



175th Anniversary Moment

“He who promised is faithful” (Heb 10.23)

MUSIC IN THE NEW CHURCH BUILDING

When the new church building was dedicated in 1969, there was no organ, but a space was allowed for an instrument. Soon, there came to be an opening in the music position, and Patricia Leege was engaged as the musician for the church. One of the first tasks was to determine what instrument could best lead the congregation’s song.

In the 1960s, Pat Leege had been an instructor of music at Concordia, River Forest, but then had left the area with her husband as he took a teaching position out of town. David and Pat returned in 1970, he to a teaching and research position at University of Illinois (then Circle Campus), and Pat was available for work as organist and choir director. She came to First Saint Paul’s in September 1970.

The music committee was tasked with obtaining an instrument. There were some who felt that an electronic organ would be suitable. That didn’t sound like a good solution to replace the large pipe organ that had been in the old church building. Pat contacted Dr. Paul Bunjes, the chair of the music department at Concordia, River Forest, and a well-known organ consultant. Bunjes had just designed a small Schlicker pipe organ for a Lutheran chapel in Colorado, and he adapted that design for the organ at First Saint Paul’s.



Pat Leege, choir, and trumpets, before the installation of the new organ.

Under Pat’s leadership, the small but talented choir sang for church faithfully each Sunday. They prepared music with instruments, both strings and trumpets, often drawing on individuals from Concordia, River Forest. The new organ was installed in the fall of 1972, and dedicated on February 4, 1973, with the nationally known Paul Manz, organist, and the combined choirs of First Saint Paul’s and the Lutheran Church of St. Luke on Belmont. In 1974, Charles Ore returned to First Saint Paul’s to play a recital program.



Pat and David Leege were very active in the congregation, with Dave singing in the choir and teaching a teenage Sunday School class. Their three children came with them and were immersed in the music and other activities of the congregation. In 1974, David accepted a position with the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., and the family moved. But a high standard of church music had been established in the new church building, and the congregation was well-prepared for its new director of music.

