

First Presbyterian Church Jackson, Mississippi





I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

### CASAVANT ORGAN, OPUS 3862

#### A New Pipe Organ for First Presbyterian Church

The Bible commands that music, especially congregational singing, be a major part of worship. Since nothing can excel the pipe organ in leading the music of worship, we resolved to include a pipe organ as part of the new sanctuary. The Session appointed Alan Walters (Chairman), Robert Cunningham and Bill Wymond as the Organ Committee. After lengthy discussions with several major organ builders, the Committee asked the venerable Canadian firm, Casavant Frères, Limitee, to build the organ. With over one hundred twenty-five years of experience, Casavant is recognized internationally as a respected builder that produces instruments of outstanding musical quality.

Pipe organs can have a very long lifespan. Many organs in European churches have been serving for more than two-hundred years, some more than three-hundred years. Of those, a large number are found in Germany, Holland and France. Most of the major church organs of Paris date from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. With the restoration of the playing and winding mechanism every fifty or so years, these instruments have continued to sing forth beautifully right up to this present day.

In that historic spirit of continuity, we have included pipes and some mechanisms of our previous pipe organs in our new organ. In the Echo Organ division, located at the rear balcony of the church, there are pedal pipes from the 1903 Henry Pilcher organ, our first pipe organ located in the Yazoo and North State Street church building. From our most recent organ we retained stops that were given through the years as memorials. These are notated in the specification of the organ listed in this brochure. The voicers of Casavant have carefully blended the old pipe work with the new to create a beautiful and cohesive tone.

As to the selection of stops, our organ is modeled after the work of the outstanding early 20th Century American builder, Ernest M. Skinner. The design of the Skinner organs works especially well for the style of music of our congregation. These organs have the ability to play all kinds of musical literature, the potential for dramatic volume and tonal variations and the flexibility to play the variety of accompaniments required by our service music. Classified as American Romantic instruments, Skinner organs were considered by far to have the most elegant tone. At the time many major American churches had a Skinner organ. One organ historian said that no self-respecting New York City church would have anything other than a Skinner!

With regard to the tonal ensemble our organ reflects the sound of Casavant organs. The solo stops of our organ sound like a Skinner organ. E. M. Skinner had a keen ear for beautiful tone. He knew organ pipes thoroughly and had the ability to create new organ stops of exquisite tonal color. His solo organ stops, those that imitate the English Horn, Orchestral Oboe, French Horn, Basset Horn and Heckelphone, are highly prized to this day. His quiet, heavenly-sounding soft stops, such as the Spitzflute Celeste and Klein Erzahler, are considered to be unrivaled for their beauty.

When we began to design our organ, we hoped to find some of these very special solo stop pipes made by Skinner to include in our organ. We inquired extensively through various means but could find none available. Knowledgeable organ people and churches that have such stops know of their special quality and have retained them. However, quite unexpectedly, as we were in discussions with the Casavant firm, we discovered that they were storing for a Toledo, Ohio, church some of the very Skinner stops we were seeking. The Trinity Episcopal Church decided for spatial and economic reasons not to include them in their new Casavant organ. They agreed to sell us these stops. They are located in our Solo and Echo Divisions.



#### A Look at the Various Divisions of the Organ:

As with all pipe organs, ours is made up of several divisions, actually six, each one a separate organ in itself. These divisions are assigned to one of the manuals (keyboards). There is also a keyboard for the feet to play, the Pedal Division. All divisions can be played independently of the others or can be combined, using the coupler tabs which are located across the board at the top of the keyboards. Each division has a unique tonal character and some stops not found on the other divisions. We will explain the purpose of each division and something about its unique stops.



The Choir Organ/Division, the bottom manual, now gets its name from its intended use, to accompany the Choir. It is located in the chamber behind the back arch on the south side of the choir loft. Historically, this division has had stops that are especially suited to accompaniment, i.e., softer, gentler sounds. We designed this division to do that. As well, we gave it enough bolder stops so it could stand alone even in accompanying congregational singing. This division includes a number of fine stops retained from our previous instrument as you can see from the notations affixed to the specification.

Noteworthy stops include the 8' Spitz flute (actually a Spitzprincipal) which was originally found in the Choir division of the 1931 Skinner organ in the chapel at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut. This organ, designed by G. Donald Harrison, was the first to reflect his ideas about a new tonal direction called the "American Classic Organ." The voicing of this very stop, along with a couple of others, indicated the tonal direction that those organs would take. We acquired this stop about eight years ago. The 8' Viola and Viola Celeste are exact copies of stops found on the Aeolian-Skinner organs at the Morman Tabernacle and the Riverside Church in New York.

