



L'ARCHE®
saskatoon

www.larchesaskatoon.org

PREPARING FOR GROWTH

by: Wyndham Thiessen
Community Leader



Celebrating birthdays at the workshop

L'Arche Saskatoon is growing! In a few short months, we will be welcoming new core members and assistants to our *second* L'Arche home. The journey that brought us to this point had a few turns and bumps along the way. We welcomed our first residents to Christopher House, our first home, on February 15, 2008. In 2012, having discerned that our community was ready to expand with a second home, we purchased a large house just a block down the road from Christopher House. However, our application to the Ministry of Social Services for operational funding was unsuccessful, and so we had to put our plans for growth on hold. We rented the new house out to tenants for a few years, and we waited. And prayed. And waited.

The Ministry of Social Services announced in 2012 that the Valley View institution in Moose Jaw would be closing. This meant

that new homes would have to be found for the almost 200 individuals who were still living in Valley View. L'Arche expressed an interest in welcoming some Valley View residents who would like to move to Saskatoon. A conversation began, and this past summer we learned that the Ministry would support us to welcome four new core members to our second home: two people from Valley View, and two others from Saskatoon.

Preparations to open our second home are well underway. The Ministry is supporting us financially to do a few more renovations to the house, including building two wheelchair accessible bedrooms and a bathroom in what is presently the garage. New assistants have started to arrive! These are exciting and wonderful times in the life of our community, and I am truly grateful for all that is unfolding. And opening our

second home isn't our only new undertaking—we have been expanding our workshop this year as well. (More on this in a separate piece—see the next page.)

Prior to this year, we have had to raise roughly \$60,000 annually for expenses not covered by Ministry funding; with our second home opening and our workshop expanding, this amount will increase. I want to say a huge thank you to all of our donors who have supported our mission over these past many years—and thank you for your continued support! And many thanks to everyone—board members, volunteers, friends, family members, community members—who contributes to the life of L'Arche Saskatoon.

I am eager to see how God will lead us into new places. Thank you for being a part of this journey. Blessings to you and your loved ones this Christmas!

L'ARCHE JUBILEE PRAYER

Loving God,
You called us into being
and gave us our mission.
Thank you
for the gift of one another.
Thank you
for our journey
together in L'Arche
from the beginning
till now.

Help us continue to grow
in our response to you,
Listening to your voice within us,
Seeing you around us,
Delighting in our gifts,
Forgiving one another
for our failings,
Trusting in you, and
Welcoming tomorrow
in Faith, Hope and Love.



Farewell celebration for Nina, who volunteered with us through MCC's IVEP program

Many thanks to the Kinsmen Foundation for a generous grant enabling us to buy a brand new wheelchair accessible van!! (We purchased a Ford Transit van, and then Golden Mobility did the conversion, installing a lift and equipment for two wheelchair users.) Having this van has allowed us to welcome two more participants to our workshop. If you see us driving around town, give us a wave!



Our new van!!

L'ARCHE IDENTITY STATEMENT

We are people with and without intellectual disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an international federation.

Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together.

We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognise our need of one another.

THE L'ARCHE WORKSHOP IS EXPANDING

Three years ago, L'Arche Saskatoon began a part-time "workshop," which involved a small group of individuals with and without disabilities meeting together with a vision of "making art, making friends, making peace." This year, the Ministry of Social Services approved funding allowing us to grow the workshop into a full-time program! This funding has made it possible for us to hire Seher Colak as our workshop leader. Seher was a house leader in L'Arche Vancouver; she has a degree in special education; she used to work in a crafts workshop for people with intellectual disabilities in Turkey; and she has a lot of experience providing care for individuals with significant needs in a number of agencies in Saskatoon.

We also have a new program assistant, Jessica Westad, who recently graduated from Saint Thomas More, and who participated in the Intercordia program (another Jean Vanier-inspired initiative). This year we also welcomed three more core members to the workshop. If you were to drop by and visit the workshop, you'd be greeted by Seher, Jessica, Carl, Renee, Cody, Sara, and Alyssa—and maybe even one of our volunteers, Nadine and Laine!

