

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 8

Friends of L'Arche, Perth - Update

165, Alexander Drive, Dianella



Connecting to the heart of L'Arche

Join us on **Sunday 11 February** for a special **Gathering** at the Dianella house to help shape the future of L'Arche in Perth. As we move forward with plans to offer families accommodation and/or respite opportunities in our house we want to ensure that the essence of L'Arche is not lost. Come and share **your** stories so that we capture and retain what it means to **you** to be part of our Community.

This will be a guided activity so it's important that we start promptly at 12 noon.

Bring a plate to share when we break for lunch at 1.30pm.

Christmas Celebrations

Our 2017 Christmas party saw a break with tradition and the beginning of a new one. After many years at the home of Josh, Lynn and Rod Brown dancing and singing along to Keith Carton's band of musicians, this time we celebrated at our Dianella house to the fine music of Sweet Jarrah.

Blessed with a perfect summer night that saw us eating and dancing outside, a great time was had by all. Thanks to all those who set up and cleaned up and to Justina for taking such great 'framed' photos. We're also grateful to core members Marie and Yolanda who decorated the house and tree at the L'Arche weekend at the end of November. Thank you.

Planning for the New Year

The Board hopes that everyone had a good break over Christmas and New Year and is looking forward to another busy year for our Community. At the last Board meeting last year we put our heads together with the Spiritual Life Group to come up with a calendar of events for 2018 which you will find at the end of this newsletter. As you will see, as far as possible we are planning to continue with our Community Gatherings on the second Sunday of each month for afternoon tea interspersed with an occasional long lunch (Feb, June and September).

The first of these is on **11th February** when we hope the whole Community will come together for a Gathering to share what L'Arche means to us individually and as an identity in Perth. Significant changes in the disability sector mean that the possibilities for Friends of L'Arche Perth have changed completely from when we last came together to map our future (2010). The board is keen not to lose the best expression of L'Arche under new funding possibilities. Plans are underway for this day, which will be led by Paula Bruckard who was involved in a L'Arche community in Canada.

A new event on the calendar occurs in the lead-up to Easter, an **Agape meal** to be held at St Nicholas Church on **Sunday 18th March** (replacing the second Sunday Gathering that month). For those unfamiliar with the term, Agape is a Greco-Christian term referring to the love of God for man and of man for God and refers to early Christian communal meals. In L'Arche communities a re-enactment of the washing of the feet is customary as part of the Easter celebrations during this meal.

Our major fundraiser for the year, **WalkAbility**, occurs on **Sunday 8th April** at Burswood Park and we ask that you get behind this event in whichever way you can: you might know of a possible sponsor, invite friends to participate or make donations, or just come along to participate in the walk yourself. We are no longer doing Bunnings Sausage Sizzles so we are totally reliant on this one event to raise money for our Community. Money raised goes toward paying our Coordinator and improvements to the house.

Unfortunately the Board was unsuccessful in its application to ALCOA's Peach Foundation for a grant to modify the layout of our house and make it more disability friendly. Other avenues will be pursued.

Following meetings with L'Arche Australia at the end of last year, it has been decided that National Leader David Treanor will take over from Claire Lawler as our mentor. We are grateful for the support and love Claire has shown us over several years. David will be writing to the Community in due course to clarify this and other changes to the way L'Arche will operate in Perth, pending the full roll out of the NDIS.



Trosly Retreat and the International Mandate

In November last year Chris King attended a Retreat in Trosly – *Living Community in L’Arche: Vulnerability, Dependency and Interdependency*. Sadly Jean Vanier was unable to lead the Retreat as he was recovering from a heart operation. Former international Leader, Eileen Glass conducted the Retreat on her own and used as a framework the International Mandate handed down at the Belfast Federation meeting earlier in the year. A full report of the Trosly Retreat is available from chrisking@iinet.net.au

The Mandate is an important document for all community members to be familiar with as it shapes the future direction of L’Arche worldwide. It is included here and may be useful to you as you consider what l’Arche means to you ahead of our February Gathering.

Taking Responsibility Together!

L’Arche is a gift that has been entrusted to us, and, together we are responsible for it. The vision of L’Arche has always been the fruit of prayer and listening to the Spirit of God while remaining faithful to our call to be present to the most vulnerable. Prayer and reflection will continue to guide our actions for the future. A strategic plan will be developed to help us implement our vision. Today, we are called to go deeper, to go out, and to go within.

1. Go Deeper: Claim and integrate our fundamental principles and values

- 1.1 Revise our Charter together; unifying the Federation around a clear expression of our values, vision and our common history.
- 1.2 Deepen our understanding of the spiritual dimension of L’Arche and its place in our daily life, taking into consideration the increasing diversity of this reality among our members and communities.
- 1.3 Rediscover the importance and the essential value of community for L’Arche in front of the challenges and changes we face today.

2. Go Out: Get involved on local, national, and international levels

- 2.1 Invest more time in “going out”. Leaders, and in particular the Federation Leadership, need to increase their interaction and collaboration in the society in which we live.
- 2.2 Respond creatively to existing and emerging hopes and needs of persons with an intellectual disability, especially those in situations of distress in our world today.
- 2.3 Create new opportunities for an exchange of experience with others; developing our own capacity for expressing our experience in L’Arche through the written word, creative arts, new technologies and other innovative means.

3. Go Within: Consolidate and strengthen the Federation

- 3.1 Create a greater awareness of the international reality of the Federation through increased internal communication and develop a stronger sense of our responsibility for one another.
Provide the necessary means to enable all communities, particularly the most fragile, to progress in their capacity to fully live the mission.
- 3.2 Integrate fundraising as part of our Mission. Increase the fund-raising capacity of L’Arche International and ensure that all levels of L’Arche take responsibility for their finances, using resources in a transparent, sustainable and ethical manner.
- 3.3 Develop greater synergy, coordination and supervision in the roles of the members of the Leadership and Support teams of L’Arche International. Evaluate the impact of the implementation of the Constitution of 2012 on the life and functioning of the Federation.

FoLP Calendar – 2018

| January | February | March |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | 6th Board Meeting |
| | 11th Gathering, LUNCH | |
| | | 18th Agape Meal, St Nichs |
| 30th Board Meeting | | |
| 31st Reflection Group | 28th Reflection Group | 28th Reflection Group |
| April | May | June |
| 1st Board Meeting | 1st Board Meeting | 5th Board Meeting |
| 8th WALKABILITY, Burswood | 13th Gathering | 10th Gathering, LUNCH |
| | | |
| 25th Reflection Group | 30th Reflection Group | 27th, Reflection Group |
| July | August | September |
| 3rd Board Meeting | 5th EVENSONG, St George's Cathedral | 4th Board Meeting |
| 8th Gathering | 7th Board Meeting | 9th Gathering, LUNCH |
| | 12th Gathering | |
| 21st Core Members Retreat | | |
| 25th Reflection Group | 29th Reflection Group | 26th Reflection Group |
| October | November | December |
| 2nd Board Meeting | 6th Board Meeting | 4th Board Meeting |
| 14th Gathering, L'Arche Family Day | 10th AGM, Gathering | 9th Christmas Party |
| | | |
| 31st Reflection Group | 28th Reflection Group | |