



### **L'Arche Avalon Community Weekend**

L'Arche Avalon hosted a Community Weekend November 1 – 3, 2019. Friday night was a public talk called “The Power of our Stories.” Board Chair, Lewis Andrews, welcomed distinguished members of the audience and visitors from L'Arche Toronto, L'Arche London and members of L'Arche communities in Atlantic Canada. He also gave a short update on the community. Then four members of L'Arche Avalon told their stories. Sheilah Mackinnon Drover and her sister Maureen Mackinnon presented their story of growing up in a home that was true to the values of L'Arche



long before L'Arche even existed. They showed a film that CBC did on Maureen's profound impact on Corner Brook, the town where she grew up. Cindy Bishop and her son Mitchell presented the story of their search for belonging, a search that eventually led them to L'Arche Avalon. Next Joe Egan spoke about his life in L'Arche which he described as forty-six years of grace that had been given to him where he discovered his place of belonging, his gifts and his wife, Mary.



Saturday and Sunday were full days of further storytelling and music led by Laurel Martin and Jim Keough of L'Arche London. They led the group in every session with the chosen theme song "Let's Keep Walking with Each Other" a motif that ran through the whole weekend which focused on our growth, our journey together and our need to continue working towards our goal of establishing L'Arche homes in the Avalon region. Laurel also led the group in a creative drum circle which showed some of the many ways to make this activity inclusive. There were several inspiring films shown, among them "The Story of Angus and Heather" an intellectually disabled couple from Cape Breton who met and fell in love in their youth only to be separated for 44 years before coming together again, resuming their relationship and getting married. Angus was one of our visitors and he was very happy to share his story with us. He now lives in L'Arche Cape Breton with his wife. On both days we shared delicious, home-made lunches generously prepared by members of the community. Sister Eileen Penney and her sister Catherine Ryan participated and offered for sale their beautiful handmade cards with the proceeds going to L'Arche Avalon.

A special thank you to Jenn Power, L'Arche Atlantic Regional Leader, for her support and leadership.

*~Lorraine*

## Upcoming Events

Dec 14: Monthly walk: Field house, 2pm – 4pm

Dec 15: Christmas Social: Don't miss this event! There will be a sing along, puzzle contest, and of course, seasonal treats!

When: 2:30pm - 4:30pm

Where: The Lantern, Barnes Road

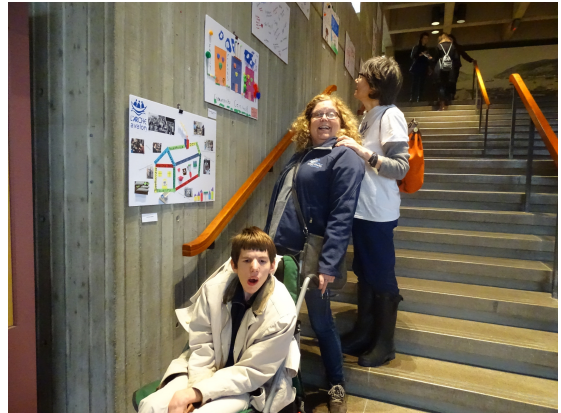
Dec 28: Jam Circle



Here we are taking shelter under the trees during one of the downpours that occurred during our walk around Kent's Pond. It wasn't too bad as it was quite warm, but needless to say we didn't stop for a snack.

## National Housing Day

The City of St. John's invited L'Arche Avalon to contribute to the exhibition that opened on National Housing Day, November 22, 2019 in City Hall - **"What makes a house a home"**.



Organizations and community groups with direct or indirect connections to housing created posters to be exhibited.

We were thrilled to have the opportunity to be part of this city initiative and being able to present the L'Arche perspective of what makes a house a home.

Several of our community members took part in the creation of our poster with enthusiasm, enjoyment and community spirit.

*~Petra*

## Dear Friends and Supporters of L'Arche Avalon,

It is hard to believe we are approaching the end of 2019! It has been a busy and exciting year and we have accomplished many things as we continue to grow as a community.

In 2019 we have continued to build important relationships. The Fry Family Foundation has agreed to partner with us and provide substantial funding for home construction. Paul Burt, CEO and President of the Foundation, as well as Marie Burt, Vice Chair, are also providing assistance with respect to the preparation of a Business Plan. We submitted an application to CMHC concerning lands in Pleasantville and in that regard received a letter of support from the City of St. John's. We are also looking at alternate sites on which to construct our first L'Arche Avalon homes as well as a Centre for day programs. These are indeed exciting times!

We continue with our regular monthly activities that include Gatherings, Walks, Thursday Lunches at the Mall, Jam Circles and our Spiritual Expressions. We invite all of you to attend as many of these events as your time and schedule permits. Come and get to know our core members and others involved in building and strengthening our community.

We have continued to reach out to officials of the provincial government concerning operational funding for L'Arche Avalon homes in this province. We have also had initial discussions concerning a possible communications strategy and a possible major fundraising campaign.





As we move forward together we ask that you, our friends and supporters, consider L'Arche Avalon when making your year-end charitable donations. Your friendship and your financial support are important to us and very much welcomed. You may donate through Canada Helps (<https://canadahelps.org/en/dn/19060>), by mail (L'Arche Avalon, P.O. Box 1573, Stn C, St. John's, A1C 5P3) or directly at one of our gatherings or activities.

We are approaching the Christmas season, a wonderful time of the year. The members of the Board of Directors hope that each of you will be able to share some of this special time with your family and friends. I wish each and every one of you a very blessed and happy holiday season and good health and happiness in 2020.

Warmest wishes  
Lewis B. Andrews  
Chair, Board of Directors  
L'Arche Avalon

Our Charitable Registration Number is 810255042RR0001

