



# GRATITUDE

L'Arche Winnipeg Newsletter #83



## The Grace of God in Pandemic Times

by Jim Lapp  
Community Leader

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- Romans 8 v.38-39

The last eleven months have had a lasting impact on all of us. It has stretched us and raised many questions about our lives. We have all been afraid for our own lives and the lives of our loved ones. For me, one question has been: is God still with us on our journey? What are the signs of that?

The Bible is very clear that God is love. In my experience, wherever love is present in the world, it is a sign of God's Spirit. That love is present in the world in many forms beyond the obvious ones of a parent's love for their child. In the last eleven months I have been witness to that love in the community of L'Arche Winnipeg.

As it states in another place in this newsletter Dorothy Baxter, a long time resident of L'Arche Winnipeg, passed

away on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 at the age of 84. In the weeks leading up to her death, I was deeply touched by the love and care for her expressed to her by the members of her home, her sister and nieces, and many others within L'Arche who were friends of hers. She was the life of the party and will be missed by many people. I have known Dorothy for over 46 years and it has been wonderful to see her grow in confidence during that time. I believe she knew deep within her soul that God loved her as she was.

As we prepare for our Virtual Walk with L'Arche we remain grateful for the faithfulness and love shown by our supporters in last year's walk and in the recently completed Christmas Appeal. Your support has helped with many things including two bathroom renovations to make them accessible for our aging members, which allows them to stay in their homes.

By the love and concern for others shown by our assistants and other workers, we have managed not to have any cases of Covid-19 in our homes. The live-in assistants have sacrificed a lot and not gone out to visit family or

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## Remembering Dorothy



The year 2020 ended on a sad note as we mourned the passing of a long-term member of L'Arche, Dorothy, who died on December 31<sup>st</sup> from pneumonia complications. She was 84 years old.

The relative quickness of her passing, during code red pandemic restrictions, meant that few people had the opportunity to visit her and say their good-byes, and only five people were allowed to attend her funeral service. L'Arche organized an online Zoom memorial service on January 27<sup>th</sup> for family and friends of Dorothy. Many people were present and had the opportunity to share stories and special memories of Dorothy. We looked at pictures of her life and listened to some of her favorite songs. Amongst the many tributes, certain words were often repeated - "gratitude" being the main one. The words "Thank-you" were often on Dorothy's lips, as she was very appreciative of everything that people did for her and with her. People remembered many of her say-

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## Limited Opening for L'Arche Tova Café

L'Arche Tova Café remains open during the current pandemic restrictions, but for take-out and catering orders only. Café hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 8 AM to 2 PM. For safe handling and distribution, catering orders can be wrapped in individual portions with individuals' names put on each portion. The Café is located at 119 Regent Avenue West. Phone in your order: 204-421-9388. View Café menus: [www.larchetovacafe.com](http://www.larchetovacafe.com)

## Past Assistants Share Memories of Dorothy

*"The things that I loved the most about Dorothy were her boldness, her honesty, and her determination ... how sensitive she was and how she just wanted to be loved and involved, just like all of us do... I'm very grateful for the love and forgiveness that she's given to me." - **Angely A.***

*"I fondly remember her bright smile and witty jokes. She welcomed me every time I visited Dayspring. She generously shared her joy and happiness with people around her." - **Tomo***

*"She was such a great person, full of life and plans for the future, so outgoing. She knew how to make friends and keep them for years, always ready to help and being there for others. I will miss her." - **Beata G.***

*"Dorothy was a lively, fun, and charming lady. She could make my day brighter, as when entering her room first thing in the morning to wake her up: she was always smiling, happy, and her face was bright. This changed my mood for the better. She was a storyteller and fun to be around. May her soul rest in eternal peace."*

**- Ornella C.**

*"When I think of her, I think of Jesus' teaching in the Beatitudes about the blessedness of those who are pure of heart "for they shall see God". She was so positive and enthusiastic. Dorothy's joy and excitement about life was such a gift and was so contagious ... she was up for anything and everything!" - **Michael H.***

*"Dorothy was like a grandmother to me. She was kind, funny, and loving. There are so many things that I learned about myself when I lived with her. I learned to be patient, understanding, and forgiving - and these are things I still tell people, how L'Arche changed me ... she was always straightforward and said what was on her mind, and I am glad I met her and shared my life with her." - **Brenda M.***

