



Volume 4 Number 2

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church recently voted to make outreach to the Friends of L'Arche Atlanta an official outreach of the church! In doing so, they have committed to offering hospitality and support for the building and nurturing of the community that L'Arche is growing here. St. Bart's, Friends of L'Arche Atlanta, and members from **Oakhurst Baptist Church** recently shared a potluck meal and decided to hold **events on the fourth Saturday of every month** to bring together people with and without disabilities for a time of fellowship, food, and fun.

We hope that you will join us at one of our upcoming events, bring a friend, and pass along this information to other interested persons.

March 27, 2010– Join us for a contra-style family dance. 5:30-8 p.m. at Lutheran Church of the Messiah in Decatur. Please check our website for more information.

H(ARK)!

A Sign of Hope in a Broken World

Fall 2009/Winter 2010

Community Update

Laura Magistro Wells
Board President

2009 was an exciting and an important year for Friends of L'Arche Atlanta. We have continued laying the groundwork for a vibrant L'Arche community and have made substantial progress toward our goals.

In November 2009 we obtained official "Project" status from L'Arche USA which gives us the green light to open the doors of our first home in Georgia. We hired an Executive Director, Curt Armstrong, who has been with L'Arche for nearly 15 years in France, and is particularly qualified for the role in terms of vision, depth, and experience. We met our fund raising goal for 2009 of raising \$90,000 – over 3 times that of 2008. We're entering 2010 with some fund raising experience and success,

and also with new partnerships in the philanthropic community that will help us reach even further in our development efforts. In all of this, we continue to make many friends around Atlanta, building a strong network of relationships for our community.

We're excited as we look toward securing our first house in 2010. We are looking for a property to buy, rent or build, and have several promising prospects. Along with this search, we are broadening and deepening our vision for what L'Arche will look like in Atlanta.

An unexpected challenge for 2010 has come in the area of the licensing process. A moratorium has been placed on New Providers in Georgia until July 2010 and this will push back the opening of our first home. We're using this time to pur-

sue properties and to build sustainability into our development efforts. We continue to build relationships with people with disabilities, the provider community, faith congregations, civic organizations, and the City of Decatur, where we plan to open our first home.

One of our recent initiatives consists of offering monthly events for people with and without disabilities to come together, have fun, and deepen in the spirit of L'Arche.

Please and come join us.

First Inaugural Golf Tournament A Huge Success

By Talley Wells

We raised over \$20,000, we had a great time, and some of us were even able to get the small white ball into the hole (actually all of us did, but one of us (me) took a lot more shots to do it in than others).

(continued pg. 2)

Golf Tournament (continued from page 1)

Special thanks go to **Trey Miller**, who rounded up the most golfers and hosted an evening in his home to prepare for the tournament. Thank you also to our other golf captains – **Ed Trzcienski, Otis Aust, and John White**. **Lee Ann Trzcienski** hosted a wonderful breakfast which kept everyone happy during the morning of the rainstorm. John White of Golf for Goodness Sake did an amazing job organizing and running the tournament for us. Come join us in 2010!

Special thanks to our Golf Tournament Sponsors:

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Fr. Ron Rolheiser Speaks to Central Truth of L'Arche in "Strength in Weakness"

Nationally-renowned spiritual writer and columnist, **Fr. Ronald Rolheiser**, inspired a group of 60 supporters at the Friends of L'Arche Atlanta (FOLA) fall guest speaker series on Friday, September 11 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. **Fr. Rolheiser pointed to one of the central mysteries of the Christian faith - the potential blessings inherent in the experience of weakness and vulnerability.** He spoke of the special power that Jesus wielded as he presented Himself to mankind as a tiny helpless baby, and that true strength and wholeness come as we learn to open ourselves to trust and to love.

Father Rolheiser, a friend of L'Arche, underscored the importance of FOLA's mission in Atlanta. He reminded us that building community centered upon our most vulnerable members, and welcoming God in the weaknesses in each of us, is a cornerstone for peace. Old and new friends of L'Arche alike were inspired by the evening. FOLA would like to recognize the welcoming community of Sacred Heart for the generous use of their facility and special thanks to their pastor, **Fr. Meehan**, parochial vicar, **Fr. Scully** and adult education director **Alan McGill**.

We'd love to share the L'Arche story with your group or congregation. Please contact our executive director, Curt Armstrong, at curt.armstrong@friendsoflarcheatlanta.org or at 678-446-5790.

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We Will Miss Our Newly-Found Friend, Helen Mulligan

In 2008, we had the opportunity at Friends of L'Arche Atlanta to get to know Helen Mulligan when she volunteered with our Fundraising committee and hosted at her home a gathering of friends to share the message of L'Arche. As a parent of a son with Asperger's syndrome, Helen understood the need for a place where a person with developmental disabilities is shown the love and security to be found in family life. As such, Helen was moved to help us open a L'Arche home here in Atlanta. Little did we know that Helen's time with us would be so brief. Helen was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in April 2009 and after a brief but valiant effort to beat it, she passed away in July. I attended her wake to represent the board of Friends of L'Arche Atlanta and was touched by the eulogy given by the deacon who presided at the service that evening. He told of the kindness and selflessness of Helen, and I was all the more saddened that I had not had the time to get to know her well. I would have been proud to have become her friend. Her daughter told me that her mother had the *Essential Writings of Jean Vanier* on her hospital bedside table and from what I learned about her during our short acquaintance it was evident that she had a heart for L'Arche. We are very sorry for the loss to her family and friends. You are missed, Helen.

Judy Miller, Board Member



A sign of hope in a broken world

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The Mission of Friends of L'Arche Atlanta is to be a sign of hope to the greater Atlanta community by choosing to embrace the mission of L'Arche International and open a few small, family-like homes here in Atlanta to bring together people, some with developmental disabilities and some without, who choose to share their lives by living together in a faith-based community.

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