



Vital Link

The Newsletter for Through the Roof | www.throughtheroof.org

Transforming Lives Through Jesus with Disabled People

“God is in charge of making me”



Disability Awareness Sunday is on 28th September this year. The theme is ‘Made in God’s Image’ and our resources/video/content is written by author Emily Owen. Here she shares about her own journey with God making her in His image...

Hello! My name is Emily. I’m a Christian, and I am disabled.

When I was 16, I was diagnosed with NF2-SWN, a condition which causes benign tumours to grow on nerves in my body. Since then, I’ve had many surgeries, including ones which left me completely deaf, and with limited mobility.

I am delighted to be involved with the 2025 Disability Awareness Sunday material. This year’s theme, ‘Made in God’s Image’, is close to my heart, particularly since one of my surgeries damaged my facial nerve, and I struggled with being visibly different.

My confidence went through the floor. I didn’t want to see anyone, or go anywhere. I existed in the ruins of my life, and I

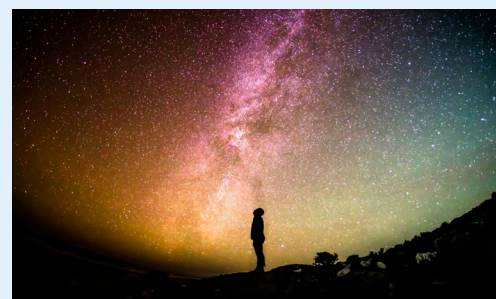
couldn’t make it better. I couldn’t click my fingers and run, and smile, and hear again. Physical changes, and their consequences, caused me to lose sight of myself.

‘Who was I now?’ I didn’t recognise myself. And God assured me, over and over, that I am made in His image:

‘I will build you up again, and you... will be rebuilt.’ **Jeremiah 31:4**

God is in charge of making me. I don’t have to do anything except let Him.

That doesn’t mean it’s always easy. Life can be hard. There are times when I’d build myself differently. But ultimately, if I let Him make me and build me and shape me, if I look for His hand in and on my life, I am blessed.



He knows me.

He knows the shape I am in.

He knows that how I am now is not the same, in many ways, as how I used to be.

He knows my joys and frustrations.

He knows me inside out.

He made me.

And He builds me up, again and again.

I hope you can join us for Disability Awareness Sunday 2025 as we celebrate together being ‘Made in God’s Image’.

Explore this theme in our free DAS 2025 resource pack, written by Emily.

To get your copy visit our website at:

<https://bit.ly/DisabilityAwarenessSunday>

In this issue:



“I don’t want my child to be like Greg.”

Accessible formats available: large print, audio, braille.
Call 01372 749955 or email info@throughtheroof.org



Plans for Hope
Explored courses.



John Garrett’s
‘Life Story’ album.

New faces

We have three new faces to introduce you to this issue: one new staff member and two new trustees. We're excited to see what God will do through each of them!



Grace Bloxham – Staff

Hello!! I'm Grace – the new Roofbreaker Co-ordinator for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Northern England. In my spare time I love watching films (with snacks), going on scenic countryside walks, reading, drinking good coffee, and listening to Taylor Swift.

I've lived in the North of England my whole life until I moved to study at London School of Theology. I met some lovely people, including my husband Peter, and learned so much about God, the Bible and the Church.

During my final year of university, I discovered my passion for disability awareness. I grew up with a disabled parent, and was diagnosed with a chronic illness in 2021, so providing equal opportunities for disabled people has always been close to my heart. I'm really excited to get more churches energised and equipped for this important mission.



Matt Lloyd – Trustee

I live in Bromley where I really enjoy being married to Ruth and raising our young children, Grace and Tom. I work as Associate Vicar at Christ Church Bromley and am particularly involved in encouraging people in evangelism and sharing the good news of Jesus.

12 years ago, I had a rare spinal abscess which has led to me using a wheelchair. It's been a big adjustment, with some sadness and harder times. But I've also seen the Lord's provision in wonderful ways over those years and am learning to trust our Father, the Potter, as he shapes our lives for His glory and our good. In those years I've been blessed by the work of Through the Roof and count it a privilege to serve as a trustee. I'm fully with the vision to 'Transform Lives through Jesus with disabled people'; I'm sure He wants to use us all and is able to do so!



