

FIRST CHURCH OF MONSON

Monson, Mass.

DESIGNER
URS Corp., Rocky Hill, Conn.

OWNER
First Church of Monson,
Monson, Mass.

CONTRACTOR
Anthony's Building Co.,
Chepachet, R.I.

PRECASTER
Coreslab Structures (CONN) Inc.,
Thomaston, Conn.

PROJECT FACTS

PRECAST STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS INCLUDE:

- 32 PRECAST CONCRETE COMPONENTS DESIGNED TO REPLICATE THE ORIGINAL WOOD STEEPL
- EIGHT STORIES OF PRECAST CONCRETE WALLS THAT ARE 1'3" THICK AT THE BASE AND NARROW TO 8" AT THE TOP



PRECAST CONCRETE & MISC



Photos courtesy of Coreslab Structures (CONN) Inc.

The tornado that hit Monson, Mass., on June 1, 2011, destroyed many buildings and shattered a signature structure: the steeple on the First Church of Monson. Located on a hilltop it was one of the town's highest points, it served as a city symbol, and church officials were anxious to restore it to its rightful place. After reviewing options with the designers, they decided on a precast concrete design.

Richard Sambor, the senior structural engineer for the URS team, suggested a precast concrete design and contacted Coreslab Structures, who worked with URS on previous projects. "My initial reaction was that it wouldn't look right built with concrete, with visible aggregates and a darker color," says Artaiz. A visit to Coreslab's plant eliminated those concerns. "They showed us what they could achieve with white cement and smooth finishes, as well as their ability to replicate decorative detail."

The steeple stands 135 feet tall with a width of nearly 18 feet at its base. The precast concrete components make up the bottom 77 feet of the height, with a fiberglass spire on top. The structure contains 32 precast concrete pieces, which were transported to the site with the help of a Massachusetts state police escort from the Connecticut state line.

The fast erection pleased Church officials, too. "It's going to be an emotional boost for the community," Rev. Robert Marrone, the pastor, told local media. "I'm hoping that this will help people to feel more secure and that we are actually moving on."