

11-10-05

Albion church restored

BY C.W. LATTIN

Our photo taken recently shows restoration work taking place on the upper portion of the tower at the Albion First United Methodist Church. Loose trim and bricks are being reset by the Kelley Construction Company.

It was this top part of the tower, which was redesigned and rebuilt in 1914. The lower part of the tower, along with the rest of the church building, was built in 1860.

The tower originally had a peaked roof. The work done in 1914 changed the appearance of the peaked roof. In its place, a battlement or parapet was added with a built-in Latin cross as a centerpiece on all four sides surmounting the tower. Below this, and just under the cornice, are two round panels on each side of the tower making eight in all.

Each of these panels or recesses contains decorative mosaic work in the configuration of a Greek cross. In other words, all four components of the cross are equal length.

Next, as we move down the tower, let us focus on the little round panel that is tucked in between the roundheaded tops of each louvered section. This small recess is also filled with mosaic, one on each side of the tower. Although it is very difficult to pick out with the naked eye, each of these four panels contains a Star of David.

The use of this symbol on a Christian church may seem odd to us in today's world. However,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

when this architectural work was done in 1914, Christians saw and used the Star of David as a symbol to represent the Old Testament. Here it is even under played in relationship to so many more crosses above it.

Another example of the use of the Star of David is at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Holley dating to 1894. The big front window facing north (Jackson Street) in its shape represents the trinity but centered in the window, the only symbol is the Star of David

representing the Old Testament.

The opposite window (the congregation faces) on the south receives the sunlight representing the New Testament, which depicts St. Paul.

Years ago, symbology was well thought out and either subtly or strategically placed within architectural confines to send a message. The Albion Methodist Church is just another example of the rich architectural heritage and history found within the historic Courthouse District in Albion.