



MEDIA RELEASE

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St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church Supports Carebridge Housing Project

The need is clear. And the congregation at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Smiths Falls has stepped up - in a big way! The congregation has pledged \$500,000 to support Carebridge Community Support's plan to build 28 affordable housing units at 44 Chambers Street.

"It's the right thing to do and we've been planning for several years," explains the Reverend Canon Catherine Ascah. "We spent time talking to the community about the needs and precarious housing came up again and again. It's a need that you don't always see, and it seemed like a good fit for us."

The St. John's team isn't stopping there. "We didn't want to just give the money and walk away," adds Canon Ascah. "Carebridge's message resonated with us, and we want to continue to partner with them, supporting persons at risk of homelessness and providing a sense of community and a helping hand."

St John's generous support for the Carebridge project represents a significant contribution to the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa's commitment to create 125 new affordable housing units as part of its 125th anniversary celebrations. Affordable housing is a top priority for the Diocese.

"On behalf of the Diocese's Homelessness and Affordable Housing Working Group, we are very excited to see this wonderful project moving forward," Canon Sue Garvey, the group's chair, says. "It is a perfect example of what is possible when community partners pool their resources to do great things in their local neighbourhoods."

"Carebridge has been providing affordable housing in our region since 1987 when the first 12 units were built in Almonte. Today we manage 187 units," says Carebridge CEO Rob Eves. "The demand greatly outpaces the supply, and we are grateful to the St. John the Evangelist congregation for their support."

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The new four-storey building will include one-, two- and three-bedroom units of which seven will be accessible. The project's total cost is \$8.9 million. Funds are coming from several sources, including Lanark County Council and the Town of Smiths Falls. A fundraising campaign is underway to raise the remaining \$2.3 million.

Construction is expected to begin in the late fall of this year, with occupancy in late 2023 or early 2024. "We can't wait for the grand opening," sums up Canon Ascah. "We hope there will be many different community partners who have come together to show our town and others what can happen when we all respond to a need and look out for one another."

Carebridge is one of Lanark County's largest, most established non-profit agencies in the health care and social services sector and the region's largest affordable housing provider.

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