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The Beacon

**The Newsletter Vol. XXI, No. 1, March 2024 of
Laidlaw Memorial United Church**

www.laidlawchurch.ca

Email: laidlawuc@bellnet.ca

The United Church of Canada

www.united-church.ca

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Celebrating 112 Years—1912-2024: Our Mission:

**With respect, cooperation and joy,
through acts of love that build each other up,
we seek to share the light of Christ
as a Beacon from our corner in East Hamilton**

EASTER CELEBRATIONS at LAIDLAW CHURCH 2024

**Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter
in person and on YouTube at "Laidlaw Live"**

Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024 at 11 a.m.

Loaves and Fishes Lunch will Follow!

Good Friday, March 29, 2024 at 11 a.m.

Coffee Hour will follow the service!

Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024

Coffee and Hot Cross Buns at 10 a.m.

EASTER COMMUNION at 11 a.m.

Join us! Every Sunday, Worship at 11 a.m.

Join us in Person, or by Livestream:

search 'Laidlawlive' on YouTube

Activities for the Children, Quiet Room Available

Every Week, Worship is preceded at 10 a.m. by Coffee and Tea,

and followed by Coffee, Tea, Drinks, Cookies,

Conversation and Games in the Gym

(And Sometimes, there is cake or lunch!)



YouTube

Drop in during the Week!

Tuesday 9 a.m. till noon, Rev. Doug is in the Church Office

Wednesday Group Meets Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.

Office Crew meets Thursdays at 9 a.m.

The Laidlaw Music Project Meets Sundays at 9:45 a.m.

Join us any week you are able!

A Download of Updates...

Jesus once said, "My Father has never stopped working, and this is why I keep on working."

Newsletters are an opportunity to take stock, celebrate, and look forward. For those who haven't been to church for a while, it's an opportunity to catch up, for those who have been around, it is an opportunity to celebrate progress, with gratitude. All the cyber stuff is great, and we recommend visiting the church website often, but sometimes, you need something to put on your toilet tank to read when you have some time on your hands.

WORSHIP continues to seek its 'new normal' the offering plates are passed around again, Communion continues in 'safe mode' with prefilled cups, and 'online' and 'in person' continues to evolve. We noticed in times of sickness and bad weather that in person and online allow everyone to gather for Worship when in other circumstances, there would be no opportunity to be part of Sunday Worship. Those who are shut in, or at a distance, can gather with us and, more and more, feel at home. We are beginning to see those gathering with us online also sending an offering, and that is a great help! Thanks!

Part of making online and in person the new normal is getting the sound system to work. When the original sound system was installed, there was little thought of livestreaming. We have made adjustments and improvements along the way, but there was need of a professional hand over the entire system, and we are now in a position to understand more fully how the sound system needs to function—hearing assist for those who need it in person, the sound system in the sanctuary, in the quiet room, monitors for those participating in the music project, and a good 'mix' of sound for the YouTube feed, as well as the flexibility to go from Worship to Concerts and other events without tearing up the system we use for worship, and putting it back together again. Travis Stoddart from Alleyway Sound, a qualified sound engineer, has now completed a reorganization and upgrade of the system, tuned the speakers and created a good mix for worship, as well as training those who will be using the system. This cost of this (\$6,900.00) was received as a grant from the Hamilton Presbytery Mission Council. If you want to hear the difference, come to church any Sunday, or listen to a YouTube Worship video from a few years back, and then to a recent YouTube Worship video. The improvement is amazing.

This improvement has helped make the Laidlaw Music Project a better experience for everyone—tune in, or join us, rehearsals are now at 9:45 a.m. on Sundays—come and bring an instrument if you play one, or your voice!



Updates on the Downlow...

