



# All of us Complete in Christ

Four encouraging  
and challenging  
findings about  
the church in Britain



Transforming  
Lives  
Through  
Disabled People



**Through the Roof asked disabled people from across the UK four questions about church. Here are their answers:**

## Helping the church in Britain fulfil the Great Commission

Through the Roof canvassed the views of disabled Christians and Christian parents of disabled children, in an endeavour to pinpoint the issues which disabled people would most like churches in the UK to address. This document is the result of this survey.

The survey consisted of four questions, and this PDF is divided into four sections corresponding to these questions. Each section is subdivided into the most common responses which were received from the participants in the survey.

This document will inform you about church life from the perspective of disabled people, and give practical examples of how churches are addressing these needs. In it you can discover:

- Insights into church life by disabled people that will encourage and challenge
- Practical ideas and examples that can help enrich church life
- Helpful resources, articles, blogs, video and further contacts
- A recommended reading list of books to inspire and equip you

Some of these are our own existing resources, some are drawn from our partner organisations in Churches for All and others, and some have been created as a direct response to the issues raised by participants in this survey. Once you have identified areas where you would benefit from some help in understanding what is needed, you can turn to the corresponding section in the index at the back, where you will find a list of the resources designed to address these areas.

We hope you will make use of these resources to help you fulfil the Church's mission to present everyone, disabled and non-disabled, complete in Christ. In addition, if you would like a representative of Through the Roof to visit your church and provide training in a particular area, this can be arranged by telephoning our office on 01372 749955 or by emailing us at [info@throughtheroof.org](mailto:info@throughtheroof.org).

**'When you have a supper, ask poor people. Ask those who cannot walk and those who are blind. You will be happy if you do this. They cannot pay you back. You will get your pay when the people who are right with God are raised from the dead.'**

**Luke 14.13-14, New Life Version**

## Section A: A hidden wealth of spiritual maturity

### We asked: What positive benefits does your disability add to your relationship with God?

The “worried well” often see disability as an unmitigated disaster. But we know that most disabled people do not see it in this way. One of the reasons why a poster campaign by a well-known healing evangelist gave great offence to the disabled community in London some years ago was because of its implication that there is “something wrong” with disabled people. At Through the Roof we acknowledge that God still heals bodies today, and we give Him praise whenever He does so. But we are also aware that many people along with their impairments experience a depth of inner healing that goes beyond what many abled people experience. Sadly, the desire to get disabled people “healed” has often unwittingly come across as, “We want God to change you”, with the implication, “You’re not acceptable as you are”.



So we decided to ask people about the positive aspects of their disability, and in particular, its positive impact on their relationship with God. Many of the responses revealed a depth of relationship with God and a wealth of rich spirituality that would certainly qualify these people for leadership roles. We would love to see more disabled people occupying leadership or ministry roles within our churches. One Christian speaker noted that, since becoming a wheelchair user, she has received far fewer invitations to speak. Another woman asked why no one seems to be able to help her progress towards ordination. She wrote, “No-one seems to know what to do about this. It wasn’t a problem when I went for reader training because I didn’t know I had Asperger syndrome. Why is it now a problem? Why will no-one talk to me about it?” Several people expressed a wish to see more disabled speakers at mainstream Christian conferences.

Other people acknowledged that they are struggling to see the positive in their disability, and for these people there is an opportunity for us as Christians to stand alongside them in their struggle, and commit to contributing to their spiritual development. But it is clear to us that there is a treasure-trove of mature Christian spirituality from which churches could be drawing if they were aware of the richness of the spiritual lives of many of their disabled members.

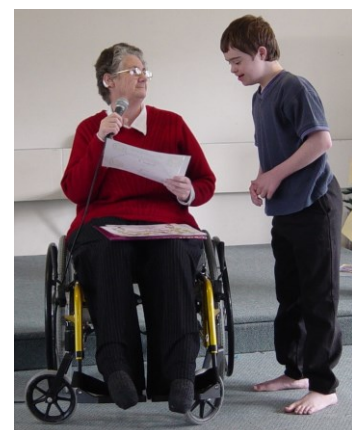
**Here are the principle benefits that people feel their disabilities contribute to their relationship with God:**

The awareness of physical weakness brings a dependence on God that goes beyond what many others experience. This need for reliance on God leads to deeper levels of faith and trust. One person remarked, "Being less in control means that God is more in control, and that is a joy and a blessing." Another wrote, "I know that I have to rely on God and other people every step of the way. I can't do life on my own. This reliance leads to trust, which leads to faith and gives me hope for an eternal future. I don't know what it will look like but I'm looking forward to it." More than one blind person remarked that they are accustomed to putting their faith in the unseen and this helps them when it comes to putting faith in the invisible God. One went so far as to say she was glad to have been born blind because the first face she will ever see will be Jesus. One guide dog owner said, "Every day I put all my faith in my dog and take leap into the unknown trusting him to keep me safe and there's a parallel with faith in God."



Many people find that having a disability opens up the opportunity to share the Gospel, especially with other disabled people. Sometimes this is because they have a greater understanding of their disabled friends and can therefore reach out to them, and sometimes it's because people notice how well they are coping with life's problems, and ask them questions which enable them to share a testimony. Several people felt that their disability gives them an empathy and

understanding that enables them to draw alongside other people and reach out to them in love. Many people felt that they had a greater sensitivity to people and a greater discernment of people's feelings and needs because of their own experience of disability. One blind person wrote, "I have a deeper understanding of people, I'm very discerning; I see more through my awareness of people because I don't see with my eyes."



A sense of being accepted “just as I am”. In a world that judges people by the perfection of their bodies, disabled Christians find a great peace in their knowledge and experience of God’s acceptance of them. People say things like, “I’m reminded of His grace and my identity in Him.” For people with learning disabilities, there is a simplicity of trust and faith that should be an example to those whose intellect gets in the way or complicates faith. One mother wrote of her son with Asperger’s Syndrome, “His faith is solid - it is nonsense to him to suggest that the gospel could be untrue.”



Some people felt they had more time than others to read the Bible, think, reflect and meditate, and that this had deepened the quality of their relationship with God. Many disabled people have grappled with the difficult questions of the goodness of God in the face of human suffering. Whereas many Christians go through life avoiding the challenging problems of God’s sovereignty in the face of hardships, disabled people are forced to face this head on. Many can testify how, as a result, they have come through this with their faith in God strengthened and their walk with Him deepened.

## **Bright ideas for you to use**

### **Exeter Diocese ‘Church is for Everyone’**

The diocese carried out an informal audit of 500 churches. They received 120 replies with 20 examples of good practice e.g.

- Voluntary Disability Advisor
- Annual service in Exeter Cathedral to celebrate people with learning disabilities
- Plans to set-up Diocesan Steering Group to draft sample policies
- Regular services for people with learning disabilities, held in a different church each time, so that each church had the burden of preparation and the benefit of welcoming disabled people.

**Greenside Parish Church Edinburgh** has begun to hold visual services. The services are run by Deaf people and are for the whole church, an experiment in inclusive worship.

**Market Harborough Baptist Church** has a number of people with sight loss on its leadership team. The weekly service sheets are produced in large print and Braille, as is the monthly newsletter. The church practises an open communication style: *“If you find standard print hard to cope with, please don’t be embarrassed to ask for a large print version. Talk to our Church Administrator or any of the deacons.”*

## Section B: Small things make a big difference

We asked: What one thing do you wish churches knew?



We received a wide range of responses to this question, covering physical access to the building, attitudes of church members, and a longing to be accepted and included. Many people wanted churches to understand what it is like to live with a disability or to parent a disabled child, and some questioned churches' willingness to know.

Small things make a big difference. For example, saying, "Please stand if you are able to do so comfortably" instead of, "Please can we all stand" might seem a really small thing, but makes a huge difference to people feeling included in what's going on.

