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Export date: Fri Mar 29 5:48:49 2024 / +0000 GMT

Opera rises to the rafters as Aurora United Church looks to rebuild



By Chris McGowan

Members of Aurora United Church welcomed the public into their home-away-from home at Trinity last Saturday, for an opera showcase to rebuild their spiritual base.

Called Opera Nella Chiesa, or The Opera in Church with soprano, Aurora native Laura Albino, a graduate of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio and the University of Toronto Opera School was joined by Adam Luther, a Newfoundland tenor and former member of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble School Studio, along with Canadian pianist Rachel Andrist.

Together, they created musical scenes from the Opera's La Boheme, Carmen, Die Fledermaus, The Merry Widow and Manon.

In attendance was the Aurora United Church Chancel Choir with Director Samuel Tam. The Aurora United Handbell Quartet (Marcia Kaye, Joyce Hagarty, Pat Innes and Anne Ella Arnold) known as EmBellished was also there, who played the handbells as 11 people would. Needless to say, the four ladies were very busy but made an extraordinary sound together.

The Director of the handbell Program, Lisa Kyriakides introduced the handbell Quartet giving thanks to the Trinity Anglican for letting the Aurora United use their handbells. She informed the audience that she, along with others, helped retrieve the four-octave set of brass bells from a closet after the fire that destroyed the Aurora United Church on April 11.

?The day after the fire, we were able to get in the cupboard where our handbells were stored and there they were,? she said.

The handbells are in very good condition, but require some replacement parts. The group expects to be using their very own bells once again as early as this fall.

The church was completely full, attended by local MP Lois Brown, members from both congregations, as well as members of Newmarket's Trinity United Church, for an evening of culture that was pleasing to all senses.

It was an event to raise money to be sure but perhaps another message is being sent here, the importance of people coming together to help others, to enjoy an evening and to plan for tomorrow.

The members of The Aurora United Church continue to be thankful to Trinity Anglican for allowing them to utilize their church for this function as well as others. As Bob McRoberts from Aurora United Church said ?They are our new best friend.?