The group spends time each day out in the community doing various social activities, as well as some time engaged in creative projects such as weaving and card making at Zion Lutheran Church. The workshop group has been making many beautiful things!

The workshop is currently seeking volunteers to help with their activities. Do you enjoy spending time with people? Do you enjoy drinking coffee? Do you enjoy spending time engaged in creative pursuits with others in a warm and friendly atmosphere? The L'Arche workshop might be the place for you! Contact Wyndham at wthiessen@larchesaskatoon.org for more information.

2015 COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

We held our "Cakes in the City" fundraiser with Cheshire homes again on January 27, with many beautiful cakes enjoyed by those attending.

February 15 marked the seventh anniversary of L'Arche Saskatoon. We celebrated with a homemade pizza supper (an annual tradition).

The Regional Council meeting met in Saskatoon at Queen's House, from March 16 to 20, followed by the Regional Board Council meeting on March 20 and 21. Thank you to everyone who helped with rides!

L'Arche led a reflection at the third station during the Way of the Cross procession on Good Friday.

Our annual retreat was held on July 29 at Saint Peter's Abbey, and was led by an assistant and core member from L'Arche Toronto (thanks to a generous grant from the Mahoney Foundation).

In September, Andrea started in our new homes coordinator role, and Asha took over the house leader role at Christopher House. Thank you Andrea, and thank you Asha!





Our December Friends of L'Arche Gathering at Holy Cross High School

WAYS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN L'ARCHE SASKATOON

- Attend a Friends of L'Arche Gathering (once a month).
- Come to a Prayer Night (Wednesday evenings).
- Become a prayer partner for L'Arche Saskatoon.
- Volunteer to work on a L'Arche Committee: Gatherings, Communications, Newsletter, House and Garden, Development and Fundraising, Finance, Special Events Planning (coffeehouse, garage sale).
- Assist with ongoing financial support for the special programs of L'Arche. Many thanks, if you have already donated -- and please continue to keep L'Arche Saskatoon on your list of worthy charities to support.
- Donate goods or services.
- Learn more about Jean Vanier and L'Arche around the world by reading books by and about Jean Vanier, Henri Nouwen, Sue Mosteller and others.
- Check out: L'Arche Canada: www.larche.ca; L'Arche International: www.larche.org; L'Arche Saskatoon: www.larchesaskatoon.org.
- Add your e-mail address to our Friends of L'Arche e-mail list to receive notices of events and copies of the newsletter by e-mail. (Your e-mail information is only for the use of L'Arche Saskatoon and will not be shared with anyone else.) Send your request to: wthiessen@larchesaskatoon.org.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE FINANCIALLY

By cheque to:

L'Arche Saskatoon
c/o Wyndham Thiessen
P.O. Box 23006
Saskatoon, SK S7J 5H3

- You will receive a charitable receipt for income tax purposes. Be sure to include your full name and mailing address so we can prepare the receipt.

For more information or to be removed from our newsletter mailing list, please send a message to Wyndham Thiessen, Community Leader, at: wthiessen@larchesaskatoon.org or by phone at (306) 262-7243.

ABOUT L'ARCHE SASKATOON COMMUNITY

L'Arche Saskatoon is one of 29 L'Arche communities across Canada. At the present time we have one home, Christopher House, a workshop and an extended community called Friends of L'Arche, which has a monthly Gathering. Ecumenical prayer nights are held weekly at Christopher House, and our Collective Kitchen members meet one Sunday a month. In these and other settings, we are working to build community and strengthen friendships as we live, work, play and pray together.

ABOUT L'ARCHE SASKATOON INC.

- We are a non-profit organization and a registered charity (#86345-4872 RR0001), able to provide charitable receipts for tax purposes.
- We have an Executive Director/Community Leader (Wyndham Thiessen) and a volunteer board of directors.
- We receive core funding support from the Government of Saskatchewan for the operation of Christopher House and we rely on donations from individuals and groups to cover additional expenses and special programs.
- Financial contributions are received with gratitude and used with great care to support our mission and our work.