Steve Simper – Trustee

I worked in the NHS and social care over four decades to improve healthcare, children's services, and support for those with learning difficulties. I became Director of Inclusion at Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust. I now run a business and serve in various roles in my church and community, including being a non-executive Director with Sense, and honorary Finance Director for a London research institute.

Reflecting **Isaiah 64:8**, my life is shaped by resilience and purpose. Despite my blindness, I approach life with enthusiasm, undertaking daring adventures including ice-skating, walking over the O2, parasailing... even driving at Brands Hatch!

I'm deeply connected to my family, cherishing moments with my four adult children and three grandchildren. My faithful guide dog, Freeman, is a constant companion, bringing joy and warmth to everyone we encounter.

My life is, I hope, a powerful example of how obstacles can be transformed into opportunities for growth and service. My experience proves that visual impairment is no barrier to living fully and contributing meaningfully to one's community.

From curse to blessing: a Nigeria Roofbreaker story



▲ Greg speaking at the Roofbreaker event.

Janet Eardley shares a moving story of Greg, a disabled speaker to 140 people at the Roofbreaker event in Lagos Nigeria.

Greg contracted polio, aged 5, and now uses a wheelchair. His father believed Greg's disability was an attack from the enemy. So he started taking Greg to churches; Greg still has physical scars from them 'removing the demons' so that he would walk. At church, children couldn't play with him. He was isolated because every parent said, 'I don't want my child to be like Greg.' This mentally affected Greg so much that he tried to end his life.

Through all these challenges, Greg went to university, and tried a nearby church. But to get Greg in his wheelchair into the church they had to lift him, and he was uncomfortable at the attention it brought. So, instead, he went to a very small church. After Greg visited this church once, by the next Sunday they'd opened a new door and fitted a ramp. From that day, he started attending that church. After one month, two other people in wheelchairs started coming. Then the church welfare people realised it was costing Greg a lot of money to get there. They said "You can't afford this. We will be taking care of your transport."

As Greg says, "These are the little, little things that we can do and then we will draw people with disabilities, and they will come and worship."

Praise God for teaching hearts that disabled people too are 'made in the image of God'.



▲ Freedom to move for girl who lost her Mum in Mozambique.

Mozambique mission: disappointment and opportunity

Trustee and Mission Leader Rob Dalton shares:

Our spirits were high as we travelled to Mozambique. Our team were excited to fit wheelchairs to some of the neediest people in the country. Then after 8 hours at the border it began to sink in... Mozambique was closed for our team.

A temporary political situation arose where teams like ours were not allowed in at that time.

We would not be entering Mozambique. Many hopeful recipients had already arrived at our partners. TTR quickly setup a remote distribution where our team could support local therapists to fit chairs to people with complex needs.

Amazing stories unfolded and chairs were given, including to a 10-year-old girl (pictured) who lost her mum during childbirth. This is her first-ever wheelchair! One team member said: "We all felt compelled to 'move heaven and earth' to do what we could to help her!"

Returning to the UK, we were called to be as faithful in our disappointment as we wanted to be faithful in service. God, our Master Potter, does not need us. But he delights to use us and work through us. He sees our heart and cares more about who we are than what we appear to accomplish. God calls us to be faithful, not always successful.

We're grateful to all involved and to our sovereign God who works all things for good for those who love him.



Made in God's image

Trevor Hahn, our Chair of Trustees, shares a reflection on being made by God.

I have many 'favourite' scripture passages one being the creation stories at the beginning of Genesis. There are two: one 'big picture' story, as God says with a Word 'Let there be.....and there was'; and one where God 'forms' us from the dust. In chapter 1, all the Trinity is involved with creation. God (Father), with a Word, (Jesus) spoke, as the Holy Spirit hovers over the waters, and it was. What awesome power and sovereignty. Never think that God is powerless to help you with whatever you are facing. He created all that is, out of nothing. And God looked upon His creation and saw that it was good. This narrative is almost blasé seemingly glossing over the unintelligible enormity of it all, with throw away comments like 'He also made the stars.' Do you know how many stars there are in the universe? Astronomers estimate that the universe could contain up to one septillion stars – that's a one followed by 24 zeros!!

