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GREATER
WASHINGTON, D.C.

HOME *matters*

BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF FAITH AND
LIFELONG HOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH AND
WITHOUT INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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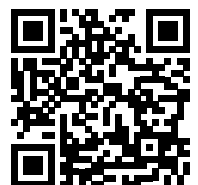
Join Us at Our Open House

Drop by either in D.C. or Virginia for one of our favorite annual traditions!
Bring a friend and join us outside, where we will be reconnecting over some snacks
and drinks. If the weather doesn't cooperate, we'll move to Zoom.

JOIN US ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH

IN D.C.: 12 NOON– 2 PM, IN VA: 2–4 PM

RSVP here for the address: www.larche-gwdc.org/openhouse/
Or give us a call at: 202-232-4539



Summer Fun at Bull Run



Left and right: Mike, Joseph, and Charles enjoy lunch at our annual visit to Bull Run park!
Center: Hazel and Molly got ice cream from the ice cream truck in honor of Andrew, a L'Arche core member who passed away last year.

6th Street House vacation



From left to right: Francene enjoys the woods; Laurie and Bruce fishing during vacation; Bruce and James grill out!

Charles is confirmed!

Charles recently celebrated his confirmation in the Roman Catholic Church! Charles is a core family member at L'Arche and a dedicated leader in our community. He often works to recruit people to come to L'Arche and also supports our board.

Charles was interested in being confirmed because his ancestors came from Rome and he himself was born Roman Catholic. Being confirmed was a good experience for him and he looks forward to growing his involvement in his faith community.

Charles' faith means a lot to him and specifically "believing in Jesus and the Virgin Mary." "I always say Hail Mary," he said.

L'Arche also means a lot to Charles and it especially means that "I have the freedom to do anything I want to."



From top to bottom:

Father Tim Hickey from Our Lady Queen of Peace with Charles.

Bob Finke, friend of Charles and Our Lady Queen of Peace parishioner, and Father Hickey pose with Charles!

6th Street House and friends gathered for the celebration.





Community Art

Art is a huge part of our lives here at L'Arche GWDC! Many of our community members are fantastic artists, who use their art for expression, income, or fundraising.

Above: James Dunmore, former assistant in our Virginia homes, captured the vibrance and fun of our houses in his colorful piece!

Right: Beth Zgoda, long time friend of L'Arche and now our Quality Assurance Manager, created this piece of our brother Andrew shaking Debora's hand. We miss Andrew and the way he connected us.

Below: Johnny held an art show to raise money for people experiencing homelessness. Johnny and Meredith speak to the crowd.



Above: Eileen auctioned off her piece on DC Statehood! Some of the proceeds go to Art Enables, the art program many core members attend.

Left: Maryanne shows off her new Johnny original!



A Visit From Our National Leader

Tina Bovermann, the National Leader and Executive Director of L'Arche USA, came for a visit to GWDC! Accompanied by Matt Hackworth, L'Arche USA Director Of Development & Communications, Tina spent time listening and sharing at Highland House. What was going to be a backyard gathering moved inside due to rain but as always, we adapted! Folks squeezed onto the stairwell and into corners and others joined on Zoom. We're grateful for the leadership Tina has provided during these challenging few years.

Witnessing Lives Changed

We caught up with Lisa and Mac Cosgrove-Davies, longtime friends and supporters of L'Arche GWDC, to ask a few questions!

What brought you to L'Arche GWDC?

We were part of the 8th Day Community, oh so long ago, when Dennis Calderone and others were working to establish a L'Arche community in DC. The first core members, Mo, Michael, Gene and Glen, all became part of our 8th Day Community.

What motivates you to stay connected to L'Arche?

The relationships and the mission and the fun people!

Why do you support L'Arche?

We support the mission of identifying gifts in people with and without intellectual disabilities, and we believe that L'Arche does a superb job at fulfilling its mission. We have witnessed lives changed by L'Arche.



If you want to become a supporter of L'Arche GWDC, find out how on our website www.larche-gwdc.org or give us a call at 202-232-4539

Looking for an adventure in community living that will help you discover the depths of the human spirit? Or do you know someone who is?

