



## Cover Feature

# First Presbyterian Church Charlotte, North Carolina

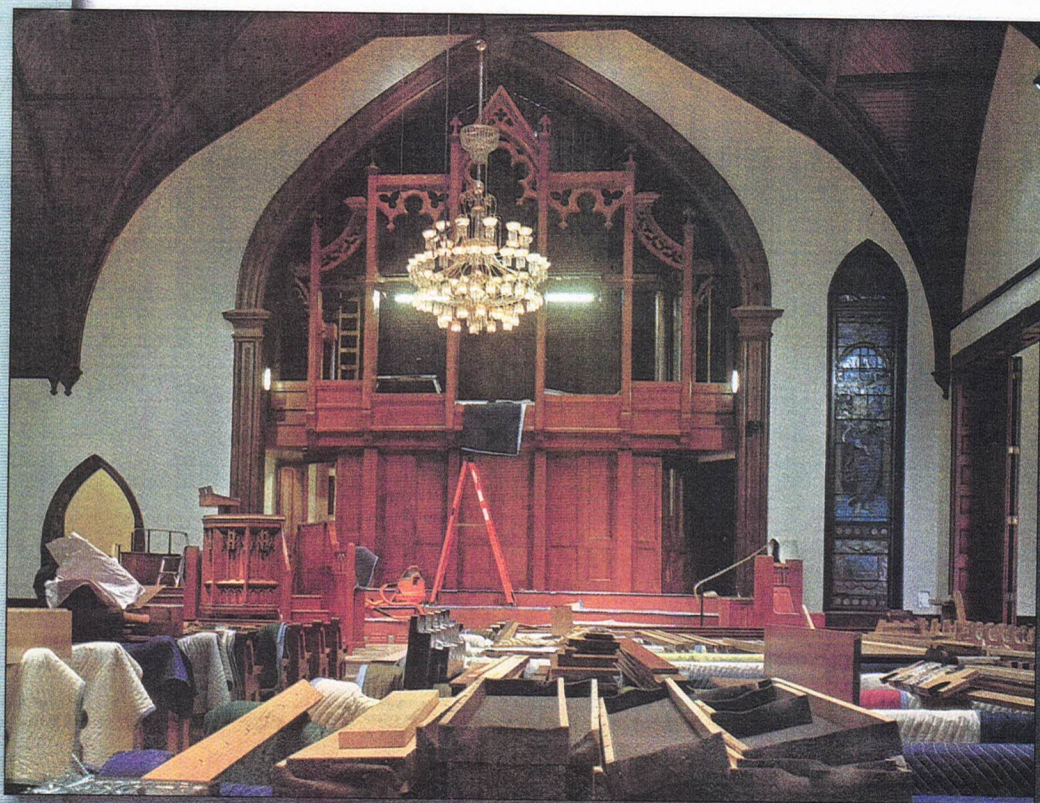
Quimby Pipe Organs  
Warrensburg, Missouri

By Brian Seever

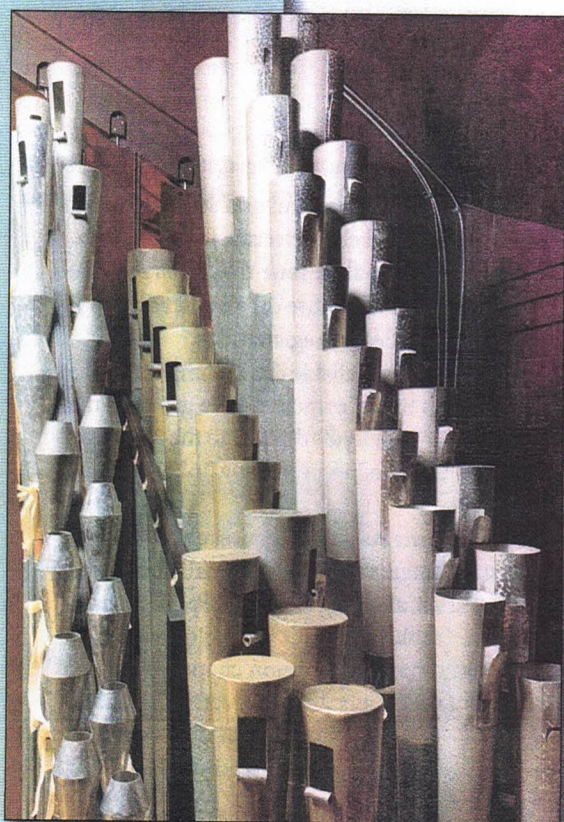
The first thing that strikes a visitor to First Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, is the set of three chandeliers adorning the center aisle. These light fixtures make a statement—bold yet refined. Originally from a public space in New York City, they have graced this historic sanctuary for a century, reminding us of an aesthetic long since passed. In contrast, the new organ has been playing for less than a year. Yet its grand visual impact and bold, cohesive tonal resources make a statement of their own.