There was also a deep longing for genuine friendships, which many disabled people are not finding in churches, even churches who are quite kind and welcoming on Sundays. One might expect that it would be the lack of physical access or facilities such as large-print hymn books or induction loops that caused people difficulties. But interestingly, these were not, in the main, what the majority of answers focused on. Most people were far more concerned with the attitudes they encountered and the wish for people to understand what their lives are like or what their most pressing needs are.

Someone pointed out that if 1 in 30 of the population has autism, then that goes for our congregations and it should also go for our ministry teams. Some replies were quite heart-rending. One person wrote "I wish churches knew that sickness and disability are not a sign of sin, so by accommodating disability they are not accommodating sin." What a tragedy, if people are made to feel that their disability is perceived as the result of personal sin.

Several of the respondents indicated that they had stopped going to church because of the barriers and attitudes they encountered. None of these had forsaken their love for Jesus, and many of them were finding fellowship in informal groups or via social media. One couple went to explain to their vicar that they could no longer attend church because of the combination of a lack of access and the fact that they were not made to feel welcome, and received the reply, "Ok, see you around, then."

**Here is a summary of the most frequent responses received to this question:**

I wish churches knew how hard and how lonely it is to bring up a child with a disability, that this is not just a “bad day”, this is every day. (100% of parents of disabled children who we surveyed gave some version of this answer. Parents really do feel churches don’t understand.) A close second to this was: “I wish churches were more accepting of people who can’t sit quietly, or who make loud interruptions based on a misunderstanding (e.g. that a question in a sermon is rhetorical).” “If a family have to take their child out, someone should be sure to talk to them and show some care before they leave.” In a similar vein, many people felt that they were simply not understood by churches, and that their value as people was overlooked. Comments ranged from simple heart-cries such as “I wish churches knew what it feels like to be disabled, and the restrictions in life”, “How to listen to the needs of people with disabilities” and “How isolating it is not to be able to take part in things in the services...There is nothing so isolating as when everyone else is laughing at a visual joke/incident and I can’t see it” to the slightly more theological: “The fact that we’re all, disabled and non-disabled, created in God’s image and redeemed by Christ’s atonement means that we’re all of incredible, huge, mind-bending value.”



Many people said they wish people would stop making unhelpful remarks that trivialise the condition (e.g. “You don’t look too bad to me” or “But you cope so well”.) Responses of this kind came particularly from people with hidden disabilities such as mental health conditions, and people whose symptoms varied in severity from one day to another, such as those with arthritis, ME or MS. The other side of this coin is that, as one person put it, “Seeing me as ‘amazing’ or an ‘inspiration’ is patronising and just another way of making me feel I’m different.” At the same time, people want churches to know that their disability is not their only problem in life, and that when they request prayer, people should not assume that the only thing they are praying for is healing from the disability. “Those with disabilities are not necessarily looking or expecting healing (though of course that is sometimes God’s plan). God has a powerful plan and purpose for us all, very often, in our weakness.” One disabled



## All of Us Complete in Christ

pastor wished people would “be more aware of what it is actually like being disabled and not try to ‘pray for healing’ as soon as they are aware of a disability.”

There were a few comments about practical access issues such as lack of disabled parking, uncomfortable seating, lack of clear print in service sheets, etc. “I wish churches knew how hard it is for hearing impaired people to do crowds and noisy things (coffee after church / meals with more than 4-5 people).” One person summed up the problem very well: “I wish churches knew that it’s no good to say they don’t need a ramp as they have no disabled members – as long as they have steps no wheelchair users will come!” But there were also comments like, “I wish churches knew that the right attitude is the most important access requirement, ahead of physical things like ramps.” There were a number of differently-expressed comments about the church’s need to follow Jesus in welcoming all. For example: “God’s heart of compassion for the weakest members of his flock.” “The church should be an advocate for disabled people as Jesus was.” “The church should evangelise disabled people who are, in many of our communities, a largely unreached people group.” “That the point of Christianity isn’t personal faith and discipleship as much as it is being a holy nation, a royal priesthood. We are to be signs of the kingdom by how we involve all and enable full participation for all.”



There were many comments about how unaware churches are of the spiritual contribution that their disabled members can make. “Be more aware of the positive contribution disabled people can make to church life by using their spiritual gifts.” “I wish there was more awareness of the positive contribution disabled people can make to church life. Everyone has something to give and should be encouraged to explore how they can best use their spiritual gifts.” “That disabled people can be gifted, used and called by God just as non-disabled people are.” This even applied to those whose ability to contribute was not obvious: “I wish churches realised that I can’t necessarily meet their expectations because I’m exhausted all the time, but that doesn’t mean I don’t want to contribute to the life of the church.” Our “mantra” in *Through the Roof* has always been, “don’t assume, always ask”, and this came out in some of the replies we received. One person wrote, “I forget about my disability unless you ask me about it or there are barriers that mean I can’t participate. If I come forward for prayer I have just the same issues as anyone else, do not assume, ask what I need prayer for.”

John Swinton writes about the difference between “inclusion” and “belonging” – the former means that people are friendly towards you on a



Sunday, the latter means you would be missed if not there. Many disabled people did not feel they would be missed. We heard tales of people being absent from church through illness, access problems or because they decided to leave, and no one from the church contacted them to see if they were all right. One wrote, "I wish churches knew that keeping contact with church members should be a priority. We can miss a whole month of Sunday services and no-one contacts either of us. Except to send me articles for the parish magazine...."

## **Bright ideas for you to use**

**Messy Church for children with additional needs and disabilities and their families: Adeyfield Free Church, Hemel Hempstead, and The Church of Christ the King, Kettering** both hold Christ-centred, fun, Sunday afternoon sessions every month. They take a multi-sensory approach, incorporating arts & crafts, e.g. play dough, cornflour, dry pasta, and have a chill-out room with bubble tube and fibre optics. They use soft play, tactile toys, puppets, worship songs + percussion instruments, an interactive story/drama with tactile bag, Makaton sign language, picture cards, ear defenders and food. Their plan is to create a welcoming environment where everyone can feel free to be themselves and they intend to get to know families really well over time. 'Buddies' for each of the children help everyone to engage in activities, providing whatever additional support is necessary (large print, signing, picture symbols, visual objects, or whatever) and creating a real sense of belonging. They want to create a God-centred environment where everyone knows they are loved and accepted; where Jesus is at the heart of all they do. You can watch a clip here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdFU\\_VdMVJoints](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdFU_VdMVJoints)

**Christ Church, Deeside**, developed links with families of disabled children through a church member who had a concern for ministry in this area. A Saturday club was started for these children, and later on some joined the church youth group. Fast forward many years, to when these youngsters were adults. In response to a Council survey about how well their needs were being met, most expressed satisfaction with daytime services but wanted somewhere to go in the evenings: "We would like somewhere to go, to meet up with friends, somewhere that isn't noisy like the disco, is somewhere safe." The same lady who had run the children's club for them many years earlier was present at a meeting where these findings were discussed, and realized that the church could again provide for the people, now adults, with whom they'd had input as children. She started a weekly meeting with games, crafts, singing and refreshments, to which these adults with learning disabilities came, along with their carers. Now 5 or more are regularly attending Sunday services, again, with their carers.

