

## **Preventing Future Flooding at St. George's from Eb LeMaster, Junior Warden August 1, 2010**

Tremendous progress is being made at St. George's. The Kindergarten reconstruction is nearing completion, the first-level church offices will be ready very soon, and work continues throughout the building. Phase 2 construction which includes Johnson Hall, the bookstore, library and other areas will start soon. But what about changes to address future flooding of the church? If we are spending millions of dollars to renovate the church, how can we insure this won't happen again? What are our options? These are great questions that have been posed by church members to us regularly, and ones that the staff and our advisors have been focused on starting the day after the flood.

Our Buildings & Grounds Committee has been very focused on looking at potential solutions. This Committee includes a number of very experienced professionals in a wide range of areas in the real estate and construction fields. This committee has organized a process to hire the appropriate outside advisors and to obtain the needed drawings, cost estimates, and other information to fully vet the options. As construction manager, Parent Co. has assisted us as well.

Barge Cauthen & Associates was engaged early on by the Committee to closely study the options. Barge Cauthen is a very experienced and highly regarded civil engineering firm that has worked with a wide range of institutions in the region, including MBA, Harpeth Hall, MTSU, Vanderbilt, and a host of others. Dan Barge and his team have completed their assessment and provided several options.

The first recommendation is to thoroughly clean the box culverts that run under the church. The two culverts are 400 feet long and 3 feet high. This is no easy work as large equipment can't be used to clean these culverts for environmental reasons. The culvert cleaning has been underway for the past week, and a large mound of dirt and debris has been removed as shown in the attached pictures. This should be a significant improvement.



Second, Barge Cauthen is in the process of completing drawings to rework certain areas in the rear parking lot of the church. This option will include replacing the back parking lot trench drain with a larger section and adding a curved trench drain at the kindergarten entry walk. Drawings will be ready soon, and Parent Co. will help us estimate the cost.

Finally, Barge Cauthen continues to analyze a range of other larger scale options to further reduce the risk of flooding.

There is no solution that would have fully protected the church, as well as many other buildings in Nashville, from the 1,000 year flood we experienced. Hopefully, we will not experience a flood of that magnitude for generations. However, we are very focused on options and changes to significantly reduce our risk of flooding from "more normal" heavy rains and floods. I can assure you that this element of the reconstruction is a top focus of all those involved.