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FRANCIS STREET FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH was organized in 1843 by Jane Anne Kemper, a devout pioneer woman, as a "Methodist Class" with five members. It officially became a society or church in the following year, and met above David Heaton's cabinetmaker shop until erecting the town's first brick church building in 1846, on a lot donated by the town's founder, Joseph Robidoux.

Following a denominational split over slavery, the local church divided in 1849, and for the next 146 years, the Francis Street Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the "Union" Methodist Episcopal Church, later called "Fifth Street" and "First," carried out similar, but separate, ministries within blocks of each other. The denomination reunited in Kansas City in 1939, and the two local churches merged in 1995.

The present building, built by the Francis Street Church in 1906, is its second location on Francis Street. Designed by New York City architect, George Kramer, who worked for Jacob Snyder, the architect who pioneered the Akron Plan, it incorporates Gothic revival elements around the Akron Plan. One source gives Kramer credit for perfecting the Akron Plan. During his 50 year career, he designed more than 2,200 churches and Sunday schools.

According to the church's history, one pastor spent an entire summer traveling the east coast, studying modern architecture, in order to advise the architects on the building's design, which was considered contemporary in every way, including one of the first detached organ consoles in the city, made possible by tubular action. Except for updated lighting and the permanent partitioning of the former Sunday School Assembly Hall, (originally separated by a series of sliding pocket doors), the sanctuary is largely unchanged. The north window depicts Christ's Presentation in the Temple and is executed in the intricate Tiffany style by Ford Bros. Studio of Minneapolis. The Sunday School Assembly Hall features a semi-circular clerestory, while the sanctuary ceiling features an octagonal dome with a skylight representing a sunburst.

The pipe organ was built and installed at a cost of \$3,500 by Hook & Hastings as their Opus 2112, comprising 14 ranks across 2 manuals and pedal. The organ in the previous building was also built by the Hook firm, Opus 1220 (1884), as was a small organ in the residence of Jas. L. Ellingwood, whose son, Jas. S., supervised installation of this organ and paid for the subsequent addition of nine ranks in 1911. It appears, however, that the decision to purchase this organ was left to the architect, who placed the project for bid among several east coast builders.

The organ case, designed by the architect, features the original polychromatic pipe colors and bandings, found on other Hook organs of this period, and indicative of the transition from highly stenciled case pipes to monochromatic color schemes. Hook & Hastings' last official contract, capping 123 years of American organbuilding, was the electrification of this organ's action in 1935. The technician, E. A. Lahaise, whose family is still in the business, painted his name on the chamber wall.

The organ was rebuilt and enlarged by three ranks by Charles McManis in 1976, and rebuilt again and enlarged to 3 manuals and 31 ranks by Michael Quimby in 1986. It was rebuilt by Quimby again in 1997 to incorporate several ranks, as well as the chimes and a Wurlitzer Harp from the 1952 Moller pipe organ in First United Methodist Church. The nine flue ranks in the Choir organ and most of the Great and Swell Principal choruses have been revoiced and/or rescaled by John Hendriksen, former head flue voicer for the Aeolian-Skinner Co. Most recently, new Great and Swell Mixtures have been installed. The original Hook & Hastings manual chests continue to function on original leather.



SPECIFICATION

HOOK & HASTINGS CO., Boston

Opus 2112, 1906

Opus 2267, 1911

Opus 2614, 1935

Rebuilt and enlarged by McManis Organ Co., Kansas City, KS, 1976

Quimby Pipe Organs, Inc. Warrensburg, MO, 1986, 1997, 2003

now with Moller console

III/44 Slider & pitman chests with electro-pneumatic action

For full information on what these stops mean, click [HERE](#)

GREAT ORGAN	SWELL ORGAN	CHOIR ORGAN	PEDAL ORGAN
8' Open Diapason (1- 20 in case)	8' Open Diapason	8' Bourdon	32' Resultant
8' Melodia	8' Gedeckt	8' Spitz Viol	16' Open Diapason
4' Octave (1-5 in case)	8' Viol de Gamba	8' Voix Celeste	16' Bourdon
4' Flute d'amour	8' Voix Celeste	8' Flute Celeste II	16' Lieblich Bourdon (Ch)
2 2/3' Twelfth	4' Octave	4' Prestant	8' Principal
2' Fifteenth	4' Flute Harmonique	4' Rohrflote	8' Bourdon
1 1/3' Mixture IV	2 2/3' Sesquialtera II	2' Spitzflote	4' Octave
	2' Super Octave	1 1/3' Larigot	

