

GRATITUDE

The L'Arche Winnipeg Newsletter June 2025 Issue 96



50 years & BEYOND



Photos from our 21st Annual Walk with L'Arche



Anita dancing to the Blues Tunes

Walk with L'Arche: Spreading our Wings One Step at a Time



Erin Sawatzky
Community Events

*"Mama told me not
to waste my life,
she said, spread
your wings, my little butterfly"*

- Wings, by Little Mix

On a hot, blustery day in May, over 360 people came together to walk in support of L'Arche Winnipeg. Gathering at a new venue in Transcona, participants warmed up with Zumba, strolled down the Transcona Trail, danced to bluesy tunes, vied for prize baskets, and visited over burgers with friends new and old. The community support we receive for this annual event is amazing, with hundreds of people contributing their time and

resources in support and celebration of our core members.

"I liked MC'ing the event," shared Jordan, who co-emceed the program after the walk. "I liked how everybody came and I did a good job - that was fun!" When asking our core members what made the day special for them, almost every one of them talked about the ways they took leadership and shared their gifts.



Jordan emceeing the event program

"I got to speak the announcements at the beginning of the walk," shared Jennifer, one of L'Arche Winnipeg's newest members. "I spoke loudly and clearly, and everybody could

understand what I was saying."

The L'Arche community dance performance was a highlight, which was planned by core members at Community Circle. They chose the song "Wings" by Little Mix, and helped choreograph the routine with their favourite dance moves. Decked out in feather boas, it was fitting that together the group sang - "these wings are made to fly!"

Empowering people with disabilities is what we're all about, and our annual Walk with L'Arche events play a key roll in making that happen. Not only does the walk draw our core members into leadership roles during the event itself, but it's our biggest annual fundraiser — supporting the community programming, events, and transportation required to help each person thrive as their needs and dreams change.

As our community dreams up plans for our future, we know that

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our dreams are only possible because of the support we receive from our community!

Thank you so much to everyone who joined us for this year's Walk with L'Arche! Together, we raised over \$53,700, a remarkable achievement that directly supports our ongoing and upcoming programs. Your support helps us continue building a community where everyone belongs, and we can't wait to spread our wings and soar into the future together!

21ST ANNUAL VICKAR AUTOMOTIVE GROUP WALK WITH L'ARCHE

MEDIA PARTNERS



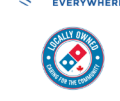
EVENT PARTNERS



GFS



RECYCLE EVERYWHERE



COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS

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Lori Hiebert
Maggi's Syrian Food
Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries
Midwest Carpets
MTYP
Pizzeria Gusto
Rainbow Stage

Root 37 Hair Designs
Rumor's Comedy Club
Shawn Martens
Sookram's Brewing Co.
Sous Sol
Sugar Blossom Jewelry
The Keg Steakhouse
The Hive Climbing
Transcona Golf Club
Transcona Salon Spa
U-Puttz Amusement Centre
Winnipeg Art Gallery
YIP Fitness
Zealous Medi Spa

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Mentoring Each Other at the L'Arche Tova Cafe



Jubilee Dueck Thiessen

Communications & Fund Development Coordinator

Every Wednesday, Murray and Holli volunteer together at the café. They arrive at around 8:45, greeting each other with a smile and a hug. As customers enter, they work together to greet and seat them: "Welcome to the L'Arche Tova Café! Our names are Murray and Holli, we volunteer together on Wednesdays and mentor each-other. Can we get you started with anything to drink?"

If you order coffee, Murray will come pour you a cup while Holli brings over the cream. Once you're finished eating, they work together to clean your table – Murray clears away the dishes and Holli wipes down the table, before setting new place settings for their next guests. The two



Holli & Murray at the L'Arche Tova Cafe make a great team, and their willingness to learn from each other is what fuels their teamwork.

"We can all learn from each other," says Murray, who has been volunteering with L'Arche Winnipeg for over 9 years – first as a maintenance assistant at the homes mowing lawns, clearing snow, and painting walls, and now as a serving assistant at the Tova Café for the past 3 years. He enjoys getting to know the café staff and customers, and he loves working with Holli.

Holli has been volunteering at the L'Arche Tova Café for just over a year, and she loves helping and getting to know the customers she

serves. As a long-time Transcona resident, volunteering at the café has helped her to feel more connected and celebrated in her home community.

The pair takes time to chat and connect with their customers, always building upon past connections with the regulars. For Murray and Holli, this is what the L'Arche Tova Café is all about: including others and being included; supporting others while being supported. As café volunteers, Murray and Holli receive as much as they give – often even more.

