

LUKAS COMMUNITY MISSION STATEMENT

“The Lukas Community is a not for profit organization whose purpose and striving is to develop and foster social-therapeutic values in a community setting: promoting human service through cooperative living, social interaction and spiritual activity based on Anthroposophy as developed by Rudolf Steiner. Coworkers at Lukas recognize the living together with individuals having disabilities mentally, physically or socially or otherwise in need of special care as the center of its community striving. The rights of each human being are upheld in the context of such interaction where the dignity of each person as a human being whose growth in body, soul and spirit may be enhanced by sharing freely in economic, social and cultural activities without distinction as to race, creed, color, sex, national origin or disability is affirmed. Lukas intends to develop such diverse crafts, trades and other activities as lend themselves especially to enhance the creative possibilities of those in need of special care and the well-being of the community. Special emphasis is placed on the value that work on the land offers and farming, gardening and forestry form indispensable elements of community life. Any revenue from work and production is intended to aid the economic independence of Lukas as each individual recognizes him or herself as a co-participant in an organized system of volunteers, without compensation in the usual sense.”

*Our 25th
Anniversary
Celebration!*



What is the Lukas Community?

The Lukas Community is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3), tax-exempt charitable organization serving the lifelong needs of developmentally disabled adults. Each of our households is licensed by the State of New Hampshire.

Based on the anthroposophical approach of humanitarian/philosopher Rudolf Steiner, The Lukas Community provides a caring, therapeutic environment in which each person is recognized as a unique human being with dignity, freedom and purpose, and each encouraged to develop to their fullest potential. Our community welcomes persons of all races, creeds and nationalities.

For more information, please contact David Spears at **603-878-4796** or email lukas@monad.net or access our website at lukascommunity.org



**Lukas Joyfully Celebrates
A Quarter Century of
Growth**

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Twenty-five years ago, The Lukas Community was founded by a group of individuals who saw the desperate need for a place where adults with developmental disabilities could live full and productive lives, a place where each could develop abilities, whilst being supported in their disabilities, a place where each was recognized as a unique human being with freedom, dignity and purpose. The founders, and those who followed, believed that in every human being, no matter how challenged, there lies a longing for self-development, a longing to realize to the fullest one's potential in all aspects of life. And, they sought to create an environment in which this process of becoming and unfolding would be respected, supported and encouraged.

In 1981, the founders bought an old farmhouse with acreage in beautiful rural Temple, New Hampshire. After some renovation, the first co-worker family moved in together with three adults in need of special care who, either because of the nature and degree of their challenges, or because they lacked sufficient financial resources, had been unsuccessful in finding placement elsewhere. Shortly after new residents joined the fledgling initiative, and largely due to the commitment of their parents, Lukas gained more stability and the possibility of growth into the future.

The ideal from the very beginning and that has continued to guide Lukas for twenty-five years—both “abled” and “disabled” persons living together as an extended family, sharing their lives and work within a therapeutic context of care. The onus of care in each household would belong to a “co-worker” family, to be supported by single co-workers and live-in volunteers. These, together with three to six developmentally disabled residents, would form a socially responsive household and environment for which each individual would feel responsible. The Lukas philosophy in practice continues to demonstrate that the things we do for ourselves, for our housemates, and for our community create a sense of interdependence and feeling of belonging, this in stark contrast to the deep sense of isolation that so many individuals experience when living “independently” within mainstream society, a society often devoid of close personal caring.

The Lukas Community as a whole is comprised of people of all ages from young children to the elderly who possess a wide range of abilities and disabilities. In such a community, the strength of one person balances the weakness of another. The faithfulness of a slow, more methodical person calms the restlessness of one who is hyperactive and oversensitive. And, the warmth and generosity of one penetrates the isolation of the other.



The founders of the Lukas Community and those who came after also recognized that through engagement in guided artistic and craft activity, persons with disabilities are able to gain an intimate sense of their own selves, their gifts, their weaknesses, this essential in ameliorating the extreme, one-sided tendencies that challenge them. Special emphasis on the therapeutic potential inherent in the creative arts, crafts and work on the land led Lukas to establish a broad program of special activities. Shortly after Lukas began, the barn attached to Crossroad Farm, the original household, was converted into a sunny weav-ery and studio space for watercolor painting and candle making, while the lower level of the barn housed the sheep whose wool supplied the weavery. Crafts produced at Lukas quickly gained a reputation for their quality and beauty, and some were accepted by the jury of the prestigious League of New Hampshire Craftsmen and sold at their shops as well as at other shops and crafts fairs throughout the region. This Lukas tradition continues today under the name “Handworks Studios”.

As well as the attention to the arts and crafts, Lukas is fortunate to have sixty-five acres of farmland fields, forests and wetlands, a large proportion of which has been placed in permanent conservation as open space for agricultural use, nature appreciation and wildlife habitat. Committed to the environmentally positive use of its land, and recognizing the benefits of working in close daily contact with the restorative rhythms of nature, Lukas initiated its own therapeutically designed intensive organic/bio-dynamic gardening and farming program. In 1998 another large barn connected with a Lukas household was renovated to provide three levels of space dedicated to serving the cultural and programmatic needs of the community, and shortly after a new stall barn was constructed on the land to meet the needs of our animal population. With new housing provided, our animal care workshop was initiated, whereby Lukas residents would have the opportunity to give care as well as receive it.

Although Lukas started with only a single household in 1981, in the spirit of building a community that would serve a greater number of individuals, foster their personal growth and meet their ever-changing needs, Lukas has continued to grow and adapt itself over the years. Recently Lukas completed the construction of two new residences that provide essential ground floor bedroom spaces for its aging residents, as well as additional spaces for younger residents whom we hope to attract and serve in the future. Also in the future, the addition of a modest health center with swimming pool may be a project deserving consideration, and the question of how best to provide the additional specialized care our aging residents will ultimately need is of serious concern.



Twenty-five years after its founding, however, Lukas may take some measure of satisfaction in what it has already accomplished and become. It now comprises four extended-family households accommodating twenty residents, an active weaving studio, a woodworking shop, a bio-dynamic garden complete with greenhouse, a stall barn where animals are raised and cared for, and a community center within which craft workshops and classes in therapeutic dance, music, art, ongoing education and festive seasonal celebrations are held. A secure and fostering home-life, self-development through meaningful work, friendship within the context of a special community blessed with all the beauty that nature can provide—what more could we wish for on our twenty-fifth birthday?



Thank You

We wish to thank our residents for their gift of purpose; their families for their support; members of our Board of Trustees for their guidance; and our coworkers past and present for their service. We thank too all of the many other individuals who have given in so many different ways to Lukas over the course of the last twenty-five years.