Apply to become an assistant at L'Arche GWDC where you'll provide professional, personalized services to adults who have intellectual disabilities! Or send this opportunity along to friends, family, or neighbors.

Become an assistant!



Apply online:



"I spent two very meaningful and formative years with my L'Arche family...I continued on through grad school and landed in public service. As I think about my path since L'Arche, it is not hard to see how my growth was shaped while I lived in the community. I gained some much-needed relational tools that have served me very well in the professional world..."

- Megan Hrdlicka, Former Assistant



Ontario House, Euclid House, and other DC community members gathered to share their thoughts for the mandate

Dreaming Together – Forming Our New Mandate

“Mandates help put words and images to what we dream of together for our community.”

So explains the presentation that introduced the mandate process to GWDC late last year.

We have spent the last several months as a community discerning what those dreams are. We asked ourselves - what are our challenges? Joys? Hopes? Through in person gatherings and online surveys we shared our answers. We talked about the difficulties of life during COVID, of what we hope to return to. We dreamed big about possibilities for the future and what daily life could be.

The Discernment Team – a group of L’Arche community members – has been hard at work pulling those answers together and putting out a draft mandate for the community to provide feedback on.

“This process is a tradition across the world in L’Arche communities – even L’Arche USA and L’Arche International go through it!” explains Stasya Erickson, current L’Arche USA Manager of Community Support & Learning for GWDC.

“Why? There are easier ways to develop goals for an organization – but those ways aren’t inclusive of the people they impact the most. The fact that mandate processes listen to ALL people in a community (not simply those holding leadership positions such as the Community Leader, Board of Directors, or Leadership team) in order to determine a direction forward is counter-cultural and essential to who L’Arche is. And

what I love most about this process is that it builds from the ground up – informed by assistants and core members and leadership team members, and board members, and friends of community, all together – and then held by the community. It’s a recurring opportunity for us to become who we say we are, to foster environments that meet the changing needs of our people, ultimately working to create a society that becomes more and more human.”

Stasya has been supporting the GWDC mandate process along with Tom Murphy, another member of the L’Arche USA team that supports our community.

L’Arche believes in a way of mutuality and interdependence, working together toward a better future for us all. The mandate process is a beautiful picture of what that means for our life together! Look out for our new mandate coming soon!

Quick definitions

Mandate: A document that communicates the goals of a L’Arche community for the next 4-6 years.



Discernment: A process L’Arche uses to listen, understand, and decide what to do.

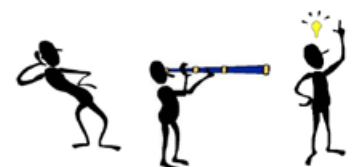


Photo Album

2021-2022



Eileen and Abigail hand Joseph a card for his birthday celebration this past winter!



Luke Smith Community Leader|Executive Director with Fritz and Father Tim Malone, one of our board members.



Johnny and Eric at the annual Board Picnic.



Hazel, Eric, Liddy, Kelly, and Eva-Elizabeth had a blast at the wedding of Lauren and Gerhard, friends of the community and former assistants and leaders!





Fritz and Alice enjoy the Arlington County Fair!



Debora hanging out at Johnny's art show!



Summer volunteers, Grace and Juliana! We love our summer volunteers and appreciate the energy and efforts they share with us.



Fritz and John take a boat out on the water during vacation.



Highlanders went to the beach near Annapolis on a day trip!

The Grace Of Recognizing Interconnectedness

Luke Olsen came to L'Arche as a Jesuit Novice for seven weeks, serving from mid-March to May. Luke had spent a few years in other intentional communities of people with and without intellectual disabilities and was excited to be assigned to L'Arche. He came in with "a decent amount of confidence based on my experience" but soon found a lot to learn and experience at L'Arche.

One of the things that struck him the most about L'Arche was the part in our mission statement about "working together toward a more human society."

"For me, the uniqueness of L'Arche is actually a part of this imagining a human society," he explained. "I think it's easy for me to think 'oh, L'Arche is wonderful, but it's so different then the way the real world is', but then thinking over the course of the months that I was there, I believe L'Arche is telling you something about the way the real world really is, about mutuality and acceptance and equality, everything that we share with each other."

