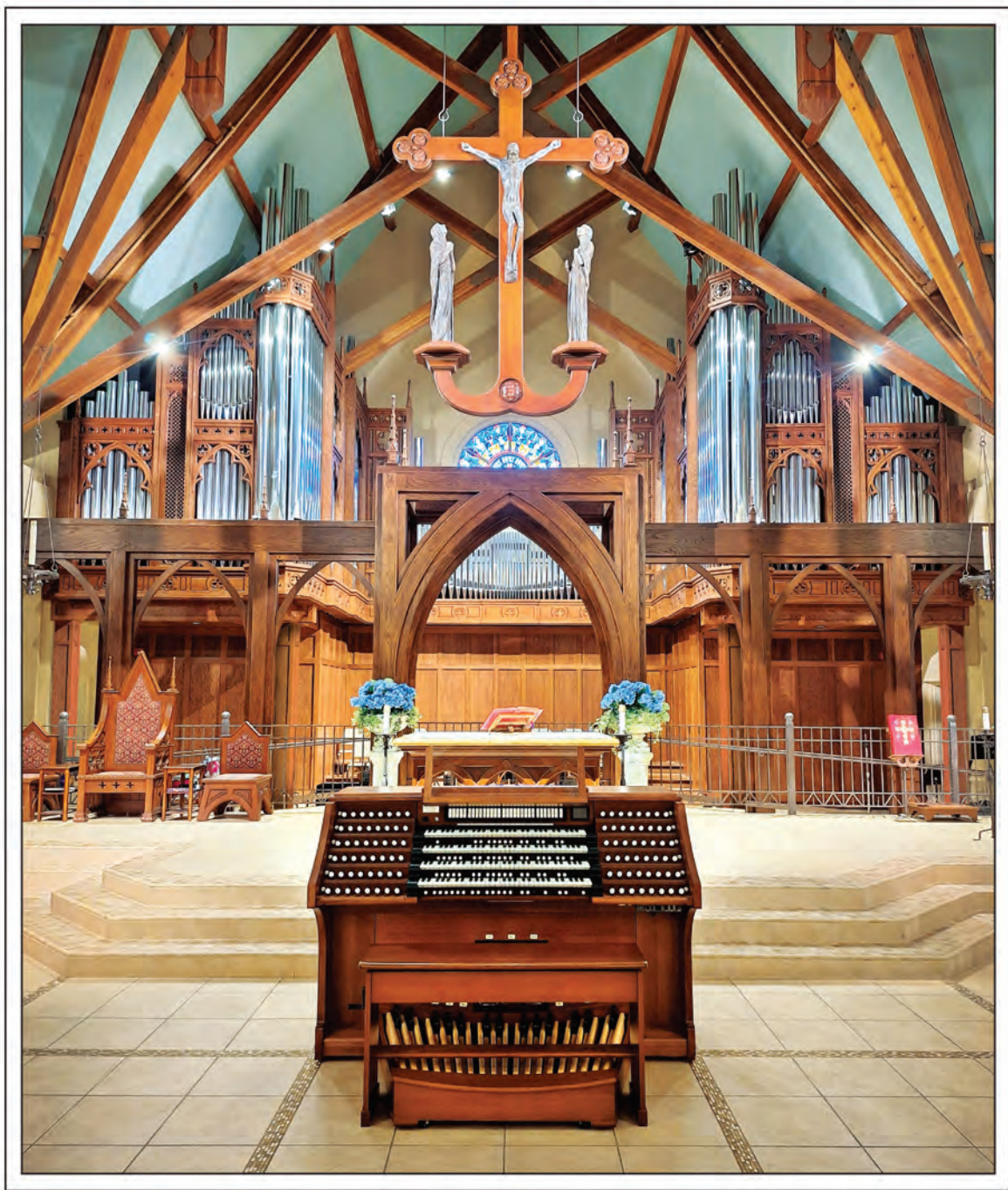


THE DIAPASON

SEPTEMBER 2025



Our Lady of the Assumption Church
Brookhaven, Georgia
Cover feature on pages 14-16

A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company, Lithonia, Georgia
Our Lady of the Assumption
Catholic Church, Brookhaven, Georgia

When the new facility was built for Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church in Brookhaven, Georgia, it was planned that a pipe organ would be installed. Knowing that they wanted a pipe organ, they included space in the building design for an instrument. Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints this dream would be shelved and unrealized for over twenty-five years.

