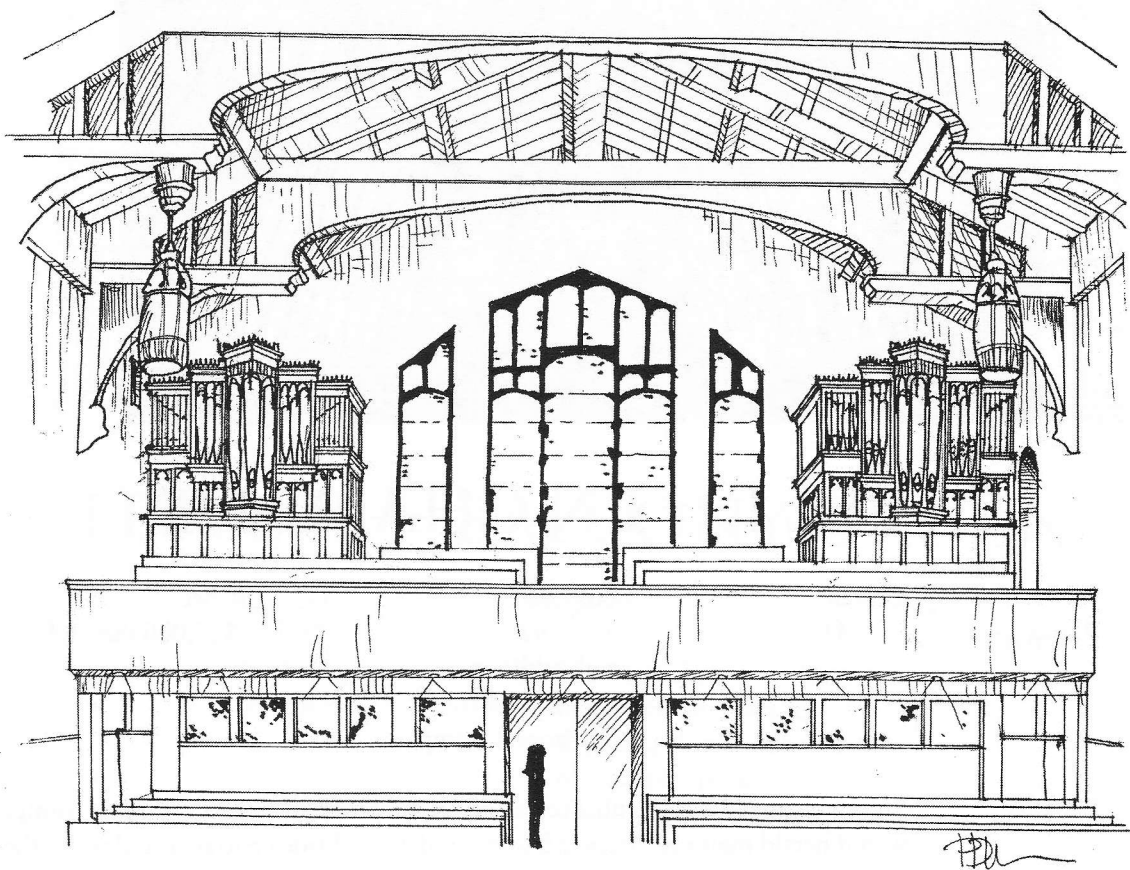
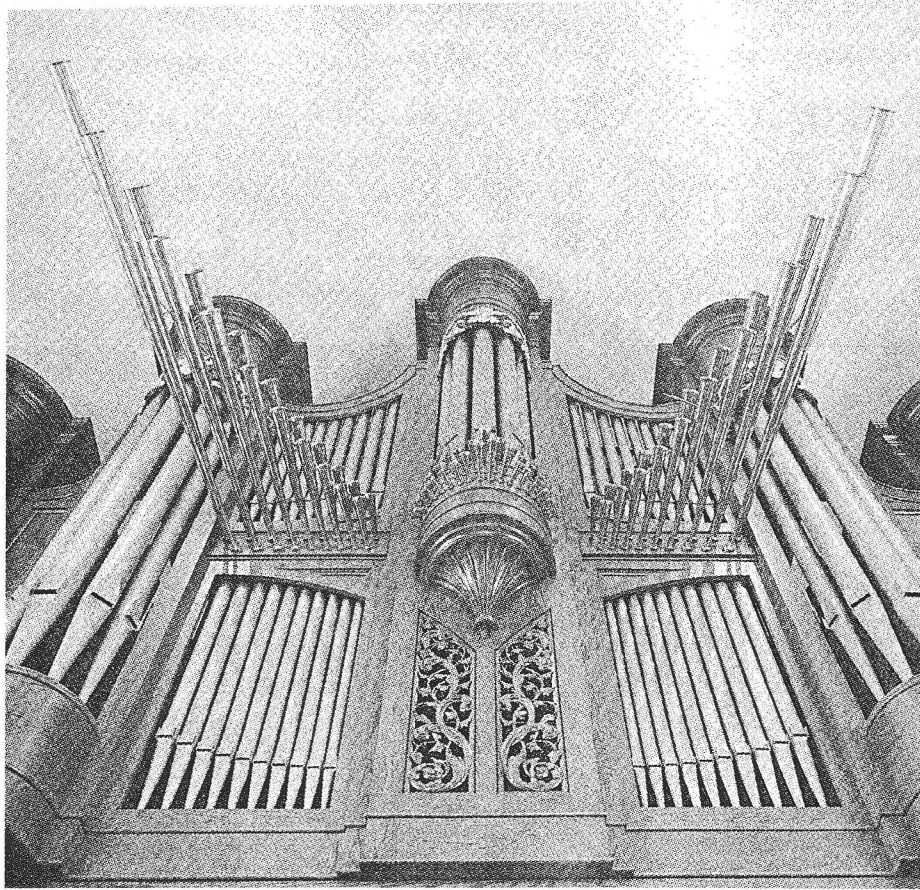


