



L'ARCHE®
london

Connection

Fall 2022

25
YEARS

*Celebrating 25 Years of
Friendship & Inclusivity*

1997–2022

Mission Statement

"We are people with and without intellectual disabilities, sharing life in community... we celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need of one another. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together."

MARIETTA AND KATIE'S MESSAGE

Katie and Marietta



Katie Mennill
Board Chair



Marietta Drost
Community Leader

At a recent Thursday afternoon Drum Circle, the drummers called out how they felt after an hour of drumming together. "Awesome!" "Energized." "Great!" "Relaxed." "Connected!" were a few of the words called out among the drum's beats. The drumming circle is a place where people are meeting at the L'Arche London Gathering Place once again – and it feels great! You are welcome too!

This issue of Connections shares the recent stories of our community. In the midst of so many challenges in our world, we have had precious moments to celebrate. At the heart of our celebration in 2022 has been the 25th Anniversary of L'Arche London. On the cover of this Newsletter you will see many pictures from "Walk With Each Other! On September 24th we celebrated our Anniversary - it was truly a joy to walk with each other again! Inside, are pictures of people who have led our community throughout our 25 years, and we share an appreciation for the Volunteers who have received provincial awards in recognition of their volunteerism at L'Arche in 2022. We have news to share about the Summer Independence Camp, the gradual re-opening of Day Participation opportunities for people, we share about Martha's Retreat, our new Community Garden (2022!) and some memories from the McGeough's, a founding family of L'Arche London.

As this special Anniversary Year comes to completion, we look to the future with hope. Please mark your calendars for the February 24th L'Arche London Gala, that will be online – we will love to meet with you on that evening! We are deeply grateful for your prayers and support, and we ask that you consider making a donation towards the vibrant programs of L'Arche London. Your support is essential to the ongoing impact L'Arche London's programs are having for the people in London. These are places of encounter, belonging and learning, a source of joy and community connections to many people.

On behalf of all your friends at L'Arche London, we wish you and yours many blessings!

ANN'S MOVE



In June of this year, Ann Ramundo joined the Westminster College Foundation as the Foundation's new Executive Director. Prior to this, Ann served L'Arche London for 13 years in a number of roles including Assistants Coordinator, Assistant Community Leader, and Director of Development. Ann served the people of our community with deep care, skill and wisdom. While we miss Ann in the day-to-day work of our community, we are very happy for her as she engages the exciting work of the Westminster College Foundation here in our City.

L'ARCHE LONDON'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY "WALK WITH EACH OTHER!"

Terryl Campbell

We were thrilled to gather again to celebrate L'Arche London's 25th Anniversary and our 5th annual walk a thon "Walk with Each Other!" on September 24. Our celebration was a great success with many friends from across the city and beyond joining us to walk. We had the opportunity to walk on our beautiful grounds and through the Gathering Place building as we shared stories, memories, music, games and food with our friends. In a time of worship, we reflected on the parable of the Sower. What a beautiful day it was to be with community friends from the past and many new ones too. There are many people we would like to thank for making this day so special – our volunteers, sponsors, our committee and of course everyone who supported us by coming to walk with us and generously donating to our event. We are happy to announce that we surpassed our goal of \$25,000!!

Thank You!



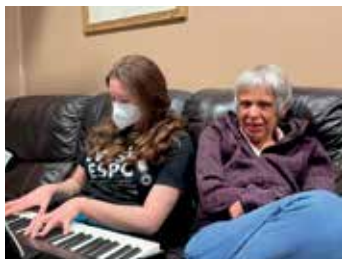
L'Arche London extends it's sincere gratitude to Remark Fresh Markets for the tremendous support of this year's Walkathon. All the event participants enjoyed the delicious food and snacks which was all graciously donated by Remark. Again thank you to Remark for being a big part towards making this year's Walkathon a huge success!

MARTHA'S RETREAT WALK WITH ME

—Aoife Pucchio—



Shortly after we first met, Martha grabbed my hand and invited me to go on a walk with her outside. I have since come to appreciate her remarkable gift of connection and how she joins hands and invites people to walk with her. This year, I embarked on a new walk with Martha to help her lead her third retreat.



