



growth & **GRATITUDE**



**2021-2022
ANNUAL
REPORT**



hello from our BOARD PRESIDENT

We are thrilled to share with you the L'Arche Chicago Annual Report for fiscal year 2022! In this Report are both our “year in review” and efforts to inform you of some exciting things happening in our community. Thanks to your generous support, L'Arche Chicago continues to be a vibrant, strong, faith-based community for individuals with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Your support has afforded our community members safe, enriching, and nourishing opportunities this past year.

Henri Nouwen was a priest, theologian, and scholar who lived for many years in a L'Arche community. He wrote extensively about his experiences in L'Arche and the understandings that emerged from sharing life with the individuals there. He wrote extensively about the fact that each of us is “the Beloved” to God. We are chosen; each person is unique, important, and interrelated with others. Nouwen also wrote,

“ When we claim and constantly reclaim the truth of being the chosen ones, we soon discover within ourselves a deep desire to reveal to others their own chosenness. Instead of making us feel that we are better, more precious or valuable than others, our awareness of being chosen opens our eyes to the chosenness of others. That is the great joy of being chosen: the discovery that others are chosen as well. In the house of God there are many mansions. There is a place for everyone — a unique, special place. Once we deeply trust that we ourselves are precious in God’s eyes, we are able to recognize the preciousness of others and their unique place in God’s heart. ”

We realize and celebrate the chosenness of each of our community members. We value and embrace the unique gifts they offer to us and to the world. Further, your prayerful and financial generosity helps us reach our goal to create a new home for our core members. We have made significant strides toward a fourth home, in Oak Park, thereby increasing our potential to welcome four new core members. The new home, as yet to be named by the core members who will reside there, will be a place of safety, comfort, and joy. As our community grows and is strengthened by your generosity, the mission of L'Arche Chicago can be realized: to make known the gifts of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Given the challenges of the world and endemic COVID, the community has changed and stretched a bit. With both live-in and live-out assistants we are fully staffed. L'Arche Chicago has also welcomed three international assistants from Germany thus enriching the cultural lives in our homes with new friendships. Regardless of the changing times, the community remains resilient and strong while holding onto the things that matter in our lives. We celebrate individuals, whether it is their birthday, anniversary, a holiday, or "just" today. We connect and do things together — whether it is preparing or eating dinner, watching a movie, taking a walk, dancing to Barney, doing laundry, planning a weekend outing, or going on vacation together. We remember by telling stories and sharing memories as we sit around the dinner table, or on the deck in the warmth of late summer. We share daily life in all its mundane moments and in the extravagant events. Life in L'Arche is rich and filled with the goodness of "today".

Thanks to the leadership of Mic Altena, the Executive Director and Community Leader, and his most excellent team, the members of the L'Arche community remain healthy in body and in spirit. We are fortunate to be able to host in-person gatherings (e.g., our Golf Outing, the monthly Community Nights, the upcoming Benefits) — we will be sure to invite you to these important events!



John, Casey, & Noah
roasting hot dogs at Peace House.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are tremendously grateful for your support and presence in the L'Arche Chicago community. You make a tangible and welcomed impact in the daily lives of the core members, assistants, staff, and friends of the community. We have been, and are, a community built on the foundation of relationships between the members and those of you who are friends and supporters. We are truly grateful for you and your faithfulness to L'Arche Chicago. You are helping us transform lives. Thank you, thank you.

Kimberly Bryze

Kimberly Bryze, PhD, OTR/L
Board President



2021-2022 in photos



Top: Painting on Peace House's side porch. Bottom, left to right: Anders at our annual golf outing. Ylijah & David fishing at Columbus Park.



Left column, top to bottom: Peace House rocking shades together. Andrea & David in downtown Chicago. Casey with his parents at our golf outing.
Right column, top to bottom: Friendship House around Christmas time. Jean & Allie Dog at Friendship House. Noah & Elizabeth roasting hot dogs.



hello from our EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I recently spent a Saturday morning assembling a DIY home improvement system to eliminate a recurring water drainage issue I've been experiencing in my front yard. In the days prior, I drew up plans, took measurements, and re-worked the plan several times. I felt confident and prepared as I unboxed the system, but quickly found myself overwhelmed as my plans weren't coming together as I thought they would.

I sat outside my front steps, frantically flipping through the instruction manual over and over, as if my amateur hand drawn plans and measurements would suddenly make sense. I wanted clarity to quickly complete the project with ease. That of course didn't happen (*did I mention my "amateur" skill level?*). However, I stumbled on something that was perhaps better. It was a single line of text, tucked away at the bottom of a very complicated illustration of the system. It read simply, "The above diagram represents an ideal configuration, every application requires a certain degree of improvisation."

