

Finding Hidden Treasure



Disability Sunday 5th June 2011

A day to help churches and fellowships throughout the United Kingdom to engage more fully with disabled people

“The gifts and faith of disabled people are hidden treasure waiting to be discovered”

Organised by

Churches for All 
Disabled people inspiring faith without limits

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Disability Sunday Resource Pack

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Disability Sunday Resource Pack

Introduction

Purpose of this resource pack

- To highlight issues of disability for churches to use within their congregations
- To encourage manageable action by church congregations

Background: Finding Hidden Treasure

We believe that disabled people have an enormous amount to offer the life and ministry of the Church. However too often barriers are put in their way that hide the contribution they can bring: too often the gifts and faith of disabled people are *Hidden Treasure* waiting to be discovered.

In Britain, there are 9.5 million adults who have a recognised disability (Disability Rights Commission, 2006): that is over one-fifth of the adult population. A further 700,000 children have one or more disabilities.

Actually, 95% of us will experience disability at some time during our life; one day, you may well enter your church as a disabled person. What will you find then?

Likening the Church to the human body Paul, the apostle, wrote: "*those parts that seem to be weaker are indispensable.*" - the Church is losing out when it fails to include those parts.

In order to be accessible to and inclusive of individuals with special needs and disabilities, churches or groups need to consider the following attitudinal Issues:

- Do you focus on the limitations and inabilities of people with disabilities?
- Do you assume that disabled people have a 'problem' which needs to be 'cured' or 'fixed? OR
- Do you assume that your church structures and attitudes need to be changed to enable disabled people to participate fully in the life of the church?

Congregations often get stuck on the issue of money, or they believe that once they raise the money and address the barriers of architecture, the job is complete. But in fact the greater challenge is to eliminate the barriers to attitude.

As churches, we need to ensure that there is 'access for all' and that these barriers, if they exist, are addressed as quickly as possible thereby making a way for the message of Salvation to reach as many people in our community as possible.

It is commonly assumed that disability discrimination, with regard to churches, has much to do with access to buildings. But by taking this approach, many churches have failed to reach out to a substantial proportion of the population. This is regrettable, as outreach is a fundamental theme of the Gospel.

The following article explores this forgotten mission field in a little more depth.



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Mission under our nose

A Christian response to people living with disabilities in the UK

When the words 'mission' or 'missionary' are used, we often jump to the conclusion that they refer only to something happening overseas. But, in fact, mission can happen anywhere and those responding to a call to mission could just as likely find themselves serving in the UK as on the other side of the globe.

The Great Commission invites us to 'make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:19) and that may make us think of other nations, perhaps forgetting that the UK surely needs the transforming power of the Gospel as much as any of them.

Actually the word translated 'nations' simply means 'people groups'. Basing our mission on the life and teaching of Jesus, we have a clear mandate to reach to the extremities of our society as well as to the 'corners' of the geographical world. Quoting from Isaiah, Jesus declares good news for people who are poor, captive, blind or oppressed (Luke 4:18,19).

The task of taking the Gospel now lies with us and it is still good news to those who are marginalised within our prosperous but deeply flawed society.

And that includes those in our society who may be marginalised because of their disability. Not only are they marginalised by practical issues, they are often excluded by the prejudiced attitudes of others. And it's reckoned that disabled people taken as a group are the least evangelised people of the world.

The first mission scene recorded in Acts was played out in the heart of Israel, in Jerusalem. Though 'at home', it was multi-lingual and cross-cultural. In the diverse society of modern Britain our mission too must embrace diversity. Jesus spent quality time with people at the fringes of first century Israel - street beggars, prostitutes, sick and disabled people, those of other races and other faiths too.

In years past, it was from the strength of the UK church that missionaries set off to evangelise the world. Now the church of the 'two-thirds world' has a vitality that we in the UK can only admire. Perhaps this should lead us to reassess and reinvigorate our home mission programmes with at least as much zeal and imagination as we apply to overseas mission.

Dr Gordon Temple, Chief Executive, Torch Trust and Executive Officer of Churches for All



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Disability Facts and figures in the UK:

- More than 15% of the UK population are disabled (approximately 9.8 million)
- About 6.9 million disabled people are of working age (16% of the working population)
- Disabled people are five times as likely as non-disabled people to be out of work
- Only about 8% of disabled people use wheelchairs
- 3% of all children under 16 have one or more disabilities
- One in four people is disabled or is close to someone who is
- 95% of the population will experience disability at some point in their lives
- 660,000 have sight loss to the degree they are or could be registered blind or partially sighted
- 1,8 million people experience incapacitating sight loss - such that they cannot read newsprint or recognise someone across a street
- 8 million people have a degree of hearing loss
- 2.5 million use hearing aids
- 75,000 are profoundly deaf
- More than 1.5 million have learning disabilities
- 410,000 people with epilepsy
- 250,000 with facial disfigurement
- 3% of children under 16 have one or more disabilities
- 1 person in 3 will have a mental illness



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Planning Disability Sunday

Please note this is a general overview only, and is not intended to go into all the detailed considerations of different disabilities. [Additional resources](#) with recommendations for specific disabilities are listed at the end of this resource pack.

Step by Step

Step 1 Form a team

Find other people in your church who would be interested in helping your church participate in Disability Sunday. Ask disabled people in the church and others with experience of disability or a heart for disabled people. In addition to disabled people themselves, this may include parents of disabled children or medical or social service professionals.

Key points:

- Get the team members to share their visions and think about the aims of the day. These could include: that people with disabilities of any kind feel welcomed and valued; hear clearly about God's love for them; are able to respond to Him; and go home having had a positive and enjoyable experience of church.
- Carry out a [Survey of Disability Related Needs](#) in your community (see later section in this resource pack)
- Pray together for God's equipping for a Disability Sunday as well as future ministry.
- Develop a proposal as to how your church would hold the Disability Sunday on 5th June 2011 (or another suitable date).

Step 2 Involve your Church's Leadership

If you are not part of the leadership of your church, you and your team should meet with your church's vicar, priest or pastor. (If your church does not have an individual leader, approach your church's leadership team). Present your team's vision for participating in Disability Sunday.

Key points:

- Present why this reflects God's heart.
- Express your team's willingness to take the lead in organising this.
- Explain that the leaders' support and involvement are vital.



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Step 3 Publicity

Disability Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to invite people who are disabled and their families from the community. [Sample invitation letter](#) and posters are included in this document.

Publicity can be arranged through [press releases](#) (sample included later) to local newspapers and radio stations, letters to local residential, educational and day care facilities for disabled people, disability organisations, and local schools.

