

Guiding Principles of L'Arche Communities

L'Arche USA seeks to embody the following governance principles, which apply to all members and structures in L'Arche in a spirit of mutuality:

- a. **Servant Leadership:** Roles and structures of the Federation are at the service of the mission as lived out in our communities. People are called to leadership for limited terms after discernment processes. Those in authority gain wisdom through respectful listening and taking counsel.
- b. **Partnership:** Trust and collaboration operate freely within L'Arche. The structures are to foster that dynamic and embrace the partnerships among the spiritual, legal, financial, and communal elements.
- c. **Subsidiarity:** Matters affecting L'Arche are dealt with at the most appropriate level, closest to the people affected. Only when they cannot be solved there are they referred to another level.
- d. **Accountability:** When given a responsibility in L'Arche and the authority to go with it, accountability is to report back to those who gave the authority. Accountability is about being responsible and being linked to the wider body. It is also about taking responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.
- e. **Participation:** Effective communication is essential in L'Arche. Processes are defined, published, and open. Wherever practical, they involve the people who implement and are affected by the decision. They include people with and without intellectual disability.
- f. **Inculturation:** L'Arche communities live in different cultures. L'Arche embraces this diversity, while engaging in an ongoing process of reciprocal and critical interaction, adaptation and challenge between the community and the culture.
- g. **Solidarity:** All in L'Arche share a common humanity and a fundamental equality. We have a shared responsibility for each other and are committed to the common good.
- h. **Stewardship:** Out of grateful hearts, L'Arche seeks to care responsibly for its people, resources, time, and environment.