

# Celebrating the Organ

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Chapel Organ Inaugural Concert Series

2008 - 2009



# The Organ

*Opus 86* is housed in two cases on either side of the chapel's chancel. The Swell and Great divisions, in the case on the right, are connected to the manuals by a fine mechanical tracker action. The Solo and Pedal divisions, located in a chamber on the left, are played through a responsive electric action. The organ's woodwork is built of American black walnut to complement the millwork of the chapel. Manual keyboards have blackwood naturals and rosewood sharps with bone overlays. The pedalboard has hard maple naturals and teak sharps. The facade pipes, drawn from the Pedal Principal on the left and the Great Principal on the right, are made of burnished 75% tin. The music rack and stop jambs are veneered with Carpathian elm burl.

The organ has 21 registers, 27 stops, and 24 ranks with 1,406 pipes. Seven ranks from the old organ were retained, modified, and integrated into the new design. The organ is tuned to equal temperament. The pipes of the Great and Swell are voiced on a wind pressure of 3", while the Solo and Pedal are voiced on 4-1/4". The organ's wind is produced by a blower located in the basement, and is regulated by the original Skinner static reservoir. The Great division naturally contains the organ's primary Principal chorus, here present from 8' through Mixture. Voicing of these stops is bold without being harsh or oppressive. The chorus is given gravity by the Bourdon 16'. The Swell contains a variety of flutes, with every pitch needed to make a *jeu de tierce*. For the sake of French classic literature, trios and other music, the mutation stops are full compass. A pair of strings is joined by a Trumpet and Oboe, both useful as solo or chorus reeds.

The unenclosed Solo has no keyboard of its own, but can be assigned to Great, Swell, and/or Pedal. It contains both the softest and the loudest sounds in the organ. The beautiful Skinner Flauto Dolce and Flauto Dolce Celeste are the instrument's pianissimo voices and provide contrast in color and volume to the more assertive strings on the Swell. The Harmonic Flute changes character through its compass: the bass is a lovely, mellow accompanimental stop, which steadily increases in strength to form a lyrical solo voice in the treble. The Trumpet is full-bodied and bold, and is extended into the Pedal to provide a 16' stop of real authority, giving the Pedal the grandeur of a large organ.

Four carved faces from the old organ have been incorporated into the new organ case. Who they represent is an enduring mystery.



# Acknowledgements

## Organ Committee

Gerald B. Fischer, *Chair*  
Melanie Ohnstad, *Minister of Music and the Arts/Organist*  
David Engen, *Project Consultant*  
Sandra Berthene  
Douglas Hedberg  
Marian Hoffman  
Thelma Hunter  
William Ludwick  
James Moe  
Joann Paden  
Eleanor Winston  
Timothy Hart-Andersen, *Pastor and Head of Staff*  
Joan Hyde, *Chair, 150th Anniversary Steering Committee*  
Jim and Carmen Campbell, *Co-Chairs, 150th Anniversary Campaign*

## Dobson Pipe Organ Builders

Lynn A. Dobson, *President and Artistic Director*  
William Ayers, *Voicing, Pipemaker*  
Abraham Batten, *Technical Designer*  
Kent Brown, *Cabinetmaker*  
Lyndon Evans, *Cabinetmaker*  
Randy Hausman, *Cabinetmaker*  
Dean Heim, *Shop Foreman, General Organbuilding*  
Donald Hobbs, *Pipemaker, Voicing, Technical Designer*  
Pat Lowry, *Cabinetmaker*  
Arthur Middleton, *Machinist, Key Action, Wood Pipes*  
John Ourensma, *Voicing, Pipemaker*  
John Panning, *Tonal Director, Voicing, Pipemaker*  
Kirk Russell, *Business Manager*  
Robert Savage, *Leatherwork, Electrical, General Organbuilding*  
Jim Streufert, *Windchests, General Organbuilding*  
John Streufert, *Voicer, General Organbuilding*  
Jon Thieszen, *Technical Designer*  
Sally Winter, *Accounting and Secretarial*  
Randall Wolff, *Wood Pipes, General Organbuilding*  
Dean Zenor, *Key Action, Administrative*

## Brochure Credits

Rodney Allen Schwartz, *Designer*  
John Lauenstein, *Photographer*  
Lynn Dobson, *Photographer, front cover background photo*



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# Dobson Opus 86 Specifications

## **GREAT (I)**

16' Bourdon  
8' Principal  
8' Chimney Flute  
4' Octave  
2' Fifteenth  
IV Mixture 2'  
Swell to Great  
Solo on Great

## **SWELL (II, expressive)**

8' Bourdon  
8' Viole  
8' Viole Celeste, TC  
4' Principal  
4' Flute  
2-2/3' Nasard  
2' Piccolo  
1-3/5' Tierce  
8' Trumpet  
8' Oboe  
Tremulant  
Solo on Swell