This new instrument, Quimby Opus 79, was built and installed in 2022. Greatly expanding the tonal palette and versatility of earlier organs, it fills the room with subtle pianissimos and dramatic choruses. Controlled by a four-manual and pedal console, this five-division instrument easily handles the full spectrum of organ repertoire and leads congregational singing with grace and variety.





Case installation



Solo pipework

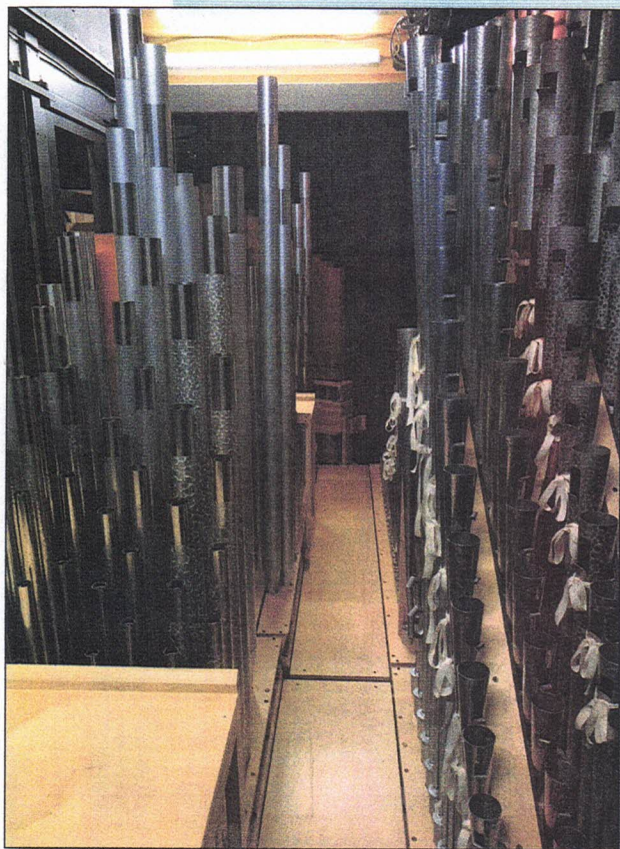
Three diapason choruses, each varied in color and power, form the backbone of the instrument. The Great chorus nods heavily to the English builders of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Crowned with a four-rank Mixture, supported by a Trumpet that doesn't overpower, and undergirded by a Double Open Diapason, the Great chorus can handle any number of musical demands. The Swell chorus is a subtler counterpart to the Great, yet it still has the growl found in many Swell divisions. This chorus is enhanced by independent 16', 8', and 4' trumpets that add fire and drama. The Choir chorus is more demure and sweet but adds brilliance to the other choruses and to choral accompaniment.

The string tone of the organ begins with a 16' Violone in the Pedal, which continues into the Great. The Swell Gamba and Celeste add rosin and beautiful undulation to that division. A Dulciana at 16' and 8' in the Choir, along with the Unda Maris, adds subtle beauty and supports softer registrations.

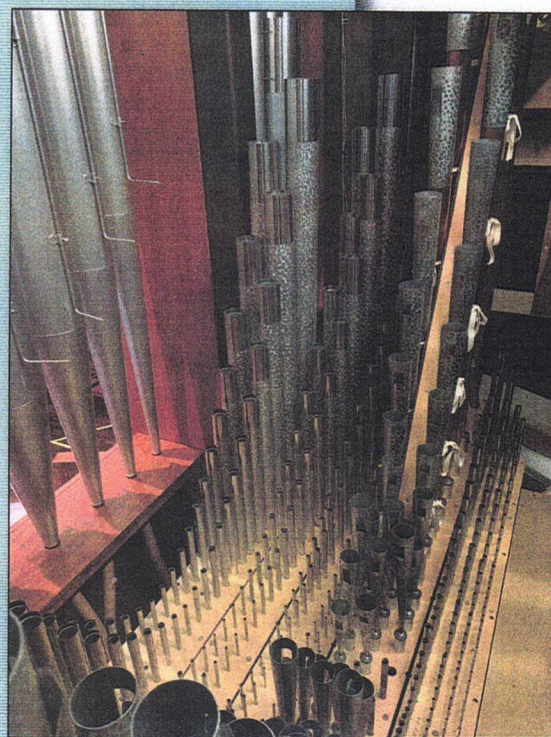
The flutes of the organ are varied and plentiful. The softest pair is found in the Swell: the Flauto Dolce and Celeste. Tapered and harmonic, they impart a soft and misty color to the quietest of registrations. The Swell also features a Cornet, underpinned by a Chimney Flute and continuing with clear and sprightly open ranks above; this contrasts excitingly with the 8' Clarinet in the Choir. The Great features a Harmonic Flute at 8' pitch, expanding the tonal palette for major repertoire. The Bourdon and Spire Flute enhance the Great with subtle tone. Choir flutes include a wood Flauto Traverso of wonderful singing quality and 4' and 2' Harmonic Flutes that add a silvery brilliance to that division.

