



# CHRIST CHURCH LONGWOOD

151 West Church Avenue  
Longwood, FL 32750  
407 339-6812

located in the Historical District of Longwood

Upholding Scriptural Authority

## Nails and Paint

April 13, 2011 to June 14, 2011

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### THE NEED

It had been clear for some time that our flagship building on the Christ Church campus, the church itself, had been coming more and more under disrepair. Sporting a graying facade, peeling paint, and evident rotting wood, it began to communicate a message to the public that we did not wish to send. Implied cost was the primary deterrent to addressing this situation followed by lack of planning and someone to step up to honcho the project.

The Vestry made the first step by obtaining an estimate of cost to repair the steeple and to bring the building up to an acceptable condition. The figure that was placed as a target was around \$8,000.00; daunting but do-able. This was the message of the thermometer chart that was found in the Parish Hall for a time. The assumption was that we would hire a firm to replace exterior rotten wood on all four sides of the tower as well as painting it for protection and appearance. Thanks to Charley Ray, who ventured up into the steeple tower a few years ago on a look-see mission, we knew that the infrastructure of the steeple tower was firm and sound. He had found neither rotten wood there nor anything else that would cause the church to have alarm over its reliability.

### THE SOLUTION

Leaning on his background as a Contractor, Wes Sparks investigated the steeple tower to determine what was required to repair/replace the rotting wood and restore the tower to a state of acceptance. His conclusion was that we were able to do the work ourselves, meaning him primarily, and that we did not have to hire an outside contractor. The main difficulty was accessing the upper reaches of the tower and how to do it. Further investigation, showed that equipment was indeed readily available that could do the job for us. The idea of using scaffolding as the means of ascent was quickly rejected as being too cumbersome and difficult for those who would be using it. We came to realize that this was also the most expensive equipment to access the church (about \$4,000.00). This left the "Cherry Picker" or "Lift Machine" (my title) as the main choice. Since Wes had experience in using such a machine, it was an easy decision to use this method. RSC Equipment Rental was our selection since Nick Myer, an adherent of Christ Church, specialized in renting such equipment.

One Sunday, as I was discussing this project with Wes, it was clear to me that if the steeple tower was to undergo fairly sever wood replacement, there would be a major need for it to be painted; one could not do the one with out doing the other. Furthermore, since a new coat of paint was to be placed on the tower, the remainder of the church building would immediately stand out as needing painting as well. It had been clear to me and others for a long time that painting the church was more and more a necessity. Here was the perfect opportunity to get it done. Therefore, I proposed to Wes that were he to repair the wood of the church, where possible, I would partner with him to paint it. We were in agreement and the pact was made. We agreed to start when the required Lift Machine was attained and ready to go. It turned out that the magic date for us to start was April, 15<sup>th</sup>.

## THE MATERIALS

All of the major tools were supplied by Wes, myself, and Christ Church; very little had to be purchased. We purchased supplies as needed such as:

- Rollers as needed, both 7" and 4". It turns out that the most useful size for Christ Church, because of the battens, was/is the 4-inch roller. With a long roller-extender and 4-inch roller, it was very possible to reach even the eaves of the church on either side of the church and every spot therein as well as the sides and battens.
- Painting tape (four rolls) used to protect around all of the windows, areas of the three porches, and the red front doors.
- Tread tape for the front porch steps; this was a safety concern.
- Rope to the bind hedge plants on the East side of the church. This allowed access to the siding and to the concrete blocks.
- Wet Paint tape to flag wet paint areas. It turns out that the grey deck paint has a notation on the can to restrict traffic for up to 72 hours. This tape does just that.
- Caulk tubes for caulking. I couldn't believe how much caulk I used on the East side of the church to get it ready for painting. Overall we used about 40 tubes of caulk throughout the church exterior to seal it against the elements. This was the most important step after replacing the rotten wood. Forty tubes means there were many cracks and open areas that needed to be sealed to prevent additional rot.
- Screws/nails as needed.
- Wood (plywood and boards). We used several T-11 plywood sheets and a number of 1"x4" and 2"x4" boards to repair the steeple wood sections, battens, and other sections of the church. Wes completely replaced the louvers and associated frame on the West (parking lot) side of the church. The front and East side louvers were not as bad and could be repaired by "sistering" (Wes' term) or "scabbing" (my term) the louver slats in the frames; making it a bit easier repair.
- Paint (white for the siding, blue for the window frames, grey for the porch decks, red for the front doors).
  - We purchased six (6) buckets of 5-gallon white semi-gloss paint for the church exterior proper (30 gallons) of which we have almost two gallons left. Because it was difficult to get good coverage with one coat of paint, I used two and, in many places, three coats of paint meaning the church as been painted up to three times this last go around (some places even have four coats).
  - We bought two gallons of grey deck paint or which there is about half a gallon left. This was the same paint and brand that we used before on the East-side porch deck.
  - One gallon of blue Sherman-Williams Super Paint was sufficient for the window frames leaving about a quarter gallon left. The church decided to exactly match the blue that was already there.
  - One gallon of red (Poinsettia) Sherman-Williams Super Paint gave the red doors two coats of tough paint; we have three-quarters of a gallon left. This color was an exact match for the red that was there.

