
The Episcopal Church Building Fund

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The ECBF is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of clergy and laity.

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SUMMARY OF WORK

The Episcopal Church Building Fund (ECBF) was established by the General Convention in 1880 as the American Church Building Fund Commission, a self-supporting agency.

MISSION STATEMENT

Helping Build the Church and Helping the Church to Build

In faithfulness to our baptismal covenant and our mission as the church to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ and in recognition of the importance of place and space for worship, proclamation, and service, the mission of the Episcopal Church Building Fund is to aid in the building, improvement, and repair of churches, rectories, parochial, and diocesan buildings by providing assistance in planning and loans, and to aid in the development of congregations through providing training, education, and resources.

In addition to its own funds, the ECBF manages the General Loan Fund portfolio of the Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society. The ECBF assists congregations with the process of planning for a building project. The goal of these services is to provide the church with buildings that are tools for ministry. Such buildings will support the ministries of the present and the future and can be maintained within the budget of the congregation. The ECBF also assists congregations in addressing issues of congregational health and growth. Contributions to either the permanent loan fund or to support the ECBF's educational work with congregations are welcome.

To this end, the ECBF provides these services:

Financial Assistance

Fixed rate, non-mortgage, low interest rate loans of up to \$200,000 are available to qualifying congregations and organizations of the Episcopal Church, through the diocese, within the domestic United States. Loans of up to \$100,000 are available to dioceses throughout the Anglican Communion. Loans are issued to a diocese for the applying congregation and are awarded based on evidence of the ability to repay. These monies are available from the ECBF's revolving loan fund, based on a permanent fund of \$5,457,968. As loan demand increases, additional monies are secured through a debenture investment program with Episcopal parishes, diocese, and organizations.

The ECBF will review building program financial plans upon request and provides advice regarding the process for fund raising assistance.

Educational Resources

The ECBF produces a workbook for congregations, entitled *Church Sites and Buildings*, which outlines a planning and decision-making process designed to minimize conflict, set a manageable budget, and clarify the architectural implications of the ministries which the building must support. Also published is *The Church for Common Prayer; A Statement on Worship Space for the Episcopal Church*, which sets forth the theological principles for worship space. A video, *Churches for Common Prayer, Buildings for the Liturgical Assembly*, provides a tour through two church buildings, one new building and one traditional building which has been renovated. The video depicts the benefits of flexible space, and ways in which to make church buildings inviting to the newcomer. The *Congregational Builder* newsletter focuses on practical issues for parishes concerned with how their buildings serve as tools for ministry, and on issues of congregational health and growth. The *Congregational Builder* is mailed to every congregation. All other resources are available at a nominal cost.

Diocesan Workshops and Consultations

The ECBF conducts free daylong workshops to introduce congregations to the building planning process. The workshop is designed for congregations planning a new building, repair, renovation, or expansion. Topics include an overview of the planning process, how to build support for change, decision making as a community, determining a realistic budget, the congruence between the congregation and its building, and a slide show depicting the principles of liturgical design. The ECBF also conducts on-site consultations with congregations, at cost, to address specific space, building, and congregational health and growth issues.

Start Up! Start Over! Congregational Development Seminar

The ECBF coordinates the Start Up! Start Over! Congregational Development Seminar, now in its fifteenth year, for the Congregational Ministries Cluster of the Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society. The seminar is designed for those planting new congregations and for those in existing congregations who want basic congregational development and growth training. Experienced church growth practitioners lead this five-day training. Topics include: interpreting congregational demographics, parallel development of the

existing and next congregation, necessary leadership behaviors, marketing the church, new member incorporation, dealing with conflict and resistance to change, cross cultural evangelism, and reaching the unchurched.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING TRIENNium

The ECBF Board of Trustees is engaged in a strategic planning process to set its course for the future.

CONSULTATION:

To provide services of education and support to dioceses in their efforts to develop congregations.

To explore funding sources for the training of field-based associates of the ECBF to increase our ability to provides consultation to congregations.

RESOURCES:

To expand the written and video resources available to the church for planning and designing buildings for ministry.

FINANCIAL:

To explore ways to increase our capacity to make loans that meet the variety of needs of dioceses and congregations.