

COVER FEATURE

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WILTON, CONNECTICUT

REUTER ORGAN COMPANY

OPUS 2234



From the Director of Music

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church was organized in 1802, the same year Wilton, Connecticut, was incorporated. The most recent chapter in our long history began in 1972 when the parish left its traditional neo-Gothic stone church building and entered into an exciting, ecumenical "joint venture" with a newly formed congregation that is now known as Wilton Presbyterian Church.

A new church complex, modernist in style, was built to accommodate both churches, Episcopal and Presbyterian, and to be a center open to the entire Wilton community. Since 1972, this facility has housed both independent congregations, each with its own dedicated worship space; however, all of the other rooms (offices, classrooms, meeting spaces, parish hall, etc.) are held in common. Aspects of several ministries (especially the church school, youth programs, and adult education) are lived out together, and the two congregations come together at various times during the year for joint worship.

The "new" St. Matthew's worship space, dedicated in 1972, included a mechanical-action pipe organ that was built by Hellmuth Wolff (Opus 5) and

graciously donated by David and Sylvia Keiser. This organ served the parish well until the recent renovation of the church's worship space. Fortunately, the Wolff organ now has a happy home at St. David's Episcopal Church in Topeka, Kansas (quite a coincidence that one organ went from Wilton to Kansas while another was making the opposite trip!).

In 1999, a facilities committee began to look at the current conditions of the nearly 30-year-old building. There was the desire to renovate the chancel space to make it more flexible for worship, concerts, and other events. There was also a desire to increase the amount of light that fills the space, both by improving the artificial light and especially by increasing the amount of natural light with the addition of a large new window.

A centerpiece of our dream was a new organ. Through the years, the music program had grown considerably. The choral ensembles, including boys, girls, and adults, had been expanded, and now there was a dynamic youth choir (grades 7–12) singing nearly every Sunday. The choir loft could no longer accommodate all of the choristers, and sight lines were impossible from the

fixed console (often half the choir could not see the organist-director). While our former organ played some periods of music well (especially from the Baroque and earlier), it was becoming more and more obvious that there were limitations as to what choral repertoire and organ literature could be offered. Increasingly, more anthems were accompanied from the piano, so that we could expand our range of repertoire and improve sight lines for the choir.

By 2007, vestry decisions had been made, a congregational vote taken, architects hired, and the parish prepared to embark upon a capital campaign for the church renovation and expansion; however, there was concern over whether we could feasibly raise enough money to do everything and provide for an adequate pipe organ. In an amazing act of grace and generosity, John and Mary Brock, parishioners at St. Matthew's, came forward and offered to fund the new organ—a gift that would be given in memory of John's mother, Anise McDaniel Brock, who was a talented organist.

Initially, ten different builders were considered. Visits were made to numerous churches in northeastern, mid-Atlantic, and southern states. Eventually, the search was narrowed to three builders. After visits to Reuter installations in Allentown and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Alexandria, Louisiana; Virginia Beach, Virginia; and Norwalk, Connecticut, the proposal for a three-manual, 52-rank instrument from the Reuter Organ Company was unanimously and enthusiastically chosen.

Throughout the process, the communication and collaboration with Reuter personnel has been extraordinary. I can not even begin to track the number of hours spent on the phone or e-mail with executives JR Neutel and Bill Klimas, not to mention their numerous visits to Wilton before the organ was even delivered. The Reuter team handled everything with enormous artistic vision and great professional integrity.

Early in our dreaming process, I had the opportunity to visit the Reuter shop in Lawrence, Kansas, and was incredibly impressed. The large state-of-the-art facility incorporates the latest advances in technology and machinery while preserving and treasuring the time-tested artistic craft of organbuilding. Nearly everything necessary for a Reuter organ is made under that one roof, carefully constructed by highly skilled artisans. There is no delay waiting for pipes, keyboards, or woodwork from another supplier—Reuter takes pride in creating the entire instrument.

The installation of our new instrument was slated for June 2009. Reuter was right on schedule, and the instrument was erected in the shop ready to be dismantled and sent to Wilton. Un-

fortunately, our overall renovation was considerably behind schedule, and the installation was delayed until the fall. On November 15, more than 150 parishioners, from small children to older adults, helped unload the semitrailer and carry in the 3,140 pipes and other parts that make up our new majestic organ; installation began immediately the next morning.