We first started working with this church seven years ago. There were several options considered for the pipe organ, including the relocation and rebuilding of several instruments. I had the good fortune to travel to Boston with Father Jim Duffy, S.M., pastor of the church, to look at one such instrument from a Catholic church that had closed.

The challenge with considering an extant instrument for Our Lady of the Assumption (OLA) was that although there had been space allocated for the instrument, the shape of the space and the need for adequate room for the choristers presented issues. First, major alterations would be required to the organ to work within the given space; and second, an extant instrument would require rebuilding.

With these considerations, it was our recommendation to custom design an instrument that could have an expansive specification with full registers of principals, flutes, strings, and reeds while leaving

sufficient space for the choir and other musicians.

The layout of the space required that we design two free-standing organ cases that allowed room for the movement of the choir and other instrumentalists. We did not want the organ to feel like it was looming over the choir. It stands twelve feet off the floor and ascends toward the ceiling above their sightlines. We made the decision to connect these two organ cases with a central element and façade that frames the rose window in the center of the church. With this layout, we were able to design an area in the middle of the chassis and cases that acts an acoustic shell to focus the choir voices into the church. The rear of the center case includes a modest cantilever to assist in the tonal focus of voices.

The musicians platform is located behind the altar and baldacchino, which is flanked left and right by an arcade that forms a modesty screen for the musicians. Soaring forward and above this is the crucifix. The organ case has been designed so that the left and right arcade can be lowered in the future to allow the case to form the finished walls that visually flank the baldacchino and provide the center visual focus on the altar and crucifix.

The organ case is built of red oak that is finished to match the pews and other furnishings in the church. It very specifically does not match the liturgical chancel furnishings, which are darker and stand out from the lighter case.

To control the organ we designed a four-manual terraced drawknob



The independent 8' Pedal Octave pipes frame the rose window above the choir loft.

console. With a low profile, it allows excellent sightlines for support of an organist/choir director. The Syndyne 8400 full-featured console control system allows 5,000 levels of memory divisible by 50 organists. It features all of the technology expected on a modern pipe organ including piston sequencer,

transposer, MIDI, playback/record, programmable vents/crescendos/sforzandos, USB memory backup, and a host of other features.

This console is built of solid oak with a contrasting mahogany interior. The drawknobs are turned from African Blackwood with inset engraved faux ivory faces. The

A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company

GREAT (manual II)		SWELL (manual III, enclosed)		CHOIR-POSITIV (manual I, enclosed)		STRING (Manual III, enclosed with Swell)	
16'	Violone (from Ped and Gt)	16'	Flute Conique	12	pipes	16'	Flute Conique
8'	Diapason		(1-12 stoppered, ext 8')	61	pipes	8'	Viola da Gamba
	(1-12 Ped 16' Principal)	8'	Geigen Principal	61	pipes	8'	Viola Celeste (TC)
8'	Principal	8'	Stopped Diapason	61	pipes	8'	Salicional*
8'	Violone	8'	Flute Conique (Str)			8'	Voix Celeste* (TC)
	(1-12 Ped 8' Violone)	4'	Principal	61	pipes	8'	Flute Conique II*
8'	Harmonic Flute	4'	Nachthorn	61	pipes	4'	Flute Conique II*(ext)
	(1-12 Ped Bourdon)	2 1/2'	Nazard (TC)	49	pipes	8'	Clarinet* (free-reed)
8'	Bourdon	2'	Flageolet	61	pipes		
4'	Octave	1 3/4'	Tierce (TC)	49	pipes	ANTIPHONAL* (Manual II)	
4'	Koppelflote	2'	Plein Jeu IV	244	pipes	8'	Gedeckt
2'	Super Octave	16'	Basson-Hautbois (TC)	49	notes	8'	Unda Maris III (digital)
2 3/4'	Comet II (TC)*	8'	Trompette	61	pipes	4'	Principal
1 1/4'	Fourniture IV	8'	Hautbois	61	pipes	4'	Koppel Flute
16'	Klein Trumpet (Ch/Pos)	4'	Clairon (ext)	12	pipes	2'	Gemshorn
8'	Trumpet	8'	Vox Humana (digital)			1 1/2'	Quint
8'	Klein Trumpet (Ch/Pos)		Tremolo (Sw/Str)			3/4'	Mixture III
8'	Festival Trumpet					8'	Krummhorn
	(non-coupling)						
	Chimes (digital, on latching piston)						
	Tremolo						