Perhaps you can guess where I'm going with this thought as I reflect back on our past year here at L'Arche Chicago. I'm certain you can relate, too, as each of us has been impacted in so many ways by the uncertainty and changes brought on by COVID-19. L'Arche Chicago simply cannot operate as we had before, so we must continually improvise to fully embrace and live our mission well.

While fatiguing at times, this new reality has also brought much new life as we tap into our creative energies, dream about new ways to accomplish our goals, feel freedom to think differently, and permission to not always get it right.

Above: Our office team putt-putting during their retreat.
Facing page: Our community during our annual foot washing.



What that looks like for us is a rapidly changing service provision landscape where more of the core members who we support are at home during the day instead of traditional day programs, an increase in mental health needs, new medical care routines, fewer live-in staff members, and continual direct care staff recruitment and hiring processes.

I couldn't be more excited about our team of staff members who are developing innovative ways to address these new realities, as well as the core members who are patiently teaching us how to best support them in this new climate.

We have grown and expanded significantly during this past year as we have restructured our leadership roles to make more space to focus on service provision (*adding a Director of Residential Services role*), articulate and advance our mission to a new generation of live-out Assistants (*adding a Director of Mission and Culture*), and support

the core members during the day with the very best community-integrated care (*adding a Day Support Coordinator role*).

This new structure will also build a strong foundation for our community as we embark on our biggest expansion to date with the addition of a new construction, ADA accessible home that is universally designed to meet the evolving needs of the core members who we support. All of this exciting work could not be accomplished without your investment in L'Arche Chicago.

Without you, we would not be able to create the life-changing opportunities that we do for the people who we support. We are forever grateful for your support of our work, however improvisational it may be!

Mic Altena | Executive Director & Community Leader



GROWING *together*

There is a giant fig bush that greets me every morning when I walk into the office. It is truly massive and has yet to produce figs, but I can see that they are growing. Honestly, I think it is a bit of an eyesore and has a faint smell to it. Growth can feel that way sometimes, uncertainty and awkwardness mixed with anticipation.

As summer begins to set, the rest of our garden is bursting with life, a mixture of Golden Rod and Russian Sage growing like the wildflowers they are. There are bees swarming, birds chirping, and every creature imaginable feeding from our plants. Currently, a cricket is climbing up my window.

To the untrained eye, this vibrant garden of ours can look tangled, overgrown, and chaotic. But looking closer you can see the richness and life that is contained inside. There is profound beauty in the numerous bees, collecting nutrients together. Outside my window is a vibrant ecosystem of plant life, blossoming in the summer sun.

Our L'Arche community also seems to be blossoming in the summer sun.

It has been an exciting year to be here, a part of L'Arche Chicago. I myself joined in January as the icy snow of COVID began to thaw and the community began to buzz again with new life. There is so much gratitude for the gift of gathering. We've been able to resume opening our doors to guests and new assistants and sending community members to L'Arche gatherings across the world and country. Just now, our office is currently filled with laughter — it's the sound of our new assistants and volunteers as they gather for training. It's the sound of newness, connection, and joy.

In the height of summer with abundance blooming everywhere, it's easy to forget the emptiness of winter or the painful stretching of spring growth. I find myself thankful for those who came before me at L'Arche and weathered the depths of COVID.

The assistants and core members who quarantined in homes faithfully, wearing masks endlessly; it is their compassionate care that has allowed us to be here today.

For donors who continued to faithfully give, even when tomorrow's reality felt unknown; their continued investment and belief in our mission propelled us forward.

I'm thankful for the house coordinators and leadership team who came before me. They thought creatively and pivoted a million times when things had to change again and again.

I'm thankful for the volunteers who joyfully dropped off meals to all the homes. It was the entire community's faithfulness throughout the winter that grew the roots that support us today.

And lastly, I am thankful for the growth that is currently taking place within our community. We're looking forward to gathering for an upcoming community-wide retreat where we will pray, discern, and dream about where we are headed and who we want to be as a community. Just like with the lush fig bush outside our front door that is working to produce its fruit, I know that today's labors will be tomorrow's sweetness.

I am grateful that we get to grow together.

Keli Miller

Keli Miller | Director of Mission & Culture



Facing page: Community members at the Lincoln Park Zoo. *Above:* Elbert checking out his beloved Harley motorcycle. *Below:* John at our golf outing.



thank you to OUR GENEROUS DONORS!