You should also publicise the event in your church starting as early as possible. (Sample [announcements](#) included later). Encourage the congregation to include family, friends or neighbours who are disabled.

Step 4 Develop your plan

Your team should choose which parts of the Disability Sunday programme you want to use. You must do the worship service portion in order for it to be successful. The other parts are strongly recommended because they reinforce the worship service and get people talking about the subject of disability.

The Worship Service - There is no one order of service that suits all churches, so it will be up to you and your church leaders to put together the service. Be sensitive to whatever liturgy may be customary in your particular denomination. It is, however, important that particular care is taken to ensure that the welcome at the beginning draws attention to the facilities available for disabled people, e.g. that there is a loop system, where to sit to benefit from the loop, the provision of large print or Braille song sheets etc.

Remember that people with learning disabilities will not be able to grasp complex language and concepts, so write down what you want to say in your introduction to the meeting, during worship or in the talk, and decide beforehand what songs and prayers to use. Then you will be able to check that the language is appropriate.

The following items may form part of your order of service:

- Someone with a disability to lead the service through
- A personal story (4-5 minutes) by a disabled person or family member
- Music by a disabled person or group.
- Scripture reading and prayer by someone with a disability or a family member.
- A sermon focusing on God's view of people with disabilities. [Outline sermons](#) are included in this document.
- A [drama](#) on the subject of disability

Involve disabled people at every level - taking up the offering, welcoming, giving out song sheets etc.



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Be as creative as possible. Remember that when it comes to worship songs and hymns, many of them contain complex ideas that may be difficult for people with learning disabilities to grasp. However, a programme that is either not Christ-centred or that is completely different from a normal service will detract from future ministry.

Celebration event - you might also decide to have a celebration event or feast, with a talk, drama, witnessing, entertainment etc. around the meal or refreshments.

Small groups you can also hold discussions or Bible studies on the subject of disability in the weeks leading up to Disability Sunday, or afterwards. Involve any existing groups or start new ones, including House groups, youth groups, mother's groups etc. There are [discussion resources](#) later in this pack.

Children's/Youth programme - Talk with the people responsible for your church's children or youth activities and review the programme with them. Make sure they make it their responsibility to carry out the programme. You will have other things to do and they will do a better job of it. Make sure you follow up with them on a regular basis to ensure that the leaders have what they need and are on schedule. You will need to make sure that there are extra helpers available to assist any disabled children or young people who join the special activities. There are suggested resources for [children's](#) and [youth](#) activities later in this pack.

Step 5 Welcomers and Stewards

Preparations for the day must include some training for the stewards or welcome team. A [guidance sheet](#) for stewards/welcomers is included in this document and can be copied and given out to the team. The training should take place before the day, but you should be in touch with the stewarding or welcome team leader well in advance.

It is a good idea to have more welcomers and stewards than usual so that some can show visitors, both disabled and non-disabled people to their seats and introduce the guests to the person who will be sitting next to them. Don't forget to invite disabled members of your existing congregation to be on the welcoming and stewarding team

Step 6 Your Church Building

Your church doesn't have to have perfect access for people with limited mobility, but it should not be an impossible challenge either. A [basic checklist](#) is enclosed for your church. Desirable for the Disability Sunday are:

- Parking for people with disabilities (blue badge holders), which is monitored to make sure that they can park in a suitable place to access the service.
- A way to get into the front of the building without steps.



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- Seating area for wheelchair users that is not only at the back. In other words you should be able to give people who use a wheelchair a choice of whether or not they want to sit in the back, middle or front.
- Child care (crèche, Sunday School) which can meet the needs of a disabled child.
- Large print programmes /orders of service, notice sheets and songs used on the overhead or powerpoint projector (if your church uses such items during a service). Perhaps make all printed material for that day in large print: 16 point type sizes will meet most needs. Or obtain Braille versions.
- An induction loop for hearing aid users.
- A British Sign Language interpreter for Deaf people.
- Wheelchair accessible toilet facilities.
- If you are following the Children's Programme, you should try and make sure those rooms are wheelchair-accessible as well.

Step 7 Church feedback questionnaire

To plan for future disability ministry, collect feedback from the congregation on the service and ideas for meeting needs more effectively. A [sample questionnaire](#) is provided for your use. It can be copied and inserted in an order of service or notice sheet and collected after the worship service.

It is also useful for long term planning if you do a survey of the needs perceived by members of the congregation. This survey will let your team know what needs exist within your church and community. Again, a sample survey is provided for distribution widely within the church.

Step 8 Transport

You may need to consider how disabled people who do not have their own transport may be able to travel to your Disability Sunday service. Advice should be available from local disability charities or social services as to forms of transport which may be made available.

Finally

How about donating your offering for 6 June to a national disability charity or a local ministry that you already work with? Partners in the Churches for All Consortium are listed at the end of this booklet, and they rely on donations for their work of making the Christian message accessible to all.



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Survey of Disability-Related Needs

This survey is being carried out by [Name of Church] to find out how well they meet the needs of people with disabilities. We would be very grateful if you could complete it and return to [Name and address of contact]

1. How does your disability affect you?

2. Do you attend church? Regularly Sometimes No

3. If not, would you like to? Yes No

4. If you would like to attend this church, would we have to meet your needs in any of the following ways? *(please tick as many as appropriate)*

- Parking
- Accessibility
- Induction loop
- BSL interpreter
- Large print or Braille material: songsheets, notice sheets, Bibles etc.
- Better lighting
- Wheelchair space which does not obstruct aisles
- Special provision for an adult or child with learning disabilities
- One to one support for a child in Sunday School

Please provide as much additional detail as possible to describe how we can meet your needs in relation to the above, or any other matters:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Name _____ Telephone number _____

Address _____

_____ Post code _____



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Sample letter of invitation

(to be printed on church notepaper)

[date]

Dear

It's a real pleasure to invite you and your friends, relations and colleagues, to attend a Disability Sunday event on 5th June 2011 at *[11.00 am]* at our church, which is in *[Lupin Gardens, Ambridge]*

The main talk will focus on what the Bible really says about disability and on God's positive attitude towards disabled people. We have also asked a few members of our congregation to speak about their own experience of disability. We plan a drama and musical contributions by disabled people.

We would like to welcome anyone in our community who is affected by disability - you yourself or a member of your family may have a disability, or you may work with disabled people. We want the service to be a first step towards fully including disabled people in the life of our church. Our church building is accessible to wheelchair users and has a loop system and an accessible toilet. A British Sign Language interpreter for Deaf people will be provided at the service. Braille service sheets will be provided.

