

March 14, 2018

Dear First Baptist Church family:

Few things make me happier than playing the pipe organ in our Sanctuary. How blessed are we to have this magnificent instrument as part of our Sunday morning worship! As with any instrument, maintenance is essential to ensure longevity. Because of this, I'm excited to invite you to take part in First Baptist's organ maintenance fundraising campaign.

Our organ has not always called First Baptist its home. Originally built in 1932 by Kilgen and Son of St. Louis, the organ was purchased from a Missouri church in the late 1990s. The organ went through a two-year restoration process before being rebuilt in our Sanctuary and dedicated in 1999.

The organ and its maintenance fund were both gifts from longtime member Perry Thatcher. Since 1999, this designated fund has sustained the organ. After nearly two decades, however, this fund needs your help to repair and restore the organ.

Water damage and wear & tear are threatening the organ's ability to make music:

- Roof leaks have damaged some of the organ's 16-foot-tall pipes, and internal actions that supply wind to them. These pipes are now unusable, awaiting funding for repairs.
- The entire organ needs new key contacts. The current contacts are original to the 1932 organ and are failing due to age. You may have noticed these failures during our worship services as notes don't always play like they should.

With a goal of \$20,000, we're hoping to raise enough money to address immediate repair and restoration concerns, and to help replenish the maintenance fund. The repairs listed above cost \$15,000; annual servicing and tunings cost \$1,500.

In order for the organ to continue bringing you and future generations the best-sounding music for worship, we need to invest in repairing and restoring our 86-year-old instrument.

It's my hope that you'll be able to join us at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 22, for an organ fund benefit concert at First Baptist. Organists and other musicians from the community will perform a variety of music, ranging from classical to sacred to secular, with a few "fun" tunes mixed in. A freewill offering will be received at the concert. Learn more at fbcmiddletown.org/ministries/music.

If you're unable to join us April 22, you can still show your support by making a donation to the Organ Maintenance Fund. Your tax-deductible gift means a continued investment in this phenomenal instrument!

If you have any questions about the church's pipe organ, please contact me at 513-423-5721 or email musicdirector@fbcmiddletown.org.

In His love,

Christine A. Baird
Organist & Director of Music

Brian P. Shepard
Director, Sanctuary Choir

Mike Taylor
Chair, Board of Trustees