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Rachael & Jean
outside of Peace House.

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Karla & John during our spring party.

our financials

2021-2022

L'Arche Chicago's community life is centered around 3 communal homes (soon to be 4!) and 11 core members (persons with intellectual disabilities; soon to be 15!). In addition to lifelong homes, L'Arche provides professional support services and seeks ways for core members to be actively engaged in the civic, social, and spiritual life of the Chicago metropolitan area.

Income & Expenses

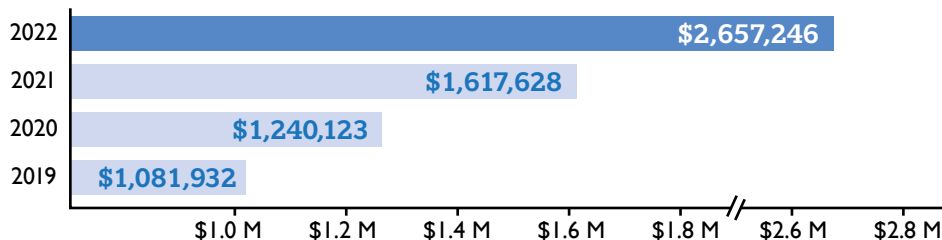


- Government Funding: **51%**
- Individual Contributions: **28%**
- Grants: **17%**
- Events: **4%**



- Program Services: **78%**
- Administrative: **17%**
- Fundraising: **5%**

Annual Income Trends

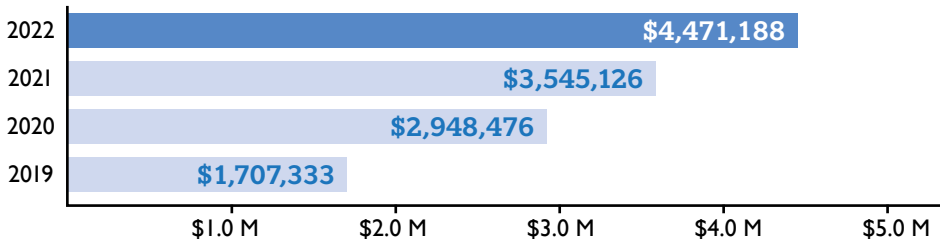


Capital Expenditures

In fiscal year 2022, L'Arche Chicago expended \$275,146 on fixed assets that included new land for a fourth home in Oak Park and several significant building upgrades.

L'Arche Chicago is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. (EIN 36-4030812)

Total Asset Trends



Assets		Liabilities	
Current	\$1,824,682	Current	\$41,586
Fixed	\$1,241,449	Mortgage Payable	\$231,935
Endowment	\$1,678,579	Total Liabilities	\$273,522
Total Assets	\$4,744,710	Net Assets	\$4,471,188



*we're so grateful
for your support!*

Ready to make a difference
in our community? Go to
LArcheChicago.com/donate
to make a secure donation.

Above: Casey & Noah on a train
at the Lincoln Park Zoo.

meet our leadership team

Staff

- ◆ Executive Director & Community Leader: Mic Altena
- ◆ Director of Care: Evangeline Smith
- ◆ Director of Mission & Culture: Keli Miller
- ◆ Director of Residential Services: Paul Kuczynski
- ◆ Director of Finance & Operations: Alex Holy
- ◆ Development Associate: Christianne Msall
- ◆ Development Director: Ryan Weseloh
- ◆ Day Support Coordinator: Andrea With
- ◆ Healthcare Coordinator: Sarah Reyes
- ◆ House Coordinators: Andrew Miller, Molly Townsend, & Karla Velasco

Board of Directors

- ◆ President: Kimberly Bryze
- ◆ Vice President: Becky Staley
- ◆ Treasurer: Jim Richards
- ◆ Secretary: Spencer Harpe
- ◆ Members-at-Large: John Biggs, Darius Bikulcius, Sarah Pelrine, Heather Rabchuk, Monika Robinson, & Tim Rylander

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come & SEE



L'Arche Chicago extends an invitation to *come and see* the extraordinary beauty of a community of faith that celebrates the gifts of each person, including those with developmental disabilities.

We are a community where people with and without developmental disabilities share life together in homes, as family. We strive to merge high quality care and mutual friendship, building a community where each person has a genuine place of belonging.

Our Chicago community joins over 150 L'Arche communities in 38 different countries around the world. We seek to be a sign of hope, revealing the truth that all people, including those with disabilities, have gifts to share — gifts that we need to receive.

From top: Chris behind the wheel of his favorite car. Jean swimming at the YMCA.