*"She was bubbly and full of life. Her joy at Dayspring and in the entire community will be greatly missed ... Dorothy enjoyed handshakes and she also teased us with a gentle squeeze of the hand. Her humour and interjections will be undoubtedly missed. In one word, she embodied the vision of L'Arche." - **Isaac K.***

## Remembering Dorothy...

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ings: "One day at a time!" - "I'm not getting older, I'm just getting better". She loved shopping: "It's my money - and I can't take it with me." Her "hello, stranger!" was a subtle reminder that you had not visited her for a long time. Dorothy liked to be involved in people's lives, and always wanted to be of service, to help out wherever she could (she spent many hours stamping & stuffing envelopes for the mail-

out of our newsletter!). She loved visiting family, especially her sister Val, and going on outings. She had the opportunity to go on pilgrimages to Rome and Lourdes with Faith and Light, to visit her friend Eileen in Australia, and to go on several Caribbean cruises.

Dorothy joined our community in 1974 and lived in several different houses over the years, and spent the last 17 years living at our *Dayspring* home.



*Dorothy helping out at the 2018 Pageant, with her friend Patsy (above). She cared for and appreciated all her friends (below: with Marge)*



Link to Dorothy's funeral service:  
[https://youtu.be/i\\_lqV9gSx2Y](https://youtu.be/i_lqV9gSx2Y)

### 2020 Remembrances

We also mourned the loss of other (past) members of L'Arche Winnipeg in 2020.

- ◆ **Michele Roy**, core member, (January)
- ◆ **James Polz**, core member, (June)
- ◆ **Yvette (Chevrefils) David**, assistant (April)
- ◆ **Conrad Wyrzkowski**, Board Member, (November)
- ◆ **Harold Graham**, Board Member, (December)

## The Grace of God ...

*(Continued from page 1)*

friends. Essentially the home they live in is their bubble. The support workers clearly have stuck to their family bubbles and avoided bringing Covid into our homes. I, and everyone else on the leadership team and Board, are extremely grateful for their sacrifices. Their loving response has been an answer to prayer.

I don't know anyone who has not struggled with the isolation of dealing with Covid. For our core members who love to go out into the broader community to interact with people including other customers, cashiers, and waitresses at our L'Arche Tova Café, it has been a challenge. And yet as I see them on Zoom calls or talk to them on the phone they seem to be doing better than most of us. I think it is probably because they intuitively understand that the most important aspect of life is relationships, friendships, if you like, love. They are living with people who love them and whom they love and so life in the isolation of their home is more than bearable.



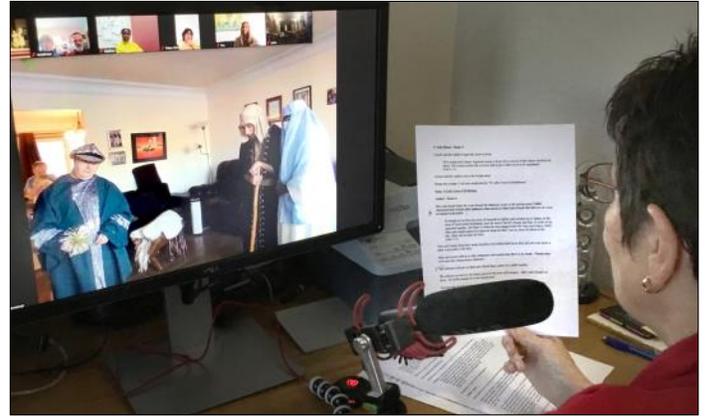
*Getting the flu shot last fall*

We have heard from the province of Manitoba that all our assistants and workers in the homes will be eligible to be vaccinated for Covid in the next two months. While we are waiting for clarification, it appears that our core members will also be eligible to be vaccinated during that period as well. Hopefully, sometime in the months following that, we will have the opportunity to get together at a community gathering, face to face. I can't imagine how exciting and wonderful a celebration that will be!

In September I will turn seventy, and as my four year mandate as community leader is up in December, I will be retiring from this role by the end of the year. For me the last 11 years have been a real gift of spiritual growth and I have been privileged to witness to God's love and presence in L'Arche Winnipeg. In the spring a committee of two board members and two community members, led by Christine Monier the Regional Leader of L'Arche Canada for the Western Region, will ask for input from the Board and all community members as to what they want to work on in the next four year mandate from January, 2022 until December, 2025. After the new Mandate is approved by the Board, they will start looking in the summer or early fall for a new community leader to lead us in the new mandate.

