

*Association of Church Musicians
Madison Chapter AGO*

Alpine Organ Crawl



Saturday October 31, 2009
Monroe, Wisconsin

Compiled by Deborah Krauss Smith

Itinerary

9:30 – 9:45 am

Treats in the choir room of St. John's United Church of Christ
1724 – 14th Street

*Welcome gifts for participants courtesy of
The Swiss Colony and Turner Hall of Monroe.*

9:45 – 10:25 am

1923 Wangerin-Weickhardt; 2 manuals; 14-1/2 ranks, unified
St. John's United Church of Christ

10:30 – 11:25 am

2006 Matthew Ronald Buholzer Memorial Pipe Organ
(1968 Möller / Rodgers electronic hybrid, rebuilt by Kelly Monette)
3 manuals (Rodgers console)
St. Victor Catholic Church
1760 14th Street

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

Lunch, with Swiss entertainment, in the Ratskeller of the historic Turner Hall of
Monroe
1217 – 17th Avenue

12:45 – 1:30 pm

1977 Reuter; 2 manuals, 8 ranks
Grace Lutheran Church – ELCA
1025 – 15th Avenue

1:45 - 2:30 pm

2001 Berghaus; 3 manuals, 39 ranks
United Methodist Church of Monroe
2227 – 4th Street

St. John's United Church of Christ

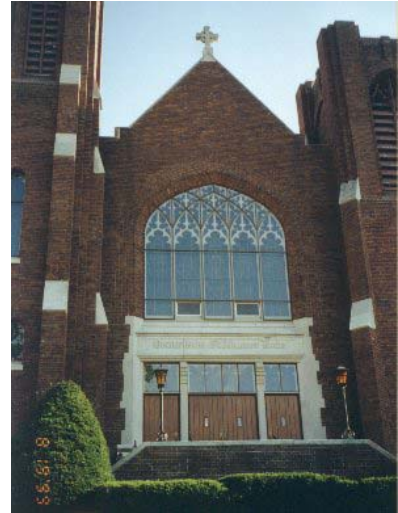
1724 14th Street
<http://stjohnsmonroe.org>

The Instrument

- 1923 Wangerin-Weickhardt of Milwaukee, WI
- 2 manuals; 14-1/2 ranks, unified
- Has had some modifications
- Very characteristic sound for a regional American instrument of its time
- Generals are set without a set piston

The Congregation

- Established in 1862 by Swiss and German immigrants to the Monroe area
- Current building was dedicated in 1923
- Held services in German until the 1920s, with Christmas Day services conducted in German until 1955
- Reinstated a German language Christmas communion service in 1972, which continues today
- Largest UCC congregation in Wisconsin with nearly 1900 members
- Largest Protestant church in Monroe
- Built St. John's Garden Apartments, which opened in 1977, on the north side of Monroe as housing for seniors
- In 1999, as a joint venture with The Monroe Clinic and New Glarus Home (UCC), expanded the Garden Apartments and added an assisted living facility called FriedensHeim (home of peace).



Interesting Notes

Green County, Wisconsin, in which Monroe is located, is one of only two counties in the entire United States that has a higher concentration of UCC congregations than any other Protestant denomination. This is due to heavy immigration of Swiss to Green County from the mid-1850s to the mid-1950s. Ulrich Zwingli, who began the Reformation Movement in Zürich in 1519, was a strong influence of the Swiss Reformed Church, which, in turn, influenced the Evangelical and Reformed denomination in the United States.

From its very beginnings, St. John's and its pastoral leadership has always had a very cordial relationship with its neighbor, St. Victor Catholic Church.

St. Victor Catholic Church

1760 14th Sreet

<http://www.stvictormonroe.org>

The Instrument

- 2006 Matthew Ronald Buholzer Memorial Pipe Organ
- Hybrid combination of a 1968 Möller pipe organ and a Rodgers 905 electronic organ
- Rebuilt by Kelly Monette of Monette Organ Service; Waunakee, WI
- 3 manuals; Rodgers console, Möller bench
- Installation precipitated a major restoration of the church



