

THE DIAPASON

OCTOBER 2017



St. John's United Church of Christ
Lansdale, Pennsylvania

**The Reuter Organ Company
Lawrence, Kansas**

A profile of three recent projects honoring the company's centennial

In April 1917, a short article appeared in THE DIAPASON announcing the founding of the Reuter Organ Company. Adolph Reuter, with years of experience gained from his employment at several North American organ builders, had assembled a team of workers to start his own company in Trenton, Illinois, and to begin building organs "second to none." By November, the first organ had been installed at Trinity Episcopal Church, in Mattoon, Illinois, where it continues to be in regular use and to enhance the life of the parish and community.

We are pleased to mark our centennial year with this DIAPASON cover feature, which illustrates three of our recent projects as described in detail by our clients. Although each story is unique, each also has a recurring theme—the challenge of taking an existing instrument in need of renewal and with a complex history of previous work and additions, carefully evaluating its existing resources in conjunction with the needs of the church, and then renovating its best elements and incorporating them with custom designed pipework and components to create a new musical instrument.

After one hundred years, our files are full of similar stories about both new and renovated organs at churches, universities, concert halls, and residences throughout the United States and beyond. We are so grateful for our clients and their support over the years. We believe that there will always be a place for the King of Instruments, and we renew our commitment to continue to build pipe organs that are "second to none" for another century!

—Ronald Krebs
Vice President
Reuter Organ Company

**Trinity Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas**

By the summer of 2014, it had become evident that the Holtkamp organ at Trinity Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas, was in desperate need of refurbishment. The organ was installed with the building of a new sanctuary in 1954 and had been a continual part of the music program of the downtown congregation.

The three-manual, 40-stop organ was typical of the period, as well as the tonal philosophy of the people responsible for its design. Mostly unenclosed, and with many independent principal and flue voices on low pressure, it was best at playing contrapuntal organ literature with clarity.

In 1978, extensive altering of mixture stops and preparations for additions were made by a local Houston firm, which also provided the church with a new console. However, many of the altered stops proved unusable in the ensemble, the console was unreliable, and the wind system was drawing in unconditioned outside air, which took its toll on the instrument.

A team of people including Mary Voigt (director of music and worship), Carla Barrows (principal organist), Vince Parks (consultant), and myself, along with a committee of lay people from the congregation, solicited proposals for work on the organ. While a number of proposals were received for the project, none approached the project with an eye toward a comprehensive musical enhancement. Our team at Trinity Downtown was focused on a vision of a superior musical instrument that could offer a wider color palette, more possibilities for accompanying

the choir, greater power throughout the length of the nave, and reliability that would serve the congregation well for another 50 years or more.

After discarding various partial approaches that the congregation had been considering, three organbuilders of national reputation were asked to provide creative proposals. Following a thorough examination of the proposals, the Reuter Organ Company was entrusted with the work.

As enthusiasm and support for the project grew within the congregation, Trinity's leadership ultimately decided on a renovation plan that would significantly enhance the original instrument. The plans for the new instrument envisioned the organ as primarily an inspiring leader of congregational singing and a useful accompaniment for all periods of choral repertoire. The new organ would be expected to have an expanded dynamic range with effective expression, fundamental tone that would energize the room, and sufficient color to capture the interest of every listener. It would need to render literature with integrity, but more importantly, this would be an organ for worship!

Trinity signed the contract with Reuter in June 2015. Four weeks later, the organ was completely removed with the goal of having it returned and ready for Christmas. This was an aggressive undertaking, as the work would include the installation of an antiphonal division in the chancel area that had not been part of the original organ. The Reuter Company delivered. The organ was dedicated on December 24, 2015. The congregation celebrated this special gift to herald the birth of Jesus Christ with a commanding new Trompette en Chamade.

The refurbished and enhanced Trinity Downtown organ is now a 50-rank, three-manual and pedal organ. The striking flamed copper façade pipes of the new instrument add to the beauty of the sanctuary that is graced by huge stained-glass windows and wood accents. Today, the organ continues to bless the congregation with wonderful music. The creativity, artistry, and craftsmanship of J. R. Neutel and the fine team from Reuter have exceeded our expectations.