On January 31, 2010, the organ was played publicly for the first time. Since that first fanfare was heard, the congregation has been enthralled with the dazzling array of sounds heard each week. Every Sunday at coffee hour, parishioners approach me and continue to praise the instrument. The widespread sense of excitement and joy is palpable.

The goals of the organ project at St. Matthew's were many. Our primary dream was to provide an instrument that would lead worship in inspiring ways, both as a noble leader of congregational song and as a colorful accompanist for the choirs. We also dreamed of a versatile and exciting concert instrument that would play a wide variety of organ literature from all periods. Visually, we dreamed of a stunning facade that would be a beautiful architectural element in our worship space. The Reuter Organ Company has crafted a magnificent instrument that fulfills and surpasses these goals in every way. We offer our profound thanks to the entire Reuter team for their outstanding work.

RODNEY AYERS

From a Member of the Building Committee

The long-planned-for concert dedicating our new organ was a joyous and festive occasion held on March 13, 2010. Our parishioners, along with many others from our community, celebrated the completion of the redesign of our sacred spaces, with the new organ as its centerpiece. So many people spent months preparing for this special evening. However, the only major element not in the church's control was the weather. A wild storm raged that evening causing power outages all around the church . . . but not in the church. Miraculously, the concert began at the appointed hour to a full church of attendees, all of whom had made considerable efforts to get there.

We were thrilled to have Ken Cowan, one of America's finer concert organists, to perform the concert. His dazzling artistry, impeccable technique and imaginative programming delighted everyone. Violinist Lisa Shihoten and St. Matthew's choirs joined Mr. Cowan for a few pieces. Works by Widor, Bach, Mendelssohn, Karg-Elert, and Calvin Hampton showed off the full range of the organ's capabilities, as well as Cowan's incredible talent and skill. The final piece, Cowan's arrangement of Liszt's



Assembly room: Pedal towers

Mephisto Waltz, No. 1, and the encore, Thalben-Ball's *Variations on a Theme of Paganini* (for pedal solo), brought everyone to their feet with tremendous applause. The great accolades were justly deserved for the brilliant artist and the magnificent new instrument.

Following the concert, the audience was invited to a celebratory champagne and dessert reception. The church was full of warmth and inspirational light that evening . . . while the storm raged on for several hours!

KATHY WELLING

From the Donor

On behalf of the Brock family, we are thrilled to have played a part in procuring the magnificent Reuter pipe organ that is now in St. Matthew's Church. It is a gift that honors my mother, Anise McDaniel Brock, who for over 50 years was the organist in the Mississippi hometown where my wife, Mary, and I

grew up. All who knew Anise Brock understood how strongly faith and music influenced her life, and she would be thrilled to know that not only for our family, but for those at St. Matthew's today and many years in the future, this incredible instrument will provide so much joy to so many. We are blessed to have Rodney Ayers with his tremendous talent bring inspiring and beautiful music to us week after week, as well as expose our children to the beauty of the instrument.

Our journey with Rodney and Kathy Welling in searching for exactly the most appropriate pipe organ for St. Matthew's was one that took us to many locales over hundreds of miles, including a trip to Lawrence, Kansas, where we saw that for the Reuter team and family, pipe organs are the result of art as well as science. It is very personal to them, and that is very fitting for a tribute to an elegant, kind, and talented

woman whose love of God was evident in everything she did and whose love of music inspired all who knew her.

JOHN BROCK

From the Builder

The new organ at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church represents a successful collaborative effort to enhance and expand the church's facility with its fine music program. As with all of our projects, the goal is to build an instrument that meets the specific needs and desires expressed to us. Conversations with the musicians involved with the project included extensive discussions about tonal concepts as they related to choral accompaniment, hymn playing, and the performance of the organ repertoire. This was also the case for the visual design, where an expansive flamed copper and polished metal facade was developed for the renovated worship space. Being very familiar with these concepts, we were able to proceed in designing, building, and voicing the organ to fulfill the church's desires.

