



THE SHEPHERD'S CALL

SPECIAL RECOVERY EDITION

July 24, 2011

Dajon Associates: Top Notch Contractor

Work on the Sanctuary is interrupted for a couple of weeks while new steel trusses are fabricated. We take the opportunity to focus on Dajon Associates, our contractor. While Dajon has a national reputation with customers throughout the U.S., the firm is based in Hackensack NJ. They specialize in the repair and reinforcement of wood roof structures. We are grateful that Beth Pochtar, P.E. guided us to Dajon. She is the structural engineer and sister of member Jim Andersen who came to our aid during the crisis in January. Pochtar highly recommended the firm and introduced us to David Strauss.

David, one of Dajon's two principals – the other being his brother Jon – made an emergency visit to Good Shepherd, assessed the roof damage, and brought in his expert crew to install shoring towers from the floor of Fellowship Hall to the roof of the Sanctuary to stabilize the building. He said, "Your ceiling should have fallen down; all the trusses failed."

For Dajon, emergencies are all in a day's work. The construction firm was founded in 1969 by Norbert Strauss who named his business after his two sons and years later, they joined him in the firm. David and Jon run it today; their father has been retired for about 10 years. They manage about 20 employees and do three or four projects at a time. While some projects involve new structures, 90% of the business is repair work and much of it is for churches. St. John the Baptist, an ELCA congregation with a very old building in Hoboken, just had their rotted trusses replaced by Dajon, and the firm recently completed a structural project for St. Scholastica in Lecanta, Florida.

Our Repair: "Leading Edge"

Good Shepherd presented a very interesting and challenging opportunity for Dajon. Chuck Lysaght, the Raleigh-based structural engineer who has collaborated with Dajon on over 100 projects, said, "Typically, we work on heavy timber framed churches. Good Shepherd is constructed of pre-engineered wood trusses which are very economical." Lysaght described the two obvious options to repair our church: either take the entire roof off and start over or install tie rods which would have created other obstacles that included destroying the interior aesthetic. Instead, Dave and Jon, their very experienced superintendent Kevin Siletti, and Lysaght put their heads together and came up with a unique solution based on solid engineering principles. Eight of the wood trusses will be replaced with steel which is, in general, much stronger than wood. "It's conceptually very simple," according to Chuck, "but significantly more difficult for Dajon. I'd only trust a general contractor like Dajon to do this repair."

The Dajon team is energized by projects like ours. "It takes creativity to do these kinds of repairs," said Lysaght. "You started something. We're using a similar approach with another church now."

You don't need us until you really need us," said Jon Strauss, "and then you REALLY need us!" The brothers get their motivation from working in difficult situations. "We're proud of this one. It's a cutting-edge repair. We're putting a lot of steel up there." The bottom line is: "We want to help you get your church back."

***** News Flash ***** Offerings for the first half of 2011 met the budget! We are "in the black" – although only slightly – which is a testament to the congregation's response to the Council's call to arms. Since January, the Council carefully tracked income and expenses to insure we met our target and, as promised, with positive cash flow on June 30, **made the decision to keep our staff intact**. Thanks to all for rising to the need.

Without a doubt, God is with us, all the time. All the time, God is with us.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

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