If you have no transport and you need a lift, or if you have any questions, please call us on *[phone number]* as soon as possible and we will try to help.

With warmest good wishes



Draft news release

News Release

St Mark's Church in Ambridge is holding a Disability Sunday service on 5th June 2011 at 11.00 am. There will be an exciting meeting of teaching and worship, led by disabled people, focusing on the world of disability.

Members of the congregation will be sharing their own experience of disability, there will be a drama and musical contributions by disabled people and there will be a brief talk on disability from a Biblical perspective.

The church is accessible to wheelchair users and has a loop system. A British Sign Language interpreter for Deaf people will be provided at the service. Braille service sheets will be provided.

Child care is also available.

In addition to the worship service, disability awareness will be the special focus of the children's programme with groups for all ages.

For more information contact: Name:

Telephone:

.....
Print the news release with a church letterhead, and post it, email it or fax it to local radio stations and newspapers in early September.

Give details of any other special contributions to be made by disabled people. Avoid using Christian jargon words or phrases.

If your church is not manned continuously during office hours, make sure you give a mobile phone number as an alternative to the Church office. Nothing irritates media more than to be unable to get an immediate response to a question. Why not cultivate a relationship with your local reporter and invite them to come along?



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Church Newsletter Items

Recruiting team members:

Many of you know the importance we attach to being fully inclusive of disabled people. We are planning to hold a Disability Sunday on 5th June 2011 with the following objectives:

- To show disabled people that God cares about them and their needs
- To raise awareness of disability and the needs of disabled people
- To give people affected by disability a voice
- To show that God responds to and uses disability in many different ways
- To show that including disabled people isn't a burden, but is a blessing.
- If you would like to serve on the planning team, please contact *[name]*.

Announcing the event:

The Disability Sunday is just *[number]* weeks away. Just to remind you, what we want to achieve on the day is:

- To show disabled people that God cares about them and their needs
- To raise awareness of disability and the needs of disabled people
- To give people affected by disability a voice
- To show that God responds to and uses disability in many different ways
- To show that including disabled people isn't necessarily a burden, but is a blessing.

Please invite friends, family and neighbours who are disabled or who are affected by disability on Sunday 5th June 2011

Recruiting volunteers:

Volunteers are needed to help with Disability Sunday. If you can help with *[list needs here]* then please contact *[name]*



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Disability Sunday - Accessibility Checklist

Note: This is a very basic checklist to alert you to possible difficulties in the accessibility of your church building. It should be noted that a positive answer to all the points does not mean that your church complies with a generally accepted accessibility standard. For more information, see [Further Specialist Resources](#) later in this pack, or seek advice from [Churches for All](#).

Basic Accessibility		Yes	No
1.	Is it possible to get from a parked car to the area used for worship without going up or down a step or stairs?		
2.	Is the slope of paths not greater than 5% (roughly 1:20)		
Ramps			
3.	Do ramps have a slope no greater than 1:12 and a width of no less than 1.2m?		
4.	Do ramps have handrails on both sides?		
Entrances and Exits			
5.	Is at least one major entrance to the building usable by wheelchair users?		
Doors and Doorways			
6.	Do doors have a clear opening of 800mm or more?		
7.	Can doors be opened easily by a wheelchair user or other disabled person?		
Floors			
8.	Is the floor level each side of doors?		
9.	Are the door thresholds a maximum 13mm high?		
Worship Space			
10.	Can the service be heard clearly throughout?		
11.	Is there an induction loop for hearing aid users?		
12.	Is there good lighting, avoiding shadows on those speaking or interpreting?		
13.	If an overhead or Powerpoint projector is used, are there large print paper copies available for people who cannot see the screen?		
14.	Is there space for wheelchair users where they can sit with a friend?		
15.	Are there seats with arms and seats with extra legroom for people with mobility impairment?		
16.	Can people take communion without climbing steps?		
Toilets			
17.	Is there an accessible toilet for use by wheelchair users?		
Other areas			
18.	Can disabled people access refreshments?		



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Guidelines for stewards and welcomers

DO	DON'T
<p><u>General</u> Treat disabled people as you would anyone else. Always speak directly to the person who has a disability. Always ask the person who has a disability if you can help him or her in any way. Whenever possible, seat disabled people with their friends or family. Try to be aware of people's hidden disabilities such as epilepsy or Alzheimer's disease, which may require assistance. Assume nothing - always ask!</p>	<p>Don't use negative terms such as "crippled" or "victim". Do not consider a companion or carer to be a conversational go-between.</p>
<p><u>Visual Impairment</u> Identify yourself by name and as a steward. Show a blind person to his or her seat. Ensure they know Braille or large print song sheets are available. Explain to a visually impaired person where things are located. Provide space for a guide-dog to lie down by removing a chair.</p>	<p>Don't push a visually impaired person - always allow them to take your arm.</p>
<p><u>Deafness and hearing loss</u> Ensure your face and mouth can be seen clearly. Look directly at the person and speak at normal speed with clear (not exaggerated) lip patterns.</p>	<p>Don't exaggerate or shout. Don't speak directly into the person's ear. Don't obscure your face</p>
<p><u>Speech Impairment</u> Give your whole, unhurried attention with good eye contact. Remember the person with a speech impairment may use another method of communication, such as writing.</p>	<p>Don't finish a sentence or word for the person. Don't get agitated or impatient Don't be afraid to ask them to repeat a sentence if you don't understand; or feed back what you think they said, and ask them to confirm.</p>
<p><u>Mobility Impairment</u> Always ask a wheelchair user if she or he would like assistance before you help. Try to sit or crouch down to talk to wheelchair users so that eye contact is easier. Provide seats near the entrance for people with mobility difficulties to minimise walking.</p>	<p>Don't push a wheelchair user unless they ask you to. Don't hold on to or lean on a person's wheelchair.</p>
<p><u>Learning Disabilities</u> Be patient, give someone with learning disabilities plenty of time.</p>	<p>Don't assume the person cannot understand you.</p>



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Suitable Language

Many people are reluctant to approach disabled people because they are afraid of saying the “wrong thing”. The following table shows some of the current acceptable and unacceptable expressions. But remember, disabled people would like you to speak to them (even if you get things “wrong”), rather than hold back out of fear.

[Quote from disabled churchgoer....]

