

In the Boat



L'ARCHE
EDMONTON

together building community

We are people with and without intellectual disabilities, sharing life in community

UPCOMING EVENTS

Prayer Night followed by Soup and Bread Supper

Theme: **Presbyterian Service- Connie Lee**

When: **Monday, September 12, 2011**

Time: 4:30 PM

Where: L'Arche Centre (10310-56 Street)

For information about community events please contact Maria

At 780.465.0618 ext. 206

Email: mmastrih@larcheedmonton.org

Lunch with L'Arche

When: Every Friday

Cost: \$4 Drop-In or \$15/month

Time: 12:00 PM—1:00 PM

Where: L'Arche Centre (10310-56 Street)

For information, please contact Alice

At 780.465.0618 ext. 224

Email: alicen@larcheedmonton.org

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR OUR
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday, September 21st
L'Arche Centre at 7:00 pm

This meeting provides an opportunity for all of us to become re-acquainted or more familiar with L'Arche. Come out and meet the current Board as they present the past year and hopes for the future year. Come and share your experiences and thoughts over refreshments

A Reflection on Community Living-

Elif Karakucuk, Summer Assistant at Noah House until July 31st

My initial impression of communal living before I departed for my placement was that it was going to be tough and possibly infringe upon my personal space. Actually, I had this wild idea that 20 people live in the same L'Arche house together! There grew a fear in me that I would not be able to compromise my independence in a house of so many people and I thought surely conflicts will arise. I suppose I didn't initially see a whole lot of point in living in the house where you work, either. But still, I was optimistic and open to the experience. To my great surprise, it turned out that there are no more than 4 assistants (3 now) and 4 core members living together in my house, and not 20 people! What a relief! And the dynamic of respect for one's personal space and trust for each other was also wonderful.



Margaret & Richard

Yet, sleeping and eating in the house where you also work still didn't quite fit well in my mind. What did it mean to be a live-in assistant? Where did community life fit with L'Arche, and why was it such an essential component? As the days went on, I came to realize that the space we shared as assistants and core members, the space of the house, of the community, rested on minute details and intricate human relationships. One person's headache could affect the entire house, a missing signature on the medication records could mean a whole night's suffering for a core member, a wrong tone of voice could influence how the next hour is spent. Everything, everything rests on a fine balance in a L'Arche home, everything is so interconnected. This kind of interconnectedness I had never seen so up close before, and it's really fascinating because it almost works like parts in a mechanical machine, or the balance in nature. In fact, the rhythm and routines of the house started to become second nature to me after my first month in L'Arche. There came a time when I could sense how a core member was feeling by the way they walked, or what chores needed to be done before anyone said anything, and all was understood without much speaking. I began to understand why a core member or an assistant was behaving the way they do, I began to be more receptive and attentive. Little by little, I am chipping away at my own ego and becoming more giving to others, but also to myself, in a different way.

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In his book "Global Conscience," Douglas Roche often likens being human to understanding human relationships, and our relationship with the Earth, and knowing that we are responsible for our actions. L'Arche can be described as a mini planet, what Roche calls our "global home." L'Arche is a "global home" on a smaller scale, a system where each action depends on another action, and each action is pregnant with patience and moral conscientiousness.

In effect, Roche's theory that we are all responsible for our global home, the planet, applies also to a L'Arche home. In L'Arche we are all responsible for each other. When I first arrived I thought that the Assistants are responsible for the core members and that's it, but it goes deeper. Since I have opened up my heart to being in mutual relationship with the core members, I know now that Pete will take care of me when I have a headache, or Joyce will help to clean the table when we are understaffed and desperately need an extra pair of hands. I am responsible for the well being of the core members as they are also for me.

We are living in a shared space, but more than that, we are living in communion as Jean Vanier had himself intended. We are living in a habitat just like nature, where each act is carefully thought out, and each act plants a seed for a tree to grow. Being a live-in assistant means more than just living where you work, it means interconnectedness, it means one person's laughter is your happiness, it means there is time to cultivate human relationships, it means there is trust and love. That is communion.

We Need Each Other

We are part of a common humanity, a universal body in which every individual is important and has a place. We are not made to be solitary heroes, "admirable" people, but to be fully and profoundly human, each in his or her place, with his or her gifts and limitations, in the body of humanity.

-Jean Vanier-Our Journey Home



Kana & Bob

Thanks to Everyone who joined us for our Open House on August 25th!

Summer 2011



Cecile, Mwando & Rima



Victoria & Olga



Kenyo, Janice & Honey



Jeff & Alan

Prayer Requests

We ask for prayers of comfort and healing for all who are dealing with physical, emotional or spiritual challenges. We pray especially for:

- ◆ Carlton George as he mourns the recent loss of his father Emmanuel George.
- ◆ Jo Lenon, L'Arche Lethbridge as she mourns the death of her mother *Daisy Wilson*
- ◆ For friends and family members of the community who are unwell or going through transition at this time.
- ◆ For *Landys Klyne, Vice Regional Coordinator* who is recovering from recent surgery.
- ◆ In thanksgiving for all our friends, families and donors who support us emotionally, spiritually, materially and financially.
- ◆ All L'Arche Communities in the world. We pray especially for all members of L'Arche Western Canada Region as we prepare for our Regional Pilgrimage, *Pilgrims Together* this month..