

AGES AND STAGES

By Joyce Beirsto

When the history of the Congregational Church of North Barnstead, UCC, is written, it will include the years 2008-2010 as the “Come Well or High Water” years.

In 2008 church members reflected and reviewed its short and long-range goals for the next 10 years. Moderator David Allen presented a power point reviewing the many goals presented by the membership. The goal of building a modern restroom to replace the present tiny one with its electric toilet and lack of running water became Goal # 1.

Clearly, the next stage had to be commitment, both in efforts and monies. Under the leadership of the Building Committee chaired by Dan Chase it was proposed and voted to construct a large modern accessible restroom, put in a well, and install a septic system.

The Rev. David Williams, finance consultant from the NH United Church of Christ Conference, provided assistance in setting realistic fund raising goals and training members for a capital fund raising campaign. Member Henry Beirsto volunteered to be the Capital Campaign Chair, and worked with church leaders to organize the effort. Two years later, with church wide commitments of over \$55,000 to be paid over a three-year period, nearly \$39,000 has been received to date.

It is now 2010, and the construction has begun. A 600 foot deep well was drilled by Contocook Well Company on the property of our neighbors Joan and Tom Sawyer, who provided an easement allowing us to locate the well on their property behind the church.

A 16 feet x 16 feet basement utility/storage room has been constructed by Witham Construction Company to house the water tank and related items, as well as provide needed storage space.

Very soon Witham Construction will begin work on a septic system and we hope the restroom will be completed by November 1.

In the year 2020 the Congregational Church of North Barnstead will celebrate 200 years of being a gathered worshipping community; first as a year-round church, then for 70 years a church that met only in the summer months, and for the last 10 years and moving forward, a year-round church with a vibrant and growing congregation.

Our pastor, the Rev. Nancy Talbott, and our property committee are encouraging us to envision projects to complete over the next ten years – new front steps, window replacement, shutters, insulation, new siding and painting both inside and outside the building.

On our 200th birthday we will look back on the ages and stages of our development and celebrate that God has blessed the worshipping community throughout its history.