



## From our Community Leader, *Stephanie Calma*

Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care. It is our responsibility to steward the mission of L'Arche. This October I attended the New Community Leader Formation at La Ferme and it was there where Jean spoke of the call for the new generation of leaders who will continue to bring forth the mission of L'Arche. Jean spoke with honesty when he named that his next journey is on the downward and he is charging others to take up the call. Our community has responded to this through our new mandate. This moment of witness is building hope for our future. The spirit was working even before Jean spoke these words to me, and the other leaders, that day this past fall. The spirit is emerging from within the community to announce our mission in new and abundant ways. I believe to live abundantly we need to be people of light in the world, to be active and participate in the world not as communities set apart. There is a paradox that lives in a spiritual journey recognizing that we are both light yet called to become light. We haven't fully lived out our mission and there is still more to do. I am grateful that others have responded to this call and we will do this together, there is power in our unity and we will experience grace in our response.

## New Mandate for 2016-2020, *by Stephanie Calma*

In June 2016 the Community welcomed a new mandate for the next four years. The document that emerged is a testament to the vibrant, life-giving force of growth that comes from living as a community of faith. Deeply rooted in our community DNA is a sense that we are called into being, nourished and sustained by God. Over the past four years our community has experienced grief, loss and change and this has planted a desire within our members to reach out beyond ourselves, to proclaim our gifts and be an active, vibrant force in the Stratford and surrounding area. What is evident in our mandate is the call for renewal, hope and new beginnings. We have chosen the image of a community garden to embody this expression of our mission and the context in which we are living it. The call for us today is to Tend Soil, Plant Seeds, and Share our Abundance with those around us. How we live out this call as a community is important. In a desire to steward our resources and this call well, we are in the process of developing a Strategic Plan in collaboration with Platinum Leadership. We recognize that prior to sustaining a harvest, work needs to be done to prepare the soil so that it can sustain life. This takes the form of building systems, homes and spaces that enable us to live out our mission. We believe that community, competency and spirituality are essential elements to sustaining us as we journey towards the harvest. A beautiful garden requires care and nourishment from the elements and we look forward to working in collaboration with our community partners as well as L'Arche Ontario and L'Arche Canada to make this a successful venture. Moving beyond our dependency on Government structures, we aspire to diversify our funding sources which will provide us the opportunity to build relationships and plant our mission more deeply in the world.



2016-2020 Mandate-drawn by Gerald Adair & Charlene Hahn

### Walk with L'Arche - October 22, 2016

On October 22, 2016, members of L'Arche Stratford, their families and friends walked around Lake Victoria to raise funds for the Community. This was our first fundraising walk and it was very well attended. Over \$10,000 was raised along with great public awareness of our Community. Thanks to our Fundraising Committee for their terrific efforts! **Our next fundraising event will be a Mardi Gras evening on February 28, 2017 at Stratford Country Club.**



### L'ARCHE MISSION STATEMENT

- *To make known the gifts of all people with developmental disabilities revealed through mutually transforming relationships.*
- *To foster an environment in communities that respond to the changing needs of our members, while being faithful in the core values of our founding story.*
- *To engage in our diverse cultures working together towards a more human society.*

L'Arche is an International federation of 135 communities where people with developmental disabilities and those care for them live, work and share life together. Canadian Jean Vanier founded L'Arche in France in 1964. L'Arche Stratford has 3 homes, 4 apartments and 2 townhouses. Members work or participate in day activities at "The Ark" or at placements throughout the city.