The Choir also has a chameleonlike Bassoon that extends to 32' pitch in the Pedal. In the Swell, an Oboe of sweet but present quality joins a subtler chorus registration or solos over an undulating accompaniment.

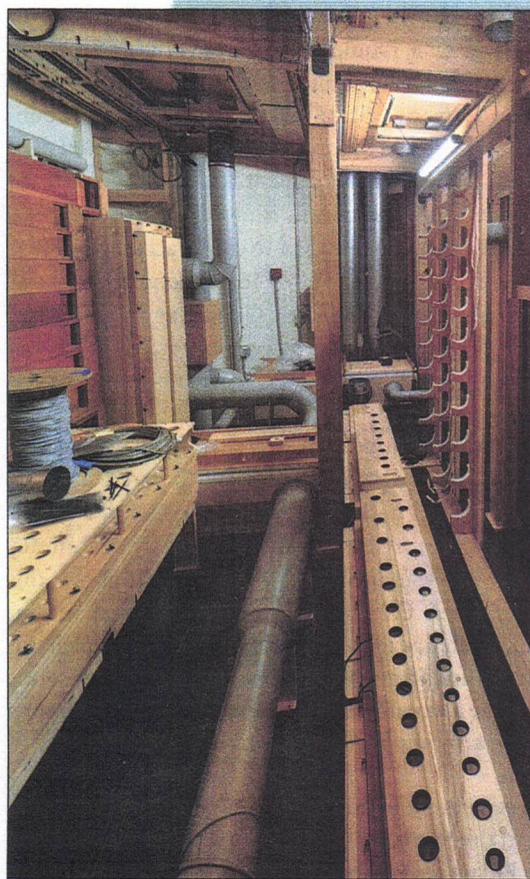




Swell pipework



Great pipework



Pedal division

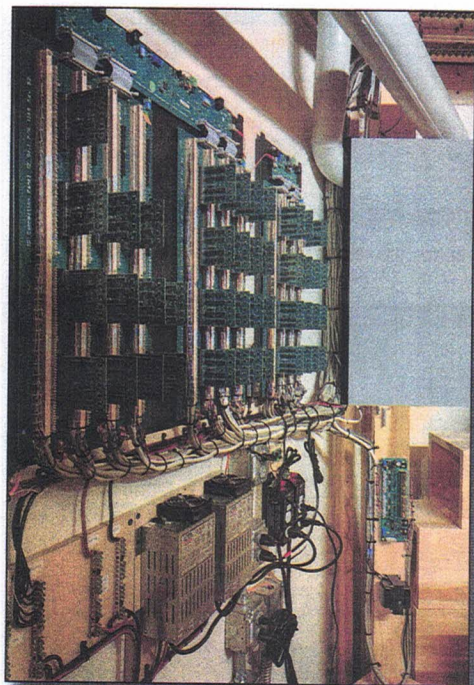
The Solo features four color stops of beautiful and strong quality. The French Horn and English Horn add characteristic flair. The Doppel Flute fills the sanctuary with a solo flute tone that embraces the listener. In contrast, the Tuba crowns the entire organ and adds both gravitas and brilliance to even the fullest of registrations.

The Pedal has a diapason unit that is available at full compass on the Solo as the Major Diapason. This broad principal tone grounds the organ. A prompt Bourdon of full tone extends down into the 32' range. The fire of the Pedal comes from an uncompromising 16' Trombone with brazen and full-bodied tone.

Mechanically, Quimby instruments feature our version of the Blackinton slider windchest, distinguished by a pneumatic pallet design and the absence of slider seals, allowing for the flue pipes in each division to speak without the "explosive attack" experienced by individual valves, since each note shares a common channel with the other ranks. The reed ranks and offsets are on electropneumatic pouch-style windchests.