One of the joys of being at L'Arche for Luke was "getting to experience what I would say is part of L'Arche's mission and understanding of itself. Which is not just being about, taking care of whoever happens to be in our home or even welcoming people, which is admirable and great. But beyond that, it's actually about making a claim about who people are and what the world really is. And that is just incredible."

At L'Arche, we live out the beliefs that build a more human society. As Luke explains, many people believe "that people have significance, they should be valued and loved. But I think L'Arche takes that a step further, and says if these things are true, what kind of life would we have? And in a place like L'Arche that looks like taking really concrete actions that cost something, that involve us in caring for

those and not caring in a paternalistic way, but experiencing life with mutuality with our friends with IDD, who unfortunately, are often not seen, as you know, for the truth of what they are. What we are, right, we all are."

"L'Arche reveals something that is already true about us, which is that we are all of us different and at the same time, importantly, all very much the same. It's one thing to say those things, or even to believe those things are true. It's another to change your life in order to reflect that. And what I really admire about every person involved in L'Arche is that there's a commitment to live as if these things that we say are true, are in fact, true."

While at L'Arche, Luke helped out in many different ways from cleaning closets to cooking breakfast. He made pancakes a few times and Johnny (a core member in Ontario) began asking for pancakes every day. "I remember thinking somebody should stop this," laughed Luke. "Somebody should stop this because Johnny is really attached to pancakes in the morning. You know, we love our routine at L'Arche and this is becoming a routine, I'm going to leave and what's gonna happen then?" Luke said he tends toward efficiency and strategy in his own life "and at L'Arche often there was this gentle kind of push back to that." Why not make pancakes for Johnny if it makes his day better, as long as we're able to?

Luke found himself watching *Gilmore Girls* in the evening with core members, organizing cleaning supplies, and grappling with completing tasks in an atmosphere not necessarily of efficiency but of mutuality. He called it "the grace of recognizing this interconnectedness." "It's movement for me from, maybe, perfection or like confidence, like 'I can just do this job. Let's just get it done and do the next job' to this place of working in and with the community. But also recognizing that the community life is so much more than tasks that have to get done."

Having ended his time at L'Arche back in May, Luke carries with him new found pancake making skills as well as the memories of living out the mission of a more human society at Ontario House.



Luke with Debora and Eileen at Ontario House



Kelly's Word Find

Every day Kelly enjoys a Word Find. Try your hand at finding the words in this one!

R	Y	J	M	F	A	I	T	H	S	G	A	P	J	Y	S	C	P
B	R	A	V	M	K	E	V	X	Q	Y	F	Z	M	G	F	Z	G
G	Y	W	F	U	P	W	G	K	C	J	R	T	P	T	R	B	F
I	I	A	T	D	A	N	C	E	I	N	T	J	P	Y	I	E	T
G	S	N	T	P	W	B	Z	E	X	F	Q	L	A	Z	E	L	A
L	I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M	E	A	L	I	R	T	N	O	Q
R	B	H	L	Z	G	V	V	P	F	J	W	G	T	X	D	N	Q
F	G	N	M	C	C	C	O	Y	U	B	D	H	Y	F	S	G	Y
C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	Y	T	V	T	H	I	I
P	D	I	O	Q	Z	R	F	W	U	S	H	O	M	E	I	N	H
I	N	T	E	R	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	E	P	G	L
I	H	R	Y	R	T	U	O	D	C	C	R	B	Y	Q	H	W	C

Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘.

BELONGING
CELEBRATION
DANCE
FAITH

FRIENDSHIP
HOME
ICE CREAM
INTERDEPENDENCE

LIGHT
PARTY



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Connect with us!

You're invited to connect with our Friendship Builder, Eileen! Want to get to know us better or have a question or idea to share? **Visit us online at www.larche-gwdc.org**
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- Through the **Amazon Smile** program, Amazon will donate a portion of your Amazon purchases to us!
- **Donate your vehicle** to L'Arche through our partners at Melwood.

If you have a smartphone, you can use the QR code to access these opportunities!



You can also email or call us!

*Newsletter content written
by Mary Ellen Dingley.*