The new instrument is a reflection of eclectic American organbuilding of this era. The specification contains well-developed choruses on all divisions with an abundance of 8' tone and reed stops. The organ also has many distinctive features: the elegant 32' Waldhorn enclosed in the Swell, the rich and commanding Tuba voiced on 16 inches of wind and located in the expressive Choir, and its prominently placed mate—a polished copper Trompette en Chamade—are just some examples. The colorful, partially stopped Brock Flute in the Choir was named for the donor family.

While on St. Matthew's campus, one soon begins to realize that a unique vibrancy surrounds this place, not only with the adults but also with the youth of the parish. The enthusiastic commitment of parents, children, and staff is exciting to see and be around, especially at a time when we hear so much about the decline of churches. It was an honor for us to have been entrusted with crafting a new pipe organ that not only serves the needs but also meets the vision of St. Matthew's parish.

The success of this installation is a result of the inspiration and tireless dedication of director of music Rodney Ayers and the leadership of the Rev. Mary Grace Williams, rector of St. Matthew's Church. The energetic support of Kathy Welling and many other parishioners involved with this project is also greatly appreciated. Finally, the Reuter Organ Company gratefully acknowledges the Brock family for their generosity in providing this timeless tribute to organist Anise McDaniel Brock.

ALBERT "JR" NEUTEL, President
WILLIAM KLIMAS, Artistic Director
RONALD KREBS, Vice President

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Wilton, Connecticut Reuter Opus 2234 3 manuals, 52 ranks, 42 stops

GREAT

16	Sub Principal
16	Viole (Sw.)
8	Diapason
8	Principal
8	Harmonic Flute
8	Bourdon
4	Octave
4	Spindle Flute
2½	Twelfth
2	Fifteenth
	Cornet III (TC)
	Fourniture IV
16	Fagotto (Ch.)
8	Tromba
8	Trompette en Chamade
8	Fagotto (Ch.)
8	Tuba (Ch.)
	Tremulant
*	Chimes
	Cymbelstern
	MIDI

SWELL

16	Viole
8	Geigen Diapason
8	Chimney Flute
8	Viole
8	Viole Celeste (CC)
4	Geigen Octave
4	Open Flute
2½	Nazard
2	Piccolo
1½	Tierce
	Mixture IV
	Waldhorn
16	Trompette en Chamade (Gt., TC)
8	Trumpet
8	Oboe
8	Waldhorn
8	Vox Humana
8	Trompette en Chamade (Gt.)
8	Tuba (Ch.)
4	Clarion
	Tremulant
	MIDI

REUTER PERSONNEL

Megan Amick
Monty Amick
John Bechen
Ted Burgess
Tom Cashen
Proctor Crow
Rodney Czerniak
Ed Dorssom
Jamie Durand
Robert Fort
Don Gauthier
David Hadl

Lloyd Jensen
John Leach
Katherine Leach
Morgan Lowry
Steve Major
Trace McGee
Kay Miller
Mike Morgan
Albert Neutel
Jeff Noll
Jim Powers
John Regier

George Renault
Chris Ruhlman
Dorothy Schaaake
Kirt Sharp
David Swanson
Karl Swoyer
Robert Vaughan
Tom Watgen
Fred Whitehead
Aaron Young

CHOIR

16	Lieblich Flute
8	Principal
8	Brock Flute
8	Dulciana
8	Unda Maris (TC)
4	Octave
4	Traverse Flute
2	Doublette
1½	Quinte
	Mixture III
16	Tuba (TC)
16	Fagotto
8	Tuba
8	Fagotto
8	Trompette en Chamade (Gt.)
8	Waldhorn (Sw.)
8	Clarinet
	Tremulant
*	Harp
	MIDI

PEDAL

32	* Bourdon
16	Principal
16	Subbass
16	Sub Principal (Gt.)
16	Viole (Sw.)
16	Lieblich Flute (Ch.)
8	Principal
8	Octave
8	Subbass
8	Principal (Gt.)
8	Brock Flute (Ch.)
8	Viole (Sw.)
4	Choral Bass
4	Subbass
32	Waldhorn (Sw.)
16	Trombone
16	Waldhorn (Sw.)
16	Fagotto (Ch.)
8	Trombone
8	Trompette en Chamade (Gt.)
8	Waldhorn (Sw.)
8	Fagotto (Ch.)
8	Tuba (Ch.)
4	Clarion
4	Fagotto (Ch.)
	MIDI

* Walker digital

Photos: Jan Cobb Photography