

Quick Guide...

Sacramental Vessels

Prepared by the Committee on Church Art and Architecture

If you have any problems, or are looking for advice concerning sacramental items such as communion ware (including communion spoons, tokens etc) or baptismal bowls and lavers, please contact the Committee on Art and Architecture (CARTA) - contact details can be found at the end of this Quick Guide.

As a result of the uniting of some congregations and the closure of others, those churches remaining often find themselves with a considerable number of vessels for Holy Communion. It is good when such congregations use, in rotation, the cups and plates of the constituent parts, thereby acknowledging both the history and the togetherness of the united charge, and allowing members to have a sense of continuity.

Where there is a genuine need to dispose of items, any request to CARTA to do so will require to be accompanied by the following information:

- the reasons for disposal
- a list of the items which are to be retained
- a list of the items to be disposed of
- proposed means of disposal e.g. gift, loan, or sale to local or national museum, sale by auction, private sale at agreed market value, sale or donation to other congregations, sale or donation to partner churches abroad.

It should be noted that an insurance valuation is not a market value and that items usually sell at a lower figure, and that auction houses may charge up to 15% commission fee which is deducted from the final 'hammer price'.

Finally it should be remembered that the Church of Scotland

as a whole has the most important collection of Scottish silver and associated wares in the country and that it is our responsibility to look after it for the next generation of members. To celebrate or participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion and hold a cup, whether silver or any other metal, is to share in the oneness of those hundreds of members who have gone before, the Communion of Saints who also felt part of Christ's Church.

Further information

Further information can be found on the Resourcing Mission website: www.resourcingmission.org.uk/carta/resources. Leaflets available include 'Sacramental Vessels', 'Recording of Sacramental Vessels' and 'Disposal of Redundant Churches'.

Whom to Contact

Anyone wishing to contact the Committee should complete an enquiry form which can be found on the Resourcing Mission website (www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/carta) and email it to: gentrustees@churchofscotland.org.uk. Alternatively, you can telephone 0131 225 5722 and ask to speak to someone in the CARTA office.

CARTA Quick Guides

Other Quick Guides include advice on audio visual schemes, access for all, stained glass and lighting. These can be accessed on the Resourcing Mission website (www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/quick-guides).

About the Author

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