**Riverside Church, Birmingham** has started something called Image Ministry. It aims to meet the needs of disabled children and their families at a number of levels:

The mission of Image Ministry is to encourage and support the participation of children with special needs and their families in the vibrant life of Riverside church in the truth that we are all created in God's image. We provide a safe environment for children of different abilities and needs, including those who benefit from one-to-one support or in a more multi-sensory environment as they learn of God's love. Image Ministry currently provides the following:

- **Volunteers** who support children with additional needs to access their peer mainstream Sunday morning group.
- **Trekkers:** A special Sunday morning group designed for children of different abilities and needs where God's love and the good news of Jesus Christ are demonstrated in a creative and accessible way that is matched to the individual child's needs. There is one to one or one to two care provided in this group.
- **Parent Night Out:** An opportunity for parents of children with special needs to connect with one another over a meal. Evenings are arranged throughout the year.
- **Individual pastoral support** for families of children with additional needs from families in similar circumstances, or people with expertise in this area.
- **Saturday Club Stay & Play** is a time for children with additional needs, their families and friends, to meet, play and be entertained. All of our sessions are led by play volunteers who engage children in a variety of activities and games designed for children of all abilities, including siblings.

## Section C: Enriching friendships

**We asked: What's the most important thing your church could do for you?**

Some churches are doing really well in seeing disabled people as an integral part of their church community. Some, though they may not have given too much thought to things like access and facilities for sight and hearing impaired people, nonetheless have such a welcoming and inclusive attitude that disabled people feel at home with them even though there may be some practical difficulties. Others might have all the physical things in place – the wheelchair ramps, the accessible toilet – and yet leave disabled people feeling belittled and overlooked.



A church which, even unintentionally, excluded women or people from different ethnic groups, would soon lose members, yet churches regularly exclude disabled people in this way. We long for the day when disabled people are felt to be as essential in the life of the church as any other minority group – for example left-handed or blue-eyed people!

Many people spoke of needing their church to stand with them for the long haul, not just in the moments of crisis. It was felt that, if some church members displayed a lack of understanding, or made remarks that gave offence, much repair work could be done by an apology from the church leadership, accompanied by an assurance that the church distanced itself from this behaviour.

But by far the biggest heart-cry under this category was not just to be included on Sundays but to find deep and genuine friendships in their church community. Particularly hurtful was people being “too busy” to help disabled people to participate, or disabled children to make their contribution. One person felt unable to discuss her problems because confidentiality would be breached under the guise of asking people to pray for her.

It was clear that some churches were very welcoming to people with a wide variety of disabilities; yet even these churches had disabled members who could identify some areas where they were not helpful, or some issues that had been overlooked. These could easily have been resolved if the people had spoken up, but many had not felt able to do so, or had been worried about being a nuisance.

It seems one of the best things all churches could do, no matter how inclusive they are, is to have a conversation with their disabled members and other disabled

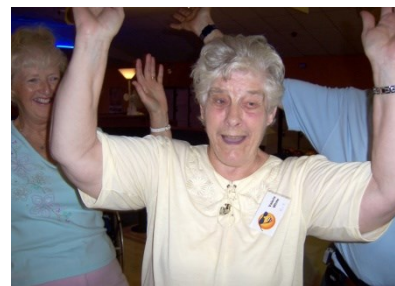
people in their community and ask them if there is anything that they are missing in their provision for them. Many disabled people feel they don't have permission to speak up for themselves. They need to be given permission.

**Here's what disabled people said their church could do for them:**



The number one issue was the longing for real friendships and not just superficial inclusion. Typical comments were: “They could include us not just on Sundays”, “I don't get invited to social events”, “My child gets support in Sunday School but no one ever invites her home for a play date” and “Help me to develop genuine relationships in the church, not just Sunday acquaintances.” There was a simple longing just to be accepted in the way that other people can take for granted in church: “Accept us as people...and share love, friendship and companionship with us in safety, allowing us to encounter all that is wonderful about our faith.” “Forget my disability and please never ask, ‘How long have you been in a chair?’ as the first point of conversation.” Some churches jump in with great enthusiasm when a new disabled member joins, but the enthusiasm soon wanes. This creates a real problem for disabled church members: “My church are good at ‘crisis intervention’ but I want them to be there for me all the time, through thick and thin.” “Be consistent –people join a rota to do things such as take us to church, and then drop out. Be there for the long haul.”

A number of people commented on the lack of equality of opportunity for disabled people in churches, with comments such as “Recognise me as an individual, relax and let me participate as God wants, and not put barriers in my way”, “Allow me to be involved in ministry and not just be seen as an object of ministry”, “See beyond making sure I can get through the door to valuing me and removing barriers to me serving and leading. E.g. Is the platform accessible to all?” and “I wish they would allow equality in church roles:



disabled prayer team, musician, usher, welcome team, elder, Sunday school – everything. We are not represented.”

Other people felt that their support needs were not understood or addressed by the church, and that it should be a matter of more than just Sunday. “Let me talk, and not get impatient if all I talk about is autism – sometimes I just need to be able to offload.” “Respite schemes, e.g. in the school holidays and carer support – it shouldn't be all about Sunday mornings.”

## All of Us Complete in Christ

Many parents spoke of what churches could do to make life easier for those with disabled children. “Recognise that we are a family, and in a family the children make noises. My autistic child actually can’t stay quiet so please don’t demand it of her or the family will be unable to attend church.” “Don’t imply that my child’s behaviour is the result of poor parenting. Someone with her disability can’t sit still and be quiet. Don’t make us feel like an inferior family because of it.” Many people found it hard to ask for help, and wanted others to take the initiative and ask them: “They could ask if I need help and not wait for me to request help.” “Ask me what my needs are, listen carefully, and don’t make every action oh so difficult.” Disabled children need more time and input than other children if they are to participate in church life, but there was a perception that people don’t have the time or can’t be bothered to make the effort. “Give my child the extra time and help he needs to take part in music ministry with the other drummers; I keep being told people are too busy to help him.” “Provide someone to stay with my child in Sunday School so I can listen to the sermon.”

One issue that came up a number of times was that the structure of church services makes them quite inaccessible for people with learning disabilities: “Shorter sermons, especially for those with learning disabilities.” “Modify the service so it is more inclusive.” Some people extended this to other disabilities, too: “Change Sunday services completely so that they don’t involve reading or any other visual presentation unless they use audio description.” Some churches which managed to accommodate people on Sundays were less thoughtful in other areas of church life: “My lack of stamina and the side-effects of medication often mean I can’t go out in the evenings. I wish churches could take this into account a bit more as I do miss out on evening events.” “Encourage [my autistic son] to attend a home group (and equip the leaders to support him) - provide a mentor - be accountable.” “Provide accessible transport to meetings or, failing that, have housegroup meetings in my home.”



## **Bright ideas for you to use**

**St Andrew's, Leyland** apply these top tips to meetings of their Good News Group, for people with learning disabilities:

1. Have high expectations of the Gospel – it is for and accessible to everyone. (Luke 14:15-23 – Parable of the Great Banquet)
2. Pray – God will open doors and bring you opportunities.
3. Reach out into your community. Get in touch with social services and ask your congregation to find out who and where are the people with disabilities in your community.
4. Don't try to do it alone – get others on board and work as a team / community / body of Christ. Use other's resources and support.
5. Get training – it is available. People will come to your church. Get in touch with one of the Churches for All organisations, they will help.
6. When including people with learning disabilities in your services and meetings: Think about making the communication good for them. Use clear language. Use shorter sentences. Explain religious language and concepts without using baby language. Be prepared to be literal. People with learning disabilities can take things literally.
7. Use different communication styles: Visual (puppets, pictures, DVD, signing etc.) Auditory (music and songs that are repetitive, clear and state Gospel truths, other sounds to link to stories) Kinaesthetic (doing stuff, drama, sensory experiences).
8. Be friendly. Be patient. Don't give up.
9. Remember that learning disabled people have gifts and can serve in the church / community even if they need help to do so. Look for their gifts and give them opportunities to serve. Don't assume they can't do something.
10. Usually it is lack of opportunity and support that hinders them. Think about different ways of doing something!
11. Pray and pray and pray. Allow people with learning disabilities to pray for you too!

