

May 4, 1975 was a special day in the history of the church when the newly rebuilt and remodeled pipe organ was dedicated. The work was done by Leonard Berghaus Organ Builders of Maywood, Illinois under the direction of Dr. Thomas Gieschen, associate professor of music at Concordia College in River Forest, Illinois. It included a new façade, pipes, a new Great Organ (that part of the organ that has pipes of the largest scale and loudest tone), and several new pedal and sole stops making a total of 54 ranks. A rank is a set of pipes of the same timbre but multiple pitches (one for each note on the keyboard) which is mounted vertically onto a windchest (a reservoir for supplying air under pressure to the pipes).

One of the most remembered organists was Mrs. Jane H. Chipman who was the organist from 1976-1987. In 1977, she began the Lenten Organ Series at the First Congregational Church and after her retirement in 1987 the program was renamed the Jane Hampton Chipman Lenten Organ Series in her honor. Lent is the forty days in the Christian calendar leading up to Easter, it is a time for prayer, fasting and self-sacrifice.

Mrs. Chipman was born April 15, 1909 in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, the daughter of Harvey Hampton and Jessie Langdon. After graduating from the local public schools, she attended Lawrence College in Appleton, Wisconsin and the Chicago Conservatory of Music in Chicago where she studied piano and organ. She came to Elgin in 1937 and became the church organist and music director at the First United Methodist Church where she remained until 1972.

In addition to her church duties, Mrs. Chipman also taught organ and piano and student recitals were often given at the Elgin Academy. She met her future husband, C. Dean Chipman, who was the Director of the Art Gallery at the Academy in 1940 and they were married in 1943.

Throughout the years, Mr. and Mrs. Chipman were strong advocates for the arts in Elgin and among the long list of honors given to Mrs. Chipman included receiving the first YWCA's Margaret Hillis Leadership Award for the Arts in 1984. Mrs. Chipman died on November 20, 2005 at the age of 96.