# THE FULLFILLMENT OF A DREAM...



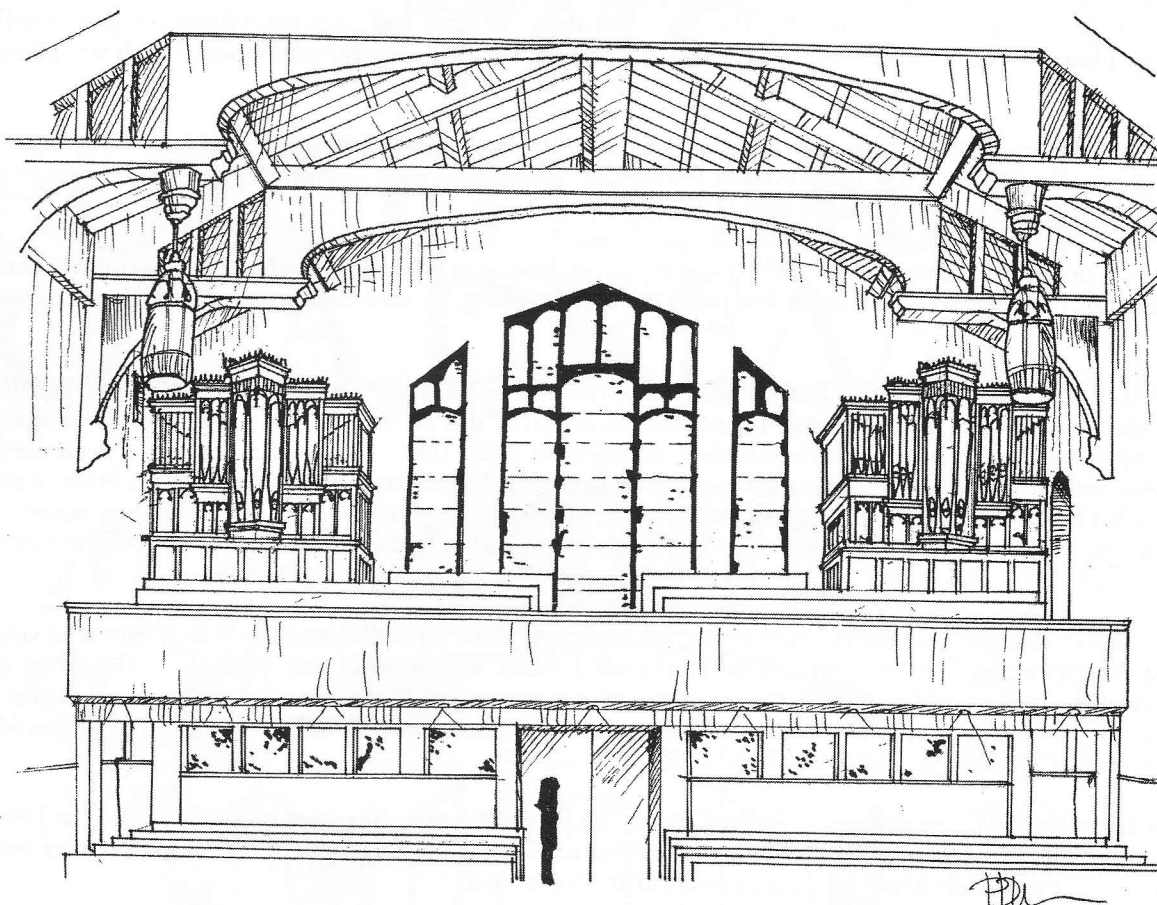
PLANS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT  
OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH PIPE ORGAN



## LEVEL I — EN CHAMADE

	Current	Proposed	Cost
Ranks	41	42 with addition of 1 rank en chamade (horizontal trumpet)	\$27,000.00

**Benefits:** The en chamade would enhance the organ in two ways. First, the fanfare trumpet would herald major events, i.e. Easter Sunday, the bride's entrance and walk, the 150th anniversary worship service. Second, these horizontal gold pipes are lofty and beautiful to see—a finishing touch to an already elegant facade.