The café's community-centred —
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approach celebrates each person's unique gifts and abilities, providing opportunities for everyone to belong in community. As Murray and Holli share their gifts and contribute to the cafe in their own unique ways, they learn from each other.

In every cup poured and every

table set, Murray and Holli show us that true community is built not just by what we give, but by how we grow together.

Want to volunteer at the L'Arche Tova Cafe? Email Volunteer Coordinator Maureen for more information:

volunteer@larchewinnipeg.org



Experiencing Eden: Disability in the Natural World



Jubilee Dueck Thiessen

Communications & Fund Development Coordinator

Where do you see beauty? What helps you make sense of your place in the world? For many of our core members with intellectual disabilities, the answer is simple: spending time in nature.

Last month, our community gathered with local artist Danielle Fontaine Koslowsky to talk about art, beauty, and identity—what makes us who we are. We shared stories of walking through parks, of noticing flowers popping up outside, of our favorite colors like sky blue, lavender, and mango. We shared about how nature makes us feel: calm, joyful, capable, and included.

As we listened to one another, a

common theme emerged: the power of nature to reflect and reveal our shared humanity.

We each move through the world in our own unique way, and our experiences, contexts, and relationships shape how we experience the world. As humans, we are part of ecosystems – and we experience who we are as people when we engage with the natural world around us. Our relationship with nature reveals the interdependence, vulnerability, and diversity of our humanity, announcing our place in the family of things.

Through art, we share how we—people with and without disabilities—perceive the world in beautifully different ways. Our senses bring us color, texture, scent, and sound, helping us connect to ourselves and the world around us.



Rolande at Community Circle

Later this summer we are opening an art exhibit in celebration of that connection—of the ways we experience life through beauty and joy. Join us Thursday, August 7th at [le Maison des Artistes Visuels](#) for the opening of “Experiencing Eden: disability and the natural world.” Through this exhibit, our core members invite you into their perspectives as people with disabilities – sharing their unique experiences of nature through touch, sight, and sound.

“I want people to feel like it's a birthday party, like it's a celebration!” said Gina, one of our core members. And that's exactly what this exhibit hopes to do: to welcome you into a celebration of life, community, and shared humanity.

In the Studio Gallery, enjoy original works by L'Arche artists featuring colors, textures, and elements of the natural world—expressed through painting, multimedia, and ceramics. These pieces reflect our community's deep connection to nature and the sensory experiences that bring us joy. In the Sensory Garden Room, step into a hands-on space inspired by the experience of walking through a park.

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Explore touchable textures, calming sounds, and sights that evoke peace and wonder. Visitors are invited to add to a growing community art piece - make a dragonfly, and add your perspective to the garden of our community.

The exhibit will be open August 7-23 with free admission, with an opening event and artist talk August 7 at 7pm.



Meeting New Friends: Introducing our Newest Members



Sterling, joined May 2024

I am: a son, a friend, a member of Anchor House

I love: Tim Hortons, going for walks, going to the mall

I hate: nothing!

I dream: of going to see monster trucks



Jordan, joined July 2024

I am: a brother, a sports fanatic, kind to everybody, friendly, talkative, funny

I love: my family, my dog "Wheeler," going to day program, watching sports

I hate: when people get in the way of my wheelchair, pizza

I dream: of a wheelchair-accessible water park



Jennifer, joined January 2025

I am: a daughter, a friend, helpful, creative, expressive

I love: keeping busy, Italian food, swimming, volunteering at the thrift store and the L'Arche Tova Café

I hate: Sitting still, late buses in winter

I dream: of travelling to Italy



Jayden, joined February 2025

I am: a friend, kind, welcoming

I love: listening & dancing to music, eating Goldfish crackers, going to school, greeting people by holding their hand

I hate: drinking water, mushy food

I dream: of listening to music all day, of an unlimited supply of goldfish crackers

SOLIDARITY MUSIC NIGHT

THURSDAY JULY 31 2025 7 PM - 9 PM
JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF MUSIC,
REFRESHMENTS, AND
GOOD COMPANY!
\$25
L'ARCHE TOVA CAFE
119 REGENT AVE W
VISIT OUR OFFICE OR
OUR WEBSITE FOR TICKETS

SOLIDARITY PANCAKE BREAKFAST

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 13 2025
SEATING #1: 9AM - 11AM
SEATING #2: 11AM - 1PM
SMITTY'S WINNIPEG REGENT
1512 REGENT AVE W
VISIT OUR OFFICE OR WEBSITE FOR TICKETS

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