**KC21 at The Well, Aldershot** has a group called Mustard Seed who support every disabled child through children's ministry. Together with the parents, a plan is drawn up of how to meet each child's needs and help them to participate to their fullest ability. Each child is allocated a team of support workers who take it in turns, month on, month off, to support the child not only when the children go out to their activities, but throughout the entire meeting, so the parents can relax and worship God. Frances and Sarah who started Mustard Seed advise to dream big, because we have a big God. Mustard Seed has now expanded into the Mustard Seed Autism Trust which works in the community with autistic children and their families. The service is delivered by some paid staff and a small army of volunteers.

**Waltham Chase Methodist Church** has adapted the Alpha Course for people with learning disabilities. We extended our normal 90 minute monthly evening Prospects sessions to 2 hours to incorporate a nice 3-course meal to start with (allowing a whole hour for the meal, for plenty of chatting). Icebreaker activities where subgroups discussed and fed back from a question about themselves related to the session eg 'What are your favourite books, TV programmes and films?' for the Bible session, and 'Who helps you?' for the Holy Spirit session. Then a powerpoint presentation to bring out the essence of the mainstream Alpha talks (it's worth scrutinising Nicky Gumbel's latest talks to extract what one might call the essence!), using lots of pictures, and asking lots of questions along the way, like 'Who is this?' about pictures of the Queen and heirs to the throne in the 'Who is Jesus?' talk. For the discussion part, we asked people to think of a response to a question which could sometimes come back as a question, eg, in session 1, 'If Jesus was standing right here in front of us now, what would you ask him?' Everybody threw a beach ball randomly around the group, and when each person caught the ball, it was their turn to give their response. People unable to speak were encouraged to join in the throwing and catching, making eye contact and made to feel included. We ended with songs at the end related to the session. (Cliff Richard's Millennium Prayer was very appropriate for the What is Prayer? session). Illustrated take home sheets summarising the Powerpoint presentation for each session, people liked collecting these.



## Section D: A ready source of creativity

**We asked: What do you wish your church would allow you to do for them?**

Many people expressed a wish to do simple things that could easily be arranged (such as Bible readings, manning the sound desk or taking part in the flower rota) but it seems their churches had never thought to provide them with that opportunity. Many others had great spiritual, organisational or pastoral gifts which were going entirely to waste.



As noted in the first section, many disabled people have been through times of suffering or hardship which have led them into a deep intimacy with and dependence on God, and so have developed a depth of spiritual maturity and wisdom which would amply qualify them for ministry. The small numbers of disabled people in ministry, whether paid or lay ministry is a scandal within the church.

Many people, recognising that those without disabilities may not always appreciate what the issues are, asked only to be allowed to help their churches understand the needs of disabled people. Some asked to be allowed to show people that true healing is about God doing the work that He wants to do in the individual, until everyone is complete in Christ – and sometimes that will involve a deeper healing than just the body. As Haydon Spenceley (a wheelchair-using minister with cerebral palsy) said at the Enabling Church conference in June 2014, “It’s about salvation, it’s not about whether I can do star jumps.”

Some people made the point that it’s not theological knowledge which fits us for ministry or leadership within the church so much as gifting, character and calling, and many disabled people have these in abundance. Others do not aspire to leadership roles, but nonetheless long to be given the opportunity to befriend and encourage others in the church.

Sadly, one response to this question simply said, “As we do not belong to any church because of previous experiences, the answer is, no.” By contrast to this, four people answered this question by saying that their churches were already using their talents to a full extent, which was encouraging to hear.

**Here are the main things disabled people want to be allowed to do for their church:**

Again, the biggest heart-cry in this category was over all that creativity going to waste:

“Recognise that my disability doesn’t mean I’m spiritually impaired. I would love the opportunity to run a housegroup or prayer meeting.” “It would be great if some of the large Christian conferences would use people with disabilities on their platforms – we need such role models.” “I would like more freedom to serve and use my spiritual gifts, I would like my church to be open to my abilities rather than worried about my disabilities.” “Lead, using the skills I have, instead of making up a list of requirements for leadership that are unfortunately designed to exclude autistic people. God did not make mistakes. He intended autistic people to lead, the same as Nicodemus [who may have had autism] led and followed Jesus.” Some wanted to be involved in the church’s wider ministry, not just on Sundays, and not just to disabled people: “Let me offer some counselling or support through the church, not just to disabled people.” “I have time to listen, most of them don’t.” Others wish to be able to use practical talents: “Allow me to do the readings in church more often.” “Help me to take part in the flower rota.” “Let my disabled child do the Bible readings / take part in music ministry.” “I could help on the sound desk if they would let me.” “I would love to be involved in children’s ministry.”



Some wanted the chance to share their experience of disability with the other members of their churches: “I would like to share my experiences of disability but I have been put off this at times, I think through ignorance or embarrassment.” “To have the opportunity to tell my story – it will help with understanding and bless people as well.” “Practical sessions as to what it is like to have a visual impairment e.g. using the specially modified pairs of glasses to simulate what it is like to not have full vision.” “To educate them and try to help them understand the needs of some people with disabilities.” “Help them understand what a broad term disability is. Sometimes a lack of knowledge of how it is to live with a disability is itself a mental disability.”

Several wanted their children to be given the opportunity to grow their talents within the church, for example by participating in music ministry or on the welcome team. “He used to play in a band for Sunday evening services, but the youth leaders with musical ability have left and are not being replaced.” There were those who wanted, out of their experience of disability, to contribute to and expand the church’s understanding of salvation: “Let me show them



## All of Us Complete in Christ

that healing isn't about functionality or lack of it, but that it is about God doing the work that only he can do and bringing people to his salvation." "A realisation that there is more to God's love than just the "sinner's prayer"/born again aspects. Life isn't that simple and Jesus's teaching of the Kingdom of God was much richer." Others felt they had something to offer in terms of showing people how to accept themselves the way God accepts them – something they had learned through their experience of disability: "Share something of the joy of being comfortable with not being perfect and of seeing God's image in others." "Let us share experiences to help others be accepted."



Some people simply wanted the opportunity to be more real and open with their fellow church members. One wrote, "I would love to be open about my eating disorder, but dare not because of trite reactions, trotting out of Bible verses which are nearly always out of context, and breaking of confidence in a prayer setting." It was clear that behind responses like this lay again that profound longing for genuine, reciprocal friendships which so many disabled people found lacking in churches. Although it was expressed in a variety of ways, many people wanted to see a willingness to learn from one another informally, as well as through formal ministry settings. One person expressed this as, "They tend to just write me off and say God can't use me. Not true. Be a friend." Another wrote in greater detail: "To show that faith is about more than knowledge and wisdom, that we shouldn't have a hierarchy of Christians where the ones who know the most or can spout the most theology are the ones who we look up to the most. We can all learn a lot from each other."



Some felt they could play a role in making a link between the church and disability groups in the community. (As Through the Roof is looking to appoint disability champions or "Roofbreakers" in 1,000 churches, this could also form part of this role.) Others felt they could play a role in fundraising.

## **Bright ideas for you to use**

At **Christ the Vine Community Church** approximately one-third of the congregation is made up of people with learning disabilities. A weekly Bible Study is held for them, and they participate fully in church life. Those leading the Sunday services use pictures on the projector screens to illustrate their meaning. Several members with learning difficulties ask for help in finding the correct page in the Bible which is willingly given, one member 'saves' coins all year round for Christian Aid, another for Gideons International. One member is on the flower rota, one occasionally brings biscuits for Sunday refreshments. Another regularly takes the offertory and another does it in their absence. All members bring money for our Christmas Shoe Box Appeal and then help to fill and wrap the boxes.

At **KC21 at The Well, Aldershot** a teenager with severe autism was given a place on the stewarding team. Because his condition included an intense dislike of anything untidy, unclean or disorderly, he took it upon himself to tidy up the auditorium after Sunday worship. He understands that this is a service he is doing for the church, and it is rewarding for him as well as for the congregation.

