



Update from Jennifer Lucking November 2021

Dear Friends,

My heart is filled with joy as I write to you after my year-long maternity leave. I return feeling renewed (though not entirely well-rested due to a baby who still refuses to sleep through the night!) and ready to continue supporting survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation through my position with Restorations. As I greet you today, I am getting a glimpse of the eagerness with which Paul and Timothy wrote, “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God every time I remember you.” (Philippians 1:2-3)



My last letter to you was around this time last year. Malcolm had just been born and I was adjusting to life with a newborn. With Ontario going into COVID-19 lockdown two more times during my maternity leave, I was thankful to be home so I could care for the kids and facilitate Amy’s online schooling while Mark continued to work at the college where he teaches. While he typically teaches a couple of days during the week, at the beginning of my maternity leave Mark was offered a temporary full-time position. That impacted my decision to extend my maternity leave from May to the full year available to me. Mark finished his full-time contract in July, so we had some great family time in August. In September, Mark and Amy both returned to school in person—Mark teaching two days a week and Amy entering grade three. Malcolm and I lived out the rest of my leave with our schedules revolving around his naps and walks around the neighbourhood. I returned to

Restorations at the end of October, and Malcolm has been enjoying his days with Daddy three days a week and then with his grandparents two days a week.

General Synod occurred during my last week of maternity leave, so I spent a lot of time live streaming the plenaries. I was so encouraged to hear all the support for ministry, Global Mission, and missionaries! Seeing updates from different ministries around the world and hearing JP Sundararajan’s report made me excited to return to my ministry work. Watching General Synod was a reminder that Restorations goes beyond the geographical region in which we conduct most of our work—our team of supporters and encouragers is far-reaching across the world.

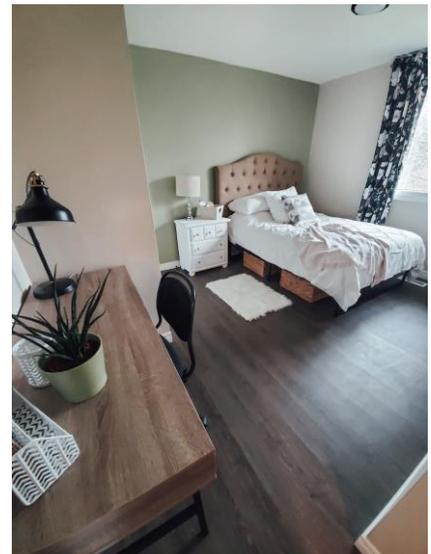
I was so encouraged to return to Restorations and witness all the ways this organization has grown over the last year. In my last report, I mentioned that Restorations had hired a Peer Support Facilitator and that this was one of the most important actions Restorations had taken to date. Since then, our Peer Support team has grown to two people supporting survivors across Canada. The Survivor-Led Peer Programming at Restorations Canada is a space that has been designed by survivors, for survivors of human trafficking and exploitation. It exists to promote collaborative relationships that empower survivors. Within a day of being back, I heard of the ways

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that Peer Advocates were supporting survivors remotely through activities like online drop-in groups and one-on-one virtual connections and in-person like our advocate who dropped off a winter coat for a survivor in need or visited a survivor who has been recovering in the hospital after a drastic incident or needed advocacy at the bank. Our Peer Support program provides direct support to survivors while we continue to work hard at opening our residential program.

Before my leave, I was working primarily from my home since the Restorations home was not yet completed with furnishings or internet. Now, as I go to "Nancy's House" (*the name we have given to the house in honour of our founding Board Chair and to give hope to the fact that we do not want to stop at just one home!*) to work alongside other staff, I am so eager to welcome our first residents. We are still working to open our doors, but I am hopeful that it will be very soon. I returned to Restorations with a waitlist of applicants for the home and have already fielded more interest and referrals. The need is great, and the options are few for survivors looking for housing that will support them through overcoming trauma.

I have been asked many times, "why isn't your house open yet?" This is a very valid question! We have been very intentional at making sure we are setting the foundations of the home to provide the best support possible for residents and not re-harm them. We are there—we have had incredible input from survivors, service providers, and other community partners. We have a house that is safe and secure (and beautiful!). Now it simply comes down to funding. Part of the complexity of this work is explaining to our supporters the intricacies of coming alongside people who have endured horrific trauma. "But there are only three people in the house," one might say when looking at our comprehensive staffing model. Yes, but how can we best support residents who are easily triggered, fearful for their lives, suffer from insomnia, or cope with mental health concerns? Our residents will require extensive support from skilled staff, and right now we are working to secure funding for a Program Manager before we can officially open doors.



I would like to thank Fiorella Kuczma for her incredible leadership during my absence. I am grateful for the way she has led Restorations through growth and challenges. She is returning to a job she held before this role (and took leave from to help Restorations through my absence! Talk about dedication!), but she leaves Restorations with her imprint!

As 2021 comes to an end soon, I look forward to seeing what 2022 will bring and providing updates!

PRAYER

- Thanksgiving for Fiorella, our outgoing Interim Executive Director.
- Thanksgiving for the precious time I was able to have with my family over the last year.
- That funding is found for a Program Manager so that we can *finally* open our home's doors.
- For our growing Peer Support program, for the Peer Support staff, and the survivors they support.
- For victims and survivors of human trafficking around the world, beloved by our Creator, that they experience hope, flourishing, and peace.

Jennifer & family