

## Construction on the Monumental Stairs at the House of Worship

A major goal of the Kingdom Project in progress is the replacement of the 972 monumental stairs and the nine landings surrounding the House of Worship. The sixty-five year old concrete stairs have deteriorated from the cumulative effects of Chicago's wet, freezing weather. The roofing systems built within the stairs and landings have weaknesses that can only be remedied by reconstructing the entire assemblies to make them watertight.

Both engineering and materials science have advanced since the Temple was originally constructed. The new concrete stairs will match the historic materials in their appearance, but tests show that they will be many times more durable than the original.

Along with replacement of the monumental steps, the nine landings will be rebuilt outside each of the nine doors to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar. The new stairs and landings will look beautiful and new weatherproofing will keep Foundation Hall dry.

Workers sand new stairs by hand.

The bronze doors on the nine sides of the Temple will also be rebuilt so that their thresholds can be made watertight. This will correct another longstanding source of water leaks into the lower level of the House of Worship. In order to skillfully work with the many materials and trades involved, thirteen different contractors are required to disassemble, rebuild, refinish and reinstall the doors, glass, structural supports, concrete, flashing and waterproofing systems.

Much work has been accomplished, and much is currently underway. The restoration of the Mother Temple is a monumental endeavor that is vital to the life of our American Bahá'í community.