



L'ARCHE®
london

Connection

Fall 2020



You are cordially invited to join us at the
“Better Together Gala”

A virtual evening celebrating
inclusion and friendship together!

*Exciting event details will be forthcoming

Friday February 26th, 2021

WE WELCOME OUR NEW BOARD CHAIR

We are happy to introduce Katie Mennill, who was named the new Chair of the L'Arche London Board of Directors at our June Annual General Meeting. Katie and her husband John have two children. Katie is People Relations & Inclusion and Diversity Leader at 3M Canada. Interesting fact: When Katie was an Elementary School Student, she attended the school that today borders our Gathering Place property! Katie has been a member of our Board since Spring 2018 and we are delighted that she has accepted this responsibility at L'Arche London. We are deeply grateful for the service of Pauline Trudell, who completed her 3-year term as Board Chair in June of 2020. Pauline led our Board with wisdom, grace and skill. Thank you Pauline! We are very happy that Pauline will continue as a member of our Board of Directors.



Katie Mennill
Board Chair



Marietta Drost
Community Leader



Pauline Trudell
Board of Directors



JUBILEE'S SUMMER VACATION!

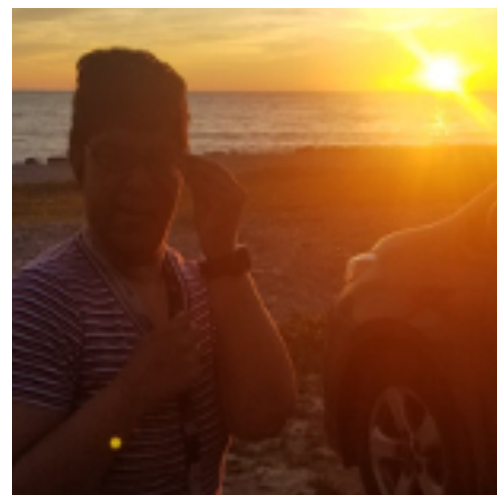
By Miju Jeon, Jubilee House Leader

Jubilee House went to Goderich for our summer vacation. It meant a lot to Melissa, Winnie, Gloria, Kate and Jubilee Assistants during the pandemic. We have needed to stay close to home all summer, so the vacation was a pretty big deal. We rented a cottage in Bayfield for a week.

Melissa and Gloria, Sisilia and Jean went first. Jean, our awesome Overnight Assistant was glad to be there as she hadn't had a chance to enjoy the summer due to COVID-19. Jean supports in our home when people are sleeping, so it was a good time for Jean to be with us during the day.

Winnie, Kate, Miju, Julie and Rebecca had a nice three days after the first group. They went to the beach every night to see the sunset, and even brought food in the van so they could watch the beauty of the nature and eat together in the van. Luckily there weren't many people at the beach, so they had a nice walk and watched the most beautiful sunsets. They also had a nice and quiet time at the cottage by watching movies and playing games.

It was a great opportunity for Jubilee House to be at the cottage during the pandemic. There were lots of things that weren't same as past years. We had to disinfect the whole cottage upon arrival and before we departed, then two times during the day. Also, we had to check our bodily temperatures two times each day according to the Ministry guidelines. But, even with heightened precautions, all of us were grateful for our trip to the cottage as it rejuvenated and refreshed us from being so confined in our home for almost 4 months.



ART ONLINE CLASSES

By Miriam Vogel

Karina, you are a great leader for me. I love making art and Karina gives me a smile on the computer from her own home and thank you for having me. I enjoy tissue paper art, making a sunset, coils, making a neighbourhood and my favourite is clay pots. I am honoured to be in a newsletter article. I think Karina is the world's best art teacher. I think L'Arche London friends are great. I enjoy my online art classes and have shown my friends the wonderful things I have made..... true story inspired by Miriam Vogel.

Christmas Shopping Anyone? Having a hard time finding unique, one-of-a-kind items for your Christmas list?

If so, please visit our brand NEW online website for beautiful, hand-made, unique and one-of-kind items made by our community members.

Our online store will be available as of November 16th by visiting www.larchelondon.ca and clicking on the Online Store link.

WE GATHER DURING COVID, VIA ZOOM!

By Shirlene & Jeff Alveranga

How have Jeff and I continued to be part of the L'Arche London community during the pandemic of 2020? It has been important for us not to lose connections made prior to of all this. One of the things L'Arche has done is to support those connections.

We still do music together on Monday mornings. We see each other's faces, larger than life spotlighted on our computer screens, and we value each one's creativity & personality. We hear voices that we know. Jeff doesn't see well but I think he hears his friends from Music Club and it helps him remember them. They didn't just



Jeffrey Isard

disappear because we no longer drive to Lambeth & visit a building there, pretty as it is. Much appreciation to Laurel & her daughter for their hard work.

Attending Zoom worship and reflection time with L'Arche friends has helped me appreciate people I didn't know as well, to listen to insights that I may not otherwise, have taken time to ponder. We have slowed our pace. We can even do worship & music in our pj's – am I giving away a secret or did you notice? God has given us an opportunity (and many have mentioned this in reflection & prayer) to appreciate his beautiful creation, and value it as a blessing & a responsibility. He has reminded us how important it is to value each one, and to reach out with concern for their well-being, to support each in joy, in celebration, and in worry and sorrow. The anxiety of COVID is less of a burden when we share and express



our needs to others. We can grow, and have grown in this time.