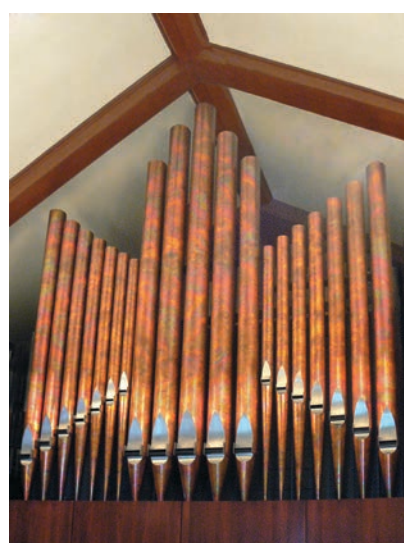
—Michael Dorn
Senior Pastor

**Trinity Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas
3 manuals, 50 ranks (2015)**

GREAT		
16'	Prestant** (1–12 existing, 13–61 Sw)	61 pipes
8'	Diapason*	61 pipes
8'	Harmonic Flute*	49 pipes
	(1–12 Pos Spitzflute)	
8'	Singend Gedeckt	61 pipes
4'	Octave*	61 pipes
4'	Spillflute*	61 pipes
2'	Super Octave*	61 pipes
IV	Mixture*	244 pipes
8'	Trumpet*	61 pipes
8'	Oboe (Sw)	61 pipes
8'	Trompette en Chamade*	61 pipes
	Tremolo	
	Chimes (console prep)	
	Mohrke Carillon (25 bells in tower)	
	Mohrke Cymbelstern (6 bells)	
	MIDI	
SWELL (enclosed)		
16'	Lieblich Flute	61 pipes
8'	Prestant**	61 pipes
8'	Rohrflute	61 pipes
8'	Gambe	61 pipes
8'	Gambe Celeste (low F)	56 pipes
4'	Principal**	61 pipes
4'	Nachthorn	61 pipes
4'	Lieblich Flute** (ext 16')	24 pipes
2 3/4'	Nazard**	61 pipes
2'	Blockflute**	61 pipes
1 3/4'	Tierce**	61 pipes
III	Plein Jeu*	183 pipes
16'	Oboe (TC, from 8')	61 pipes
8'	Trompette*	61 pipes
8'	Oboe*	61 pipes
	Tremolo	
	MIDI	



Trinity Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas, chancel and Antiphonal façade



Gallery façade



Gallery façade in the assembly room

POSITIV		
16'	Lieblich Flute (Sw)	32 pipes
8'	Prestant (Sw)	32 pipes
8'	Oboe (Sw)	32 pipes
4'	Schalmei	32 pipes
8'	Spitzflute**	61 pipes
4'	Principal**	61 pipes
4'	Harmonic Flute*	61 pipes
2'	Doublette	61 pipes
1 1/2'	Quinte**	61 pipes
II	Sesquialtera**	122 pipes
8'	Cromorne*	61 pipes
8'	Oboe (Sw)	61 pipes
16'	Trompette en Chamade (TC, Gt)	61 pipes
8'	Trompette en Chamade (Gt)	61 pipes
	Tremolo	
	MIDI	
PEDAL		
32'	Resultant	
16'	Principal*	32 pipes
16'	Prestant (Gt)	32 pipes
16'	Subbass	32 pipes
16'	Lieblich Flute (Sw)	32 pipes
8'	Octave**	32 pipes
8'	Prestant (Sw)	32 pipes
8'	Bourdon	32 pipes
8'	Spitzflute (Pos)	32 pipes
8'	Lieblich Flute (Sw)	32 pipes
4'	Choral Bass	32 pipes
4'	Rohrflute**	32 pipes
4'	Spitzflute (Pos)	32 pipes
ANTIPHONAL PEDAL		
16'	Gedeckt (ext Ant 8')	12 pipes
8'	Principal (Ant)	12 pipes
8'	Gedeckt (Ant)	12 pipes
4'	Octave (Ant 8')	12 pipes
16'	Fagotto (ext Ant 8')	12 pipes

*New pipework
**Repurposed pipework



Central United Methodist Church, Traverse City, Michigan, chancel with console in recital position



Voicer at work on Traverse City pipework

**Central United Methodist Church
Traverse City, Michigan**

Organ music and robust congregational singing has been a defining characteristic of worship at Central United Methodist Church (CUMC) for generations, largely due to the talent, charisma, and dedication of Robert Murphy, organist and music director from 1963 until his death in 2001. He left a sizable part of his estate to CUMC for the continued improvement of the organ. Mr. Murphy's gift had been left largely untouched for 15 years during a time marked by transition, most notably the establishment of a praise band service as a primary part of the church's identity. During this time, the congregation was aware that organ repairs were needed—there was damage from water leaks and falling plaster, failing leather, and collapsed bass pipes—but waited for direction from me. I wanted to improve the sound of the organ, not just fix broken items, so I advised that we hold tight while we figured out the best course of action.

