

UPDATE August 18 2022

**THE
MUSIC
HALL**



The Music Hall at New Vision United Church Enters New Stage in its Development

Church seeks to empower equity diversity and inclusivity partnership to lead going forward

Hamilton, ON (August 16 2022) – New Vision United Church has concluded renovation planning for a community-benefiting venue in its heritage auditorium at 24 Main St. W., formerly Centenary Church. This new venue, known as “*the Music Hall*,” and compared by some to Nashville’s Ryman Auditorium and Toronto’s Massey Hall, needs \$3.9 million to be raised to bring a much needed state-of-the-art 1,000 occupant mid-sized venue to Hamilton’s downtown.

“Our next step is to talk with Hamilton’s citizens and community leaders to develop a clear structure for operating and programming the venue,” says Ian Sloan, New Vision co-ordinator of the Music Hall initiatives. “Those taking up the challenge will then push ahead with the renovations leading to the many event and performance opportunities that await.”

Sonic Unyon and SUPERCRAWL promoted and ran successful “proof of concept” concerts at the Music Hall before the pandemic with such headliners as Terra Lightfoot, Dan Mangan, Jeff Tweedy and others. JR DiGG’s commitment to the Music Hall as his home for his annual charity Acoustic Christmas Concert continues to be a big boost.

The renovations designed and costed to date for this 1868 heritage-designated landmark include structural reinforcement of the main floor, a large suite of gender neutral washrooms to meet the occupancy load of the auditorium, safety enhancements in the balcony area, improved accessibility features, sound and lighting support, amenities for patrons, crews and performers, and significant improvements in ventilation that include air-conditioning.

New Vision aspires for this venue to have long-term equity, inclusivity and diversity impacts. The first gay marriage in Hamilton was celebrated in this space and New Vision formally became an LGBTQ+ affirming church shortly afterward. Most recently, anti-racism and disability activists found safe space here during the pandemic, as did houseless people needing a place to rest and to connect.

New Vision thanks all its friends and supporters who have richly contributed to date. Chief among these is its business plan consultant Cobalt Connects Creativity, the City of Hamilton and its Economic Development Division and business renewal staff, the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee and the heritage planners of the City Planning Division, the Hamilton Community Foundation, the Hamilton Halton Brant Tourism Association, and many, many local musicians, particularly those who contributed to our pre-pandemic vinyl double album release “*Do Well by Hamilton*.” And, of course, a big thanks to our volunteer advisory committees, the design team from McCallum Sather and our project manager, XGC Consulting, for helping the Hamilton community to arrive at this point with this project.

For more information, contact Ian Sloan, New Vision Music Hall initiatives coordinator
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