



St. Francis of Assisi Laudato Si' Environmental Team September 2023 Newsletter

Indigenous and Communal Garden Signs



The Laudato Si' Team would like to thank Marjorie Simon and her daughter Susie, for the many hours they spent planning and creating the graphics for the two new signs. Above, Marj is standing amongst the fall bounty of the Indigenous Garden at the front of the church – pole beans, corn, tobacco, sweet grass, squash and sage. These plants have special meaning to the native peoples of our region. Cedar cuttings (from the hedge in the back) were also given to the Anishnabeg Outreach Center for their personal use in ceremonies and rituals.

Additional thanks to Kitchener's Love My Hood for the near \$5,000 grant last year, and to the quality, care and installation ideas provided by Signs by Jukes.

Laudato Si' Banners



Parishioners may have noticed that each of the entrances into the church has banners of grape leaves, a Laudato Si' message and some of the accomplishments that St. Francis parish has achieved.

They were inspired and created by former secretary Alice Soedar last year, who took the seven Laudato Si' priorities and created the beautiful graphic display for parishioners: the Cry of Earth, the Cry of the Poor, Ecological Economics, Simple Lifestyles, Ecological Education, Ecological Spirituality and Community Involvement and Participation.

They were painstakingly coloured by high schooler Dina Habte, and the messages refreshed and expanded by Ruthann Fisher as priorities and undertakings were completed.

Some of the major ones include: the Communal Garden's expansion (with its produce sent to Tiny Home Takeout), Indigenous Garden, a toxic waste collection day, Lee Valley box initiative, a candle-lit mass and increasing environmental awareness among worshippers.

St Francis of Assisi Communal Garden

WILLING HANDS HELPING OUR COMMUNITY



In the beginning... ...mid-summer bounty ... to Tiny Home Takeout, Kitchener

www.stfranciskw.ca with support from #LoveMyHood - Kitchener's guide to great neighbourhoods

Tiny Home Takeout Satellite Location



The tiny home that is beside the church, in the St. Louis parking lot, is a Tiny Home Takeout satellite location. Launched this past summer, it serves hot, fresh calzones with salads or soups on Tuesday and Thursday nights. Its slogan is: "Grab a bite. Give if you can."

Fr. Toby Collins, at St. Mary's Parish, recognized the difficulty homeless or marginalized people to have access to nutritious foods. With seed money from Hamilton Diocese, a kitchen was created in the church's basement, including a pizza oven and tilting mixer that can make 150 bowls of soup. The first Tiny Home began serving food in January, 2021, necessitated by the pandemic policy to avoid indoor gatherings.

Building manager Gary Howell, an avid gardener, utilized the gardens innovatively this year, creating "square foot" sections that optimized the produce that is grown for THT's needs. The picture below shows a typical week's production at the height of the gardens' summertime bounty.

The St. Francis location (and Holy Trinity Church on Wilson Avenue) were created to enable needy persons and families to easily access the meals. Donations are welcome at: <https://tinychometakeout.com/donate/>.



Lee Valley Tools Box Initiative Update

Thanks to the many parishioners collecting small to medium size Amazon boxes. Between our June and September collection we accumulated 130 boxes for a credit of \$65 at the Waterloo Lee Valley Store.

We used this credit to purchase tools and seeds for the church gardens.

Thanks to several parishioners who have volunteered to help sort the boxes and deliver them to the store.

Our next collection will take place at the November 18th and 19th masses. Please try to store any Amazon boxes in your home until then. We would prefer this to dropping them off in dribs and drabs at the church foyer.

Please note that we are not encouraging Amazon purchases, simply trying to repurpose the boxes, enabling Lee Valley to reuse the boxes for customer online customers. This might save a few trees from being made into boxes. Alternatively, you can receive \$0.50 per box when visiting the store, located at 620 Davenport Road in Waterloo.



Upcoming Events

Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 – Next St. Francis Environmental Team Meeting (6:00 p.m. pot luck dinner at St. Francis) – Feel free to join our team! Contact the church at 519 745 7301.

November - Development and Peace Stand for the Land Fall Campaign – defending land and water rights in the Honduras. Watch your bulletin for details in November.