Title: On Belonging: Some Lessons Learned on What Matters Most

Presenter: Erik W. Carter

**Slide 1**

[Picture of two college-age students side hugging, one with an intellectual disability and one without]

On Belonging: Some Lessons Learned on What Matters Most

Erik W. Carter

**Slide 2**

[Picture of a paper cut-out of a question mark held up by two hands.]

No text.

**Slide 3**

[Picture of the word “belong” written out in cursive against a backdrop of the sky.]

No text.

**Slide 4**

[Picture of a family of five, including two parents and three children, one of who has Down syndrome.]

Conversations with families on faith and flourishing.

**Slide 5**

[No picture]

Dimensions of belonging:

* Present
* Invited
* Welcomed
* Known
* Accepted
* Supported
* Cared for
* Befriended
* Needed
* Loved

**Slide 6**

[Photo of three large wooden doors at a church entry.]

1. To be present.

**Slide 7**

[Five circles arranged in a star shape, each with statistics written inside]

52% of adults with IDD don’t attend

27% attend a youth or small group

56% lacked support for their child

32% changed their place of worship

18% or fewer of churches offered supports

The research citation at the bottom of the slide reads “Sources: Ault et al. (2013); Carter et al. (2015); Carter et al. (2016)”

**Slide 8**

[Picture of a large white church built into the side of a mountain with large winding steps leading up to the door.]

No text.

**Slide 9**

[Picture of a very old Italian church at the top of a very narrow, tall rocky incline]

No text.

**Slide 10**

[Picture of a much smaller church at the top of a very narrow, tall rocky incline]

No text.

**Slide 11**

[Picture of a sidewalk leading up to a red church door. A step exists right at the entry.]

No text.

**Slide 12**

[Picture of a person extending a right hand as if to shake someone’s hand.]

2. To be invited

**Slide 13**

[No picture.]

“It’s not that we deliberately excluded [people with disabilities]. In fact, we weren’t deliberate at all. That was the problem.” A pastor.

**Slide 14**

[Picture of a church sign for Christ Community Church that reads “Don’t Worry-Be Happy. Everyone Welcome!” along with information about service times and the pastor’s name.]

No text.

**Slide 15**

[Picture of a handicapped parking sign that says “Rachel’s parking space.”]

No text.

**Slide 16**

[Picture of a pie graph showing 32% filled in.]

Parents who changed their place of worship because their child with a disability was not included or welcomed. The research citation at the bottom of the slide reads “Source: Ault, Collins, & Carter (2013)”

**Slide 17**

[Picture of a brown welcome mat on a wood floor.]

3. To be welcomed.

**Slide 18**

[No picture.]

“We felt like we were wanted.” A parent.

**Slide 19**

[A picture that says “Disability etiquette: Tips for interacting with people with disabilities.”]

No text

**Slide 20**

[A picture of two friends with their arms around each other, one man with an intellectual disability and one woman without a disability.]

4. To be known

**Slide 21**

[No picture]

Intellectual disability is “a disability characterized by **SIGNIFICANT**

**LIMITATIONS** both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills.” AAIDD definition (2010)

Autism is characterized by...

* **DEFICITS** in social-emotional reciprocity; ranging from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back and forth conversation through reduced sharing of interests, emotions, and affect and response to total lack of initiation of social interaction,
* **DEFICITS** in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction; ranging from poorly integrated- verbal and nonverbal communication, through abnormalities in eye contact and body-language, or deficits in understanding and use of nonverbal communication, to total lack of facial expression or gestures.
* **DEFICITS** in developing and maintaining relationships, appropriate to developmental level (beyond those with caregivers); ranging from difficulties adjusting behavior to suit different social contexts through difficulties in sharing imaginative play and  in making friends  to an apparent absence of interest in people

APA definition (2012)

**Slide 22**

[Picture of a sheet of paper with a line drawn down the middle. One side says “strengths” and the other side says “weaknesses.” A hand with a pen is about to write something on the strengths side.”]

4. To be known

**Slide 23**

[Picture of two college-age students side hugging, one with an intellectual disability and one without]

5. To be accepted

**Slide 24**

[Picture of two pie graphs, one 55% filled in and one showing 48% filled in.]

Congregational leaders accept my child.

Congregation members accept my child.

The research citation at the bottom of the slide reads “Source: Carter, Boehm, Annandale, & Taylor (2016)”

**Slide 25**

[Icons of four people—three standing and one sitting in a wheelchair.]

Inclusion Awareness Activities

Access Sunday

Celebrating Inclusion

**Slide 26**

[Picture of a pastor preaching, holding a Bible in one hand and raising the other as if in mid-sentence.]

5. To be accepted

**Slide 27**

[Picture of two women walking together, one is supporting the other.]

6. To be supported

**Slide 28**

[Picture of a pie graph showing 46% filled in.]

