

The Pipe Organ of Trinity Parish, Wethersfield, Connecticut

Trinity Parish's pipe organ started its life as a small Austin Organ, Opus 1361. When initially installed, the high altar was approximately where the chancel steps are now located. The organ pipes were placed in a transept built for that purpose (home now to the side altar). The organ console was placed outside the transept in the area now occupied by nave pews. With the expansion of the church building in 1963 the Austin was moved to its present chamber location in which it now resides. In 1981, Russell & Company Organ Builders of Cambridgeport, Vermont, were contracted to enlarge, and mechanically modify the instrument.

Foley-Baker, Inc., of Tolland, Connecticut, took over tuning and maintenance of the Trinity Parish pipe organ in 1992. Soon after doing so, a detailed plan was put forth to complete the tonal and mechanical changes began a decade earlier. Further tonal additions, made possible through generous bequests and donations, were carefully selected by Trinity's Organist, Mr. Bruce R. Henley. They included a new 16 foot Bassoon in the Swell Division, a 4 foot Harmonic Flute in the Pedal, plus an 8 foot Cremona, a 8 foot Harmonic Flute and 4 foot Octave in the Great Division.

In 2001, trouble struck the Trinity Parish organ in the form of a roof leak. Water damaged many of the organ's pipes and some internal mechanisms. The necessary repairs, which included removing and repairing numerous pipes and completely reconditioning the Great Division wind chest, were undertaken in August of that year.

The internal wiring and contact corrosion problems throughout the instrument prompted replacing the organ's mechanical relay and switching components. In their place was installed a state of the art, computerized relay system built by Artisan Classics of Ontario, Canada. This system has greatly improved the organ action's speed and reliability as well as enhancing the organist's musical options through improved console ergonomics and the addition of multi-level combination actions. Trinity Parish's pipe organ is now a true 21st Century instrument and stands ready to provide beautiful music for many years to come.