

RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS FOR SMALL CHURCHES

Capital Campaigns are not easy by any stretch of the imagination, but for churches located in small towns and rural communities they are nearly impossible. St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Horsehead, NY is 150 years old and no one remembers ever having a capital campaign there. With the assistance of the Episcopal Church Foundation, St. Matthew's ran a successful campaign. You can read about it here:

<https://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/article/632/a-small-church-capital-campaign-experience>

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES IN LITERACY AND WORSHIP RESOURCES

ESTABLISH CHURCH CHILDREN'S LIBRARY OR BEGIN A COMMUNITY LITERACY MINISTRY

The Miles of Pennies Fund was established in 1988 on the 100th anniversary of The Church Periodical Club. The maximum grant given by Miles of Pennies is \$844.80 which represents one mile of pennies lying end to end. The grants serve the needs of children from kindergarten through high school. For more information:

<https://www.churchperiodical.com/miles-of-pennies.html>

DOLLAR GENERAL STORE'S LITERACY FOUNDATIONS

The granting opportunities here range from Adult Literacy, Family Literacy, Summer Reading Programs, to youth literacy grants. Perfect for small communities who would want to fund a Summer Literacy Program – Camp.

<https://www.dgliteracy.org/>

READING CAMP – SUMMER LITERACY PROGRAM FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

Did you know that a little more than half of the fourth graders in the United State are not proficient in reading? Set up a meeting with your school's principal and see where your community falls in that statistic and if you are interested in a summer literacy program (camp) Reading Camp, Lexington, KY have the resources to help establish a summer reading program in your community. Find out more here:

<https://www.readingcamprocks.org/>

RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

BIBLES, PRAYER BOOKS, AND HYMNALS

As a small church Vicar and Rector, Canon Missioner and Canon to the Ordinary, I would often draft a letter for the bishop's signature while at the same time submitting my request through the diocesan office. The example below is the same, or similar letter, I would compose as a member of diocesan staff after receiving a request from one of the small churches in the dioceses where I have served.

Every request must have the recommendation of the diocesan bishop, and I have never seen a single request denied.

Here is a template of the letter I would draft for the bishop and I offer it here for you to use for that purpose.

DATE

Bible and Common Prayer Book Society
247 Broad Street
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Dearest Sirs/Madam:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus!

Please find attached a request from _____ Episcopal Church, CITY, STATE.

Their request is for assistance with hymnals and books of common prayer used in public worship. The _____ Church has an average Sunday attendance of 24, a modest income through plate and pledges, supports a full/part-time clergy presence, and is a church in good standing in this diocese.

As is the case with many small churches, _____ is one of those small rural parishes with a big heart, offering a (food pantry, reading program, after school program) for their community and is a distribution point for the mobile food truck.

The Prayer Books currently in use are missing pages, have loose binding, and are badly worn. Most of the hymnals are in the same condition. Please know that in making this request the people of _____ Episcopal Church have my full and complete support.

It is my hope that you will be able to assist them with the much-needed worship resources they seek, for it will not only provide for their physical needs but offer them the spiritual boost they need to become even more successful.

If further information is necessary, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Faithfully,

The Right Reverend _____
Bishop of Somewhere Special

<https://www.biblesandprayerbooks.org/contact-us?fbclid=IwAR258jQI4milZHPdVYyKhtXhvp3w4Y8O-g1m5G4vTBtCl3yIsoDIwwYELI>

RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

EPISCOPAL (ANGLICAN) RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES IN SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS

STUDYING YOUR CONGREGATION

A free tool which charts 11-year trends in and around your particular church. It is easy to use, easy to understand, and easy to disseminate. With the most up-to-date information this resource is being made available by The Episcopal Church for all 109 Diocese to assist congregations “in a myriad of applications, including stewardship, short- and long-term planning, and strategic development.”

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/research.htm>

ROANRIDGE TRUST GRANTS – EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Roanridge Trust Grants support creative models of leadership development, training, and ministries in small towns and rural communities across The Episcopal Church. Awards generally range from \$5,000 to \$20,000. For more information contact the Rev. Dr. Molly James, deputy executive officer of General Convention, mjames@episcopalchurch.org

SMALL TOWN AND RURAL CHURCH MINISTRIES IN OTHER DIOCESES

Since 2007, the Rural Church Ministry Commission in the Diocese of Dallas has organized a gathering for rural church leaders with the goal to share resources and learn new ways to minister to their communities. For more information: <https://edod.org/>

Trying to confirm through the Reverend Canon Jerry Morriss, Canon for Rural Ministry

FACEBOOK

Anglican/Episcopal Rural Churches

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/rural.churches/>

SMALL CHURCH GROWTH STRATEGY HANDBOOK

In the Episcopal Church, churches in small towns and rural communities represent nearly half of all Episcopal Church Congregations. First published in 2007, this revised edition of the Small Church Handbook offers a dynamic set of tools designed to affirm and strengthen vitality in small-membership churches (generally defined as those churches with an ASA of seventy or less).

https://episcopalchurch.org/files/Small_Church_Handbook_2009%281%29.pdf

RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LEADERSHIP, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

COLLEGE FOR CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

Developing healthy, faithful, sustainable congregations able to fulfill their calling to be the body of Christ in a particular place, time, and community is the work The College for Congregational Development does best. For more information:

<https://www.episcopalrochester.org/content/college-congregational-development>

CENTRE FOR RURAL COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY

One of the most impressive and exciting resource is that of the Anglican Church of Canada <https://www.anglican.ca/resources/centre-rural-community-leadership-ministry/> and their Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry affiliated with Saskatoon Theological Union (St. Andrew's

College, College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, and Lutheran Theological Seminary).

<http://www.circle-m.ca/> This resource offers a unique and varied educational experience that can be taken as a multi-

year degree program or a course or two. Perhaps the most impressive and to me the most exciting part of this center is the involvement of Bishop Mark MacDonald, who serves as National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, for the ACC.

Also, under their Ecological Living tab they offer the Sunday School Resource, The Story of Creation, something the office says is particularly suitable for rural and small communities.

<https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CARING-FOR-CREATION-RYAN-THE-RHINO.pdf>

SEWANEE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH

Since 1975, The University of the South, Sewanee School of Theology, has offered Education for Ministry (EfM). EfM is a unique theological experience designed for the laity of the church. This resource is as unique as it is helpful to small churches. With a minimum class of 5, this four-year distance learning certificate program offers education in Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, and Theology. For more information: <http://efm.sewanee.edu/>