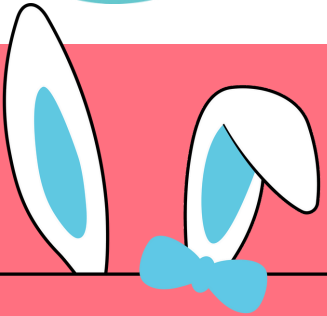
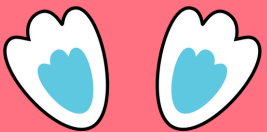


L'ARCHE HAMILTON CONNECTIONS



Easter Edition 2025



Sarah's Corner

Events

Inclusion CoffeeHouse

Children & Youth

Wish List

664 Main Street East
Hamilton, Ontario
L8M 1K2
www.larchehamilton.org

SARAH'S CORNER

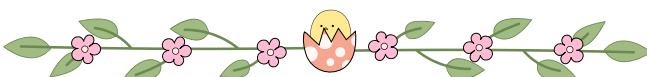
Sarah Tuck, Community Leader



Over the past two months, our Board and Assistant body have been participating in an organizational health assessment, reflecting on our strengths and needs as an organization amidst a number of changes we've experienced over the past several years and continue to experience as we grow and evolve. As part of the process, we were invited to share about things that we love about L'Arche - things that fulfill us in our roles. For me, two clear answers came to mind right away, which are both things I experience on a daily basis. **The first is L'Arche's gift of accepting and celebrating people.** We have such a wonderfully diverse community full of the most fascinating people – this extends not only to our Core Members and Assistants, but also our friends, family, volunteers.

One recent example that comes to mind is Steven's birthday celebration, held at the beginning of April. Steven doesn't particularly like birthdays in their traditional form, so a lot of thought and care was put into tailoring his celebration to him. It was truly a delight to see people catering to his preferences – sliding into the room through the "car wash" streamers that were hung, making broken banjo jokes, giving him his favourite gifts (and celebrating as he ripped the wrapping off - one of his favourite parts), playing and singing his favourite songs and so much more. Steven was the life of his party! He was laughing, making jokes, and enjoying himself – he seemed to me like the best version of himself, and it was such a privilege to see him be known, to be celebrated for the incredible person he is, and to hear each person share and show their appreciation for him.

(Continued on next page...)



The second gift of L'Arche that came to mind is the openness and willingness of our community members to take risks and to reach out beyond themselves. We have so many projects, outreach and various initiatives (which you'll read about in this newsletter) to share and to help shape a more inclusive and joyful world, but these don't all just happen on their own – they take a willingness of the community to plan, to engage, to lead...all of which have been supported with a heart-filled "YES"!

One of our greatest leaders in this area is Christopher. Christopher is visually impaired and uses a wheelchair, but despite this, he is, quite literally, one of the first to jump up enthusiastically to greet someone or to join in an activity - whether it be dancing, singing, etc. He is thrilled to welcome and meet new people, and he makes each one feel special with the nicknames he gives them. I admire the way he has embraced the newest members of our Day Program, taking time to sit with them and get to know them; asking questions; making jokes; reaching out to touch their hands – it is so refreshing to see, and a gift to these new members.

As we look ahead to a time of growth for L'Arche Hamilton as we continue to grow our Day Programs and explore opportunities to create new housing, I am reflecting on how these gifts come together so wonderfully to fulfill our mission. We have seen and lived the beauty that each person brings to the community, so we welcome with joy each new person and each new opportunity, knowing that they have gifts that are waiting to be revealed, just as the flowers reveal themselves in Spring.

As we gather to celebrate Easter, I want you to know how much we value your well wishes, your prayers and your support. On behalf of all of us here at L'Arche Hamilton, we wish you a Happy Easter and a beautiful spring.

~ Sarah



INCLUSION
— coffeehouse —

Spring Events

MAR 6	Pajama Party Wear your fav PJs and join for music, dance, movie, art, cookie decorating (\$2 donation) and more! 10am-1pm; FREE, no RSVP required
MAR 11	Free Music with Cindy & Steve 11AM
MAR 27	Free Music with Charissa 11AM
APR 10	Free Music with Craig Robertson 11AM
APR 29	Art with Art Gallery of Hamilton 11AM, Free, RSVP via paige@larchehamilton.org , limited spots available
MAY 8	Pond Collage Art with Ashlynn 11AM, \$10, RSVP via paige@larchehamilton.org
MAY 27	Soap Making 11AM, \$10, RSVP via paige@larchehamilton.org , limited spots available

BERNIE MORELLI RECREATION CENTRE

L'ARCHE HAMILTON

EASTER PARTY

APRIL 21ST 2025
11:30AM-2:30PM
Faith United Church
842 Main St E Hamilton

COME AND JOIN US FOR EASTER GAMES, FOOD AND FUN!

PLEASE RSVP TO JOHN
JOHN@LARCHEHAMILTON.ORG

A Cup of Cheer and Change at Inclusion Coffeehouse

2024 was a year of community, creativity, and connection at our Inclusion Coffeehouse. We began the year with the goal of expanding our hours to better serve our neighbours—and we did it! Thursdays are now part of our weekly schedule, giving us more opportunities to share coffee, conversation, and kindness.

