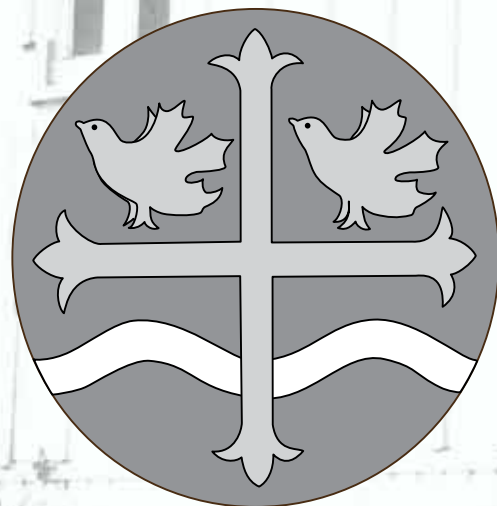


Stage 3: The Story

The Parish Study

Our buildings: a workbook



Before you begin...

You will need

Coordinated through the Synod Office:

- Completed building assessment and report

Gathered by the MAP Leadership Team

- Completed copy of 'Our finances: workbook and discussion guide'
- Your parish's booking calendar, or some analysis of building use. Ideally, you would like to know how many people are using the building(s) for how many hours a week in a given year, and for what purpose.

Additional resources available on request

- Parish Survey (1996 and 2006), which includes questions on building condition, maintenance costs, major renovations undertaken and planned, accessibility, and building use.
- Do-It-Yourself Energy Audit checklists (various) have been gathered by the Diocesan Environmental Unit.
- Building Energy Label workbook (produced by Dr. Rosie Hyde of the Diocesan Environmental Unit) for an in-depth analysis of current energy usage and targets for future consumption.

Contact information

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Introduction

We love our buildings. They are a link to our past, our home of the present, and our plan for tomorrow. These buildings hold sacred memories of baptism, weddings, funerals, and countless community and personal memories. These buildings can be our great blessing, but they can also be a costly and limiting factor in ministry. How well they are designed, maintained and equipped are important for parish life.

This workbook and discussion guide is one element of The Parish Study, part of MAP Stage 3: The Story. A companion piece to this workbook and discussion guide on buildings is a workbook and discussion guide on parish finances.

An opening prayer

From where we are
to where you need us.

Jesus, now lead on.

From the security of what we know
to the adventure of what you will reveal.

Jesus, now lead on.

To refashion the fabric of this world
until it resembles the shape of your kingdom.

Jesus, now lead on.

Because you promise to feed and heal
all those who come to you.

Jesus, now lead on.

Let us become the presence of Jesus in our world.

Jesus we are following you. Amen.

Wee Worship Book, p. 24

Ministry

Have the building assessment checklist, the inspection report, any notes from a follow-up conversation with the building inspector, as well as a copy of the completed 'Our finances: workbook and discussion guide' available for reference.

In this section, the MAP leadership team is being asked to reflect on the parish building(s) in relation to the ministry that is carried out there.

Initial impressions

Imagine you are unfamiliar with the church. You have decided on Sunday morning to attend.

Could you easily find the church and the time of worship? How?

What would be your impression of the building? How well does the facility present to the community? Think about signs, lighting, parking, overall appearance, cleanliness, etc.

Does the building make you feel welcome? How?

What if you brought children with you?

Present and Future

Now that you have come back to worship at your parish several times (and have landed a position on the MAP Leadership Team!), reflect on the following questions:

What areas of the building are over or under utilized?

How adaptable is the worship space to meeting the needs of the community in worship? Consider generations, style preferences, gender, etc.

How well do the worship and other spaces reflect the values and goals of the parish?

How well does the space meet the needs of current programs? How adaptable is the space to meet projected programs or opportunities for ministry? Include outreach into the surrounding communities.

Did the building inspection raise any serious issues? How might these influence the parish's future?

Turn to *Our finances: workbook and discussion guide*.

p. 11: Are you adequately maintaining the facility? Are you planning for major renovations and replacements? Are there major capital expenditures you need to make or are putting off?

p.11: Does the parish's facilities upkeep expenditure reflect the vision and mission of the parish?

Make a note of relevant observations.

Environmental impact

Consumption, intensity and useage

Consider how much the parish pays on average for electricity and natual gas in a month (a rough estimate is fine). Now, estimate how many people use the building, and for how many hours a month.

Based on your estimates of the people using the building, how much of your building use is parish-related (worship, programming, outreach, etc.)? How much is used by groups that reflect your vision of community needs? How much of your building is used mainly for rental income?

Based on your estimates of energy consumption (as reflected in monthly cost) and building use, do you think the parish buildings represent good environmental stewardship? How important is this to your ministry and why?

Refer to the building inspection report. Which recommendations in the “Green Status” and “Green Action” sections can you implement in the short term? In the longer term?

Consider your current “green” initiatives. Do you think you could conserve a lot or a little energy by upgrading to better energy performance? What changes could you make to improve your energy stewardship?

A final question

Consider the building inspection, the ‘fit’ of the building to ministry needs, the environmental impact of the building, and the financial implications of maintaining the building. What do these suggest about the future health and sustainability of the parish?