PROGRESS ON THE PRESERVATION OF OUR LOFT J. FREDERIC WENCHEL WINDOW

Our window was removed from the church the week of March 9 by our stained-glass craftsman, Mr. Andrew Goldkuhle. Since then he has been sending us periodic updates to us of his progress and what he finds as he works on the panels.

Talking with him that week, he noted that now that he had gotten up close to the window, there was more cracked glass than he expected. He said it was definitely the right time for us to get the window renovated.



Above is a photo of him working on the scaffolding in the loft, the window panels after they had been removed, and the plexiglass outer window cover which was left in place.

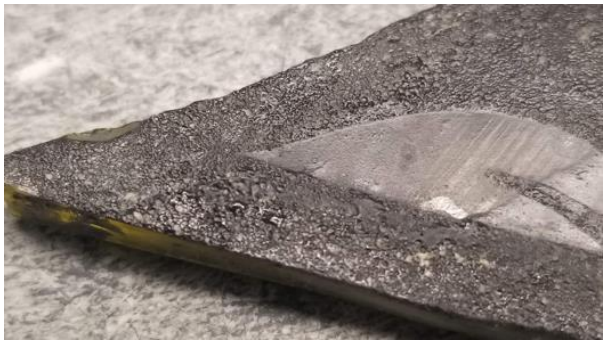



Above on the left he shows us a rubbing of the panel. The colors represent the different sizes of the leads used in the panel. He also comments on the state of the window. The next picture to the right, shows cracks in the lead, and the next shows failing waterproofing. Furthest right, there are changes in the lead due to water, creating white spots of lead carbonate.

Most recently he shared with us the state of the glass and paint itself. He noted again that there is a lot more broken glass than was observable *in situ*. Many of the pieces are convex and based on the manner in which several pieces are broken, he thinks the glass was fired and cooled too quickly. This makes the glass very brittle. The brittle glass and the degree of buckling in the window, lends itself to many of the pieces of glass being broken.




Above left: One of the 11 panels. Each piece of blue tape is a broken piece of glass and the white specs are where the putty has embedded itself into the paint and will not be removed due to the paint not being fully fired into the glass. This is perhaps the worst of the panels with respect to broken glass. 2nd to the left: This piece will be edge glued and then plated on the exterior with clear float glass. There are many pieces that are also single line breaks that are more typical of glass that was properly annealed. This piece is also convex where the center is higher and not flat on the workbench. 3rd to the left: This piece of glass shows an erratic break that is typical for glass that has not been properly annealed. On the right above: a better example of the convexity of the glass in some of the pieces.




These 2 photos above show how the paint has pits and craters; it should appear as smooth as the glass. It was either not well-fired or is a result of using too much binder in the paint. Given that the pattern of the glass breakage is likely related to the firing, the paint problem is more likely a firing problem too. The result of this is paint that is not fused into the surface of the base glass. All the panels have paint that is not well-fired but is not consistent within each panel of glass. Overtime, the pits and craters can collect dirt which makes cleaning it more important to restore the color. This condition changes the method of cleaning, extra care must be taken not to remove the paint and makes removing the putty from the surface of the glass more difficult.

As far as the project overall, Mr. Goldkuhle says he will have the new exterior glazing ready for installation in June provided the conditions of the pandemic allows for it. For the remainder of the month of May, he will be fine cleaning the glass and mending the broken glass. In June and July and into August, he will rebuild the panels and he aims to re-install August/September.