DO SAY	DON'T SAY
<p><u>General</u> Disability Disabled Person who has/experiences... Non-disabled</p>	Handicapped Crippled Invalid Victim of... Suffers from... Able-bodied, normal
<p><u>Visual Impairment</u> Blind and partially sighted/Visually impaired people</p>	The Blind
<p><u>Deafness and hearing loss</u> Deaf people Hard of hearing people Deaf sign language user</p>	The Deaf Deaf and dumb Deaf mute
<p><u>Speech Impairment</u> Deaf sign language user</p>	Dumb
<p><u>Mobility Impairment</u> Wheelchair user</p>	Wheel-chair bound Confined to a wheelchair (the wheelchair is not the source of the disability)
<p><u>Learning Disabilities</u> Has learning difficulties Learning disabled Has mental health problems</p>	Mentally handicapped, Retarded Mentally ill, insane, mad, crazy, nutter, psycho, psychopathic, schizo, split personality



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Follow-up survey

We value your feedback to help us to better meet your needs. Please complete the following questions and return to one of the stewards/welcomers.

How did you find your overall experience of today?	
What did you find particularly helpful?	
What aspects could be improved?	
What overall message will you take from today?	
Are there any other comments you would like to make?	

Please leave your name and contact details if you would like to receive further invitations to our activities.

Thank you. We look forward to welcoming you again.



Disability Sunday Activities

Sermons

Preparing the sermon

Remember that there may be people with learning disabilities present, and they are likely to have a limited vocabulary. Christian terminology may not be understood, so jargon is out! Simple language is essential for clear communication with people with learning disabilities (and it can also make a surprisingly effective impact on everyone else too.)

General Sermon Points (These can be usefully incorporated into any sermon)

In the Gospels 35 specific miracles are recorded.

3 cases of raising the dead: (all examples of his care for the carers)

- the widow's son at Nain
- Jairus' daughter
- Lazarus at Bethany

9 miracles which break the natural laws of physics which include;

- feeding the 5000; walking on water; calming the storm; turning water into wine

23 miracles involving disabled people

- 6 involve mental illness
- 17 (half the total number of recorded miracles) involve physical disability including, blindness, deafness, paralysis, a withered hand and leprosy

So why don't we see disabled people in our churches? One reason is that our society traditionally approaches disability from the **medical model** of disability. This model sees disabled people as 'having a problem', which needs 'fixing or curing'. The emphasis is on what is 'wrong' with them, and they are treated as in need of healing or in need of pity and having to be cared for. This has often led to disabled people losing control over their lives - e.g. they have to go to bed when the carer can put them to bed, not when they choose to.

The better model, and most importantly, the model chosen by disabled people is the **social model** of disability. This looks at the environment to see what can be changed to allow a disabled person to take part on equal terms with non disabled people. Thus, a wheelchair user is not disabled in an environment where doors are wide, door furniture is within their reach, floors are flat and smooth and changes in level are accomplished by the use of ramps and lifts.

Using of the social model of disability has led to the growth of more independent living, where disabled people employ their own personal assistants to help with personal care, housework, going out, socialising, shopping etc. Thus the disabled person retains control of their lives and is able to make their own contribution to society and to church life.



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Sermon 1

Let me paint a picture. If it were possible to gather together all the disabled people in the world into one nation, that mythical nation would number 650 million men, women and children. That's more than ten times the population of the United Kingdom. That nation would be the world's third largest country, after China and India. (World Health Organisation statistic)

That nation would have a number of unique characteristics. That nation would...

- have the least access to education - because disabled people receive little or no education in developing countries
- have the lowest proportion in the world of its population in employment
- be the poorest nation on earth, because disabled people are the poorest of the poor
- have the least access to any sort of transport - poverty again
- be the least evangelised nation with the lowest proportion involved in a church

[Disability Facts and Figures in the UK \(see separate page\)](#)

Don't forget, if each disabled person in the UK has only one person caring for them, there are 19m people affected by disability. Think about it, if your husband, wife, child or parent who is a wheelchair user can't get into your church, then the whole family can't get into the church.

As Christians, we need to understand the issues that both disabled people and carers face. The sad reality is that our churches often reflect society's lack of understanding and care and these people are not present.

Now you see why Jesus gave such a high priority to people with disabilities. There were so many of them! Let's think about Jesus' response - He gave a high priority to people with disabilities.



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Sermon 2 based on 1 Peter 2:1-3

By David Palmer, Regional Outreach Leader, Torch Trust for the Blind

In the book 'Barrel of Fun' by J John is the following love letter lament:

Dearest Jimmy,

No words could ever express the great unhappiness I've felt since breaking our engagement. Please say you'll take me back. No one could ever take your place in my heart, so please forgive me. I love you, I love you, I love you!

Yours forever, Marie

P.S. And congratulations on winning the lottery.

Today we are thinking about love: love for God and love for people. As we will discover, while Marie's love for Jimmy was conditional, the love that Christian believers have for one another should be completely unconditional.

Peter, writing to young churches, opens chapter 2 of his first letter with these challenging words: 'Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.' [NIV]

The context of these verses is found particularly in 1:22 'Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.'

In chapter 1 Peter urges Christians to live a life of holiness; now he urges love for one another. And he shows that what we are to do is grounded in what God has done.

We live in a particularly individualistic culture in the West and increasingly in other parts of the world. French mathematician René Descartes said 'I think, therefore I am' - a concept which became foundational in Western philosophy. As others have remarked, today's consumerist culture has adapted this as, 'I shop, therefore I am'. Either way, the focus is on 'I'.

It was former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher who famously argued, 'There is no such thing as society', emphasising the trend for individualism. It is all too easy to individualise our Christian faith, considering it something exclusive and personal between God and us. And yet the Bible clearly calls us to Christian community. God's Word shows us the way to salvation, cleansing and maturity which fits us for a life of love lived out in community.

So often, disabled people feel on the edge of our church communities, neglected and unappreciated. Why do so many disabled people find attending and belonging to a church difficult? Surely church should be the first place that is accepting and welcoming? Sadly, sometimes it is the last place. When we plan our services and our outreach, there are so many good causes - discipling local young people, evangelism in South America or Africa, mission to the poor, relief for AIDS sufferers. These are all good and necessary, but it's reckoned that, on a global scale, disabled people remain the least evangelised in our society today. Why is that? If we are utterly honest with ourselves, might we say that they don't really feature on our radar? Or might we say



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we don't even know any disabled people? And that somehow we feel embarrassed, fearful or even just plain unconcerned?

Clearly, Peter sees love for fellow Christians as the great mark of true holiness. He is not satisfied with mere tolerance or acceptance. Indifference will not do. He will have love - sincere love, without pretence or hypocrisy. But even sincerity is not enough; our love for one another must be deep and intense. In 1:22 Peter uses a word that means 'stretched' or 'strained'. It's the same term used to describe the intensity of Christ's prayer in Gethsemane: 'And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground' (Luke 22:44). The deep heartfelt love that Peter urges is in no way artificial. It is the brotherly love that unites the family of God. Why? Because God's love is the source of ours. The reality of his love is what kindles ours. Jesus' love and compassion for all people, especially those on the edge of society, reflect God's own heart for people on the margins.