And then we are told:

**'God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.'
(Genesis 1:27)**

We, all of us, with so much variation, are made in God's own image. God is our Creator, and scripture says it was not just good, but very good; in fact exceedingly good, pleasing, precious, and beautiful. God does not make rubbish. You are beautiful, pleasing, and precious to God.

Chapter 2 gives an 'up close and personal' view of creation. 'The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into His nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being' (verse 7). With a Word God created all the stars yet, like a potter working the clay, God forms and moulds us with His bare hands. We are made with care and love: it is a personal, intimate act, with His eyes and attention fully focused on us as He moulds us and shapes us into who He wants us to be. And just like the potter's work, every creation is different, unique, precious, and special.

You are unique, yet we are all made in God's image. And if we choose to believe, through Jesus, we can receive the gift of salvation.

We can have the breath, the life, the Holy Spirit of God within us; become a new creation, His child, in unbroken fellowship with our Creator and have the privilege to call Him, 'Abba,' Father.

May you always delight in the One who delights in you.

International mission opportunities

Please pray for these trips and consider if you could support a mission by volunteering or giving financially.

Wheels for the World trips

Jinja, Uganda: 10th–20th September 2025

Partner: Petra Foundation Christ Ministries

Elburgon, Kenya: 21st–31st January 2026

Partner: Abundant Hope of Glory Church

Contact: Kathy@throughtheroof.org
to apply or for information.

International Roofbreaker trips

Kayonza, Rwanda: 16th–26th April 2025

Partner: FH Rwanda

Contact: Shaun@throughtheroof.org
to apply or for information.

We also ask for prayers and celebration of the Roofbreaker event below, which will be led by an in-country team of local Mozambican volunteers:

Mozambique: 15th–25th October 2025,
(no UK team)

Partner: Somos Nós

Hope Explored

A series of 3 online sessions to explore hope, peace and purpose

In these times hope can feel difficult to find, but we believe that we have assurance and hope to offer in Jesus. We'd love to invite you to consider this further with us. Whatever your background or experience, this is open for everyone, and we encourage you to invite a friend along too. Hope Explored uses short videos and animations to spark discussion.

These three online sessions, from the makers of 'Christianity Explored', will be facilitated by people with experience of disability in an effort to try and make it as accessible as possible for everybody. We also hope to have sessions available in British Sign Language.

We don't yet have fixed dates, so to find out more and express an interest please email janet@throughtheroof.org



To all our anonymous donors

Thank you to everyone who gives to the work of Through the Roof.

For those who kindly make donations to us anonymously, we do not get the chance to thank you for your generosity in person. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge your donations.

Thank you from everyone who has been blessed by your gifts.

If you're expecting a response to a donation and haven't had one, please get in touch so we can join up all the information and properly acknowledge your gift.

If you'd like to financially support Through the Roof, please visit www.throughtheroof.org for a donate link or contact the office on 01372 749955.

Shaun is sadly retiring from managing our International Missions, after 9 years of faithful service to Through the Roof. He's overseen its growth and development as God has guided him, for which we're very grateful. We'll soon be recruiting for this role, so visit our website to find out more about being part of this adventure with Jesus.



HOPE|EXPLORED

WHAT'S THE BEST FUTURE
YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE?

Made and re-made: a Roofbreaker's redemption story

"But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." (Isaiah 64:8)

John Garrett embodies the mission of Through the Roof. Accompanied by his guide dog, John is a Roofbreaker using his gifts to lead worship at his local Baptist church, and actively enabling positive change for other disabled people. Our editor, Annette, interviews John, about his story and how he is spreading the message of the Gospel.

Isaiah 64:8 describes God as the Master Potter, shaping us as new creations in Christ Jesus. John Garrett's journey echoes this truth. Brokenness has been both a burden and a blessing for John. He has suffered with addiction issues and struggled with relying on God alone, but John's life has been transformed by God's healing touch.

When John's marriage ended, he realised he felt broken on the inside. He described himself as like one of those Russian dolls with one model inside another; the one on the outside looked presentable, but the inner ones were damaged, with paint peeling off. But God said: 'You've got to be broken to be fixed. Now you cannot cope by yourself, will you let me in?' Reaching rock bottom was the turning point. It was there that John began to depend fully on God and experienced a radical transformation. He was remade in God's image.

