

PROTECTING OUR CHURCHES

Taking inventory in the local church

What inventory includes:

Church inventory is a list of all its movable property. A lectern that can be carried from room to room is included but not the pulpit fixed to the floor. Loose rugs are included, but not wall-to-wall carpeting.

Each item in the list requires certain kinds of information:

- ✓ All items on the inventory should have a brief description, i.e.; *45 heavy-duty folding chairs with cushioned seats.*
- ✓ If, known, the approximate date each item was purchased or given to the church
- ✓ Include brand name and model number, if known
- ✓ Financial estimate value of what each item would cost to replace new.
- ✓ The serial number of the high-priced items should be noted in case they are stolen.

The easiest approach is to use a school or church supply catalogue: find picture and price, and paste it into the inventory itself.

How to take inventory:

Taking inventory is an assignment best suited for several people. One person can be responsible for the written inventory. One or two others can research catalogues, count chairs, open and close cupboards, and pay attention to being

comprehensive. With a team, the task can go quickly and be fun.

Videotape – Walking through a church taking inventory with a videotape recorder is an excellent supplement to the written list. The cameraperson is best accompanied by a narrator who can “show and tell” what is being recorded.

Where to keep inventory:

At least one copy of church inventory should be kept away from church, ideally in a safe deposit box. An inventory of the church property is useless if it is lost along with the property.

A working copy of the inventory should be kept in the church office and updated when any major purchases are made or gifts are given. As new items are added, their cost can serve as their replacement value.

Special Values:

A desk is not always just a desk. If it is 100 years old and made from solid oak, it has special value. Antiques in general, one-of-a-kind items, and rare artifacts all need an expert appraisal measuring their financial value if they are to be replaced with like kind and quality when lost. The same expert evaluation should be made of paintings, sculpture and other art objects.