To return to Peter's letter, there is logic and reason in Peter's writing. Since we have been saved, forgiven and made holy, we must live as if that's real. We know we cannot deceive God, so why deceive others? We know that we dishonour God when we act or speak without love or concern or with spite, so we must not do it. Peter exhorts them to deepen and strengthen a love they already have. Paul urges the Thessalonians to love 'more and more' (1 Thessalonians 4:10) as God has taught them.

'Grow up in your salvation,' writes Peter. We have a sure and living hope that is our inheritance. It is kept for us and we are kept for it. Yet that hope is also future; we do not merely wait for it, we grow towards it, like flowers toward the sun. We serve Christ by serving the needs of others. Faith is purified, love is intensified, grace is tasted - as we are tested.

John Stott in his book 'The Living Church' states his vision or 'dream' for the church. Here's an extract from that vision:

'I have a dream of a church which is a caring church - whose congregation is drawn from many races, nations, ages and social backgrounds, and exhibits the unity and diversity of the family of God, whose fellowship is warm and welcoming, and never marred by anger, selfishness, jealousy or pride, whose members love one another with a pure heart fervently, forbearing one another, forgiving one another, and bearing one another's burdens, which offers friendship to the lonely, support to the weak, and acceptance to those who are despised and rejected by society, whose love spills over to the world outside, attractive, infectious, irresistible, the love of God himself. I have a dream of a caring church.

'I have a dream of a church which is a serving church - which has seen Christ as the Servant and has heard his call to be a servant too, which is delivered from self interest, turned inside out, and giving itself selflessly to the service of others, whose members obey Christ's command to live in the world, to permeate secular society, to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world...'

Is this a vision that we identify with? Is this the vision that we have a passionate desire to live out for ourselves?



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Key notes for a talk or discussion

based on the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:27-37)

Here are some key points that can be used in a talk, presentation or discussion in churches, home groups, youth groups, Christian Unions or a school assembly.

Consider how you can use these key points to challenge, educate and motivate people to develop an ongoing disability ministry in your church and local community.

Please encourage other leaders and lay people to use these points whenever they have opportunities to raise awareness of the needs of disabled people.

1. Jesus is asked: ‘What must I do to receive eternal life?’

This question asks for specific practical advice: we are busy and we need direct answers, we want to ‘tick the boxes’ in our lives and be safe. But life doesn’t always turn out how we expect. We may be called to die to our own ambitions and hopes before we can live. We may suffer or watch those around us suffer. We are confronted by lives that are affected by pain, disappointment, and incapacity.

Discussion/Meditation point: *What is our response to our own lives and to the lives of others when things don’t go according to plan?*

2. Jesus asks the expert in religious law: ‘What Does The Law Say?’

Jesus knows that the law tells us to love God, and love our neighbour. He challenges the questioner, who wants easy answers, to look a bit deeper at his heart attitude. The answer is more about who we are than what we do. Our response has to be inspired and initiated by how we react and how we feel. As we consider the work of Livability and the needs of those facing disability, we need to ask ourselves what our inner attitudes are.

Do we care about those excluded from our church services? Does our compassion motivate us to act and meet needs in practical ways? Do we love our neighbour as ourselves?

3. Recognising The Need

The Samaritan was motivated to act on compassion. But first of all he had to recognise the person in need.

Are disabled people invisible to us?



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4. Crossing The Street And Meeting Immediate Needs

Like the Levite and Priest before him, the Samaritan could have walked past with any number of excuses and chosen not to help or become involved. Once we recognise that someone needs our help, we too can choose not to respond. But Jesus challenges us to love in a practical way, to act on our compassion, and cross the street.

In meeting someone's needs we meet Jesus - we fulfil Jesus' commands, as He says in Matthew 25: 31-40 "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me".

Do we see Jesus in those who are different from us? Do we see the person first, or the disability?

5. The Goal Of Independence

The Samaritan met the injured man's immediate needs, but he went much further in providing money for his future needs, helping him until he was able to carry on his journey independently. In a similar way, Livability offers choice and independence to thousands of disabled people by providing wheelchair accessible homes, education, holidays, rehabilitation, respite and residential care.

Do we have the motivation to commit to our neighbour for their future lives, to meet a stranger and become a friend, to help someone gain independence and a sense of self worth?

6. Now Go And Do The Same

In the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tells us that the Samaritan 'came to where the man was', identified himself with him, bound up his wounds and made himself responsible for him. So Christ, our Good Samaritan, comes to where we are, entering into our hearts and homes, showing compassion and binding up our wounds. What's more, He tells us to "Go and do likewise".

Do we ask Jesus to help us when we find it difficult to step out of our "comfort zone" and help others?

7. Things We Can Do

The Gospel challenges us to ask ourselves, 'what are things I can do to be a neighbour to disabled people?'

How do we follow the example of the Good Samaritan in our own community - overcoming apathy, prejudice, fear of the unknown and showing practical, long-term love?

[\(See separate page: "More than just a Day"\)](#)



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Some helpful Biblical references to disability

2 Samuel 9: David & Mephibosheth

Exodus 4: 10-12: Moses - God takes responsibility for disability

Luke 4: 14-21: Jesus' Messiahship

Luke 5: 17-26: Friends lower a paralysed man through the roof

The paralysed man's friends worked together to make sure he made contact with Jesus. The story makes it clear that the important issue Jesus dealt with was that of forgiveness of sins - the healing of the man served to illustrate that Jesus is God and has the power to forgive sins. It is not known whether the man remained fully healthy for the rest of his life, but the important thing is that he would be with Jesus in eternity.

Luke 14: 15-24: Filling God's house

This passage reveals the heart of God - God's house will be full when it includes marginalised people - those who are poor, disabled, despised etc. The passage does not say that the guests are to be healed, only that they are to be included.

Psalms 139: God designing us

In Psalm 139, we are exhorted to thank God for the way He made us.

2 Corinthians 12: 7-10: God's power revealed in weakness

It can be argued that a powerful reason for God choosing to use disability and weakness is so that it becomes clear that He is not dependent on the things which the world sees as weakness.

1 Corinthians 12: 22 - 23

This verse helps us determine the make up of our church body. Most churches have difficulty in ministering to disabled people simply because of some basic fears and lack of awareness. Moving past these attitudinal barriers and misunderstandings we'll discover the joy of caring for someone simply based on the preciousness of their souls, not on their physical attractiveness and intellectual capabilities or social position. The Theological model supports this understanding of people with disability.



