

## **A Pipe Organ Isn't Just a Pipe Dream**

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*(Helpful links and other information on the last pages of this outline)*

### **Presentation Outline**

- **Introduction: Pipe vs. digital?**
- **What's the big idea?**
  - Thesis: It seems that pipe organ projects are often overlooked and immediately dismissed by church committees because they assume they are poor stewardship of the congregation's resources. It is our goal to leave you with solid facts that show that not only are pipe organ projects possible for all congregations, but they are also the ultimate demonstration of good stewardship—such that they will be used to glorify God generations into the future.
  - Priorities: God deserves the very best
    - The best—in material stewardship
      - Solomon's Temple dedication (1 Ki 6, 2 Ch 2-7)
        - Monetary cost
        - Quality/longevity of building materials
    - The best—in intellectual stewardship
      - A pipe organ builder must have a deep and wide understanding of God's creation
      - Know how to use the organ you have
    - The best—to lead His people in worship of Him
      - Physics: the organ leads the human voice the best
      - Versatility: the organ is able to fill all expectations/aspects of church music (and even community outreach through concerts!)
      - Reverence and majesty: the king of instruments for the King of kings
    - The best—as an heirloom to future generations of Christians
      - Unteröwisheim organ (1830 Wm. Overmann (John's ancestors' church))
      - St. Bavokerk, Haarlem, Netherlands (1738 Müller organ)
  - Quality is the best
    - For many congregations, a pipe organ is the largest investment they will ever make besides the building itself
    - Pipe organs are designed to outlive the buildings they are in

- But only those that are built and maintained well actually do
    - “The most pipes for the least money” is not necessarily seeking the best quality
    - “You will be remembered for the music you beautified not for the money you saved. The quality of the organ will be judged long after its price is forgotten.”
    - Where to go for quality? Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America (APOBA)
- **Planning for an organ project**
  - Pray! (No, seriously!)
  - Have a plan
    - “Failing to plan is planning to fail”
    - Organ committee
    - Consultant?
      - =an individual who is knowledgeable about the pipe organ’s music, its construction, and is hired to give unbiased advice on an organ project
    - Budgeting for future organ repairs
  - Assessment of
    - Finances/fundraising
    - Space/location
    - Human resources (project volunteers, organists)
    - Options for organ projects
  - Get the congregation involved!
- **Types of projects**
  - Maintenance and Prevention
    - Tuning and Inspection
      - Inspection finds minor problems before they become major
      - Details
        - Relevancy? Churches with pipe organs
        - How often? Twice a year minimum
          - Sanctuary must be at worship (occupancy) temperature for at least 8-10 hours **before tuners arrive** and stay constant during their visit
        - Member involvement? NO!



- How long? 6 months to 2 years
- Member involvement? Maybe.
  - Members may help with installation and other tasks
- Examples
  - Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, WI (1960/2016 Berghaus/Schlicker)
  - St. Crucis Allendorf, Germany (1852/2018 J.W. Walcker/Schulte)
- Renovation
  - =Making improvements with original builder's concept in mind
    - Adding ranks/divisions (using appropriate scaling/voicing)
    - Mechanical improvements (blower, playing action, memory system)
  - Details
    - Relevancy? Churches with pipe organs in decent condition or with some historical significance, yet not completely fulfilling worship needs
    - How long? Several weeks to a year depending on scale of project
    - Member involvement? Maybe
  - Examples
    - St. Alphonsus Chicago, IL (1959/2014 Casavant/Berghaus)
    - Cathedral Church of St. Mark, Minneapolis, MN, (1928/2012 Welte/Foley-Baker)
    - Chapel of the Resurrection, Valparaiso, Indiana, (1959/1996 Schlicker/Dobson)
- Restoration
  - =Returning an instrument to its condition at some point in the past
    - Replacement materials kept the same as original
    - No changes to builder's original concept
  - Details
    - Relevancy? Churches with organs of historical significance or that are adequately fulfilling worship needs; churches with organs that are more than 80 years old
  - Examples
    - St. Maria Himmelfahrt Ginderich, Germany (1888/2016 Conacher/Schulte)

- Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, MN (1877/1996 Johnson & Son/Dobson)
- First Presbyterian Church, Waunakee, WI (ca 1890/2010 Schuelke/Wahl)
- New/Used Organ
  - Registration—a tangent: “Play with the organ, not against it”
    - The Romantic school of voicing uses harmonics (ie “pitches within a tone”) within 8’ stops to achieve dynamic and tonal diversity
      - The more 8’ s drawn, the more harmonic diversity
    - The Baroque/Neo-Baroque/Organ Reform school of voicing uses pitch (8’ 4’ 2’ etc.) and stop families to achieve dynamic and tonal diversity
    - One manual instruments are sufficient for fulfilling most worship needs
      - Example Immanuel Lutheran Fairfax, MN (1885 Barckhoff)
  - Relocation
    - Radicalization in organ styles and an abundance of church closures has provided an abundance of available used organs
      - Organ Clearing House, Church Organ Trader, Facebook Redundant Organ groups, eBay, Craigslist
    - May require any of the previously mentioned organ projects
    - Details
      - Relevancy? Churches without a pipe organ; churches where the cost of rebuilding current organ outweighs worth
      - Cost?
        - Instrument itself (sometimes free)
        - Moving costs
        - Finder’s fee
        - Qualified organbuilder to oversee moving and voice
      - How long? <2 years plus other “3 R’s” work
      - Member involvement? Yes!
        - Members can do a bulk of the work after brief training and as long as the work is overseen by a qualified organbuilder
    - Examples

- St. Andrew Lutheran Milwaukee, WI (1971/2010 Klaus Becker/Volunteers & Nolte)
  - House of Hope Presbyterian, St. Paul, MN, (ca. 1860's Merklin/Volunteers)
- New Organ
  - Relevant infos
    - Who?
      - Anyone
      - New church building project
        - Benefit of working with architect
    - Time? 1 to 3+ years
    - Member involvement? Some
      - Renovating new organ chamber
      - Help with moving parts and unpacking
      - Shop tours to view progress
  - Examples
    - Mount Olive Lutheran (WELS), Appleton, WI (1990 Dobson)
    - Martin Luther College Chapel of the Christ (2010 Schantz)
    - St. Thomas Episcopal Church, New York, NY (2018 Dobson)
    - St. Petri Dortmund, Germany (2015 Schulte using old English pipework)
    - St. Johannes Lutheran Cologne, Germany (2014 Amadeus Junker using pipework and windchest from two used organs)
- **Fundraising**
  - Donations
  - Pipe sponsoring
  - Selling a historic organ, parting-out an old organ
  - Endowment/Naming organ in honor of a loved one
    - Hazel Wright organ (Crystal Cathedral Pasadena, CA)
  - Not recommended: selling pipes/parts/"organ art" as souvenirs
- [bonus topic] Pipe vs. digital pros and cons

- [bonus topic] Fitting an organ to a space
- [bonus topic] Insurance and pipe organs

### Helpful Links

#### Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America

<http://apoba.com/>

#### American Institute of Organ Builders

<https://www.pipeorgan.org/>

#### American Guild of Organists

<https://www.agohq.org/>

#### Church Organ Trader

<https://www.churchorgantrader.com/>

#### Organ Historical Society

<http://www.organsociety.org/>

#### Organ Clearing House

<http://www.organclearinghouse.net/>

### Biographies/Contact Details

- **John Miller** is an apprentice organ builder at Orgelbau Schulte in Kürten, Germany and receives education in organ building theory at the Oscar Walcker Vocational School in Ludwigsburg, Germany. He previously worked for Nolte Organ Building & Supply in Milwaukee, WI. John serves as a Lutheran church organist and is an advocate for the preservation of historic pipe organs.
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- **Ryan Mueller**, a native of Milwaukee, WI, is a pipe organ builder at Dobson Pipe Organ Builders Ltd. in Lake City, Iowa. He is an active member of the OHS, AGO, DTOS, ATOS, ALCM, and AIO. He serves as organist for several CLC congregations in both Minnesota and Wisconsin and serves as an organ project consultant throughout the Midwest. Ryan frequently gives concerts to raise awareness for historic pipe organs.
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