## **THE WORK**

Wes worked on the steeple tower independently from me where he did not need me. In the meantime, I started painting the East side of the church. Wes' work had priority. Therefore, whenever he did need me to assist him, painting came to a halt. Wes had help now and again from his daughter Beth Ann in the early work. We are very grateful for her help; it made life easier.

Afraid of heights? Who me? Nah. Well maybe a bit ... "Come on, Stan, time to go to the top of the steeple to help me a bit and to start painting there." Can you imagine getting into a two-man bucket at the end of a large, long telescoping iron arm and elevating to 45 feet in the air; and when you stop, you really don't stop but sway back and forth and up and down as if on a boat at sea? That is what it was like. Thank goodness there is a railing around the bucket to white-knuckle onto. Then to add to all that, Wes was still getting used to the joystick and other controls to go up, down, left, right, etc. So I get ready to go left, and we go right; or the arm stops in its flight and the bucket keeps going on. YIKES! It took me about a half hour or so to get used to what was going on. It was a great help that I could concentrate on the work at hand; I had to do so, of course. After a while, all surroundings disappeared as well as life in the bucket and living was easy once again.

I think Wes was enjoying the newness of his traveling companion all this time. I know I enjoyed his company; Marine and Air Force; same time period. It was easy to keep a constant discussion going. We had a lot in common. This made the work seem easy and short. We both enjoyed what we were doing and the morning hours just seemed to fly by.

Wes liked to get started about 7:00am in the morning. You have got to be kidding! I normally was still in bed at that time. After a week, I decided give it a go and roll out of bed at 5:45am to get started to meet him at the church on his time terms at 7:00am. I was running only on three cylinders or so until I arrived at the church and started work. After a week or two it became natural to get up that early and start. Clearly, Wes had quite an influence on me and my timing. Now that we are done, I am working on getting back to my normal sleeping hours ... it is not easy. Should I?

After the work on the steeple tower was completed, we concentrated on painting only the highest parts of the church that required that we have a ladder or the lift machine. We both saw the value in the lift machine as it made painting life so much easier. It was via that machine that we got the rear of the church and its window painted in record time.

After the high points of the church were painted, we had no further use for the lift machine and let it go back to its own roost. We said "Goodbye" to the machine on May 18<sup>th</sup>. The remainder of the time until June 14<sup>th</sup> I spent painting the rest of the church. Now and again, I had help from various members of the church.

## **THE HELP**

Wes and I are grateful to the help we received throughout this project. We give special thanks to:

- Pastor David Knox ... painting
- Chad and Beth Ann Yusk ... caulking, painting, wood work (thank you Beth Ann)
- Nancy Sparks ... painting
- Doug and David Mathews ... painting
- Ron Goddard ... painting
- Sue Russell ... painting
- My trench angels: Blake and Wesley Yusk

## **FUTURE PLANNED WORK**

There are a few areas of the church that require work that Wes and I have planned to do later in the year (2011). They are as follows:

East and West Porch Ceilings. The ceilings of these porches are exposed to the roofing nails above and look pretty rough. Wes and I will install plywood as a ceiling in these porches to make them more acceptable in appearance. In the meanwhile, I have painted the existing ceilings to make them as good as possible at this time.

West Porch Ramp. We have found rotten wood under some of the ramp boards as well as the rear steps. This wood is not load bearing and does not present a danger to people. Wes and I will repair this wood after installing the ceilings in the two porches.

## **AREAS OF NOTE**

There are a number of areas around the church that presently have rotten or water-damaged wood. Fortunately, none of these are for load-bearing purposes but are all for aesthetics. They are as follows:

- Top eave, right front of church near steeple. Top is eaten but I have painted it to keep it from advancing.
- Top eave, left front of church near lower eave: Top is eaten but I have painted it to keep it from advancing.
- Top eave, left rear of church, the entire length: Top is eaten by carpenter ants which appears to be old damage. I could not paint it as there is nothing there to accept the paint. The eave looks to be ok but that is surface only.

## **ADDITIONAL WORK**

Wes and I plan to enclose the ceilings of the West and East porches toward the end of August so as to make them more appealing and not see all the nails, etc.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

You can find all the relevant photographs regarding repairing and painting of Christ Church at the church web site; in particular at the following link:

<http://christchurchlongwood.com/Activities/SteepRepair-2011/SlideShow/index.html>