console is moveable to allow it to be placed forward of the altar for concerts and other special occasions.

In designing the instrument, we positioned it in the front of the church with the choir in the center surrounded by the organ. The stop placement and shade designs of the enclosed divisions were planned to “bloom” the organ forward so that the organist and choir hear the full registrations but are out of the tonal foci of the full organ resources.

Located behind the right façade, the Great division is placed in a very forward position that allows it to blossom into the center of the room and more easily transit into the crossing to provide acoustic support to the transepts. It is also slightly forward of the choir so the choristers do not have to take the brunt of the tonal support needed for full congregational accompaniment. This division was designed with a large number of 8’ registers that individually allow root building of a number of different foundational choruses while also providing a rich supportive sound when massed together. The 16’ register of the Great is the Violone that borrows 24 pipes from the Pedal rank, moving into an independent rank at 4’ C.

Located directly behind the Great is the Choir/Positiv division that is designed as a tonal foil to the Great. Its composition includes full principal and flute choruses that are secondary to the Great. The 8’ Gemshorn in this division acts as a small conical principal that can be thickened with the Holzgedeckt. It was also given a dance partner

in the 8’ Gemshorn Celeste voice. Alone, these coupled stops are lovely. However, this division also includes an 8’ Flute Celeste II in the form of a wooden Ludwigtone that is available at 8’ and 4’ pitches. This stop has a haunting beauty by itself and also can be drawn with the Gemshorns to provide a breadth of floating, ethereal texture without the edge tone of the String division. The reeds of the Choir/Positiv are duplexed to the Great to allow the inclusion of controllable ensemble reed texture without aggression. Of particular note is the 16’/8’ Klein Trumpet, which is also available in the Pedal where it serves as a work-horse for undergirding registrations up to *mezzo forte*.

The Swell is located behind the left façade. When designing this division, we wanted to include a number of strings along with the requisite principal, flute, and reed registers. I have often joked that every organ should have a little bit of Wanamaker in its design. For me this is usually illusory to sufficient string stops in the organ—if one is good, two is better, three is better yet, and so on. In the design of the Swell there was originally a plan for two sets of strings. These are a dominant and subdominant voice with companion celestes. As I looked at the space and design possibilities, I realized that there was the opportunity to add to the stoplist, make some changes to actions, and develop a string organ that could be part of the Swell, calved off and separately floated to other divisions. The strings were placed on a



The organ casework is built of red oak to match the pews and furnishings.

separate slider windchest to allow their independence. As part of several donations our family made to the instrument, we added a 16’/8’/4’ Flute Conique and companion 8’/4’ celestes to complete the desired texture of the String division with an enveloping richness.

It is, and always has been, important to the members of the Schlueter family to gift items back to the clients we work with. Throughout the fifty-two years of our firm’s existence, we have purchased non-functional instruments and gifts from closed churches and individuals, and have had the opportunity to acquire a number of rare vintage pipe organ ranks that we have held in our larder waiting for the opportunity to give them a proper home and again let them have wind under their pipe toes. It has been our distinct pleasure to offer these stops as gifts



The terraced console features four manuals and turned African Blackwood drawknobs with faux ivory engraved inserts.

to the churches we work with and the organs we build for them. With the String division formed, we wanted a unique woodwind class register to meld with the strings. As a gift, we restored and added a free-reed