These tonal resources are integrated into a striking Neogothic case built by New Holland Church Furniture of New Holland, Pennsylvania. The organ is controlled through the Virtuoso system, built by Integrated Organ Technologies of Alpharetta, Georgia. These elements of architecturally inspired tonal design and a versatile control system have combined to create a magnificent instrument of visual and tonal beauty that will surprise and delight all who see, hear, and play it.





Virtuoso control system

Quimby Pipe Organs would like to thank everyone at First Presbyterian Church, especially Will Young, Wilfred Neal, Ben Treece, and Jim Tyndall, for all their attention to detail as this project came to be. We would also like to offer our sincerest thanks to Diane and Gloria at the front desk, who delivered countless packages to us throughout the installation.

Those at Quimby Pipe Organs who made contributions to the building and installation of this fine instrument are Michael Quimby, president and tonal director; Eric Johnson, head reed voicer; Joseph Nielsen, flue voicer; Brian Seever, service department manager and lead installer; Daniel Sliger, woodshop foreman and lead installer; Charles Ford, project designer; Chris Emerson, executive assistant and lead installer; and the following production team members: Chirt Touch, Anthony Soun, Mahoney Soun, Bailey Tucker, Bryce Munson, Noah Lipham, Baylee Martin, and Aime Touch. Special thanks to Amory Atkins, Joshua Wood, and Terence Atkin of the Organ Clearing House for sharing their expertise in rigging, winding, and general organbuilding throughout the installation.

**Brian Seever** is the manager of the service department at Quimby Pipe Organs, tuning and overseeing the maintenance of over 100 instruments. He is also involved with installations and other major projects.

Cover photo: Cierra Christian

Article photos: Brian Seever

## First Presbyterian Church • Charlotte, North Carolina

### Quimby Pipe Organs • Warrensburg, Missouri

Opus 79 • Four manuals, 54 ranks

#### GREAT

16 Double Open Diapason  
8 Open Diapason  
8 Harmonic Flute  
8 Bourdon  
8 Violoncello (Ped.)  
8 Dulciana (Ch.)  
4 Octave  
4 Spire Flute  
2 $\frac{3}{4}$  Twelfth  
2 Fifteenth  
1 $\frac{1}{2}$  Mixture IV  
8 Bassoon (Ch.)  
8 Trumpet  
8 Tuba (Solo)  
Chimes

#### SWELL

8 Open Diapason  
8 Chimney Flute  
8 Gamba  
8 Voix céleste (GG)  
8 Flauto Dolce  
8 Flute Celeste (TC)  
4 Octave  
4 Triangle Flute  
2 $\frac{3}{4}$  Nazard  
2 Fifteenth  
2 Flageolet  
1 $\frac{3}{4}$  Tierce  
2 Mixture IV-V  
16 Contra Trumpet  
8 Trumpet  
8 Oboe  
4 Clarion

#### CHOIR

16 Contra Dulciana  
8 Geigen Diapason  
8 Flauto Traverso  
8 Dulciana  
8 Unda Maris (TC)  
4 Octave  
4 Harmonic Flute  
2 Harmonic Piccolo  
1 Mixture III-IV  
16 Bassoon  
8 Bassoon (ext.)  
8 Clarinet  
8 Tuba (Solo)

#### SOLO

16 Contra Dulciana (Ch.)  
8 Major Diapason (ext. Ped.)  
8 Dulciana (Ch.)  
8 Doppel Flute  
4 Dulcet (Ch.)  
16 Bassoon (Ch.)  
8 French Horn  
8 English Horn  
8 Bassoon (Ch.)  
8 Oboe (Sw.)  
8 Tuba  
4 Tuba Clarion (ext.)

#### PEDAL

32 Contra Bourdon  
16 Open Diapason  
16 Bourdon (ext.)  
16 Violone  
16 Contra Dulciana (Ch.)  
8 Octave (ext.)  
8 Bourdon (ext.)  
8 Violone (ext.)  
8 Dulciana (Ch.)  
4 Super Octave (ext.)  
32 Contra Bassoon (Ch.)  
16 Trombone  
16 Contra Trumpet (Sw.)  
16 Bassoon (ext.)  
8 Tromba (ext.)  
8 Trumpet (Sw.)  
8 Bassoon (Ch.)  
8 Oboe (Sw.)  
4 Clarion (Sw.)  
8 Tuba (Solo)