### **Christ Church, Bayston Hill**

Ellie, a young lady in her twenties, has Cerebral Palsy and a God-given passion to advocate on behalf of others who experience daily life with disability. She was recently successfully elected on to her Parochial Church Council (PCC) and is proposing a 14-point plan to further advance her church's already positive and welcoming approach to disabled people. At her first leadership meeting she volunteered to scribe for a small group discussion and reported back to the group, which she did "excellently", according to one of her fellow PCC members.

## Index of Resources

We hope that this booklet has helped you to identify the areas where you are doing well in addressing what disabled people see as the key issues for them, and the areas where perhaps disabled people are slipping through the net. The following index is arranged in an order that matches the issues in each of the four areas.

Some of the resources are from Through the Roof, and some from our partner organisations within **Churches for All** and from **Joni and Friends** and **Life Without Limbs**. Some have been created specifically in response to the answers received to our survey.

The **Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization** identified disabled people as possibly the most unreached people group in the world. We hope that the resources in this index will help your church to play its part in changing that statistic, at least in this country.

The resources in this index come from the following organisations, all of whom are members of **Churches For All** ([www.churchesforall.org](http://www.churchesforall.org)), and further information, advice and support can be obtained from any of them:

- [www.torchtrust.org](http://www.torchtrust.org) A Christian organisation with a worldwide vision for people with sight loss
- [www.livability.org.uk](http://www.livability.org.uk) Inspired by a Christian ethos, Livability work with disabled and disadvantaged people to achieve real choice, independence and opportunity through their expertise, the breadth and quality of their services and by campaigning for change
- [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org) Transforming lives through disabled people, a national, pan-disability, Christian ministry seeking to ensure that the good news of the Christian message is accessible to everyone. Our vision is of a world where all people live interdependently, mutually giving and receiving, as God intended
- [www.prospects.org.uk](http://www.prospects.org.uk) The lead Christian organisation for people with learning disabilities and their families in the United Kingdom
- [www.mindandsoul.info](http://www.mindandsoul.info) Premier Mind and Soul - exploring Christianity and Mental Health

## All of Us Complete in Christ

- [www.gosign.org.uk](http://www.gosign.org.uk) Sharing Jesus with Deaf people whose first language is BSL
- <http://openears.org.uk> A non-denominational Christian charity for people with various degrees of impaired hearing, mainly those who communicate orally, assisted by hearing-aids and lip-reading. It aims to provide accessible fellowship, Bible teaching, prayer support and pastoral care, informative literature, and to support specified Christian work among people with impaired hearing in developing countries
- <http://thekairosforum.com> Tailor made resources for parish welcome, worship, spirituality in social care, family faith activities, bereavement, palliative care and school inclusion please contact [cgangemi.kairos@gmail.com](mailto:cgangemi.kairos@gmail.com). The Kairos Forum for people with Intellectual or Cognitive Disabilities – KFICD - seeks to highlight and respond to the spiritual and religious needs of people with disabilities
- [www.asna.info](http://www.asna.info) Adventist Special Needs Association – supporting people living with special needs and disabilities
- <http://parishnursing.org.uk> Whole person healthcare through the local church  
Some additional resources in this index come from:
- [www.joniandfriends.org](http://www.joniandfriends.org) International Disability Centre with help, resources, education and training. **Please note that Joni and Friends does not ship to addresses outside the USA. If you see a resource on their website that you wish to purchase, we suggest you search for it through one of the online booksellers.**
- <http://www.annmemmott.org.uk> a national disability and autism consultant, working to improve understanding of how to make use of the considerable gifts of disabled people
- [www.lifewithoutlimbs.org](http://www.lifewithoutlimbs.org) Founded by Nick Vujicic who was born without limbs, its mission is to cross boundaries and break down barriers, to build bridges that bring people to the love and hope found in Jesus Christ

## Available Resources

### Section A: What positive benefits does your disability add to your relationship with God?

If any doubt remains about the wealth of spiritual gifting that disabled people bring to the body of Christ, some of these webpages, blogs and resources will hopefully remove it:

#### Blogs written by Disabled Christians and their families:

- <http://disabledchristianity.blogspot.com>
- <http://www.haydonspenceleay.com/>
- <http://promotingdisability.blogspot.com>
- [www.loveinadifferentlanguage.com](http://www.loveinadifferentlanguage.com)

#### Websites on Disability, created by disabled Christians:

- <http://www.disabilityandjesus.org.uk/disabilityandjesus.org.uk/Home>
- <http://reneweddaily.com/>
- <http://eugenecho.com/2013/10/18/i-have-disabilities-i-am-broken-but-not-because-of-my-disability/>
- <http://www.joniandfriends.org/>
- <http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/beyond-suffering-christian-view-disability-ministry-study-guide/>
- <http://www.bsldailydevotions.co.uk/>
- <http://gosign.org.uk/go-sign-channel>

#### Article on a Biblical view of disability:

- <http://www.bethinking.org/human-life/a-biblical-view-of-disability>

#### Disabled vicar giving a view from the pulpit:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wM9Crq48js>

#### One disabled Christian's inspiring story:

- <http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/look-no-hands/>

## Section B: What one thing do you wish churches knew?

### Sensory disabilities:

**From Torch Trust** (<http://www.torchtrust.org>):

- Visual Awareness Training Brochure (<http://www.torchtrust.org/downloads/auto/Visual%20Awareness%20Training%20Brochure.pdf>)

**From Go!Sign** (<http://gosign.org.uk>)

- Sign me in ([http://issuu.com/go\\_sign/docs/sign\\_me\\_in\\_policy\\_2015?e=0/11532439](http://issuu.com/go_sign/docs/sign_me_in_policy_2015?e=0/11532439))

**From Open Ears** (<http://openears.org.uk>)

- Information and education (<http://openears.org.uk/about-us/>)

### Mental Health:

From **Livability and Premier Mind and Soul** (<http://www.livability.org.uk/>) (<http://www.mindandsoul.info/>)

- <http://www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org/>

### From Premier Mind and Soul

- Depression ([http://www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/250561/Mind\\_and\\_Soul/Resources/Topics/Depression/Depression.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/250561/Mind_and_Soul/Resources/Topics/Depression/Depression.aspx))
- All About limits ([http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/414373/Mind\\_and\\_Soul/Resources/All\\_about\\_Limits.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/414373/Mind_and_Soul/Resources/All_about_Limits.aspx))
- Living with borderline personality disorder ([http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/411381/Mind\\_and\\_Soul/Resources/Testimonies/Living\\_with\\_Borderline.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/411381/Mind_and_Soul/Resources/Testimonies/Living_with_Borderline.aspx))
- The Amazing Technicolour Pyjama Therapy ([http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/295628/Mind\\_and\\_Soul/Resources/Books/Book\\_Reviews/The\\_Amazing\\_Technicolour.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/295628/Mind_and_Soul/Resources/Books/Book_Reviews/The_Amazing_Technicolour.aspx))
- Mental Health Friendly Church ([http://www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/128991/Mind\\_and\\_Soul/Resources/Topics/Friendly\\_Churches/Friendly\\_Churches.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/128991/Mind_and_Soul/Resources/Topics/Friendly_Churches/Friendly_Churches.aspx))
- Friendly Places (<http://www.faithaction.net/areas-of-work/friendly-places/>)
- Podcasts ([http://www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/110157/Mind\\_and\\_Soul/Resources/Podcast/Podcast.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/110157/Mind_and_Soul/Resources/Podcast/Podcast.aspx))



- Navigating life audios ([http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/411134/Mind\\_and\\_Soul/Resources/The\\_Navigating\\_Life.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Articles/411134/Mind_and_Soul/Resources/The_Navigating_Life.aspx))

