

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

60 YEARS of L'Arche in the World

Mutual relationships among people with and without intellectual disabilities transform us by revealing the unique value of each person. This experience is a sign in the world that all belong.

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From the Charter of the Communities of L'Arche

### Dear friends,

Our Annual Report is a good opportunity to reflect on the work of L'Arche Canada and our 30 L'Arche communities across the country over the past year. We collect a great deal of information to measure the impact of our work. This data is often expressed in numbers and dollars. Measuring impact is a good discipline for us, and the Annual Report does include numbers and financial reporting that I hope you'll find helpful. At the same time, data alone says very little about the experience of transformation that is at the heart of L'Arche. *This movement of transformation, which is both personal and social, transcends language, faith, and culture.* 

I talked recently with Antoine, a pre-med student who had lived as an assistant at L'Arche Mauricie for only a few months. Antoine described his experience of L'Arche as "indelible." L'Arche has changed the way Antoine sees the world. It has changed him, and he believes it will change the way he'll practice medicine.

## Learning

**Belonging** 

## Collaborating

That description resonated deeply with me. *Like so many of us in L'Arche, the experience of encountering people with differences of all kinds has transformed Antoine and me in ways that will continue to shape us.* After almost 45 years with L'Arche, I am convinced that the impact of L'Arche is not only personal and communal, but also societal and global.

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L'Arche is 60 years old this year. In the past six decades, we have lived through many periods of social and economic change, many difficulties and challenges, and even a pandemic—yet transformation remains at the core of the L'Arche experience. At this time in our history, I believe it is important to claim and celebrate this key inner movement that inspires us to keep learning, that calls us to collaborate with others, and that ignites us in a spirit of belonging.

Thank you to all of you who give so much of yourselves to make the experience of L'Arche one that we share together!

Louis Pilotte

National Executive Director, L'Arche Canada and L'Arche Canada Foundation

# L'Arche in Canada and Around the

## We believe in the transformational power of relationships between people with and without intellectual disabilities. Today our shared life is more relevant and challenging than ever before.

From the 2023-2028 Mandate of the International Federation of L'Arche Communities

**L'Arche Canada** is a national leader in building communities of inclusion and belonging. With a presence in Canada since 1969, L'Arche Canada is one of the few national bilingual organizations committed to fostering the social inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. The impact of L'Arche is personal, local, regional, national, and global.

### **OUR IMPACT TODAY**



#### 30 L'Arche communities in Canada

in nine provinces from coast to coast

#### 122 homes and apartments

providing accessible and inclusive housing for over 500 people with intellectual disabilities



#### Life-long learning and leadership development

for people with and without intellectual disabilities



#### 160 L'Arche communities in 37 countries

on six continents form the International Federation of L'Arche Communities



## Advocacy with 20 national and international partners

to promote the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities as valued citizens and leaders World

L'Arche Mauricie

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### WESTERN REGION

Comox Valley Greater Vancouver Lethbridge



A E

Winnipeg

## Learning

## "There is beauty in each person. Names don't need to be in lights to shine."

Tiana Kirkegaard, L'Arche Greater Vancouver

Tiana Kirkegaard emceed the 2024 annual online *Canadian Health and Wellbeing in Developmental Disabilities Conference*. Tiana, who lives in Vancouver, is one of the youth leaders who took part in Leading Change, a L'Arche Canada pilot program. In February, Tiana welcomed people to the conference with warmth and confidence. To prepare for the role, she spoke with several wellness experts. Tiana skillfully wove together their expertise and her own lived experience.

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"I interviewed Andrew Neufeld from *Alongside You*. One of his top messages is how important it is to find a community... And Liv Meriam from the *Down Syndrome Resource Foundation* talked about having connections and how important it is to wellness. I completely agree with them as my community and being connected to others is ever so important to me. I found belonging in my community. I love places where we can all be ourselves, where all our voices matter.

"Knowing that I am loved and valued Is one of the most powerful and healing messages for me," said Tiana. "There is beauty in each person. Names don't need to be in lights to shine. We can all shine in the way that we shine best." We value sharing life together with all our differences. We live the call and challenge of community.

From the Charter of the Communities of L'Arche

L'Arche has learned that creating social change means forming partnerships with a broad range of changemakers, including the National Disability Network, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Tamarack Institute and many others.

TAMARACK

NSTITUTE

# Our Partnership with the Tamarack Institute

L'Arche Canada is privileged to be a long-time partner of the Tamarack Institute. Tamarack's Communities Building Belonging network across the country is committed to strengthening neighbourhoods and ending social isolation in Canada.

#### **Circle of Actions**

L'Arche Canada has assembled one of the 13 teams across the country who form the first Communities Building Belonging cohort. The cohort, called *Circle of Actions*, includes local governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and residents with lived experience. The L'Arche Canada team members are from our communities in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Sudbury, and Halifax. The Circle of Actions cohort is designed to catalyze the efforts of community leaders to create plans and carry out interventions that foster a sense of belonging.

