



Birmingham, Alabama—First United Methodist Church

Four manuals and pedals, 51 stops, 64 ranks

Detached moveable drawknob console, compass 61/32

Electro-pneumatic action

Schantz Op. 437 (1960); Refurbishment and Enlargement, 2000;

New Echo division, 2002

Photograph: James H. Cook

Built in 1891, the historic sanctuary of First Methodist Church was home to a three-manual, 48-stop Hook & Hastings organ, of which the Pedal Bourdon 32' has been retained in the instruments installed by Möller (1931) and Schantz (1960).

While it was a desire to the client to make the best use of the existing Schantz organ, we were asked to redesign the instrument with a French flair. We made a thorough examination of the existing pipework. In the rebuilt organ, more than half of the pipework comes from the previous instrument. New electro-pneumatic windchests were provided throughout; only the existing Récit main windchests and some offset windchests were retained. The existing expression shutters were rebuilt for greater effectiveness. New Casavant sixteen-stage expression motors were provided.

The tonal concept was essentially new. The commanding Grand Orgue and Bombarde divisions replaced the previous Great and tiny Positiv in façade.

The new Grand Orgue and Bombarde cantilevered divisions were provided with new decorative woodwork. The existing casework was retained.

The Récit was somewhat revised. We did not hesitate to provide new ranks where the existing ones were not satisfactory. The new enclosed Positif combines the best ranks from other divisions. In the Pédale, the new Bombarde 32'-16' provides an impressive undergirding to the foundation of the entire organ. A team of Casavant voicers spent no less than four weeks on site to blend the old pipework with the new ranks into a truly cohesive ensemble.

In 2002, instead of reconnecting the 1931 Möller six-stop Echo division, it was decided to install a new division designed along the same lines as the rebuilt main organ.

This project was done in collaboration with Dr. James Cook, Professor of Music at Birmingham Southern College, and local organ builder Mark Hayes, also Director of Music at First United Methodist Church, who assisted us with many aspects of the project, especially preparation of the site (removal, cleaning, etc.) prior to the organ reinstallation.

The compared specifications follow.

Schantz, 1960		Casavant, 2000-2	
	Great		Grand Orgue
Violone (ext.)	16	Montre (new, bass common with Pedal)	16
Principal (revoiced, 1996)	8	Montre (new)	8
Violone	8	Violon (existing)	8
Bourdon	8		
Octave	4	Prestant (new)	4
Harmonic Flute	4		
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃		
Fifteenth	2	Doublette (new)	2
Fourniture IV	1 ¹ / ₃	Fourniture IV-V (new)	1 ¹ / ₃
Trumpet (from Swell, 1978)	8	Bombarde	16
		(existing Posaune, revoiced, ext.)	
		Trompette (new)	8
		Trompette royale (Bombarde)	8
		Bombarde	
		(new division)	
		Flûte à cheminée	8
		Flûte harmonique	8
		Flûte ouverte	4
		Nazard	2 ² / ₃
		Quarte de nazard	2
		Tierce	1 ³ / ₅
		Tremulant	
		Bombarde (ext.)	16
		Trompette royale	8

Swell	
Contra Dolce (ext.)	16
Melodia	8
Viole de Gambe	8
Viole Celeste	8
Flauto Dolce	8
Dolce Celeste	8
Geigen Principal	4
Rohrflöte	4
Octavin	2
Plein Jeu III	
Contra Fagotto (ext.)	16
Trumpet (new, 1978)	8
Fagotto (revoiced, 1978)	8
Vox Humana (existing)	8
Clarion	4
Tremolo	

Choir	
Lieblich Gedeckt (ext.)	16
Spitzprincipal	8
Gedeckt	8
Erzähler	8
Erzähler Celeste	8
Flauto Traverso	4
Nazard	2 ² / ₃
Piccolo	2
Tierce	1 ³ / ₅
Clarinet	8
Tremolo	

Positiv	
Nason Gedeckt	8
Nachthorn	4
Principal	2
Larigot	1 ¹ / ₃
Siffloete	1
Cymbel III	1

Récit	
Contra Dolce (existing, ext.)	16
Flûte majeure (new)	8
Cor de nuit (Écho)	8
Viole de Gambe (rescaled)	8
Voix céleste (rescaled)	8
Flûte douce (existing)	8
Flûte céleste (existing)	8
Octave (new)	4
Flûte octaviante (new)	4
Octavin (new)	2
Plein Jeu III (recomposed)	2
Basson (new)	16
Trompette (new)	8
Hautbois (new)	8
Voix humaine	8
Clairon (new)	4
Tremulant	

Positif	
Bourdon (ext.)	16
Principal (from Great)	8
Voce umana (from Spitzprincipal)	8
Bourdon (existing)	8
Prestant (from Great)	4
Flûte à fuseau (new)	4
Nazard (rescaled)	2 ² / ₃
Quarte de nazard (rescaled)	2
Tierce (rescaled)	1 ³ / ₅
Cymbale IV (recomposed)	² / ₃
Trompette	8
Clarinette (revoiced)	8
Tremulant	
Trompette royale (Bombarde)	8

Bombarde-Echo

(existing Möller, 1931)

Stopped Flute	8
Viole	8
Viole Celeste	8
Waldflute	4
Viole (ext.)	4
Bombarde	8

Écho

(new, 2002)

Bourdon doux (ext.)	16
Cor de nuit	8
Voix angéliques II	8
Principal	4
Flûte d'amour	4
Cor anglais	8
Hautbois (from Récit)	8
Tremulant	

Pédale

Bourdon (existing, ext.)	32
Contrabass	16
Violone (Great)	16
Bourdon	16
Lieblich Gedeckt (Choir)	16
Contra Dolce (Swell)	16
Octave (ext.)	8
Principal (façade)	8
Bourdon (ext.)	8
Violone (Great)	8
Gedeckt (Choir)	8
Dolce (Swell)	8
Choralbass	4
Gedeckt (Choir)	4
Choralbass (ext.)	2

Mixture III	2 2/3
Posaune (ext.)	32
Posaune	16
Contra Fagotto (Swell)	16
Posaune (ext.)	8
Posaune (ext.)	4

Pédale

Bourdon (ext.)	32
Contrebasse	16
(1-12 new, open wood)	
Violonbasse (Grand Orgue)	16
Bourdon	16
Bourdon doux (Positif)	16
Bourdon (Écho)	16
Octave (ext.)	8
Principal	8
Bourdon (ext.)	8
Octave	4
Flûte ouverte (Bombarde)	4
Théorbe III (derived; 10 2/3' + 6 2/5' + 4 4/7')	
Mixture IV (existing)	2 2/3
Contre Bombarde (new, ext.)	32
Bombarde (new)	16
Seconde Bombarde (Gr. Orgue)	16
Basson (Récit)	16
Trompette (ext.)	8
Trompette royale (Bombarde)	8
Clairon (Grand Orgue)	4
Soprano (from Récit Basson)	4