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church, Brookhaven, Georgia

FANFARE* (Manual IV)	
8’ Harmonic Flute (Gt)	
4’ Harmonic Flute (ext)	12 pipes
(1-49 from Gt)	
VII Mass Strings Choir (Str)	
8’ Cromorne (Ch/Pos)	
8’ Clarinet (Str)	
8’ Festival Trumpet (Gt)	
8’ Posaune (ext Ped Posaune)	29 pipes
8’ Trompette en Chamade	61 pipes
PEDAL	
32’ Bourdon* (digital)	
32’ Violone* (digital)	
16’ Wood Open* (digital)	
16’ Principal	32 pipes
16’ Bourdon	32 pipes
16’ Violone	32 pipes
16’ Flute Conique (Sw)	
8’ Octave	32 pipes
8’ Diapason (Gt)	
8’ Bourdon (from Gt Harmonic Flute)	
8’ Violone (Gt)	

4’ Choral Bass	32 pipes
4’ Cantus Flute (Gt)	
2½’ Mixture II (wired, 8’ Diapason)	
32’ Bombarde* (digital)	
32’ Harmonics (wired cornet series)	
16’ Posaune	32 pipes
16’ Klein Trumpet (Ch/Pos)	32 pipes
8’ Posaune (ext)	12 pipes
8’ Trumpet (Gt)	
4’ Klein Trumpet (Ch/Pos)	
4’ Krummhorn (Ch/Pos)	

ANTIPHONAL PEDAL

16’ Stille Gedeckt (digital)
16’ Stille Principal (digital)

* gifts from the A.E. Schlueter family

MIDI (available as preset stops, pistons on coupler rail)

Playback/Record
MIDI on Pedal
MIDI on Great
MIDI on Swell
MIDI on Choir/Positiv
MIDI on Fanfare

Coupler Rail

Great to Pedal 8
Swell to Pedal 8
Choir/Positiv to Pedal 8
String to Pedal 8
Antiphonal to Pedal 8

Swell to Great 16
Swell to Great 8
Swell to Great 4
String to Great 8
Choir-Positiv to Great 16
Choir-Positiv to Great 8
Choir-Positiv to Great 4

Antiphonal Off Great
Fanfare to Great

Choir-Positiv to Choir-Positiv 16
Choir-Positiv Unison Off
Choir-Positiv to Choir-Positiv 4
Swell to Choir-Positiv 16
Swell to Choir-Positiv 8
Swell to Choir-Positiv 4
String to Choir-Positiv 8
Antiphonal to Choir-Positiv 8
Fanfare to Choir-Positiv 8

Swell to Swell 16
Swell Unison Off
Swell to Swell 4
String Off Swell
Antiphonal to Swell 8
Fanfare to Swell 8

Antiphonal to Fanfare 8

64 ranks, 93 stops, 3,630 pipes

Clarinet that was built in the 1920s by the Aeolian firm. The round, colorful woodwind register faithfully duplicates a real, handheld clarinet, and as a hand-in-glove capstone, completed the division in the wonderful acoustics of this space.

The Fanfare division on the fourth manual features the 8' Festival Trumpet in the chancel and an 8' Trompette en Chamade in the rear of the church. The chamade is built of polished copper and is located over the baptismal font. These two powerful reeds and their spatial locations provide wonderful solo voices against the resources of the other manual divisions. We also provided additional solo registers brought to this manual including the 8'/4' Harmonic Flute and color and solo reed voices from the String, Choir/Positiv, and Great divisions. With the luxury of a fourth manual and use of full couplers, we used this keyboard as a home for the Fanfare division and a location to separately float the Antiphonal and String divisions.

The shape and size of the room made consideration for an Antiphonal division important. Early on we made the decision that this would be a gift from the Schlueter family to this church. This division includes a supportive chorus, a mutation for coloring the 8' and 4' registers, and a lyrical solo/ensemble Cromorne. Again, in consideration of the atmospherics of this worship space, we included a three-rank string register.

The Pedal division was designed with a number of independent registers that find their home in the façade. The organ façade is very large with over 151 pipes in its design. This gave us the space for independent resources from the Pedal, including the 16' Principal, 16' Violone, and 8' Octave. Behind the façade are additional Pedal resources including the 16'/8'/4' reed, 16'/8' Bourdon and 4' Choral Bass.

