

DIOCESE OF RUPERT'S LAND
Policy re Distribution of Memorials and Artifacts of Disestablished Parishes

The General Synod Archives manual for Anglican churches entitled *Material Heritage: Custody, Care and Conservation* states it is essential that each diocese have in place policies and procedures which will ensure that redundant church artifacts and memorials are handled in the most sensitive pastoral manner possible, and with scrupulous attention to both Canon and Legal procedures.

Canon 19, 4(i) of the Diocese of Rupert's Land

If no new parish is erected within fifteen months after the disestablishment has been declared, the assets of the disestablished parish shall be dealt with and disposed of by and under a Commission and the award of such Commission, when confirmed by Diocesan Council and the Bishop, shall be binding on all parties.

PRINCIPLES for the distribution of memorials and artifacts of a disestablished parish should be that:

- gifts given to a parish are the possessions of the parish or, when disestablished, the diocese. They are not the possessions of the givers or individual members of the parish, however pastoral concerns should be taken into consideration;
- distribution should generally be made only after there has been an opportunity for diocesan parishes to become aware of what is available and to place a request, and
- objects should be offered first to places where there is need or where the gift will support the strengthening of congregational life;
- items like plaques should be returned to the families if deemed appropriate and so requested by the family.

GUIDELINES* for the Distribution of Memorials and Artifacts of a Disestablished Parish include:

- A designated diocesan authority, appointed by the Bishop, shall retain responsibility for the security of all church memorials and artifacts pending transfer to the new owner.
- Appraisal, where deemed necessary and appropriate, would be the responsibility of either the closing or receiving parish.
- Rectors and Wardens, or a designated diocesan authority, shall prepare an inventory of all moveable property which will become available pending closure. The inventory shall include a description, photograph and value of each item plus the name and address of the original donor, if known.

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- The designated diocesan authority shall be responsible for circulating the inventory list to all parishes in the diocese. They will also be responsible for setting the deadline for receiving requests for items on the list.

- After the deadline for accepting requests, recommendations for the disposition of each item shall be prepared by the designated diocesan authority with rationale for consideration based on the following options:
 - transfer to another parish directly
 - transfer to another parish indirectly through diocesan gifts and exchange registry
 - return to original donor's family
 - transfer to an appropriate museum provided the provenience is specified.
 - transfer residual items to the diocese after all effort has been made to distribute appropriately.

- The designated diocesan authority shall submit the recommendations re the disposition of all memorials and artifacts to the Bishop and Diocesan Council for their approval. The decision of the Bishop and Diocesan Council is final.

- The new owners of the transferred items should be encouraged to recognize the donation through the preparation of a suitable plaque identifying the object, the donors and the date received.

- All transactions will be documented with a copy retained in the Diocesan Archives.

- Transferred items shall be added to the moveable property inventory of the new parish.

- The diocese may establish a registry of residual items for future loan or acquisition by parishes.

DEFINITIONS (as applied to this policy):

Chattel – An item of tangible property other than real estate property. Property not fastened to the 'real property' and can be moved to another location. Also referred to as 'non-real property'.

Artifact – A man-made object that reflects the history and life of the parish in which it resided.

Provenience – Origin or source; place where found or produced.

*Based, in part, on guidelines listed in the manual *Material Heritage: Custody, Care and Conservation*

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