

History of the Pipe Organ....

The pipe organ in our church was originally built for First Christian Church, Bedford, Indiana and installed there in 1900. The organ was built by Carl Barchhoff, an organ builder who learned the art in Germany and then worked for many years in the American mid-west. For the first 20 years the wind supply was pumped by hand. The heavy oak pump handle can be seen behind the organ where it is kept. In 1920 an electric blower was attached making it possible for the organist to practice without the aid of someone to pump the wind.

St. Matthew Lutheran acquired the organ in the summer of 1962. Fred Bogner, Robert Brookwell and Robert Hooper were appointed to help remove the organ from the church in Indiana and re-assemble it in the newly constructed balcony. The balcony was specially designed and constructed to accommodate the organ and the choir.

The organ was played for the first time for both services on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 7, 1963.

For the 25th anniversary year of the organ in 1987-1988, a restoration and completion program was begun. This involved installing new metal pins and felt bushings in the moving parts of the playing action, the first work of this kind to be done in 87 years. A number of new pipes were obtained from Europe to fill out the upper range of some voices which had been left incomplete by tonal changes carried out when the organ was installed.