FUNDRAISING is recovering well now. Post COVID we are seeing an increase in attendance. Penny Sales, Bingo, Movie Nights, Marketplace events are all popular and well attended. We continue to adjust events to make them mobility friendly, now that there is wheelchair access to the mezzanine. The future calls for a more robust accessible washroom downstairs, and we have begun to explore possibilities for that. We have also begun to offer refreshments at events upstairs, and with the completion of the upstairs kitchen, this opens for us a whole new opportunity to interact positively with our community as we provide space for music and drama events. With many venues closed over the COVID years, we are seeing more requests of all kinds. The Upstairs Kitchen upgrade makes day to day life at Laidlaw more comfortable and convenient, and even featured as a film set in some recent filming at Laidlaw. We are beginning to see more requests for movie and film rentals again.



OUTREACH at Laidlaw, more and more, includes Recovery Groups, A.A., Al Anon, Narc Anon, as well as the wonderful people of the Tuesday L'Arche Day Group. These groups contribute to what is good at Laidlaw, and we work together to ensure sustainability and cooperation that works for everyone. We are able to do more than ever since receiving a grant from the Ontario Government that allowed us to improve security. We now have remote access to the door alarm and locks, allowing us to welcome groups and manage security. This has also been a great benefit to the folks who are teaching music lessons at Laidlaw. The Vocal Point Choir is back at Laidlaw this year, as well as many groups doing recitals and concerts. With



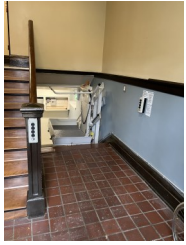
the new sound system, and the upstairs kitchen, all this becomes more convenient and enjoyable for everyone.

The Stu Hamilton Room is currently receiving a facelift, with new lighting, and reorganized storage. David and Dennis always find ways to make life better for everyone with a coat of paint and some tender loving care. The new roof over the parking lot door is a hit with those waiting to get into the church in the rain!



Access and New Ventures...

The Wheelchair Lifts are now completed and paid for, and recently, the first inspection and maintenance was completed. It is wonderful to see so many people who can now access events upstairs and down at Laidlaw. This is also pushing us to continue the work of making everything more accessible for everyone at Laidlaw. We have begun to explore the possibilities for a mezzanine level accessible washroom.



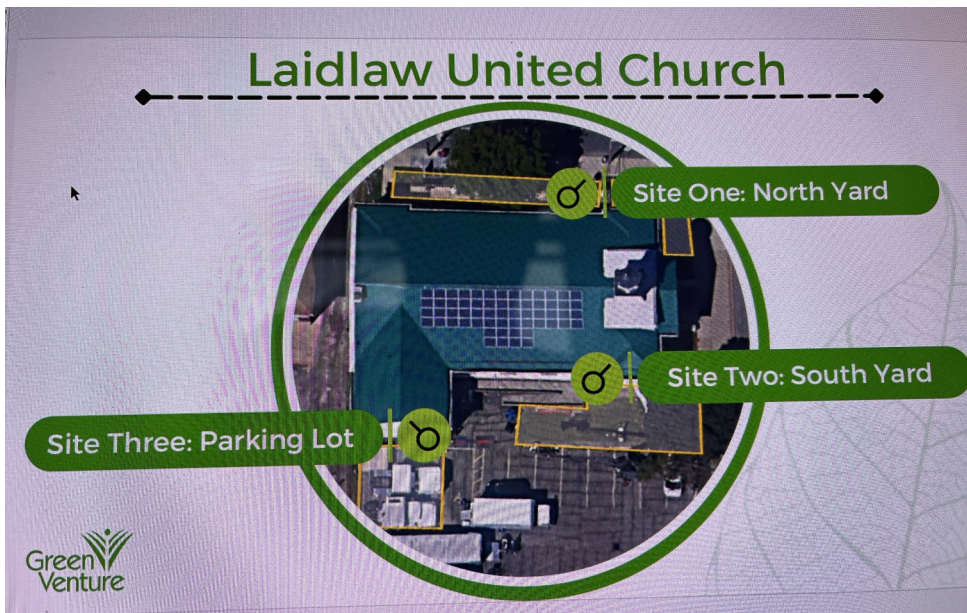
CONCERTS AND RECITALS are returning to Laidlaw. We are having some conversations about having a regularly scheduled live music and drama event at Laidlaw, perhaps on Thursday Evening, in the direction of live presentations, with Laidlaw offering refreshments. This would be an opportunity for live music and drama with family friendly and sober friendly leanings, something unique. We hope for a collaboration with a number of people who are able to help us organize and seek funding for this venture.



