



## Collaborative on Faith & Disability

### **Resources, Creative Ideas, and Networks for Inclusive Religious Education and Ministries with Children, Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities and their Families**

(Disclaimer: This is meant to be a starter list, not a comprehensive one. Someone else will need to do that. Resources are growing at rates almost impossible to keep up. But it is meant to be a listing of some books, guides, websites, creative older pieces), and more around including and supporting children and young people with disabilities and their families in faith communities.)

#### **Audio Visual**

- ***Believing, Belonging, Becoming.*** 11 minute video featuring four congregational stories of inclusion, two with children, two with adults. A great video to use for beginning education and awareness. <http://faithanddisability.org/videos/>
- ***Worship as One: Disability in Community. Including Persons with A Variety Of Abilities Is Transforming These Three Church Communities.*** Produced by Calvin Institutes for Christian Worship and CLC Network. <http://faithanddisability.org/videos/>

#### ***CD Study on Hospitality***

##### ***Our Doors are Open: Building Welcoming Cultures in Helping Organizations.***

[www.communityactivators.com](http://www.communityactivators.com) In this CD, broken up into short sections for group use and discussion, Bruce Anderson explores key issue and learning about hospitality and community building from working with a variety of human service, religious, and other community organizations. Great for a hospitality team exploring ways to be more welcoming. See Erik Carter's Summer Institute Plenary in 2016 on the same subject. (below)

#### **Books, Guides, and Resource Publishers**

- ***Amazing Gifts: Stories of Faith, Disability, and Inclusion.*** Alban Institute  
Long-time religion writer for the Orlando Sentinel, Mark Pinsky has written a collection of 64 stories of inclusive congregations and leaders in the US, with stories from all major faith groups. Foreword by Ginny Thornburgh. Six of these stories are related to Pennsylvania congregations and leaders.
- ***Amplifying our Witness: Giving Voice to Adolescents with Developmental Disabilities.*** Eerdmans Pub. Co. Benjamin Conner challenges congregations to adopt a new, practice-centered approach to congregational ministry — one that includes and amplifies the witness of adolescents with developmental disabilities.
- ***Autism and Faith: A Journey into Community.*** The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center  
This 50+ pp booklet, originally done several years ago, is now available in Spanish. Downloadable from [http://rwjms.umdj.edu/boggscenter/products/Product\\_FaithBased.html](http://rwjms.umdj.edu/boggscenter/products/Product_FaithBased.html)
- ***Child by Child: Supporting Children with Learning Differences and their Families.*** Church Publishing, Inc. Rev. Susan Richardson is an Episcopal priest. This is a guide for integrating children and teens with learning differences— and their families—into the fabric of everyday church life. Grounded in theological principles, the new guidebook provides a useable on -the-ground

resource for church leaders with specific suggestions, samples, and processes for adapting curricula, training volunteers, and supporting parents and care-givers.

- The [CLC Network](#). See the books and resources at the ones by Barbara Newman and colleagues. I am not going to copy them all here. Just some of the best work in inclusive religious education. (Christian) At the [website](#), look under Church Resources and Store. Then also explore the resource library at their neighbor and partner, the **Calvin Institute for Christian Worship**, <https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/> for disability related presentations of many kinds.
- ***Disability and Spirituality: Recovering Wholeness***. Bill Gaventa. Book exploring spiritual supports over the life-span, including supports for families, faith development, transition to adulthood, and strategies in community building, working collaboratively with agencies, and more. [Baylor University Press](#). Part of the **Baylor University Press Series: Studies in Religion, Theology and Disability**.
- [Friendship Ministries](#). A variety of resources for religious education program coming out of a network of hundreds of church related programs working with them around North America and in other parts of the world. Creative new Bible Study series for inclusive groups called [Together](#). Also have resources in Spanish.
- ***Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities: A Guide for Service Providers, Families, and Congregations***. Erik Carter. Paul Brookes Publishing, 2007. You will see it at the CLC Network. Now a classic. Also see Erik Carter's plenary presentations at the Summer Institute on Theology and Disability "Past Institutes" videos, including 2014 and 2016. Also see a variety of online, downloadable resources Erik and colleagues have done through the **Kennedy Center at Vanderbilt**: <http://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vkc/resources/religionspirituality/> including tip sheets, and a manual for including adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in religious education. Also look for articles in a variety of journals that they have written coming out of their research with families about what they would most like from their faith communities.
- [Leading a Special Needs Ministry](#). Amy Fenton Lee. Designed for churches beginning special needs ministry programs.
- [Putting Faith to Work](#). A manual for congregations, able to be customized to any faith tradition, to help congregations begin ministries to help young people get jobs as they transition (age out) out of school. The manual was developed out of a project testing the idea in four states.

