

Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist
“Guidelines for Leaders” - Chapter 7

New Church Buildings



The Diocesan Board of Trustees wishes to help you in your plans to put up any new churches or church buildings. We have plans of properties around the Diocese that can be used or can be adapted to suit your needs. We have people who can give building, structural and architectural advice. We want to help you not only with putting your vision into practise but also ensuring that the building you build is sound, appropriate and will work !!

However, there are certain procedures that need to be followed. If you don't follow them it will cost you a lot more in the long run, because the building cannot be dedicated or insured until all the requirements have been met. The purpose of this paper is to help you by informing you of those procedures and what the Trustees will expect from your Parish and Chapelry.

The **first thing** that you should do when you first begin to think of erecting a new church or any other new building is to contact your Archdeacon. You should arrange to meet him/her to discuss the process and how you plan to proceed. Before you even start with plans, ask yourselves “How do we want to use this building? What are our needs now? What will the needs of the congregation be in 20 years' time?” This will have a big impact on your plans - and it may be that you realise that you need to build in several phases. But if you build without asking these questions you may be stuck with a building that does not meet your needs.

It will help you to discuss everything in this document with your Archdeacon, who can put you in touch with others if you need more help (e.g. the Diocesan Building Committee).

†Martin: St Mark the Evangelist

1. Compliance With Diocesan Rules

All procedures followed and all buildings must comply with the Diocesan Rules (copies are available from the Diocesan Office) and with the Constitution and Canons of the ACSA, with respect to Buildings and Property. Please note in particular Diocesan Rule 31.1, which begins “*No building shall be erected on any land belonging to the Church nor shall such land be put to any use without the prior permission of the Trustees. Such permission shall be applied for by the Parish Council upon a resolution of the Vestry, or of a meeting of the congregation concerned.....*”

1.1 Ownership of the Land

It is *essential* to have the correct documents showing that the land to be built on is either owned by, or be granted to “The Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist”. Copies of these documents *must* accompany your application to Trustees.

1.2 Plans

Before the Trustees can approve the building of any new property, plans of the proposed new building first have to be submitted to and approved by them. These plans should be drawn on A2 size paper and attached is a guideline to indicate what is required by the Diocesan Building Committee before the plans can be approved. It includes among others the following:

- 1) Site Plan showing location of proposed new building on the actual site and with respect to surrounding buildings and roads. This plan should have a North point.
- 2) Elevations showing how buildings will look from each side (N,S,E & W),
- 3) Floor Plan showing layout of inside of building, water and drainage plan and electrical plan.
- 4) Roof Plan showing pitch of roof (this may be on the site plan).
- 5) Sections showing the proposed structure and materials to be used.
- 6) Schedule of Finishes showing how and with what the building will be finished off.
- 7) A Signed Engineer’s Drawing should the structure warrant it (large building)

Does this all sound complicated and costly? Please talk to your Archdeacon or the Diocesan Administrator who will try to help you. As stated above, we do have standard church building plans of varying size and several plans of good churches around the Diocese that could be utilized. This could save you considerable time, effort and money.

1.3 Finances

1.3.1 Costing

You will need a minimum of two builders’ estimates for the total cost of erecting the new building.

1.3.2 Raising The Necessary Money

Please submit a statement from the Parish Council as to the balance of funds already available and how it plans to raise the remainder of the required funds.

1.3.3 Loan From The Diocesan Trustees

The Diocesan Trustees are prepared to loan money to Parishes, provided certain conditions are met:

- 1) No loan will be granted by the Trustees unless the loan application is accompanied by a Parish Vestry Minute.
- 2) Before any loan will be granted some form of guarantee must be issued by the Parish. This could be against some fund held by the Parish, some realizable asset that the Parish owns or personal guarantees by people in the Parish.
- 3) The rate of administrative fees debited will be 2% above the current Money Market rate.
- 4) Monies borrowed for the erection of a building will only be released in terms of normal Bank procedures for the erection of a building.

In terms of a Diocesan Synod resolution, the Diocesan Trustees are establishing a sub-committee to help and guide chapelries and parishes with major building projects after their plans have been approved.

1.4 Time To Build

Please submit an estimate of how long you expect it will take to complete the building. This could vary significantly depending on who does the building.

Please also note that it is the responsibility of the wardens, through the archdeacon to keep the Diocesan Administrator informed regarding the progress of the building, so that the insurance cover can be correctly managed.

At various stages in the building process certificates are required from contractors or inspectors - otherwise we can find that the building is not insured.

Finally, if you have a church building, completed or partially completed, and you have not followed the correct procedure, ***please correct it as quickly as possible!*** Please contact your Archdeacon immediately, who will help you to get everything into line. If you fail to do that and anything goes wrong (e.g. someone is hurt) the Churchwardens and council can be held personally liable. So it is very important to set things right immediately.

2. Procedure To Follow With New Church Buildings

- 1) Parish/Chapelry to submit plans to your Archdeacon, who will forward it to the Trustees Building Committee.
- 2) Building Committee report back to you, with any requirements for changes or additions. Remember this is for your own good, to save many problems later!

- 3) If your plans were not approved the first time, make the necessary changes and re-submit them with all requirements set by the Diocesan Building Committee.
- 4) Once they have been approved by the Diocesan Building Committee, submit them to your Municipality for approval (this will cost something, but it covers their inspections during the building process).
- 5) Once your Municipality has approved your plans, a Diocesan Building Inspector will supervise the construction phase and liaise with the builder and church wardens/priest until completion. Each Archdeaconry aims to have a building inspector to work in their area.
- 6) All certificates as stated in building committee report (e.g. engineers, glazier, ant poisoning etc) and copies on the municipality certificates are to be submitted to The Diocesan Building Inspector before he passes the file back to Trustees for final clearance and insurance cover.
- 7) The Parish or Chapelry where the building is situated is to carry all the costs involved in above requirements, and the Diocesan Building Inspector's travel costs.
- 8) If a building has begun **without** Trustees approval - it is to **stop immediately** and the procedure laid out above **must be** followed.
- 9) No church will be dedicated until clearance is given by Trustees (see Chapter 8).

If you need any help or have any questions, please speak to your Archdeacon or the Diocesan Administrator. We would love to help you!

These guidelines were prepared by Diocesan Trustees. Page 36 has a useful checklist to help you with the process.

New Church Buildings Checklist

Parish Chapelry

Rector/
Priest in
Charge Church
Wardens

	Done	Date	Name & Signature
Agreement of Parish council			
Agreement of Parish vestry			
Meet with Archdeacon			
Ensure property is in the name of the Diocese.			
Apply to Trustees for permission to build			
Draw up financial plan			
Decide on architect/draftsman to draw plans			
Hand him details of diocesan requirements for plans			
Obtain Municipal permission			
Check plan includes all requirements. Submit the following to Trustees via your archdeacon:			
✦ Plan			
✦ Financial Plan			
✦ Statement showing funds available			
✦ Quotes/Estimates for cost of building			
Trustees permission obtained			
Ensure builder appointed is registered with building council.			
Notify Archdeacon date building will start.			