

Our Tamarack Day Program Re-opens!

By Dallas Frank (Day Program Leader)

At the height of the COVID-19 lockdown, one of the biggest challenges we faced was operating our Tamarack Day Program, especially with so many uncertainties with COVID-19. How could we adapt to our “new normal?” With all of the strict health regulations, we weren’t sure how continuing to provide Day Program in-person supports would be possible. Could we keep everyone safe even if we could implement all the new regulations in our cramped space?

However, it was apparent we needed to address the social isolation of our core members especially the ones who didn’t live in L’Arche homes. Even though we had transitioned our programming to Zoom with some in person support, it couldn’t replace meeting together with friends. “I missed everyone at L’Arche. I wanted to see my friends again. I like to come out. I don’t like to be stuck at home all day” said McKayla.

One of our greatest hurdles was the unanticipated expenses to our Day Program relaunch. But with help from our generous donors we were able to purchase thermometers, hand sanitizers, and individual supplies. The donor contributions also enabled us to once again take core members on fun and educational outings so that they are not stifled indoors all day.

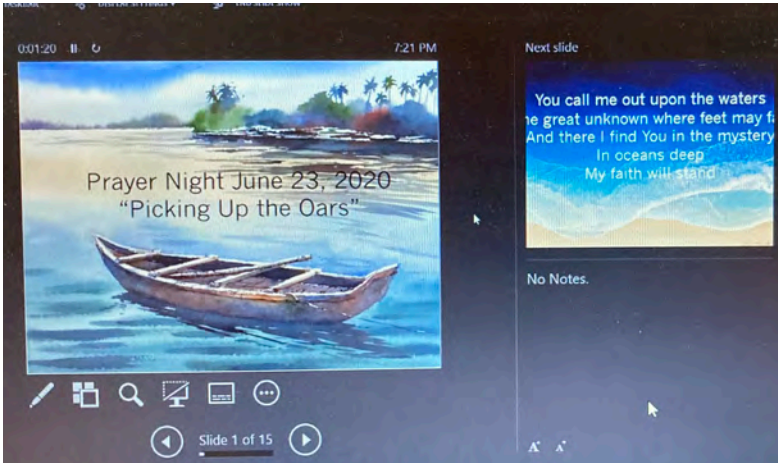
Since the reopening, the most positive impact is that core members are able to connect, stay active and share their creative gifts with the community.

We are happy to have you back, McKayla!



“I was so excited to hear my Day Program was open again! I’m so happy to see my friends again. I love doing arts and crafts. I love going on outings” ~ McKayla





Prayer Night via Zoom



Shula and Rachelle enjoying a socially distant visit

Living Community in COVID

By Ani Hynes (Director of Assistants and Formation)

Prior to the month of March, our L'Arche Calgary Community Life wasn't slowing down by any means. We were still gathering feedback from a busy, joyful, and festive Christmas Season. We were barely unpacking from our annual Winter Games, we were short weeks away from our Run for L'Arche event, and we were planning our Holy Week and Easter Celebration.

Then our L'Arche world as we once knew suddenly changed and no one was expecting what was to come. The lockdown overwhelmed us and affected our emotions, thoughts, and behaviors, but we quickly regrouped and transitioned to virtual settings by using Zoom and FaceTime.

Even though our Community Life gatherings are not the same as we have known, we have learned that there is a lot of goodness and grace in our Community. There is a divine power guiding us. As we are challenged by the realities of COVID-19 we are challenged to become more human - more open, forgiving, gentle, and compassionate – to live in community and in communion with each other. We love and care for one another and by just living this heartbreaking, soul-healing, sometimes unpleasant and yet ordinary life it has been a breathtakingly beautiful experience.

For the time being, our new "normal" is here to stay. But as we often speak in L'Arche "great things happen in small moments" and we still continue to witness those even in this strange new world. The L'Arche community prays that you live the fall season in the midst of many, many small moments of genuine kindness that will inspire you all year long.

Carmela's Life Calling

Throughout the pandemic, L'Arche Calgary has been fortunate to have dedicated assistants such as Carmela DiMaio. To Carmela, L'Arche is more than place of work, it is a second family to her.

Since joining L'Arche in January 2019, Carmela has never experienced a community quite like L'Arche. During her tenure, she has had great opportunity to be a volunteer, summer student and Day Program assistant. For her, though, L'Arche is more than a job, it is a life calling.

At the beginning of the lockdown, in order to ensure the safety for both our core members and assistants all in person activities in our Day Program space where Carmela worked were halted. So Carmela transitioned, first working in our Supported Independent Living Program, and then in our Kichiyak house.

Carmela saw first hand how the lockdown was negatively impacting the mental health of community members. She realized during this time of uncertainty how important it was to come together as a community to support one another in order to reduce the social isolation. For Carmela, despite her fears and worries, it was imperative for her to continue to support our core members and L'Arche community.

L'Arche Calgary is so grateful for Carmela's commitment - and that of all of our assistants - to our community these past months!





Save the Date!!!

Rogers Insurance Run for L'Arche:
March 27, 2021

ROGERS INSURANCE
RUN
FOR L'ARCHE

Ways to Support L'Arche Calgary

- Donate: financial contributions are much needed at this time. You can do so by cheque or credit card [HERE](#).
- Send or drop off cards, letters, craft kits, activities to our homes and SILP members. Address: L'Arche Calgary 307 57 Ave SW Calgary AB T2H 2T6
- Share your musical talent with our community! We host regular video gatherings and welcome people who would like to entertain us. Email Ani Hynes at ahynes@larchecalgary.org for more information.

Does Your Organization Match?

Many employers sponsor matching gift programs, and will match charitable contributions made by their employees. Now is a great time to find out if your employer provides a matching program in order to increase your contribution!
Contact Daudi if you have questions at (403)930-2263; dkawooya@larchecalgary.org



"Skip the Depot" [**Click Here**](#) to donate your bottles to L'Arche Calgary.



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