



NEWS FROM BENDIGO

February 2022

From the Editor



David Treanor has been the Leader of L'Arche Australia for the past ten years. In November of last year he decided to step down from the position and explore areas of interest both personally and professionally.

Fortunately David will stay on with L'Arche in some official capacity however such is his passion for the Mission and the L'Arche way of being he will always be a friend of L'Arche and a companion to those who are committed to living its values and ideals. David has been a regular visitor to Bendigo and a constant mentor over all of his time as National Leader. This has been the case most especially of late when he and Cindy have chosen to live in Bendigo and help guide us through this period of growth we are experiencing. This is incredibly generous and greatly appreciated.

It speaks strongly of David's total commitment to the service of others especially those in L'Arche communities trying to give witness and be authentic expressions of the ideals of L'Arche. David's deep spirituality, rich intellect and organisational capacity are well known to many of us. These have contributed greatly to the development of Bendigo. However it is his interactions with members that have given us most inspiration. He gives genuine witness to the importance of mutually transforming relationships in the warmth, love and outreach he extends. It is beautiful to watch the way our members respond so positively to him. David, we acknowledge the huge and selfless contribution you have made to L'Arche in this country. We are lucky to have had so much access to you in Bendigo. David will be with us until Easter so there is still time to catch up with him, enjoy his company and "pick his brain."

Jim Rolfe

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Reflection

It is roughly six weeks since my lovely Christmas spent on the coast, and today is warm, the sun is shining, and, I can see from my deck that people are travelling by foot or car....to do something! From my deck it looks as though life has returned to some semblance of normality. But, for many, life is anything but normal. Many families had members of their families unable to be present at Christmas celebrations because of Covid, and, as I write, a dear friend, a man in his 70's who has had his 3 jabs is very sick with Covid. So, 'Covid uncertainty' is as alive and well as the virus itself. How do we live with grace, kindness and dignity during this? I am clearly the wrong person to answer this. I am SO over Covid and its continuing restrictions and demands. I feel cheated, annoyed and even sad that I have not been able to see those I love – including my daughter and granddaughter at Christmas.

After watching the Australian of the Year Awards the other night, I turned off the television and said to myself, "Get over yourself, Angela. You are so very blessed". I watched as the Young Australian of the Year took the stage to accept his award. For readers who don't know Dr Daniel Nour has founded 'Streetside Medics', a growing organisation that takes health care to the streets. After working in a hospital in Sydney during the day, Daniel then takes his bus onto the streets where he and his volunteers provide health care to our homeless, to people who would otherwise not be able to receive the care to which you and I have access. He and his volunteers receive no pay. I listened to him the following day on the radio. He described himself as a Christian, and said, "My faith informs what I do and why I do it."

So, while I am sitting at home whingeing about the freedoms that have been curtailed because of Covid, he is volunteering his time until the wee hours of the morning to care for those who have never really experienced freedom. So, God bless Daniel and all those who work with him. And God bless us all, in our struggles to live with uncertainty. I am not sure that any of the above may make it any easier for us to be gracious, kind, courageous or fair in our journey, but perhaps it might put things in perspective.

Angela Allen
L'Arche
Spiritual Life Group

Board News

The Board met in Woodend for a planning day on Saturday January 22nd. It was wonderful to be together in person after such a long time. Thanks to John De Bono, a former board member, for his skillful facilitation of the day. The board now has a process for strategic planning. The immediate priorities are growth and financial sustainability. Planning for these and other areas for which the board has responsibility will be integrated into the community mandates.

Council News

The Community Council is yet to meet this year. Members are endeavouring to continue with the implementation of already established priorities. A very successful working bee to make way for the development of the memorial garden at Grandview Crescent was held on February 15th. We especially thank Toby Lennon, of Lennon's Tree Services, who gave so generously of his time and skill.

Information of Note

The Bendigo Community is currently engaging in a discernment process for the appointment of a Community Leader. This was recommended by the L'Arche International Membership Group last year when the community made application for Probationary status in the L'Arche tradition. A discernment team made up of Claire Lawlor, interim National Leader, Liz Stoltz, Community Council representative, Silke Carter, Community Leader- Mt. Tabor NZ and Jim Rolfe will oversee the process.

It was wonderful that the community had the opportunity to gather in person on the evening of Sunday February 20th. Thanks to Andy, Matt and Yvonne for hosting the occasion in the beautiful shade of their backyard. We took the opportunity to go through the Annual Report which highlights the many achievements and blessings of the year. This served as a means of reflection and complemented the beautiful liturgy which was prepared by the Spiritual Life Group. The updated mandate (2022-2026) was also circulated and explained. It was great to see Bishop Shane present who noted the many developments which have taken place in L'Arche.



Prayer Points

- For the people of Tonga as they re-establish their homes and way of life after the recent volcano.
- For Dylan Alcott during his year as Australian of the Year. May this be a time when there is positive advocacy for people with a disability.
- In thanksgiving for the many opportunities which become possible for the disabled through the NDIS.
- Vijo Varhese, Seena's cousin, who died suddenly in India aged 34 years.
- Those who we know that are unwell with Covid symptoms.

