

The Farwell Memorial Organ

A Brief History of the Farwell Memorial Organ

Mr. Arthur Farwell, a friend of Tryon Presbyterian Church, gave \$150,000 to build a pipe organ as a memorial to his son, Frederick B. Farwell (1931-1979). A committee was appointed by Rev. John D. Smith to make recommendations to the Session for the purchase of a suitable organ. The committee consisted of: Eric Larson, Ruth Wright, Jack Allen, George Finnie, Tom Grenfell and Betty Brewer, church organist. Consultants to assist the committee were: Hans Vigeland, Mrs. John D. Smith, Ken Smith and Dr. Richard Peek.

After extensive study of the Austin, Cassavant, Wicks, and Möller organ companies, the committee recommended the Möller organ to the Session of the church.

The organ was delivered May 27, 1982 and installed by David Nelms & Associates of Charlotte, North Carolina.

On June 13, 1982, Lee Erwin of New York City played the Dedicatory Concert which also honored the retirement of Rev. John D. Smith on June 30, 1982.

An organ committee consisting of Nancy Dunn, Betty Brewer, Eric Larson, Betty Ross, Don Borden, Ruth Wright, and chaired by Bill Wuehrmann, oversaw repairs and upgrades that were completed in 1999. Significant gifts from several members of the church initiated this work. Several of the upgrades included the Harmonic Trumpet stop and the 32' Contra Basson pedal stop. Additional electronic digital stops were also added during this renovation.

A new (movable) organ console was added in 2017. The Swell Division pipes were removed and replaced by all digitals. To date, there are now 19 ranks of existing pipes and 33 new digital ranks. This renovation was completed by Cornell Zimmer Organbuilders from Denver, NC.

The organ has four divisions playable from a three manual and pedal console located in the center of the choir loft. Swell and Positive divisions are located in four tiers behind the reredos. The exposed Great and Pedal divisions are located on each side of the reredos. Pipes are also located on platforms behind rock walls on each side of the choir loft.