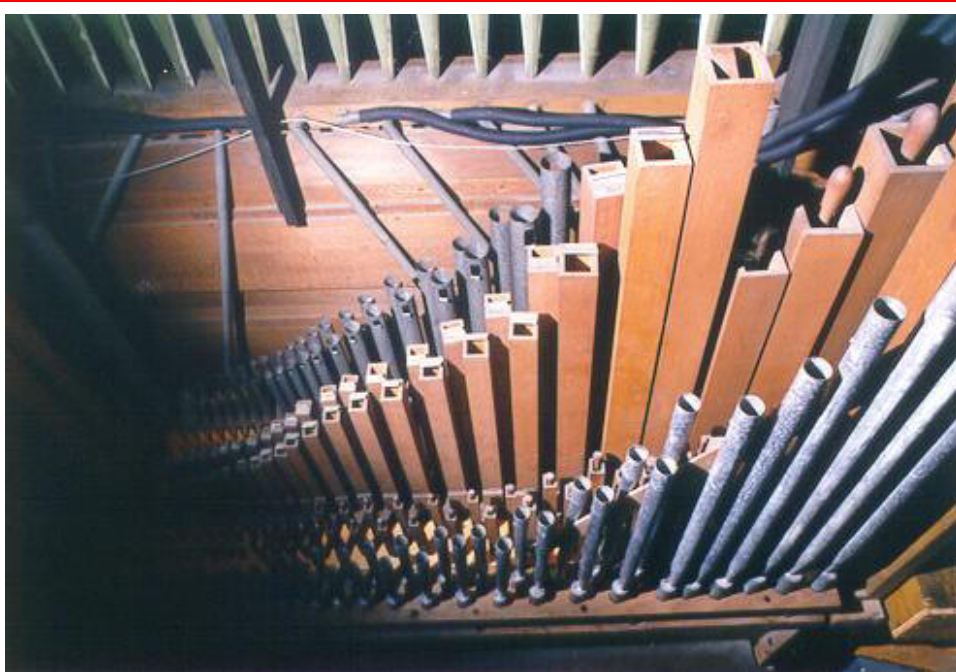
8' Cromorne	2' Mixture III	8' English Horn	2 2/3' Mixture III
8' Festival Trompette	8' Trompette	8' Festival Trompette (Gt)	16' Posaune
4' Clairon	8' Oboe	Tremulant	8' Tromba
Tremulant	8' Vox Humana	Zimbelstern	4' Clarion
Chimes	Tremulant	Harp	
Choir & Antiphonal			



Above: CHOIR DIVISION, Francis Street First United Methodist Church, while erected in the shop of Quimby Pipe Organs, Inc., in 1996, prior to being dismantled for shipment and installation in the church. This section of the organ has 11 ranks or 618 pipes. The larger bass pipes are “offset” to the right from the main windchests. In the lower left is the “Harp”, with its graduated nickel-plated resonators and large piano-like hammers, which strike tuned metal bars.



Above: Another angle of the CHOIR DIVISION with the 1 1/3 Larigot rank in the foreground. This stop plays a quint pitch, 19 notes above the note actually played. In the background is the 8' Bourdon rank. The caps on this stopped metal flute are held in place by the black felt collars.



Above: GREAT DIVISION, Francis Street First United Methodist Church, one of three windchests holding pipes for 14 ranks in this division, which are grouped in rows of 61 pipes, creating one pitch for each of the 61 notes on the keyboard. The ranks or stops are (front to back) “Cromorne” (or Clarinet), “Flute d’amour” (small wood pipes with stoppers), “Melodia” (open wood pipes), “Twelfth” (barely visible) and “Open Diapason”. Note hoses and metal windlines connecting “speaking pipes” offset in the organ case



An early postcard view of the NW corner of the church, showing the semi-circular clerestory of the Sunday School Assembly Hall and outside wall of the classrooms on two levels, distinguishing features of the Akron plan. The tower entrance and steps have since been removed. Below is a modern photo, taken from Civic Center park with the fountain in the foreground.