#### Asset-Based Community Development

L'Arche de la Capitale-Nationale

The principles of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) are central to the way the Circle of Actions cohort teams work with communities. This is an approach to the development of communities based on their strengths and potential. The Circle of Actions cohort is a dynamic way for L'Arche Canada to participate in a national movement for belonging guided by seasoned leaders in social change.

# Collaborating

### *La Presse* Story Sparks Media Blitz for L'Arche in Quebec

The eight communities of L'Arche in Quebec became front-page news in *La Presse*, a major national newspaper, in January of 2024–sparking a two-month media blitz in print, on television and radio, and in online forums. The well-being of L'Arche in Quebec was at stake as its communities faced such long-time underfunding that some L'Arche members feared that their homes might be forced to close. Their worried families and friends sent a barrage of letters and emails to their members of provincial Parliament.

The National Leader of L'Arche Canada, Louis Pilotte, made a strong case in media interviews that L'Arche in Quebec has been funded far below what other service providers receive. The media blitz was the most well-orchestrated L'Arche Quebec advocacy campaign in recent in memory. It brought much needed attention from MPPs, including the Quebec Minister of Health and Social Services, as well as the commitment for increased funding based on individual needs.

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The communities of L'Arche in Quebec, their regional leaders, and the Regional Public Funding Committee have worked together to call attention to the way housing needs can change throughout life. L'Arche in Quebec is advocating for a funding program that can support people's changing needs as they age. L'Arche continues to be a leader in the challenge to bring about a major change in the reality of housing for people with intellectual disabilities across Quebec. We are people with and without intellectual disabilities, engaged in the work of partnership, advocacy and justice.

From the Charter of the Communities of L'Arche

Lucie Bellerose, L'Arche Lanaudière

## L'Arche Advocates on Parliament Hill for Inclusive Housing

In March, a delegation from L'Arche communities in Ontario joined colleagues from disability organizations across the province for a dynamic advocacy campaign in Ottawa, "Day on the Hill". The goal was to highlight the importance of including people with intellectual disabilities in Canada's National Housing Strategy.

L'Arche delegates met with several members of Parliament, including the Honorable Sean Fraser, the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities. The L'Arche group from Ontario included Darrell Marsh and Chantale Gaudette from Sudbury, Raphael Arens from Toronto, John Rietschlin from Ottawa, and Ontario Regional Leader Jeff Gilbreath.

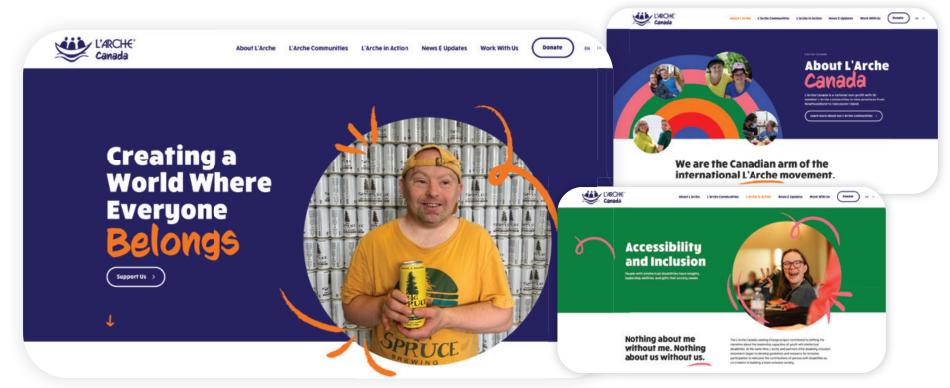
Board Chair of L'Arche Ottawa John Rietschlin said: "The 'Day on the Hill' provided a forum for disability organizations and advocates to meet with both elected and non-elected individuals responsible for the policy governing access to hundreds of millions of federal government dollars to fund affordable housing... It is important for L'Arche to add its voice to the conversation shaping policy. Our unique perspective is important."

"I felt very confident using my voice with the people in government. I told them that housing is important to me, and that people need to live in a home where they don't feel lonely. They need to have friends nearby." 9

**Chantale Gaudette** L'Arche Sudbury

# Belonging

## L'Arche Canada Launches a New Website



After over a year of planning, L'Arche Canada launched a new website in the spring of 2024. A cross-country committee of L'Arche members worked closely with a consultant to create a website in French and English that is welcoming, easy to navigate, wonderfully accessible, and responsive to the diverse needs of the thousands of people who visit the site every year.

The Inclusive Design Research Centre, based at the Ontario College of Art and Design, gave critical guidance to ensure that the website was developed inclusively, so as to be as accessible as possible for all our stakeholders and all website visitors. The template for the L'Arche Canada website was also designed so that any L'Arche community in Canada can adopt the new design template to update their own websites.

Our websites have become an increasingly important way to communicate with people with intellectual disabilities and their families, people who are interested in becoming assistants or volunteers, our donors and funders, our colleagues in the field of disabilities, and our partners who work with us on issues of inclusion and belonging.