### **Inclusive Church:**

#### **From Livability** (<http://www.livability.org.uk/>)

- Everybody Welcome audits (<http://www.livability.org.uk/church/training-events/everybody/audits/>)
- Everybody Welcome - Developing the children's team (<http://www.livability.org.uk/church/training-events/everybody/developing-childrens-team/>)
- Everybody Welcome in the church (<http://www.livability.org.uk/church/training-events/everybody/wider-church/>)

#### **From Through the Roof** (<http://www.throughtheroof.org>)

- All Welcome (<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/all-welcome/>)
- Be a Roofbreaker (<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/be-a-roofbreaker/>)
- Come In! (<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/come-in/>)
- Hearts in Motion (<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/hearts-in-motion/>)
- Bible Teaser postcards (<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/bible-teaser-postcards/>)
- Steward Welcome Cards (<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/stewardwelcome-cards/>)

#### **From Churches for All** (<http://churchesforall.org.uk/>)

- Enabling Church Conference Audio recordings and transcripts (<http://churchesforall.org.uk/enablingchurch/audio-recording/>)

#### **From Urban Saints**

- <http://www.urbansaints.org/allinclusiveevent>

#### **From Adventist Special Needs Association** (<http://www.asna.info>)

- A very comprehensive list of resources and publications is available to borrow (<http://www.asna.info/asna-resources-list-of-books-and-publications>)
- <http://www.asna.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/manual-08.pdf>

#### **From Lynn McCann**

- <https://includedbygrace.wordpress.com/>

## Dementia:

### From Livability (<http://www.livability.org.uk/>)

- Dementia Friendly church training (<http://www.livability.org.uk/news/2015/tailored-training-church-dementiafriendly/>)
- Top 10 dementia tips [http://issuu.com/livabilitycommunitymission/docs/10\\_top\\_tips?e=6753323/2012248](http://issuu.com/livabilitycommunitymission/docs/10_top_tips?e=6753323/2012248)
- Dementia-friendly buildings <http://www.livability.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Top-ten-tips-for-Dementia-Friendly-Buildings.pdf>
- Dementia-friendly communities <http://www.livability.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Top-ten-tips-for-Dementia-Friendly-Communities.pdf>
- Dementia-friendly worship <http://www.livability.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Top-ten-tips-for-Dementia-Friendly-Worship.pdf>
- Dementia-friendly communications <http://www.livability.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Top-ten-tips-for-Dementia-Friendly-Worship.pdf>
- Dementia-friendly prayer <http://www.livability.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Top-ten-tips-for-Dementia-Friendly-Prayer.pdf>

## Autism:

### From Ann Memmott

- [http://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/autism\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/autism_guidelines.pdf)
- <http://www.annmemmott.org.uk/2012/11/autism-and-safeguarding-by-ann-memmott/>
- [http://www.annmemmott.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Autism\\_Sensory\\_Pilgrimage1.pdf](http://www.annmemmott.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Autism_Sensory_Pilgrimage1.pdf)

## For children and adults with learning disabilities:

### From The Open Praise Project ([www.openpraiseproject.com](http://www.openpraiseproject.com))

- Bible Stories to download: <http://openpraiseproject.com/downloads/>
- Bible story books, made to order: <http://openpraiseproject.com/books/>
- Open praise resource packs <http://openpraiseproject.com/resource-packs/>

### From The Kairos Forum (<http://thekairosforum.com>)

- Training and advice for religious communities (<http://thekairosforum.com/content/religious-communities>)
- Training for leaders of religious communities (<http://thekairosforum.com/content/leaders-religious-communities>)
- Everybody Has a Story Training (<http://thekairosforum.com/content/everybody-has-story-training>)

## All of Us Complete in Christ

- For more about what The Kairos Forum can offer, see <http://thekairosforum.com/content/aims>

### Theological and Social aspects of disability:

**From Joni and Friends** (<http://www.joniandfriends.org/>)

- The Journal of the Christian Institute on Disability (<http://www.joniandfriends.org/christian-institute-on-disability/journal/>)

## Section C: What's the most important thing your church could do for you?

### Serving the community:

#### From Livability ([www.livability.org.uk](http://www.livability.org.uk))

- Things I can do (<http://www.livability.org.uk/church/church-fundraising/things-i-can-do/>)
- <http://www.livability.org.uk/church/training-events/neighbour-developing-livable-communities/>
- <http://www.livability.org.uk/church/church-community/>

#### From Parish Nursing ([www.parishnursing.org.uk](http://www.parishnursing.org.uk))

- Examples of what Parish Nursing could help your church to do: <http://parishnursing.org.uk/about-us/case-studies/>

### Serving people with learning disabilities:

#### From The Kairos Forum (<http://thekairosforum.com>)

- <http://thekairosforum.com/content/resources>
- <http://thekairosforum.com/content/i-belong-special>
- <http://thekairosforum.com/content/i-belong-special-leaders-guide>
- <http://thekairosforum.com/content/everybody-has-story>
- <http://thekairosforum.com/content/religious-agencies>

#### From Reachout ASC

- [www.reachoutasc.com/churches-organisations](http://www.reachoutasc.com/churches-organisations)

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

- All of the following can be ordered from [www.prospects.org/catalog](http://www.prospects.org/catalog)
- Easy-to-read Bible (leather bound)
- Easy-to-read Bible (softback)
- Daily Bible reading notes:
  - Listen to Jesus
  - Paul followed God
  - David pleased God
  - Come, Holy Spirit
  - In the Beginning
  - Moses, man of God
  - Being like Jesus
  - God gives new life
- Songs of praise

## All of Us Complete in Christ

- The story of Christmas
- The first Christians
- The story of Easter
- Say the word CD
- Jesus the start of it all CD
- No God is greater CD
- Everything is good CD
- Heaven is our home CD
- No God is greater Makaton DVD
- No God is greater Makaton signers' handbook
- Jesus the start of it all Makaton DVD twin pack
- Jesus the start of it all Makaton signers' handbook
- Cream Makaton songs pack with symbols
- Communion booklet
- Love is the Reason

### Developing Biblical Friendships:

**From Care for the Family** (<http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/>)

- <http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/about-us/faq/faq-befriending>

**From Churches for All** ([www.churchesforall.org.uk](http://www.churchesforall.org.uk))

- Belong or Begone board game (instructions, board and playing pieces)  
<http://churchesforall.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Board-game-explanation-leaflet.pdf>
- <http://churchesforall.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Friendship-board-game-version.pdf>
- <http://churchesforall.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Friendship-cards-and-game-counters.pdf>
- Pages 10-11 of Be a Roofbreaker  
(<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/be-a-roofbreaker/>)

**From Joni and Friends** (<http://www.joniandfriends.org/>)

- Barrier Free Friendships by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Jensen  
(<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/barrier-free-friendships/>)

### Ministry to disabled children

**From Joni and Friends** ([www.joniandfriends.org/](http://www.joniandfriends.org/))

- Special Needs Smart Pages  
(<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/special-needs-smart-pages/>)

- Pocket Guide to Special Needs  
(<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/pocket-guide-special-needs-quick-tips-reach-every-child/>)
- Helping Kids Include Kids with Disabilities by Barbara J Newman  
(<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/helping-kids-include-kids-disabilities/>)
- Leading a Special Needs Ministry by Amy Fenton Lee  
(<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/leading-special-needs-ministry/>)
- Special Needs Ministry for Children by Pat Verbal  
(<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/special-needs-ministry-children/> )

**From Ann Memmott** (<http://www.annmemmott.org.uk>)

- <http://www.annmemmott.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Children-in-church-resource1.pdf>

**From Additional Needs Alliance**

(<http://www.urbansaints.org/additionalneedsalliance>)

