

L'Arche News

Spring 2025

CELEBRATING BELONGING

A New Home for Conrad

As Conrad's sister, I knew that we would have to work hard at finding a good place for Conrad to live. Initially, we planned for him to live in a suite in our house. This was a good plan up to a point, except that we are aging. My husband and I are older than Conrad, so the last thing we wanted to surround him with was seniors. The bigger issue was what would happen when we had to move into assisted living ourselves, or we died. We began to prepare Conrad for when we are no longer around.



We were elated when we were told he had been accepted into L'Arche's semi-independent living program. This was what he wanted, what he had dreamed of. L'Arche had been integral to his life for 34 years as he participated in their community inclusion programs. Now, he has his own place and is close to the community he has known for so long.

Conrad's suite is fully equipped with everything he needs. He has worked hard to learn the skills he needs to live independently. **Every chance he gets, he tells us how happy he is.**



He is his own person with responsibilities that he accepts with joy, knowing he is living the life he had dreamed of.

- His life.
- His choices.
- His responsibilities.
- His community.
- His dream.

L'Arche has created something amazing. Encompassing group homes where individuals who need more support live within a community geared to them. A semi-independent living program where people like my brother can live with support. There are housing options for people from all walks of life who want to live in an intentional community.

My brother is happy. He is safe. He is part of a community that he loves. He is living an intentional life within an intentional community where he is accepted for who he is. That is a dream that we never thought would be possible.

Dreams do come true.
Shelley Watson

A Board Member's Perspective

I work in systems—
governance, finance, tax—
but I never forget
that systems exist for people.

As a Chartered Director
and Chartered Accountant,
I've led in boardrooms
and across ledgers,
but the work I value most
is rooted in trust,
and clarity,
and care.

L'Arche first crossed my path
through quiet conversations.
What stayed with me
was not the scale
but the spirit—
a community shaped
by belonging.

In L'Arche,
people are not reduced
to roles, or needs,
but honoured as whole.
That resonates.

We lead better
when we live alongside.
We serve better
when we listen first.

The values I hold—
integrity, humility, shared
purpose—
are the values I see in L'Arche.

And when I step away from work,
you'll find me with family,
or following a trail,
grateful for space,
and for connection.

By Grant T. Smith,
L'Arche Greater Vancouver Board member

Meet L'Arche Greater Vancouver's "First Family"

Curtis, Bryn, Meadow, and Jovi were the first family to move into our new building. Curtis teaches music and band at a local Christian school. Bryn is on maternity leave from her role as Intervarsity's Campus Minister at Emily Carr University of Art and Design. Three-year-old Meadow likes going to the local library with her parents (Fancy Nancy books are her favourite) and enjoys watching the dogs at the park next door from their unit's window. Jovi recently celebrated his first birthday with friends and family on the rooftop amenity space.

They are eager to be involved with what's happening at L'Arche and keep watching the display board



The Vargas Family

near the elevator to see what's happening. That's where they learned about adopting one of the rooftop garden beds and are learning to grow things together. "My kids love digging in the dirt, checking on baby spiders in the corner of a planter, and inviting their friends to help water and plant."

Bryn and the kids look forward to their Monday afternoon visits to the Evergreen Café. Bryn gets to talk to other adults, and the kids get lots of attention. "Everyone thinks they're cute. They're little celebrities here." Bryn and Meadow have picked up their art supplies and will participate in L'Arche's "All Together Now" Art Show in June.



Meadow, Jovi, and Bryn

to talk to other adults, and the kids get lots of attention. "Everyone thinks they're cute. They're little celebrities here." Bryn and Meadow have picked up their art supplies and will participate in L'Arche's "All Together Now" Art Show in June.

Living in a Christian community is important to the family. They had previously lived in a community setting, but they needed a new home when the building owners changed. Bryn observes that living at L'Arche is significantly different. "This has a broader demographic. Our children are meeting people at different stages of life."



More from our Community

More Family Perspectives

“My daughter has attended the day program since 2022. She likes the activities. It is so good that she engages in different activities and events with the other participants. We are happy to hear her talk about her day. We feel content and reassured that she has a place where she can learn new skills and use the ones she knows and that she is safe.” – *Thuy’s mother*

“The program offers a social atmosphere where Claudio can interact with his peers safely and in a positive manner.” — *Sarah*



Personnel Changes

We are happy to welcome Umi, our new Office and Communications Assistant. You will find her at the front desk, answering phones and greeting people. Kuniko, who was previously in the front office, has taken on the new role of Administrative Operations Officer.



Words in Gratitude for the Life of Philip Beeby

October 26, 1963 – January 29, 2025

Philip lived a life that was full of love and joy. He gathered people into his orbit with his heart-warming smile and gentle, teasing nature.



He lived the past 36 years in a L’Arche home where he grew into his full potential. Philip was renowned for his “New news” announcements, and his heartfelt, inclusive (and sometimes long!) prayers for his entire family and many friends. He loved to tease; his laugh was wholehearted and infectious, and he loved unconditionally.

Denise, who would later become L’Arche’s Community leader, remembers meeting Philip in the 1980s when she and her family were weekly dinner guests at September House, Philip’s first L’Arche home. “Through the years, I repeatedly saw Philip draw young assistants out with his charming ways, often choosing the shy ones to cajole and focus his attention on. Slowly, they would become more at ease and blossom with his gentle humour and kibitzing.

“Philip lived an extraordinarily rich life with his family loving him and surrounding him every step of the way. His L’Arche family welcomed and loved him, encouraging his beautiful gifts to shine.” His friend and house leader, Celine, recognized that Philip knew how to make people feel special. “He had nicknames for people that took time and effort to make. He acknowledged us and taught us that love is not so complicated.”

Thank you, Philip, for blessing us with your love.

Supporting Organizations

We gratefully acknowledge the following Organizations for their support from November 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025

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Tributes

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

In Honour of

Christina Bruce
Jeff and Susan Cada

In Memory of

Philip Beeby	Ken Milne
Patrick Byron	Jack Mullen
Alice Clarkson	Delinda Perry
Gail	Gilbert Schaubroeck
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Add your name and address in the message box along with any special instructions

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