

Featured: St. Rose of Lima, Murfreesboro, TN

Milnar Organ Company Newsletter 2020

Greetings!

It seems like the life we are leading now is surreal. We visited three churches in Nashville where the church and/or organ were damaged by a tornado. The first was East End United Methodist Church. The roof collapsed on the organ and it was open to the weather. The 1912 Hillgreen-Lane was destroyed. The people of the neighborhood filled the streets helping their neighbors. Saint John's Lutheran Church in Donelson was also destroyed. The Reuter organ we installed in 2012 was under the side wall of the sanctuary and also destroyed.

Our final stop that day was The Church of the Assumption in Germantown. There was so much devastation that it took a great deal of time to get close to the church. The church was still standing, but the steeple was tilting to one side. Many large stained-glass windows were blown out. The force of the wind was so great that it lifted the roof off the side walls of the church. We wondered if the pre-Civil War building would survive. The organ, in the balcony was still intact. We sent a crew to totally cover the organ in heavy construction plastic. The 1895 Johnson & Son organ is a very special organ with a wonderful sound. The church will be saved, and we have removed the organ.

Since then, we have been living with the threat of COVID-19. We are considered essential workers and have been working throughout this pandemic. Thank God! It looks like we are almost over the worst of the virus, and our country is starting to come back.

Aside from this year's tragedies, last year was full of travel and wonderful projects for our company. Several of our customers have done major renovation projects to their sanctuary, which allowed us to upgrade the organ without disruption. Here are a few projects that we would like to mention.



First United Methodist – Martin, TN



Left to Right: Jeff Milnar, Justin Little, John Lucianno, Greg Milnar, Kevin McGrath, Derek Milnar, Marilucille Counce, Todd Milnar

First United Methodist in Martin, TN made an extensive addition to their opus 10786 Möller pipe organ. The Möller organ at First United Methodist Church in Martin, TN has been under our care since 1973. We made additions and upgrades throughout the years, but the first major work was in 1994. When the organ was first installed, it was placed in front of beautiful stained-glass windows. We removed the instrument and brought it back to our shop for redesigning and rebuilding.

The church built two rooms over the street entrance foyers on the far right and left of the sanctuary. This exposed the beautiful stained-glass windows and enlarged the space for the choir. The organ remained a II manual instrument and we added several new stops and upgraded the electrical system to solid-state controls. We used the old Möller façade pipes to make two new pipe displays facing the congregation. We added more stops to the organ in 2003 that were prepared for during our work in 1994.

In 2018, we removed the Shantz, opus 616 organ from First Baptist Church in Covington, TN.

We squeezed the Schantz Great and Choir main chests into the left chamber in front of the Möller 16' Bourdon chest. The Möller Swell main chest was retained. We rebuilt the III manual Schantz console with a Peterson ICS 4000 system. All new drawknobs and a new coupler assembly were installed. Forty-three new thumb pistons were fitted under the keyboards and twelve new toe studs were added. The pedal board was rebuilt with all new felts, and the pedals were sanded/sprayed to new condition.

The Mayland chime action, removed with the Schantz organ, was installed. New chests were constructed for added stops in the Swell and Choir divisions. A new 4' Gemshorn in the Choir and a new 1 3/5' Tierce in the Swell. The organist, Justin Little, was a great help throughout the entire project.



St. James the Less Episcopal – Madison, TN



St. James the Less Episcopal has a beautiful Möller Double Artiste, opus 9890 located in their choir balcony. The organ is a II manual, seven rank organ, with pipes being housed in two separate boxes under expression. Opus 9890 was built in 1963 and was originally installed in the Saunders Fine Arts building at MTSU. In 1999, we moved the organ to Westminster Presbyterian in Montgomery, AL. During the move we added a 4'-2' Octave rank and installed Peterson Diode-Matrix relays.

In 2016, we got a call from Westminster Presbyterian with word that they were closing and that the organ had to be removed very soon. Before the removal, we advertised the organ on our website. St. James said that they would like to hear the organ, so Derek Milnar took their organ committee and organ consultant, Dr. Josh Coble, to Montgomery for a listen. The committee liked what they heard and purchased the instrument. This past summer, we installed a new Peterson Single Board Duo Set combination action. This new board was installed on location with no disturbance to the church activities. It has 128 memory levels with a digital display. It also includes a 9-step piston sequencer and memory backup.



St. Joseph Catholic – Madison, TN



Saint Joseph Catholic Church has a 1981 Delaware pipe organ with II manuals and eighteen ranks. This past summer we gave the entire pipe organ a major cleaning. The windows in back of the organ were not sealed properly and allowed hundreds of lady bugs into the room, causing dozens of ciphers and making the organ unusable. We removed all the pipe work so contractors could seal the windows and chambers and spray pesticides. While we had the pipework at our shop, we made repairs and cleaned them. All of the capped stops were gone over for tightness and adjusted where necessary. When re-installing the pipe work, we added more bracing where needed. The organ project turned out great with the help of Jeff Hall and Robert Todd.