The Great Organ/Division, the second manual is, as its name implies, the major division of the organ by virtue of its function: it is intended to lead the hymn singing and to play the majestic anthems and postludes. Located behind the screened panels on either side of the dossal curtain, its stops are bold in voicing. The principal pipes are located on the left side of the curtain, and the flutes and reeds are located on the right side. Almost all of the pipes of this division are newly made by Casavant, with the exception of the twelve lowest pipes of the 16' Trombone stop retained from the 1952 Moller Organ. A noteworthy stop of this division, the 8' Harmonic Flute, is scaled and voiced like those of the famous 19th Century French builder, Cavaille-Coll, the builder of the organs of Notre Dame and St. Sulpice of Paris. The reeds (trumpets) are English in character.

The Swell Organ/Division, the third manual, is particularly flexible and is valuable both for accompanying and for hymn playing. This division is located behind the front arch on the north side of the choir loft. Because the reeds (trumpets) are French, with Cavaille-Coll style shallots, the whole division takes on the more brilliant character of that 19th Century master builder's work. Other noteworthy stops include the 8' Salicional and 8' Voix Celeste, which are scaled and voiced in the Cavaille-Coll manner. The 4' Triangular Flute, which has triangular shaped wooden pipes, has a bright and charming quality. Uncommon in organs today, it was copied from pipes made by the Henry Wills firm in England and sent to Skinner in 1924. These stops were afterwards always found on Skinner organs. The 8' Cor d'Amoure, a stop developed by Skinner and copied by Casavant, has a hauntingly beautiful

sound. Our version of this stop is the first Casavant has built. They are so delighted with it that they have resolved to use it on other new organs they build.

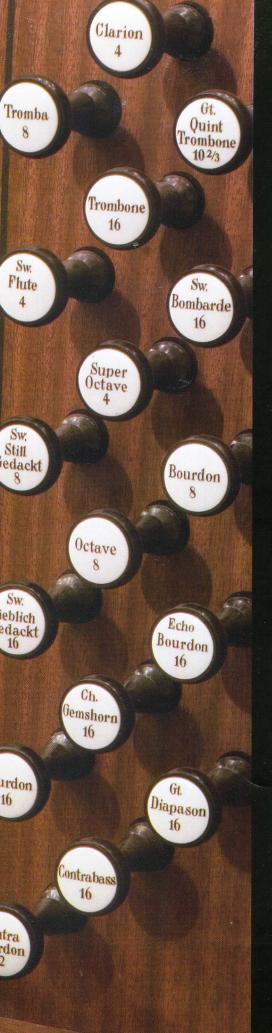
The Solo Organ/Division, the fourth, or top, manual has stops that are used to play solo melodies. This division is located behind the front arch on the south side of the choir loft. Of particular interest are its original and historical stops made by the Skinner Company for the Toledo, Ohio, church mentioned above. These include the 8' Harmonic Tuba (the most powerful trumpet stop on the organ, which dates from 1909) and the 8' Gamba and Gamba Celeste, dating from 1916, which are very broad and large-scaled strings that flair out toward the top of the pipes. Other unique stops are the 8' Corno di Bassetto (Basset Horn), which is a large-scaled Clarinet, and the 8' Orchestral Oboe, a stop made to sound particularly like oboes

found in symphony orchestras. Rare is the 8' Heckelphone, a stop found on only about ten organs in the USA. Developed by Skinner, this stop imitates its orchestral counterpart, an instrument built by the famous German bassoon manufacturer at the request of the composer Richard Strauss for his early 20th Century operas "Solome" and "Electra." Actually, an alto English Horn, this stop has a dark, piquant tone. Our stop was crafted for us by the Vermont-based Broome Company, a father/son team of highly respected independent pipe voicers. They were aided in this project by the curators of the magnificent Skinner Organ located in Woolsey Hall at Yale University, Nicolas Thompson Allen and Joseph Dzeda, who generously lent pipes from the heckelphone stop of that organ so our craftsmen could get our pipes just right.

The Echo Organ/Division, a floating division which plays on any manual to which it may be assigned, contains only three stops. The pipes are located in a chamber in the tower of the church and speak into the rear balcony through openings in the south wall. The manual stops are both vintage Skinner pipes from the Toledo church. They are both described by Skinner as the most beautiful of all organ stops. The Klein Erzahler 8', dating from 1916, is a very soft and gentle stop whose name, translated from the German, means small story teller. The pipes of the Spitzflute Celeste 8', dating from 1909, is the first-ever example of this stop combination made by Skinner. It is also a very gentle, dreamy sounding stop, and is perfectly suited to play quiet interludes or background music for Communion Services as is its principal intent. The Bourdon 16' pedal pipes of the Echo, built by the Pilcher firm, date from our first pipe organ of 1903 which was installed in the building located on the corner of Yazoo and States Steets.

The Pedal Organ/Division is controlled by the thirty-two pedal keys played by the organist's feet. The pipes of this division are located behind the back arch on the north side of the choir loft. The pipes of this division extend in length to about eighteen feet as they play the lowest notes of all. The bulk of these pipes were carried over from our former organ. One stop extends down to the 32' pitch range, which is only sixteen cycles per second, about the lowest pitch any organ has.