- <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/44mgtginrlvinek/AAAfzUJKHr8SSTR1sUjwRbHca/Resources?dl=0>
- <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/44mgtginrlvinek/AACfKFjD6u0RCwU9gGb5U-Z3a/Resources/Behaviour%20cards?dl=0>
- <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/44mgtginrlvinek/AAB5J3Ph6GEg5uEE6g3ewrmWa/Resources/Story%20telling%20presentations?dl=0>
- <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/44mgtginrlvinek/AACu4rNUGOAOg3HP7ul-e6lca/Resources/Info%20sheets?dl=0>
- <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/44mgtginrlvinek/AAAJCWHuDHONsRUCXEzm3GvWa/Resources/Creative%20Prayers%20from%20Eastbourne%20Conf?dl=0>

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

- Parachute Bible Stories  
(<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/parachute-bible-stories/>)

**Developing a ministry with and to disabled people**

**From Joni and Friends** (<http://www.joniandfriends.org/>)

- Developing a disability ministry (<http://bwcumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Developing-a-Disability-Ministry.pdf>)
- Autism and your church by Barbara J Newman  
(<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/autism-and-your-church/>)

- Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities by Erik W. Carter (<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/including-people-disabilities-faith-communities/>)

### **Making Church accessible to everyone**

#### **From Torch Trust ([www.torchtrust.org](http://www.torchtrust.org))**

- Worship for All (<http://www.torchtrust.org/smartweb/foursight/accessibleworship>) transcribes your text into large print or braille
- All the following resources are listed at <http://www.torchtrust.org/downloads/Resources%20for%20Churches.htm>:
- Giant Print Bible (NIV) – hardback (19 vols)
- Giant Print Bible (NIV) – paperback (37 vols)
- Pocket-size Bible portions – various Bible books (NIV) – braille
- DAISY (Audio) Bible (TNIV) – Requires DAISY player
- DAISY (Audio) Bible (Authorised Version) – Requires DAISY player
- Megavoice (Audio) Bible (portable, self contained unit) – with power unit
- Megavoice (Audio) Bible (portable, self contained unit) – WITHOUT power unit
- 100 Hymns for Today (Braille grade 1)
- Bethlehem Carol Sheet (55th Edition) – braille or giant print
- Mission Praise 1 – hardback – braille (2 vols); giant print (1 vol)
- Mission Praise 1 – softback – giant print (1 vol)
- Mission Praise 2 – braille (3 vols)
- Mission Praise Complete – softback – giant print (5 vols)
- Mission Praise Complete – hardback – giant print (5 vols)
- Spring Harvest Song Book (2011-2012) – braille or giant print
- Worship Today – braille (4 vol) or giant print (2 vol)
- A Clearer Vision – clear print, giant print, braille
- Awareness and practical training for churches
- Bibles in Accessible Media – an online resource at [www.torchtrust.org/bibles](http://www.torchtrust.org/bibles)
- This is Braille – an introduction to braille with Bible text
- Daily Bible Reading Notes

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

- Removing Barriers: <http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/removing-barriers/>
- Hearts in Transformation (<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/hearts-in-transformation-2/>)

## Section D: What do you wish your church would let you do for them?

### Equipping disabled people to serve the Church

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

- All the following resources are listed at <http://www.torchtrust.org/downloads/Resources%20for%20Churches>:
- Alpha Manual – braille
- Alpha Team Training Manual – braille
- The Marriage Course (N & S Lee) – braille (1 vol)
- The Purpose Driven Life (R Warren) – braille or giant print (4 vols) –
- Freedom in Christ: Participant Guide 2009 ed. – braille or giant print (2 vols)
- Steps to Freedom in Christ – (Neil T Anderson) – braille or giant print (1 vol)
- Gideon Bible Helps – giant print (hardback)
- Gideon Bible Helps – braille or giant print (softback)
- Christianity Explored: Handbook 2010 ed. – braille or giant print (1 vol)

### Celebrating the place of disabled people within the body of Christ

#### From Churches for All (<http://churchesforall.org.uk/>)

- Disability Sunday pack  
(<http://churchesforall.org.uk/disabilitysunday/disability-sunday-resource-pack-2015/>)

#### From Life Without Limbs

- Biography of a Determined Man of Faith  
[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/biography-of-a-determined-man-of-faith/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/biography-of-a-determined-man-of-faith/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)
- Life's Greater Purpose  
[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/dvd-lifes-greater-purpose/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/dvd-lifes-greater-purpose/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)
- Verve  
[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/products/DVD-VERVE.html?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/products/DVD-VERVE.html?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

#### From Ann Memmott (<http://www.annmemmott.org.uk/>)

- <http://www.annmemmott.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/A-Christian-Faith-and-Autism1.pdf>



**Equipping church members to serve their disabled community**

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

- Roofbreaker starter kit and e-news: <http://www.throughtheroof.org/a-new-year-a-new-season-for-disability-ministry/>
- Roofbreaker FAQs: <http://www.throughtheroof.org/2-roofbreaker-faqs/>
- Sign up to become a Roofbreaker: <http://www.throughtheroof.org/sign-up-to-become-a-roofbreaker/>

## Recommended book list:

### Mental health

Dealing with Depression by Sarah Collins and Jayne Haynes

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/dealing-with-depression/>

Depressed or Possessed by Pastor Joe Hayes

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/depressed-or-possessed/>

### The church and disability

Enabling Church by Gordon Temple with Lin Ball

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/enabling-church/>

Making Church Accessible to All by Tony Phelps-Jones

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/making-church-accessible-to-all/>

The Lost Mandate by Dan'l C Markham and Nick Vujicic

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/the-lost-mandate/>

Barrier-Free Friendships by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Jensen

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/barrier-free-friendships/>

Same Lake Different Boat by Stephanie O Hubach

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/same-lake-different-boat-coming-alongside-people-touched-disability/>

Autism and your Church by Barbara J Newman

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/autism-and-your-church/>

Beyond Suffering – a Christian view on disability ministry by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Bundy

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/beyond-suffering-christian-view-disability-ministry-study-guide/>

Beyond Suffering for the Next Generation by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Bundy

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/beyond-suffering-next-generation/>

### The church and social issues

The Church in the Twenty-First Century by Pastor Joe Hayes

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/the-church-in-the-21st-century-free-with-any-purchase-totalling-over-25/>

## All of Us Complete in Christ

How to be a Christian in a Brave New World

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/how-to-be-a-christian-in-a-brave-new-world/>

The Life and Death Dilemma by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/life-and-death-dilemma-families-facing-health-care-choices/>

Life in the Balance by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/life-balance/>

Life in the Balance Leader's Guide by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/life-balance-leaders-guide/>

### Deafness

Deaf Liberation Theology by Hannah Lewis

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/deaf-liberation-theology/>

Theology without words by Wayne Morris

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/theology-without-words/>

### Suffering

A Myrtle Tree for Life's Briars by Joanne Peden

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/a-myrtle-tree-for-lifes-briars/>

When God Weeps by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Estes

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/when-god-weeps/>

The Amazing Technicolour Pyjama Therapy <http://muddypEARL.com/books/the-amazing-technicolour-pyjama-therapy/>

Why? By Sharon Dirckx <http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/why/>

God's Help When You Suffer DVD and Study Guide by John Ankerberg

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/gods-help-when-you-suffer/>

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/gods-encouragement-caregivers/>

Have You Felt Like Giving Up Lately? By David Wilkerson

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/have-you-felt-giving-lately/>

A Lifetime of Wisdom – the way God heals you by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/lifetime-wisdom-embracing-way-god-heals-you/>

Diagnosed with Breast Cancer: Life after shock by Joni Eareckson Tada  
<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/diagnosed-breast-cancer/>

### Testimonies

Cara – a hope and a future by Rhona J Tolchard  
<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/cara-a-hope-and-a-future/>

In the Saviour's Love by Jenny Edwards MBE  
<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/in-the-saviours-love/>

