

# Church Rises Beautifully from its Ashes

By: Rankin MacDonald



Lake Ainslie Presbyterian Church. Build 2012



The interior of the church. Cross made by DJ MacLean from burnt timbers in background.

It took exactly a year for the phoenix to rise from the ashes but when it did it flew with a plumage perfect for its pastoral, Lake Ainslie home.

In December of 2011, the East Lake Ainslie Presbyterian Church burned to the ground in a morning fire just prior to service.

It was decided to rebuild so with the insurance money, fund-raising and donations everything fell into place to have the church ready for the Christmas season of 2012.

On Christmas Eve, the church was standing-room-only as it welcomed the faithful to a Christmas Eve candle light service conducted by its minister Rev. Louis Isahz.

On Christmas Eve when Rev. Isahz saw the crowd he jokingly remarked, "I knew we should have built a bigger church."

The new church built on the same spot and resembling the old structure is beautiful inside, with rustic decor, clean lines and a welcoming atmosphere.

It can seat 140.

"I never dreamt it would be so beautiful," said Rev. Isahz. "A church is its people and these people were determined to build. There were naysayers, what with churches closing and smaller congregations, but we felt that it was a community, a presence here since 1833."

He said the official dedication of the East Lake Ainslie Presbyterian Church will take place next summer.

A letter from one of the church's best friends, Rev. Ian MacMillan, congratulated the parishioners for their determination and dedication.

Rev. MacMillan held fund-raisers for the new church.

Rev. Isahz said that local Catholic churches, St. Joseph's in S.W. Margaree and at West Lake Ainslie sent unsolicited donations to the cause.

Lauchena MacDonald and family donated large-print bibles to the church.

Rev. Isahz also commended David MacLean for doing a superior job in building the church "on time."

"How pleased we are," he added.

At the front of the church, behind the choir loft, hangs a beautiful decorative cross which was made out of old planks from the fire by D.J. MacLean.

It was an evening of rejoicing in the community of Lake Ainslie as the people welcomed back an old friend.

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