#### STOPLIST OF THE CASAVANT ORGAN, OPUS 3862

GREAT ORGAN	
Double Diapason	16'
First Diapason	8'
Second Diapason	8'
Harmonic Flute	8'
Gross Quint	5 1/3'
Octave	4'
Flute	4'
Twelfth	2 2/3'
Fifteenth	2'
Mixture IV	1 1/3'
Contra Tromba [1]	16'
Tromba [2]	8'
Clarion	4'
Chimes	
[1] Gift of Dr. and Mrs. L	ynn Stringer
[2] Memorial to Evie and	B. G. Horton
and Edna M. Edgar	

#### **SWELL ORGAN**

Bourdon	16
Diapason	8'
Gedackt	8'
Salicional	8'
Voix Celeste	8'
Octave	4'
Flute Triangulaire	4'
Fifteenth	2'
Mixture V	2'
Bombarde	16'
French Trumpet	8'
Corno d'Amore	8'
Vox Humana	8'
Clarion	4'
Tremolo	
Swell Sub	
Swell Unison Off	
Swell Supe	
1	

#### CHOIR ORGAN

Gemshorn	[1]	16'
Spitz Flute	[2]	8'
Concert Flute	[1]	8'
Viola		8'
Viola Celeste		8'
Octave		4'
Flute	[1]	4'
Nazard	[1]	2 2/3'
Piccolo		2'
Tierce	[1]	1 3/5'
Plein Jeu IV		2' 8'
Cromorne	[1]	8'
Orchestral Oboe	[Solo]	8'
Carillon	[3]	
Tremolo		
Choir Sub		
Choir Unison Of	f	
Choir Super		
[1] From previou		
Memorial to	Mr. Ğeo1	ge Curtis Bailey
[2] From E. M. S.	kinner 85	Ĭ
[3] From previou	ıs organ:	
Memorial to	Paul Dav	is Cannada

COT		
SOL	1 (1)	
		TA

CCEC CROILI		
Gamba	[1]	8'
Gamba Celeste	[1]	8'
Orchestral Flute	[2]	4'
Harmonic Tuba	[3]	8'
Corno di Bassetto	[4]	8'
Heckelphone	[5]	8'
French Horn	[1]	8'
Orchestral Oboe	[6]	8'
Tremolo		
Solo Sub		
Solo Super		
[1] From E. M. Skinner, O	Opus 258,	1916
[2] Gift of Mr. and Mrs. I	Larry Edw	ards $\degree$
[3] From E. M. Skinner, G		1909
[4] New, from Casavant, v		
[5] From Broome Compa		
[6] Vintage Casavant pipe	es	

#### PEDAL ORGAN

Contra Bourdon		32"
Diapason		16'
Contrabass		16'
Bourdon	[1]	16'
Lieblich Gedackt	(Sw)	16'
Bourdon	[2] (Ec)	
Gemshorn		
	[1] (Ch)	
Octave	[1]	8'
Bourdon		8'
Still Gedackt	(Sw)	8'
Super Octave		4'
Flute	(Sw)	4'
Trombone		16'
Bombarde	(Sw)	16'
Quint Trombone	(Sw) (Gt)	10 2/3
Tromba		8'
Clarion		4'
[1] From previous organ:		
Memorial to Dr. Gira	ard I owe	
Michighal to Di. Olla	ard EOWC	

## [2] Pilcher, Opus 424 ECHO ORGAN

Spitz Flute Celeste II Klein Erzahler II

Orchestral Flute

Tremolo	[6]
Chimes	[4]
Harp ·	[2]
Echo Super	
Echo Sub	
[1] From E. M. Skinn	er, Opus 165
[2] From E. M. Skinn	er, Opus 258
[3] From E. M. Skinne	er, Opus 369
[4] Deagan Class A: F	rom previous organ

8' 8'

[1] [2] [3]

Analysis:	Stops:	Ranks:	Pipes:
Great	12	15	927
Swell	13	17	1063
Choir	12	15	903
Solo	8	8	502
Echo	3	5	281
Pedal	5	5.	220
	52		200/



## Special Gifts and Memorials for the Organ

We want to express sincere gratitude for the very substantial gift of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Robertson which, in large measure, has made possible the purchase of this wonderful pipe organ for our church family. Our original Organ Fund, established by Dr. and Mrs. H. Richard Johnson, was used to purchase all of the historical stops found in the Solo and Echo Divisions. Other gifts have been received as memorials to the Organ Fund. To all who have given we say thank you for us and for the generations to come whose worship will be enriched by the leadership of this instrument. Memorial gifts previously given toward stops in our former organ, all of which were carried over to the new instrument, are listed in the footnotes to the specification.

To God be the Glory!



# First Presbyterian Church

Established 1837
1390 North State Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39202
601.353.8316 • www.fpcjackson.org

Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III, Senior Minister