As background, in 1969 the church remodeled its chancel area to its current configuration and purchased a new Möller organ, Opus 10419. This organ had 26 ranks of pipes distributed

over three manuals and pedal. Very much a product of its time, the organ was small scaled by today's standards, with an abundance of upperwork. (The only 8' Principal, located on the Great, was particularly thin, with 2/9 mouth widths.) The organ underwent many alterations over its life, presumably to make it more flexible for worship. Two sets of celestes were added, along with three color reeds. The Great was re-scaled, which ultimately gave the chorus a fluted character. The most recent modification was the replacement of the three-manual console with a refurbished four-manual console and solid-state control system. Though taken individually, these alterations were arguably successful and well received by the congregation; yet I found the overall sound of the organ to be hollow and anemic, lacking vibrant, eight-foot tone. There were parts of the organ I did like, however—the Swell reeds and the effective swell boxes, in particular.

In 2016, we were finally ready to act! We put together a collaboration to repair the pipe chambers, design and implement an HVAC system to maintain a constant temperature in the chambers, replace aging leather, and expand and improve the sound of the organ. Because



Trompette en Chamade

our funds were limited and we wanted to honor as much of the previous stewardship as possible, we kept the console, control system, chests, and much of the existing engineering. Swem Organ Company of Grand Rapids re-leathered all of the reservoirs, swell motors, and octave shifters locally.

We selected Reuter to fashion a new tonal scheme for the organ. This is my second project with Reuter. Interlochen Center for the Arts, where I am the organ instructor and assistant director of music, chose Reuter to build its concert instrument, Opus 2227, using as much of the existing Aeolian-Skinner organ as possible. This project was remarkably successful and gave me confidence to go to the well a second time for the CUMC project. I like Reuter because they are willing to take risks in reusing and reworking existing components, and they stand behind their promises. For example, the Trompette en Chamade, completely renovated with new tongues and shallots, playing on new chest action with increased wind pressure, is just one of the stops totally transformed at the Reuter shop. It is now a stately, heralding voice that truly crowns the whole ensemble. I was also eager to work with Bill Klimas again. I trust his ears and like his taste in voicing.

The results are absolutely stunning. I am thrilled, as is our congregation.