Parents who say they have been asked about the best way to include their child in religious activities.

The research citation at the bottom of the slide reads “Source: Ault, Collins, & Carter (2013)”

**Slide 29**

[Picture of silhouettes of two people talking while sitting in a coffee shop in front of a window.]

6. To be supported.

**Slide 30**

[Bar graph]

Disability Awareness Efforts: 70% say somewhat/very helpful, 12% say a little helpful, and 18% say not at all helpful.

An Advocate for Families: 68% say somewhat/very helpful, 15% say a little helpful, and 17% say not at all helpful.

Informational Resources for Families: 69% say somewhat/very helpful, 14% say a little helpful, and 17% say not at all helpful.

Spiritual Counseling for a Leader: 65% say somewhat/very helpful, 14% say a little helpful, and 21% say not at all helpful.

A “Support Group” for Parents: 62% say somewhat/very helpful, 21% say a little helpful, and 17% say not at all helpful.

Respite Care: 61% say somewhat/very helpful, 13% say a little helpful, and 25% say not at all helpful.

Modifications to Religious Education: 59% say somewhat/very helpful, 14% say a little helpful, and 28% say not at all helpful.

A Spiritual/Religious Education Plan: 59% say somewhat/very helpful, 14% say a little helpful, and 28% say not at all helpful.

Support in Religious Education: 56% say somewhat/very helpful, 13% say a little helpful, and 22% say not at all helpful.

Support During Worship Services: 48% say somewhat/very helpful, 12% say a little helpful, and 41% say not at all helpful.

“Special” Worship Services: 46% say somewhat/very helpful, 12% say a little helpful, and 42% say not at all helpful.

Financial Support: 43% say somewhat/very helpful, 13% say a little helpful, and 54% say not at all helpful.

Transportation to Congregation Events: 34% say somewhat/very helpful, 13% say a little helpful, and 54% say not at all helpful.

A More Accessible Congregation: 32% say somewhat/very helpful, 13% say a little helpful, and 55% say not at all helpful.

The research citation at the bottom of the slide reads “Source: Carter, Boehm, Annandale, & Taylor (2016)”

**Slide 31**

[Picture of two young women, one of whom has an intellectual disability. They are standing in front of a chart at a person-centered planning meeting.]

7. To be cared for

**Slide 32**

[Picture of four congregations, one on each corner.]

No text.

**Slide 33**

[Picture of map of Western Michigan, with red dots on every congregation in the area.]

No text.

**Slide 34**

[Picture of two women walking together, one is supporting the other.]

7. To be cared for

**Slide 35**

[Picture of two college-age students side hugging, one with an intellectual disability and one without]

8. To be befriended.

**Slide 36**

[Picture of two pie graphs, one 51% filled in and one showing 24% filled in.]

**Never** invited to a social activity with peers

Have **no** friends outside of staff and family

The research citation at the bottom of the slide reads “Source: [www.nlts2.org](http://www.nlts2.org) and [www.nationalcoreindicators.org](http://www.nationalcoreindicators.org)”

**Slide 37**

[Picture of four middle school students, one of whom has Down syndrome, all embracing each other in a lunchroom.]

8. To be befriended

**Slide 38**

[Picture of a adolescent with a disability carrying a cross down the center aisle of a church.]

9. To be needed.

**Slide 39**

[Picture of a church sign that reads, “Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church: Read 1 Corinthians 12: We need you here ASAP!”]

No text.

**Slide 40**

[Picture of two adolescents embracing, one of whom has Down syndrome.]

10. To be loved

**Slide 41**

[Faded background picture that says “I wish I knew where I belong.”]

Markers of belonging:

* Present
* Invited
* Welcomed
* Known
* Accepted
* Supported
* Cared for
* Befriended
* Needed
* Loved

**Slide 42**

[Picture of what looks to be typewriter keys spelling the word “myth”.]

A few worth dispelling

**Slide 43**

[Picture of a road with the words “Serving the Least of These: Special Needs Ministry” hovering over it.]

Myth 1: People with Intellectual disabilities primarily have “Special needs”

**Slide 44**

[Picture of older girl and younger girl, who has Down syndrome.]

Myth 2: People need programs more than relationships.

**Slide 45**

[Picture of a crowd of people dressed professionally.]

Myth 3: Fostering belonging is best left to the experts

**Slide 46**

[Picture of a brick wall with a giant hand pointing a finger painted on it.]

Myth 4: Someone else should definitely address this.

**Side 47**

[Picture of the word “belong” written out in cursive against a backdrop of the sky.]

No text.

**Slide 48**

[Picture of a church sign that reads, “Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church: Read 1 Corinthians 12: We need you here ASAP!”]

On belonging: Some lessons learned about what matters most.

[erik.carter@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:erik.carter@vanderbilt.edu)

www.vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu