

Report of the Bishop's Advisory Committee on Church Buildings (BACCB)

Mandate and preamble: The Bishop's Advisory Committee on Church Buildings shall be appointed by the Bishop and shall continue at his pleasure. At the request of the Bishop, or at the request of a Parish through the Office of the Bishop, Committee members provide experienced, informed and impartial advice to Parishes that have concerns about the condition, maintenance or preservation of their buildings (and cemeteries), by assisting in a review of those concerns, in the identification of problems, by supporting the search for competent consultants and/or contractors, and in the monitoring of any resultant work, all as may be necessary or as requested, consistent with the requirements of Canon 4.6; and report to the Bishop on all of this. Also, when requested, to assist the Bishop by reviewing and commenting on the plans and drawings of any proposed new church building or major modification of an existing church building, and by reviewing, from time to time, the progress of any consequent construction. Members similarly undertake such other tasks as the Bishop may, from time to time, assign to the Committee. All members are volunteers.

Workload: In the past year, individual members have accepted ex-officio membership of parish "building" committees to provide support and advice during specific projects. The locations were/are at St. John the Divine, Cayuga; All Saints' Hamilton; St. Luke's, Palermo, The Church of the Epiphany, Oakville; The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer, Stoney Creek and St. Jude's, Oakville.

Separately, several members were invited to provide specific advice either to the parish or the diocese with respect to St. Paul's, Port Robinson; St. Columba's, St. Catharines; St. Mark's, Orangeville; Christ's Church, Niagara Falls; Christ's Church, Woodburn; Church of The Ascension, Hamilton; Christ's Church Cathedral; St. George's, Guelph; St. Matthew's House; St. Brendan and St. James', Port Colborne; St. Michael's, Hamilton; The Church of The Good Shepherd, St. Catharines; Grace Church, Waterdown; St. Stephen's, Hornby; Christ's Church, Flamborough; St. John's, Stamford and Christ's Church, Wainfleet.

Members were briefly involved at All Saints, Hagersville; Canterbury Hills; St. David's, Welland; Holy Trinity, Welland, St. John's, Jordan, St. Elizabeth's, Burlington and St. Luke's, Burlington.

Context: While the projects range from new construction to simple repair, the work is never routine, because every job is different and because the imperatives of Canon 4.6 emphasize competitive bidding and transparency in all things, particularly the awarding of contracts.

The expenses of building and repairing churches do crowd-out investments in mission, but even though (as we are often reminded) the church is not its buildings, the buildings are a fundamental support for mission. Doing things right the first time not only saves money for the other initiatives, but is good stewardship, is good for the environment and is an example of ethical responsibility.

The Committee continues to work in co-operation with The Decennial Inspection Committee and the Financial Advisory Committee in order to help the Diocese and its parishes maintain the structural integrity of its buildings and the safety of its cemeteries; in the name of true economy.

Future: We are concerned that if we do not keep up with the repair of our church buildings, each year that passes will add to the maintenance burden weighing down the whole Diocese. To defer maintenance is usually a false economy that will add to costs and cripple church effectiveness. We will be exploring that thought in the coming year.

Also 2015 is the first full year of the revisions to Canon 4.6. We intend to seek permission to survey parishes with a view to illuminating how effective it has been in furthering church governance.

Theological reflection: Members of the Bishop's Advisory Committee on Church Buildings, who all have worked in construction, know that Jesus was a carpenter who must have lived by the maxims of (i) measure twice, cut once (ii) do it right the first time (iii) never waste anything (iv) go with the grain, and (v) check the drawings, again.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Chadwick,

Chair.