A NEW GREEN VENTURE at Laidlaw! Laidlaw has been chosen by Green Venture as a site for a community garden upgrade. Plans are still being prepared, but by the end of June of this year, three areas at Laidlaw will be improved, the North Lawn, the South East lawn, with de-paving at the back fence to allow vegetable and herb gardens. The test run on this was the gardens at the back fence over the last few years. A meeting was held February 29, and another will be held March 28, to receive community

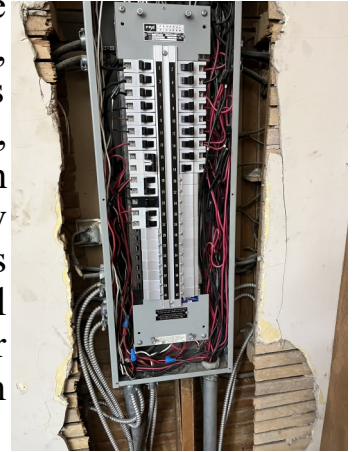


input. Green Venture is securing grants and funding for this project, and when it's done, the grounds around Laidlaw will be green, and include benches and seating that allow everyone to enjoy the green space and find some 'peace in the valley'. Please come to the planning meetings, and plan to help with the planting day in late June!



Catching up with the Future...

FINANCIALLY, the CEBA Loan was paid in full in 2023, with a great sigh of relief and gratitude. At year end, there was an operating deficit of just under \$7,000.00, but with the Wheelchair lifts complete and paid for, we anticipate returning to balanced budgets in the years to come. This year, while working on the upstairs kitchen, we learned that the 1950's electrical panels installed at Laidlaw have now become banned, and must be replaced at a cost of just over \$8,000.00. A loan from the Mission Council, added to the roof and solar loan, will allow us to care for this issue without having an effect on cash flow this year, for which we are grateful. The Federal Pacific Panel breakers fail at an alarming rate, and it was a failure of a breaker that brought the issue to our attention. This work will be done in April.



There are two envelopes in this newsletter. We appreciate an Easter Offering, and it will be a great help if we can all find a special gift to make toward 'catching up' the operating deficit from last year. We are living 'hand to mouth' at the moment, and returning to balanced budgets and consistent cash flow is a grace we seek. If everyone uses that envelope to give what they can offer, we know that God will provide all we need, and we will find balance and health, and even strength, in continuing the work of love and faith God has called us to share at Laidlaw Church.

EASTER is a time to reflect on the transformation of resurrection. The winter comes, and brings what feels like loss and sorrow. Things are different. But there is progress, and grace. We are welcoming new people to Laidlaw, and we continue to be a Beacon, a place of welcome and harbour for members and friends of Laidlaw. There is no resurrection without a few days in a tomb. But when the tomb days are over, wow! Laidlaw Church is finding new life and resurrection in all sorts of ways, and we are grateful to all those who make that resurrection and new life possible, visible, and joyful!



We know our future is to continue to share the light of Christ from our corner in East Hamilton, with respect, cooperation, and joy. We know there are generous souls who will hear God's call to join us in keeping the Beacon shining at Laidlaw!

Thank you for your contributions, the contributions that have brought us the joy and hope of spring. We hope you will join in Easter Celebrations at Laidlaw, in person, or online, or both! You are always welcome at Laidlaw!

