

PEABODY INSTITUTE
OF THE CITY OF BALTIMORE
CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202

THE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

11 June 1971

Rev. Paul A. Rasche
United Evangelical Church
945 S. East Ave.
Baltimore, Md. 21224

Dear Pastor Rasche:

In evaluating the Wicks organ at United Evangelical Church, I would like first, to make general comments about the instrument; second, suggestions for putting it in good condition again, and finally, comments about future additions and improvements to the instrument.

I feel the organ was very poorly designed in the beginning. The console, being the part that most people see, is very impressive but it is far too large and offers far too much versatility for an instrument of nine ranks (I could find only nine ranks - perhaps, they are counting the chimes as the tenth). More money should have been placed in the pipe work and less in the console.

In order to bring the instrument into good condition within its present potential, I would like to recommend the following:

First, both chambers should be cleaned thoroughly and carefully of all dust and grit. All ranks in the entire instrument need regulation. (At present, the tone quality within a single rank of pipes varies from note to note.) The sanctuary should then be cooled or heated to the temperature desired for Sunday mornings and the organ should be thoroughly tuned.

The nazard and the swell is totally out of tune. The trumpet needs complete regulation. Also, it is my opinion that a good and competent tuner uses his ear and not a machine to tune.

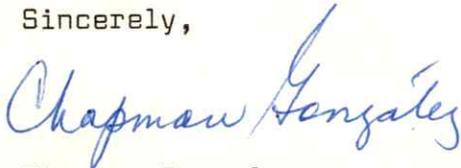
The console appears to be in fairly good condition with a few exceptions. The key action on all manuals is very poor. This can be improved slightly by overhauling and replacing the springs in the keyboard. This work will probably be quite expensive and will not bring a great deal of improvement. The action will always be "springy" and will never resemble the tracker-type of keyboard action which is usually preferred. The swell shades are quite noisy but this should be fairly easy to correct.

As far as future additions and remodeling to the organ go, the greatest need is for upper work. A mixture or two are badly needed, as well as mutation and 2' stops. These should be independent ranks and not borrowed stops. Again, unfortunately, the original design of the instrument does not offer the fundamental planning necessary for the addition of upper work. This would require a very thorough study of the present disposition of the instrument and the possible replacement of some of the present ranks of pipes. I can see no value in filling the organ with the prepared stops that are suggested on the console. These were just to give you more 8' stops which you do not need. I would also suggest that you replace the entire trumpet rank. A much nicer and more usable trumpet stop could replace this one.

In summary, let me say that I do not feel the original designers of the instrument were entirely fair with you. They were obviously more interested in winning a contract than in building a good instrument. Also, your serviceman has been a little casual by allowing the pipes to become so badly out of regulation, and in cases such as the mutation, so badly out of tune.

I hope this is the information you want. If you would like more specific information, or detailed explanations of anything I have said, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Chapman Gonzalez
Ass't Director

CG:rb