I am grateful for my journey in this role. Above all I am grateful to have come to know so many wonderful people filled with compassion and caring. May God bless and surround with His love all our members, friends and supporters.

## Pageant Creativity



*As Barbara narrates the nativity story, members from The Anchor house act out their scene.*

We were unable to gather this past December for our public **Christmas Pageant** presentation. The Pageant Committee, with great determination and creativity, decided to put together our annual celebration of the nativity story as a Zoom production instead. On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, our pageant was presented from 8 different locations. The coordinator (Julie) and the narrator (Barbara) each worked from their own location, while the six L'Arche homes were alternating scenes of the nativity story. Costumes and detailed instructions had been delivered to each home in preparation for the event.

As the songs were played and the narration proclaimed, computer screen images shifted to each of our L'Arche homes where residents, in full pageant costumes, acted out the various tableaux of the story.



*(above) Angels appeared on cue at Elpida house. (below) Ross was able to reprise his role as the Little Drummer Boy from the safety and comfort of his L' Ainé house.*



## Virtual Walk With L'Arche in May

by **Hubert Pantel**  
Newsletter Editor

The 17th annual **Vickar Automotive Group's Walk with L'Arche** on Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, will be a virtual event again this year.

We thank you in advance for supporting this year's virtual event, as we strive for continuity and look forward to a 2022 walk when we can again come together for a party celebration with fellowship, food, music, entertainment - everything you've come to enjoy about our yearly gathering!

### What's different this year...

We've moved the walk to a Saturday (May 1<sup>st</sup>) instead of Sunday.

Registration for the walk is free this year. The registration form is found in the walk brochure. You can also register online through the L'Arche Winnipeg website, where you can also print registration & pledge forms. Mail in your registration or drop it off through the mail slot at the L'Arche Winnipeg office.

Walk 1k or 5k on a path of your choice. If you walk with friends or family members, please respect all Government of Manitoba pandemic health regulations that will be in effect in May.

We encourage you to take pictures of your walk experience and share with us the creative ways you were a part of this unique event. Please



email pictures and all the details to: [newsletter@larchewinnipeg.org](mailto:newsletter@larchewinnipeg.org)

Walk T-shirts can be requested by collecting a minimum of \$100.00 in pledges, which must be submitted (along with the registration form) to the L'Arche office by April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### What stays the same...

You can still win prizes! The names of all registered walkers who have collected pledges will be entered for the prize draws. You could win a framed autographed picture of Winnipeg Jets star goalie & Vezina trophy winner Connor Hellebuyck, or other autographed pictures of Jets players Adam Lowry, Andrew Copp, or Laurent Brossoit (courtesy of Joe Daley's Sports & Framing), as well as a selection of other prizes that will be drawn in June.

You can earn L'Arche Tova Café gift cards by raising pledges - the value of

the gift card is determined by the amount raised (gift card value range is from \$10 to \$200). A letter will be sent in June to the pledge collectors who have earned a gift card.

Fundraise by letting family, friends and co-workers know that you are **walking for L'Arche** and ask them to sponsor you. Even friends and relatives who live far away can sponsor you by credit card through the CanadaHelps.org link on our website. Direct them to [www.larchewinnipeg.org](http://www.larchewinnipeg.org) and instruct them to write that they are sponsoring you in the "message to L'Arche Winnipeg" box in the online donation process. Your online donors will immediately receive an income tax receipt from CanadaHelps.

The pledge drive continues to the end of May. Please submit raised pledges to the L'Arche Winnipeg office by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

We appreciate your support in helping us live through these difficult times, and we look forward to a time when we can gather again.



## GRATITUDE FROM WINNIPEG

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## Welcoming a New Member

A new member of L'Arche Winnipeg was recently welcomed at our Elpida house in 2020: **Gina** (right, in photo) arrived on December 23<sup>rd</sup> at our Windsor Park home.

Gina has already shown us her artistic side - she likes to listen to music, write lyrics, do painting, and draw pictures that she uses to make cards.

Everyone in the house is quite happy to have her there, and she fits in very well with her love of dancing and for watching Disney movies!

