



L'ARCHE HAMILTON CONNECTIONS

Spring 2026



Sarah's Corner

Sarah Tuck, Community Leader



One of my favourite aspects of life in L'Arche is getting to spend time every day with people who are different than me -- in background, experience and perspective. I find it's one of the greatest sources of a broader, more balanced worldview as well as my own personal growth. One of the people who has impacted me significantly in my growth journey is Sandi, with whom I've traversed both highs and lows. Sandi introduced me to the Tiger-Cats, and we've enjoyed many games together. We celebrate being aunts, we have travelled together, shared many phone calls and coffees, and I appreciate her capacity to call just to say hello. At the same time, we have sat together through grief and loss, broken bones and life changes. One thing that constantly amazes me about Sandi is her capacity for joy and optimism. In both easy and hard times, she lives with a sense of calm assurance that is remarkable, especially to someone like me, who is quite prone to worrying.

A while back, I noticed a phrase that Sandi uses quite often when speaking to others: "I don't know right now." Sandi might invite me to her birthday party, and when I ask when it will be, she says, "I don't know right now." If I ask where she wants to travel next—"I don't know right now." Whenever something is uncertain, that's her answer.

In no way does Sandi use this phrase to shut down or shy away from a conversation, nor is it said with anxiety or distress. To the contrary, she asserts it with a calmness that says, "I don't know right now, but I will know sometime." To me, the "right now" is what makes all the difference. It's an approach to life that models how we don't have to have all the right answers in the moment to move ahead, to plan, to celebrate, to process. It's a trust that all will be revealed in its time, and to its purpose - and it is inspiring! Her optimism is contagious!

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Spring / Easter
2026



Sarah's Corner

Wish List & Events

Active in our
Community!

Meet Dave!

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Sandi's outlook on life reminds me of a scripture verse I often reflect on, one I think may speak to all of us, regardless of our religious convictions.

And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you— you of little faith? (Matthew 6: 28-30)

This is a message that I need to hear over and over again - a reminder to let go of my worries and fears, to trust, and to enjoy the richness of life! Especially as a Community Leader, someone who is generally expected to have most - if not all- of the answers, it is so refreshing and important to be around someone like Sandi who teaches me that it's okay to say. "I don't know right now."

As we enter into Spring, I invite you to journey with Sandi and I into a place of not knowing, but trusting. May we look forward in eager anticipation to all the blessings waiting to bloom, both in our hearts and in our gardens. On behalf of all of us here at L'Arche Hamilton, we wish you a Happy Easter and a beautiful spring.

~ Sarah



Wish list+

DID YOU KNOW that there are many ways you can support L'Arche Hamilton? Just like every household, things in our five homes break down or need replacing all the time. If you have any items you could donate, we'd be most appreciative. Please contact Sue at office@larchehamilton.org for more info.

CORNERSTONE: Standing water dispenser

HOLTON HOUSE: a shoe rack and photo frames of different sizes

LADIES BUNGALOW: the ladies are looking to clean up with a corn broom and a sturdy garbage can on wheels



INCLUSION coffeehouse - SPRING Event... Schedule

- THURS APR 9 AT 11 AM → Music by Minuscule
- TUES APR 14 AT 11 AM → Music by George
- THURS APR 23 AT 11 AM → Music by Andrew Bentham-Riley
- THURS APR 30 AT 11 AM → Art Workshop with DVSA. RSVP paige@larchehamilton.org, free
- TUES MAY 5 AT 11 AM → Music by Caroline Wiles Downman
- TUES MAY 12 AT 11 AM → Book Tour: Bits and Pieces by Jessica Compton & Music by Ashley Bell Ham
- THURS MAY 21 AT 11 AM → Music by Sam & Robin
- THURS MAY 28 AT 11 AM → Recycled Kits Workshop with Ashlyn. RSVP paige@larchehamilton.org, free
- TUES JUNE 2 AT 11 AM → Presentations by Josh Wyrigaarden. Life on the Autism Spectrum
- TUES JUNE 9 AT 11 AM → Music by Mia Romantica
- TUES JUNE 23 AT 11 AM → Music by Cindy & Steve

Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre
876 Cannon Street East, Hamilton @larcheinclusioncoffeehouse

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

Active in our Community, @ the Inclusion CoffeeHouse & beyond!

Spring is in the air after a cold and snowy winter, and Inclusion Coffeehouse is welcoming the warmer days with friendly hellos and fresh-baked treats!

We always have something new to offer, including seasonal cookies, cupcakes, hot cross buns, and more. It's been a busy winter, with music and art events almost every week. We've welcomed talented emerging musicians like Ava Hickey, Luiz Grante, and Suyeon Kim. We hosted a cozy pajama party, helped by a **visiting group from Gannon University**, along with musician Charissa.



We all had an icy blast participating in the **Frostbites Festival** in February. Hosted by the Hamilton Theatre Company, Frostbites is similar to the Fringe Festival, but with a winter twist. The festival took place at Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre, home to the Coffeehouse, and featured activities like lantern making, community and Indigenous marketplaces, synchronized skating, and a light procession. We were delighted to be part of the event and to serve many neighbours who don't usually have the chance to visit us during our regular hours. We received wonderful feedback from all! **Make sure to check out our spring events calendar, with even more art and music to come.**

Dave, our longtime Coffeehouse Manager has moved on to the role of L'Arche Hamilton's Spiritual & and Community Life Coordinator. We're grateful for all he has contributed and look forward to seeing him drop by for coffee. A big welcome to our **new CoffeeHouse Manager Hyewon**, who has joined us from L'Arche Stratford. We are excited to have her on our team!



This season, David Cervenak and Philip have been contributing as music library specialists at **INDI Radio 101.5 FM**, helping to convert CDs into digital music libraries. Michael has also been sharing his DJ talents, and in February, David had the opportunity to share some of his favourite songs and speak about his cultural heritage on the radio.

We've also been enjoying regular visits to **Theatre Aquarius**, which generously provides us with monthly passes to their community theatre productions.

This winter, our friend Gaby entered a beautiful, one-of-a-kind piece in the **Cotton Factory Winterfest Young Artist Exhibit** titled The Magic of Santa's Hat. The exhibit was so successful that it was extended by an additional month. We also continue to visit **Max**, a former Inclusion Coffeehouse Core Member who is now working at the **McMaster Bistro**. It's always a joy to see him welcoming guests with kindness and care.

In February, we participated in **Cathedral Secondary School's** Coffeehouse, where students shared their music and artwork while raising funds for a service trip to the Dominican Republic. We were grateful for the opportunity to share L'Arche art and our mission with the school community. We also took part in the **TrueCity Festival**, joining other local ministries in sharing about our work. We love being part of all your communities!





Meet Dave

Dave Drenth is definitely not new to L'Arche Hamilton. He has been a part of us for years – as a live-in assistant, as our volunteer coordinator, our CoffeeHouse manager, and more. We are so glad that he has stepped into a new role here, as our Spiritual & Community Life Coordinator. We've invited Dave to introduce himself and share a glimpse of his heart for this role.



Dave, Nina & family

I was first introduced to L'Arche by someone I volunteered with at a local social-enterprise café. Her name is Janice. I was so intrigued by the way that she spoke so fondly of her home and the story that shaped the traditions of her community. What struck me most was how much she wanted me to know L'Arche and meet her community, even though she knew relatively little about my background. My accomplishments seemed to matter less to her than who I was as a person. When the opportunity to become a live-in assistant arose, I jumped on it.

Living at Sherman House was different from anything I had done before. I would wake up before 7:00 and go downstairs to meet my friends, Richard and Doris. I would stomp on the floor outside of Richard's bedroom so that the vibrations in the floor would let him know that I was there. He would greet me with a huge, infectious grin. He was so excited to be awake that I almost liked being awake!

The three of us would quickly fall into our shared routine of making coffee. Richard would dramatically open and close cupboards or throw coffee grounds into a mug. Doris would toss us a spoon to use and give a fist-pump celebration when I caught it (or a resigned shrug when I didn't). We would sit and drink our beverages in silence, communicating our appreciation of each other through familiar expressions and body language.

This slowness and mutuality was so different from the pace of school and work that had defined much of my life before L'Arche. As I continued to live and work in the community, I fell more and more in love with the simple, repeated and embodied practices that made-up our days together. They became "liturgies" that shaped me into becoming aware of the God who is present within and around all of us.

As I enter into this new role of Community and Spiritual Life Coordinator I am aware of how much I still have to learn and grow, but as a starting point for my work I have a few tentative guiding principals that have come from my reflections on the spirituality of L'Arche. Here are a few of those reflections:

Remain focused on Core Members. The heart of L'Arche has always been the relationships we share. Core Members continually teach us what it means to be human. There are so many wonderful teachers in our community who can show us how to be joyful, empathetic, sincere, playful and more.

Value simple traditions and rhythms. Many of the most meaningful parts of life at L'Arche are simple, repeated practices: sharing meals, caring for a home together, popcorn on Friday nights, community gatherings, house meetings and coffee together in the morning. These rhythms remind us of the sacredness of everyday life.

Create opportunities for transforming relationships. Welcome and hospitality have always been central to L'Arche. Storytellers and sages in our community, like Janice, are the people who can teach us how to use the gift of welcome and hospitality to people who haven't encountered L'Arche yet, and programs like Inclusion Coffeehouse are beautiful spaces where I've valued witnessing Core Members, volunteers and neighbours encountering each other in unique, beautiful ways.

A quote that really describes the experience of L'Arche well is from Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, where he says: "When two people relate to each other authentically and humanly, God is the electricity that surges between them." As I enter into this new chapter I am feeling grateful that we have decades of history of Core Members who have been practicing this human, authentic relationship on a daily basis. As these Core Members invite new assistants and friends into these daily "liturgies" I know that our community will enter further into a deep sense of belonging and life of joy.

Peace, Dave