—Thomas Bara
Organist

**Central United Methodist Church
Traverse City, Michigan
4 manuals, 42 ranks (2017)**

GREAT		
16'	Geigen (Sw) (1–12 Sw Rohrflute)	
16'	Rohrflute (Sw)	
8'	Diapason*	61 pipes
8'	Harmonic Flute*	61 pipes
8'	Bourdon**	61 pipes
4'	Octave*	61 pipes
4'	Spillflute*	61 pipes
2'	Fifteenth*	61 pipes
IV	Fourmiture*	244 pipes
8'	Tromba (Ch)	
	Chimes (21 tubes)	
	Tremolo	
SWELL		
16'	Rohrflute* (1–24 wood)	61 pipes
8'	Geigen*	61 pipes
8'	Rohrflute (ext 16')*	12 pipes
8'	Viole	61 pipes
8'	Viole Celeste (TC)	49 pipes
8'	Salicional	61 pipes
8'	Voix Celeste (TC)	49 pipes
4'	Geigen Octave (ext 8')	12 pipes
4'	Waldflute*	61 pipes
2 3/4'	Nazard*	61 pipes
2'	Piccolo	61 pipes
1 3/4'	Tierce* (TC)	49 pipes
III	Plein Jeu*	183 pipes
16'	Bombarde	61 pipes
8'	Trompette (ext 16')	12 pipes
8'	Oboe*	61 pipes
4'	Clarion (ext 16')	12 pipes
	Tremolo	
CHOIR		
8'	Principal**	61 pipes
8'	Gedeckt	61 pipes
8'	Gemshorn Celeste II	110 pipes
4'	Octave*	61 pipes
4'	Koppel Flute (ext Gedeckt)	12 pipes
2'	Super Octave	61 pipes
1 1/2'	Larigot	61 pipes
II	Sesquialtera**	122 pipes
16'	English Horn	73 pipes
8'	Corno di Bassetto	61 pipes
8'	Tromba*	61 pipes
16'	Trumpet en Chamade (Solo)	
8'	Trumpet en Chamade (Solo)	
	Tremolo (flues)	
SOLO		
16'	Rohrflute (Sw)	
8'	Geigen (Sw)	
8'	Harmonic Flute (Gt)	
8'	Rohrflute (Sw)	
16'	Trombone (Ch)	
8'	Tromba (Ch)	
8'	Corno di Bassetto (Ch)	
8'	English Horn (Ch)	
16'	Trumpet en Chamade (TC)	
8'	Trumpet en Chamade	61 pipes
	Tremolo (Choir reeds)	
CELESTIAL		
<i>Swell stops designated "Celestial" include:</i>		
8'	Salicional	
8'	Voix Celeste	
8'	Viole	
8'	Viole Celeste	
2 3/4'	Nazard	
1 3/4'	Tierce	
	Zimbelstern (5 bells)	
	Swell Celestial Off	
	Celestial on Choir	
	Celestial on Great	
PEDAL		
32'	Bourdon (ext Sw 16' Rohrflute, 1–12 electronic)	
16'	Contrabass	32 pipes
16'	Subbass* (ext 8' Subbass, 1–12 electronic)	
16'	Rohrflute (Sw)	
8'	Principal (ext Contrabass)	12 pipes
8'	Subbass**	32 pipes
8'	Rohrflute (Sw)	
8'	Open Flute (Gt)	
4'	Choral Bass (ext Contrabass)	12 pipes
4'	Subbass (ext 8')	12 pipes
II	Mixture	64 pipes
16'	Trombone (ext Ch Tromba)	12 pipes
16'	Bombarde (Sw)	
16'	English Horn (Ch)	
8'	Tromba (Gt)	
8'	Trompette (Sw)	
4'	Clarion (Sw)	
4'	English Horn (Ch)	
8'	Trumpet en Chamade (So)	

*New pipework
**Repurposed pipework



St. John's United Church of Christ, Lansdale, Pennsylvania

**St. John's United Church of Christ
Lansdale, Pennsylvania**

St. John's United Church of Christ was founded in 1876, and the church's current spacious Norman Gothic sanctuary was built in 1952. The sanctuary's first pipe organ was installed in 1977 by the Fritzsche Organ Company. Because the congregation desired an economical initial purchase price, they obtained a used Aeolian-Skinner console from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on Central Park West in New York City. Thirty-three ranks of Skinner, Aeolian-Skinner, and new Stinkens pipes were assembled with used chests in the existing pipe chamber to create an organ that was functional for worship. The warm acoustic of the 500-seat worship space gave the organ a satisfyingly sweet and mellow sound.

When I began my tenure as St. John's United Church of Christ's minister of music in 1987, it was clear that music had long been a vital part of the worship life of the congregation. Since that time, the music ministry has expanded in its diversity, with the organ always at the core of its leadership. St. John's Artist Series included numerous performances by guest organists until 2010 when the console's gradual deterioration limited the flexibility of the organ for performing organ repertoire.

The limitations of the console were the initial reasons for considering a renovation project. While a new state-of-the-art console would solve many issues, the need to address tonal and design issues became an equally important aspect of the project. In 2011, the church's organ committee, chaired by Steven Hendricks, began serious conversations

with four organ companies. Bill Klimas, artistic director of the Reuter Organ Company, dialogued with us in detail about his clear vision for the organ's future, agreeing to incorporate the vast majority of existing pipes, revoiced, along with several new ranks of pipes in a totally redesigned pipe chamber. Reuter proposed a tonal concept that would appropriately fill the room and complement its beautiful architecture and acoustics. The design included a new tone opening for the pipe chamber with grille work custom made to match the existing tone openings.