We also celebrated a very special new arrival—Dave and Nina welcomed their baby boy! While Dave was on parental leave, we were thrilled to welcome Ginelle, Coleson, and Rushi as our new coffeehouse managers, alongside a stellar crew of new baristas.

Serving Up New Flavours

This year, we added some delicious new items to our menu, including bagel sandwiches, paninis, and quiche, all topped with gourmet flair. Whether you were grabbing a quick lunch or lingering over a latte, there was always something fresh and satisfying on offer.

Sweet Summer Moments

We loved connecting with neighbours at the Open Streets Festival, where we handed out chocolate chip cookies and cold brew coffee. And who could forget our three-day Christmas in July celebration? With umbrella-topped hot chocolate and gingerbread ice cream sandwiches, we made sure everyone got a little taste of holiday magic in the summertime.

A Creative Fall Season

Autumn brought even more vibrancy to the coffeehouse. We were delighted to welcome musician Jay Erlich—introduced through the Hamilton Musicians Guild—who performed his original music for us. We were also honoured to be featured in *The Libretto* magazine.

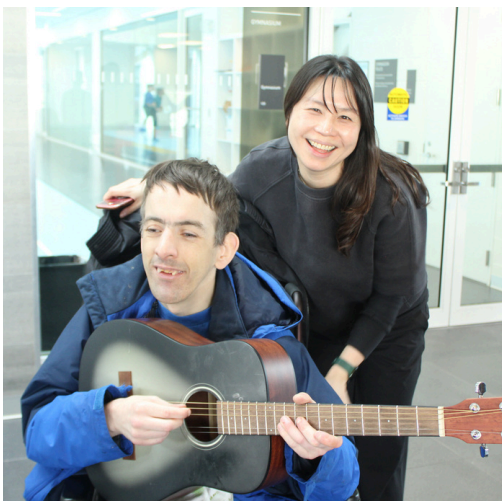
Thanks to the Dundas Valley School of Art, free community workshops in collage and watercolour brought new inspiration to our space. And our kids and youth after-school art program, led by Ashlynn and Jessica, was a huge hit! From beach glass ornaments to oil pastel creations, young artists got to explore their creativity twice a week with guidance from local art mentors.

Skating Into the New Year

We closed out the year with warmth and joy at the New Year's Eve skating party hosted by Councillor Nringer Nann at Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre. Our cookies and hot chocolate added just the right touch of coziness—and even Michael Barry dusted off his skates for the occasion!

Looking Ahead with Gratitude

From all of us at Inclusion Coffeehouse, thank you for being part of our story thus far. Your support, smiles, and shared moments fuel everything we do. We're baking up lots of fun throughout 2025—and we can't wait to share it with you.



Children & Youth Art Project

With support from a grant from the Hamilton Community Foundation, and the help of our Core Members, L'Arche Hamilton has hosted two multi-week sessions of art expression programs for children and youth at the Inclusion CoffeeHouse. Now that the latest session has wrapped up, we'd love to share a note from Ashlynn, the program leader, reflecting on the impact she witnessed.

"L'Arche Hamilton's Youth Arts workshops have become a haven for young people of all ages, abilities & walks of life to come and socialize, have a nutritious snack, engage in a new craft or skill, and walk away with a sense of community, connection & mastery.

There was one interaction I had with a girl which I'll never forget: as a vulnerable youth coming from a challenging home life, she had so much beautiful wisdom and energy and I could tell was holding back a lot from engaging with the craft. After encouraging her to join & be part of the workshop, her seemingly endless talents for drawing, and affinities for herbalism, crafting, tattooing, & nature began to shine through.

At the end of the craft while cleaning up, I asked how she would get home, to which she answered, 'a 40 minute walk', as transit was too expensive. It was in this moment I realized how humbled I should be for the opportunity to commute via bus, or have family offer to give me rides. Not every young person is guaranteed this privilege...

The next week, we had another beautiful conversation and I told her that despite the hardness of this world at times, she had this innate softness & beauty cultivated within. I told her to never lose touch with that gift"

Thank you Ashlynn for helping this young woman see the gifts inside of her, and for helping lead dozens of young people on this journey of expression and confidence!



Jessica (L) and Ashlynn (R)



Wish List



OUR HOUSES ARE SEARCHING FOR A FEW ITEMS, IF YOU HAVE EXTRAS TO DONATE:

The Ladies Bungalow (Support Independent Living) would love a narrow shelving unit they could use for pots & pans in the kitchen – the ladies love to cook!

Charbonneau House is hoping for an exercise cycle, new cushions for their backyard swing, some pyrex and baking dishes, sturdy plastic containers with lids for lunches, new bedding for twin & double beds and some larger outdoor flower pots – gardening season is almost here!

The Day Programs would love a karaoke microphone and bluetooth speaker for all our talented singers!!

To donate any of these items, please contact Sue at office@larchehamilton.org or call 905-312-0162

To be added to CONNECTIONS email distribution list email marianne@larchehamilton.org.
Read past issues of Connections on our website www.larchehamilton.org/newsletter.html