Today, John uses his God-given musical talents to lead worship, playing keyboard in his church band. But God didn't stop there – He inspired John to write powerful songs that reflect his own journey. After first writing in the 1980s, John prayed for a refreshing of his gift of songwriting. Then in the early 2000s, John's first album, *Life Story*, started to take shape. The album is freely available online, so anyone can hear John's crystal-clear voice and experience the healing message of powerful biblical truths through his Spirit-filled music.

Life Story is more than an album – it's John's testimony. The first half tells the story of a life that felt broken and worthless, only to be rebuilt by the hands of the Master Potter. Through adoption, a challenging upbringing, addiction, sight loss, and failed marriages, God's loving hands have reshaped him, showing him his true value, and assuring him of a place and a purpose in God's plans. The second half of the album is a source of encouragement for those walking their own narrow path of truth and life.



John invites listeners to hear his story in song, offering an honest glimpse into the highs and lows of his journey with Christ. All he asks is less than an hour of your time to sit back, listen, and let his music inspire you.

You can stream or download *Life Story* on multiple platforms through the following link:

<https://ditto.fm/life-story-john-garrett> or watch a video version with lyrics on YouTube at:
<https://www.youtube.com/@LifeStory-j3r>

‘Together’ Activity Holiday

Monday 16th - Friday 20th June 2025

Calvert Trust, Exmoor, N Devon



Calvert Trust, situated on the edge of Exmoor, is an all-inclusive "accessible, exciting and memorable adventure break for everyone."



Guests, Carers and Helpers can enjoy a range of fully accessible activities such as abseiling, archery, cycling, canoeing and much more. If you want something a little quieter, then you can enjoy the peaceful surroundings of Calvert Trust's 44 acres of land set on the edge of Exmoor National Park.



ACTIVITIES

Calvert Trust offers / organises a timetable of accessible activities (weight restrictions apply to some activities*) for groups that might include:



Zip-wire



Carriage riding*



Abseiling*



Canoeing



Archery



Cycling

Cost: £630 pp (Carers*/Helpers £495)

£

For full-board accommodation, activities & spiritual reflection We can offer a limited number of discounted places for carers*. If personal care is required each guest needs to arrange adequate and appropriate care ensuring that all costs are covered in full. We are not legally allowed to provide carers. Rooms are predominantly twins which have adjoining / easy access to wet-rooms—several of the rooms have ceiling track hoists.

To find out more:



together@throughtheroof.org



<https://throughtheroof.org/holidays-and-retreats/holidays/>



01372-749955



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

Pressing on towards the goal

Through the Roof has now been advancing in its mission for 28 years – and we believe that God still has work for us to do as we ‘press on towards the goal’. Right now, we’re praying and perceiving what God’s plans are for the coming few years.

With so much uncertainty in the world and with our current Strategic Plan nearing its end, we’d really value your thoughts and wisdom so we can collectively discern God’s Will for the future of Through the Roof.

We have compiled a **short survey to gather people’s perspectives** and would love your input from whatever way you engage with the charity. Questions include ‘where have you seen God at work in TTR?’ and ‘what could be improved or changed?’

Please fill in the enclosed paper questionnaire and return it to us. Alternatively, scan the QR code or follow the link to complete it online here:

<https://bit.ly/TTR-Future-Survey-2025> or scan the QR code. The deadline for all responses is **Wednesday 7th May**. Lookout for the key findings in the next newsletter. Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel.



TTR Future



Multiply the talents God gave you

Using the gifts God made you with is the theme of the ‘parable of the talents’ in Matthew 25. You can use your creative or sporting talents to bless others and fundraise to make a difference. It’s amazing how far a small initial investment can go.

Through the Roof challenges you to see just how much you can raise by starting with just £10!

The idea is simple: start with £10 and find creative ways to grow it. Perhaps you could bake some cakes and sell them, host a quiz night, or even set up a sponsored challenge, such as running or walking a certain distance? Whether it’s through local events, online campaigns, or even reaching out to your community for support, the possibilities are endless.

Every penny raised will help us partner in mission so the church catches the vision for disability inclusion. Help us raise money for the three key projects God has called Through the Roof to run: Wheels for the World, Roofbreakers (in the UK and internationally) and the Together Fellowship programme.