EASTER WORSHIP

at Laidlaw Memorial United

PALM SUNDAY PARADE
SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2024, 11:00 A.M.
 "JESUS CAME, RIDING ON A DONKEY, AND THE PEOPLE LAYO BRANCHED ON HIS PATH..."
 THE CHILDREN WILL ENJOY BEING PART OF THE PALM SUNDAY PARADE!
 FOLLOWING THE SERVICE,
 JOIN US FOR A LOAVES AND FISHES LUNCH

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 2024, 11:00 A.M.
 "FROM NOON ON, DARKNESS CAME OVER THE WHOLE LAND..."
 WE CELEBRATE GOD'S PROMISE TO SAVE US FROM DARKNESS AND DEATH
 WITH HYMNS AND MEDITATIONS
 JOIN AFTER SERVICE FOR COFFEE HOUR

EASTER COFFEE & HOT CROSS BUNS
SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2024, 10:00 A.M.
 JOIN US, BEFORE THE EASTER SERVICE FOR A LIGHT BREAKFAST OF
 COFFEE, TEA AND HOT CROSS BUNS

EASTER SUNDAY COMMUNION
SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2024, 11:00 A.M.
 JOIN US FOR A JOYFUL CELEBRATION OF EASTER—BRING YOUR FAMILY!
 "DON'T BE AFRAID—JESUS IS RISEN"
 WE WILL CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER

Laidlaw Memorial United Church
 at the corner of Cannon and Ottawa Streets

BINGO

Saturday, January 13, 2024
 Saturday, February 10, 2024
 Saturday, March 9, 2024
 Saturday, April 13, 2024
 Saturday, May 4, 2024
 Saturday, June 15, 2024

Doors Open at 12:00 p.m.

Bingo starts at 1:00 p.m.

Lunch and Refreshments Available

Cash Prizes, Two 50/50 Games

Family Friendly Area and Adult Friendly Area

Children must be accompanied by a guardian at least 18 years old

Held under Ontario Lottery License

Check out all the Events Posted at our Website: www.laidlawchurch.ca

Laidlaw Memorial United Church
 A Beacon in East Hamilton since 1912
 at the Corner of Cannon and Ottawa Streets

Penny Sale Prize Raffle, Half & Half Raffle Bake Sale

**Saturday,
 May 25, 2024
 at 12 noon**

Draws begin at 2 p.m.

There is something for everyone!
 Great Penny Sale and Raffle Items
 Scrumptious Home Baking!

Come in Time for LUNCH!

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
 (with the Children's table—a prize for every child!)

community marketplace

At Laidlaw Church
 At the corner of Ottawa and Cannon Streets
 In the Ottawa Street Shopping District
www.laidlawchurch.ca

SEW Hungry on Ottawa Street Sale
Saturday, May 11, 2024

Welcome to Fall Sale
Saturday, September 14, 2024
 10:00 a.m. till 2:00 p.m.
 FREE ADMISSION—Free Parking!

Refreshments and Lunch Available
Local Arts, Crafts, Makers and Vendors
 Gathered at Laidlaw for your Shopping Convenience
Support your Local Artisans!

Vendors:
 To Rent a Table, or for more information
 go to www.laidlawchurch.ca—there's a fillable form
 or Contact the church office, 905 544 6536

EASTER Comes from All Directions...

EASTER calls us to see the future as a future of possibilities. We are living in a time when there is too much despair. Too many wars, too much anxiety over climate change, the cost of living, tension between the generations over who is to blame for all the trouble and woe, too much hate.

EASTER calls us to come together in faith, hope and love, in prayer, in worship, in loving relationship with one another seeking a way to make things better. There will always be challenges, life is not easy, and griefs do not avoid us.

God's love is steadfast. God raised Jesus from death to life, and we are reminded that if we share in suffering, and Christ did, we will also share in resurrection, as Christ did. God is helping us, and we look to the fulfilment of God's promise.

Laidlaw Church is alive and well, and together, we are finding the future God has for every generation. We have a wonderful opportunity to be of service, to worship together, to provide a place of recovery and creativity and joy.

We thank you for your part in the life of Laidlaw Church.

Let us continue to work together for good, as God gives us grace. We can continue to participate and promote fundraising events at Laidlaw. We can help with donations for events. We can encourage people to come with us to Bingo, Penny Sales, Movie Nights, Concerts, and Sunday Worship. We can find a way to increase or start a regular monthly gift for the General Fund at Laidlaw by PAR (speak to Keith Greeniaus). Inflation has affected us all, and our church too. We can find a way to contribute to making things balance at home, and at church. There are two envelopes in this newsletter, one for Easter Offering, which is very important to keeping up with expenses, and a balanced budget envelope, seeking to reset to balanced budgets in this post COVID period. Please consider retuning these envelopes to Laidlaw Church with a special gift to help balance the 2024 Budget! Sincere thanks to everyone for their generosity and enthusiasm!

