



Guidelines for the Deconsecration and/or Sale of Church Buildings

Approved by: Diocesan Council

9 February 2012

Amendments:

File #423(a)/

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines provide a list of expectations regarding the deconsecration and sale of churches and to highlight the responsibility of parishes.

If the Parish Council is reviewing the possibility of selling a church within its Parish it is important to consider the following:

- Previous worshippers from the church in question who are attending the operational churches in the parish need to be consulted in relation to the sale prior to the final decision;
- The Bishop and Territorial Archdeacon need to be consulted to ascertain that closure and sale is appropriate for the area, current ministry and its expected growth in the future;
- The closure is to be communicated through the *Anglican Messenger* to obtain public comment within the Anglican community.

Once the sale of a church has been approved by the Parish Council, Bishop and Territorial Archdeacon, the Parish Council is to submit a proposal (to include 'specific use of proceeds') to the Diocesan Secretary. This proposal will be submitted to Diocesan Council and The Perth Diocesan Trustees for approval. The Rector and the Council Secretary of the Parish will then be advised of the decision.

Please note:

- The parish will need to make arrangements for the church to be deconsecrated by a Bishop and arrangements made for a service of deconsecration to be held.
- If the church has not been consecrated but has been blessed or dedicated, then arrangements must be made for the church to be secularised.
- A deconsecration licence is issued by the Archbishop on the date set for the deconsecration service. It may be appropriate to advertise the service in *The West Australian* and local newspapers to ensure previous worshippers and their families have the opportunity to attend.
- If a Memorial Garden containing ashes and/or memorials is present, appropriate plans for the removal and relocation of earth and/or memorials to another consecrated site will be necessary.
- Family members and descendants of those whose ashes are interred in the garden must be advised. Locating family members and descendants can be accomplished by contacting the local Historical Society or Electoral Role. It is also recommended that the parish place an advertisement in the "Public Notices" of *The West Australian* and local newspaper.
- Removal of Items – refer to Checklist of ecclesiastical items and items of significance.

POLICY GUIDELINES – No. 56



Removal of ecclesiastical items and items of significant or sentimental value to the church, such as:

- Memorial plaque.....
- Foundation stone
- Stained glass windows.....
- Altar.....
- Pews.....
- Brassware.....
- Lecterns/Prayer Books/Banner.....
- Prayer Desk.....
- Font.....
- Bell/Tower.....
- Other.....

These items can be relocated to another church in the parish, donated to another parish and/or organisation, or returned to the family that donated the item (if applicable).

**A PROPERTY CANNOT BE PLACED FOR SALE
ON THE OPEN MARKET UNTIL
THE ABOVE ITEMS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED**