



# vital link

The Newsletter for Through the Roof



TTR on the Move



God Has a Plan For Me Too



When I See Her, I See God



Waves of Refreshment



## Delivering Wheelchairs and Drawing Crowds Wheels for the World in Butaleja, Uganda 2018

Travelling by minibus to the main wheelchair distribution site in Nabiganda, just southwest of Mbale, our Wheels team stopped to buy water from a shop beside the red dust road. On the ground outside the entrance to the store they met William, a beggar with no legs and only one arm. He wasn't able to get to the distribution site, so the team returned to him a few days later. In a scene reminiscent of Bible times where Jesus and his disciples stopped to minister to people at the side of the road, first-time team leader, Anj; Helen, one of the physios; and local techie Leonard carefully fitted William with the wheelchair they'd specially reserved for him, while team pastor, Ola, ministered to curious passers-by.

As the chair was being fitted, another disabled man, Charles, turned up. The dedicated team came back later on and were able to give him a chair too, and invite a girl who begged on the same patch to come to the site for assessment, where she also received a chair. The shop owner allows these three to stay outside his shop and beg even though it's normally not allowed. We pray that this practical demonstration of love will encourage the crowd who gathered to look to God and not to marginalise those with disabilities, especially disabled people living on the street.

Anj, had previously visited Butaleja with a Wheels for the World team two years ago. Back then she had met a little girl called Afua, who needed a mobility aid. Anj was disappointed as she realised the team couldn't help her because

they just didn't have a suitable wheelchair to meet her needs. It's very different from being at home where customised chairs would be readily available. Imagine how Anj felt when she met 9 year-old Afua again on this latest trip. Would Anj have to give her bad news for a second time? Afua was hopeful that this would be her big day – the day she received a wheelchair. Thankfully, this time, things were different! After taking careful measurements Anj spotted a chair that could possibly meet the girl's needs. But then, encouragingly, she discovered an even more suitable fit – a bright red chair that was perfect for her. It was uplifting to be able to provide something just right for Afua, and amazing to see how happy and excited she and her mother were to finally have a chair. A whole family, and possibly even a whole community changed by the gift of one wheelchair.

### A whole family changed by the gift of one wheelchair

When the team had arrived on the first day, they found a crowd of people already waiting. This isn't unusual for a Wheels distribution – often people will wait all day for the opportunity of receiving the gift of a wheelchair. On that first day, 40 people were seen and assessed. Depending on the individual's disability there are a few options available – a wheelchair isn't right for everybody. In some cases, crutches may help improve mobility or at least prevent someone losing strength or skills.

*(Continued on page 2)*



(Continued from page 1)

If a wheelchair is the right thing to issue, the therapist will select a suitable chair. It may not be an exact fit, so they're often modified by our skilled techies, engineering adaptations to demonstrate love and care for each person. Once the chair's complete the therapist will explain how to use it and then each individual has the opportunity to receive a Bible in their own language and pray with the team pastor.

The team saw around 250 people in total, and distributed 130 wheelchairs, plus scores of crutches and mobility aids. It's been great to hear about the fantastic team spirit of the 10 volunteers – some first-timers, some veterans of many trips – and how working with our in-country partners, RILD, they've changed the lives of so many people through the gift of a refurbished wheelchair. Some of the team were even fitting chairs in impromptu clinics to people in need at their hotel on the final evening.

You can watch a series of excellent short videos from the trip at [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org) or our Facebook page (search for 'Through the Roof' on Facebook) – they give a great insight into how a Wheels trip works, as well as letting you see the people your support is helping.

We're planning two more Wheels trips this year (Kenya from the 5th to the 15th of September, and Nigeria from the 14th to the 24th of November), and we're always researching future venues, partners, and distributions. If you're interested in joining a team, please contact Shaun at the office on **01372 749955**. Wheels also relies on your financial support to keep changing lives. If you'd like to donate towards a trip, or sponsor a wheelchair, please take a look at the enclosed form, visit [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org), or give us a call. Thank you!

## Contact Details

Through the Roof, Alpha House, Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4TQ

**Phone:**  
01372 749955

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

**Web:**  
[www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org)



## Ready to Recharge

There are still places available for the one night Time out with God retreat at High Leigh conference centre in Hoddesdon on **25-26th August**. Starting at lunch time on Saturday and finishing with a cream tea on Sunday, this is a weekend for recharging spiritual batteries, making new friends and enjoying the lovely surroundings of the conference centre. Cost is **£127pp**. Please contact [jenny@throughtheroof.org](mailto:jenny@throughtheroof.org) for more information

Contact us now, we would love to have you with us.

## TTR on the Move

After 5 great years in our current Epsom office, we've moved premises to a new building in Morden/Worcester Park. Our main phone number (01372 749955) and e-mail addresses are the same, but our new address is Through the Roof, Alpha House, Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4TQ. Please send all post there from now on. We're sharing the new building with the Ascension Trust, who run Street Pastors, among many other exciting projects, and we're looking forward to seeing what connections and opportunities might develop from that relationship.



**Hard at work in a new location**

Our new office is a little smaller than the current one, so unfortunately we won't be able to accept any wheelchairs there. If you've got one to drop off, please contact us, and we'll arrange a time you can deliver it to the Aldershot warehouse.

## Our Vision

*'... is all people enjoying life together, mutually giving and receiving, as God intended'*

## Our Mission

*'... is transforming lives through Jesus with disabled people'*

*Through the Roof Charitable Trust Ltd is a UK Registered Company number 04201510 with offices at Alpha House, Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4TQ. It is also a Registered Charity Number 1087788.*

*Quotes are sometimes edited for clarity and length*

Vital Link is designed and printed by PDC Design & Print [www.pdc-kingston.co.uk](http://www.pdc-kingston.co.uk)

# God Has a Plan For Me Too

By **Becky Tyler**

15 year old Becky spoke at our recent Roofbreaker event. She writes: I have quadriplegic cerebral palsy. At birth my brain had no oxygen for so long, I nearly died. My brain can't control my muscles. I can't sit up unaided, stand up, balance or walk. I find it hard to eat. I can't talk with my mouth so I 'speak' using a communication aid with my eyes.

Disabled people are made in God's image and loved by God just like non-disabled people. We're not inferior if our bodies or minds work differently. No part of the body can tell another part it's not needed (1 Corinthians 12.21). Disabled people are a much needed part of the body of Christ.

God has a wheelchair too (Daniel 7.9) and God's plans include everyone. I have a superpower – my ability to use eye-gaze technology to talk and use a computer. It's the only thing I can do completely independently. God uses my eye-gaze skills to reach other people. At Greenbelt I preached to over 6,000 people!

I love my powered wheelchair, it helps me get around. But I can't go where there are stairs, narrow doorways or corridors. I can't use standard disabled toilets; they're not big enough for my wheelchair, and I need a hoist. So without a suitable toilet, I have to wear a pad or go home.

I want to feel I belong in and contribute to a community, but for that my basic needs must be catered for. Is your baptistery accessible to someone who can't walk? Why do baptisteries have steps and no hoists? Communication is a challenge for me. It can take a long time to write a sentence, so it's difficult to have conversations and make friends. My pet hate is being spoken to like a baby. People are often scared to talk to me because they don't know how, or what to say.

Sudden noises like screechy PA systems or loud worship events startle me and give me uncontrollable movements. It makes my head physically hurt and I have to leave.

Buildings can be made accessible. Ramps are better than stairs! Chairs are more accessible and inclusive than pews. I'm grateful my local church has installed a Changing Places toilet so I can stay and belong to the community there.



**Becky brought an inspirational message to our Roofbreaker event in Ashted**



**Becky preaching at Greenbelt last year**

Disabled people are not people you do ministry for, they are people you do ministry with. Disability ministry is about doing church together. When communicating, don't just talk to my parents or carer, please talk to me. Training courses in ministry subjects and theological studies are not so accessible to disabled people like me. I hope this will change. God has a plan for us too!

# Purpose and Plans

By Dr. Mike Townsend, Chair of Trustees

Do you ever wonder if God has any purpose for you? Many disabled people struggle with their personal sense of value (and it's not just disabled people!)

I am writing this just after our first Every Church Needs a Roofbreaker day in Ashted. The keynote message drew our attention to an amazing fact. We are 'created in the image of God' (Genesis 1:27). We all reflected on what this means. Does it include everyone? Even those with profound disabilities who struggle to communicate?

I used to run family houseparties. In the evenings I told the children exciting serial stories illustrating God's message for the day. Daniel was a regular from the age of eight. He had absolutely no communication, and just lay there in his flat carriage. I used to wonder if he understood anything. When Daniel was thirteen, he arrived with a communication aid. He used Dectalk synthetic speech - like Stephen Hawking. Daniel had broken the communication barrier! He described to me, in great detail, the stories I had told them back to when he was eight.

In the silence, God spoke to Daniel and he was now finding purpose in telling others about Jesus.

At the Roofbreaker day, we were privileged to have Becky Tyler speak. Becky had preached at the main Sunday service at Greenbelt last year. She is 15, and uses a computer to speak, controlling it with her eyes. She



## Time for sharing and discussion among Roofbreakers

prepared her sermon in advance, and delivered it very effectively using glances to the screen.

Referring to the book of Romans (8:28), 'In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose', Becky testified that with her profound disabilities she is "created in God's image" and therefore God has a plan for her. "All things" are not always "good". But the real meaning of that verse is that God uses our experiences for his "good" purposes.

There are two sides to the work of Roofbreakers. Firstly, they enable disabled people to engage with church. Roofbreakers look for ways to include people and encourage leadership to make this happen. However, real belonging is a two way street. We are not just "to be served but to serve". Roofbreaking includes enabling disabled people to use our gifts for the glory of God.

God has a plan for Becky, for me, and for you too.



## New Logo

Last year we created a special logo to celebrate Through the Roof's 20th Anniversary. It was designed to reflect the unity and dynamism of the charity's mission and its 3 programmes, as well as incorporating its roof-shaped graphic and colour schemes of each area of work: the red of the charity, the green of Wheels for the World, blue of DCF, and purple of Churches inc. Trustees are so pleased with it we have decided to adopt it for the charity on-going, and you should start seeing it on all of our new publications soon.

# Changing and Growing

By Jenny Edwards M.B.E.

The weather has been so beautiful these last few days that I have been able to sit outside on my balcony for my breakfast, enjoying the bird song and watching the wildlife in the woodland I overlook. Amongst the early morning visitors were many butterflies, which reminded me of the amazing stages in its life before acquiring those lovely colours and the ability to fly. Starting with an egg, it becomes a caterpillar, then changes again to a chrysalis before emerging as a beautiful butterfly.

How like our Christian lives as we grow in Christ, from our birth into the trust and faith and belief in the Saviour to the desire to explore further the life we have been born into. Like the caterpillar we wander around, but have many times of growth through our lives. The chrysalis stage, when we are waiting on God to work in us and through us, until finally we form the butterfly that He wants us to be. I have a card on my desk that says "What the caterpillar calls THE END, the Master calls BUTTERFLY". God is at work in us and through us every moment of our lives in order to see us become a beautiful butterfly in His Kingdom.

Trust in your God to bring you to a place where you know you have the potential to spread your wings and fly for Him, and watch out for those butterflies, all different colours and shapes but all formed perfectly how God wants them to be.



God is at work in us to see us become a beautiful butterfly in his kingdom (Photo by Ryan Jacques on Unsplash)

## The Most Welcoming Place on Earth

Thank you to everyone who came along to our first Roofbreaker Event. Around 50 people joined us for the day in Ashted and enjoyed...

- Insightful Bible teaching by Rev Jonathan Edwards, who told us that "The church should be the most welcoming place on Earth for people with disabilities,"
- Inspiring personal testimony from 15 year-old Becky Tyler, who used eye gaze technology to compile her presentation and presented it through her voice synthesizer, (you can find more from Becky earlier in this issue)
- Humbling stories from Ros about the exceptional pastoral care she received from her church when her disabled daughter was born, and,
- Interactive discussion groups for people to share their own stories and ideas and encourage one another.

We've had a lot of positive feedback from the attendees, with people planning to go back to their churches and raise awareness, encourage inclusion, and encourage their churches to keep on improving. Plans are afoot for future events in other areas of the country, look out for more details in upcoming Vital Links - if you're interested in becoming a Roofbreaker, and getting monthly newsletters full of ideas and inspiration, you can find out more at [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org).



Jonathan Edwards challenges everyone to make their churches the most welcoming places on Earth

# The Giving Machine

Just fourteen of our supporters have raised over £140 for Through the Roof at no cost to themselves, simply by doing their online shopping through The Giving Machine. It's easy to join in and to help raise much more. If you'd like to find out how:

- go to the Giving Machine's home page ([www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk))
- search for and nominate Through the Roof as your chosen charity
- register as a giver (you need to give them a name, email address, and create a password)

Then, whenever you want to make an online purchase, first sign in to The Giving Machine, search for the item or shop



The Giving Machine™

you want, click through to it from the link provided by The Giving Machine and make your purchase as normal. That's all there is to it. The retailers you buy from will then donate part of the purchase price to us. It all adds up, and it's an easy way to help support Through the Roof.

Visit [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/through-the-roof/](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/through-the-roof/) for more details, and to get involved.

## Inspiring Inclusive Kids Work



**Get inspired, and create inclusive children's ministry**

passing these contacts on to them, or forwarding the links, to help give them new ideas and inspiration. You can also find a version of this article with easy-to-follow links on our website, at [www.throughtheroof.org/children](http://www.throughtheroof.org/children)

St Saviour's Church, Guildford has produced a website of resources, lesson plans, craft ideas and everything you need to run a successful children's ministry that includes those with additional needs. You can find their website at [www.allbelong.co.uk](http://www.allbelong.co.uk).

Tonbridge Baptist Church has done similar work, putting together a website of resources here: [aslan.tonbridgebaptist.church](http://aslan.tonbridgebaptist.church).

Trish Hahn, Messy Church SEND co-ordinator and wife of one of our trustees has put together a 'Maximising the Mess' guide for welcoming people with additional needs. You can read about it and download the PDF file here: [www.messychurch.org.uk](http://www.messychurch.org.uk)

Boys Brigade have resources here [leaders.boys-brigade.org.uk/dan.htm](http://leaders.boys-brigade.org.uk/dan.htm) and have also launched a free app.

There is a growing range of online resources available to help you tailor your children's ministry for full inclusion of children with additional needs. Please encourage your children and youth leaders by

Girls Brigade has also produced a PDF resource, which can be downloaded from here: [gbeuropeprojects.jimdo.com](http://gbeuropeprojects.jimdo.com)

The Scouts movement also has a dedicated section on its website on how to be inclusive of young people with additional needs, and this can be found by searching for 'Scouting for All' on [members.scouts.org.uk](http://members.scouts.org.uk)

The Church of England's Going for Growth website has a section on special and additional needs on their website, [www.going4growth.com](http://www.going4growth.com)

The Methodist Church has a resource on supporting children with additional needs which can be downloaded from [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)

Urban Saints has advice and resources, including details of how you can book one of their All Inclusive or All Inclusive 2U workshops on their website [www.urbansaints.org](http://www.urbansaints.org)

The Bible Reading Fellowship also provides a leaflet of suggested ways to make your children's ministry more inclusive, which can be downloaded from here: [www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk](http://www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk)

And of course, Through the Roof is ready and willing to come and do a workshop with your youth and children's team, which we can tailor to the particular needs of your own young people. See [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org) for more details. We also have publications to help with your youth and children's work, Parachute Bible Stories and A Welcoming Place which are £5 each. You can buy them through our online shop, [www.throughtheroof.org/shop/](http://www.throughtheroof.org/shop/)

# Waves of Refreshment

The Brunel Refreshment Week by Jenny Edwards M.B.E.

The rain was doing its best to wash us all away as we headed towards Torquay and our Refreshment Week at Brunel Manor earlier this year. As we drove into the lovely grounds and entered the amazing building there was an air of excitement as friends reunited and new friends met. Through the week we looked at the story of Joseph, focussing on the Ds, including disappointment, dreams, and many others. One session was particularly special as people felt able to speak openly about things they were struggling with, and how God was helping them. This led several to encounter Jesus in a real way and their faith was enlarged as they grew closer to the God they love, which blessed everyone. We were also glad to have an evening hearing all about Holly's time in Uganda. Holly had brought lots of props so the evening was quite different, and we all enjoyed it.



Everyone together at Brunel

As we had free time in the afternoons, many of us ventured to the seafront to enjoy an ice cream. Some even took the further trip to places like the Marble factory. By Friday we all agreed that the week had been a good time of refreshment and returned home having spent valuable time together with Jesus. We have booked for another four day break for 15th – 19th April 2019. Please do let us know if you are interested by calling the office on **01372 749955**. We would love to have you with us next time.



Get in touch now to join in next year

## Richer for Sharing

The South East Baptist Association recently gathered church representatives from across the region for a Disability Awareness Day. Through the Roof were invited to present and we were delighted to speak alongside Susan Myatt, the first Deaf ordained Baptist Minister; as well as friends, Pete and Christine Winmill of Count Everyone In ministry; and staff and a volunteer from Torch Trust's Holiday & Retreat Centre.

All the presenters spoke on the common theme of the uniqueness of all people made in God's image, and the particular contribution that every disabled person brings.

In feedback, delegates commented that the day had been helpful and enlightening. One told us, "A big thank you for all your input into our church lives. We are the richer for your sharing."

Another asked whether "Ministers should update their

training in the way that GPs, Social Workers etc do? Perhaps churches need to reconsider how we worship - we use a lot of words!"

Even the organiser, Rev Jerry Newson (Regional Minister), went away committed to take things further. He told us, "It has inspired me to do what I can to ensure the whole subject of Disability Awareness is given a much higher priority across the South Eastern Baptist Churches."

Through the Roof is here to serve churches and we'd be pleased to offer your church an interactive training workshop, fitted to your needs. Through Biblical teaching, small group discussion, videos, insightful practical exercises and real-life examples, we can inspire and support your church to discover how much more enriching church life can be with the full involvement of disabled people. Get in touch to find out how we can help you.

# When I See Her, I See God

Churches Inc in Elburgon By Kerry-Lee Tamlyn

Smati is a young girl in rural Kenya with cerebral palsy who was brought by her mother to one of our workshops. Her mother exclaimed, "I thank God for Smati's life. Through her many people came together. She was fed through tubes and given oxygen after she was born, and then she came back to life. When I see her now, I see God. When I see the way she is, I see her as my wealth. I know God has a purpose for her that I may reach out to others so that they will love their children with disabilities". It is people like Smati and her mother who embody the message we bring on our Churches inc mission trips.

This trip to Elburgon in Kenya was hosted by our longstanding partner, Rev. Davis Gatua, Founder of the Hope of Glory Centre for People With Disabilities. Four hundred leaders, including pastors, community leaders, and local government leaders attended the Leaders Event to hear how God views disabled people like Smati. A further four hundred people attended our workshops to learn about the barriers to inclusion and how to combat them.

We saw a tremendous shift in attitude of the pastors who came along. They were strongly challenged by God's Word, and personal experiences of disability. Their attention was captured, their hearts were moved, and attitudes that have prevented the Church from responding to disability were



Smati's mother knows God has a purpose for her daughter

confronted. One of our team members, Pastor Shadrack from Tanzania shared how his own father was born with disabilities in a village where people believe that disabled people bring misfortune in the way of famine to the village. The consensus there is that such a person needs to be killed or banished. But his grandmother ran away to save the baby's life and now his father is a respected pastor.

We appealed to the pastors to preach that 'God's power is made perfect in weakness' rather than a false prosperity message that God only favours 'the strong'. We challenged them to talk openly about disability so that it is not a taboo subject, and so that people can have the confidence to tell them about relatives hidden in their homes.

A Churches Inc. team will be travelling to Sierra Leone from the 9th to the 17th of October – we're looking for a few more people to join the team, particularly those with a background in teaching, or who have practical experience of working with disabled people, have a personal story of disability to share, or who have photographic, administrative or pastoral skills. If you're interested, please email [Shaun@throughtheroof.org](mailto:Shaun@throughtheroof.org) to find out more, or to apply to be on the team.



Kerry-Lee speaks at one of the workshops for parents, helping to prevent pressure sores and back injuries



# 3 Good Deeds in 1



Sponsor a wheelchair for £42, and transform the life of a disabled person overseas

## RECYCLE

Save an old wheelchair from landfill



## RESTORE

Help prisoners contribute to society by refurbishing wheelchairs to 'as new' standard



## RESULT

Change the life of a disabled person in a developing country through the gift of a wheelchair



*"Thank you, may God bless you, you have made my life better!"*  
– Joyce, Wheelchair Recipient in Ghana



**Please return  
this form to:**

Through the Roof,  
Alpha House,  
Alpha Place,  
Garth Road,  
Morden, Surrey,  
SM4 4TQ

## All About Wheels

65 million disabled people worldwide need a wheelchair (World Health Organisation). Most of these people don't have the money or opportunity to buy one. Wheels for the World, an overseas programme of Through the Roof, restores and distributes previously-used wheelchairs to people in several African countries, giving disabled recipients increased independence and demonstrating the love of God in a practical way. See more at [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org).



## Donor Details

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Postcode: .....

Telephone no: .....

Email: .....

We take your personal data and privacy very seriously and only use your information to best provide you with the products and services you ask for e.g. sending our newsletter, or accounting for donations. We only hold personal data for as long as it is needed, and it is held securely and never passed on to external organisations. More information can be found in our Privacy policy.

- Tick here to receive our International Missions news by email
- Tick here to receive our Vital Link newsletter by email
- Tick here to receive our Vital Link newsletter by post

### Please return this form to:

Through the Roof, Alpha House, Alpha Place,  
Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4TQ

**01372 749955**

I would like to sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ wheelchair(s) at £42 per chair.

All sponsors receive a photo certificate of a recipient after the trip

Name for sponsor certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ made out to Wheels for the World **OR**

I would like to make a donation by credit / debit card of (amount): .....

Card number:

Security Code (Last 3 numbers on back of card):

Issue number (If applicable):  Valid from date:  /  Expiry date:  /

Signature: ..... Date:.....

## Other Ways to Give

Please visit [www.justgiving.com/ttr](http://www.justgiving.com/ttr) to donate directly and securely online, and reference 'Wheels Sponsorship'. To donate by bank transfer, use **A/C 00008105, sort 40 - 52 - 40** and reference 'Wheels' so your gift goes to Wheels for the World. Do let us know if you do this, so we can claim gift aid and keep you informed about the good work you're making possible. Or call us on **01372 749955** or email [info@throughtheroof.org](mailto:info@throughtheroof.org)

Wheels for the World is a programme of Through the Roof Charitable Trust Ltd, Registered Charity number 1087788 with registered offices at Alpha House, Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4TQ. It is also a Registered UK Company number 04201510.

## Gift Aid

Gift Aid enables us to make your gift go further without any additional cost to you.

I would like Through the Roof to treat as Gift Aid donations\* all qualifying gifts of money made:

Today  In the past 4 years  In the future

Please tick all boxes you wish to apply.

Date:

*giftaid it*

or

It is not possible for me to Gift Aid my donations.

\* I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please notify the charity if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address, or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.