Offerings and Donations to Laidlaw Memorial United Church, 155 Ottawa Street North, Hamilton, Ontario, L8H 3Z2 can be made by mail, Electronic donations can be made through Canada Helps, go to laidlawchurch.ca and click the "Donation" button (a form will pop up on our website, and allow you to make the donation without leaving the Laidlaw Website!); or by Interac E-transfer, use the church email address, laidlawuc@bellnet.ca (we have set this up for automatic deposit—no password needed)! This is a great time to go on PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance)! Call Keith Greeniaus at 289 941 3654 if you would like to go on PAR, or have a set of offering envelopes. Please note: Offerings through 'Canada Helps' are receipted separately by Canada Helps.

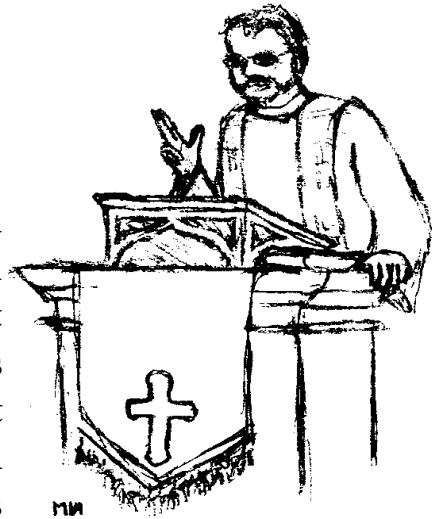
Accessible Entrance Project Update: Laidlaw is now, officially, accessible, and the lifts are available to the general public! Please see Rev. Doug if you would like to use one of the lifts, for safety and training purposes. Rev. Doug would love to do some training with people willing to assist people who would like to use the lifts. The cost of the lift is paid in full, we need now only consider the cost of inspection and maintenance!



An Eggstra Special Easter...

Easter has a way of raising expectations. 'Even death cannot hold him!' Easter is either a beacon of hope for us, or a cause for more cynicism.

I was listening to a YouTube video, and they were discussing how we deal with expectations. The second commandment, 'Don't take the LORD's name in vain', at first glance, may be understood as 'don't swear', but that seems a bit silly, really. What annoys God is when we confuse our expectations with what God wants. When we confuse our expectation with what God's expectations, we will surely find ourselves doing evil in the name of God—and that is surely to be avoided.



I remember when my Shirley was ill, and I was working with the Group Insurance people. You can imagine I expected them to be of help. When they were less help than expected, I remember being told I needed to 'manage my expectations.' I am fairly sure I was being told to lower my expectations.

That is a strategy. If we lower our expectations, we will be less troubled and disappointed. But if we hold our expectations high, and give thanks when we see any progress, even when it falls short of our expectations, we have the best of hope and faith, and perhaps, even, love.

Easter is an expectation of life where there has been suffering and death. Perhaps it is no wonder there is scepticism about a faith that encourages us to raise our expectations, especially in these times when we seemed overwhelmed by trouble, sorrow, war, destruction and decay.

But I see progress. I see recovery, and creativity. I see improvement, and generosity. I see us working out our faith with fear and trembling, and a certain amount of good humour. I feel joy and peace in our worshipping together. Resurrection is not, after all, too much to hope for, an unreasonable expectation. It happened to Jesus, and we're still celebrating. We're still celebrating because we share in the sufferings of Christ, and in the resurrection of Christ. Resurrection happens to us. May God give us the grace to see it, celebrate it, and live with tempered expectation and joy.

We are not alone. We live in God's world, and as we chose it, we have each other and the grace of God that raises us from death to life. God give us grace to see the new life God is giving us all.

Glory to God in the Highest! *Rev. Doug Moore, lovin' it at Laidlaw*