

## TRINITY METHODIST

# Old Movie House Organ Dedicated for Church Use

By CARL BURGEN

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A gaudy organ, shaped like a horseshoe, entertained moviegoers a generation ago in a small theater in San Angelo. Today that same organ, more austere finished, provided the music for a Dallas church that until a month ago relied on an upright piano.

Now valued at \$40,000, the organ was dedicated Sunday at the old Trinity Methodist Church at Pearl and McKinney. It was donated to the church by the congregation's organists, Mr. and Mrs. Weldon Flanagan Jr.

The couple, who married last

April, bought a new home at 7030 Haverford, and decided that the organ which Mr. Flanagan had kept in his home for years, had no place in their new quarters.

"We thought about selling it," Mr. Flanagan said. "But when we decided the church could really use it and we knew we would both enjoy playing it there, so we decided to give it to the church."

Mr. Flanagan plays for the morning service and Mrs. Flanagan, who also directs the children's Vesper Choir at the church, plays in the evening, when Mr. Flanagan is providing entertainment to Palace

Theater patrons between movies, his regular job.

The organ traveled a circuitous route to the Trinity Methodist Church. From the San Angelo movie house, it went to a little church in the same city. When the church bought a new organ, Mr. Flanagan bought the old one.

## OLD ORGAN QUIT

For years he kept it at his home. Then when he was married, he and his wife decided that if the organ was stripped of its theater covering and repaired, it could be used by their church.

"The old organ at the church, which had been there about 50 years, finally just quit in May," Mr. Flanagan said. "Since then the congregation has been using the piano."

John Fort, a Dallas organ builder and longtime friend of Mr. Flanagan, repaired the organ and built a completely new case for it. The pipes from the original organ in the church are being used with the repaired Flanagan console.

## STILL NOT COMPLETE

"The organ is still not complete although we have been using it several Sundays already," Mrs. Flanagan said. "It will take about another month to finish it."

The organ was dedicated Sunday at the Trinity Church in conjunction with a service and hymn festival in honor of Charles Wesley, composer of many Methodist hymns.

Mr. Flanagan has been playing for services at the church for about six years with short breaks. His wife began playing there when the two started going together.

He is the organist at the Palace Theater. He spent a year repairing the Palace organ in 1950 and in 1951 began his seven years of theater playing.

Mrs. Flanagan, the former Mary Cole, played the instrument with the Cole Sisters at the State Fair annually and before the Variety Club.



## FROM THEATER TO CHURCH

Mr. and Mrs. Weldon Flanagan, organists at the Trinity Methodist Church, take a break from practicing on the organ they donated recently to the church. The organ was dedicated Sunday in a service commemorating Charles Wesley, who wrote many Methodist hymns. The organ came originally from a San Angelo theater, later was used by a church and was bought by Mr. Flanagan from the church. He plays the organ Sunday mornings and his wife plays it for the evening services.—Times Herald Staff Photo.