

“Remarks for Organ Dedication Sunday”

by Kevin Clemence

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<http://ccpc.bowiemd.org/sermons.htm>

Well, now that we've heard it, it's hard to know just what to say...

What words does one choose to “dedicate” an organ with? A prayer perhaps? Some humorous quotes? Poetry? Maybe even some MUSIC...well...

I believe the first thing we must say is a heartfelt thank you, from all of us, to all of us, for giving our church community this gift. And from the many who are remembered by our gifts, who have gone before us and are now with us in the spirit, we feel their gratitude and thanks today for doing what many of them hoped one day we could do.

I would like to say a few things about this organ though, without sounding like we're at a technology conference, but the technology is quite amazing. This instrument represents the centuries-old trade-craft of organ building from four countries, artfully combined with the most refined sound-modeling technologies to create a rare thing in the music world today. Very few musical instruments can be called works of art, and this is one of them. From the elegant woodworking designed to match the chancel area, to the software programming of the sounds and the calibration of those sounds to our acoustics, this project is a work of art. Speaking of art, our own Bob Brutout created the space for the organ with equally refined skill. One of the reps came out to see the space and said, no, it won't fit, the space is too small. Bob said, “It WILL fit.” Well there it is...it fits! Bob, thank you.

Now, a real pipe organ, a small one, runs about a half million to a million dollars. You get one set of pipes. Larger cathedral and concert hall organs go into the millions. You get a lot more pipes, but it's still one set. The sound of the American organs is called American Classic. So, imagine if you could fly to Ely Cathedral in England, tear down the organ, bring a ton of pipes over and install them here. Then you'd have what is called the English Cathedral sound. Hop over to France, stop by a few cathedrals and pick up another couple tons of pipes and bring those in ... the powerful French Romantic or Symphonic organs. Finally, on to Germany, land of the legendary Bach himself. He composed his masterpieces on what are called German Baroque organs. So let's grab some of those too. All four types of organs are modeled digitally by this humble 60K box here. The range of sound is amazing. All that's missing are the pigeons. Ah, well, we have bats...which will be shaken from their sleep momentarily...

So, that's enough talk about the organ. Let's dedicate this instrument to the praise and glory of our lord Jesus Christ. If there is a prayer to be offered up, then let it be a song, let it be our voices singing, high bright and clear, ringing with the sound of this magnificent instrument.

And for encouragement, a quote from Bach himself on playing the organ. He says, “There is nothing to it. You only have to hit the right notes at the right time and the instrument plays itself!”