## LEVEL II — BALCONY ORGAN

Ranks	Current	Proposed	Cost
	42	48	\$150,000.00
	(including en chamade)	Additional 6 ranks to be part of balcony facade.	
		1. 4' principal in antiphonal	
		2. 8' viola pomposa	
		3. 8' viola pomposa celeste	
		4. 8' flute harmonique	
		5. 8' clarinet	
		6. 8' open diapason (bottom pipes in case)	

### Benefits:

The addition of six ranks of pipes is again two-fold. First, the pipes would add colorful sounds, mainly solo voices and some beautiful strings, as well as some fundamental sounds to boost congregational singing from the balcony (for a more "surround" sound, if you will). Second, the balcony pipes have become an eyesore over the years. The fake pipes are badly dented and bent. The new facade would have sounding pipes and would match the front facade, but on a smaller scale. This blend of sight and sound would be a fitting contribution to the celebration of our 150th anniversary.

# THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ORGAN

In 1923, a generous gift by the Higginson family made it possible for First Presbyterian Church to acquire an organ from the Pilcher Organ Company of Louisville, Kentucky. The organ had about 20 stops and three main divisions: great, swell, and pedal which were placed in the organ chamber which is still in use, plus a small antiphonal division, which was placed in the balcony.

The large group of pipes in the organ chamber were screened by a set of gold—lacquered pipes, most of which were non—speaking, simply providing a decorative facade for the instrument. These pipes were similar to, but somewhat larger than, the gold non—speaking pipes which are currently seen in the balcony.

The new organ was dedicated in <sup>24 Oct. 1924</sup> ~~December, 1923~~. It was typical of American church organs built in this country between 1900 and 1935, an era that has been described as the low point in organ building. Former organists described the sound as “loud, but muddy.”

During the 1960s and 1970s two modest projects were undertaken to improve the sound of the instrument. In 1961 three ranks of pipes were replaced and the whole instrument cleaned. A part of this project was the purchase of a new three manual console, replacing the original console which was literally falling apart at the time. The console, purchased from the Reuter Organ Company, and the new pipes were installed by Robert Geisler. In 1973 three new ranks of pipes, a mixture and a Zimbelstern were added by Mr. Geisler. These projects increased the number of stops to 23. Although some new voices had been added, those church members with a knowledge of organ music continued to be concerned about the tonal deficiencies of the instrument.

The year 1986 marked the 63rd year the instrument had faithfully served us. In addition to the lack or variety of voices, it was becoming apparent that the mechanical work, including the wind chests, were in a sad state of repair. In the spring of 1987 the Session's Worship Committee appointed an organ committee to investigate the mechanical and tonal needs and to develop suitable proposals for the rebuilding of the instrument. Committee members were Ed Walker, moderator, Gordon McQuere, Jim Lilly, Jim Richards, Jan Bodine, and Becky Ward (ex—officio).

The committee consulted with Mac Range, of Range Organ Company, Mesquite, Texas, who had been hired in 1986 to maintain the organ. An initial proposal to rebuild the instrument was received from Mr. Range in 1987. Several other organ builders were contacted, but none expressed an interest in submitting a proposal.

Eventually the Range proposal was sub—divided into four possible choices which the organ committee submitted to the Session on March 16, 1988. Because plans were being formulated for capital improvements needed to carry the church into the 21st century, the Session deferred any decision on the organ until those plans were completed.

Meanwhile, Waco experienced one of the most severe cold spells in its history in late December, 1989. The extended period of below freezing temperatures resulted in such severe damage to the wind chests that the organ became largely unplayable. On Christmas Eve, 1989, one day shy of the 66th anniversary of the dedication of the Higginson Organ, the congregation observed the annual Christmas Eve service using a piano instead of the organ.

In early 1990, the Session committed the church to the proposal of rebuilding the organ, adding new voices. This proposal included the removal of the existing facade pipes and the building of a new facade which would house a full complement of speaking pipes. Because the major fundraising effort for the Capital Improvements Program was a year away, a special contract was proposed by Mr. Range. Under this plan Range would rebuild a part of the organ in such a way that the balance of the original proposal could be completed. This limited initial project was financed with funds available in the Organ Fund, the Golden Memory Memorial Fund and the church's Plant Replacement Fund. The initial project was completed in December, 1990.

After the First Into the 21st Fund Campaign in the fall of 1990, the Session authorized a contract in mid—1991 for the balance of the proposal. The work was completed in May, 1992, and the rebuilt organ was dedicated in morning worship on Sunday, September 20, 1992. Former organists of the church, Valinda Ashworth and Frank Carney, joined Becky Ward, present organist, in playing during the worship service. On the afternoon of the same day, Mark Scott of St. Stephen Church, Fort Worth, played a special dedicatory recital.

In early 1999, a newly rebuilt console was purchased from and installed by Range Organ Company using funds provided by the Organ Fund and the Golden Memory Memorial Fund. Installation of the new, larger console required expansion of the Chancel area, which was accomplished by Barrett Building Company and the C. M. Trautschold Company, both of Waco, using wood left from earlier renovations to the chancel. Later in that same year, gifts were made by two families in the church to purchase an enhanced, variable speed Zimbelstern and a set of replacement chimes.