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Prayers

Almighty God, we remember that you created us and made us all in your image.

Following your acts of creation, when you saw everything that you had made you described it as 'very good'. We celebrate the diversity of your created order. You have made us each as individuals according to your perfect will and purposes. You have blessed us with gifts and abilities.

Yet we live, each of us, with brokenness and limitation, failure and disappointment. We thank you that in Christ you came alongside us and entered our humanity.

Lord Jesus Christ we turn to you - you who know us better than we know ourselves - you who intercede for us.

We come to you, our Saviour - just as we are. We thank you for our salvation. Where there is brokenness, bring wholeness; where there is disease, bring healing; where there is repentance, bring forgiveness; where there is prejudice, bring acceptance; where there is injustice, bring justice.

You are a gracious and loving God, full of loving concern and deep compassion. We pray for your blessing on all those who experience disability. May we offer compassion and help without being patronising and smug towards those who face any form of disability.

We thank you for the wisdom and skill that you have entrusted to those in the caring professions. We thank you for the many organisations who work unceasingly to bring practical help and comfort to those who suffer. We pray that their efforts may bring relief and hope to many who feel despairing and helpless.

Encourage and give resources, we pray, to all those who seek to offer support and understanding to those who live with disability.

We pray for those who carry the responsibility of carers, whether they be family members or others.

Lord, today on this Disability Sunday, we especially pray for ... *(name those known to you who are disabled or who face the onset of disability)*.

Amen.



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Intercessions

Lord Jesus, you reached out to the leper, the paralytic, the blind, the deaf and the needy. You gave friendship and hope to the lonely, you transformed the stranger into a friend, the outcast into a neighbour.

Show us Lord who our neighbours are, not just those who have found their own way to our church, or who look like us, or can do the things we do. Show us the people who are on your heart, needing love, help, encouragement and friendship.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Open our eyes to our forgotten, overlooked neighbours, so that we feel your love and compassion. Compel us to cross the street and invest our time, effort, love and money. Inspire us to bring others to you, carrying those who no longer have the strength to make their own way to your feet.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Thank you Lord for the work of Livability. Thank you that through them your love continues to be demonstrated. Help us to be your hands and feet in our communities and to continue their work with perseverance.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Turn our churches inside out, Lord. Help us to see those around us and cross the street from our buildings and comfortable boundaries to help others to live full and independent lives. Show us how to open our doors to those who you love, and welcome people with practical and genuine love. Help us to change our attitudes, our buildings and our hearts to become more like you.

Amen



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Children's Activities age 5-11

Introductory activity

Using a chocolate bar and what appears to be an empty crisp packet (but the packet actually contains a £1 coin hidden in the corner), offer the children a choice between the two - being careful to hide the coin by holding the packet by that corner.

Hopefully the children will choose the chocolate bar!

You can then reveal that the better choice would actually have been the crisp packet because of its hidden contents.

Link this activity to 1 Samuel 16:7 and the truth that God looks more at what we are like on the inside than at our outward appearance.

Discussion

Divide the children into age groups for a short discussion about how we feel when we first meet someone with a disability.

NB. Remember to emphasise that not all disabilities are obvious on the outside.

"Feelings" activity

This activity should be done while the children are still divided into age groups.

Give each child a large plain paper bag on which they can draw a face. On the outside the children can write words to describe the feelings we show on the outside. On pieces of paper the children can write words to describe the feelings we hide on the inside. These pieces of paper can be placed inside the paper bag.

NB. Younger children may find it easier to draw simple pictures to describe feelings.

During this activity ask the children to consider especially how those with disabilities might feel. Encourage them to think about positive feelings as well as more negative ones!

Through the Roof

Act out with the children the story of the disabled man lowered through the roof to Jesus (Luke 5: 17-26). All the children can be involved because those without key parts can form the crowd in the house.

Bring out the following points from the story:

- Sometimes it can be difficult for those with disabilities to come to church or to feel included
- We can all help one another like the four friends helped the disabled man
- Jesus forgave the man and helped him to feel better inside before He healed him on the outside



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Disability awareness activities

Give out a wrapped sweet (e.g. Starburst) to each child. Ask the children to put their "good" hand (the one they write with) behind their back and unwrap the sweet with the other hand. Talk to the children about the difficulties experienced by those who do not have full use of their hands.

Play a game of "Chinese Whispers". Talk to the children afterwards about how it feels not to know what others are saying and use this to raise awareness of the difficulties of hearing impairment.

Put out two or three chairs in various parts of the room. Blindfold a child and ask another child to guide them to a chair. Make sure there are some narrow 'pinch points' (which can be made with spare chairs) and other obstructions. Discuss the difficulties experienced by those who are visually impaired.

Consider inviting someone from your congregation who has a disability to talk to the children about how God helps them.

Conclusion

Conclude with a prayer time, in groups, encouraging the children to pray about what they have learnt and for those they know who are disabled.



Youth Programme - Age 11+

Introductory comments

How extraordinary - the Lord of Glory makes himself at home in ordinary human beings. The Bible calls us temples of the living God. Even more remarkable: sometimes God chooses broken temples to show the surpassing riches of His grace.

Some people are born without a capacity most of us take for granted. Other people lose something they once enjoyed. But God loves us all and He also loves to live in broken people. So if you think learning about disability is just about wheelchair ramps and disabled parking, think again. Disabled people can teach us some important lessons about being human. They show us that what you see is not necessarily what you get. And they help us to see that, in a broken world, everyone is somehow broken.

Focus question

How do you think you'd feel if you had to live without one or more of your physical capabilities? What do you think you would miss the most?

Some of the people you're about to hear don't speak very clearly, so you'll have to listen carefully. It'll be worth it. They may be difficult to understand, but they are **thinking** very clearly.

Play **Shattered Temples DVD** (see Further resources from Through the Roof)

Discussion questions

1. Describe your first impression of these stories. What thoughts and feelings did you have? Any surprises?
2. Did anyone in this story remind you of someone you know? Can you tell us about that?
3. Did you identify with someone in this story? Can you tell us about that?
4. Read John 9:1-7 (or, preferably, the whole chapter)
 - a. What strikes you about the disciples' assumptions toward the blind man?
 - b. Have you ever come across that assumption - that people are broken because they or their parents sinned?
 - c. What do you make of Jesus' response?
 - d. Have you ever seen God glorified by healing someone? How did you feel about that?
5. Read Psalms 103 and 147
 - a. How is the healing power of God described? His compassion?
 - b. Why doesn't God heal everyone?
6. 'Have you ever seen God glorified by not healing someone? How did you feel about that?
7. What has spoken to you particularly as we have talked? Is there something you need to apply to your life? How can we pray for you?



