

Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council
Church Extension Committee
Role, Activities, Support for Communities of Faith

Updated April, 2023

The Church Extension Committee supports Communities of Faith throughout the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region by providing shared financial assistance and advice with respect to projects involving their buildings and facilities.

The Church Extension Committee provides ongoing support for the Communities of Faith in the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region with respect to their physical assets and facilities. The Committee provides advice and assistance with respect to:

- new buildings, land, and facilities for the purpose of establishing new congregations;
- renovations and upgrades to buildings, equipment, facilities and audio-visual technology projects and for disposal and demolition of buildings and facilities;
- providing suggestions and advice regarding ways to approach and finance their projects; and,
- providing financial guidance and support through grants, loans or mortgages to cover a portion of the costs.

Church Extension Committee

The Church Extension Committee is a corporation operating under the laws of Ontario. Its Letters Patent and By-Laws were revised in late 2018 to confirm the relationship with the Region.

Directors: Ted Brett*, Graham Campbell (President), Judy Harms-Potter (Secretary), David Debenham (Treasurer), Alan Gale, Catherine Grant*, Judy Harms-Potter, Mike Nyeuhuis, Don Reynolds*, Linda Suddaby*

EOORC Appointments: Rev. Brian Cornelius, Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly (Resource Person)

*Members of EOORC Property Committee

The Committee's Vision Statement was approved on November 4, 2020:

Our Vision: Striving to support the health and continuance of Communities of Faith throughout the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region with excellent advice and shared financial support for their projects to repair and renew their physical assets.

Supporting Communities of Faith Since 1961

Looking back, the Committee operated between 1961 and 2018 within the former Ottawa Presbytery. The original capital for the Committee's work was provided by the congregations of the former Ottawa Presbytery.

The Committee used these funds for the purchase of land which was later donated for the creation of 12 new churches. It provided loans or mortgages to 22 congregations for major renovations or additions, and it provided grants to 14 congregations for smaller scale improvements to their buildings and facilities. Since the mid-1980s, the Committee supported congregations in the former Ottawa Presbytery with grants, loans or mortgages totalling \$1.3 million.

The Church Extension Committee became part of the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region in January 2019. Between May 2019 and November 2021, the Committee has provided 23 Communities of Faith across the Region with advice and financial support in the form of grants and one loan for 26 projects totalling \$270,924.

Working With Church Extension

Each Community of Faith is responsible for management of its physical assets such as church buildings and manses, for maintaining and creating facilities to meet their current needs such as for accessibility ramps and audio-visual technology, and for upgrades to support new forms of ministries that will emerge in the future. The Church Extension Committee supports Communities of Faith to address these needs.

Communities of Faith are welcomed to work with the Church Extension Committee in three areas.

1. Application and Advice for Projects: A guideline is available which provides information on the Committee's requirements when considering requests for grants or loans.

Communities of Faith seeking funds meet with the Committee to make their proposal for shared funding to support projects for their buildings or facilities. Their representatives often consult with individual members of the Committee or with members of the Region's Property Committee in advance to explore alternatives and identify practical and often less expensive ways to meet their needs.

This advice is very useful to the representatives of the Community of Faith if they do not have the expertise, experience or contacts in building-related matters.

The Committee has advised several Communities of Faith on ways to make the best use of their facilities in order to supplement their income and increase their engagement with the surrounding community. Examples of alternative uses are renting space and facilities, hosting community events at the Church, or providing space for children's day care.

In addition, one member of the Committee has taken the lead on behalf of the Region working collaboratively with Communities of Faith to provide advice and to assist with arrangements for selling Church buildings.

2. Financial Advice: During meetings with representatives of Communities of Faith, the Committee discusses the financial aspects of the project in detail. Typically, the sources of funding will be from a combination of the Community of Faith's reserves, from fundraising activities, and from Church Extension. The Committee makes suggestions about other sources of funding and works out repayment terms for loans which take account of the financial capacity of the Community of Faith.

This advice on the financial aspects of the project leads to an improved funding arrangement.

3. Support to Sustain Communities of Faith: Many Communities of Faith come to the Church Extension Committee for assistance with projects which will enable them to keep going even though their membership is declining and their financial situation is strained.

The Committee recognizes the importance of providing funding and advice to sustain the life of Communities of Faith. There are several examples where the funding provided by the Committee has been successful in doing so.

The committee's strength is its diverse membership. At present, the 11 members of the Committee have expertise in:

- Buildings and facilities;
- Financing projects;
- Financial management;
- Legal matters;
- Real estate; and,
- Management of Church projects.

Contacting Church Extension

The Committee anticipates an increase in demand for its services. For instance, many Communities of Faith may not have had access to funds for repairs and improvements to their buildings and facilities. Some may have facilities that need upgrades to meet regulatory requirements for accessibility and to provide on-line worship services.

We invite representatives of the Community of Faith to meet with the Committee to describe their project, their financing plans, and to respond to the Committee's questions and suggestions.

The Committee meets twice each year to consider applications in April/May and in October/November in conjunction with the corporation's Annual General Meeting. If urgent requests are received between meetings, the Committee will arrange to meet with the Community of Faith's representatives.

Thank you for your interest in working with the Church Extension Committee. We look forward to hearing from your Community of Faith.

Church Extension Committee, April, 2023