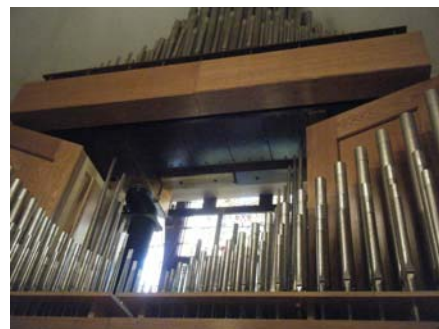
The Parish

- Established in 1860
- A separate parish of German-speaking Catholics, St. Mary's, was established in Monroe in 1861
- The present building was consecrated and dedicated in 1893
- German-speaking Catholics from St. Mary's were welcomed into the parish in 1918, following the death of St. Mary's priest
- St. Victor parish opened its first school in 1916
- The current St. Victor School building opened in 1956 and was designed by parishioner and architect, John Steinmann, who had studied with Frank Lloyd Wright

Interesting Notes

An organ built by the Hinners Organ Company of Pekin, Illinois resided in the building's balcony until it was removed in 1967. It was replaced by two electronic installations.

14-year-old Michael Emil Klarer, a young parishioner of Swiss descent who loved organ music and lived across the street from the church, vowed that someday the church would again have a pipe organ. That young lad realized his dream when Fr. Michael Klarer returned to his home parish in 2003.



Turner Hall of Monroe

1217 – 17th Avenue
<http://turnerhallofmonroe.org>

The Turner Hall derives its name from the German word for gymnast, which is *Turner*. Although there are many German Turner Halls throughout the country, it is believed that this Turner Hall is the only one of Swiss origin left in the United States. The building itself, a Swiss Emmental-style chalet, is listed on both the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Its authentically Old World interior houses many irreplaceable paintings and Swiss artifacts as well as exemplary examples of *Bauernmalerei* (Swiss folk painting.)



The first *Turnhalle* was built by Swiss immigrants in 1868 on approximately the same site as the current Turner Hall. Originally a place for the Swiss to practice gymnastics and preserve their Swiss traditions, it also soon became a center of community activities and was often referred to as the "opera house".

On Labor Day of 1936, the structure burned to the ground. Almost immediately, plans were begun to build the present Turner Hall, which was completed and dedicated in 1938.

The Turner Hall of Monroe, a non-profit 501(c)(3) entity, continues to be a vital place for nurturing Swiss heritage through its many Swiss-related events and activities, as well as a venue for concerts, dances, receptions, and a host of other community events. Long known for being a place Where Old and New Worlds Meet, its rich history also includes personal appearances by William Jennings Bryant, John F. Kennedy, and big band names such as Wayne King, Tiny Hill and Lawrence Welk.

In recent years, the entire building...the authentic Old World Ratskeller, the beautiful upstairs ballroom and stage, the gym, and bowling lanes...has undergone loving renovation. Turner Hall's volunteers and sponsors work tirelessly to support and maintain this landmark gem and treasure of Swiss heritage.

It is probably no accident that Turner Hall is located close to both St. Victor Catholic Church and St. John's United Church of Christ. In Switzerland, a country that is almost evenly split as half Protestant and half Catholic, it is common for a gathering place of this type to be located near both the Catholic and Protestant churches. This is perhaps partly why Catholics and Protestants in Monroe have always worked so well together.

Grace Lutheran Church (ELCA)

1025 – 15th Avenue
<http://www.gracemonroe.org>

The Instrument

- 1977 Reuter; 2 - manuals, 8 ranks
- Entirely unenclosed, with capability to be enclosed

Interesting Notes

Prior to the last renovation of the sanctuary, the layout of the sanctuary was completely reversed; the chancel was where the balcony now is, and vice versa.



United Methodist Church of Monroe

2227 4th Street

<http://www.monroeumc.com>

The Instrument

- 2001 Berghaus of Bellwood, Illinois
- 39 ranks, 3-manuals
- Choir manual does not have a separate division, except for a festival trumpet
- MIDI capable
- Voiced by Kelly Monette



The Church

- The Monroe congregations of Immanuel E.U.B Church and First Methodist merged in 1970 following the 1968 denominational mergers and creation of the United Methodist Church
- Immanuel E.U.B housed a small 2 - manual Wicks pipe organ; First Methodist, a Hammond electronic after its pipe organ was severely damaged by a lightning strike to its tall spire
- The merged congregations worshiped in the Immanuel E.U.B building until 1981 when a new facility...everything but the sanctuary...was built
- The current sanctuary was completed about 10 years later
- First Methodist Church was sold in 1976 for \$100,000 and became what is now the Monroe Arts Center (<http://www.monroeartscenter.com>)