Member Profile & News

Hi there Matt here. As you are aware I am part of the L'Arche community here in Bendigo with Yvonne and Andrew. What you might not know is my life's journey before Bethany. I was born in September 1985 named Matthew Gerard Peter Considine, the fifth child of Brian and Maureen. I have two sisters and two brothers, Kara Aidan, Simon and Gemma. I also have four nieces and four nephews. I lived most of my life in Myers Flat, a semi rural area where my Grandmother and Auntie lived next door. I had a beagle called Snoopy who was always by my side and we got up to a lot of mischief together. I attended SDS, St. Liborius and Catholic College. My interests are horse riding, dance, music, films, and generally being cheeky and friendly with others. During that time I attended the Great Victorian Bike Ride and was also part of the Special Olympic Swimming Squad. I also participated in Horse Riding for the Disabled. My Mum died in 2006 and Dad remarried in 2015. Dad, Janine and I moved to Maiden Gully. Our new house has a pool and this is awesome, as I really love to swim.

Some twenty years ago my mum and Andrew's mum started on the L'Arche journey. In October 2020 my new home, Bethany, opened and Andrew, Yvonne and myself became housemates. I am very happy living at Bethany as it has become my new home and I enjoy the community that it provides. I am most thankful for all the people who have helped in making the dream come true.

Cheers,

Matthew



Assistant Profile

Hi,

My name is Cathy Peautagitama, and I am presently an assistant carer with L'Arche.

Regarding my background, my mother is originally from Italy and my father was born in Australia. I grew up in Shepparton, Victoria, the youngest of 6 children.

Today, I am a mother of 5 children, with two sets of twins included in that number. Becoming a Christian has shaped my life the most, as the journey of faith in Christ has brought clarity, hope and peace in a world that is crying out for these very things.

Becoming a mother of twins has also been a significant event in my life, and has shaped the way I look at motherhood, bringing insight and empathy in this space. The early years of motherhood were very busy and challenging to say the least, and today, I am grateful for the lessons learnt and experiences tucked away in my memory!



In terms of my hobbies and interests, I enjoy and value spending time with friends, which include many walks, coffee catchups and going out for a well-deserved meal together. Family is important to me, and time spent with them is highly valued and protected.

Walking and hiking are interests of mine and I would love the opportunity to do more of these activities.

I have been involved, working alongside people with disabilities now for nearly 25 years. I have thoroughly enjoyed working and supporting many over the years, in differing environments and with a diverse group of care workers. L'Arche has given me more experiences to enjoy and learn from.

Cathy

BIRTHDAYS

Birthday greetings to -

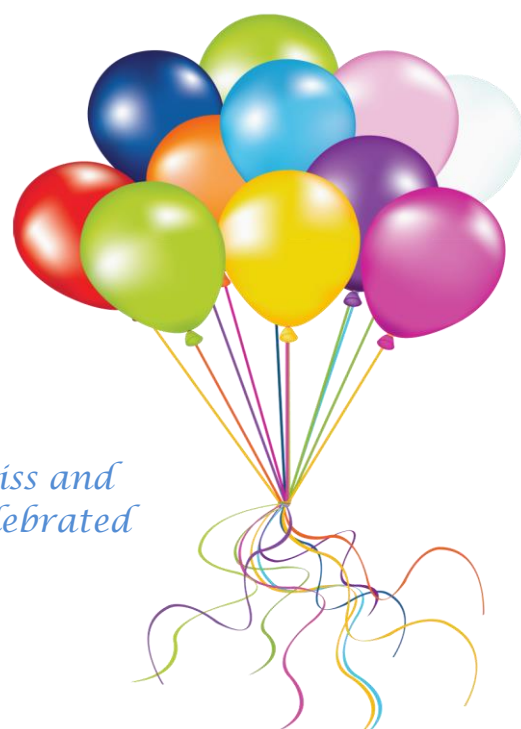
Andy Ransom 9th February

Mark Fiddlears 15th March

Isaac Fiddlears 19th March

Suren Perera 23rd March

*Special best wishes also to Jenny Feiss and
Lynda Wyles (Mary's Mum) who celebrated
birthdays recently.*



Congratulations

Best wishes and congratulations are also extended to Ray and Loretta Taylor – who recently celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary.

Ray is currently an Assistant at L'Arche.



Life at L'Arche Bendigo



Recent working bee at Grandview



A visit to Peppergreen Farm

Programs

Irasha and Damien



Seena and Yvonne arriving for Programs at Hesse



Pene and Simon



A Meal out to farewell Sandy



Ray, Matt and Pene

Mary and Sandy

Cindy and Yvonne

Andy with Von and Samantha



Donations

Donations to L'Arche are tax deductible and can be made directly the L'Arche Melbourne/Bendigo Bank Account

BSB: 633-000
Account: 152536827

L'Arche Identity

We are people with and without intellectual disabilities, sharing life in Communities belonging to an International Federation.

Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together.

We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognise our need of one another.

Mission

To make known the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities revealed through mutually transforming relationships.

To foster an environment in Community that responds to the changing needs of our members, whilst being faithful to the core values of our founding story.

To engage in our diverse cultures, working together toward a more human society.