Once the contract with Reuter was signed, things happened very quickly. Within two months the entire organ was removed and on its way to the Reuter shop in Lawrence, Kansas. One of Reuter's design engineers, John Deahl, carefully worked out a detailed plan for the arrangement of the pipes in the chamber, maximizing egress of sound from the new tone opening along with the existing openings. Three and a half months after its removal, the newly renovated organ arrived at St. John's Church. Several weeks later, the organ was voiced and tuned, ready for its debut!

Musicians and non-musicians alike have been excited about the new sounds of the organ. Most noticeable is the fuller base of support for congregational singing. The new tone opening greatly benefits the choir's ability to hear the organ for accompaniment of anthems. The new state-of-the-art moveable console provides the opportunity to host organ concerts once again, beginning with the dedication concert in November played by Nathan Laube. Generations to come



Console



Rescaling the Subbass

will enjoy the music provided by this very successful organ installation.

—David L. Furniss
Minister of Music

**St. John's United Church of Christ
Lansdale, Pennsylvania
3 manuals, 40 ranks (2017)**

GREAT	
16'	Geigen (Sw) (1–12 Sw Rohrflute)
8'	Principal° 61 pipes
8'	Harmonic Flute° 49 pipes
	(1–12 Choir Open Flute)
8'	Bourdon 61 pipes
4'	Octave° 61 pipes
4'	Koppelflute°° 61 pipes
2'	Super Octave° 61 pipes
IV	Fourniture° 244 pipes
16'	Oboe (Sw)
8'	Tromba°°° 61 pipes
	(1–32 existing, 33–61 new)
	Chimes (21 tubes)
	Tower Chimes (amplified in tower)
	Tremolo
SWELL	
16'	Rohrflute°°° 61 pipes
	(1–24 existing, 25–73 new)
8'	Geigen° 61 pipes
8'	Viole 61 pipes
8'	Viole Celeste 61 pipes
8'	Rohrflute (ext 16') 12 pipes
4'	Geigen Octave° 61 pipes
4'	Hohlflute°°° 61 pipes
	(1–20 existing, 21–61 new)
2 1/2'	Nazard°° 61 pipes
2'	Blockflute°° 61 pipes
1 1/2'	Tierce°° 61 pipes
III–IV	Plein Jeu°° 231 pipes
16'	Oboe (ext 8')° °° 12 pipes
8'	Trumpet 61 pipes
8'	Oboe 61 pipes
	Tremolo
CHOIR	
8'	Prestant°° 61 pipes
8'	Open Flute°° 61 pipes
8'	Gedeckt°° 61 pipes
8'	Erzähler 61 pipes
8'	Erzähler Celeste (TC) 49 pipes

4'	Principal°°	61 pipes
4'	Mystical Flute°°	61 pipes
4'	Open Flute (ext 8')	12 pipes
2'	Doublette°°	61 pipes
1 1/2'	Quinte°°	61 pipes
8'	Fagotto°	61 pipes
8'	Krummhorn	61 pipes
	Tremolo	

PEDAL

32'	Resultant	
16'	Open Wood	32 pipes
16'	Subbass	32 pipes
16'	Geigen (Gt)	
16'	Rohrflute (Sw)	
8'	Octave°	32 pipes
8'	Subbass (ext 16')	12 pipes
8'	Geigen (Sw)	
8'	Rohrflute (Sw)	
8'	Open Flute (Ch)	
4'	Super Octave (ext 8')	12 pipes
4'	Subbass (ext 16')	12 pipes
4'	Open Flute (Ch)	
16'	Trombone	32 pipes
	(1–12 existing, 13–32 Gt Tromba)	
16'	Oboe (Sw)	
8'	Tromba (Gt)	
8'	Oboe (Sw)	
4'	Oboe (Sw)	
4'	Krummhorn (Ch)	

°New pipework
°°Repurposed pipework
°°°Combination of both

Reuter Organ Company website:
www.reuterorgan.com
Trinity Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas, website: www.trinitydt.org
Central United Methodist Church, Traverse City, Michigan, website: www.tccentralumc.org
St. John's United Church of Christ, Lansdale, Pennsylvania, website: <http://st-johns-ucc.org>

Houston and Reuter shop photos by Ronald Krebs. Lansdale photos by Joseph Routon. Traverse City photos by Thomas Atkinson.