

Parking Lot Project-Rick Croskery

April/May 2021

Things are coming along nicely this month, thanks to some recent beautiful weather. The soggy winter slowed us down a few weeks, but the grading of the site is essentially complete, and you can really visualize the parking area and driving lanes as you scan the smooth compacted nearly flat surface that has been added to our steep hillside. It is all held back by an impressive retaining wall which wraps around the edge of the property and ends at the site of the old catch basin behind the courthouse. The basin has been filled in and leveled to provide a new open area accessing the back corner of our property, for which new use becomes a possibility. A heavy layer of gravel will top this surface, allowing the lot to serve as a staging area for the materials and equipment needed in construction of the building addition. Paving and striping will occur after the heavy equipment has moved out for good.

So, construction is to begin soon! The initial work will involve digging and pouring a new foundation. We will be building essentially a small new building adjacent to our church, filling in a couple of windows and cutting through a couple of doors from our current upper and lower hallways into this new structure. We probably will not see anything going on inside our church building for some time yet and will have plenty of warning before anything happens which would be disruptive. We continue to uncover some unusual things as we dig—our electrical power feed

conduit encased in concrete, a gas line that was far nearer to the surface than it was supposed to be, and a sewer line which stopped sloping downward some distance from the building. The unexpected is sort of expected when working on very old sites like ours, and the crews are handling everything professionally. We had to temporarily turn off the gas on April 15, so no cooking or hot water in the building for up to four weeks. Brief interruptions in power will be required on a couple of occasions, but always with warning and at times when the church is not open. The good news: when the lot is complete, we will have no utility poles on the site and eventually, no overhead lines. And 50 new parking spaces!

We did dig and safely store or transplant all the foundation landscape plants and trees affected by construction and hope to be able to use them in our new landscape plan. Times being what they are, material cost and availability has been affected. The construction process is starting later and may be a little slower than originally planned. We have already made some modifications to help with cost and construction time. Even so, it will probably be late in the year or early next year before the project is complete. It is a great project and will be worth the wait. God is good.