo	

**Pedal**

16'	Violone	44
16'	Bourdon	32
16'	Quintade (Great)	
16'	Erzahler (Choir)	
8'	Geigen Prinzipal	
8'	Rohrgedeckt	44
8'	Gemshorn (Choir)	
4'	Montre	32
4'	Rohrflote	
III ranks	Mixture	96
32'	Bombarde	32
32'	Contra Trombone	dgt
16'	Bombarde	12
8'	Trumpet	
8'	Rafoth Trumpet (swell)	
16'	Rafoth Trumpet (swell)	
4'	Clarion	
16'	Gedeckt (Antiphonal)	
32'	Lieblich Gedeckt	dgt
32'	Violone	dgt

Main console is located in the rear gallery: 4 manuals, English ivory keys with tracker touch. Second Console is located in the chancel: 2 manuals the upper keyboard of which is dedicated to the Antiphonal division, the lower keyboard duplicates the Great division of the main console. The instrument has 55 ranks on 3" Wind Pressure for the Great; 3 1/2" for the Swell, Choir, and Pedal; and, 4" in the Antiphonal.

In 2007 at the urging of John Rafoth, Organist, numerous donors in the congregation financed an organ restoration effort, addressing mounting problems primarily related to the general aging of the organ's originally installed systems and materials. Fabry Pipe Organs, Inc., in Fox Lake, Illinois accepted the maintenance and refurbishing contract that once again brought the instrument into compliance with the performance standards of the day.