## **SOLO (floating)**

8' Harmonic Flute  
8' Flauto Dolce  
8' Flauto Dolce Celeste  
8' Trumpet

## **PEDAL**

16' Subbass  
16' Bourdon  
8' Principal  
8' Bass Flute  
4' Octave  
16' Trombone  
8' Trumpet  
Great to Pedal  
Swell to Pedal  
Solo on Pedal



# Project History

The chapel is Westminster's most frequently used worship space. Since the 1930s the musical presence in the chapel was anchored by a Skinner organ built in 1928 as Op. 717. It was given by the Crosby family for use in Westminster's newly-constructed chapel. In the 1960s, the south organ chamber was damaged by arson. The instrument's historic value and much of its tonal charm and beauty were lost in the fire. Deteriorating components, poorly insulated walls, and accessibility challenges were making the organ less and less dependable. As part of Westminster's celebration of its 150th anniversary, the church determined to replace the ailing organ with a new instrument.

A chapel organ committee was formed and held its first meeting in October 2005. Recognizing that a pipe organ is a legacy for both present and future generations, the committee established the criteria for a new organ. Of highest priority was identifying a builder who could create an instrument of exceptional tonal beauty whose appearance would enhance the architecture and aesthetics of the Chapel. The specification needed to offer artistic versatility and the structural design needed to be space-efficient. The committee sought a partner who would understand Westminster's values and who could deliver a mechanically sound organ of the highest workmanship and materials.

Dobson Pipe Organ Builders of Lake City, Iowa, was unanimously chosen. A contract was signed in November 2006 and on a sub-zero day in March 2008, the new organ was delivered. Installation and tonal finishing were completed in mid-May. The organ was dedicated in worship on May 18, 2008.

## About the Builder

Dobson Pipe Organ Builders was established in 1974 by Lynn A. Dobson, president and artistic director of the firm, and has earned an international reputation for instruments that possess beautiful sounds, creative visual designs and meticulous craftsmanship. Each instrument is designed, built, and assembled in Lake City, then dismantled and re-assembled at its final destination. To date, 86 new instruments have been installed in churches, universities and concert halls in 25 states and the District of Columbia. Westminster's chapel organ is the 16th new Dobson instrument in Minnesota.



# Inaugural Concert Series

*Rejoice in God, O ye tongues; give the glory to the Lord, and the Lamb. Nations, and languages, and every Creature, in which is the breath of Life. – Christopher Smart*

## CELEBRATING THE ORGAN IN SOLO PERFORMANCE

**September 28, identical recitals at 2:00 and 7:00 PM**

Thomas Bara, Instructor of Organ at the Interlochen Arts Academy, performs music by Bruhns, Bach, Mozart, Sowerby, Vierne. \* *Reservations required*

**September 27, 9:30 AM**

A Saturday morning workshop for young organists.

## CELEBRATING THE ORGAN AS CHORAL ACCOMPANIMENT

**November 16, identical concerts at 2:00 and 7:00 PM**

The Westminster Presbyterian Choir, under the direction of Jere Lantz and accompanied by Melanie Ohnstad, presents Benjamin Britten's, *Rejoice in the Lamb*, and choral classics by Bach, Fauré, and Haydn.

## CELEBRATING THE ORGAN WITH OUR YOUTH

**February 1, 2:00 PM**

John Ourensma, church musician and Dobson Pipe Organ Builders pipemaker and voicer, takes children on a friendly romp through organ construction. John will play family-friendly selections, and with Director Christopher Laumann, lead Westminster's Youth and High School Choirs.

## CELEBRATING THE ORGAN IN COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

**March 15, 2:00 PM**

The Gregorian Singers, with founder and director Monte Mason, presents Carissimi's oratorio, *Jonas*, in a meditative Concert Spirituel. Oratorios were composed as the Lenten alternative to opera in 17th century Italy. The Gregorians will be joined by plucked instruments and organ.

## CELEBRATING THE ORGAN AS LEADER OF CONGREGATIONAL SONG

**April 5, 2:00 PM**

David Cherwien leads a Palm Sunday hymn festival. Renowned for his exciting improvisations and hymn arrangements, Cherwien will employ *Opus 86* in its highest calling: inspiring our finest singing.

## CELEBRATING THE ORGAN AS AN ENSEMBLE INSTRUMENT

**May 17, 2:00 PM**

Melanie Ohnstad, Westminster's Minister of Music and the Arts/Organist, demonstrates the organ's abilities as a team player. The versatile voice of *Opus 86* will sound with steel drum, violin, flute, and other orchestral instruments, concluding the first season of concert offerings to Westminster and the greater community.

*Hallelujah from the heart of God, and from the hand of the artist inimitable, and from the echo of the heavenly harp in sweetness magnificent and mighty. – Christopher Smart*



All concerts are free and open to the public.

\* For concerts on September 28 and November 16, contact Barbara Prince at 612.332.3421 or [bprince@wpc-mpls.org](mailto:bprince@wpc-mpls.org) for reservations.