#### Please visit the new website at: www.larche.ca

### L'Arche Team Fosters Inclusion in Shaping Social Policy

Michael Marjoram, a member of L'Arche Calgary, and Christine Monier, regional leader for Western Canada, have been participating in the Max Bell Foundation's Public Policy Training Institute since last November. The Institute equips representatives from non-profit organizations with the skills needed for effective advocacy.

Michael and Christine have appreciated this unique opportunity to learn from policy experts and to be mentored by faculty from the University of Calgary. With their support, Michael and Christine have developed a comprehensive advocacy plan. Their goal is to urge the Government of Alberta to promote legislation that would improve accessibility to public transportation for all its citizens.

Michael's personal experiences with the challenges of accessible public transportation have fuelled his commitment to this advocacy work. **The aim of the policy work is to ensure that individuals with disabilities are directly involved in the creation and development of policies that affect them.** This initiative aligns with the principle of "Nothing about us without us."

Michael and Christine's growth as advocates is an example of how L'Arche is fostering active engagement in shaping a more inclusive society. This rich learning experience with the Max Bell Foundation's Public Policy Training Institute will inspire and empower L'Arche advocacy teams across the country. In Michael's words, "I just want to get around like anybody else and do the things I love to do."

## L'Arche Canada Foundation

## **Our Heartfelt Thanks to Our Donors!**

We are deeply grateful for your generous support of the L'Arche Canada Foundation during the 2023-2024 year.

As the fundraising arm of L'Arche Canada, the Foundation is the major source of funding for the national structure that serves all L'Arche communities across the country.

Your generosity supports the everyday life of our communities with essential resources that are most effectively managed at the national level: the recruitment of assistants, leadership development programs for people with and without disabilities, communication tools including our website, and human resource management systems. Your giving also supports our advocacy work, done in collaboration with national and international partners to support the social inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in Canada and around the world.

The Foundation also raises Solidarity funds to support L'Arche communities internationally as they face challenges due to economic hardship, political instability, and war.

Together, with your generous support, we are building a world where everyone belongs. Thank you!

Total Donations **Direct Mail Campaigns** 2,076 gifts 2023-2024 \$1.85 million \$253K Foundations & Corporations Major Gifts from Individuals **Planned Gifts** 20 gifts 11 gifts 52 gifts \$166K \$264K \$603K **Gifts for International Projects** Monthly Donors 434 gifts 552 donors \$160K Gifts for Canadian Communities 740 gifts \$158k

L'Arche Cape Breton

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- Marshall Family Endowment Fund
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- John and Donna Rietschlin Endowment Fund
- Robert Sprachman and Marie-Josée Therrien Endowment Fund
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- 2 Anonymous Endowment Funds

To learn more about major giving, gifts of shares, making a planned gift through your will, or establishing an endowment fund, please visit our Ways to Give page at www.larche.ca/foundation or reach out to us at 1-800-571-0212.

## Thank you for your generosity!



# L'Arche International

## L'Arche Joins Advocacy Campaign at the UN

"L'Arche works in some of the world's most fragile contexts," said L'Arche Interim International Leader, Sylvain Brabant. "It is critical that the global community works to reduce risks for people with disabilities who are often forgotten in aid efforts."

In June, ten L'Arche delegates from Canada, Lithuania and the USA joined other advocates at the 17th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, held in New York. May Banting and Sherry Kavumkal (L'Arche Halifax) and Nick Herd and Lori Vaanholt (L'Arche Canada) took part in this significant global gathering.

May Banting delivered L'Arche International's statement on Article 11, promoting inclusive response planning for people with disabilities impacted by war and conflict. Nick Herd covered the event on *UN News* radio.

## Solidarity at L'Arche



From the Charter of the Communities of L'Arche

The L'Arche Canada Foundation and L'Arche communities across the country raise funds to support L'Arche communities around the world that face extraordinary challenges, including these three communities located in places of conflict or political instability:



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L'Arche Ukraine



L'Arche Haiti



L'Arche Bethlehem

Many thanks to all our Solidarity donors!

# **Financials**

#### 8% 7% Consolidated L'Arche Canada and L'Arche Canada **Foundation revenues** 52% Fundraising 33% Communities (dues, events, solidarity) Government grants Other **Consolidated Expenses** 20% Support to communities 40,5% Mission and public engagement 19,5% International development 20% Governance and administration

The current consolidated financial situation of L'Arche Canada at the national level

Total Revenues	4,175,027
Total Expenses	4,542,997
Surplus (deficit)	(367,970)*

\* The overall deficit was reduced by 51% compared with the previous fiscal year, despite a reduction in revenues, largely dependent on the economic situation in 2023-2024 and the continued development of the philanthropy team.



Scan this QR code for financial statements.

## Boards of Directors

Our Board members give generously of their time, skills and expertise to steer and oversee L'Arche's operations.

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### L'Arche Canada

Joseph Reynaud, Board Chair Donna Diskos Vince Kazmierski Sam Watts Nancy Marenick Myron Rogal Agnes Thomas Randal Van de Mosselaer

### L'Arche Canada Foundation

Lauren Alexander, Board Chair Joseph Reynaud Donna Diskos



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