Martha is deeply connected to her faith and shows true joy when she shares it with others. It is Martha's special gifts of leadership and connection that brought 50 members of community together on June 25th to attend her retreat "Walk with Me". It was a morning of reflection, prayer and music, and ended with a guided meditation walk.



It was a privilege to assist Martha in leading this retreat. I witnessed how beautiful it is when communities gather, each person with their own gifts, to build connection and share faith. The Walk With Me retreat symbolized all of the walks we take throughout our lifetimes and all of the people who reach out their hand and invite us to walk beside them and share in this journey of life. Thank you Martha, for sharing your powerful gifts and inviting your friends to walk with you – both at these special retreats and every day.

WALKING WITH L'ARCHE LONDON FOR 25 + YEARS

—Jim and Colleen McGeough—



We've been so pleased to be part of the L'Arche community for much of its local London, Ontario history. Both of us were introduced to L'Arche by our parents, Vince and Carole McGeough, who were incredibly passionate about the organization during

their lives. With L'Arche, we've found friends, support, new and enriching artistic pursuits, and a network of wonderful and caring people. It has been awe-inspiring to witness how the community has grown over the years and how it has expanded its ability to touch peoples' hearts and lives. To understand how the community has grown, one has only to attend any one of the numerous events or programs that L'Arche delivers and to bask in the love, inclusion, and unconditional acceptance that L'Arche offers. For L'Arche's 25th year, we'd like to extend our deep gratitude as well as our warmest wishes for many more silver anniversaries to come.

L'ARCHE LONDON ATTENDS WESTERN UNIVERSITY'S O-SERVES EVENT

—Jennifer Topfer—



On September 10, we were invited to Western University's O-Serves event on campus to share about L'Arche London's Volunteer opportunities and to talk about life in community. We were joined by over 50 first year music students at London Hall. During our time together we gave the students a first-hand experience about how music impacts our lives at L'Arche on a daily basis. Laurel, Jim & Caroline shared their musical talents with the students in an Open Mic & Drumming Circle session, while Melissa tempted their taste buds with some treats from the Bonjour Cafe. It was a beautiful time creating music together & sharing our stories. It was an incredible experience to spend time with these talented young musicians and to share about our life in L'Arche.

COVENANT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL'S 3rd GRADE CLASS AND L'ARCHE LONDON'S NEW COMMUNITY GARDEN

By Ms. Mulder, Teacher



DRUMMING CIRCLE

When:

Every Thursday, 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Where:

The L'Arche London Gathering
Place

Who:

Everyone is welcome!

Contribution:

\$5.00 each Drumming Circle

Circle Leader:

Laurel M.

What people are saying:

"Awesome!"; "Relaxing"; "Fun!";
"Friends"; "Energizing!"



This past spring L'Arche London warmly welcomed the Grade 3 students of Covenant Christian School to participate in their Community Garden. Through the work of many volunteers and staff members, a beautiful garden was created, which allowed the curriculum to come alive. Students excitedly weeded and watered their plants that were grown from seed. However, even with this care, students discovered that there are many elements that can affect the life of

a plant: resulting in the loss of some plants. Thanks to our fellow gardeners for watering our plants during the summer and allowing our students to return to an abundance of vegetables that were shared with our families and the Food Bank. Now with the colder weather, the time has come for us to clean up and hang up our gardening gloves until next year. Thanks to L'Arche for this amazing learning opportunity!!!

GARRY'S AWARD

On September 27, 2022 at Queen's Park in Toronto, Garry Dodman received the Ontario June Callwood Award for Outstanding Achievement in Volunteerism. Garry was nominated to receive this special award for his dedicated and dynamic service in our L'Arche London Community. Congratulations Garry!

CONGRATULATIONS



Garry Dodman

JUNE CALLWOOD OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
FOR VOLUNTARISM

L'ARCHE LONDON ONTARIO

THREE COMMUNITY LEADERS



It was a wonderful day when Claire Trahan visited L'Arche London. A picture was taken of the three people who have led our community these 25 years – a lovely picture of Claire, Toinette Parisio, and Marietta Drost.

