Central Baptist Church Begins to Rebuild After Tornado

On February 24, 2016, an EF3 tornado struck Appomattox County, damaging and destroying several dozen homes and businesses, including Central Baptist Church. “(It was) devastating and it was even worse when you got here to think and see just what really was gone because it was totally demolished,” Central Baptist Church Member Peggy More said.

Attempts were made to salvage some things out of the parsonage, but everything was damaged beyond repair.

Unprompted, the community generously responded by donating nearly $150,000 to rebuild the sanctuary. “In a disaster, you really find out who the good people are,” said Nelson Mann, deacon chair.

Since the storm, church members have been holding services in a conference room at the Appomattox Baptist Association building, about seven miles away.

Thankfully, church members gathered together December 11 for a ground-breaking ceremony for their new building. Plans show that the new building will look a lot like the old church, although a bit

Church members break ground on Central Baptist Church’s new building.
smaller. The sanctuary is designed to have two aisles instead of three and Sunday School space will be adapted from the new fellowship hall, using dividers if necessary.

Money from insurance will cover the rest of the $500,000 total estimated costs, however, the congregation will need to furnish the pews and furniture. The sanctuary is expected to be complete by May 2017.

The small, country church has been in the community since 1893. In addition, there is a cemetery alongside the church where many gravestones were knocked over during the tornado. Robinson Funeral Home and L.E. Simmons Monument Company of Farmville worked together to restore the cemetery.

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