### Coming up at L'Arche Stratford

**December 10:** at Bethel Church  
Community Christmas Dinner  
with Family and Friends

**February 28/17:** at Stratford  
Country Club - Mardi Gras Evening

### 2016-2020 Mandate L'Arche Stratford



*Planting Seeds  
Tending the Soil  
Sharing our Abundance*

**Assistants Corner** by Emily Verhoeve, Assistants Coordinator

When I arrived in this role on June 29th this year, I was excited to learn of the long term connections many of our Assistants have made over the past several years. Regardless, community is an ever changing place and we have welcomed and farewell-ed several Assistants over the past five months. We have said goodbye to Anita at Avonwood and Ethan at Nazareth, our two co-op students over the summer months. We had a DSW student, Kim, in the Day Program over the summer who continues to support community as a volunteer. In September, we welcomed Maria to Nazareth, and Eunice as a co-op student at Avonwood. Michael, who lived at Nazareth over the past year, now lives with Kevin and Steve and also as a Relief Assistant. Allyson has transitioned from the SIL Coordinator role and now supports our community as a Relief Assistant. In October, we welcomed Mary as our SIL Coordinator. We have wished Sharone from Agape well as she left community at the end of October to continue on with her next journey. Naomi left the SIL Assistant role in September and we have since welcomed Brianna as the newest member of this team. We have also welcomed two new Relief Assistants, Alyssa and Daniel, who begin by supporting Maranatha and Nazareth, respectively. We are grateful for the new life Assistants' bring as they begin their journey with us, and thankful for the dedication all Assistants bring to community!



**Welcome, Jes Looyenga, House Leader - Nazareth**

Hello, my name is Jes. I am very excited to meet and get to know each of you. My journey in L'Arche has mostly been in Toronto (over 20 years). I have also had the privilege to spend time in communities in both Uganda and Australia. It has also been a real delight to have been in Spirit Movers, the Liturgical Dance Troupe from Daybreak for over 10 years. I enjoy swimming, reading and spending time in nature with family and friends. My favourite food is coconut ice cream. *Jes comes to us with a wealth of skills and experience including the following: she is a Certified CPI instructor, has experience with Individual Learning Plans and ISP development, and she has a B.A. in Social Work.*

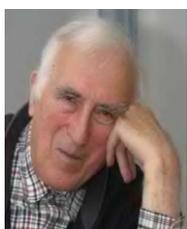
**Welcome, Mary Starnaman, SIL Leader**

Mary was appointed SIL Leader in October. She comes to us with over 30 years of Social Work and Community Development experience. She brings musical gifts to our community – playing the Celtic harp and mandolin, singing in her church choir, and playing in two bands! Mary also loves art. She is very excited to join our community and become involved in the Mission of L'Arche! Mary has been working hard to acquaint herself with all of the members of the SIL program and their families. She brings a wealth of new ideas and we look forward to hearing more about them in the coming months.



**Welcome, Emily Verhoeve, Assistants Coordinator**

Hello everyone, my name is Emily and I joined L'Arche Stratford as Assistants' Coordinator on June 29, 2016 - and have been thrilled by the warm welcome I have received ever since! My journey in L'Arche began when I served as a co-op student at L'Arche Arnprior in 2009. When I finished my undergraduate degree in Psychology and Child and Family Studies at the end of 2011, I travelled to Australia to join the L'Arche Beni Abbes community in Tasmania as a Live-In Assistant over the 2012 year. Before coming to L'Arche Stratford, I graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with a Masters in Social Work. For fun, I enjoy hiking and back-packing, as well as dancing and yoga. I feel fortunate that my path has once again brought me to community life in L'Arche and look forward to making memories with everyone!



*Jean Vanier,  
From  
Drawn into the  
Mystery of  
Jesus Through  
the Gospel*

The seed of the Spirit has been planted in each of us. We must learn how to nourish this seed so that it can grow and bear much fruit. This journey, our pilgrimage of love, begins and deepens as we hear God murmur within our hearts: I love you just as you are. I so love you that I come to heal you and give you life. Do not be afraid. Open your hearts.

**L'Arche Stratford**  
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**WISH LIST**

**Cash or Gift Cards for:**  
Groceries (Food Basics)  
Gas (any)  
Supplies for creative arts (Staples)  
Vacuum Cleaners (Canadian Tire)  
Two New Single Mattresses (Sears, Sleep Country)

**Household Items:**  
Serving Bowls  
Dishes - full setting for 12  
50 Soup Spoons for Forum Dinners

**Home interior/exterior:**  
End tables/lamps  
Large Dining Room Table (must seat 12)

**Miscellaneous**  
Wheelchair Mini Van (\$50,000)

Let us know if you would prefer to receive your newsletter by email! Send an e-mail message to:  
**info@larche.stratford.on.ca**

Visit our Website at [www.larchestratford.ca](http://www.larchestratford.ca)

- monthly **calendar** of events for Day Program
- upcoming events**
- how to donate** to L'Arche Stratford

Thank you to DPS Printing for their continued support of L'Arche Stratford through the printing and folding and occasional editing of this newsletter.