

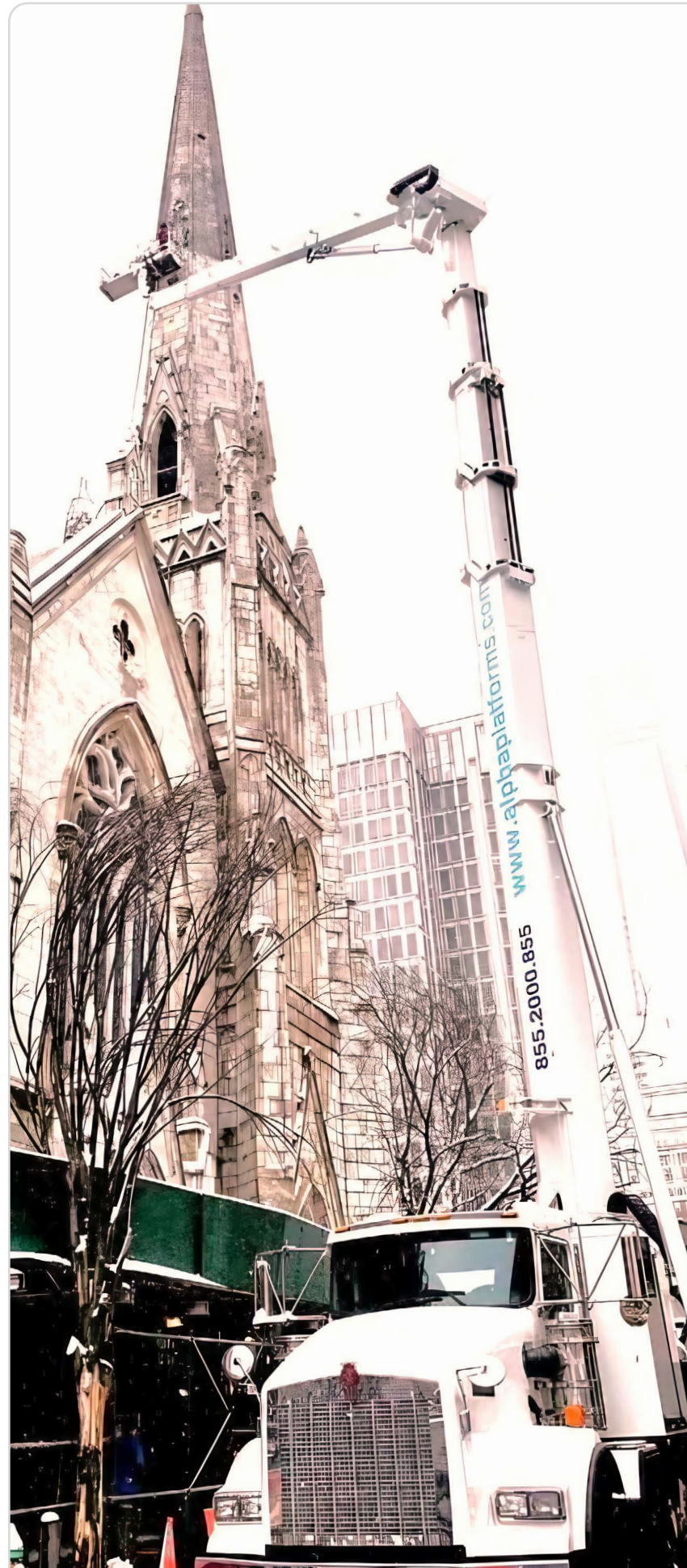


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# HOW TO INSTALL NETTING ON A 215-FOOT HISTORICAL CHURCH SPIRE WITH A CONTACTLESS BOOM LIFT IN THREE DAYS AND SAVE

