



## Growing Together in L'Arche



From October 19<sup>th</sup> - October 21<sup>st</sup>, L'Arche Avalon hosted its first retreat. Eight members of L'Arche communities from across Atlantic Canada and Jenn Power, Regional Leader for L'Arche in Atlantic Canada, joined our community, to come together to explore the spirituality of L'Arche through music, meditation, art and listening to each other. Visitors and hosts met first for lunch at the home of Petra, David and Anton. The Presentation Sisters were very generous in granting us The Lantern, the perfect venue for the retreat. Members of L'Arche Avalon collaborated to organize and prepare a tasty and varied menu for the



weekend. Jenn and Gray Gilles of L'Arche Saint John led us through the various activities of the weekend.

Growth was the theme and the thread which ran through the three days: personal growth, growth in our community and how that growth can impact the world. Warren Tompkins of L'Arche Saint John shared his short film "What It Means to Grow in Friendship," a beautiful and



appropriate opening to the weekend. We learned some new songs which helped us to center ourselves and

"retreat" to consider what it is that helps us to grow and that makes us feel fully alive. Several people who are already living in communities shared how simple, beautiful moments of their supporting and affirming



each other help them to be the best human beings they can be. We listened and responded to each other's personal stories and thoughts. We

concluded on Sunday morning with the recognition that we are all tiny lights, that we all have something to share and that together we can let those lights shine and make the world a better

place. Local member, Maureen Mackinnon, brought the weekend to a fitting close by inviting one and all to her and her sister, Sheilah's house for a final get together. Thank you to all who made this wonderful weekend come to fruition, especially to Jenn, Gray and our visitors who travelled so far to be with us.



~Lorraine



*"To love is to live in communion with others..."*

*~ Jean Vanier*

## December at L'Arche Avalon:

**Thursday lunches** - 12 - 1:30 pm - We're at the Avalon Mall food court every Thursday. Come and share lunch with us.

**December 8** - Christmas Sing along 2 - 4 pm at the MMAP Gallery, 2nd floor of the Arts and Culture Center. Eric West is an accomplished local guitarist, composer and publisher. Since 1988 he has performed children's music as half of the duo "Heather and Eric." Besides his professional activities, Eric directs and accompanies the Potluck Singers, a community choir that gives volunteer performances at schools, hospitals, nursing homes and other venues around the province. Eric and the choir have offered to lead us in a singalong to get us in the mood for the Christmas season.

**December 16** - Christmas gathering 2:30 - 4:30 pm at the Rotary Sunshine Park Chalet on Thorburn road. We welcome you to join us for our annual Christmas social. Please bring along a seasonal treat to share.

**December 22** - 2 - 4 pm Jam Circle at the Arts and Culture Center, MMAP Room (2nd floor of the Center),. We usually make some unique music, sing a few old favorites and of course, we'll finish off with a little snack. It would be great if you could come and bring along a friend or family member with an intellectual disability.



Jane P.

Charlotte H.

Paul A.

Mitchell B.



Petra S.

## Special Thanks!!!



We'd like to extend our gratitude to Bill Brennan, Professor at the Memorial University School of Music, for the donation of this Indonesian set of Angklung to use in our Jam Circles!



## We Can All be Fundraisers for L'Arche Avalon

I have been involved with L'Arche Avalon for nearly five years. I have been busy listening, learning, reading and absorbing what it is to be in a L'Arche Community. Two years ago I became a member of the Board. One of the things we did just after I joined was to travel with other Board Members to Nova Scotia where we visited the L'Arche Communities in Wolfville and Halifax. That was very inspiring. We also attended information sessions; one of which was on fundraising. The speaker mentioned a book by Henri Nouwen called *A Spirituality of*

*Fundraising.* I nearly guffawed when I heard the title because the two ideas, "spirituality" and "fundraising", seemed complete opposites to me. To make a long story short, I bought the book out of curiosity and Henri Nouwen did a job on me. Before reading the book, I felt that fundraising was



an unpleasant but necessary evil, that had to be undertaken in order to get things done.

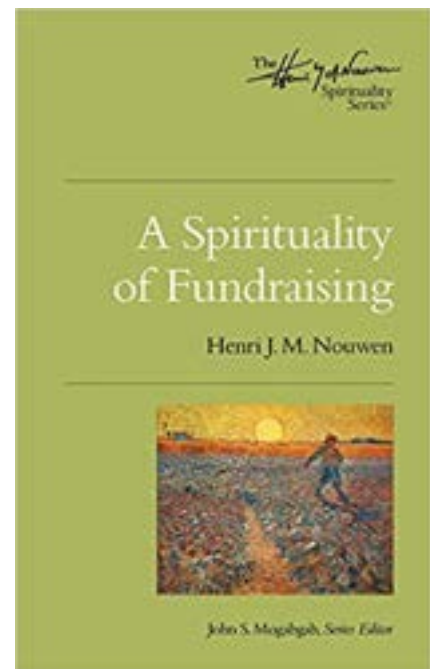
Henri Nouwen's premise is that fundraising is an integral part of the mission. He believes that in "spiritual fundraising" you are

not just looking for money. You are telling people about this wonderful, worthy idea that you want to bring to fruition and you are inviting them into a relationship with you and your community. If you agree with the mission of L'Arche, he believes, then you should stand up straight and tall, be able to articulate what it is that L'Arche does and invite

people to join you on the journey. Nouwen helped me to see fundraising from a completely new perspective. I believe in L'Arche and I am a proud member of our community's fundraising committee. In the past year I have done three things to fundraise. Last September I had a very successful Bridge Evening for L'Arche which I plan to make an annual event. I recently turned a big milestone and had big birthday celebrations. On the invitations people were told that only the pleasure of their company was required, but if they would like to make a donation to L'Arche Avalon that would be appreciated. People were very generous. Lastly over the past year, I checked out Canada Helps that is an agency that accepts donations for non-profit organizations such as L'Arche Avalon and I decided to make a small monthly donation.

You too can be a fundraiser for L'Arche. There are lots of ways to help and to raise money. It just involves seeing things from a new perspective. Please visit our website at <https://larcheavalon.ca/getinvolved/> for more information on getting involved.

As the year draws to a close and income tax time rears its head, many people think about charitable donations in terms of tax credits. Please consider donating to L'Arche Avalon this year. We are a registered charity. The easiest way to donate is through Canada Helps. Go to [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org), type in L'Arche Avalon and follow through. You can give a little amount monthly or give a one-time donation. You can always send a cheque to us at P.O. Box 1573, Stn C, St. John's A1C 5P3 or donate directly at one of our get togethers. We appreciate the support.



## Membership Renewal



It's membership renewal time again. This is the simplest way to support the community. Sheilah Mackinnon Drover has taken over membership. Many thanks to Petra for doing the job for over 6 years. You may contact Sheilah at [shmacdr@gmail.com](mailto:shmacdr@gmail.com). She will have the receipt book at all of our events/activities in the upcoming weeks. Renewal due date is December 31. In addition, if you are already a member,

but your contact information has changed, please contact Sheilah.



*"A community is like an orchestra: each instrument is beautiful when it plays alone, but when they all play together, each given its own weight in turn, the result is even more beautiful."*

*~Jean Vanier*