

St. John Organ Fund

(ongoing maintenance and repair)

St. John's organ has been used for many years and is older than the present building we are in. Pipe organs, like any other mechanical device, require ongoing maintenance and repair. We are now at a point in the life of our organ that we need to do some major repairs and updating to keep this instrument running for years to come.

History

The current organ was relocated from the prior church building in 1966/67.

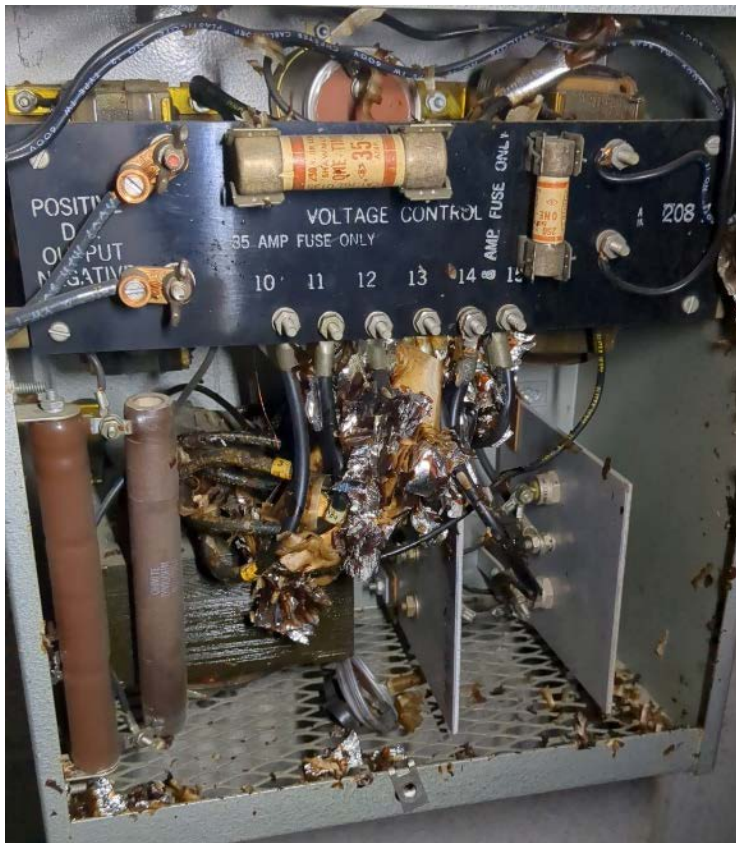
The organ console was bleached and re-stained by Hermann Schlicker to match the furnishings in the current church building.

The wind chests and pipes were also relocated from the prior church building.

While Kathy was the organist (and Pastor Buchmann was the pastor), the wind chests were re-leathered, and the oboe pipes were added to the organ. This renovation was about 45 years ago.

We are proposing a Two Phase approach to repairing and upgrading our present organ.

Phase One: Approximate cost \$50,000



This phase of the organ's restoration and update includes replacement of the 1966/67 wiring throughout the instrument along with new "high-tech" (for pipe organs that is) functionality. The high-tech piece will allow for recording ability along with instant transposition to accompany instrumentalists who play in other keys. The control system replacement project also includes new keyboards and a new stop tab assembly. The Pedalboard has already been rebuilt and will be reused, along with the console shell. The new control system will allow for record/playback of the instrument - not an audio recording, but rather the ability of the organ to play the pipes back exactly as the organist did. There is a built-in transposer, multiple levels of memory, and MIDI capability. MIDI is often used in music education, for example, in conjunction with notation software.

Phase Two: Approximate cost \$150,000

Once the organ has been completely rewired, it will be ready for the next phase – replacement of the wind chests. Since the wind chests were brought over from the prior church building, they weren't designed specifically for the space in which they are sitting and, as a result, we have a somewhat awkward layout that makes it difficult to maneuver inside the chamber for maintenance purposes. Additionally, the current wind chests are leaking air badly and the effort to repair them while keeping the inefficient layout would be the same effort to build them new and achieve an efficient layout. Note that either way, a portion of the organ screen would need to be removed so that the wind chests can be removed.



Virtually all of the pipes that came from the prior church building are in good condition and appropriate (from a sound standpoint) for the current building. Some would be replaced or repaired as needed. Heritage Pipe Organs already has the “replacement” pipes in their inventory so these would not need to be acquired brand new. There would be one additional set of pipes added as part of the renovation – an 8’ “Geigen Principal”. This set of pipes blends well and has a long history . . . it dates from around 1620 in central Germany. And Heritage Pipe Organs has this set of pipes in its inventory also.

All recent repairs to the organ will be utilized in any future projects: the new chime action and relay system, the repairs to the wooden stoppered pipes, the rebuilt Pedalboard, and the releathered reservoir. Most of the pipes will be repaired and reused but placed on new wind chests. Selected ranks will be replaced with new or gently used pipework that will complete the ensemble of existing pipework. The chamber layout will be improved for tuning and service, as well as sound projection and dynamic range.

If you would like to support this project, you can contribute to St. John Lutheran Church attention “Organ Fund.”