I notice the care-givers of L'Arche. I note how they put on a mask, no matter how difficult or tiring it must be to wear one for so many hours – it is a gift they give the members without complaint. I notice too how caring & supportive each member is with their housemates. And finally, I notice all of the work of support for adapting to this time that is done behind the scenes in whatever way necessary and by the strong leadership team. And we even grow, expand and welcome a new Program Coordinator Mel during COVID!

Thank you for including us in community. We will all return to Lambeth as soon as it is safely possible.

"I wanted to share with you my gratitude for the wonderful Music program that has kept my son, Jeffrey, engaged with friends and with the music he loves! Jeffrey loves each time he can see his friends, chat with them, sing with them, and engage with Laurel, whom he adores. The program is wonderful and it is so enhanced by the caring and uplifting program that keeps him engaged the whole time. On its own it is fantastic but add Covid and it truly is a miracle to save Jeffrey's ability to relate to others.

***It is definitely helping my sanity, as Jeffrey so misses his many ways of connecting with his friends and usual activities. I have long awaited the chance to thank Laurel and all who assist in making these times real and fun for those who are limited in their ability to get out."* — quote by Christine Isard**

'ENERGY' AN ART SHOW THAT CREATED A BOND

By Karina Viovy

It is said that people who eat together around a table are bonded by moments of laughter, discussion, storytelling and more laughter! This is the same bond that L'Arche London created with the 500 plus students of Jean Vanier School. Only we didn't share food; we shared art instead! We discovered together that it was both fun and creative to work on one piece of art collaboratively. We called this concept of sharing art; 'ART AROUND THE TABLE'. Each class created one masterpiece with everybody's hands collaborating. This included all core members and assistants alike. The show was intended to open in May of 2020. Due to our unexpected 'crowned' visitor the show was put on hold. We are pleased to announce that we will be holding the show virtually. We are thankful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for making this possible.

Thank you to OTF for supporting our online Music and Art programs



Please stay tuned we will posting the Art Show video on our Facebook account in the coming weeks.



RICHMOND UNDERPASS COMMUNITY ART PROJECT



L'Arche London is a Community Partner in the Richmond Underpass Community Arts Project. Seven members of our L'Arche London community – Kavya, Peter, Nicole, Janet, Melissa, Jenn and Toinette engaged this project throughout the Summer and early Fall. They created thought provoking and beautiful works of art based upon a blend of personal stories and shared experiences. They worked with over 13 other Community Organizations in partnership to revitalize the Richmond Street downtown underpass. The work came together to create a beautiful mural to be enjoyed by the whole London community, which was unveiled on October 24. This Community Arts initiative was sponsored by a City of London Neighborhood Decision Making Grant. The leaders on the project were Alejandro Zuluaga and Melanie Schambach.

Look on our Facebook for pictures of the celebration!

www.facebook.com/larchelondon/

KAVYA FROM BETHANY HOUSE SHARES ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE:

Since the 3rd of June, 2020, Peter and I have been working diligently on the Richmond Underpass Community Art Project along with Nicole, Janet, Melissa and Jennifer, and supported by Toinette. Within just four months, I discovered a whole new side of Peter which amazed me and taught me a lot of things. He taught me how an absolute gentleman would treat people, how to speak to people with kind words, even if it was for something as simple as asking for a spoon. I also had so much fun in the process and we learned a lot about each other. This journey was very special as it occurred during hard times and taught both of us, how to be happy no matter what the situation was. The best gift that both of us received from each other through this process was the acknowledgment of each other's presence in life. Above is a picture of the both of us for one of the activities.

FAITHFULNESS

St. George's Catholic Church



On Sunday, September 27th, St. George's Catholic Church held an evening concert to raise funds for our community. It was a beautiful evening hosted by Father John and Paul Gilpin from the Knights of Columbus. The parish's very talented Holy Spirit Band played many different musical pieces throughout the evening. So much

hard work from many volunteers at the parish went into making this evening truly memorable. We are humbled by the faithfulness and support that is continually shown to our community by the St. George's Parish and the Knights of Columbus. Thank you!

If you would like to watch the concert, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzbJcoP2Gjs>



"We are people with and without intellectual disability, sharing life in community... we celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need of one another. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together". – The L'Arche Mission Statement

SUMMER STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

We were so blessed to have amazing student volunteers this summer at L'Arche London. Their work and spirit helped us to meet the pressures of the pandemic time. Justyn spread the joy of music – by Piping in front of many homes – an ambassador for our community near and far. Korah assisted Laurel in managing our online Wednesday evening Coffee House and Monday Morning Music Club. Mim supported our Office Administration function this summer, lightening the load for all of us. Gabrielle produced three amazing videos that will help us to share our Mission with others virtually in the months to come – the Community Song Video, the Volunteers during a Pandemic video, and the Art Show "Energy" video, a collaborative online Art Show with our partners at Jean Vanier Elementary School. Finally, we want to share our joy in hearing that Adam Reid, faithful friend and volunteer at L'Arche London, was named Optimist Club of Oakridge Volunteer of the Year in June 2020!

