



## Jones combines consulting and reconstruction services to benefit of many

On December 1, 2006, nine properties utilized by a Westmoreland county community housing development organization, sustained damage due to high winds to nine of its units. The organization's mission is to provide safe, affordable housing to low income individuals. The organization currently manages 128 properties in Western Pennsylvania.

G.S. Jones was retained by the insurance carrier to perform consulting services due to the wind damage. John DiMenno, Consultant Associate, assessed damage and repair cost of all nine units. Eight of the units sustained minor damage, and the ninth unit sustained the most extensive damage.

A large masonry chimney, located on a building behind the ninth unit, was blown over by high winds. The chimney fell and impacted the roof of the five story structure. There was exten-



Temporary enclosure over damaged roof

## Historic Church Fire

On December 31, 2006, fire struck a historical Pittsburgh church. In addition to weekly church services, the 225 year old church was also used as a meeting place for other ministries along with sleeping areas for the homeless in bad weather.

Gary Baker, G.S. Jones Estimator, received the initial emergency call at 10:00pm New Years Eve to handle emergencies and to assess damages. A scope of damage and repairs were evaluated and within 2 hours G.S. Jones had crews on the scene. The fire occurred in the Social room below the sanctuary. There was heavy smoke throughout the entire church as well as water and fire damage. In meeting with the Pastor, scope of damage and repairs were evaluated and a time line set. The initial response team evacuated smoke and removed standing water. Crews continued to work throughout New Years day to board up all windows to protect the building from cold winter temperatures.

Priority for the church was to continue with worship services - uninterrupted. The hall and meeting rooms of the church were also required to be available for meetings the following week. 50 restoration workers worked 12 hour days New Years day through January 6<sup>th</sup> to clean all areas in the sanctuary to a height of 9 feet. The hallway leading to the meeting rooms were cleaned, painted and had new light fixtures installed. All meeting rooms were cleaned of smoke and water damage by the following Saturday, thus allowing church services and scheduled community meetings to occur without the church having to reschedule.

The next step was to clean the church ceiling and upper walls that were approximately 56 feet high. Scaffolding was erected throughout the sanctuary in order to clean the entire ceil-



Restoration of damaged statue

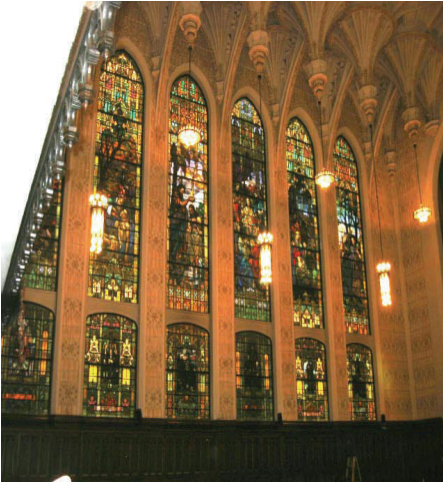
ing, walls and windows in the altar area, seating area and balcony. The scaffold was set at approximately 40 feet with rolling scaffold on top in order to reach the ceiling. The aisles where the braces were set were kept open to allow church members to pass to their pews.

A specialist was consulted on cleaning the antique stained glass windows. The windows could not have any cleaning solutions on them during the cleaning process or they would be permanently damaged. Windows were meticulously cleaned by hand to restore to their original state.

All other rooms, offices, stairways and hallways in the building also were cleaned. Cleaning and repairs took approximately 3 months without any interruption of church services and meetings. Repairs to the Social room where the fire originated are continuing and should be completed within the next month.

The basement gymnasium is also used as the shelter for the homeless and sustained heavy water damage to the plaster ceiling. G. S. Jones utilized an infrared camera to detect the location of water penetration on the ceiling and was able to pinpoint the efficiency of the drying equipment to those locations. Special rigging was used to suspend the equipment from the twenty foot ceiling. As a result the ceiling was dried and did not have to be replaced. This saved the Insurance Company over \$50,000.00 in removal and replacement of the plaster ceiling.

## Historic church fire Continued...



*Intricate stained glass windows*



*Rolling scaffold to reach domed 56 ft ceiling*

### NEW FACES



**Lizzy Smarsh** and **Amy Odrey** have joined the warehouse team as Contents Technicians. Each is responsible for itemizing, cleaning and packing all contents. Once the contents have been cleaned they are unpacked and returned to the owner.

## Consulting/Construction Continued....

sive damage to the flat metal roof. Significant structural damage occurred to the fifth level concrete floor system, the rear masonry wall, and a concrete support beam. This five story concrete and masonry building is occupied by offices of the community development organization and provides residential housing for displaced residents and persons in need of housing.

After the initial meeting with the community development organization team, G.S. Jones was also retained to perform the emergency board up repairs to the building as well as the complete structural rebuild. All parties agreed that this would not pose a conflict of interest and in fact determined it would speed the repair process by being able to start the job with a trusted associate, thereby actually decreasing the business interruption loss to the insurance company and the overall cost of the claim. Also the Insured retained their goodwill within the community, by quickly restoring operations.

The repair process began with the removal of well over one ton of bricks and metal roofing in order to inspect the underlying damaged concrete deck. Inspection of the deck was completed in the presence of a Structural Engineer. As a result, G.S. Jones recommended restoring the building to its condition prior to the collapse utilizing the same design as when the building was built. This would be the most economical, timely and structurally sound method. And as a result did not result in any design or architect fees.

The project was completed during the winter months. Therefore a temporary shelter was built over top of the work area on the roof so that repairs could be made without the threat of water penetration into the occupied building. Also, due to the height of the building, an elaborate scaffolding system was erected at the rear of the building. Close proximity to overhead electrical wiring posed danger to the crane and craftsmen therefore, Allegheny Power was instructed to install temporary wire covers to protect all workers. The project wrapped up on budget and on time. The Community development organization did not suffer any down time in providing their services to the residents of Westmoreland County.



*Scaffold system around high voltage lines.*

### DID YOU KNOW??

Apples are more effective at keeping people awake in the morning than caffeine.

Nondairy creamer is flammable.

On an average work day, a typist's fingers travel 12.6 miles.



8347 Ohio River Boulevard \* Pittsburgh, PA 15202

412-766-6886 \* Fax 412-766-7878

[www.gsjonesandsons.com](http://www.gsjonesandsons.com)