## **Movement and Multisensory Ideas**

- **Frog Pond Enterprises**. Doris Clark, a parent and Christian Educator. Variety of resources at <http://www.joyclassalive.com>. See Joy Dancing as one, a resource with movement versions of Biblical psalms and the Lord's Prayer.
- Another version of the *Lord's Prayer in Movement* as well as a creative listing of *Multisensory Worship Ideas* (Margot Starbuck) both available by emailing [bill.gaventa@gmail.com](mailto:bill.gaventa@gmail.com) until I get them up somewhere.
- Barbara Newman's new book, *Accessible Gospel, Inclusive Worship*. Clear, practical, and excellent. Go to [CLC Network](#).

## **Related Worship/Religious Education Models**

There are a variety of ministries and models of worship that also sponsor inclusive worship services as ways of enabling all kinds of people to participate and which also serve as learning and training opportunities to help people participate in, and lead, worship. Some include [The Parables Ministry](#), [Rejoicing Spirits](#), and services that are sometimes called "No Shush" Services and/or Messy Worship.

Another is [Young Life Capernum](#), which sponsors groups around the country involving high school and college students with teenagers and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## **Websites and Facebook Pages**

### **Look Within Your Own Faith for Organizations and Resource Offices**

Many have national resource offices in the US. Some include the Roman Catholics ([www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org)), a number of Protestant and Jewish networks (google Jewish Disability Awareness Month (February) and several Muslim support networks. Visit the [Congregational Accessibility Network](#) for information on many of them.

### **The Summer Institute on Theology and Disability.**

(<http://faithanddisability.org/projects/summer-institute/>) Under “Past Institutes,” see Barbara Newman in 2015, Erik Carter in 2016, and many others. “Like” our Facebook page to receive news about the Institute, new resources, other conferences, articles, things we find out about. <https://www.facebook.com/theologydisability/>

[The Special Needs Ministries and Leadership Forum](#) A Facebook page connected to Key Ministries <http://www.keyministry.org> that shares ideas, questions and resources among its members.

The [Office of Pastoral Ministries with the Archdiocese of Newark](#) has a number of excellent resources, including their PRAISE program and other resources to help children with autism participate in confirmation, mass, and other parish activities. The ideas and strategies are wonderfully adaptable to other Christian traditions.

### **Older but Useful:**

*A Place for All: Ministry with Youth with Special Needs.* (2008) John Barone and The Monarch School. Winona, MN: St. Mary’s Press. 128 pp. \$24.95 ISBN 978-0-88489-972-3. Creative guide for religious educators.

*Let All the Children Come to Me. A Practical Guide to Including Children with Disabilities in Your Church Ministries.* (2006) Malesa Breeding, Dana Hood, Jerry Whitworth. NexGen, Cook Communications Ministries. 4050 Lee Vance View, Colorado Springs, CO 80918.

See also:

[Jewish Community Resources](#)

[Muslim Disability Resources](#)

[Grief, Death, Dying Resources](#)

[Disability Statistics](#)

[Traumatic Brain Injury Resources](#)

[Ways to Stay Connected with Ideas, New Resources, Publications, and Events at the Intersections of Faith, Theology, Ministry and Disability.](#)

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With the help of others in the Collaborative on Faith and Disability