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Get Physical

If you want to do something to produce at least a little empathy for disabled people, try these simulations. Leave plenty of time to talk about thoughts and feelings afterwards. Take great care with these exercises - make sure they are closely supervised to avoid accidents. Please be aware that these activities are not designed to replicate the varied experiences of disabled people. The aim is to help people practically engage with the subject of disability and stimulate further discussion.

- Borrow a couple of wheelchairs and have youngsters wheel around church, and open heavy doors without putting their weight on their feet and see what it is like to see the world from a chair
- Put eye shades on youngsters and have them fill a cup from a jug
- Put eye shades on youngsters and let them try to get from point A to point B
- Construct a simple dyslexia experience by asking youngsters to follow a simple maze with a pencil while looking at the maze in a mirror
- Have youngsters negotiate a course on crutches. Make sure you include some steps (not a whole flight of stairs!).
- Have youngsters try to get a message by reading lips.



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A Drama for Disability Sunday

“Hope Found” by Gayleen Gardner

Though simple in form, the message is powerful and one with which everyone can identify. The drama takes approximately 10 minutes and requires no props. Costumes for the Biblical characters are highly recommended.

(Scene: Woman enters, obviously agitated - talking to God. Upstage are four Biblical characters with backs to the audience. Modern day characters are seated in the audience. Each character either turns or rises to deliver their line. At the end of each line each character chooses a pose around the woman. 'All' refers to characters who have already spoken - excluding the woman.)

Woman: O God, no. Please. No. I can't do this. I can't face this. This is beyond me. I thought you loved me. OK. OK. I KNOW you love me but oh God this hurts too much. I feel so alone. I feel so far from you. What are you doing? What in this world are you doing?

Hannah: My name is Hannah. I know what it's like to feel alone. But I know how to worship and cling to the giver of life. He is my hope and salvation.

Job: My name is Job. I know what it's like to feel devastated.

All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

Job: ...who gives and takes away. He is my hope and salvation.

David: My name is David. And I know what it's like to feel guilty.

All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

David: ...who takes away my sin. He is my hope and salvation.

Joshua: My name is Joshua. And I know what it's like to feel inadequate.

All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

Joshua: ...who is my strength and my shield. He is my hope and salvation.

Barbara: My name is Barbara. And I know what it's like to be terminally ill.

All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

Barbara: ...who heals in this life and the next. He is my hope and salvation.

Kim: My name is Kim. And I know what it's like to lose a child.

All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

Kim: ...who holds each child in His hand. He is my hope and salvation.

Carol: My name is Carol. And I know what it's like to be divorced.



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All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

Carol: ...husband to the widow and defender of the defenceless. He is my hope and salvation.

Ken: My name is Ken. And I know what it's like to be addicted.

All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

Ken: ...who died to set me free. He is my hope and salvation.

Disabled woman: My name is *[name]* and I know what it's like to be paralysed.

All: But I know how to worship and cling to the Lord

Disabled woman: ...who walks with me. He is my hope and salvation.

All: We know how to worship and cling to the Lord.

Woman: You - oh God - are my hope and salvation.

Director's Notes...

You hold in your hand a script that is simple and quite honestly unassuming on paper. But the simplicity and staging are very powerful and it is the intention that God will use this sketch to bring hope to each person in your congregation - no matter how obvious or hidden their heartbreak may be. The following are a few suggestions for casting and staging:

- Use your most dramatic actor or actress for the person in crisis. Their effectiveness is the key - their gender is not.
- When possible, you can use individuals from your congregation who really have struggled with illness or addiction or divorce. It is very effective for them to step out to the congregation.
- However, be prepared! Someone may think this is an open invitation to share!
- Having your Biblical characters in costume is recommended.
- Experiment with placement and posing. Hannah may kneel next to the woman, while David and Joshua stand, and Job is in a more humble, reclining position. Every character needs to speak to the woman, but they do not have to all be gathered too close around her. Your divorced character and addict are probably good ones to leave on the edges because that is often how they feel!
- We find the unison reading very powerful. If you don't have time to practise getting it to sound good then just have the individual characters say the entire line. Give it a try though - it works!

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More than just a day

We're sure you will find that your Disability Sunday opens new doors for your church and inspires people to reflect God's heart for disabled people all the more, so you won't want to limit yourself to just one Disability Sunday.

Here are four things you can do

as individuals and as a church community:

1. PRAY.

Ask God for opportunities to use the gifts and talents He has given you to make a real difference in the lives of disabled people.

2. BECOME A DISABILITY CHAMPION

Find out about opportunities to volunteer and support the work of disability charities in your area. Take practical steps to make disabled people feel welcome and included in every area of church life by developing your own disability ministry.

Disability Sunday will very likely have uncovered new areas for ministry and people will have stepped forward. There are further resources and training you can obtain from various Christian disability organisations, to help you develop your ministry. Details are given at the end of this document.

3. GIVE.

There are many simple, practical 'things we can do' to raise money for various disability charities such as organising a collection, sponsored activities, selling Christmas cards, carol singing or holding a special service.

4. KEEP DOING IT

Make Disability Sunday an annual event and broaden the theme to include a variety of ways in which God works through pain, suffering and brokenness.



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Further Specialist resources

(Please obtain resources from the individual organisations at the contact addresses given at the end of this pack. Online versions of this document contain direct links to websites: just click on the title.)

[Through the Roof](http://www.throughtheroof.org) www.throughtheroof.org

[Hearts in Motion](#) - a six lesson Bible study exploring disability from a Biblical perspective.

[Be a Roofbreaker](#) - Equipping churches to become welcoming places for all.

[Come In](#) - Making your church buildings accessible to disabled people.

[Removing Barriers](#) - a self-assessment resource to see how inclusive your activities are.

[All Welcome](#) - Best practice guide to include disabled people in the life of the church.

[Guidelines for stewards/welcomers](#) are double-sided, playing card-sized, laminated cards that give the key principles of inclusion in bullet-point format.

[Integr8](#) disability youth programme providing free web resources, training, mentoring, and mission trips

[When God Weeps](#) by Joni Eareckson Tada, a book on pain and suffering.

[Depressed or Possessed](#) by Joe Hayes - a book recognising and responding to mental illness.

[Shattered Temples DVD](#) - personal stories of young disabled people

[Causeway Prospects](http://www.prospects.org.uk) www.prospects.org.uk

One Big Family is a resource churches can use to promote awareness and action that will benefit people with learning disabilities and their families.