Joni and Ken – An Untold Love Story by Ken and Joni Eareckson Tada  
<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/joni-and-ken-an-untold-love-story/>

Joni – an unforgettable story by Joni Eareckson Tada  
<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/joni-unforgettable-story/>

Joni – A Step Further by Joni Eareckson Tada  
<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/step-further/>

The God I Love – a lifetime of walking with Jesus by Joni Eareckson Tada  
<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/god-i-love-lifetime-walking-jesus/>

Choices – Changes by Joni Eareckson Tada  
<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/choices-changes/>

Look, No Hands! By Brian Gault  
[http://www.amazon.co.uk/Look-No-Hands-Inspiring-Christian/dp/034074636X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1434031559&sr=1-1&keywords=Brian+Gault](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Look-No-Hands-Inspiring-Christian/dp/034074636X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1434031559&sr=1-1&keywords=Brian+Gault)

Life without Limbs by Nick Vujicic  
[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/book-life-without-limits-paper-back/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/book-life-without-limits-paper-back/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

### Encouragement

The Power of Unstoppable Faith by Nick Vujicic  
[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/the-power-of-unstoppable-faith-your-keys-to-a-fulfilled-life/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/the-power-of-unstoppable-faith-your-keys-to-a-fulfilled-life/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

Unstoppable by Nick Vujicic  
[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/unstoppable-paperback/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/unstoppable-paperback/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

## All of Us Complete in Christ

Your Life Without Limits by Nick Vujicic

[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/your-life-without-limits/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/your-life-without-limits/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

Stand Strong by Nick Vujicic

[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/stand-strong-hard-cover/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/stand-strong-hard-cover/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

### The church and disabled children

Special Children Special Needs by Simon Bass

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/special-children-special-needs/>

Special Needs Ministry for Children by Pat Verbal

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/special-needs-ministry-children/>

### Theology of disability

The Enabled Life by Roy McCloughry

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/the-enabled-life/>

The Paradox of Disability by Hans S Reinders

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/the-paradox-of-disability/>

Disability, Providence, and Ethics by Hans S Reinders

<http://www.waterstonesmarketplace.com/Disability-Providence-and-Ethics-Bridging-Gaps-Transforming-Lives-Hans-S-Reinders/book/28049842?qsort=p>

Disability and the Gospel by Michael S Beates

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/disability-and-gospel/>

A Place of Healing by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/place-healing/>

The Disabled God by Nancy Eiesland

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Disabled-God-Liberatory-Disability/dp/0687108012>

Copious Hosting: A Theology of Access for People with Disabilities by Jennie Weiss Block

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Copious-Hosting-Theology-Access-Disabilities/dp/0826413498>

Vulnerable Communion: A Theology of Disability and Hospitality by Thomas E Reynolds

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Vulnerable-Communion-Theology-Disability-Hospitality/dp/1587431777>

Discovering Trinity in Disability: A Theology for Embracing Difference by Myroslaw Tataryn and Maria Truchan-Tataryn

<http://www.amazon.com/Discovering-Trinity-Disability-Embracing-Difference/dp/1626980373>

Theology, Disability and the New Genetics: Why Science Needs the Church by John Swinton and Brian Brock

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Theology-Disability-New-Genetics-Science-x/dp/0567045587>

A Constructive Theology of Intellectual Disability: Human Being as Mutuality and Response by Molly C. Haslam

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Constructive-Theology-Intellectual-Disability-Mutuality/dp/0823239411>

Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity by Amos Yong

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/books/dp/1602580065>

Disability in the Christian Tradition: A Reader by Brian Brock and John Swinton

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Disability-Christian-Tradition-A-Reader/dp/0802866026>

The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God by Amos Yong

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Bible-Disability-Church-Vision/dp/0802866085>

Theology, Disability, and Spiritual Transformation: Learning from the Communities of L'Arche by Michael Hryniuk

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Theology-Disability-Spiritual-Transformation-Communities/dp/1604976942>

Becoming Human by Jean Vanier

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Becoming-Human-Jean-Vanier/dp/0232523363>

Human Disability and the Service of God – Reassessing Religious Practice by Nancy Eiesland and Don E. Saliers

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Human-Disability-Service-God-Reassessing/dp/0687273161>

Critical Reflections on Stanley Hauerwas' Theology of Disability by Stanley Hauerwas and John Swinton

[https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Critical\\_Reflections\\_on\\_Stanley\\_Hauerwas.html?id=W\\_VDzt7AciEC&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Critical_Reflections_on_Stanley_Hauerwas.html?id=W_VDzt7AciEC&redir_esc=y)

### **For children**

The Feast Easy Read Bible Story <http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/the-feast-easy-read-bible-story/>

God Gave Us So Much by Lisa Tawn Bergren

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/god-gave-us-so-much/>

The Incredible Discovery of Lindsey Renee by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/incredible-discovery-lindsey-renee/>

On the Wings of the West Wind by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/wings-west-wind/>

### **Caring**

The Challenge of Caring by Alexine Crawford

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/the-challenge-of-caring-bible-related-reflections/>

God's Encouragement for Caregivers DVD and Study Guide by John

Ankerberg <http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/gods-encouragement-caregivers/> <http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/gods-encouragement-caregivers-study-guide/>

### **For Parents of Disabled Children**

Finding Your Child's Way on the Autistic Spectrum by Dr Laura Hendrickson

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/finding-your-childs-way-autism-spectrum-discovering-unique-strengths-mastering-behavior-challenges/>

Another Kind of Courage by Doug Mazza and Steve Bundy

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/another-kind-courage/>

A Never Give Up Heart by Beverley Linder

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/never-give-heart/>

## Devotional

Finding God in Hidden Places by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/finding-god-in-hidden-places/>

31 Days Toward Intimacy with God by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/31-days-toward-intimacy-god/>

31 Days Toward Overcoming Adversity by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/31-days-toward-overcoming-adversity/>

Pearls of Great Price by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/pearls-great-price-sale/>

31 Days Toward Passionate Faith by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/31-days-toward-passionate-faith/>

Heaven – Your Real Home by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/heaven-your-real-home/>

Diamonds in the Dust by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/diamonds-dust/>

Glorious Intruder by Joni Eareckson Tada

<http://www.joniandfriends.org/store/product/glorious-intruder/>

Sailing in Deep Waters by Ros Bayes [http://www.amazon.co.uk/Sailing-Deep-Waters-Ros-](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Sailing-Deep-Waters-Ros-Bayes/dp/1291600086/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1432641194&sr=8-1&keywords=Ros+Bayes+Sailing+in+Deep+Waters)

[Bayes/dp/1291600086/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1432641194&sr=8-1&keywords=Ros+Bayes+Sailing+in+Deep+Waters](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Sailing-Deep-Waters-Ros-Bayes/dp/1291600086/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1432641194&sr=8-1&keywords=Ros+Bayes+Sailing+in+Deep+Waters)

Hope Inspired Life Devotional by Nick Vujicic

[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/hope-inspired-life-devotional/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/hope-inspired-life-devotional/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

Life without Limbs Prayer Journal by Nick Vujicic

[http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/life-without-limbs-prayer-journal/?page\\_context=category&faceted\\_search=0](http://store.lifewithoutlimbs.org/life-without-limbs-prayer-journal/?page_context=category&faceted_search=0)

Facets of Healing by Ase Johannessen (Available from the author at 16 Friary Close, Daventry, Northants. NN11 4FL / [asejohannessen49@gmail.com](mailto:asejohannessen49@gmail.com))





[info@throughtheroof.org](mailto:info@throughtheroof.org)

Tel 01372 749955

Through the Roof Charitable Trust Ltd. is a UK Registered Company number 04201510 with offices at Suite B1, Aviary Court, 138 Miles Road, Epsom, KT19 9AB. It is also a Registered Charity Number 1087788.