



Clergy and Community

A New Perspective by Sandra Braun, Ph.D.

SPRING 2023

"**Transformative**," is how Rev. Graham Brownmiller describes how L'Arche Greater Vancouver has impacted Jubilee United Church.

Through his relationship with L'Arche core members, Brownmiller, Lead Minister at Jubilee, came to experience 'ministry with' versus 'ministry to.'

While the traditional structure of worship experiences tends to focus



on the activities of worship being more one-way communication from shepherd to flock in an invitational manner, Brownmiller said he has been able to experience first-hand, more two-way communication and participatory worship in working alongside L'Arche.

"I get my guidance from L'Arche about the songs, activities, and themes for Community Prayer and I facilitate that," he said. **"I participate in the worship that they prepare; they guide me."**

Brownmiller, known as Reverend Graham to people at L'Arche, notes how L'Arche has modeled a more

participatory approach to both community life and worship.

"L'Arche members **desire to actively contribute to community life in tangible ways**. Jubilee has responded by finding ways for them to serve in church life, such as greeting visitors, passing out bulletins, and providing baked goods for fellowship time."

Members of the L'Arche community have modeled participatory approach during the formal Jubilee worship time. Some will play an instrument along with certain songs, or express spontaneous acts of worship such as hand-clapping, all of which **"positively changes the worship experience,"** says Brownmiller.

Overall, says Brownmiller, "they seem to naturally want to participate; whereas the more common parishioner experience is somewhat more passive," said Brownmiller.

"And sometimes, to my great surprise, I will even get a response to a question I might ask during a sermon," he chuckled.

Mary Hillhouse, a member of the church and L'Arche describes Brownmiller as gentle, friendly, and kind.

"Rev. Graham and I were in solidarity as wheelchair buddies after he had surgery on his back."

Brownmiller is careful to note that Jubilee United Church is only one of

the faith groups represented at L'Arche. "They come from different faith backgrounds and we try to accommodate that."

"It's really more an inter-faith effort including, but not limited to, the United Church, Anglican Church, and Roman Catholic Church." There were members of each of these faith groups in attendance at the blessing of the land at the site of L'Arche's new building. "The liturgy was uniquely designed to incorporate all three faiths."

As a result of his ministry with L'Arche, Brownmiller has gained a new perspective on some of the challenges faced by his friends at L'Arche. He clings to an idea that came to him one morning: **"In the diversity of humans being, we are all welcome at God's table."**

Sandra Braun is a professor at Mount Royal University in Calgary



Redevelopment Photos



The windows of one of the "new" L'Arche houses



A view of the roof, looking West towards the park



The back of the building looking East



Looking North towards Metron from the roof

A Message From Tracey Executive Director/Community Leader

I am motivated by my belief in the vision and values of L'Arche. The changes and challenges of the year have not inspired and excited me. They have confirmed that I want to live my life within a L'Arche community and guide L'Arche Greater Vancouver toward new possibilities.

Despite the reality of COVID fatigue, we have continued to live our mission. The care that was given was full of heart and reminded me daily that L'Arche is like a family, no matter where we live and what is happening in the world around us. This year inspired me as I witnessed how people leaned into each other.

There was a willingness to collaborate, and everyone did what they could to help each other, as people in our homes were a priority. The compassion, care, and respect they extended to our Core Members was extraordinary. I am also inspired by the ways in which the Program Team, House Leaders, and Assistants advocated our external agencies for the health and well-being of our Core Members. We know that the advocacy role will continue to grow with the changing needs of our aging members.

All that was lived in this last year will assist us as we move forward. The possibilities are endless.

This excerpt is taken from Tracey's message in our 2021/2022 Annual Report. The complete report is available on our website www.larchevancouver.org/annual-reports/

Remembering Jim Watson

We were deeply saddened to learn that our friend, Jim Watson, passed away on November 17, 2022.

Although Jim joined L'Arche just seven months prior to his death it felt like he had been a member of the community for much longer. When he was interviewed for the role of Director of Development and Communications, Board President Jim Lattimer took note of his positive attitude and amazing energy. It was evident that Jim Watson was the right person for the job.

Jim had a tremendous gift for building connections. He was excited to introduce us to the people he knew from his years in fund development and broadcasting. He was equally excited to introduce himself to people who supported our mission and capital campaign.

We are grateful for all that Jim brought to our community. We miss his laughter, encouragement, wisdom, and warm presence.

Jim was looking forward to being present when we cut the ribbon of our new building in 2024. Even though he won't be there in person we believe he will be there in spirit. We are committed to continue the good work he started at L'Arche.



The Power of Fellowship

Community Prayer

During a sunny Wednesday afternoon at the South Burnaby location of Jubilee United Church, Vancouver, a prayer group gathers for an experience deeper than simple preaching. The small gathering of around 30 people would fool outside listeners as their triumphant singing fills the church. Songs and scripture are interwoven with discussion and conversation as the congregation encourages residents of L'Arche Greater Vancouver to participate in their celebratory worship.

The residents share their experiences of feeling alone, scared, and unsure of the future. They join together in prayer for a familiar face they fear they may never see again.

The residents read scripture; psalms of God's guidance and grace, and though they may stammer they know every ear in proximity is bent to listen to them. They know they are in a place they are respected, loved, and cared for. Through this, L'Arche residents learn that hardships are a part of life, but they are never alone in those struggles. As Psalm 23 is read, the community is reminded that they belong to a flock and that their shepherd cares for them.

As the mic is passed around and everyone offers their prayers, the passions of the residents of L'Arche Vancouver are showcased. Ilonka joyfully and beautifully sings her thanksgiving prayer for daily bread, and Erol asks that the Canucks would finally win the Stanley Cup. In this welcoming arena, people who felt silenced for their differences instead become alive. Free from the outside world that probes for the slightest fault, here they know who they are is all they need to be.

Living with difference and vulnerability is challenging, yet L'Arche demonstrates that when all people, including the most marginalized, take their place, society becomes more human – more colourful, welcoming, creative, compassionate, and joyful.

This is the power of fellowship.

Shafraz Ladack, a new friend of L'Arche, recently zoomed into our Community Prayer. These are his reflections on that visit.

Photo Gallery



Fairy, Christina and Claudio



Theresa and Linda at Burnaby Lake



Linda and Celine having fun at the Christmas Party



Philip with his new socks



Melina and her Christmas gift

Supporting Organizations

We gratefully acknowledge the following Organizations for their support from October 2022 to February 2023

Agape Catholic Charities
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Tributes

The following were honoured or remembered with a tribute gift to L'Arche

In Memory

Alphonse Alain	Evelyn Lattimer
Betty Allen	Jillian McIntosh
Leslie Atwell	Paul Mosca
Rev. Doug Graves	Gerry Staudacher
Thea Hoffman	Barry Craig Thomson
Angela Lant	Jim Watson

In Honour

Sue Allen
Philip Beeby
Melina Boote
Christina Bruce
Patrick Byron
Alanna Stadler
Christine Stadler
Linda Staudacher

WAYS TO SUPPORT L'ARCHE GREATER VANCOUVER

Mail: Mail your cheque to L'Arche in the postage paid envelope provided
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Charitable Registration No. 1376468671-RR0001



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