Any contribution, no matter how small, adds up to create a huge impact. The key is to be creative, involve others, and have fun while making a

difference. Whether you raise £20 or £200, every pound you raise will change lives. With the gifts God gave you, and just £10, the potential to transform lives is truly limitless.

You could set up a fundraising page on our Just Giving site at **www.justgiving.com/ttr** Please get in touch and let us know what you are doing.

May God bless and multiply your efforts!

▼ Every pound you raise will change lives.



Thank you for reading Vital Link!

We hope you enjoyed this issue. Please do send any feedback to **annette@throughtheroof.org** or call the office on **01372 749955**. Accessibility is so important, so please let us know of any issues. All blessings for Lent and Easter!

Through the Roof Charitable Trust Ltd is a Registered Charity no. 1087788 with registered offices at Alpha House, Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4TQ. Registered UK Company number 04201510.

Bring life in all its fullness with Wheels for the World



We're all made in God's image.
Donate or sponsor a wheelchair for
a disabled person overseas.

Your gift to Through the Roof can change lives:



**£21 could give an
audio Bible**



**£46 could help
refurbish a wheelchair**



**£78 could help refurbish
and transport a wheelchair**

**"Yvonne's smile grew even wider and brighter as she thanked us sincerely
for her 'gift'. We told her it was a gift from God." (Peter, a volunteer)**

Yvonne, age 24 from Rwanda, who has cerebral palsy, cannot crawl or feed herself but she radiated warmth. Our dedicated team customised a wheelchair for her, allowing her to attend church, reconnect with friends, and gain new independence. Praise God!

Your donation can bring this transformation to many more disabled people. Donate now!



Scan the QR code for our Just Giving page or visit www.justgiving.com/ttr to donate directly and securely online – add 'Wheels Sponsor' (in Message box) for wheelchair sponsorship.



Please return this form to: Through the Roof, Alpha House, Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4TQ.

01372 749955 | www.throughtheroof.org

Please return this form to:

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



Why support Wheels for the World?

Over 80 million disabled people worldwide can't afford a wheelchair (WHO). Our volunteers' refurbish and deliver disused wheelchairs to developing countries where volunteer therapists fit them. We also give a Bible in people's own language.

Your details

Full name (inc. title):

Address:

.....

Postcode:

Telephone:

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 at www.throughtheroof.org

We'd like to keep you informed on this good work:

Tick here to receive:

- ☐ Vital Link newsletter by email
- ☐ Vital Link newsletter by post
- ☐ Together Fellowship Newsletter (email)
- ☐ International Mission newsletter (email)
- ☐ Information on becoming a Roofbreaker (by email)

Bring 'life in all its fullness' to a disabled person: sponsor a wheelchair today

Gift Aid

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

Please advise your full name, including title and middle names, together with your full address, in the 'Your details' section (see left) to help us in applying for Gift Aid.

I am a UK taxpayer and would like Through the Roof to treat as Gift Aid donations* all qualifying gifts of money made:

- ☐ on this donation
- ☐ in the past 4 years
- ☐ in the future

giftaid it

Please tick all boxes that you wish to apply then sign and date below.

or

- ☐ I am not a UK taxpayer and it is not possible for me to Gift Aid my donations.

Signature: Date:

* 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.

Sponsor a wheelchair: £46 will help refurbish a wheelchair or £78 will help to refurbish and transport a wheelchair. You can sponsor: • By cheque payable to **Through the Roof** • By bank transfer (BACS) to: **Through the Roof Charitable Trust**, sort code: **82-12-08**, Virgin Money account number: **20047444** (reference your name & 'Wheels sponsor') • Online at www.justgiving.com/ttr reference 'Wheels sponsor' • By Credit Card (complete details below)

Name for wheelchair sponsor certificate(s):

- ☐ I enclose a cheque for £..... made out to Through the Roof
- ☐ I have sent my money by bank transfer, my reference is
- ☐ I would like to donate £..... by credit / debit card

Card number:

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

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

- ☐ I would like to make a regular donation of £..... to be used for

☐ I have set this up with my bank ☐ Please send me a form to enable me to do this.

- ☐ I do not require an acknowledgement for my donation

Signature: Date: