



L'ARCHE HAMILTON CONNECTIONS

He is Risen



SARAH'S CORNER

Sarah Tuck, Community Leader



Through the years, I've come to notice a phenomenon in my life, where over a few weeks or months, a theme or message reappears over and over in my life in various ways, as if waiting to be fully received. These past few months, the recurring theme has been about welcome. It began about 6 weeks ago when we were meeting with a group of new Assistants. As a group, we spent some time talking about key traditions in L'Arche including things like celebrations, mealtimes, and more. When we talked about welcoming in L'Arche, I felt deeply touched to hear all of their stories of welcome. Of course, there were the obvious things - a special meal, a welcome sign or card, flowers or a goodie basket - but embedded in their stories was something deeper than that - they talked about the moment they felt truly understood or accepted in the home - the little signs a Core Member had given, or even the fact that they realized they were missed while they were gone, even after such a short time in the home.

The next reminder of welcome was at an event in our Inclusion Coffeehouse. I was already overwhelmed by the incredible turnout we had - nearly 100 people of all different ages, abilities and backgrounds who came for one of our free concerts and were very clearly enjoying themselves. To add to the moment, one of the musicians then shared a song he was inspired to write, based on his experience of welcome and being touched by the members who serve out of our Inclusion Coffeehouse. Wow! What a sign of the impact even small moments can have on an individual!
(Continued on next page...)



Easter Edition
2024



Sarah's Corner

Blood Drive

Inclusion CoffeeHouse

Upcoming Events

Wish List

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



To wrap it all up, and to ensure a couple of joyful tears were shed, I was then privileged to witness a woman with an intellectual disability confidently make her way up to the front of the room, and as she began to dance, enraptured in the music, she paved the way for others, and soon there was a small group dancing together. Some were even total strangers, yet they were sharing something special together.

The third display of welcome came when I entered the Day Program one afternoon to see a beautiful art piece that one of our Assistants, Emma, created for Steven. It shows Steven, along with his many many catchphrases like "You broke the banjo" "Welcome to the Day Program" "I'm the bus driver" and more. While I appreciate the piece visually, what really struck me was how it is truly a celebration of all that Steven is and the joy he brings to our community. Posted up in his little corner of the Day Program, it is a visual sign of the welcome and acceptance we all give and receive here in L'Arche - we aren't just known, we are celebrated for who we are.

This theme of welcome has come at a perfect time as of course, we welcome spring and the warmer weather, longer days, and beautiful blooms, but also because we are in the process of welcoming again as a community! In January, we fully opened our second Day Program - Creative Connections - as an expansion to our services. This means that we have been able to welcome back many of the Core Members in our community who live with their families or in other places in the community, but have been unable to attend in person until now.

We have also been able to welcome some new Core Members, who come looking forward to building relationships and having meaningful day time activities. Having two programs allows us greater flexibility in what we offer for programming, so we've been able to explore new options along with Core Members, such as sports, arts programming, volunteering and more! I was fortunate to be present one morning when John, one of our live-out Core Members returned for the first time to the Day Program. The sheer joy with which he entered the building, and the enthusiasm of the assistants as they welcomed their friend, has left a lasting impression on me.

This theme of welcome that I've been reflecting on has really helped me over the past couple of months to recognize how important the work we do collectively in L'Arche is. We of course create homes and programs of welcome for people with disabilities, but we do much more. We create a place of belonging for assistants and friends of L'Arche. We create spaces of inclusion for a variety of people in the greater community. We inspire others through our testaments of relationship and love. We bring hope, acceptance and healing.

As we journey into Easter and spring, I invite you to join me in reflecting on this theme of welcome, and to join L'Arche as we live out our mission to create a world where everyone belongs. ~ Sarah



IT'S IN YOU TO GIVE

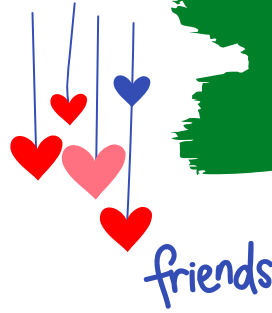
Many of us were inspired this past year to make blood donations in memory of Melinda Moote, our dear friend and former assistant who died as a result of a blood disorder. We have set up a L'Arche Hamilton team for Canadian Blood Services (CBS) with a 2024 goal of 50 blood donations!

Want to join our team? If you are already a blood donor, it's simple: visit <https://myaccount.blood.ca/en/join-team/LARC0115786> to join. Any time you make a donation it counts towards our total. If you've never donated but have thought about it or want to, we invite to find out more. You will need to set up a donor account with Canadian Blood Services first and ensure you qualify, but you can then join the team by visiting the link above.

We also do team donations at CBS's Hamilton location! Our next group blood donation is Tuesday, April 9th at 12 noon, and we plan to do this every 3 months or so. Once you join our team, you will have visibility to our team donations and can book yourself to join us at them. We will send email notifications to team members when these appointments will be taking place.

Please email John (john@larchehamilton.org) if you have any questions.





All You Knead is Love Inclusion CoffeeHouse

LOTS OF LOVE at Inclusion CoffeeHouse these days! If you haven't been to or heard of Inclusion Coffeehouse, it is a special place. It's not just somewhere to purchase coffee, but it's really a community of love. People with and without disabilities come together to create a community space where people can learn and grow from each other, often listening to some great tunes or creating unique art. It's not uncommon to see people up on their feet moon-walking or showing off their newly created art piece. From awesome new programming... to our wonderful new team on Thursdays... to the love baked into the yummy treats...and to the **very best news, a new baby!!**... there's lots to be grateful for this Spring.

Yes, a new baby is in town! Dave, our CoffeeHouse Manager and his wife, Nina, have welcomed a new baby boy, Willem. It didn't take long for Willem to demand that mom and dad bring him by to check out all the fun at the CoffeeHouse. We're happy to report that he approved and is now our newest customer.



We're also excited to announce that **we have new hours!** Inclusion Coffeehouse is now open on Thursday mornings in addition to our regular Tuesday and Wednesday. So, we are now open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings 10am-1pm. We have a great team on Thursdays and want to welcome baristas Julie, Chris, Josh, Christine, Emma and Ginelle!



This Fall, we started some new art programming for kids and youth at Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre. We invited local artists to share their art with us, from music lessons to sew your own creatures to expressing emotion using oil pastels. Kids and youth came from the local neighbourhood including students from Bernie Custis Secondary School to express their creative side and enjoy some treats from Inclusion CoffeeHouse too. Maylor and a new core member, Robert, led the program. It was cool to see youth sharing their art – we overheard one student tell the other just how profound this experience and their creations were to them.

We're always looking for new members of the Inclusion CoffeeHouse community. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact our office. We currently have a waiting list for people with disabilities to volunteer. To be added to our waitlist, please email Paige via paige@larchehamilton.org. And if you are able to help those with disabilities participating in our program, even one morning a week, I'd love to connect with you. With your help we can expand our CoffeeHouse program and welcome even more people to join us.

~ Paige McIsaac



We are grateful to welcome CN as an official sponsor of our Inclusion CoffeeHouse project.





INCLUSION COFFEEHOUSE

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL & MAY

ART WITH ART GALLERY OF HAMILTON, 11AM, \$12
PAIGE@LARCHEHAMILTON.ORG **APR 11**

APR 16 FREE LIVE MUSIC WITH ROCK N' ROLL BAND 11AM

STAINED GLASS WATERCOLOUR, 11AM, \$8
PAIGE@LARCHEHAMILTON.ORG **MAY 9**

MAY 28 RICH HAMELIN FREE LIVE MUSIC!, 11AM



Good Friday Social Justice Walk: Join us at New Vision United Church (24 Main St W, Hamilton) at noon for our ecumenical stations of the cross walk. We will be hosting station 10 (Jesus is crucified). At the end of the walk (at 2pm) we will have a Solidarity Soup lunch together (walk ends at St Paul's Presbyterian on James St). For more details and to stay updated, follow the walk on Instagram or Facebook (goodfridayjusticewalkhamont)

VICTORIA DAY BBQ: May 20th, 11:30-2 at our office parking lot.

CANADA DAY BBQ: July 1, 11-3 at Confederation Park.

A reminder that we list all of our events in the Weekly Wave in the Community Corner section. Ensure you're checking it out for info on all of our community events! And follow us on Facebook and Instagram @larchehamilton and @larcheinclusioncoffeehouse



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

- The Ladies Bungalow (Support Independent Living)** would love a new hand mixer and some kitchen shelves
- Cornerstone** is looking for a Ninja blender, portable clothes steamer, outdoor porch furniture & carpet and a bread box
- Sherman** is in search of full-size bath towels, soup bowls, a stackable washer/dryer and a sturdy dining table & chairs
- Holton** is looking for a portable clothes steamer, juicer, cake mixer, paper shredder & projector screen with stand
- Charbonneau** is in need of new cushions for their backyard swing, outdoor furniture and towel sets
- Day Program** is searching for 1-2 bean bag chairs, an insta max mini camera and two passes to the Royal Botanical Gardens
- Office** is in need of three new desk chairs

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