

# **An example of a Church that Still uses a Pipe Organ:**

WILSHIRE BAPTIST CHURCH 4316 Abrams Road Dallas, Texas 75214

From their website we learn:

Excellence in music flows throughout the fabric of Wilshire's life. In worship, music is not something only a few gifted people do; it's an expression of joy for the entire congregation as we sing together great hymns of the faith old and new. The music ministry also offers choirs, ensembles and opportunities for every age grouping, from preschoolers to senior adults.

## **About Wilshire's Schantz organ**

A central feature of Wilshire's Sanctuary is the magnificent Schantz pipe organ. Unlike so many churches that have abandoned traditional church music, Wilshire embraces the traditions of the church and the classical music of our heritage. Because of this commitment to a traditional worship format, done with excellence and creativity, the church has invested heavily in a beautiful instrument of praise.



"The organ is itself an instrument of praise. It is not only instrumental to the praise of worshipers; it praises God in a way our voices alone cannot," said Senior Pastor George Mason. "Few instruments are more complex than a pipe organ, or more representative of a genuinely diverse congregation. When this magnificent creation is played, so many elements of creation are summoned to duty. Yet the organ also aids worship by calling our voices to highest heaven. It partners with the people in raising praise above our vocal limits."

From its humble beginnings in 1873, the Schantz Organ Co., founded by Abraham Tschantz (later changed to Schantz), has evolved into one of the leading pipe organ building firms in the United States. Within the walls of its modern facilities in Orrville, Ohio, the many skilled artisans of the Schantz firm practice their centuries-old craft of pipe organ building.



The four-manual, 79-rank Schantz pipe organ in Wilshire's Sanctuary was designed and constructed especially for the church. Housed in chambers flanking the baptistry and above the chancel area, the organ takes full advantage of its placement on the central axis of the building to effortlessly produce tone. Additionally, the nine-stop antiphonal organ is encased at the rear of the balcony. The organ has been designed and constructed to meet the diverse musical requirements of the music ministry, dynamically support and encourage the liturgy and hymnody of the church, and accompany various styles of choral music, while effectively rendering organ literature of all periods.



Each of the organ's 4, 587 pipes is actually an individual windblown instrument designed, crafted and voiced especially for this building. Organized into 79 ranks or sets of pipes, the pipes are made from an assortment of materials including zinc, lead, tin and wood. The majority of the pipes, however, are made from a tin-lead alloy, which is cast, cut, shaped and soldered by the pipe makers in the Schantz workshop. The largest pipe in this instrument is 16 feet in length and more than 9 inches in diameter. By contrast, the smallest pipes are no larger than a common pencil.

Sixteen ranks from the church's previous instrument were retained and recast for inclusion in the new organ. This re-use of suitable existing pipework provides a connection to the church's musical heritage in addition to being mindful of the stewardship of resources.

The organ's six divisions—Great, Swell, Choir, Solo, Pedal and Antiphonal—are actually complete organs within themselves. The Great and Pedal form the backbone of the ensemble and are located toward the front and side of the main organ chamber where they can carry and project sound into the nave. The Swell, Choir and Solo, with their variety of accompanimental and solo sounds, are placed behind expression louvers to allow further control of dynamics. Of special note are the two unique voices found in the Solo Organ. The Flauto Mirabilis contains pipework with double mouths, used in soaring solo melody lines. The Orchestral Oboe harkens back to the symphonic/romantic tradition of American organbuilding in the early part of the 20th century.

The instrument's two most dramatic voices are found in the Great Organ: the heraldic, polished copper Trompette en chamade on 10" wind pressure and the Solo Organ's English-style Tuba Major on 18" wind pressure. The Choir Organ is home to the instrument's softest voice, the ethereal Erzähler II (German for "storyteller").



The Antiphonal Organ, whose name suggests its musical role, is comprised of both an unenclosed Principal chorus and an enclosed/expressive "swell" chorus. In addition, this division is fitted with a two-manual and pedal tilting-tablet console capable of controlling the Antiphonal resources or, through "blind" General pistons, the resources of the entire organ.

The moveable four-manual, English-style drawknob console in the chancel is made of walnut, with cherry stop jambs, ebony drawknobs and keys of bone and ebony. It features all the modern conveniences for aiding the player, including a solid-state combination action with 99 levels of memory and a record/playback system.

From the stately tone of the Principal chorus, to the softest whisper of the Erzähler and the declamatory shouts of the festival trumpets, this organ joins a tradition centuries old, that of calling the faithful to worship and stirring among them that which inspired Bach, Luther, Watts and Wesley.