

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Montesano Altar Table & Flower/Candle Stands Project (Spring, 2011)

This new altar table is being built from recycled wood taken from the old "modesty screens" that used to be placed in front of the pews on either side of the front row in the church. The legs for the table are taken from the legs at either end of these screens. The cross supports for the table are taken from the cross members of the screens. And, most of the trim boards for the table are from boards from the screens. The altar table top itself is built from two old boards made stored away at John Tennefoss' house. All of the major exposed parts of the altar table have been assembled using only glue and dowels. The base and table top are built as two separate pieces, and attached with four cross bolts on the underside, for easier moving, since the whole table will likely weigh near 200 lbs.

The new flower/candle stands are being built from recycled wood from the old chancel and communion rails that were originally installed in the church in 1954, and were replaced in 2009.

All of this wood is older growth fir, with the darker existing finish removed by a planer and jointer, exposing the beautiful wood surfaces underneath. This effort is being done by Jeff Williams, son-in-law of Jim & Rev. Bonnie Campbell, church members at St. Mark's.

Planing, Jointing of the Old Wood, and Initial Stage of Building the Table Top (5/13/2011)



The pews, including the frontal screens, were originally in Holy Trinity Church, Hoquiam. Left: Notice the thickness and shape of the pews legs, and the dark color of the pews. Right: In front of the first row on either side are the old modesty screens taken apart and used for this new altar table.



Planing and jointing--the legs after this process. Left: Outside view of one of the legs
Right: End view of one of the legs



All four of the legs, inside views

Cross members to tie the 2 legs sets together and to each set



The table top—28" x 60", tied together with dowels and lots of glue and clamps
Lots of planing, jointing, drilling out holes for dowels, gluing, and filling old holes!

Initial Assembly of the Base (5/26/2011)



Two long dowels are inserted through each of the two cross member supports, and into each of the leg parts on each end of the table base. All are heavily glued and clamped and left to dry overnight. The assembled table base legs are 44" apart (outside), 21" wide, and 30" tall. The legs are 3" thick—very solid!

Assembly of the Structure to Attach the Table Top to the Base (5/27/2011)



Left: Length members are added to the tops of the legs to hold the support cross pieces that also attach the table top. Right: Jeff runs boards for the table top cross pieces through the jointer to make a clean surface to attach to the underside of the table top.



Left: Jeff lays out the support/attachment pieces for connecting to the tabletop. Right: The tabletop, ready to attach the two support/attachment pieces on its underside, then attach the tabletop to the base.



The tabletop is attached to the base assembly, then the whole table is doweled and glued as needed to fill all holes. Note the dowels filling holes on the inside of both legs where kneelers used to be attached.



After drying, start of cutting off dowels and then sanding. Left: on the upper right the first few dowels are removed and sanded smooth. Right: After removing all dowels and initial sanding the top is looking great.

Final Assembly of the Altar Table (6/3/2011)



Left: Jeff sanding the tabletop after attaching a trim/edge board around the top. Right: completion of the table—adding a faceboard around the top of the table base, and two trim pieces inside the legs.



Left: A shelf is added in the back of the table for a book or small cup for water. Right: A front view of just the completed table base assembly.



Left: Front view of the completely assembled altar table. Right: Rear view. Now ready for all the sanding and light staining/finishing.

Assembly of the Flower/Candle Stands (6/10-13/2011)



The pile of leftover materials from the altar work and from the old rails. The pile on the left are the old rails tops split in $\frac{1}{2}$ to be used for the legs of the stands. The dark wood boards on the right are used to make the tops of the stands.



The stands were stick built, first by building two small boxes, and then attaching the legs to them, using dowels, glue, and an air nailer. Left to assemble and attach are the tops and the lower shelves. Left: the first stand lower assembly took about an hour to assemble. Right; all three stands assemblies took only about 2 hours total.



The stands top were each built from three pieces, heavily glued and clamped to dry overnight. The tops are 12" square, and about 1 1/2" thick. Once dried, they can be sanded and attached to the bases.



Left: More stands top were each built from two pieces, heavily glued and clamped to dry overnight. These 2 tops are 21" long, 7" wide, and about 1 1/2" thick. Once dried, they can be sanded and attached to the bases.
 Right: The collection of all of the assembled flower/candle stands—tall & short.



Left: The bases for the matching two short stands, to go with the tops shown above. These stands, when fully assembled, will be 12" tall. Right: Another stand, 9" tall, with its top installed and ready to sand.



Left: A completed tall stand with lower shelf. Right: Everything ready for sanding and finishing! Not!



Left: 9" tall stand, with its top installed, dowels cut, and ready to sand. Right: a 12" tall stand, ready to sand.



Two more really small stands—7" by 8" tops, one 6" tall and one 8" tall. Uses—on the floor for single vases, or on a table to elevate a vase or candle holder.



Front & side views of yet another stand or table--27" tall, with a 22" by 12" top.



Left: Collection of most of the flower/candle stands. Right: Stacked up and now ready for attaching the last tops and then sanding and finishing—the altar and all of the flower/candle stands.

Final Sanding of Everything (6/18, 21, 22/2011)



Pre-Conditioning and Staining (6/23/2011)





The sanding took about 12 hours, while the pre-conditioning and staining phase took under one hour total. Using a spray system made a huge difference! The color for all of the pieces is very uniform and looks a lot like the new altar rails already installed. Two-three coats of a nice finish of everything and the project will be complete!

Finishing (6/26/2011)



A paint sprayer to apply the finish and foam brushes to even out and remove excess finish made quick work of applying 2 coats on everything over a period of about 3 hours. One more coat on all top surfaces in a couple of days and they will be finished and ready to deliver to the church.



Setting Up in the Church (6/27-28/2011)



First thing was to remove the shelves that had once held the candelabrum and flowers from the wall and to move the old altar back to the wall under the large cross, where it used to be back in the 1950s thru the early 1990s. Then the new altar table and the other stands and table were brought in and set up.



The old shelves were moved to the back of the nave, where they can now be used to hold the printed programs and other information for worship each Sunday, and to place items used for baptism. Left: communion elements shelf and shelf for worship programs. Right: shelf for baptism items.



Left: New plant stand in the narthex. Right: Another plant stand in the sanctuary near the processional cross.



Left: A new table in the sanctuary for the worship team. Right: Several small stands to be used around the sanctuary or nave for flower displays.



These last four pictures show various views of the new altar table. One of the new stands is being used to hold the Gospel book, giving it its own focus and removing it from the altar table. In the rear you can see the old altar, with the candelabrum, and still decorated by church season.