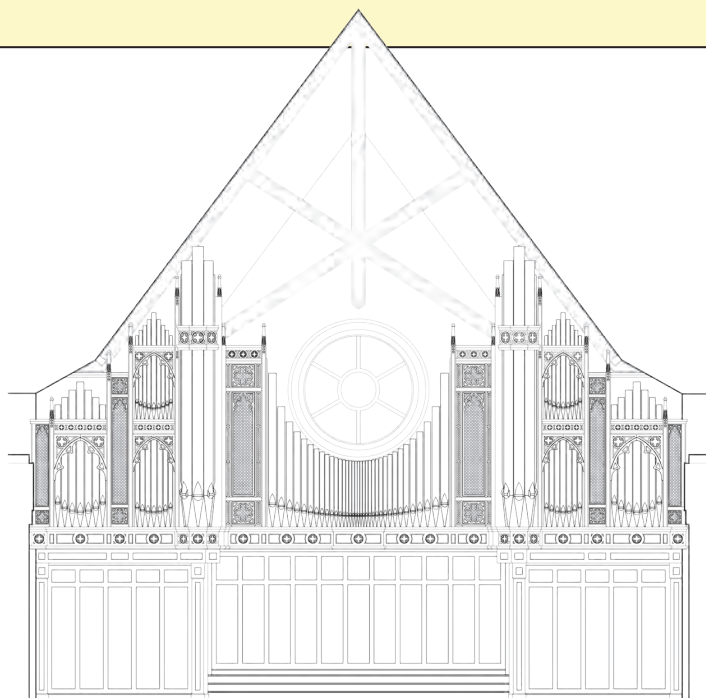
Sometimes building an organ can be an extreme challenge. I want to take this opportunity to convey a most sincere thank you to Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church. During the building of this organ there were a number of trials, including numerous supply chain issues and delays of materials that continued on from the covid pandemic period. While the organ was being built, our staff and members of the

Schlueter family suffered a number of personal and health challenges that mercifully are behind us now, but led to delays in building this instrument. While we are certain that this was trying, the church was our champion and offered us support, prayers, and grace. They were the face of Christianity as one should hope for, and what as a church, they exemplified. Personally, I was buoyed and humbled by the witness they provided. They will remain in my prayers and my heart. We are privileged to have worked with this congregation and built an instrument that will fully support worship, outlive us, and continue for a generation yet unborn.

We would be remiss if we did not thank Father Jim Duffy, director of music and liturgy Jake Mappes, business manager Jim Schweizer, and also the new pastor, Father Daniel Ketter, JCL.

The organ was dedicated to worship on May 13, 2025, to a full congregation with a concert by Jake Mappes and Nick Johns-Cooper, director of music at Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church. The service featured a special blessing by Archbishop Hartmayer along with a recital of various organ works, including the world premiere of *Marian Fanfare*, a brand new composition written by Jake Mappes, commissioned for the new instrument. We were honored for the debut of this work written for the occasion and so beautifully performed.

As this project concludes, we feel grateful to have left our thumbprints on another instrument that will outlive us. We are fortunate to have such a talented staff and a number of additional significant projects on our books. Some of these projects include the reinstallation of the restored Möller instruments at the United States Air Force Academy chapels in Colorado Springs, Colorado; a new organ for the Catholic chapel at West Point Military Academy in West Point, New York; a 36-rank instrument for First Baptist Church in Valdosta, Georgia; an organ restoration for Saint Paul's by the Sea Episcopal Church in Jacksonville, Florida; major additions to Saint Peter's Anglican Cathedral in Tallahassee, Florida; continuing restoration of the "Mighty Mo" theatre organ at the Fox Theatre in



CAD drawing of organ facade and casework



Racks being built for wood pipes in our wood shop

Atlanta, Georgia; and new consoles for Holy Spirit Lutheran Church in Charleston, South Carolina, and Saint Peter's Catholic Church in New Iberia, Louisiana.

Let us know how we can help you! We can be reached by e-mail to

Arthur Schlueter III at: art3@pipe-organ.com.

—Arthur E. Schlueter III
Artistic and Tonal Direction

Builder's website: pipe-organ.com
Church website: www.olachurch.org