

L'Arche GWDC Mandate 2023-2028

As the L'Arche Greater Washington D.C. community, we begin the shared work of our **2023-2028 Community Mandate** with renewed commitment to care for one another, to tend to the spaces we share together, and to pursue sustainable growth that nurtures and feeds our community.

This work finds roots in our mission and the rich spiritual life of our community. It is also set within our tentative yet eager emergence from the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. We have strong roots that have grown stronger even in the difficult time of keeping each other safe. This foundation needs continued tending. We have also made progress towards key parts of our previous mandate, such as responding to the needs of aging core members, building a successful executive leadership team, achieving financial sustainability, and ensuring the thriving and happiness of our core members. The new mandate calls us to build on our successes to date while prioritizing our internal needs. It calls us to strengthen relationships and structures within our homes and community that have been frayed by the pandemic. It calls us to cultivate relationships with new and old friends. And it calls us to imagine new, purposeful, and innovative ways to grow in the spirit of L'Arche.

This mandate shares the direction and dreams of our community in a broad way and, guided by our Board of Directors and Community Leader, it will be made measurable through strategic planning.

Together, the L'Arche Greater Washington D.C. community will:

1. Strengthen Relationships and Structures Within Our Homes and Community...

- Invest in supports that allow our employees, especially assistants and those in house leadership, to feel cared for, re-energized, and have opportunities for growth and skill development.
- Strengthen and support channels of communication between members of the office and each home.
- Audit our homes and properties to assess and commit to necessary improvements that meet the community's current and pending needs related to maintenance and care, accessibility, and supporting aging core members.
- Led by the ongoing work of the Inclusion Party Team and the Diversity Commission, embed everything we do, including our approach to leadership, within a culture of diversity and inclusion.

2. Cultivate Relationships With New and Long-Term Friends...

- Re-establish connections with regular volunteers and friends that have been lost or lessened during the pandemic.
- Take small, relational steps to connect with local spiritual communities, neighbors, and neighborhoods near our homes and office. Allow those connections to further natural supports for the community.
- Cultivate relationships that allow us to deepen our diversity and strengthen our advocacy skills with and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Connect and collaborate with partner entities that help us grow our skill and competency in meeting the needs of aging core members.
- Rekindle relationships with other L'Arche communities in the Federation.

3. Imagine New and Innovative Ways to Grow in the Spirit of L'Arche...

- Explore the feasibility of expanding into new homes, including the Reeves Farmhouse project, within a process that carefully attends to financial resources, appropriate timeframes, and pertinent partnerships.
- Commit to conversations that help imagine creative ways to serve and be served by people with disabilities that don't live in a L'Arche home.
- Empower our volunteers, board members, and friends to share stories that communicate what we're learning, build our network, and deepen our impact.

L'Arche GWDC Mandate 2023-2028 | Accessible Version

In our **2023-2028 Community Mandate**, our community will:

- take care of one another,
- take care of the places we live and work,
- and grow our community in careful ways.

This mandate comes from our mission and spiritual life. This mandate is affected by the COVID pandemic. It was hard but made us stronger.

This mandate remembers that we are already doing many good things together.

- Learning to care well for one another as we get older
- Building strong teams and growing good leaders
- Being careful to grow and care for our money
- figuring out how to make sure our core people are happy

Our Board of Directors and Community Leader will make a plan that maps out how to take next steps with this mandate.

Together we will:

1. Make relationships and our teams stronger...

- We will take care of employees, assistants, and house leaders and help them grow.
- We will make sure our homes and the office communicate well.
- We will check our homes to see what needs to be fixed and then fix what is broken. We will make sure everyone can get around safely inside our homes.
- We will make sure our community is diverse and that everyone feels included with the help of the Inclusion Party Team and the Diversity Commission.

2. Reconnect with old friends and make new friends and partners...

- We will reconnect with friends and volunteers who have not been around because of the COVID pandemic.
- We will reach out to neighbors and other communities around us, including places of worship, that help us feel supported and well.
- We will find friends who help us advocate for the rights of our core people.
- We will find friends who can help us understand how to better meet the needs of our core people as they get older.
- We will reconnect with other L'Arche communities.

3. Imagine new ways to grow L'Arche...

- We will think about new places to live and work. We will make good plans before we grow.
- We will connect with people with disabilities who do not already live in L'Arche.
- We will make sure volunteers, board members, and friends can share their stories of L'Arche so that they can help us grow.