- **Worship CDs and other resources**, featuring original songs with simple lyrics.
- **DVD with Causeway songs** and Makaton signing.
- **Remembering God's Love** - understanding the service of Holy Communion.
- Easy to understand **Bible Reading Notes**, available both in written and audio (CD) format, to help people with learning disabilities grow individually in faith.

A member of our mission development team will be happy to visit and talk to you about training, resource materials and the affiliation partnership programme.

[Torch Trust](http://www.torchtrust.org.uk) www.torchtrust.org.uk

A Clearer Vision - A booklet about including blind and partially sighted people in the life of the church. Available in print, giant print and Braille.

The Bible for Blind and Partially Sighted People - a guide to where you can purchase Bibles in accessible media. Available in print, giant print and braille.



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Foursight for the Church - register online at www.torch-foursight.org for access to resources that will help you and your church make a difference for blind and partially sighted people. We will also send you a free Church Pack which includes *A Clearer Vision*, *The Bible for Blind and Partially Sighted People* and a DVD illustrating some of the issues faced by blind and partially sighted people in church.

Christian Resources from Torch Trust - a catalogue of all the resources available from Torch in accessible media, including:

- Giant print Bibles
 - Daily Bible reading notes
 - Magazines to suit different ages and interests
 - Books available to purchase
 - Information about our postal library
- Available in print, giant print, braille and audio.

Livability www.livability.org.uk

Neighbourhood Nativity. Free resource and DVD for putting on an inclusive Nativity service at Christmas

Things I can do. Free resource pack with ideas for disability-focussed services and activities.

Life to the Full. Ten things your church can do to involve disabled people.

Just People? An interactive six-week course looking at compassion, justice, and how your church can effect change.

The Community Mission Team can run training courses and retreats to motivate congregations to become active in outreach and social involvement.

Go Sign www.gosign.org.uk

Sign Me In! A policy for including deaf people in the life of the church.

Christian Signs. Booklet and DVD on British Sign Language Resources. This includes people giving their testimony in sign language, as well as a video clips of Christian vocabulary translated into BSL (also available online at www.christiansigns.co.uk)

Mind and Soul www.mindandsoul.info

UK Directory of Christian Counselling and Care compiled by the Association of Christian Counsellors for Premier Lifeline, this is an invaluable resource for finding trusted and reliable Christian counselling and care wherever you are in the UK.

Open Ears www.openears.org.uk

Advice about inclusion of hard of hearing and deafened people in church life. Contact Open Ears on 01425 615215 or admin@openears.org.uk

ASNA www.asna.info

Making the Gospel accessible. A practical training guide and resource manual for Special Needs Coordinators within the British Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (Applicable to all churches) also available online at www.asna.info or send email to info@asna.info



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[Scripture Union](http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk) www.scriptureunion.org.uk

Top Tips - Welcoming special children. A book giving advice on including disabled children into church communities

Mega Top Tips - Dealing with challenging behaviour. A book supporting understanding and giving strategies to build relationships alongside those children and young people whose disabilities sometimes result in difficult behaviours.

Other

Guidelines for producing print material suitable for people with all levels of sight are available in the "[See it Right](#)" book and CD-Rom produced by the **RNIB**. Contact the RNIB on 0845 702 3153 or see their website: www.rnib.org

- Information about website accessibility is available on the [RNIB](#) website. The **Web Access Centre** is located under "Good Design".
- **Equal Sign** is a translation service from English text to British Sign Language (BSL) on video. www.equalsign.co.uk
- **Signs of God** offer advice about booking and using BSL (British Sign Language) interpreters - see their website: www.signsofgod.org.uk










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Who is Churches for All ?

[Churches for All](http://www.churchesforall.org.uk) (www.churchesforall.org.uk) is a partnership of UK Christian disability organisations. The partners have a breadth of experience and depth of knowledge on disability issues - challenging and enabling churches to include disabled people fully.

Our aim is to help churches create and sustain an environment where disabled people can participate fully in church life for the benefit of all. Disabled people are involved in the leadership of Churches for All and many of its partner organisations. Together, we strive to equip churches to reach towards their full potential by truly including disabled people

The Churches for All Partners

 <p>prospects ...access to life</p> <p>Prospects for People with Learning Disabilities</p> <p>A full life in Christ for people with learning disabilities. Tel: 0118 951 6978 www.prospects.org.uk</p>	 <p>TORCH vision for people with sightloss Torch Trust for the Blind</p> <p>Christian literature and fellowship for blind and partially sighted people. Tel: 01858 438 260 www.torchtrust.org</p>
 <p>Go! Sign Christ in the Deaf Community</p> <p>GO! Sign Supporting and enabling deaf Christians through networking, equipping, teaching and outreach. Tel: 01702 613 113 www.deafchristian.org.uk</p>	 <p>livability Choices for disabled people</p> <p>Livability The new name of Grooms-Shaftesbury. Providing care, education, rehabilitation and holidays for disabled people. Tel: 020 7452 2000 www.livability.org.uk</p>
 <p>Through the Roof</p> <p>Good News to all disabled people and those involved with their lives. Tel: 01372 749955 www.throughtheroof.org</p>	 <p>Open Ears Fellowship for non-signing hard of hearing Christians Tel: 01425 615 215. www.openears.org.uk</p>
<p>Mind & Soul</p>  <p>A nondenominational organisation exploring Christianity and mental health. Lifeline - 08456-52-52-52 www.mindandsoul.info</p>	



Disability Sunday Resource Pack

Churches for All Associates

<p>ASNA (Associate Member)</p>  <p>Asna Adventist Special Needs Association</p> <p>Supporting the spiritual, social, emotional and physical needs of people living with disabilities. Tel: 01491 821103 / 01491 821104 www.asna.info</p>	 <p>Children Worldwide</p> <p>A network of Children's workers, providing fellowship, support and accountability for those working in children's work, whether full or part-time, paid or voluntary. www.childrenworldwide.co.uk</p>
 <p>Scripture Union light to live by</p> <p>Scripture Union An international mission movement making God's good news known to children, young people and families and encouraging people of all ages to meet God daily through the Bible and prayer. Tel: 01908 856000 www.scriptureunion.org.uk</p>	<p>Guild of Church Braillists</p> <p>Guild of Church Braillists aims to advance the Christian religion in particular by transcribing Christian literature from print into Braille. www.gocb.org</p>
 <p>NewWine Local churches changing nations</p> <p>New Wine is a movement of churches working together to change the nation through a network of church leaders, summer conferences, training events and resources. Tel: 0845 437 8656 http://www.new-wine.org</p>	