

ABOUT ME

When I retired, I thought life might be a bit dull. Fortunately, I have been proven wrong.

During my career, I have served three long-term fulltime Organist/Choirmaster positions, in Toledo, Ohio, Corpus Christi, Texas, and Grand Rapids, Michigan. At Central Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, I held the longest tenure of any Music Director in the church's 165 year history. And prior to that, during my thirteen years at First United Methodist Church in Corpus Christi, I also represented the M. P. Möller Company. In that position, I was responsible for the design and tonal finishing of twenty-five organs in Texas.

While in Grand Rapids, I inaugurated a number of music series, including the New Year's Eve Pops Concert, which this year will celebrate twenty-six years. We also sponsored an annual *Access to Music* program for the disabled and those who could not attend evening programs. Those programs would attract so many that we would have to do two performances.

Since we had a wonderful endowment for music at Central, I was able to perform many works with the Grand Rapids Symphony, including the first performance in GR of Joseph Jongen's *Symphonie Concertante*. For those two performances, we brought David Hill, then Organist and Master of Music at

Winchester Cathedral, and now conductor of the BBC chorus to conduct.

Other organ and symphony works which I performed there were Dupre's own arrangement of his *Cortege and Litany*, the Poulenc concerto, both of the Rheinberger concertos, Howard Hanson's *Concerto for Organ, Strings and Harp*, Saint-Saens, and several Handel concertos.

For the church's 150th anniversary in 1990, in addition to the Jongen, with the GR Symphony, we co-sponsored the Amsterdam Concertgebouw orchestra, had a hymn-writing contest, and commissioned a new anthem by Alice Parker.

It has been my privilege to enlarge the instruments at every church I have served. The first, a 1930 32 rank Möller, was increased to 43 ranks. In Corpus Christi, we added a 14 rank Gallery organ to the 58 rank Reuter in the front. The Grand Rapids Schantz was rebuilt by Robert G. Dial, and increased from an incomplete four manual instrument of 41 ranks to a five manual of 80 ranks. And in Decatur, the 1954 Casavant was also rebuilt by Bob Dial and has grown from 40 to 66 ranks. During a sabbatical at the end of my service in Grand Rapids, I was able to record a CD on that great instrument.

After first retirement, in addition to organizing the England tours, I served as Organist of Central Christian Church in Decatur, (the next town east of Springfield, where I lived for those twelve years),

and as Organist and Choirmaster of Temple B'rith Sholom in Springfield.

Then in 2009, becoming tired of winters up north, I moved back to Corpus Christi, and am now organist of First Christian Church, where I designed the Möller organ in 1968!

I started the England tours in 1989 in an effort to see the wonderful cathedral organs of England. After five trips to England, and realizing that it is difficult to simply walk into one of these grand places and gain access to the instrument, I thought that organizing and planning a tour would be a great way to do it.

2011 was a great landmark for these tours. We have now, over the years, visited and played every cathedral organ in England!