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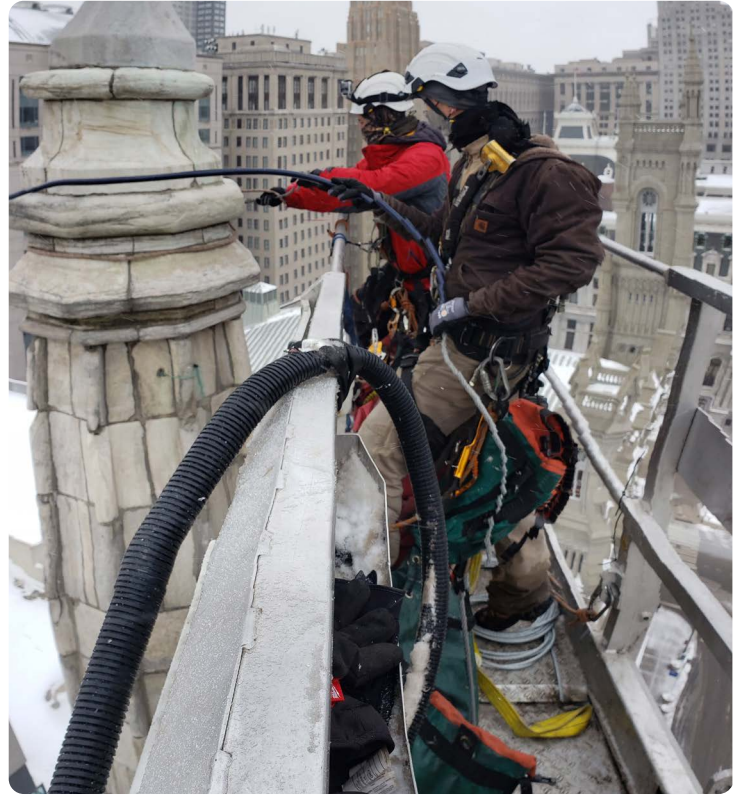


The Arch Street United Methodist Church on North Broad Street is a historic church built in 1870 in downtown Philadelphia. After 155 years, the stone structure proved to be crumbling and portions of the stonework were falling down. The defects were discovered during an inspection of the central spire that identified its many weak points. The church was committed to restoring the spire because its soaring presence above the city serves as a beacon to the community and a landmark of the Philadelphia skyline. The first restoration step was to secure the steeple while funds were raised for the repairs.

## THE CHALLENGE

The crew's safety and the steeple structure were the primary considerations when installing protective wrapping around the spire. The team evaluated several options, including hiring a crane with a hanging basket. This was not the best option due to the risk of the free-swinging basket hitting the stonework: a basket at that height is subject to instability and high winds, especially in the Philadelphia winter.

A second option was to access the spire through the roof hatch. Accessing the steeple with teams of climbers could damage the loose stonework and would be a slip risk to the team. The third option was to build scaffolding, allowing stonemasons to access the steeple. It would have cost \$300,000 and irreparably damaged the historic stone façade. Scaffolding must be drilled into the stone at short intervals causing irreversible damage and driving up the restoration price.



## THE SOLUTION

The industrial climbing team used by the engineers for the restoration project, engaged Alpha Platforms to provide a safe and cost-effective solution to their extreme height access problem. An [A-300](#) lift was utilized both to inspect the roof and allow the crew to install protective netting around the steeple without making contact with the building. The secured netting eliminated the risk of falling stones and debris crashing to the ground.

The service provided to the church was all-inclusive, supplying a full-time IPAF-Certified lift operator, a road closure permit, and traffic management.

## THE OUTCOME

Installing the netting around the steeple took just three days in February 2021. The full-time operator navigated the cage around the steeple using a 32-foot-long jib boom. The 12-foot-long basket gave the crew ample working space while still enabling access to all sides of the steeple during the netting installation. All this was accomplished while the A-300 remained in the same parking spot next to the church. As if that capability wasn't incredible enough, the work was conducted during a major snowstorm through wind and sleet that did not affect the basket's stability. Alpha Platforms' highly trained crew and superior extreme height access ensured the netting was installed safely and at a reasonable cost.

**Our precise German-made lifts have become the height access method of choice for those who try them, as they combine unmatched productivity, safety, and reach.**



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