BOARD MEMBERS

1997 – 2022



We are grateful for the people that have Chaired our Board of Directors throughout the 25-year history of L'Arche London. David McKane, Pauline Trudell, Charles Spina, Tony Parisio, Dr. Phil Vandewalle, Katie Mennill, Sister Theresa Mahoney, Tony Parisio, Garry Dodman, and John Reitschlin, your faithful leadership and service, along with all the Directors of our Board throughout these 25 years, has been at the heart of our healthy and vibrant community.

ONTARIO VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS 2022

Jennifer Topfer

This year we had the opportunity to honor some of our volunteers in a special way. We nominated Father Tom Donohue (25 Years), Sister Theresa Mahoney (25 Years), Connie Sylvain (20 Years), John Wells (20 Years), David McKane (15 Years) and Greg De Sousa (10 Years) for an Ontario Service Award. This award recognizes volunteers for providing committed and dedicated services to an organization. We thank these volunteers for their spirit, energy, and commitment. They continue to make a huge difference in our community life. Please join me in congratulating these amazing volunteers for their support, love & long years of commitment. We are excited to continue this new tradition in the years to come.



ONTARIO VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Awards

ENGAGING L'ARCHE LONDON'S DAY PROGRAMS

By Dan G.



L'Arche is always fun. I meet lots of new people. We enjoy making things, drama, art and hanging out with our friends. Everyone is cool. All the helpers are nice. It is a caring place and everyone is thoughtful. The instructors make programs fun.

**IS LEAVING A GIFT
IN YOUR WILL FOR YOU?**



L'Arche London has partnered with Will Power, a national movement encouraging Canadians to think differently about charitable giving, and support the causes they care about through a gift in their Wills.

Did you know that by leaving a gift in your Will you can make a large and lasting contribution to L'Arche London and still support your loved ones in the future?

Learn how you can turn your Will into a powerful tool for change at

<https://www.willpower.ca/charities/larche-london-ontario>

INDEPENDENCE SUMMER CAMP

By Eliza McClelland



Over the summer, L'Arche London hosted Independence Summer Camp, which was designed for youth transitioning from highschool to adult life. Camp introduced and/or strengthened many life skills and offered opportunities for community building and recreation. At camp, we learned about financial literacy, laundry, mindfulness, active listening and communication, sewing, cooking, baking, creating resumes, taking the bus, and grocery shopping. We also had lots of fun doing our scavenger hunts, fitness classes, dance parties, crafts, karaoke, jeopardy, running our very own car wash and on our field trips to White Oaks Mall and to Port Stanley Beach. We met twenty wonderful

campers, many amazing volunteers and several incredible workshop leaders.

This camp was a testament to our strong community – we were surrounded daily by bountiful support. So many assistants stepped in to support camp throughout the summer, from offering rides, and leading workshops, to supporting day-to-day camp life. We felt so blessed by this fantastic community!

When I reflect on my favourite camp memories, I think of the tears - campers' tears shed at the end of sessions and among camp staff – of joy and pride. I know these tears mean that this camp was a special thing that meant something to many people – and for that, I am grateful.

26th Anniversary Gala



Building on a very successful 2022 event, the 2023 Annual Gala promises to be a great online event. Mark **FRIDAY FEBRUARY 24th, 2023** on your calendars to enjoy a memorable evening of friendship and inclusivity for everyone to enjoy.

Look for exciting details to follow.



capital colour

L'Arche London extends its sincere appreciation to our friends at Capital Colour for the overall production of this newsletter.

L'Arche London Needs YOU!

I would like to help the L'Arche London Community build a stronger future by making a tax-deductible gift. Charitable registration #89183 5241 RR0001

My personal cheque is enclosed for

\$ _____

or donating **online at www.larchelondon.ca with a credit card.**

Please direct my funds to:

☐ Gathering Place ☐ Operations/Homes ☐ Day Programming

Please make the receipt to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Country: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for your generosity

Please mail this form to our office or contact us online at **admin@larchelondon.org**

I want to do more! **Please enroll me as a Friend of L'Arche London with a monthly gift of:**

\$ _____/month.

Please send information on:

☐ Becoming a Volunteer

☐ Attending a worship service

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2022 Fall