Brook Hollow Baptist – Nashville, TN



Brook Hollow Baptist was founded in 1955 and has a large fellowship. We have had two projects at Brook Hollow in the past couple years. The first project was to re-leather stoppers on the large outside façade and also shim caps on the exposed flutes. The second project was to replace all the thumb pistons on the console with new ones from Klann Organ Supply in Waynesboro, VA. This work was performed on site with no disruption to service.

A Warm Welcome to Our New Clients!

- **St. Luke's Episcopal – Jackson, TN**
- **Trinity Episcopal – Clarksville, TN**
- **Germantown UMC – Germantown, TN**
- **Independent Presbyterian – Memphis, TN**
- **Graystone Presbyterian – Knoxville, TN**
- **First United Methodist – Covington, TN**
- **St. Matthew's – Covington, TN**
- **First United Methodist – Holly Springs, MS**

- First Presbyterian – Trenton, TN
- First Presbyterian – Covington, TN
- First United Methodist – Tiptonville, TN
- First United Methodist – Trenton, TN
- Cumberland Presbyterian – Dyer, TN



Madison St. UMC – Clarksville, TN

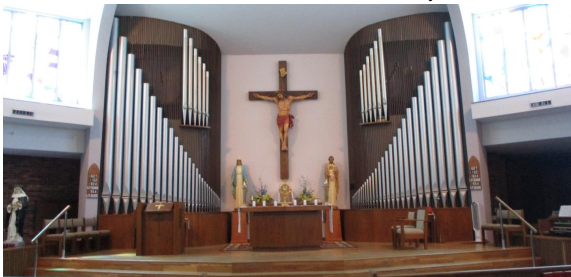


For more than one hundred years, Madison Street United Methodist Church has been woven into the fabric of the Clarksville community. It has experienced physical rebuilding following a devastating tornado in 1999 that destroyed the church facility and the Jardine pipe organ.

Madison Street's organ, a Rieger-Kloss from the Czech Republic, needed three of its main bellows re-leathered. We were able to refurbish the bellows in place without removing them. The work was completed during the week so Sunday service would not be disturbed.



St. Rose of Lima – Murfreesboro, TN



Saint Rose of Lima has been our family church for decades now. Many family members have been married and baptized at St. Rose. The 1978 Shantz organ that we enlarged and redesigned in 1990, needed extensive system and relay upgrades. We removed the console and Great 8' Bourdon pipes and transported them to our shop facility. The cotton wiring and mechanical switching was removed from the console. The mechanical switches and relay in the organ chambers were replaced with a Peterson Diode-Matrix relay. A new 60-amp power supply was added to the console and the pedalboard was refurbished. New leather was installed on the Great 8' Bourdon pipes. We are proud to have a Shantz-Milnar organ in our family parish. Welcome to our new organist Isaac Johnson!



St. Matthew's Episcopal – Chandler, AZ



A new life has been given to the 1960 Reuter-Milnar organ, opus 1297 at St. Matthew's. The organ was originally built for George Peabody College for Teachers, formally located across the street from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Vanderbilt was growing and bought the college along with all the grounds. One of the university's goals was to expand their music department by building a new building for Blair School of Music.

We were commissioned to remove, redesign and rebuild the Caroline Bevill McMichael Organ (Reuter) from Peabody College for Blair School of Music. We worked closely with the architect, Mr. Bob Street, in the design. The new room was several times the size of the William Hume Chapel (Peabody) and the acousticians gave the room a wonderful environment for the organ and other musical performances.

Mr. Peter Fyfe, a very gifted organist and beloved teacher, and his wife Lois donated a new Posaune for the Pedal and a new 8' Trumpet and III 1 1/3 Mixture for the Great. The two reeds not only enhanced the tonal scope of the organ but were very prominent in the design. The original 1' Great Mixture was moved to the Swell.

Before Blair School of Music decided to purchase a new Dobson pipe organ, a gift from Mr. Cal Turner, Jr and his sister Mrs. Laura Dugas, they were considering upgrading the Reuter-Milnar. Organ Professor Mr. Carl Smith, Jr. was recommending upgrading the organ's existing electrical system to solid-state and adding a 16' Oboe extension to the Swell 8' Oboe, a 4' Principal and a 1 3/5, also to the Swell.

Mr. Claude Haynes is a member of Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church in Chandler, Arizona. He grew up in Tennessee and knew of our work. Mr. Haynes first inquired about the instrument in May of 2017. He visited our work shop in May of 2018 and brought us drawings of St. Matthew's new building. Working with their architect, Mr. Adam Chester of Barduson Architecture in Phoenix, AZ., we were able to upgrade and re-configure the Reuter-Milnar organ to fit their space. We also added the three new stops Mr. Carl Smith recommended. The congregation was very helpful throughout the entire project.



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