

Organ project story

"Dreams get you into the future and add excitement to the present."

~Robert Conklin

As the *Annual Report* can attest, 2010 at Calvary was a whirlwind of motion built upon the dreams and vision of our congregation and staff. I am pleased to say that this, too, was certainly the case for Calvary's music ministry.

Nearly a year ago, I received a call from a member of University Hills Baptist Church, located near the corner of Yale and Colorado here in Denver. Through the course of our conversation, I found out that their church building and property were to be sold. Furthermore, all of the contents of building were to be sold as plans to demolish the building were being made by the purchasing contractor. *Why call the director of music at Calvary Baptist Church of Denver, you might ask?* Our conversation led to the discussion of the church's prized three-manual, 43-rank pipe organ and what would become of it following the church's closing. As time and communication progressed over a few months, it seemed apparent that there was a significant desire for a local Baptist church such as Calvary to acquire this instrument and see it continue to minister through its music.



Just before we rang in the New Year, several members of council and staff met with representatives of University Hills to inquire about their situation, discuss the asking price for the organ, and determine the timeframe for acquiring and moving the instrument. However, following that discussion, it seemed wise that we hold off on such a significant purchase for Calvary.

We continued to maintain communications with their representatives. As time progressed and drew closer to the church's deconstruction, they seemed to imply that they would be willing to accept a much lower offer for the instrument—so low that we immediately began to reconsider whether this might be a possibility for Calvary. Meanwhile, several Calvary members approached our senior pastor as they became aware of the situation. Many shared their vested interest Calvary's pipe organ and music ministry, and they offered special gifts toward project funding.

In the weeks following that conversation, I met with various organ builders from across the country to consult them and acquire bids and details on such an organ project. Each organ builder estimated the University Hills organ was worth approximately \$800,000 if installed new today. University Hill's original purchase price was nearly 90% less than what it is worth: They were asking for \$85,000. Unbelievably, our most recent conversations suggested that we could offer a mere \$5,000 for the purchase of the instrument. As the numbers and variables came together, it seemed more and more like the dream of acquiring a world-class instrument could be plausible.

Tuesday, Jan, 18, 2011, a formal presentation of the project was submitted to council for consideration. Following discussion and review of incurred costs, funds from the existing Pipe Organ Replacement Fund and special gifts, Calvary's Council voted unanimously to purchase the 1987 McManis III/43 pipe organ from University Hills Baptist Church.

Senior Pastor Brian Henderson submitted an official offer of \$5,000 for the purchase of the pipe organ Jan. 19, 2011. And, as conversations implied, our offer was accepted. We immediately proceeded to make plans with local organ builder, Morel & Associates, Inc., for the removal and storage of the organ here at Calvary. This removal is currently underway and is being documented by Calvary's talented photographer Denise Wylde.

Calvary, as your director of music and organist, I am pleased by council's decision to make this dream a reality and invest in the future of the music ministry here at Calvary. This is an exciting acquisition that will continue the tradition and standard of excellence of good organ music and musicians within our congregational and denominational traditions! May we continue to dream, count our blessings and be excited about what is to come!